

THE HONG KONG

A NTHROPOLOGIST

香 港 人 類 學



I S S U E N U M B E R T E N

Report for 1996-7 by Chris Hutton, President

In the past year we have had speakers on a variety of topics and reflecting a range of backgrounds and interests. The 10th Barbara Ward lecture was held by James Hayes on October 29 with the title: "Hong Kong's indigenous boat people in stress: some first-hand experience of their lives and situation in change, 1956-1971". Other speakers during the year were: Elizabeth Johnson who spoke on a Hakka multilineage community, Susan Donaghue who discussed the reconstruction of Kobe after the earthquake, and Dixon Wong who analysed the culture of a Japanese supermarket in Hong Kong. Postmodern anthropology was introduced to the society by Joseph Schneider in his 'Pleasures of the ethnographic text'; Tan Chee Beng discussed Baba Malay identity, Elizabeth Teather gave an overview of Hong Kong Chinese cemeteries from the point of view of an urban geographer. Grant Evans discussed the socio-politics and ethnography of statues in Thailand. James Watson spoke on the revival of "puhn choi" and its entry into mainstream civic rituals in Hong Kong; Rubie Watson looked at fung shui as a factor in relations between New Territories villagers and the government. The AGM was addressed by Cheung Siu-Woo, who described his field work in Guangxi province on ethnic Vietnamese residents of the PRC.

Other activities: the society organised an outing to the HappyValley mosque in Hong Kong; members of the committee and others made a trip to Guangzhou to meet colleagues from the Institute of Minorities there. We were also taken to visit the mosque and Moslem tombs in Guangzhou. A showing of David Feingold's documentary study of mines in Cambodia ('Silent sentinels, coward's war') was organised. The society also developed its own Home Page on the Web, and this is an important resource that we hope to develop in the years to come.

In general attendance at lectures was satisfactory, though sometimes erratic. The society needs to recruit new members, and I believe will benefit from maintaining a balance between academics and lay people, students and teachers, specialist anthropologists and those with interests in other disciplines, specialists on Chinese society and generalists. This diversity is the real strength of the society, since it provides a forum for these groups to meet, discuss and learn from each other.

Many thanks to the committees past and future, to our treasurer Andrew Stables, the vice-chairs Sidney Cheung and Cheung Siu Woo, to the Hon. Secretaries Cheng Sea Ling and Marie Wong, to the editors of the Hong Kong Anthropologist Joseph Bosco and Grant Evans. Special thanks to Roger Harris for getting us on-line, and to all the co-opted members not only for their hard-work and support and but also for their insights into the complex history of the society and its founding ancestors. Best wishes to the new chair, Sidney Cheung, for 1997-8.

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with the assistance of NG Chi Wo

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Cover photo: Thai Boxing. (Viewpoint Postcard Center, Bangkok. Reprinted with permission.)

Intermittent Field Research in a Japanese Community: 1951-1996

Robert J. Smith

I will take up two themes in this paper. The first, as the title suggests, concerns the advantages and disadvantages of conducting research in a single community over a period of more than a half-century. It is a rather unusual career in that respect, and when my wife and I carried out a "25 years later" study in 1975, someone asked me if we intended to do another 50 years later. My answer was that neither I nor the community was likely to last that long. The second theme is that of change, of course—personal as well as social—and how one's view of a place is affected by the inevitable process of growing older.

A bit of personal background. I started the study of the Japanese language in 1944 when I enlisted in the US Army Japanese Language and Area Program. It was one of many efforts being made during World War II to teach the language to Americans, very few of whom (except the ethnic Japanese who had emigrated to the US or been born there, of course) knew a word of it. Some of the programs did not work very well, but for a few of us it was an experience that changed our lives forever.

The point I wish to stress about long-term fieldwork is one that is not often mentioned in retrospective accounts of such endeavors. It is this: In many ways I count myself a "typical American" born and raised in the United States and resident there for almost all of my nearly 70 years. Since the end of World War II in 1945, as I have said, I have been engaged in the study of Japan and one of the comments I hear most frequently is, "Isn't it remarkable how quickly and how much Japan has changed since the war ended!" My rejoinder is, "And so has the United States." It is easy to forget that the standpoint from which the

anthropologist views another society not only is strongly colored by the character of his or her own society, but also that it is constantly shifting.

It is my firm opinion that the United States of today is as different from the United States of my youth as the Japan of today is from the Japan I first encountered in 1946 as a member of the Occupation Forces. The Japan I first saw was burned out, devastated, and prostrate in defeat—totally unlike the Japan of 1996. But it is too easily forgotten that the United States I came from had still not recovered from the disastrous effects of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Indeed, when I first worked in the village in Shikoku in 1951-1952, I astonished my hosts by telling them that, while they had got electric service well before the war, the house in Missouri that I was born in had neither electricity nor running water. The American economic situation was quite dire, the Japanese one catastrophic; it took almost 20 years for the Japanese to regain the standard of living they had enjoyed in the mid-1930s.

Subsequently, both our countries achieved world-class status economically, which had been true of neither during my early years of study of Japan. I made many friends during my military service in the Occupation Forces and I still see some of them every time I visit Japan. Our get-togethers almost always turn to the subject of how greatly our two countries and our personal relationships have changed since we first met. For example, when the yen was trading at 360 to the US dollar, it was my habit to treat friends to the theater (kabuki tickets were practically free by my standards) and dinner at quite good restaurants. I even had the occasional use of a car, so rare in

1946 that I actually knew only *one* individual who owned a private automobile.

Eventually, the US dollar began its dramatic slide and the "rich American anthropologist" who might have been mistaken for a colonialist in the early days, but who really was just a poorly paid American academic, was transformed into a foreign visitor who could barely afford a cup of coffee. Not long ago I paid ¥ 900 for coffee at the Imperial Hotel coffee shop (at ¥ 100 to the dollar) and when I remarked on this to my Japanese friends, they agreed that it was expensive—a more reasonable price would be ¥ 400-500, they said.

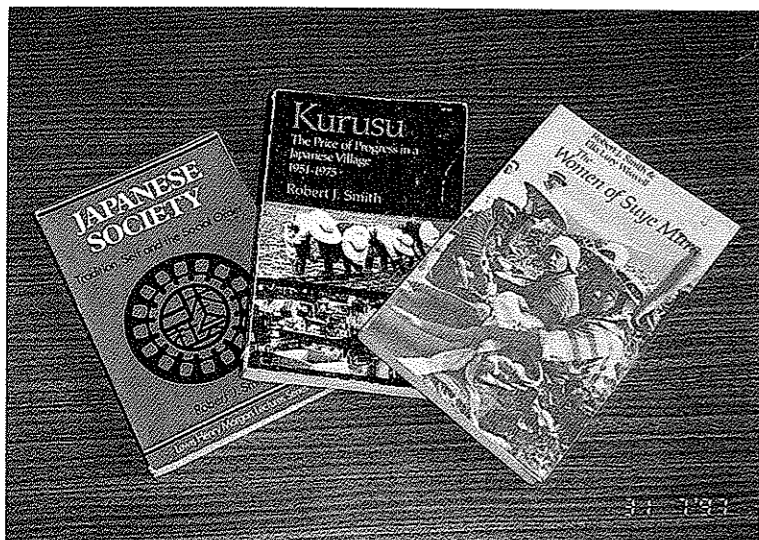
So, our countries have changed, as have our relationships. And, of course, we have all grown older. A consequence of this inevitability is that I find it increasingly difficult to remember what Japan was like when I first encountered it, and virtually impossible to convey to my students a sense of what life was like there in those days. But occasionally, one's memory is jogged by a voice or a chance meeting or an event. I hope it never happens again, but I had such an experience in January 1995 when I turned on the television evening news in New York and saw the first pictures of the devastation wrought by the great earthquake in the Kansai region.

It is the part of Japan I know best, for in 1946 I was stationed in Osaka and spent as much time in Kobe as I could. I was stunned by the television pictures, for there—in living color—was a Kobe that looked almost exactly as the city had looked when I first saw it, burned out and ruined by successive air-raids toward the end of the war. There were sequences showing long processions of people were walking away from the burning city, carrying a few possessions; the rail lines and most of the highways were out of commission; large numbers of the burned out were camped in school playgrounds, temple precincts, athletic fields, and parks; great areas of the city were flat expanses of black and brown debris of the sort left by the fires that had

leveled them. Later, an elderly friend of mine wrote to say, "It's just not fair! I've been through this once. It's as though the last 50 years had never happened . . ." Historically, what happened to Kobe has happened to other Japanese cities with depressing regularity. Fire, flood, tidal waves, and earthquakes have taken their toll, and every time the city has been rebuilt.

But what about the villages? When I was in graduate school from 1949-1953, the reigning style of anthropological research was the "community study." As it happened, one of the very first such studies, undertaken by John F. Embree (a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Chicago) and his wife Ella in 1935-36, had been done in Japan. In 1939, Embree published his classic *Suye Mura: A Japanese Village*. It was used as a textbook in my Army courses—one of the only English-language books on Japanese society available at that time—and so it is not surprising that all of us who went to Japan to conduct research in the 1950s knew Embree's book well. Our intent was not to replicate his study, but rather to see what had happened to the Japanese rural community as a result of the war and subsequent occupation.

I went to a small community called Kurusu in Kagawa prefecture on the island of Shikoku in 1951, before the peace treaty had been signed. In those days, a researcher had no choice but to start at the top. I enjoy telling my students that when I first arrived in Kagawa prefecture as a very young Ph.D. candidate, the first thing anybody could think to do was to take me to the office of the governor. So I found myself sitting in the governor's office, wondering what to say. He was a jovial man, and asked me what I was there for. When I told him, he asked incredulously, "You mean you t to live in a farming village?" I said I did, and he asked, "But why would you want to do that if you don't have to?" I explained as best I could, but discovered only later that in many ways it was a very good question.



In any event, I first saw Kurusu from the window of an automobile (with driver) provided by the governor himself. This suggests the outrageous privileges accorded Americans in Japan just as the Occupation was about to end. The peace treaty still had not been signed; there were almost no American civilians on the island of Shikoku and military personnel were required to wear uniforms. It must have been obvious that I was not a missionary, the only reasonable assumption they might have made about me. So I was a real anomaly and my initial contact with them was of such a character that they could not refuse to deal with me. After all, the governor's car had stopped at the village office just across the river, and it was immediately clear that they were expected to be helpful.

At the outset of my year there, then, we were cast in our respective roles by relations of power. It is not the way I would have chosen to select a community for study, but circumstances in Japan at that time offered no alternative. So, people were helpful, but I worked very hard at establishing myself and soon it was apparent that at least some of them were being far more helpful than they had to be.

Life in the villages of Japan in those days was very hard. It was not as hard on me as on the people of Kurusu, of course, but it was a difficult time for everyone. They were very kind and certainly puzzled about why I was there. Some were suspicious and

some, like the members of the Japan Communist Party, thought they knew precisely what my business was. The socialists were somewhat less suspicious, but for the most part people simply were puzzled.

I had one thing to recommend me, which was the entertainment value of my fractured Japanese, deeply flawed, but serviceable enough. I also had a typewriter, which no one had ever seen, that provided an source of endless amusement to those who came to

watch me use it. I also had a camera, and to show you just how long ago that was, no one else in the community had one. Consequently, I soon found myself designated the official photographer.

Once very early in my stay, the head of the family I was staying with came running in and said, "Come quickly. There's a funeral up the river." In my culture, you do not take pictures at funerals, and so I changed into some decent clothes and went with him. When we got to the house, he introduced me to the husband of the deceased, who took one look and asked, "Where's his camera?" So I was sent back to get it, and took pictures of the funeral ceremony from start to finish and started to leave. But it turned out that I was to follow the coffin up to the cremation ground, where I took more pictures as the family members gathered and the pyre was lit. Later I took the rolls of film to the shop in the city of Takamatsu where I had all my photographic work done, and when I went back to pick up the prints, the owner looked at me, shook his head, and said, "Even cremations!" He had printed my photographs of weddings, memorial services, and agricultural activities, but this time it was clear he thought I had gone beyond the pale.

Kurusu is a very small place. In 1951 there were about 25 households and now there are about 28—most of them are households I knew in 1951, although there

are a few more recent arrivals. I have been asked why so many of the same families still live there after the passage of so many years. There are two principal explanations, I believe. First, a household's single most valuable asset is the land. They could sell out, of course, but when I have asked why they don't, the routine reply is it's risky to do so and lose their base. They also point out that it's important to keep enough land to make it possible to feed the family should things fall apart. The older people need no reminding that things did fall apart in living memory, in 1945. Furthermore, it is my view that farmers are natural pessimists, expecting that any number of things might well go wrong—flood, drought, etc.—and being able to grow enough rice to feed the family is important to them. All the new kinds of agricultural machinery, which abounds, is purchased with income earned outside agriculture — a good measure of the importance given to continuing to cultivate the land as security. Second, keeping the house and land provides the fall-back, a fail-safe means of surviving if things go badly. Keeping the land makes it possible for a family to bring back an unsuccessful son who has failed to make it in the city, as well as the injured, ill, and other members of the family who otherwise are unable to compete in the kind of urban world that Japan has become.

I settled in, aiming to find out what I could about how the war had affected the place. Among other discoveries, I learned that Kurusu and the neighboring communities had lost a lot of men, yet no one ever confronted me as a representative of the enemy. The end of the war had brought real hardship, and these farmers were being urged by the government to produce as much rice as possible to feed the malnourished population. Food shortages were so severe that they were actually clearing new land and constructing new rice paddies. This was done without the aid of a single internal combustion engine—all the work done by hand. Men and women alike put in very

long hours and heavy labor and I think, in retrospect, that there was no sense of optimism at all. The future seemed to hold little promise of anything more than a long, slow grind toward a life that might, with luck, be better.

As a former mid-western farm boy, I was struck with how much they complained about government policy, the lack of fertilizer and insecticides, the shortages of clothing and food, price controls—all the things that farmers routinely complain about. Yet, they set about their task with remarkable equanimity, and it seemed to me that the dominant attitude was one of making the best of circumstances, however hard they might be. No one, not the villagers and certainly not I, could possibly have imagined how things would turn out.

Until the mid-1970s, conditions in Kurusu were characterized by a kind of inertial carrying forward of the immediate post-war situation. But as time passed, Japan's economic growth began to affect the rural areas in major ways. I try to go back every three or four years, and am proud to report that I am always made to feel welcome. On every visit, however, I am struck once again at what immense changes have swept over places like this. These are people who worked very hard and had very little to work with when I first knew them. They used to walk almost everywhere they had to go and either carried their agricultural equipment from one tiny plot of land to another or used a small one-wheeled cart to move heavier objects. Some were saving up to buy a used bicycle. There was bus service, to be sure, but it was thought to be inordinately expensive. There was one telephone in the village office, but no radios.

In 1951, Kurusu was an agricultural community of a kind typical of the time. Something like 85% of income was derived from agriculture and all but one household (the sawmill owner) depended on farming for their livelihood. Until the land reform of 1946, most of the households had been tenant farmers, and even after the reform, the

average size of a household's cultivated land was about one-third of a hectare. It was also a place where cooperative labor was essential, for any given household simply could not get the rice transplanted, cultivated, and harvested, and the winter crop of barley planted and harvested, without substantial exchange labor with other households in the community.

Because labor exchange was so important, there still existed in Kurusu a practice that in the post-war period had already faded in most of the countryside, the practice of imposing heavy sanctions against those who failed to maintain their obligations to other households and to the community at large. It is called *mura hachibu*, social ostracism. No one was ever expelled from the community, but as the word *hachibu* (eight parts) suggests, all but two of the putative ten exchange relationships were abrogated, save for assistance at a death in the household and in case of fire, which threatens the entire community. But for all other activities, such a household could count on no help in its agricultural activities. Not surprisingly, the one household in Kurusu that had been sanctioned in this way some years before my first stay there was one that was rich enough to flaunt village mores and hire its own laborers for planting and harvesting.

So, this is a place where dense cooperative relationships ordered much of life. It is also a social entity that enjoyed something of a sacred status, for all residents of Kurusu worshipped at a small Shinto shrine to the tutelary deity of the community. Festivals involving only Kurusu households were held in spring, summer, autumn, and the New Year, but by 1951 the first three were much attenuated observances. I came back from the autumn one, which I had been urged to attend, somewhat irritated because when I got there it developed that, except for the itinerant Shinto priest, I was the only adult. When I complained that only children had been in evidence, I learned an important lesson, for my host's immediate

question was, "But surely there was one from every household." For minor occasions, it was considered sufficient to send a representative of the household; for major ones, only the presence of the head of the house would do.

Not all Kurusu household were members of a single sect of Buddhism, a circumstance not all that unusual in rural Japan. At funerals and memorial services for the ancestors, a mix of priests from Shinshū and Shingon temples was considered quite acceptable. I wondered about this for a time, until I realized that behind this apparently casual attitude lay a much more important principle: at observances for the ancestors of the house, the important people are household members, relatives, and friends. The priesthood plays an important ceremonial role, to be sure, but a secondary one nonetheless.

After nearly a year there, I prepared to leave the village. Our parting was touching in many respects, for many people came down to the bus-stop to see me off with gifts of vegetables, eggs, rice-cakes, noodles, and pickles. I am not sure that I have it right, but in retrospect it seems to me that we probably assumed that we would never see one another again. I returned to Cornell in the fall of 1952 and began to write. At length I noticed that there was a curious thing about the seminars and colloquia on "community studies" that I was attending, for that model of research was almost universally adopted by graduate students in my department. I finally realized that it was assumed that because Kurusu worked, because it really did function and people really did cooperate, it must be a harmonious kind of place. And it was further assumed that because it was harmonious, people must like each other. But they did not like each other all that much. There were long-standing enmities and rivalries and some people actively detested some of their neighbors, as only those who know one another really well can.

They tolerated one another, much as members of the extended family in Japan are likely to do, because there were no options to getting along over the long haul. It is not the case that the middle generation of such households necessarily wants to take care of their parents and children and sometimes grandparents as well, it is that they see it as their duty to do so. So it seemed to me that Robert Redfield had got it partly wrong when he implied that in the "folk society" people not only lived harmoniously, but also felt well disposed to one another. In fact, just before our re-study in 1975, Kurusu very nearly came apart over just such an issue that brought to the fore long-festered antagonism, resentment, jealousy, and suspicion.

I did go back, of course, as often as I could, mostly to visit the people I knew best. And finally, in the summer of 1975, my wife Kazuko and I went to do a brief re-study of the place. We were married in 1955, not long after the end of my first field trip, and Kurusu had always made her as welcome as they had me. Because she is a city girl, they found it amusing that I could explain some things about Japanese rural life to her, and a relief that they could tell her things they feared I might not understand. It was a summer so freighted with emotion that when we returned to Ithaca, I felt driven to complete the manuscript in two short months, at breakneck speed. It was published under the title *Kurusu: The Price of Progress in a Japanese Village, 1951-1975*.

Now it is easy to become nostalgic in the course of thinking back over one's past, and I will admit to some feeling of loss at discovering what has happened to Kurusu. But during that summer an incident occurred that will always epitomize for me the transformations that have occurred in the place and my relationship to it. One steamy afternoon I was standing at a bus-stop in a pouring rain without an umbrella. I had been there a while when I saw a shiny new pickup truck approaching. It slowed and stopped, and the driver rolled down his window, leaned out, and called out, "Can I

give you a lift?" A close look revealed him to be the grandson of a man I had known quite well 25 years before. I thanked him and hopped in. This story's import will be lost unless I tell you that one of the most memorable days in the lives of Kurusu kids up to that time was in 1952 when I arrived in a borrowed Jeep station wagon and gave them rides up and down the valley. I felt like Cornwallis at Yorktown, where the surrender ceremony was accompanied by a military band playing "The World Turned Upside Down."

It was the beginning of a shift in our relationship that I quite enjoy. Nowadays almost every family has at least one automobile, their cameras are far superior in quality to any I have ever owned, most houses have been completely rebuilt and enlarged, the level of education of Kurusu's young has outpaced the wildest dreams of all but the richest local households of an earlier day, and people's health is immeasurably better. Virtually no one farms more than they want to and other sources of income have so swamped agriculture that it accounts for no more than 5-10% of the total. Many people who work in offices and factories in nearby towns and the city of Takamatsu leave early and return late on weekdays, having little to do with community life.

All this has been accompanied by a steady erosion of most of the institutions and practices that once defined Kurusu as a place. For the most part, the festivals for its tutelary deity are in abeyance; weddings are now held in wedding halls or Shinto shrines in towns down the river; the communal cremation grounds have been replaced by a centralized one built by the town in which Kurusu is located. The notion of shared fate, symbolized by the name by which the place is known, Kurusu *dōgyō* (to go together), has greatly weakened over the decades. Yet the member households still hold some land in common, and people moving into the place are invited to join the *dōgyō*. The place can induct new members,

but it is unthinkable that it any longer has the ability to expel them.

But these institutional changes are less striking in many ways than changes of another kind. If on your first visit to Kurusu, you were to arrive about midday, you might not notice a phenomenon that epitomizes what has been going on. There is no one about. No one on the paths; no one in the fields. The place seems deserted, in sharp contrast to the scene you would have encountered until the early 1970s. If you call at a house, you may find an elderly man or woman, perhaps a very small child or two (too young to be in school, left in the care of a grandparent), or someone taking a break while watching the television. The thick texture of community life has been pulled apart over the years, leaving the shell of what once was, only fitfully animated by sparks of its once vibrant life.

Any anthropologist who began field research in the early 1950s and kept track of the place and its people could tell much the same story. Indeed, the literature abounds with stories of the displacement of community values, the decline of cooperative enterprise, the mechanization of agriculture, and the slow apparently inexorable eradication of a way of life that had existed for a very long time. But there is a great deal more to the matter, I feel.

It is not just that Japanese society has changed enormously, or that the character of the United States has so radically altered. For the anthropologist and his discipline have also changed. I've grown old and the concerns of anthropology today are so different from what they were 50 years ago as to be virtually unrecognizable to my generation. Not one of my many students have ever volunteered to do a community study, and this seems to me a pity. After all, millions of Japanese live in rural areas and while they may not be country people any longer, they do not live only a subway ride from Roppongi, Harajuku, or the Ginza; they are not conversant with the latest goings-on in the city, except vicariously through

television. Yet, despite their numbers, we know almost nothing about them!

What happens to a farm family when the husband and wife *both* become wage-earners outside the home, for example? Are the rural pre-schoolers left in the care of their grandparent(s) like pre-schoolers in cities, about whom we know quite a lot? What are the social consequences of the process that has turned places like Kurusu into dormitories for the wage-earning middle generation? The list of questions is endless, but I am not the anthropologist to answer them. Why? Because my initial observations are so far in the past that they are almost irrelevant. It makes little sense to contrast social behavior of 50 years ago and more with today's after all. Those residents of Kurusu of my generation are essentially relics of a by-gone era in which their descendants express little interest. No doubt that is why the old-timers are so glad to see me, because we share something they do not share with their own children and grandchildren.

One of the most effective ways to steer the conversation in that direction is the photograph. All anthropologists should take as many photographs as possible, throughout their fieldwork, for they trigger memories, incite disagreements and debate, and conjure up memories long dormant. Thus equipped, the anthropologist revisiting a place can show people pictures of themselves and their lives taken at a time when they had no way of recording them. And one of the unexpected pay-offs of the use of old pictures is that they sometimes provide conclusive evidence that people's memories may be very flawed indeed. We all know that, or suspect it; the advantage of the photograph is that we discover in just what ways memories distort.

For all I have said, I am not sure that I would recommend studying the same place off and on for so many years. Yet upon occasion there is an event that suggests that such long-term associations may provide insight into a relationship that I believe to be

much misunderstood today. In 1935-36, as I have said above, John and Ella Embree undertook the first study of a Japanese rural community, Suye-mura, which was published in 1939. Shortly after World War II, in 1950, John Embree and their daughter Claire were killed by a drunken driver. In 1951, Ella Embree returned to Suye to visit old friends there and attend a memorial service for John and Claire. She returned again in 1968 after her marriage to Frederick Wiswell, and both were warmly welcomed. In the meantime, any number of anthropologists, both Japanese and American, had visited the place, keeping alive the connection between the community and the discipline of anthropology. This was so much the case that for some years there was a sign-board on a road leading into Suye that announced its special status as "the village studied by John Embree."

The Wiswells retired in Honolulu and Ella's contacts with Suye thinned out, but suddenly in 1994, she received an invitation to come to the village with her husband for the fiftieth anniversary observances of the start of the Embree study. The village office sent air tickets; the villagers met the Wiswells at the nearest airport with a minibus to take them to their hotel; an elaborate program, including an appearance by the governor of Kumamoto prefecture who later became Prime Minister, was set in motion; and plans were laid for an Embree Memorial Hall to be erected in the village. The Japan Broadcasting Corporation eventually produced a two-hour television program on Suye and the villagers made an hour-long one of their own. I seriously doubt that even the discussion of such a celebration ever occurred in Kurusu to mark my arrival there, although Okayama television did film a visit my wife and I made there in 1993.

What the Suye events strongly suggest is that a great deal of current soul-searching by anthropologists, having to do with feelings of guilt for exploiting the objects of their study, is misplaced. Of course, the relationship of anthropologist and the people

studied involves exploitation, but it is my experience that the uses to which they put one another are mutual and reciprocal. I have been helpful to some Kurusu people, of course, and occasionally used them for my own purposes. It is equally important to see that, for their part, they have not been shy about using me for their purposes. Suye, as one of its young politicians wrote to me not long ago, has been put on the map by the Embree study, and become well known as the first Japanese community to be studied by a foreigner. Viewing the television footage, one cannot help but be struck by the way in which the elderly in Suye, those who knew the Embrees, blossom under the lights of the camera crew. They comment on their initial impression of the Embrees, confess that they were deeply suspicious of them at first, and then reminisce about this and that encounter they remember from their childhood.

What is the legacy of the community study model for the understanding of Japan? There are not many of them, actually, but taken together they afford us a picture of a society caught in the process of becoming something other than what it had been. The last such studies were done so long ago now that they represent a kind of archive, a record of a kind that otherwise would not exist because very few people other than the anthropologists had the slightest interest in seeing to it that a record was made of that way of life. That surely is compensation for whatever small shock-waves our presence among them may have caused and little occasion for guilt.

Finally, I want to say something about factions, for which Japanese communities are justly famous. I am sometimes asked how the fieldworker can avoid becoming identified with one faction? My answer is that one inevitably is caught up in factional disputes. The only recourse is to resist being identified too closely with one faction or another. That is easier said than done, of course, but it can be managed by the judicious. In Kurusu, there was one

household that wanted nothing to do with me—partly for political reasons, partly for personal ones. As a consequence, other households in the village with whom this particular one was on bad terms, looked on me more kindly, and so I'd say that in many senses, my faction chose me.

I have long thought that early fieldwork relationships are like those between siblings. But by the time a generation has passed, because their children have grown up and have much less of a stake in the relationship with the anthropologist-outsider, they are more like those among cousins. For one thing, the outsider is no longer a curiosity; for another, the rivalries and factional disputes of an earlier day are unlikely to have

persisted in such virulent form that they pose a problem a generation later.

What must fieldworkers do to maintain and foster a relationship of this kind? Clearly, if they are reasonably polite to everyone, even when they're not very polite in return, and if they are reasonably considerate and try to meet people's requests, which can be very burdensome, things are likely to go smoothly. But at its base, the relationship is all about respect. Researchers who lack respect for the people on whom they are so thoroughly dependent have no chance of success over the long term.

在日本社會的間斷田野調查：從 1951-1996

Robert J. Smith

文章摘要

自 1951 年起，本文作者便在日本一社區進行人類學的田野調查工作，透過研究該社區物質條件的提升和社會生活的改變，作者描述在同一個社區作長時間田野調查工作的利與弊。同時，作者認為最重要的改變是他與該社區由一個具優勢的旁觀者身份轉變為老朋友的關係。

他亦指出社區研究的價值就是把一些快將失去的人類生活史存檔，他亦回應一些指責人類學家利用報導人的批評。作者認為人類學家與報導人的關係是雙向的，只要他們的關係是建基於互相尊重，這可算是一段成功的關係。

IT IS NOT BLOOD, IT IS RED *An Anthropological Approach to Thai Boxing*

Juha Komppa

In Thailand, Pico Iyer writes, 'savagery and grace [are] so cunningly interwoven that beauty often [seems] brutal and brutality itself quite beautiful.' To him, the 'bouts of Thai boxing resembles nothing so much as ritualized ballets, in which two agile boys bowed their heads before the spirit of the ring, then pounded each other to the accompaniment of weird pipes, ominous drums and a steady chanting. And [furthermore] all around [there hangs] a cockfight air of menace' (Iyer 1992:310)

It is also said that like much in Thai society, a closer, more careful look reveals layers of culture, tradition and even aesthetic beauty that make Thai boxing more than merely thrilling entertainment (Hoskin 1992). Besides, it reveals a side of Thais, as Steve Van Beek has remarked, 'that will give pause for thought' (Van Beek 1994:174)

My initial curiosity about Thai boxing was roused on one hand—besides Iyer—by John Donohue's analysis of the ritual dimension in the Japanese martial arts (Donohue 1993), and on the other by Clifford Geertz's reflections on the Balinese cockfight (Geertz 1973). Consequently, I wished to explore to what extent what they had said could be applied to Thai boxing and, thus, to Thai society and culture at large.

While doing so, I have tried to bear in mind what Brian Foster has noted about Thai friendship, that 'the key to understand [it] . . . is to beware of making more of the obligations of friendship than the Thai intend' (Foster 1976:54)—both in the sense of not just indiscriminately applying foreign material to Thai context and that gambling might easily be all the 'deep play' there is to Thai boxing and even as such, in Geertz's

terms and view, it is mostly 'shallow' (Geertz 1973:431).

This paper, then, looks at Thai boxing—chiefly its ritual dimension—in some detail; particularly the links between a Thai boxing camp and the *sangha* in initiation and training of their members. It also explores the highly symbolic cultural activity in which the Thai boxers and their trainers are enmeshed, and in which colour, language, and motion act to transmit specific messages about the world as interpreted within the framework of Thai boxing.

Last, I will take the audience's point of view and conclude with an interpretation of Thai boxing—owing much to Geertz—that I hope will, among other things, explain the ambiguous title I have chosen for my paper; why 'it is not blood, it is red.'

The Ritual Dimension

Public familiarity of Thai boxing gives emphasis to its physical beauty and ferociousness as well as its ritualistic, mystical aspects. It seems to go without saying and by definition, that training in the Asian martial arts involves something more than mere physical activity. There is in the popular imagination, as Donohue has remarked in the context of Japanese martial arts, a sense that there is a mystical, quasi-magical dimension to these arts elevates from the realm of the mundane and invests their practitioners with vaguely-defined powers, insights, and abilities (Donohue 1993:105).

¹ After Jean-Luc Goddard, cited in Deleuze (1986:118).



Figure 1: Boxer's accouterments. (From Stockman 1979, reproduced with permission of the author).

On another level—especially from the audience's point of view—this sense of something more can be easily understood as a response to the ritual dimension in the martial arts fights. Certainly so in Thai boxing, where a strong spiritual and ritualistic dimension adds grace to an otherwise cruel and ferocious sport (Gray 1992:36). Several writers besides Pico Iyer have asserted this: '[It] is an irresistible blend of ritual, balletic grace, and savage assault', write Ian Lloyd and William Warren (Lloyd 1986:141); or 'It is a curious combination of balletic grace and murderous ferocity' (Van Beek 1992:134-135). It seems to me that the term 'balletic grace' is used in order to further accentuate the heroic or grand, ritualistic quality of the fight like Iyer does by juxtaposing Thai boxing with classical Thai dancing.²

This view is shared by the Thais in general and Thai boxers in particular, who

² 'For savagery and grace were so cunningly interwoven [in Thailand] that beauty often seemed brutal and brutality itself quite beautiful. At official performance of Thai classical dance, sketches that featured lissome girls making supple turns were juxtaposed with others that showed off bruising, but no less sinuous, displays of sword fighting. Meanwhile, bouts of Thai boxing resembled nothing so much as ritualized ballets, in which two agile boys bowed their heads before the spirit of the ring, then pounded each other to the accompaniment of weird pipes, ominous drums and a steady chanting' (Iyer 1992:310).

recognize the nature of Thai boxing as a 'combination of gentleness and violence' (Tsui 1988: 43) There is gentleness in 'the practice of paying respect to the teacher, in the fair game and techniques and in the boxer's gentle behaviour',³ whereas the violent aspects are a 'lust for killing and hunting each other, the ability to sustain pain and being fearless of death' (Tsui 1988:43); a Thai boxer has also remarked that 'the violence in Thai boxing is most primitive violence' (Tsui 1988:43)

While Thai boxing can thus be convincingly traced back to combat,⁴ the functions it served were quite novel: it was seen as military training activity,⁵ as a vehicle for status-gaining (what we might now refer as social mobility),⁶ and

³ A Thai boxer should be good in technique, confident, disciplined, quick-witted and brave. Furthermore, he should also be a gentleman, patient, helpful and polite, with a good sense of sportsmanship (Stockman 1979:34).

⁴ Anthropologists have long been intrigued by the many ways sport and war are linked together in human society. Certainly, the tendency toward conflict, like that toward violence, is essentially universal among human beings, and in many ways sports can be viewed as playful combat and conflict. Most sport activities involve two opposing parties both competing for a limited resource, the thrill of victory. In this process, the aims of the combatants are frequently to neutralize, and in some cases injure or eliminate their rivals. These links will be discussed in relation to the emergence of Thai boxing as a martial art tuned to producing warriors honed for combat as much as sports performers.

⁵ Apart from the obvious martial art skill which lay at the heart of Thai boxing, physical fitness, strength, and the general toughness that derives from competition were important military attributes; hence the process was tuned to producing warriors honed for combat as much as sports performers. But stripped of its original purpose, the intrinsic aspects of the activity came to prominence. (Cashmore 1990:56) Stealth, intelligence, daring, physical prowess were valued more than the outcome (unlike in warfare) - and, over time, these became integrated into a series of activities, each in some way mimicking the original activities. Thus Thai boxing was, already then as now, already 'the result of the attempt to reintroduce the excitement and thrill of the hunt into the lives that were threaten with mundane routines in unchallenging environments' (Cashmore 1990:56). In a society in which the propensities for the serious and threatening type of excitement have diminished, the compensatory function of 'play-excitement' has increased (Elias 1986:72)

⁶ That Thai boxing is a working class occupation is reflected not only in the physical nature of the activity but also in the social recruitment of its practitioners. Most fighters in the Bangkok circuit are from the provinces who, after showing promise in the ring, have moved on to the capital in search of fame and fortune.

as a way of securing divine favour. The last aspects—standing for the ritual dimension—is perhaps best elucidated in the context of training in Thai boxing.

Although it is reasonable to assume that Thai boxers themselves have similar 'expectations, opinions, and feelings' as Donohue has noted to exist in *karate-dō* and which are results, 'at least partly . . . of the dense concatenation of symbolic action and implicit meaning that makes the atmosphere in a martial arts training hall pregnant with significance' (Donohue 1993:105), there nevertheless are some obvious differences, too. The most obvious is the lack of the training hall in its Japanese sense (*dojo*). Consequently, whatever atmosphere pregnant with significance there is in Thai boxing, it should therefore be found in the training itself and not so much in the space in which it takes places, even if the boxing ring itself is considered sacred and every boxing stadium also has a spirit house⁷ in the Thai tradition (Van Beek 1992:134-135).

Moreover, the rituals that precede the entry of a new student into a boxing camp

They usually come from the economically lowest strata of society and fight as often as they possibly can. It should however be noted, as Stockman does, that 'on the social scale a [Thai boxer] is not rated very highly' (Stockman 1979:10).

It can thus be concluded in Loïc Wacquant's words, that Thai boxers are 'small entrepreneurs in risky bodily also cases of young Thai boxers with good looks and physique, who end up as rent boys in Bangkok because it is more profitable and, although not less risky, does not involve the same dangers of being hurt physically as in fighting (personal observations at the Turning Point, Bangkok, 9 June, 1996).

Last, that boxing in Thailand - as elsewhere - is a low class occupation is indicated also by the fact that fighters consider training not as avocation and relaxation (as is often the case with other Asian martial arts) but plainly as work: '[After the fight] there is no sense of victory or defeat, just a short job done' (Somsak [a Thai boxer] in conversation, Bangkok 1989).

⁷ In a Japanese *dojo*, 'very often the only type of ornamentation or design is that present in the *kamiza* or *shomen*, the niche at the head of the room which serves as the "deity seat". It is often marked by a small shrine, some calligraphy, or, with increasing frequency in the modern age, the photograph of a head instructor' (Donohue 1993:112) It can be argued that, as in the case of the *kamiza*, the Thai spirit houses found at the boxing stadiums are 'a visual device that underscores the fact that the [site where Thai boxing is performed] is a special place where the [boxer] is participating in an activity ultimately concerned with spiritual questions concerning continuity, community, and potential' (Donohue 1993:112; cf. also Keyes 1986).

have a close resemblance to the rites associated with ordination and *sangha* membership, that is, the performance of an ordination rite and the subsequent practice of the 'discipline' by those who become members (whether only temporarily or for ever) of the order of monks. As when entering the monastic order, the candidate must first present himself to a boxing teacher (*khroo muay*) and apply to enter the boxing camp (*kai muay*). For before a young man is allowed to join a camp, he has to be accepted by his prospective teacher. Should there be any doubt about the candidate's suitability or character he will be rejected or asked to apply again after some time (Stockman 1979:22).

Once a new student is accepted, the *khuen khroo* ceremony, an important entrance ritual, must be performed⁸ on an auspicious date as chosen by the teacher, preferably a Thursday (Wells 1975:137). The general procedure is similar in boxing camps throughout the country, although many teachers have introduced slight variations to suit their own sentiments.

The *khuen khroo* is held in front of a Buddha shrine, flanked on either side by Thai boxing equipment, and the most important part of the ceremony is the vow of loyalty, which takes place after the students have made their offerings of flowers, a piece of white cloth,⁹ incense sticks, candles and perhaps few coins of small presents.¹⁰ Then they pray, before reciting their pledge as follows (the correspondences to the religious

⁸ It may be noted here that even modern physical education colleges insist on this practice for those students taking a course in Thai boxing.

⁹ This may have some bearing on how 'during the ceremony [leave-taking ceremony held at home] the candidate wears a white robe... which he can easily slip off as he changes to the yellow robes in the temple' (Wells 1975:140).

¹⁰ Likewise, as a part of the ordination ceremony for Buddhist monks, 'in procession are carried the gifts for the candidate [sic] and also for the monks who conduct the ceremony: cloth, flowers, candles, incense . . .' (Wells 1975:141).

one given upon entering the *sangha* is apparent):

We have come today to worship the teacher and solemnly promise to be your honest disciples. We respect you and have complete trust in you. We will treasure all traditions, rules and everything we will learn from you. We will make your style and techniques our own. We will never think, say or do anything that could harm the reputation of the teacher, camp or our mates. We swear our words are honest and to be kept forever. Earth, heaven and the four directions are our witnesses. We beg you to protect us, always. With our bodies, our souls and our words, we surrender to you and obey you as your disciples with the highest respect. Thus, we beg you to teach us everything you know, to help us to succeed, to protect us from dangers and bless us with love and happiness, forever. (Stockman 1979:22)

The recital is followed by a period of meditation, Buddhist rituals and chants, and a talk by the master of ceremonies and the teacher—resembling an ordination ceremony; but also the *phuk khwan* ceremony for freshmen at Chiang Mai University in 1972 as reported by Heinze (1982).¹¹

After the ceremony, the students are part of a boxing family, consider the teacher equal to their father, and cannot change camps without permission (Stockman 1979:22).¹² This transformation is then continued through the more overt and dramatic physical activities involved in training. Thai boxing is a dynamic (martial) art. Although its more complex goals are

spiritual,¹³ it attempts to reach these goals through intense, often violent, physical activity that alters both the physical and psychic states of practitioners. These practices are not oriented solely around questions of material reward or objective success but rather focused on the utilization of overt, often physically demanding, techniques in order to create an alteration of consciousness;¹⁴ thus, in a maddening way characteristic of the Zen philosophy which has so strongly influenced the martial arts (Donohue 1993:120)—including Thai boxing (Tsui 1988:39,42)—the goal and the technique used to reach that goal merge and become indistinguishable. The physically challenging nature of Thai boxing may thus be interpreted as an integral part of its ritual dimension.¹⁵

There are also further affinities between the monastic life and training in a boxing camp. For example, the discipline to which a member of the *sangha* must subject himself consists, as Holt (1981) has argued, of

being completely aware of the nature of one's actions. That is to say, mindfulness and concentration are intricately involved in the process of discipline. A disciplined action is more than just avoidance of killing . . . and sexual misconduct. It is the effective

expression of one who has been converted to a way of looking at the world, one who has embraced the perspective and the world view realized by the Buddha and expounded on his central teachings. (Holt 1981:65)

This seems to confirm with what Loïc Wacquant (1995) has asserted about boxing: that 'because it demands and effects a far-reaching restructuring of the self as well as an integral colonization of one's lifeworld, boxing is what they [boxers] are: it defines at once their innermost identity, their practical attachments and everyday doing, and their access to and place in the public realm' (Wacquant 1995: 150). This holds also for the *sangha*, where the correlation between monks and the monkhood is the same' and the resemblance to *bushidō*, the Japanese "way of the warrior", is obvious as well.

Consequently, physical training is not the only part of a Thai boxer's education.¹⁶ For those who live in the camp, discipline extends to the non-training hours. They do chores and run errands for their teacher and a knowledgeable instructor also lectures his students on anatomy and the workings of the muscular, nervous, respiratory and digestive systems, and teaches them massage techniques. In addition, he also gives moral coaching and acts as teacher, doctor, father and brother.

In the words of a well-known boxing instructor, a Thai boxer should be 'a boon to society' (Stockman 1979:34). He should be good in technique, confident, disciplined, quick-witted and brave. Furthermore, he should also be a gentleman, patient, helpful

¹⁶While proper meditation techniques are extremely difficult to develop and may well be a neglected aspect of training in Thai boxing, there is a well-established conviction among the boxing masters that meditative activity is a component of truly advanced Thai boxing. As Donohue has marked about meditation, it 'allows students to maintain an almost heightened connection with their environment. In this state the trainees can calmly and accurately view what is occurring around them, remain emotionally detached from it, and act in a way that reflects total unity of mind and body' (Donohue 1993:118). The action, however, takes place either after or before the meditation and there is no direct link between the actual meditation and the performance of the martial art; rather the link is to be found in the acquired awareness (that is, the unity of mind and body, capacity for calmness and control acquired) through mediation (personal observations from kendō training, Hong Kong 1993-4).

¹³As for its many goals, Thai boxing was first practised for use in warfare (military purposes); later it turned into a professional sport (prizefighting), while it is also seen as a way of preserving traditional Thai culture (i.e. cultural nationalism in addition to military patriotism) and as a vehicle for spiritual development (ritual dimension).

¹⁴Calm and control are emphasized because these two qualities permit the Thai boxer to respond to difficult situations in a way that will be optimally beneficial to all concerned; this bears further witness to the initial military application of Thai boxing.

¹⁵Like any ritual, participation in training has a number of functions. There is the overt purpose of studying Thai boxing—the acquisition of skill. There are also more subtle meanings in the activity. Participation in training is ultimately both a statement of belief and belonging, a tangible signal that the individual holds certain ideals and that he holds them in common with a specific community. Training then becomes 'a statement of personal and social identity' (Donohue 1993:111) As such, training can be interpreted as a means of engaging and transforming individuals and groups though 'the manipulation of explicit and implicit symbols' (Donohue 1993:111). In short, to participate in Thai boxing training is to be part of ritual process that assumes many of the dimensions of a rite of passage (what is also involved in entering the *sangha*; see Keyes 1986:69ff.).

and polite, with a good sense of sportsmanship (Stockman 1979:34). Not all trainers, however, have such high ideals; some consider their students as little more than 'bodies to be made into fighting machines.' (Stockman 1979:34) Nevertheless, like Wacquant has noted about the gym, the boxing camp too can be seen to constitute 'a small scale civilizing machine' in Elias's sense of the term (Wacquant 1995: 141; Elias 1982).

And what Charles Keyes says about entering the monkhood holds also for Thai boxing:

Even today, when many males in Southeast Asian societies do not follow the traditional ideal and enter the *sangha*, the rites and texts associated with ordination and *sangha* membership still provides the most coherent and authoritative perspective on maleness found in these societies. The Buddhist initiatory process functions as a 'total social phenomenon' in that it unifies diverse spheres of social action. Buddhist initiation provides simultaneous expression of the religious and moral character of males, whether they remain members of the religious community or return to assume adult roles in lay society. The performance of an ordination rite and the subsequent practice of the 'discipline' by those who become members of the *sangha* constitute in each instance a process of 'text-building' as Becker [1967] has termed it. (Keyes 1986:69-70)

Keyes goes on to explain, 'a past long fixed by tradition is re-created in the present by actors who are members of a particular social order. From their participation, these actors require a perspective on their maleness that is at the once shaped by the Buddhist texts of the past and at the same time by the constraints of the present social world in which the initiatory process occurs' (Keyes 1986:70).

Yet, although one may argue as Donohue does, that the popularity of Asian martial arts are due to a concern for self-defense or fitness, 'the tenacity with which [the martial arts fighters] pursue their training bespeaks an appeal more profound than that of combat utility' (Donohue 1993:108); hence Donohue concludes that it is the ritual dimension that is the most

¹¹The ceremony began with five monks chanting Pali verses and respect was paid to the Triple Gems - the Buddha, the *dhamma*, and the *sangha*. 'Not far from the Buddha statue, *bai si* ('auspicious trays') had been set on tables in front of the students. [The chanting was followed by a traditional dance, performed by a group of girls belonging to the community of a nearby monastery. The dance was meant to propitiate the gods so that they would attend the ceremony and confer their blessings on the participants.] Then the rector of the university proceeded to tie both wrists of the freshmen standing next to him. In view of the large number of students, he was assisted by other faculty members and some senior students.

According to an undated publication of the Christian Student Association of Chiang Mai University, this tying of the *khwan* not only was supposed to remind the students of their promise to study but also symbolized the university's promise to provide this education' (Heinze 1982:9-11).

¹²This loyalty extends even—quite literally—beyond death: for in the case of a ring death it is the camp which takes care of the traditional ceremonies and cremation rites (Stockman 1979:18).

significant aspect (at least for non-Japanese) of participation in this art. This, however, does not apply to Thai boxing, which is a strictly professional affair, where 'no boxer would think of climbing through the ropes without a purse' (Stockman 1979:18). Nevertheless, to participate in the Thai boxing training is also to be part of a ritual process that assumes many of the dimensions of a rite of passage (Van Genep 1960).

Keyes (1986) has juxtaposed the monkly ideal with that of the *nakleng*, 'a person who is not afraid to take risks, a person who 'lives dangerously', kind to his friends but cruel to his enemies, a compassionate person, a gambler, a heavy drinker, and a lady-killer' (Thak Chaloehtiarana [1979:339] quoted in Kayes 1986:87) While I cannot pursue the point here, it seems nevertheless clear that a Thai boxer is a somewhat liminal figure between these two ideals—sacred and profane—a man who has tempered his desires through temporary submission to the discipline of the boxing camp (forbidding drinking and sexual relations), while playing a role in the society not altogether unlike that of the *nakleng* (taking risks, 'living dangerously' and being kind to his stablemates and friends but cruel to his enemies).

As if marking a final rite of passage, once ready for his first fight, the young boxer is given a ring name. The teacher will observe the novice and then choose a name in line with the boxer's characteristics or personal peculiarities. The surname, like that of his stablemates, is the name of the camp (Stockman 1979:23); some of the ring names are 'Singnum Pettanin, meaning Young Lion of the Pettanin camp or Khunsoek Kaisuadam, the Great Warrior of the Black Panther camp', as in the examples given by Stockman (1979:24). (Should a fighter lose too often, or be otherwise unlucky, his name is considered ill-chosen or bewitched. His teacher will then meditate on this and, sometimes with the aid of an astrologer, choose a more auspicious appellation for him.)

Before the fight,

The two of us who are being prepared for the fight lie on wooden tables, while two masseurs apiece work on our bodies. Afterwards they bind our hands tight with bandages. We put [the statutory red or blue boxer] shorts on, preceded by a jockstrap and a guard.¹⁷ The assistants then secure the boxing gloves with tape. A rose-coloured towel is placed on my shoulders,¹⁸ followed by an armband around the biceps [there can be an armband worn around one or both biceps], with an amulet tied to it.

Also, during the pre-game ritual we wear a sacred headband [the *mongkhon*, which is a hallowed talisman bestowed upon them by their trainers].¹⁹ (Somsak [a Thai boxer] in conversation, Bangkok 1989)

The headband (*mongkhon*; see figure, 6 and 7) is worn exclusively during the pre-fight rituals, whereas the armbands (*kruang rang*) are worn during the whole thing; their function is to protect the fighter's body and enhance his physical power (Tsui 1988:39). There are, in fact, two versions of the *kruang rang*. The more easily identifiable as an armband is the string version. The other kind is a folded piece of white cloth tied around biceps and are adorned with occult designs (see figures 2 and 3),²⁰ while inside a string-

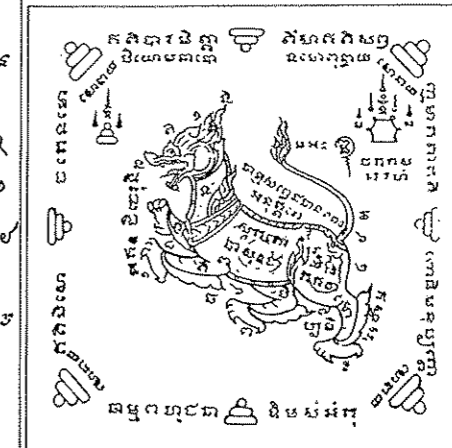
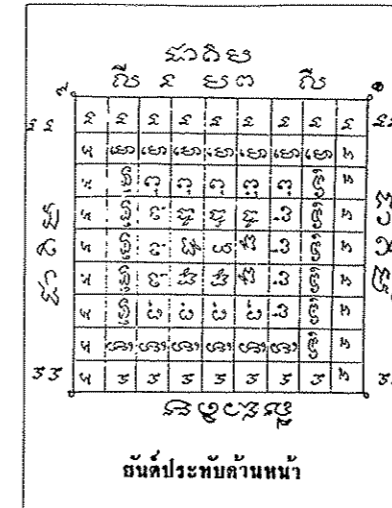
¹⁷ Until the 1930 the fighters wore groin guards of sea (conch) shell held in place with a piece of cloth tied between legs and around the waist (Stockman 1979:9).

¹⁸ But often flamboyantly attired in a lurid silk robe (Gray 1992:36 and Hoskin 1992:90; see also fig. 5).

¹⁹ This ritual dress code can also be seen as a symbolic reminder that the [Thai boxer] is a member of a community of students that stretches back through time and across space as wearing a special outfit in Thai boxing is only partially a practical response to the requirements of physical activity. In the Japanese context, as Donohue points out, this is also 'a statement of individual conformity and identification with the group' (Donohue 1993:113). In Thai boxing, I would argue, the characteristic apparel can be seen manifesting a strong historical dimension, emphasizing the martial art's links to the (Siamese) past (of the Thais); that is: an identification with a common (racial) past (cf. Khetr 1979:6).

²⁰ Tattoos are also used for similar purposes by Thai boxers; apart from being racial distinguishing and decorative markings, they also drive away the evil and signify power. When a boxer is being tattooed, a religious ceremony is concurrently performed, to endow the emblems with power. It should be noted, that although it is Buddhist monks who are invited to give blessing, the tattooing itself, however, is performed by a black magician. Tattoos are usually found on the chest or on the back, most popular designs being the figure of Hanuman (monkey) and those of strong animals like elephant, tiger, leopard, rhinoceros, water

armband, or tied to it, is often a small image of a Buddha or an amulet.²¹ These objects must, however, be activated. Usually this is accomplished by chanting by black magician, a warlock. There are some taboos concerning



Figures 2 and 3: Two examples of white cloth (*kruang rang*) with magic patterns.

the use and wear of such magical items which must be observed or else the objects' magic will weaken; if this happens, one must go to a magician to have them re-activated. Also, these objects must be personal, that is, belong to a particular person, either to the boxer or to his teacher (Tsui 1988:39); the sacred armband, the *mongkhon*, actually is the property of the teacher (Stockman 1979:26). Even the lurid robe the boxer wears when entering the stage is blessed by a magician and there may be esoteric images on it (Tsui 1988:39). All this points to the seldom mentioned fact that apart from Buddhist practices (which could be termed as white magic), Thai boxing is rife with black magic.²²

buffalo, snake (naga) or mythical animals or/and writings or occult diagrams (Tsui 1988:42).

²¹ The Buddha images are made of a peculiar dark metal, obtained 'from caves on a plateau.' As for personal amulets, they can be of the same dark metal - or else leaves, bark, or some herb - often embellished with magic signs (Tsui 1988:39).

²² The difference between Buddhist (white) and other (black) magic is, that whereas the Buddhist magic has only a limited scope within the confines of *dhamma* and monks cannot evoke spirits but use only blessings, black magic has broader boundaries to call and evoke spirits and in asking for supernatural powers. Black magic

Indeed, since the very beginning, the technique and the black magic have been inseparable from each other in Thai boxing. Most of the latter is said to have originated from India in ancient times,²³ but also

Burmese and Cambodian magic is practiced in Thailand. Regardless of the source, its function is to drive away evil spirits and invite blessing and evoke good spirits to protect the boxer. As the incantations, magic formulas and substances are highly guarded and well kept secrets, so often an accomplished black magician is invited to the boxing camp to perform a ritual for good luck and safety in combat (Tsui 1988:37).²⁴

was also used in the Burmese wars. One example is a spell called *Hanuman's Heart*, its magic formula for use in war being made up as follows: 'tactic/drive away the enemy/fight with hate/defeat the opponent/becomes victory' (Tsui 1988:39; translated by Nancy Yu).

²³ There seems to be a connection between Brahmanical (magic) rituals and the black magic as it is practised in Thailand. It may be mentioned here that the Thai boxers (at least) of old also believed in Hindu gods, such as Brahma, Hanuman, Rama, Indra, Garuda and Erawan (Indra's elephant-mount) (Tsui 1988:34).

²⁴ However, some of the boxers themselves are good at magic. For example, some use hallowed water (though not from a temple) for massage in the morning or chewing a particular plant in the evening, so that in a fight their skin would be as hard as metal and they would possess a never ending power physical power. And sometimes it is the boxing teacher who weaves an evil spell so that his student's opponent cannot sleep and consequently will perform badly in the fight (Tsui 1988:38).

On the way from the dressing rooms to the ring a boxer often makes a small detour to the shrine of the stadium's guardian spirit and, saying a short prayer, asks for protection (figure 4). Most orthodox teachers

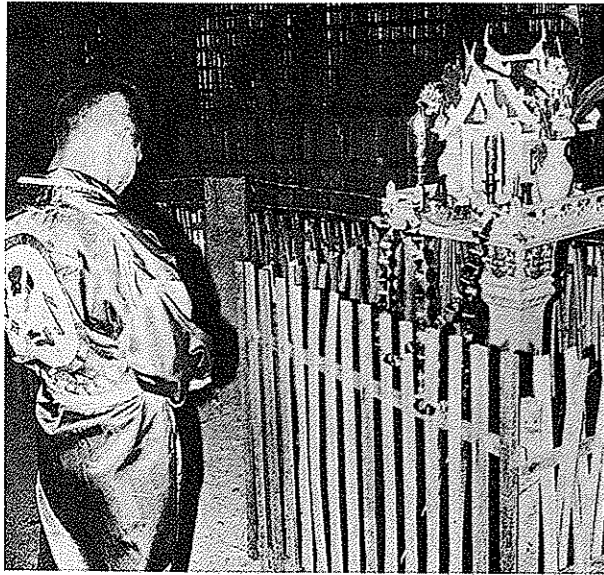


Figure 4: Before the bout, the boxer prays in front of a spirit shrine (spirit house) which found in every stadium. (From Stockman 1979, reproduced with permission of the author).

will not let their students mount the steps to the fight platform before taking them aside and murmuring some incantations in their ear, followed by a short prayer. Many boxers also stick a flower, given by well-wishers, to the post in their corner for good luck.²⁵

In Thai boxing strong emphasis is put on respect and veneration of the teachers; an observable cultural characteristic of the Thais is the desire to show respect and gratitude especially to those who impart knowledge, like parents and teachers. Before each fight, each fighter performs two separate rituals: the *wai khroo* (obeisance to

²⁵ 'Also, Thais are very superstitious people and would probably perform innumerable, inexplicable, personally [meaningful] selected acts for luck, bravery, strength, endurance, favourable judges' attitudes, placation of animistic spirits, etc. This could include everything from getting a lucky number in order of the fight card for the evening, lucky date or time for the fight, lucky colour corner (although his is usually determined by the relative skills of the pair that is fighting - red for the expected winner), paying respect to Buddha [or to other divinities] at a particular shrine before the fight, and on and on' (Janet Earle, in personal communication, 19 December, 1996).

the teacher), followed by what is called the boxing dance (*ram muay*).

The pre-fight ritual starts with a show of respect to the teacher (*wai khroo*).²⁶ First the boxer performs a *wai* while standing in the ring, and then kneels facing the direction of his camp, home or birthplace. He then moves his body forward and raises his hand up to cover his eyes with his gloves and says a short prayer²⁷ while three times bowing low until his gloves touch the canvas (Stockman 1979:24-25; Hoskin 1992:90). At this point, two particular rituals may be performed: one, called "Greeting to the Mother of the Land", is virtually identical with the *wai khroo* (Tsui 1988:60); while the other, "Greeting the King", is characteristically different. Afterwards, the boxer moves into a position similar to that of a medieval knight kneeling his left hand is placed on the left knee (touching) while the right hand is held parallel to it (where the right knee would be if reversed), before standing up (Tsui 1988).

The actual dance that now follows is a special ritualistic boxing dance (the *ram muay*), which claims the audience's attention and demonstrates the boxer's prowess as a performer (Gray 1992:36). It is a combination of religious ritual (driving away evil spirits) and intimidation (Hoskin 1992); but according to some sources (Khetr 1979:6; Van Beek 1992:134-135), the boxer while performing the *ram muay*, is also paying homage to his teachers; although it seems,

²⁶ That there is a considerable amount of confusion about all this becomes evident as Grey says that 'the fighter then bows, first in the direction of his birthplace and then to the north, south, east and west, honouring both his teachers and the spirit of the ring' (Gray 1992:36). while Kamnueng (1959) adds that boxers had to pay homage to the king before the boxing could begin, and this custom became a tradition; even in these days [1950s] both boxers turn their faces in the direction of the Grand Palace and give a royal salute before the first round starts.

²⁷ One such prayer is given by Alex Tsui in his book: 'Now I am going to fight. I sincerely thank my ancestors [i.e. only persons who are deceased] and my teacher. As I step into the ring I already prepared to die [literally: the heart of must die], I will do my best to fight in this fight. I hope I can have the blessing from you to protect me; if the predicament becomes difficult, I hope you can guide me. I hope all my brothers shall pray for me that I will be lucky' (Tsui 1988:58; translated by Nancy Yu).

again, that no distinction is made between the *wai khroo* and the *ram muay* and in his book *Bangkok*: 'Each bout is preceded by an elaborate stylized dance which both boxers perform to honour their teachers and to invoke magic to intimidate their opponent' (Van Beek 1994:175)

A boxer might slowly walk around the ring, his hands sliding along the top rope, while looking viciously at the crowds—yet his act has nothing to do with the spectators; his furious expression is meant to keep evil spirits away. At each corner he stops, lowers his head onto the rope and stamps his foot several times: 'now his aura fills the ring, and no corner will provide refuge for his opponent' (Stockman 1979:25) Another fighter may kneel on his right knee, right foot raised high, keeping balance with his toes of his extended left foot. He then starts a swimming or flying motion with his arms while rocking forwards and back. He jumps up and fights an imaginary opponent, slow-motion-style, into each of the four corners (Stockman 1979:25).²⁸ One of the loveliest and certainly most balletic movements in *ram muay* is the Peacock in which the boxer first spreads his hands down backwards, resembling a peacock's tail, and then brings them up—behind his back—into a *wai* above his head (Tsui 1988:60).

Not only is the *ram muay* performed in many different ways, each teacher having his own variety which he gives to a boxer according to his proficiency and experience,²⁹ but this ritual also differs from camp to camp and should two fighters be seen rendering a

²⁸ This would confirm the notion that 'the ritual dance is actually a series of stylized fighting movements' (Buckley 1992:156) and thus corroborate the emergence of Thai boxing as a martial art tuned to producing warriors honed for combat as much as sports performers (Kamnueng 1959; Anderson 1989; Van Beek 1994).

²⁹ What could perhaps be termed as the three paradigm boxing dances are the *Classical Steps*, *Combined Steps* and the *Steps of the Four-faced God*. The *Combined Steps* were created by combining the original steps of a famous university boxing teacher sometime in the 1920s into a single, codified pattern. As for the *Steps of the Four-faced God* (i.e. Brahma), in it an identical series of movements is performed facing the four cardinal directions (Tsui 1988:60) and possibly hence the name.

similar performance, they are almost certainly students of the same teacher, or else their instructors have come from the same camp. (To an outsider, the dances look very much alike, but in fact each boxing camp has its own distinctive version and connoisseurs can tell immediately from which camp a fighter originates.) If an inquiry reveals this to be true, the two boxers will on no account fight each other. This tradition is based on the strict disciplinary training and the pledge given during the *khuen khroo* ceremony. It ensures 'a feeling of close unity in the camps and villages and is meant to foster a sense of belonging to the race as a whole' (Khetr 1979:6). Besides, it is believed that such dances are a worthy and beautiful way for a boxer to pay homage to his teacher, and also—through such virtuous acts—the boxer receives strength and a blessing for a positive outcome (Anderson 1989: 132-133); in almost all cases, these ritualistic performances, which are accompanied by magic incantations, are deemed to have strong protective qualities against harm and injury.

The series of photographs gives an idea what the *ram muay* looks like. Its performance is accompanied by silent prayers and the recitation of magic formulae. Some of the higher forms of these dances are very difficult to perform and may earn a boxer extended applause if well executed. However, without initiation and the knowledge of the secret words, jealously guarded by each boxer, its performance is both meaningless and quite useless (Stockman 1979:25).

Last, it should be emphasized the *ram muay* is very difficult to master and a boxer's proficiency in the dance will earn a fighter 'not only murmurs of admiration from connoisseurs in the audience, but respect for his fighting skills from his opponent as well', as Hoskin

(1992:90) has also commented. Thus I would contend, that the boxing dance is viewed not only as a visually beautiful performance (ritualistic ballet) but more specifically as a symbol of maleness, strength, bravery, maturity. Here we have, then, the spirituality³⁰ and aesthetics of the pre-fight rituals in particular as well as Thai boxing on the whole.

After completion of the *ram muay* and before the first round commences, the boxer goes back to his corner, where the teacher bows with folded hands (*wai*), says a short prayer and lifts the *mongkhon* off the boxer's head and blows on his hair for good luck (Stockman 1979:26).³¹ The referee then calls

³⁰ In Thai boxing the devotional and spiritual training, without which the concentration and discipline necessary to master the pain and fear could not be attained, are represented by the *wai khroo* and the *ram muay*.

³¹ 'A person's head, especially a man's head and his hair, is considered a holy or at least a restricted part of the body. The origin of this, I understand, is that the head is the highest part of the body and should be most special (sacred), as the feet are the lowest part and a part therefore the least special, or dirty (profane). Women especially should not touch men on the head or hair [and] foreigners are given the cultural warning to avoid touching Thais on the head or hair [however] these taboos are rapidly dying out with the young, educated Western-influenced Thais. I mention all this to reinforce the symbolic meaning of the trainer blowing into the hair of the fighter' (Janet Earle, in personal communication, 11 December, 1996).

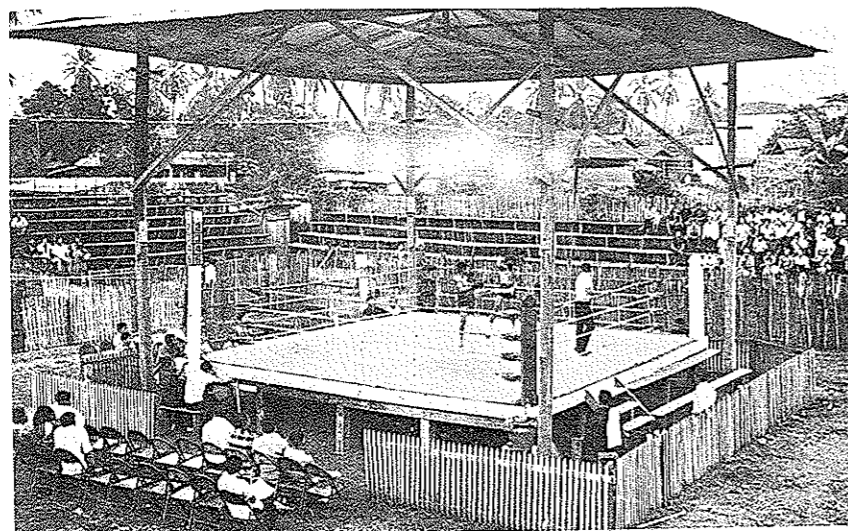


Figure 5: A provincial stadium (*sanam muay*) Muay-Thai ring (*wehtee*). In a typical Muay-Thai arena one of the two diagonally opposite ring posts is painted red and the other blue. They mark the contestants and corners are matched by the colour of a boxer's trunks; red is usually given to the favourite. Here, the near corner post is painted blue (*fainamnerng*), the far one, red (*faidaeng*); neutral corners are white. Just beyond the red post is the spirit shrine. (From Stockmann 1979, reproduced with permission of the author.)

both fighters to the centre of the ring and repeats a few rules, after which the gong strikes to announce the start of the first round (Stockman 1979:67).

In addition, an integral part of Thai boxing is the music which not only accompanies the fight itself but also the pre-fight ceremonies (Hoskin 1992:90).

The orchestra (*wong muay*) is seated on one side of the ring, similar to Chinese opera, and is composed of traditional instruments: a reedy sounding Java flute (*pi'chava*, which originates from India and is also used in army marches; as it plays throughout the match, the flute player must be a good one), a pair of small brass cymbals (known as *ching*; they give the rhythm and also serve to mark the passing of time), and the *glonk kaek*—two drums—one high pitched (and male), the other a low (and female).

The musicians watch the fighters constantly, varying the tempo and volume from slow and soothing to fast and loud, so that the intensity of the music rises and falls with the level of intensity in the ring (Hoskin 1992:90). (However, if the action in the ring slacks down, the music will rise to encourage

the boxers.) It also helps the audience to visualize how the fight between the boxers is 'one of life and death' (Tsui 1988). This would seem to indicate that Annette Hamilton's analysis of Thai films is valid in the context of Thai boxing as well. Hamilton (1992) writes:

While these stories are set in modern times, elements of them can be interpreted through much older narrative forms: Thai classical literature, traditional tales based on the *Ramayana*, tales of lives of the Buddha, and *likay*³² popular folk drama, provide echoes in the modern drama, and the intertextual framework of audience interpretation. (Hamilton 1992:264)

With the help of the music, the audience can transform the actual fight that is taking place into a heroic and grand combat, and in doing so, to reduplicate the Thai past for *the real legends of their imagination*, as it were. And so, when the orchestra begins to play at a slow, steady cadence as the boxers begin their boxing dance (*ram muay*), 'a link to the spiritual and martial traditions of ancient Siam' (Hoskin 1992:90) is (re)created by way of evocation (of another age) and reduplication (of its deeds).

The Deep Play³³

When the boxers come out of their corners and the fight begins, the ringside musicians build up to fever pitch, rising and falling along with the events in the ring (Buckley 1992:156). As interesting as the ring action is, the exuberance displayed by the audience—where gambling takes place—expends as much energy and emotion as the boxers themselves (Hoskin 1992; Van Beek 1994).

Gambling, in a bewildering variety of forms, both legal and illegal, is very much a part of the daily life of all levels of Thai

³² A popular theatrical performance in Thailand, which tells 'a familiar dramatic narrative largely through song and music' (Hamilton 1992:260).

³³ To use the clever title of Clifford Geertz's notes on the Balinese cockfight.

society (Klausner 1993:351). Boxing matches—like cockfights—certainly inspire wagers just like the Thai kite fights and combat between pairs of gorgeously-hued male Siamese fighting fish (Lloyd 1986:132; Klausner 1993:351). And although like on Bali, gambling is officially frowned upon, so high does it rank on the *sanuk* scale that all efforts to stamp it out are probably doomed.³⁴

Though there are even similarities in the actual gambling as it is carried out in Balinese cockfight and in a Thai boxing match—and these could make a fascinating comparative study—that is not what I am going to do here. Partly because the gambling, after all, as Clifford Geertz has noted himself, is 'not the reason, or at least not the main reason, why the matches are interesting [deep], the source of their fascination, the substance of their depth' (Geertz 1973:432). Nonetheless, what I will argue about the Thai 'deep play', is something slightly different from where Geertz's points converge.

My starting point will be the notion, that the fight is 'really real' only to the boxers (Geertz 1973:443) and, perhaps, to their teachers. For the audience it is 'real' only, as Geertz has suggested with reference to the Balinese cockfight, in 'an ideational sense' (Geertz 1979:444). Geertz's thesis is, that as

an image, fiction, a model, a metaphor, the cockfight is a means of expression; its function is neither to assuage social passions nor to heighten them (though, in its playing-with-fire way it does a bit of both),³⁵ but, in a

³⁴ 'Sanuk is a very old part of Thai life that 'makes life enjoyable' [and] having fun and deriving pleasure from carefree amusement with congenial friends or companions has a positive value in the code of behaviour: no one indulging in *sanuk* would expect to be blamed or criticized' (Kulick 1992:69).

³⁵ I agree here with Geertz—and also as he writes: 'Every people, the proverb has it, loves its own form of violence. The cockfight is the Balinese reflection on theirs [like I would contend that Thai boxing is on the Thais]: on its looks, its uses, its force, its fascination.' Drawing on many levels of Siamese (that is, historical Thai) experience, Thai boxing can be seen to bring together themes - animal savagery, male narcissism, status rivalry, mass excitement as on Bali, and more: violence, cruelty, death, masculinity, pride, loss, victory, chance, demonic powers (black magic), even blood sacrifice (as in very old *phi muang* cult; see Gosling 1991:25ff.) - whose main connection, as Geertz notes, is

medium of feathers, blood, crowds, and money, to display them. (Geertz 1979:443; my emphases)

Saying this, I am also drawing on Annette Hamilton's analysis of Thai dramas, as she writes:

While these stories are set in modern times, elements of them can be interpreted through much older narrative forms: Thai classical literature, traditional tales based on the *Ramayana*, tales of lives of the Buddha, and *likay* popular folk drama, provide echoes in the modern drama, and the intertextual framework of audience interpretation. What differentiates the modern drama, however, is the complexity of the plot. In traditional narratives, the conflicting elements are well known and their outcomes are entirely predictable: in the modern drama, the circumstances of modernity themselves impose unexpected and unlikely possibilities, and different possible outcomes. (Hamilton 1992:164)

Geertz writes: 'Like any art form—for that, finally, is what we are dealing with—the cockfight renders ordinary, everyday experience comprehensible by presenting it in terms of acts and objects which have their practical consequences removed and been reduced (or raised) to the level of sheer appearances, where their meaning can be more powerfully articulated and more exactly perceived' (Geertz 1973:443).

Again, this can be supported in the Thai context by what Hamilton has written about the Thai dramas:

Another aspect of *nang chiwir*³⁶ is the extraordinary verbal expressions of emotion which occur within them. Scenes show characters in great passion, barely under control, using wild metaphorical language,

'their involvement with rage and fear of rage, and, binding them into a set of rules which at once contains them and allows them to play, builds a symbolic structure which, over and over again, the reality of their inner affiliation can be intelligibly felt.' Finally: 'Balinese go to cockfights to find out what a man, usually composed, aloof, almost obsessively self-absorbed . . . feels like when attacked, tormented, challenged, insulted and driven in result to the extremes of fury, he has totally triumphed or been brought totally low' (Geertz quoted in Blanchard 1995:242) and so perhaps do the Thais, too. In any case, sports violence and the violence associated with war grows out of cultural context of society. So seen like this—Thai boxing is simply one way of expressing aggression; its function is not to defuse or engender violence, but simply to express it.

³⁶ Translates as 'film of life', and which Annette Hamilton calls simply 'dramas'; see Hamilton (1992:259ff).

insults, and elaborate constructions to express their rage, disdain, hostility and fear. This is particularly striking where such language is used between women, particularly older and younger women linked by kinship; normally younger women should show polite and modest speech and demeanour to all older people, most particularly relatives. These violent verbal quarrels seldom result in serious physical struggle, however, perhaps substituting them. They are both deeply shocking and profoundly amusing to the Thai audience. (Hamilton 1992:268)

The same is true, I would argue, of a Thai boxing match. It puts a construction on and 'makes them, to those historically positioned to appreciate the construction, meaningful—'real' in an ideational sense.' (Geertz 1973:444)

To conclude, if one dimension of the Thai boxing, its balletic grace and ritual dimension makes it seem a typically ritualistic practice, its 'flat-out aggressiveness [however] makes it seem a contradiction, a reversal, even a subversion' (Geertz 1973:446) of its spirituality and rituals.³⁷

In the normal course of life, the Thais—just like the Balinese—are, as Geertz has described the latter, 'oblique, cautious, subdued, controlled, masters of indirection and dissimulation—[that] they rarely face what they can turn away from, rarely resist what they can evade' (Geertz 1973:446).³⁸ Yet, in Thai boxing they disclose themselves as savage and ferocious, giving, as Geertz has astutely phrased it, 'A powerful rendering of life as the [Thais] most deeply do not want it' (Geertz 1973:446) And it is in this sense of the 'deep play', rather than referring to gambling³⁹ or 'the migration of the Balinese status hierarchy' (Geertz 1973:436), that I use the term in this paper.

Thus, as Iyer has remarked about Thailand, and Geertz said of Bali, I would

³⁷ For Thai boxing, see Hoskin (1992:90).

³⁸ See Kulick (1992:65ff.) and Klausner (1993:192, 253, 390).

³⁹ See Geertz (1973:431ff., 435).

argue that brutality is as much a part of Thailand as charm, as are violence and smiles or sanguinariness and devotion. Without Thai boxing—where these different aspects are juxtaposed and fused in a fascinating, beautiful but bloody drama of rituals, balletic grace, cruelty, violence and occasionally death, the Thais might have a much less certain understanding of their sinister side. This is, presumably, as Geertz concluded about the Balinese cockfight, 'why they value it so highly' (Geertz 1973:447).

But any expressive form—like ritualistic—lives only in its own present *and presence*—in, as Geertz says, 'the one it itself creates' (Geertz 1973:445).

And then, 'suddenly, it is all over', as Somsak said (in conversation, Bangkok 1989) about his Thai boxing fight. Like on Bali,

a shadow of the experience no doubt remains with the principals, perhaps even with some of the witnesses of a deep fight, as it remains with us when we leave the theater after seeing a powerful play well-performed; but it quite soon fades to become at most a schematic memory - a diffuse glow or an abstract shudder - and usually not even that. (Geertz 1973:445)

But unlike Geertz, I would say that extremes of emotion make any experience memorable, and that the process of participation in Thai boxing will have in some ways effected a transformation that leaves the audience both satisfied and eager to repeat the experience. While it would be absurd to ignore the part that gambling must play in it, it can nevertheless be argued that the feeling is also generated for the boxers through the ritual process and the combat itself (amounting together into "a 'hyperreal' space in which a purified and magnified masculine self may be achieved" [Wacquant 1995:154]); and for the audience through its participation in witnessing the drama acted on the stage, a broad and varied panorama of affect, pleasure, and dramatic release.

Against such background, then, what the participants in a Thai boxing match are beholding is no longer the actual reality but an imaginary one. It is not blood, it is red.

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Constructing Love Relationship with Idols:

Wan Man Po

It is very common in Hong Kong for young people to have idols--most often movie stars, media figures and sports figures--who they like or love. Media figures are known through the consumption of the various media such as television, movies, radio, books, magazines and newspapers. The worship of these media figures is highly interesting in that the ordinary people who worship media figures have never met them and yet as John L. Caughey (1984:33) writes in his book *Imaginary Social World*, "Despite the complete lack of real face to face contact, they also feel strongly about them." Ordinary people may greatly love or admire these mass media figures.

In this research, I investigate how female Hong Kong college students construct their love relationship with their idols. To investigate this question, I have interviewed five people for an hour each to see what young people think of media figures. I asked them to describe their love relationships with their idols and how the relationships changed in their imagination before and after the existence of a real boyfriend.

What is a constructed love relationship?

Love relationships are difficult to describe. They are a matter of a feeling between two people. In most ordinary love relationships, it is reciprocal. In other words, you feel affection and desire towards your boyfriend or girlfriend and he or she feels the same for you. However, a constructed love relationship is not reciprocal. It is one-way. One person feels admiration, affection and desire for another, but the desired person does not know who that desirer is. Sometimes this constructed one-way love relationship may be with real people in your

actual social world who simply do not know your feeling about them or who reject you in your feelings. Often, though, these constructed boyfriends/girlfriends are figures from mass media. In that case, the loved figure may have no knowledge at all of the idolizer. It is not surprisingly that an idol can become a constructed boyfriend or girlfriend. As John L. Caughey has written, "People characterize unmet media figures as if they were intimately involved with them" (1984:33). They can do that because the mass media tell us lots of information about media stars. We can learn a great deal about Jacky Cheung, much more than we know about our own friends. This enables us to have enough information to construct relationship with these people. Furthermore, the mass media show people who are very attractive, most girls are not as charming as a top media star like Anita Mui. Most men are not as attractive as a top media star like Jacky Cheung. In this paper, I will discuss how this constructed love relationship with idols operates. So the term "constructed boyfriend" in this paper means the idol or media figure whom one constructs an imaginary love relationship.

Who will easily fall into this constructed love relationship?

All my informants are girls. It can be said that girls can construct love relationship with male idols more easily. They may imagine love with their male idols, even imagining sexual relations. This may be due to girls are usually socialized to be emotional whereas boys are expected to be more rational. This process can certainly be related to the fact that many girls construct love relationship with idols while boys do not. However, it may also be that the boys are

lying because they are too shy and embarrassed to talk to a female researcher about their constructed love relationship.

All of my informants have a common characteristic. All of them studied in girls' secondary schools. They have a very limited number of male friends. Their main channel to know about the opposite sex was only the mass media and media figures for they are very visible. Girls may feel embarrassed when they directly interact with boys since they have only few such opportunities. So, interacting with male media figures in their imagination without any real contact can solve this problem.

For the psychoanalytic interpreters, imagination is "an imagined sequence of events or mental images that serves to express unconscious conflicts, to gratify the unconscious wishes, or to prepare for anticipated future events. If the gratifications of reality are insufficient, thinking may not be controlled by the demands of reality but serves as a regressive or substitute satisfaction" (Caughey 1984:157). It may be that constructing love relationship with idols in the imagination can to some extent solve unfulfilled wishes in reality. One of my informants said that she had never really had a male friend. She even said, "Friendship can be more long lasting than love between man and woman. I have no confidence in the love between man and woman, which is a less stable relationship as compared with friendship". In fact, this informant can know more boys in the University and the church, but she does not do that since she has not got any confidence in interacting with them. However, she can feel safe when interacting with the man, who is her idol, in her imagination.

How do they construct love relationship with media figures?

The only way to engage in a constructed love relationship is by imagination. A person imagines the love affair with her constructed boyfriend. All the imagination segments are

the common events that usually occur between real boyfriends and girlfriends. It involves quarrel between boyfriends and girlfriends, working together and other daily living processes. One of my informants even imagines sexual intercourse with her idol.

Imagination can be analyzed in terms of three areas: setting, fantasy being, and self (Caughey 1984:159). Setting refers to the physical environment in the imagination; fantasy being refers to the person one imagines about; while the self is one's own image during the imaginary encounter.

There are no specific settings in the imaginary encounters of my informants. The setting can be any place. However, some of the most common settings are at home and in the work place. It is obvious why the home and the work place are the most common settings for imaging boyfriends. Simply, these may be the centre of our daily lives. However, some other settings may include the countryside or simply the streets.

The fantasy being that my informants imagined are, as I have discussed, their constructed boyfriends. However, the job as well as the character of the constructed boyfriends will be modified often within my informants' imagination. Sometimes, the constructed boyfriends will retain their original jobs such as singers, tennis players or whatever. But sometimes these imagined idols will be modified into ordinary office workers, in which, they happen to work in the same office as my real informants. Moreover, the character and personality of the constructed boyfriends will be modified in the imagination. One informant said that Michael Chang is more innocent in her imagination than he is in reality.

My informants' imaginary selves are also transformed. There are two main differences between the real selves and the imagined selves. First, my informants' selves are more mature than their real selves. My informants had their idols when they were in secondary schools but my informants dreamed of themselves as adults. Even

though they are still students now, they imagine that they are working women. In addition, the character and personality of my informants is modified. They will become stronger, more capable and independent. They can perform well in every aspect. My informants would even become prettier when they met the constructed boyfriends in the imagination.

Three of my informants were satisfied with simply imagining their constructed relationship from a distance. The other two informants try desperately to make this love relationship more real. They try to do things both physically and psychologically to get closer to their constructed boyfriends. For example, one of my informants idols comes from Taiwan. My informant went to Taiwan several times within two years. She can speak fluent Mandarin and has tried to learn the local Taiwanese language, Minnan. Through these acts, she is trying to lessen the distance between her idol and herself. My informant emphasized that she may have tried to be like her idol at first, but now she really enjoys the place. Her idol just served as an introductory spark.

How can imagination be reinforced?

One of my informants said that the feeling was real even if the relationship was imaginary. She emphasized that she would feel happy and sad just like the real love relationship when she imagined a relationship with the idols. Sometimes she even cries when she imagines sad aspects of her relationship with her constructed boyfriend such as the constructed boyfriend

gives her up. This kind of sensation can strengthen the imaginary relationship. One of my informants said, "I would laugh happily when I thought of Michael Chang." "As Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann observe, the theatre illustrates our participation in 'multiple realities' outside ordinary social life. In attending the theater, a person is psychologically drawn out of his objective social world into the realm of the play" (Caughey 1984:33). As described here, a transporting experience exists in media consumption. Obviously, this kind of transportation to another world can be used to explain the sensation of my informants.



Girls like to read magazines to gain more information about their idols in order to better construct a love relationship with their "constructed boyfriend."

They and their constructed boyfriends have entered into their world of imagination.

One of my informants said, "I will continue to love him until I can come to know him." Another informant said, "I told myself that imagination is better than really knowing him since, in reality, he may not be as good as the person I imagine." The image and the personality of the idol can be constructed according to what an informant would like. This cannot exist in a real love relationship. Thus, the constructed love relationship can be formed to fit the emotion and thought of a person. This explains why such love can last for a very long time. One

of my informants had an opportunity to meet her constructed boyfriend but the experience was not good. She thought her idol was sincere because his image was good in the radio. However, she was disappointed that her idol was very pretentious in real life. She said that she would prefer not having seen him. Thus, the constructed boyfriend is under the control of the imagination so the bad part of his personality can be completely ignored. It is the main key reinforcing the constructed love relationship.

How does a constructed love relationship fade away?

Imaginary love relationships can last for quite some time, often for many years. Some informants said that they gradually stopped imagining idols as they become older. One informant said, "I think that a girl of my age should not have an idol like Leon. That should be the privilege of secondary school girls and young teenagers." Some informants who still imagine the relationship with the constructed boyfriend feel embarrassed to tell others. Another informant said she was too old to apply for membership in a fan club. As the above comments show, people view constructed love relationship with media figures as irrational.

Most of the time, a constructed love relationship stops when another constructed love relationship or a real boyfriend emerges.

Constructed love relationship can break up for different reasons, such as the constructed boyfriend loses popularity. One informant said, "It is influenced by the mass media. If he is not popular, I will soon forget him. Sometimes, when an idol such as Alan Tam becomes older, you will like him less. When someone is popular, it will lead me to notice him and put him into my imagination."

Because there is no sense of responsibility in a constructed love relationship, falling in love with a new idol on the basis of imagination is not difficult. One informant said, "I had the right to love

two persons whom I did not really know. There was no responsibility involved in the imagination."

"An individual would be most likely to engage in a media love relationship when he or she is without a real or satisfying actual lover" (Caughey 1984:49). Therefore, when a person really finds a real boyfriend, they will reduce or even give up their imagination with idols because their attention will have shifted to the real boyfriend. In the real love relationship, affection and desire are shared by two. A real love relationship involves a sense of responsibility. One informant said, "My boyfriend is jealous about my idols. I will feel unloyal to my boyfriend when I think of them."

The relationship between the real boyfriend and the constructed boyfriend

There is a tension between the real boyfriend and the constructed boyfriend. Most of the time, informants will continue to like their idols after they have a real boyfriend. They said that they like the idols because the idols have something worth appreciating. The feeling, therefore, cannot be cut at once even after they have new boyfriends. The real boyfriend may consider the idol as an enemy or a rival even though he realizes the idol will not gain victory in this battle. However, he is still jealous about the idol when his girlfriend thinks of the idols.

One of my informants said, "He (the idol) will be the example and model for me to choose a boyfriend." Another one told me, "If I choose a boyfriend, I will compare the boy with Jeffrey Chang. The boy has an advantage if he shares some Jeffrey's good sides; he will have a better chance to become my boyfriend." It can be seen that most girls wish their future boyfriends can look like the constructed boyfriend in terms of personality and appearance. However, these two informants do not have any actual dating experience. Their thoughts are only of their ideal.

My other informants have real boyfriends now. All of them agree that the constructed boyfriend they loved before would not influence them in choosing the real boyfriend. Their real boyfriends are not similar to their constructed boyfriends. One informant said, "I am just looking for a boyfriend who is understanding, who really cares about me and loves me." We can see that the only trait shared between the real boyfriend and constructed boyfriend is giving care. The informant continued, "I don't know if my boyfriend is really that kind of person, though I believe he is. But if I ever discover that he is not that kind of person, I will not want to stay with him any more."

The social significance of the 'constructed boyfriend'

Different idols can reflect different needs of the worshipers (Shi 1993:118). "The God of Money" in the Chinese society is very popular among families since many Chinese people think that "the God of Money" can help them in gaining more money. Idols, as constructed boyfriends, can only give affection through imagination. Why don't people find a real boyfriend to replace that constructed boyfriend.

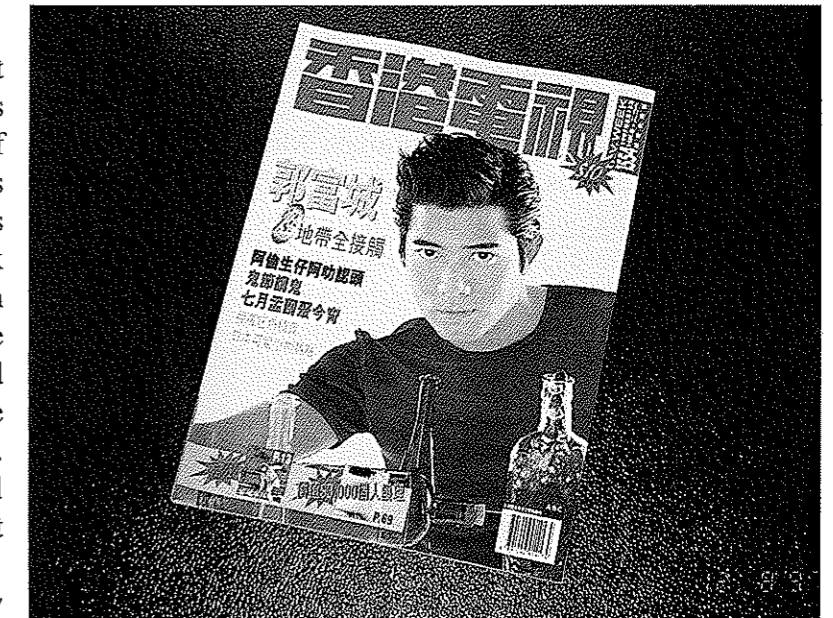
In reality, building intimacy with another person is very difficult. This is emotionally a very dangerous thing especially in a society like Hong Kong where people are so busy. Hong Kong is an extremely crowded society and this leads to a great deal of stress. A constructed boyfriend, however, does not exist in real space. A person can be under great stress in his physical life, and yet still have an imagined boyfriend.

Therefore, the easier alternative is to form a constructed boyfriend. You can just buy constructed boyfriends' magazines and CDs and watch their films; all of these

activities only cost some money. But you can understand your constructed boyfriend more without any risk of being cheated and hurt. One informant said, "I know that he (the idol) will not leave me. I know that the relationship between us is stable and under my control."

It is obvious that the constructed boyfriend is a by-product of the mass media. All of my informants would not know their constructed boyfriends if mass media did not exist.

What is the function of the mass media here? It serves as a direct substitute for social activity through the "transporting experience," as discussed earlier. Such transporting experience is provided by the mass media which facilitates and activates



An example of a popular magazine, with the famous idol, Aaron Kwok, one of the "Four Big Kings" on the cover. Aaron is a popular "constructed boyfriend" of many girls.

the imagination. "Especially through the vehicle of the electronic media, the individual is regularly transported into the midst of dramatic social situations involving intimate face-to-face contact with the most glamorous people of his time. The seeming reality of this experience naturally engenders emotional reactions--especially since these figures are deliberately and manipulatively presented in the roles of sexual objects and lovers" (Caughey 1984:48).

The most effective electronic medium to evoke imaginary idols is TV. "TV stimulates imagination through its content (i.e., by providing a source of ideas from which the individual can draw when engaged in creative tasks). TV characters and events are picked up, transformed, and incorporated into the products of imagination (Gardner, 1982)" (Valkenburg and van der Voort 1994:324). Most of my informants emphasized that their imaginary stories were derived from TV. TV provides both visual image and the voice, which are the key elements you need to imagine a person, to know his appearance and voice.

The cultural construction of imaginary love relationships with idols

Imagination is culturally constructed. "It reflects individual desires, but only as these have been shaped, twisted, and structured by social and cultural forces. More narrowly, it seems to connect to the individual's social situation and social roles" (Caughey 1984:163). "It is also highly cultural: the structure of fantasy relationships is directly or indirectly affected by systems of cultural categories, rules and plans" (Caughey 1984:185).

Firstly, there are certainly differences between the culture in Hong Kong and other cultures. Therefore certain aspects of the constructed love relationship of my informants are culturally unique to Hong Kong. For example, all my informants imagined these love relationship, not with white people or black people, but with Chinese idols. It may be easier to form a constructed love relationship if two persons come from the same ethnic group. Chinese, be they in Hong Kong or overseas, are preferred as idols.

In addition, overseas Chinese idols are preferred because of the contemporary global mass media. As Hong Kong is an international commercial city, information technology connecting Hong Kong and other countries is very advanced. This is why my

informants can receive the information about their overseas constructed boyfriends very easily (for example, Jeffrey Chang from Taiwan). Thus the constructed love relationship can be updated with news and the imagined story can be complemented and enriched.

All of my informants choose their own idols for their constructed love relationships. However, in their imaginations, my informants who are female show that they are passive and take up a rather recessive role in the constructed love relationship. One of my informants always imagined what they could talk about when they first met. She said, "we would talk a lot about his interests." Another informant talked about the imagined character of her constructed boyfriend, Danny Chan, a famous Chinese singer who had died a few years ago. She said, "He always had a bad temper, he gave me up and found another girl. It was always he who left me first, never the opposite. Later he could come back. However, I was always the victim." This probably reflects the fact that in an imaginary love relationship the female takes up a less active but more committed role when compared with her counterpart. As the informant said, it was she who was given up. This may also suggest that the male takes up a more dominant role not only in family or company but also in an imagined love relationship.

Conclusion

Although the mass media, especially TV, does not aim to develop idol worship, it does enhance the creation of idols. This is because if the mass media can successfully develop a person into a popular figure, its programmes can then be very popular when the idol is on air. This certainly has an economic significance. The figure of the idol can be used as a "product" which can be sold in various goods. The selling of these idols' products affects the subculture of the youngsters. Therefore, it can be seen that the constructed love relationship in idol worship

has deep roots in the culture and society of Hong Kong.

From this discussion, it can be seen that constructed love affairs are very romantic, emotional and real to the person who creates the imaginary relationship. Such an imaginary relationship may be a kind of fantasy which takes place before the real romance. It is not certain whether this kind of relationship is a norm among adolescents, but it is definitely significant in my informants before they have real dating experience. In adolescence, real dating is forbidden in many schools and families, thus this hidden kind of love relationship provides a fantasy experience at their age. In this sense, the constructed love relationship can be seen as a base of idol worship. Moreover, this constructed love relationship also plays a significant role in the behaviour of my informants. This is why in modern society, many activities make use of the popularity of idols. An example is the "Famine 30", in

which singers, actors, and actresses participate and perform. Therefore, "idol worship" is certainly a topic that requires further investigation because it certainly plays an important role in the subculture of the youngsters.

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與偶像「談戀愛」：以香港的大學女生為例

溫敏寶

文章摘要

在香港，年輕人崇拜偶像是非常普遍的，他們甚至「愛」上自己的偶像，但是他們並沒有與偶像建立一個真正的面對面關係，只是從思想上與偶像有密切的接觸，這亦即是所謂的幻想 (imagination)。在這一個研究中，我從五名女大學生的面談中，讓她們描述怎樣與男偶像建立一個有笑有淚，且浪漫的戀愛關係，而這個關係怎樣因男朋友的出現而轉變。其實這種「戀愛關係」的出現與維持，與電視台因經濟利益而不斷吹捧偶像的產生及支持其知名度有關。而這些偶像或「愛人」對年青人的行為及思想往往造成很大的影響。

FOREIGN EYES ON HONG KONG PEOPLE: THE VIEW FROM CHUNGKING MANSIONS

EVE F. Y. WONG, with Gordon Mathews

Chungking Mansions, a vast warren of shops and budget tourist hotels in the heart of Tsim Sha Tsui, is one of the most famous, or infamous, sites of Hong Kong. In this place, different ethnic groups, not only Europeans and Americans but also Nigerians, Indians, Nepalese, Filipinos, and Japanese mingle together, in a true ethnic mosaic. While Chungking Mansions has a popular reputation in Hong Kong of being a place of illegal immigrants and of crime, it is in fact one of the few places in Hong Kong that are truly international, and within which one can get a sense of how Hong Kong is seen by people from places throughout the world. This paper, based on extensive observations and interviews conducted in Chungking Mansions in fall 1996, examines how some of the foreign residents of Chungking Mansions—particularly those from poorer nations, who make up the majority of the foreigners living in Chungking Mansions—think about the local people in Hong Kong. It also examines how Hong Kong people working around Chungking Mansions view the foreigners there, and considers how global economic relations underlie the stereotypes held by Hong Kong people of foreigners. Finally it considers the “home away from home” that these foreigners try to create in Chungking Mansions, to protect against an indifferent, or even hostile Hong Kong.

I. CHUNGKING MANSIONS

Compared to the five star hotels nearby, like the Peninsula or the Sheraton, Chungking Mansions is not easily visible from the street. However, you can easily recognize it by the crowds of people at its entrance. Africans, Nepalese and Indians

all stand soliciting customers for Chungking Mansion's guesthouses and restaurants, or socializing; those hurrying through the crowd on their way to somewhere else are local Hong Kong people. Stepping inside the lobby, one immediately finds oneself in an international bazaar, with stores selling Indian videos, Filipino snacks, Pakistani groceries, American and Japanese pornography, and Hong Kong souvenirs. Indeed, the ground floor of Chungking Mansions in its massive mix of peoples illustrates what anthropologists have lately been calling “hybridity and transnationalism” (Basch, Schiller, Blanc 1989: 226-265). Its micro ethnoscape (Appadurai 1990) consists of both transients—tourists, illegal immigrants, contract laborers, and those who smuggle commodities from overseas—and permanent residents, including shopkeepers and owners, both local and foreign, of guesthouses and restaurants. Chungking Mansions seems to be a “world without frontiers” in which different foreign commodities and alien cultures ceaselessly intermingle.

In popular depictions—for example, in the movie “Chongqin Senlin”—Chungking Mansions is portrayed as dark and dim and dangerous. It cannot be denied that criminal activities such as drugs, smuggling, and prostitution, are part of the place. Within the labyrinthine layout of the five blocks and numerous poorly maintained guesthouses, dire social problems can indeed be found, as Hong Kong mass media occasionally report (see, to take just one example, the 1993 South China Morning Post Sunday Magazine article “Sleaze City” (Chan:1993). But while there is an element of truth to this portrayal, it ignores much of the reality of the place. I found it highly

interesting that even though many local people I spoke with had lots of information and stories about Chungking Mansions as gleaned from the media, many did not know its location, and certainly had never been there. Many outsiders who claimed to know much about Chungking Mansions simply accepted what was reported in the media as truth. The fuller truth—the extraordinary diversity of ethnic enclaves and interactions in the heart of Hong Kong—is more interesting, I think.

II. STEREOTYPES BY FOREIGNERS ABOUT HONG KONG PEOPLE

If many Hong Kong people are ignorant of Chungking Mansions, the foreign residents of Chungking Mansions seem equally ignorant about Hong Kong. I interviewed many of these people about their conceptions of Hong Kong's people. Some defined Hong Kong people in terms of international exposure: “They are fluent English speakers,” “They are internationally minded,” and “They like American movies even more than their own Hong Kong movies.” A few praised Hong Kong people as honest and straightforward, but more often, Hong Kong people were described negatively. A Nigerian described local people as “noise-makers” who always speak loudly in public. A Tunisian described himself as an “invisible” man in front of Hong Kong people: “They are always so busy that they cannot see you!” An Indian cargo-port worker said that although Hong Kong people are smart and internationally-minded, they would hardly ever give a tip of even a few cents out of their pockets. Many of these foreigners spoke of what they considered to be a common feature of Hong Kong people—the blank face. They said that when they went shopping, they were served by store clerks with faces without expression, which look “like corpses.” This would not be the case, they held, were they from different societies; as one Pakistani claimed, “Things would be different if I were

Japanese!” A Nigerian told me that the store clerks in surrounding shops seemed to view him only as “a cargo from Chungking Mansions obstructing their shops,” rather than as a human being and potential customer. When he described how the local people discriminate against blacks, he in turn mocked Hong Kong people as “golden chickens,” who, with their gold in their pockets, think of themselves as flying high in the sky and look down on other people.

These stories of discrimination are so ubiquitously told as to be indubitable: it is shameful that these foreigners—perhaps unlike Japanese or Americans—do not seem to be viewed as full human beings by the local people around Chungking Mansions. But unlike their stories of discrimination, their images of Hong Kong people were often inconsistent with one another. Throughout my interviews, they would often start expressing their images of local people with a similar tone, “Oh, Hong Kong people! They are like this...and they are like that”: Hong Kong people are “only concerned with money,” Hong Kong people are “coarse and impolite,” Hong Kong people are “so straightforward that they insult other people.” Their descriptions of Hong Kong people they presented as obvious facts, but in fact their descriptions often contradicted one another: one person would speak of Hong Kong people as honest, another as cunning and calculating; one person would speak of Hong Kong people as noisy and emotional, another as completely unemotional.

These people tended to reduce the variety of people in Hong Kong to a generalized “Hongkongness,” rather than recognizing the diversity and complexity of Hong Kong people. These stereotypes enable them to categorize people into a model in which the notions of otherness are simplified enough to be readily grasped and understood. In fact, most of the foreigners in Chungking mansions have little relation to Hong Kong people in daily life, and their stereotypes may be largely untrue, given all the complexities and diversities of Hong

Kong people; but while untrue, they are practically and cognitively effective, in categorizing Hong Kong's people for easy comprehension. However it is not only these foreigners who stereotype Hong Kong people; Hong Kong people, even those within Chungking Mansions, also stereotype foreigners.

II. HONG KONG PEOPLE'S VIEWS OF FOREIGNERS

The local people working in Chungking Mansions with whom I spoke invariably expressed disdain for the foreigners working in Chungking Mansions. These local people were shopkeepers, watchman, or landlords, or sometimes managers or secretaries in small factories or companies; all were of higher economic status than my foreign informants in Chungking Mansions. To take just one example from many people I spoke with, a local guesthouse owner saw ethnic groups like Nepalese and Africans as dirt and trash who would only contaminate her place. She always repeated the same slogan to sell the rooms in her hotel, "You see, it's clean! 99% here are Japanese, maybe one or two Australians, no Nepalese, Africans, Pakistanis or others are allowed, don't worry!" In her eyes—as well, presumably, as the ears of her prospective guests at whom her pitch is directed—people other than whites or Japanese are thieves who would only steal things, and unclean people who would contaminate her clean guest house.

These images, pervasive in the comments by the local people in Chungking Mansions, explain in part why some foreigners come up with negative images of Hong Kong people—the generally low social and economic status of these foreigners makes them vulnerable to the contemptuous attitudes of local people. It seems clear that the low local images of these foreigners are very much subject to global economic relations. If we look at the respective Gross

Domestic Products of the different countries these people come from, the degree to which they are respected by locals in Chungking Mansions ranks very much in accordance with the wealth of their respective countries. At the top of the ladder of ethnicity are the most respectable "whites" (Westerners) and "honorary whites" (Japanese and Singaporeans). At the bottom of the ladder are what Hong Kong people in Chungking Mansions call "troublemakers" (Indians, Nigerians, Nepalese, and Filipinos).

Social scientists have often noted how money levels all things, taking away their uniqueness and showing them only in their exchange value (Marx 1978: 319-329, Simmel 1971:326). In terms of Chungking Mansions, this seems to apply not only to things, but to people as well—the global economic status of the homelands of members of these various nationalities translates into their social status as individuals in Hong Kong. This is clearly seen in the ways that local people address various categories of foreigners: they address westerners as "foreigners" (外國人), and Japanese and Singaporeans properly as "Japanese" and "Singaporean." But they call Indians "Curry Sin," "Sin," or "Ah Cha" and call the Thai women "Thai maid" (泰妹) (due to their job nature in Hong Kong), and Africans "Black ghost" (黑鬼). These more or less derogatory labels are not anything secret but widely used in public.

Although some of what goes on in Chungking Mansions reflects larger ethnic stereotypes in Hong Kong as a whole, some is unique to Chungking Mansions. An Indian college professor teaching at a university in Hong Kong is not likely to be looked down upon by the local people, and is not likely to be called "Curry Sin." But many Indians I spoke with in Chungking Mansions said they were always called such names, and felt insulted by these names. This is in part due to the nature of Chungking Mansions, and the assumption that anybody in Chungking Mansions does

not have much money, and thus is not worthy of much respect.

However, it seems that the ladder of ethnicity and nations' wealth is not only in the minds of Hong Kong people but also in the minds of foreigners. When foreigners narrated their notions of Hong Kong people, they often tried to increase the validity of their statements by comparing Hong Kong people with Americans, British, Singaporeans, Taiwanese, and especially Japanese. For example, the local "international mindedness" of Hong Kong people was compared with the "international feature of Americans." The "impolite manners" were contrasted with the "good education of Japanese." The "fluent English" was contrasted with "broken English of Taiwanese" and the "coarse tone of speech" was compared with "soft speech of Japanese." Only in a very few cases did they compare Hong Kong people with people from developing countries who seem largely excluded from such world comparisons. What this may imply is that these foreign peoples have to a degree bought into the notion of their own inferiority: Hong Kong people are not compared with people of their own poor nations, but only with people from other rich nations.

III. THE "IMPORTED HOMES" OF FOREIGNERS LIVING IN CHUNGKING MANSIONS

Without doubt, many of the foreigners and local informants who hold such stereotypes of one another's cultures in fact know very little about each other. As we have seen, the limited knowledge of Hong Kong people is probably among the main features of foreigners inside Chungking Mansions, who often work, live and entertain only within their own ethnic groups. In turn, many local people in Chungking Mansions never bother to find out where foreigners come from. For example, I heard one local Chinese woman referring to a Tunisian as "a foreigner" (外國人), by

which she meant a Westerner; she clearly knew nothing more about him.

This mutual ignorance is not at all surprising when we reflect upon the fact that Chungking Mansions thrives upon—and indeed, exists because of—the need for deterritorialized populations from poorer nations in the world to retain contact with their homelands, and indeed, to recreate their homelands in a foreign setting. The clustering of ethnic groups, the specific foods, the indigenous songs, and the native clothes like the Indian sari all provide materials by which ethnic groups can construct what we might call their "imported homes" within Chungking Mansions. Instead of merging into and accommodating local society, their efforts have been to cultivate and import a familiar home which shares more or less the same traditional ideas and ways of life as their home countries.

This seems to differ, to a degree, by gender. It seems clear that male foreigners, from places such as Pakistan, India, Nepal, and the Philippines, are less ensconced within their imported homes and more exposed to the local community than their female counterparts. Many female foreigners in Chungking Mansions speak neither English nor Cantonese, and thus cannot communicate with people other than those from their own ethnic groups. The male foreigners I interviewed generally could give more specific examples, personal experience and diverse images in their discussion of Hong Kong people than female foreigners, who seem to depend much more on TV and magazines—whether of their own countries, or in Hong Kong—for their ideas about Hong Kong. Just as in many of their home countries, the men often work outside Chungking Mansions, while their wives work, if at all, within Chungking Mansions; their stereotypes of Hong Kong are structured accordingly.

There was wide individual variation among the foreigners I interviewed as to their degree of attachment to their "imported homes," and conversely, their degree of

interaction with and understanding of Hong Kong. At one extreme are the Indian and Pakistani women I could hardly even speak with, there being no common language in which we could speak. Many women gave similar broken phrases to describe Hong Kong people, like "good English," and "money": and many were extremely shy in talking with me, a local woman.

At the other extreme was a Pakistani, the only foreigner in Chungking Mansions I met who tried actively to accommodate the local community. He took a Cantonese class twice a week in the evening. Once, just as usual before the class, he and I went to a fruit shop where he met a local housewife. Throughout the conversation, we had been getting along well in a friendly atmosphere until he suddenly asked the woman in less than fluent Cantonese, "Neih geido seui? Sei saahp la?" (How old are you? Forty?). These words failed to convey their intended meaning, but were unfortunately interpreted as a curse by the woman: "You are really bad, go to die!" Due to the slight difference in intonation, this woman drew a different meaning from the words, and then fiercely retaliated by calling the interviewee an arrogant "village boy." A local informant would never call a Westerner an arrogant village boy, even if that Westerner speaks equally bad Cantonese. Yet, the Pakistani was able to shrug off the insult. Due to his willingness to accommodate to local society, he was able to regard the insult more as part of the local plain-spoken character of Hong Kong Chinese than as racial prejudice.

He, however, was the exception. For most of those I interviewed in Chungking Mansions, the world of Hong Kong beyond Chungking Mansions was simply a source of money and the stuff of stereotype. Their real identity lay in their "imported homes" in Chungking Mansions—a home away from home as a counter force to the radical deterritorialization of their lives. As one Nepalese man said to me, in words echoed by many more "The only thing in my mind

after getting off the plane from Nepal is to come to Chungking Mansions. It's the mentality of Chungking Mansions that I like": the mentality of his Nepalese home, reconstructed a world away from that home.

V. CONCLUSION

Chungking Mansions is a special place in Hong Kong: an international enclave within the general ethnic homogeneity of Hong Kong. Foreigners in Chungking Mansions hold diverse stereotypical images of Hong Kong people, perhaps derived more from mass media than from their actual knowledge of and relations with Hong Kong people. Local people are equally prone to stereotyping. Their stereotypes too have little to do with actual knowledge of the foreign people in Chungking Mansions, and much more to do with the rankings on the world ladder of wealth and poverty of the home nations of these foreign people. The two sides do not see one another except through their own distorted lenses.

In the face of the hostility or indifference of an uncomprehending Hong Kong community, the foreigners in Chungking Mansions I interviewed seek to recreate their own home communities. On the surface, Chungking Mansions seems to be a deterritorialized community, a mingling of people without borders; but in reality, the people I interviewed are desperate to establish their own "imported homes." In this sense, Chungking Mansions is a deterritorialized community in a continuous process of reterritorialization.

The underlying tragedy is that such a thing is necessary. Viewed in terms of asymmetric global economic relations, these foreigners in Hong Kong are hardly ever seen in Hong Kong eyes as free from their national background—not a cultural background but an economic background. The question remains: perhaps these foreigners in Chungking Mansions live within their "imported homes" in large part because Hong Kong people will never allow

them to feel as if Hong Kong could ever really be a home away from home.

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從重慶大廈的角度看外國人眼中的香港人

黃鳳如

文章摘要

大部份香港人對尖沙咀「重慶大廈」這個「黑點」並不感到陌生，但對它的真正認識卻甚少。本文透過接觸及訪問「重慶大廈」裏的香港人及外國人，探討外國人眼中的香港人是怎樣的。來自貧窮地方的民族會認為香港人一毫不拔及勢利，崇尚美國文化，而當香港人視來自富有國家的民族，如日本人或歐美遊客，為高等教育，高尚品格及金錢的象徵時，他們卻視來自貧窮地方的民族為「垃圾」或「小偷」。

綜合訪問及搜集的資料所得，「重慶大廈」裏的外國人及香港人對各方所持的見解在很大程度上受到不同民族之間的貧富懸殊所影響。此外，不少聚居於「重慶大廈」的外國人努力嘗試重建他們本身國家的社會文化。他們各自於「重慶大廈」裏建立屬於自己的小社區。這令「重慶大廈」一個民族萬花筒之餘，也使得聚集於「重慶大廈」的本地人及外國人之間的隔膜加深。

香港印尼華僑的語言使用情況

詹菁

一. 導言

選擇香港印尼華僑作為我的研究對象，是因為我覺得他們是一群在香港為數不多，卻又能夠保存自己獨有文化的族群。由於他們的歷史背景，令他們分別在印尼、中國和香港都居住了一段長時間。相對地，他們全部都會說印語、普通話和廣東話，有些甚至會說自己所屬籍貫的中國境內方言，即俗稱的「鄉下話」，如潮州話、客家話等。究竟他們在甚麼情況下用甚麼語言呢？語言對於他們來說除了用來溝通外，還有沒有其他特別的功用呢？複雜的語言使用情況怎樣影響他們的日常生活呢？

二. 香港印尼華僑簡介

在這篇文章裡，香港印尼華僑是指那些三十至五十年代在印尼出生，然後五十至七十年代在中國居住，再在七十年代以後由中國遷來香港定居的中國人。

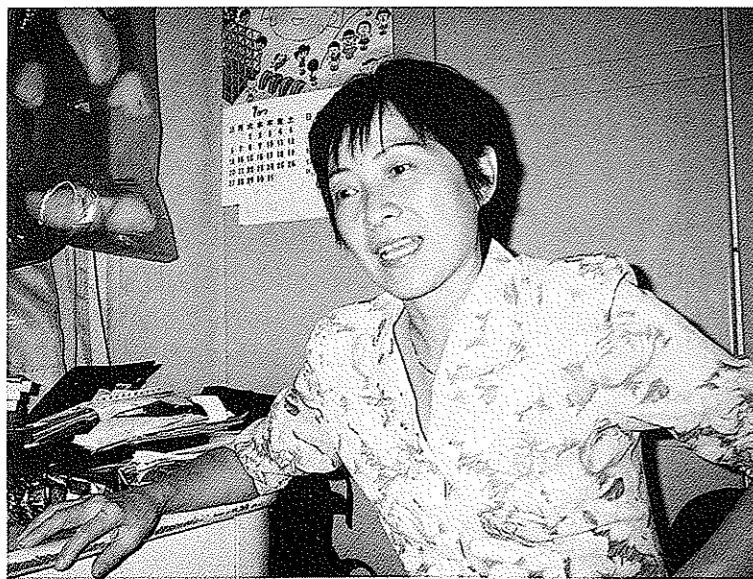
由於早期中國生活艱難，且三十至五

十年代時適逢是戰爭時期，任人們怎樣艱辛努力，也難以餬口。故當時很多人便移民到印尼，認為在當地只要肯努力，便可養活自己。故這群中國人便成為香港印尼華僑的祖先。他們在印尼定居下來後，開枝散葉組織家庭時，又適逢六十年代印尼政府採取排華政策，再加上當時中國的局勢已漸漸穩定下來，故有一部分在印尼的中國人，尤其是先前第一代在印尼的中國人子女便由印尼回到中國，並在當地接受中學或大專程度的教育。到了七十年代時，為了逃避文化大革命，又因香港生活環境較佳，他們便再由中國移民來香港，一直居住到現在，並在此有穩定的職業和養兒育女。這些人便成為現在的香港印尼華僑。

在這篇文章中，我共訪問了五位香港印尼華僑，他們分別是四女一男，年齡介乎於四十至六十歲之間，全部已婚，且都在香港定居了超過十八年以上。

三. 香港印尼華僑的語言使用情況

在這五位被訪者中，他們全部都會說印語、普通話和廣東話，當中有四位更可說自己所屬籍貫的當地語言，包括潮州話、客家話或福建話等。如當中一位被訪者吳小姐便可說福建話、客家話、普通話、廣東話和印語。問其原因？吳小姐說她在印尼時，除了學會說印語外，還學會了客家話和普通話，因她所屬的籍貫是客家，家人都說客家話。而她所讀的是中文學校，所以也學會了普通話。回到中國後，她在汕頭讀書，當地有很多福建人，故她的同學很多都是說福建話，因此她又學會了福建話。到了香港後，便學會了廣東話。



張小姐的廣東話並不流俐，故對子女說話時也是用普通話的。

那麼，在這麼多語言中，那種語言是他們說得最流俐的呢？五位被訪者皆說是普通話。而最不流俐的則有不同答案，有一人說是印語，一人說是福建話，一人說是客家話，而兩人說是廣東話。

既然他們會說這麼多語言，那麼在甚麼情況下會說這幾種語言呢？首先，五位被訪者都說他們最常說的是普通話，幾乎對任何人包括兄弟姊妹、配偶子女、朋友等都會說普通話。四位被訪者說廣東話是日常對話和對子女和同事說的，另一被訪者張小姐則對子女也是說普通話的，因為她的廣東話並不流俐。而所有被訪者皆說和丈夫或妻子使用普通話交談。而「鄉下話」或印尼話就是在和自己的兄弟姊妹交談時用的。

在我訪問當天，我曾在陳小姐的家裡觀察過，證實她所講的全是真的。當天剛好她弟弟一家人來她家吃飯。之前我曾聽過她確是用廣東話和子女交談，和丈夫說話時則用普通話。她的弟弟也一直用廣東話或普通話和其他人交談，但當他向陳小姐要求拿一塊濕布幫他的兒子抹手時，卻用上了潮州話。吃飯時他和陳小姐交談也用潮州話的。

我知道這些香港印尼華僑的朋友或家人們，很多都不只會說一種語言的，他們大部分可以說兩種或以上語言的。那麼，在和這些人交談時，他們多會先選擇說那種語言呢？如對方也是印尼華僑，會說印尼話和普通話，他們會先選擇說何種語言？五人都說會選擇用普通話，因普通話是自己說得最流俐的語言，且亦習慣了用普通話交談。但之後其中一位又補充說，說甚麼語言要看對方而定，如對方是客家人，懂得說普通話和客家話，他會選擇說客家話，因知道對方較常說客家話。既然香港印尼華僑本身可說多種語言，而他們的朋友或

家人們也可以說多種語言，那麼他們交談時會否經常出現語言混雜(code-mixing)或語言轉換(code-switching)的情況呢？全部受訪者皆說當然有，且這是個非常普遍的現象。其中一位被訪者說每當她說到一些內容不想被別人聽見時，便會採用這兩種方法。而另外一些受訪者則說這樣做有時是因為覺得用另外一種語言可表達得更清楚明白，或這些詞語是大家比較熟悉的字眼，又或者有些字已經忘記了，要用另外一種語言表達。此外，亦由於語言轉換和語言混雜在香港印尼華僑當中一向是一種習慣，因他們自小便身處一個複雜的語言環境當中。

然而，離開印尼和家鄉這麼多年，他們又如何能記得印尼話或「鄉下話」的呢？全部的被訪者都說他們平日其實有很多途徑說這些語言的。例如鄉間或印尼有親朋戚友來時，他們便有機會說「鄉下話」和印尼話了。此外，他們有些在香港有校友會，故與同學聚會時又可說印尼話或「鄉下話」。有兩位被訪者家裡有印傭，故印尼話便成為他們日常生活的一部分。還有，即使和兄弟姊妹或丈夫妻子交談時，間中也會用印尼話或「鄉下話」。

最後，我問他們認同自己屬於那個民族或族群。四位被訪者說自己是中國人，一位說自己是潮州人。沒有一位說自己是



莊先生認為在香港沒必要學印語，故並沒有刻意教導子女學習印語。

印尼人或香港人。

四. 資料分析

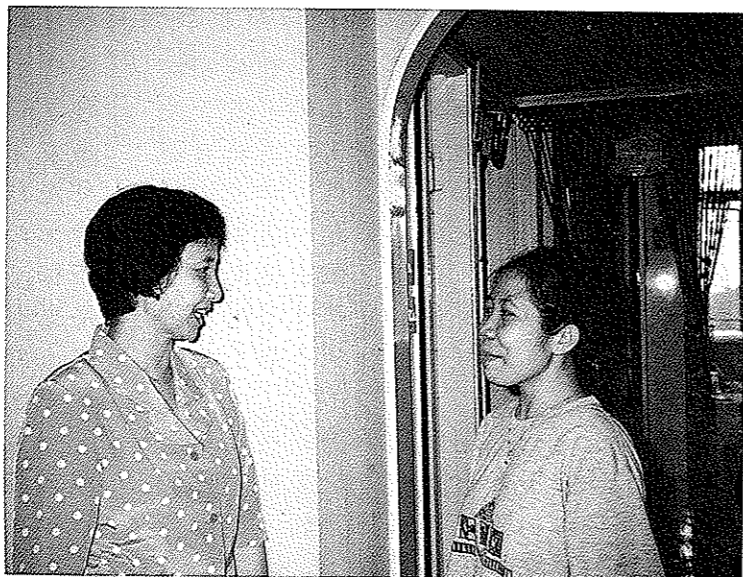
就以上的資料看來，香港印尼華僑的語言使用情況真的甚為複雜，這和他們本身的歷史背景有莫大關係的。他們分別在三個地方作過長時間的居留，而香港可能是他們將會逗留得最久的地方，且在此落地生根，但說得最不純正和流俐的卻偏偏是廣東話。這當然是無可厚非的，因為年紀越大，便越較難去從新學一種新語言。但這是否有其他原因呢？是否因為他們根本不認同自己是香港人，故不想學廣東話呢？當我問陳小姐時，她便說：「我當然不想學廣東話，我只是被迫學的，且我根本不是香港人，我來香港只是迫不得已，我不會也不想做香港人。」而另外一位張小姐也說，她來了香港已經二十三年，但至今她的廣東話也說得不好，但她說沒有所謂，因她根本沒有刻意去學，且她根本不是香港人，而自己身邊的朋友也多是印尼華僑或會說普通話的人，她根本不需要好好去學習廣東話，只要可應付日常應對便可以了。故此，我們可見，不認同香港人，很難會去學好廣東話，因沒此必要，也不願意。

此外，他們之所以廣東話說得不純正，其實是一個循環因果。試想想，他們身邊的朋友多是印尼華僑或會說普通話的人，和丈夫妻子及兄弟姐妹又不說廣東話，令他們覺得根本沒有必要學廣東話，故廣東話學得不好便較難和香港人溝通，故身邊的朋友更多不是香港人，這樣下去，他們的廣東話便說得不流俐了。

另外，即使他們能說得一口流俐的印尼話，但他們卻不認同自己是印尼人，這是很容易理解的。據被訪者說，他們雖然在印尼出生，但他們過著的生活和當地印尼人有頗大分別。一方面在印尼的華人較為富有，故經濟環境方面和當地人已有段距離。加上他們唸的是中文學校，身邊的

朋友們皆是中國人，故「我們是中國人」這個概念，從少便在腦海中。另外，他們之所以在印尼生活，也只是被迫的，因為當時中國經濟情況不佳。故他們根本不認同自己是印尼人。

但在香港，印尼話對們來說卻有一種很重要的作用，就是用來認同於香港印尼華僑這個身分。據吳小姐說，雖然她不認同自己是印尼人，但在香港一旦聽到有人說印尼話便有種很親切的感覺，故很多時，當她和校友會的同學集會時，她有時也會用印尼話交談，像有一種「我群」的概念存在，把「我群」和「他群」分隔開來，顯示出這一班人和其他香港人是有分別的，他們有自己的獨特身分，這也是一



因為家裡有印傭，故吳小姐日常也經常說印尼語。

種團結的心理。故印尼話對於這一班香港印尼華僑來說，是很有親切感的，且有一團結的作用，而這一種「我群」的意識也加強了他們獨特的身分。故即使她和她的印尼華僑校友常用普通話交談，但間中也會用印尼話交談的，以顯示他們都是香港印尼華僑。在此看來，印尼話對這班香港印尼華僑來說是有重要的象徵意義 (symbolic meaning)。

對於香港印尼華僑而言，普通話可說是這班人最基本、最普遍的語言，是他們優勢語言 (dominant language)。因為無論對子女、妻子丈夫、親朋戚友，他們都會用普通話來交談，且普通話是他們全部人都說得最流俐的。故如果說說何種主要語言

便即等於認同於那語言文化的人，這班香港印尼華僑大部分認同自己是中國人。

在這班香港印尼華僑的語言使用情況當中，我發現了一個頗為有趣的現象。就是他們說廣東話時多是和子女交談時用，和丈夫妻子說話多用普通話，而用「鄉下話」時則多是和兄弟姐妹交談時用。因為子女們是香港人，故便多數用廣東話和他們交談。而和丈夫妻子，便選擇一種大家都說得最流俐的語言，即普通話來交談。而和兄弟姐妹們，卻為何會經常用「鄉下話」呢？我想可能大家都在同一個地方出生，同一個家庭長大，大家一同學習「鄉下話」，故這「鄉下話」好像也有一象徵意義，象徵他們是同一家人、同屬一故鄉，說「鄉下話」對他們來說也有一很親切的感覺，也有一種「我群」的意識。這象徵意義和以上的象徵意義不同。前者是象徵同一家人、同屬一籍貫的人；而後者則象徵著大家同是香港印尼華僑。

在這個研究裡，我還發現語言——尤其是印尼話——對於這班香港印尼華僑來說有一重要功用，那便是可防止別人偷聽，或可在公眾場合說秘密。如其中一位被訪者吳小姐說，當她在公眾場合想說些秘密

時，又或者和別人交談時說到一些內容不想被其他在場者聽見時，她便會說印尼話，因為它較少人能聽得懂。而這個「語言作用」是所有被訪者都贊同的，可見語言對於他們來說除了可用來溝通和有團結作用及有象徵意義外，還有另一重要作用呢。

五. 總結

總括而言，香港印尼華僑的語言使用情況是甚為複雜的。基本上，普通話是他們的主要語言，且有一種民族認同的作用，就是認同於中國人。而印尼話和「鄉下話」則有不同的象徵意義，而廣東話則只是用來應付日常應對。

然而，這一班香港印尼華僑只是一特定時代下的產物，他們只是香港的過客，終有一天會消失的。但是，坊間有關他們研究真是少之又少。這是否暗示著他們並不受別人重視呢？任何一種文化都有其存在價值和意義，以及研究價值。希望有更多人去研究他們的文化吧，讓他們的文化得以永遠的流傳在這世上。

Language Usage among Hongkong Indonesian Chinese

Grace Chan

Abstract

Indonesian Chinese is one of the ethnic groups in Hong Kong. Though they are small in number, they still can preserve their own distinctive culture which makes them quite different from Hong Kong people. They lived in Indonesia and China for a long time, and now are living in Hong Kong. They were therefore significantly shaped by these three cultures and also, to various degrees, preserve these local cultures. Their distinctive culture which may be viewed as the mixture of three cultures, can be especially seen in their language use.

All interviewees can speak at least three languages: Indonesian, Putonghua and Cantonese. Some even can speak several other Chinese dialects from their places of origin such as the Hakka dialect and Fujian dialect. Several questions are examined: which language do they use most frequently and speak most fluently? What language do they use in different contexts, and why? Do different languages have different significance to them? For them, apart from communication, what other functions can a language serve?

人類學的透視 — 香港客家人的文化認同和香港文化的建構關係

蘇國威

一. 引言

不同社會有不同的文化特色，隨著資訊科技的發達、世界人口的流動、以及國際分工模式的經濟組合，帶動了全球的政治、經濟和文化的相互交流，形成了全球化和國際化的世界觀念。在全球化和國際化的影響之下，不同的社會形成了一些共同的文化共性，例如人道觀念、經濟取向和政治理念等。

世界各國的地區化往往促成了不同社會形成自己獨特的文化，以香港為例，她是世界的金融中心，華洋混雜之地，東西文化的相互交流，發展成香港的多元化格局，表現出國際社會的文化特色。從文化認同 (cultural identity) 的層面來看，香港同樣是多元化的，例如：北京人、潮州人、客家人、湖南人及香港人等，而隨著不同文化的互動過程中，不同的族群除了保留自己的文化特色之外，亦分享了部份社會的文化特質，對自己的文化認同產生一定程度的改變，令香港的文化認同，在呈現高度異質性之餘，亦出現涵化合和同化的趨勢，而當中的轉變因素，正能反映出不同族群對不同文化的認知和理解，反映出不同的價值觀念。

香港的客家人佔全港人口的百份之二十，而傳統的客家文化和香港文化卻存在著極大的差異性，尤其在語言、飲食、習俗、藝能和服飾方面。因此，香港客家人的文化認同是值得我們研究的。而當中客家人的文化認同的轉變和發展過程，是值得我們加以探討的，以了解香港不同族群的文化認同現象，進一步掌握社會的轉變脈絡。本文將從客家人的文化認同出發，探討香港文化認同的特質，並進而了解香港的文化特色，這是本文的主要目的。

二. 研究方法

今次的研究，是以人類學研究方法中的深入訪談為主，並輔以文獻參考，對今次的研究題目進行深入和全面的探討。而目標群的介定，主要分為客位和主位兩方面，每方五人嘗試從主位和客位、非客籍和客籍人士的角度，分析各方面的互動關係，如何塑造和再塑造出一個族群的身份認同。本文的資料紀錄，是以全文引錄的方法為主，令不同的學者亦可根據第一手的訪問資料，從不同的立場和角度，分析這個研究題目，以求能達到更客觀性的研究立場。

三. 內容

I. 主位訪問 (節錄)

A. 背景資料

1. 姓名 : 傅潔宜
2. 年齡 : 22
3. 性別 : 女
4. 教育 : 大學
5. 宗教 : 無
6. 籍貫 : 廣東多祝 (父)
廣東冷水 (母)
7. 家庭人數 : 5

B. 客家人的定義

- 問：何謂客家人？
答：知！即非本土人事嘛！
問：客家人的源流和今天的分布？
答：源流不大清楚，但今日主要分佈在中國南方，香港情況則不太清楚。

C. 客家文化知多少

- a. 宗族組織：不知道客家和香港有什麼分別，不過我家中的親屬稱謂和中國人都差不多叫法，都是叫公公婆婆、舅父叔公之類。
- b. 土樓民居：未聽過，亦都不知是什麼東西。
- c. 客家方言：識得聽和識得講，但是聽比講更叻。小時候自己聽婆婆講得多而學識，不是太流俐。婆婆和公公主要講客家話，但都識得講廣東話，父母親都識得客家話，但甚少講，亦無人教我講客家話，可能不重要吧！自己亦無特別想去學，因為應用範圍不廣。
- d. 禮俗文化：不太清楚，我姐姐結婚時都有擺酒，同香港人的結婚方法一模一樣。
- e. 飲食文化：當然識啦！例如有芥菜薯仔，梅菜扣肉等，但家中不常煮，因為不太好味，小人吃，我都喜歡吃廣東菜，客家菜不太好吃。除節日外，家中都什少煮客家菜，可能個人口味問題，家中都係以廣東菜為主，可能因為係阿媽煮，佢係廣東人，而且大家都喜愛吃，阿婆和阿公都無所謂，佢都無乜意見，所以咪煮廣東菜囉！
- f. 藝能文化：我以前都懂唱山歌，不過大個左忘記了，只記得那些音節。細細個時阿媽教的，當玩咁樣，不是刻意教的。
- g. 服飾文化：不知道有何特色，細細個見家中人的服飾和其它人都無分別。

問：客家文化的認識渠道

答：自己所知的客家文化，例如客家話客家菜等，都是細個時在日常生活中認

識的，父母好少刻意去教，佢都要返工，阿公阿婆都無教，有時都不知他們說什麼。此外，亦無特別漆道走認識客家文化，好少機會去接觸到自己亦無興趣去學，一來學都無用，二來我都無興趣，再加上無人教，所以自己不太清楚客家的文化。點解無用？因為日常生活中都甚少遇到客家人，況且都唔普及，你對人講佢都不知係什麼！

問：你認為今天香港還有否客家文化，那重最明顯和最要緊呢？為什麼？

答：可能有，但好少，少到見唔到。你香港出街食飯有無見過客家菜館？香港變得快，傳統好難保留，香港社會有自己的文化，客家文化好容易被淘汰，變成書中的文化。

D. 客家人的認同

問：自己是客家人嗎？怎樣才是一個客家人？

答：當然是客家人啦！我阿爺、阿婆和阿爸都係客家人，但阿媽則係本地人，人所有事都係跟阿爸的，咁我當然係客家人啦。

問：客家人的外貌特點？為什麼呢？

答：家中就無人講過，但細細個就聽人話客家人又黑又矮，我都覺得係，但則和香港人差不多，無太大分別。

問：日常生活中有否接觸客家人？怎去區分對方是否客家人呢？對方若是客會否特別開心？

答：好少，因為佢地唔講客家話，實在好難分，因為大家都多說廣東話，除特別黑和矮，咁我就會估佢地係客家人種。若遇到對方是客家人，都不別開心，你估同鄉真係好朋友些嗎？咁老土！香港好現實，不會係同鄉幫你，而且做朋友講性格，好個人，若果有個真正朋友就會好開心。

問：少時家中是否以客家文化為主導？和香港的日常生活有何分別？融合香港生活有問題嗎？

答：少時生活和其他鄰居都差不多，都係屋村的生活，家中都無乜客家文化特色，講的都是以廣東話為主，父母都要外出工作，甚少教我客家的傳統習俗，融合社會都無困難，有困難都係個人因素，與客家文化無關。

問：你認為血緣地緣和語言那種因素最能確定自己是客家人？為什麼呢？

答：血緣囉，你祖上係客家人，你以后就點都係半個客家人；其次係地緣因素，假如你籍貫係客籍，你就一定係客家人。語言都重要，但不及前兩者，因它們無得改變，但客家話就不同，你一講人就知你係客家人，但有些客家人，不識得講客家話，但佢都係客家人。語言係重要的社會溝通工具，香港係以廣東話為主，要學都學廣東話先，而且有好多客家人的父母到外出工作，好多都識廣東話，要教都教子女說廣東話。

問：客家人不慣說客家話又算否家人？為什麼？

答：當然算！因為血緣地緣因素係無得改，係先天，但客家話係后天因素，學唔學要睇環境而定，都係為適應社會。

問：什麼時候才會稱呼及強調自己是客家人呢？

答：填手冊或申請政府工時便會，因為要填籍貫一項；又或有人問我邊處鄉下時，我就會答我係客家人。朋友就好少講，都不會因為同鄉而好朋友一些，朋友講性格合唔合得來，好個人。社會上更加不會，出來工作講實力，再無呢樣群腳關係。

問：社會和自己怎去看待客家人？地位有否低些？還是平等？為什麼？

答：我覺得社會不會看低客家人，因為大家都不會去想你是否客家人。香港講實力，大家不會因你背景而話你係叨仔，只會你做唔做得來。

問：認為自己主要受何種文化因素影響呢？為什麼呢？

答：香港文化。父親雖然是客家人，但都在香港生活左幾十年，都適應晒啦，

而且佢地都無教我一些客家文化。我係香港出生，由細到大都接觸香港文化為主，自己雖然是客家人，但其實同香港人無分別。

問：你知道香港有客家社團嗎？有否接觸和參與維持客家文化的機制？

答：不太清楚，亦無接觸過。

問：你認為客家文化和身份認同會消失嗎？有必要維持客家的身份認同嗎？為什麼？

答：不會。因為血緣和地緣因素係好難改變至少響呢代唔會，但以后就唔知。無必要刻意強調自己係客家人，順其自然好些，你點強調都無用，社會話你唔係就唔係。

問：對香港文化和族群的認識？香港的族群意識強烈嗎？

答：香港文化和族群都十分多元化，也都有一些，中西結合，轉變十分快，但可能族群和文化太複雜太多元化和變得太快，族群意識變得較為薄弱。加上經濟發展十分快，人們都變得十分忙，重實利和效益，除非自己友有好處，否則人好少會去想呢種問題。

問：對“客家人”的認同感強烈嗎？香港人和中國人又如何？

答：其實不太強烈，一個身份咁啦！多數話自己係中國人，我係中國人嘛！香港人都會，其實無乜所謂，好少諗呢個問題。

II. 客位分析 (節錄)

A. 背景資料

1. 姓名：周自強
2. 年齡：22
3. 性別：男
4. 教育：中學
5. 籍貫：廣東東莞
6. 家庭人數：12

B. 訪問資料

問：知否什麼是客家人？

答：是否即是潮州人。

問：客家人的外貌特點？

答：不知道。

問：客家人的文化特色和生活習慣？

答：說客家話，食客家菜囉！這是最基本的。點解？客家人當然識講客家話，客家菜由細到大都食嘛。

問：除地緣和血緣因素之外，怎樣才是一個客家人？

答：客家話，用來溝通嘛，至少同父母或屋企人講。

問：怎樣才知道對方是客家人？

答：客家話囉，佢地除非用客家話講，否則都好難分邊個係邊個唔係，因為大家外表都差不多。其實我都不知什麼是客家話，我諗佢同潮州話差不多。

問：香港和客家人的分別？

答：我覺得大家都無分別，可能佢只識多一種語言，但在日常生活，我想大家生活習慣都差不多。

問：認識和接觸客家人的渠道？

答：無接觸過，其實可能接觸過自己都不知。在日常生活中都無渠道接觸客家人，但大陸人就有。香港的客家人同香港人其實差不多，可能已經融合左！

問：自己和社會對客家人的看法？

答：無什麼特別看法，根本未想過，但你若咁問，我會諗佢可能有些似大陸人，地位低少少咁啦！

問：對香港文化和族群的認識？

答：香港的族群和文化其實好複雜，因為香港本身都係由大陸人組成，而且香港又國際化，所以無論你係邊到人，都可以響香港找到本身的文化特征。但我都不是太清楚香港有那些族群，自己無去想過，亦無人教過呢樣。自己無想過係因為覺得呢樣不重要，香港是一個商業社會，重經濟效益和效用，做事最重實力，呢種族群關係無太大幫助。而且大家都同化晒啦，邊有話邊個打邊個，大家都係香港人。

四. 內容分析

1. 從文化接觸 (Cultural Contact)、涵化 (Acculturation) 和同化 (Assimilation) 看客家人的文化認同

根據內容所得，客家人的文化認同，正處於一個轉移的時代，而這種認同的轉變，是由「客家人」的文化認同，轉變為「香港人」的文化認同；而且隨著年齡的遞減而更加明顯。文化認同與族群認同是有密切的關係，一個族群的存在與否，很大程度上是建基在族群本身的文化之上。客家文化與香港文化是各成體系、各有特色的，對本身的族群具有強而有力的凝聚力。香港客家人在文化認同的轉移，原因是多方面的，當中涉及兩個不同的文化體系的互相角力，是一個文化融合和排斥的過程。

A. 從濡教化和社教化的角度看客家人文化認同的轉移

客家人在文化認同的轉移，與濡教化和社教化是有直接的關係。香港老一輩的客家人，多因中國戰時和戰後而遷移來港，他們自幼在大陸的客家鄉村長大，受到客家文化的濡教化影響，對客家文化是有一定程度的認同感，但來港生活以後，卻受到另一種模式的社教化影響 - 香港文化，對自己客家人的文化認同，必然產生一定程度的衝擊。而日後在香港出生的客家人，因生活環境的轉變和父母日漸香港化，所受到的是香港模式的濡教化和社教化，對客家人的文化認同，自然減腿，對香港人的文化認同自然增加。二者的結果，是客家人對固有的客家族群，產生疏離的感覺，為香港族群提供了新的文化資源。故此，不同的濡教化和社教化內容，是導至客家人文化認同轉移的因素之一。

B. 「轉移機制」(Transitional Institution)

客家人在文化認同的轉移，除了宏觀層面之外 - 濡教化和社教化，還涉及微觀層面 - 「轉移機制」(transitional institution)。客家文化和香港文化，是各具特色的文化體系，要從一個特定的文化體系轉移到另一個特定的文化體系，是有一定程度的阻力，尤其年紀較大的客家人。可是，根據訪問的內容得知，由「客家人」

的文化認同轉移到「香港人」的文化認同的過程中，是平穩的文化交接。當中原因，是香港存在著的「轉移機制」。香港「轉移機制」的特點是將客位的文化特色 (etic culture) 加以消亡，令當中的客位族群 (etic group) 在不受自己固有的文化影響之下，可以平穩地和流暢地轉移至主位的文化 (emic culture)，並進一步融入主位族群 (emic group) 的社會。而客家人就是因為這種機制，令至他們的「客家人」的文化認同，轉移為「香港人」的文化認同。

香港的「轉移機制」是多元化的，包括政治、經濟、法律、醫療、教育等各方面。而這個機制的基礎，就是建基於香港的教育制度之上，香港的教育制度提供了九年免費教育的強制性規定，確定了人人有書讀的觀念，而在這個教育制度中，所有學生均接受共同的教育內容，以中、英語為教學語言；建立考試制度，作為社會認受的個人標準。而這種社教化模式，為香港不同族群的兒童，締造成了一個「劃一化」和「均一化」的發展基礎，消滅了不同族群的固有文化的特性，並為他們提供了新的共同文化。客家籍兒童在投入這個機制之後，對自己的客家文化認同，形成一定程度的沖擊，最終結果，是不同的文化認同，將會減退而邁向於同一的文化認同觀。

教育的轉移機制，是必需配合其它的轉移機制才可發揮效用。香港的經濟制度和政治制度，便起著決定性的作用，將傳統的族群觀念和先賦地位 (ascribed status)，根撤擇優而用 (meritocracy) 的大原則之下，改變為成就地位 (achieved status) 取向。而在英國殖民統治之下，香港建立一套「無根文化」 (rootless culture)，進一步削弱香港的族群觀念。而轉移機制的結果，是消亡不同的固有族群和文化觀念，並根據主體社會 (host society) 的文化導向，再建立一個整體的文化認同。要知道文化認同的確立，是一個主位和客位的互動過程，但根據五位非客家籍的受訪者，均表示他們並不清楚香港族群的情況，更不知道不同族群的文化特色，對他們來說大家都是「差不多」，客家人在確定自己

的文化認同時，欠缺了一個主位和客位的互動過程。香港的客家人，雖然部份仍想保留自己的客家文化認同，但在欠缺社會的認同下，是很難建立一個鮮明的客家的文化認同。故此，客家人來港以後，面對著新的文化氣候，對自己族群的文化認同必然減弱。在香港的主流 (mainstream) 和支配 (dominant) 文化影響之下。客家人的文化認同。便開始由「客家人」轉移為「香港人客家人」，再建構成「香港人」的文化認同觀。而在滾雪球的情況下，「香港人」的文化認同不斷擴大；「客家人」的文化認同則不斷縮小，這是現今香港客家人在文化認同方面的現象。

C. 客籍團體與客家人的文化認同

由「客家人」的文化認同轉移為「香港人」的文化認同，香港只提供了客觀的環境因素 - 香港人的文化認同；而客家人本身，就製造了主觀的環境因素，導至客家文化認同的消失。客家人與潮州人雖同為香港的外來族群，但客家人和潮州人不同之處，是潮州人迄今仍然維持著一個明確的文化認同，與受訪的客家人比較，實有極大差異。綜觀其因，是客家人欠缺一個強而有力的機制，去維持客家人的文化認同。

香港的客籍團體為數超過二百個以上 (Hsieh 1978:22)，可惜，這些團體在面對主體社會中 (host society)，卻無法扮演一面文化傳遞的角色。當中原因是涉及這些團體的結構和內容的功能退化。香港的客籍團體，主要因血緣和地緣的因素結合，但在發展過程中，基於地域原則組成的客籍團體呈現散發式 (divergent) 的演變，產生許多新的少社團；相反，基於親屬原則組成的客籍團體，卻呈現輻合式 (convergent) 的發展。由於領導層的分裂，導至客家群體也產生了分裂的現象，形成兩個社團群集 (association cluster)，前者削弱了客家人在文化認同方面的凝聚力，后者收窄了客家人在文化認同方面的範圍。二者的結果，造成了一個文化認同的差距現象 (distance

gap)，令客家人的文化認同，欠缺了一體化的塑造。

在內容分析方面，一般客籍團體的參與率都不太高，以最高的『上水惠州同鄉會』為例，該會自稱代表上水一帶為數約二萬的惠州客籍人士，但會員數目只得二千二百人；最低的如『元郎惠州同鄉會』，自稱代表元郎的八萬同鄉，但人數實得三百五十人 (Hsieh, 1978)。這顯示出香港社會的流動性大，會籍的穩定性並不易維持，並且非傳統性的新式社團也會分散可能的會員。至於客籍團體的成員種類和特徵，除部份領袖人物的聲望和地位的追求者之外，一般會員有的是新來香港，有的是因為事業的原因而參加，分散了客家人在文化認同方面的凝聚力，要知新一代土生土長的香港客家人，對這類社團並不踴躍，無法為客家人的文化認同上提供新的人口資源，而造成客家團體的非功能化。

此外，客家人本是一種無根的文化，一向隨遇而安，擁有極強的適應能力。客家人的文化認同，本來就是不斷的創造和不斷的確定，而客籍團體中的宗教因素，便為香港的客籍人士，提供了另一種新的綜攝功能 (syncretization)，為客家人注入新的文化原素。可是，在建立新的文化認同之餘，亦削弱了客家人原有的文化認同，形成了客家人在文化認同方面的可變因素。

最后，今天的客家團體，在政治、經濟、文化教育方面的功能，已失去對新一代客家人的吸引力，原因是作風穩守、欠缺新血的加入、在管理和經營的技巧無法追上時代轉變，給人一種「老人機制」的感覺。而這些客家團體每年所舉行的綜攝活動少之又少。此外，客籍團體中新滲入的宗教文化認同因素，並非一般中國人所能接受。另外，這些客籍團體亦欠缺了獨特性的建造，無法在一個多元文化的社會中，建立自己的鮮明形像，最終的結果，是導至客家人對原有的文化認同意識的減弱，並且將客家人的文化認同層面和範圍收窄，與主體社會形成一個文化差距的現象，為香港年青一代的客家人提供了新的文化認同的空間。

新一代的客家人，在主體社會中受到客觀和主觀的環境影響之下，自然從客家文化轉向香港文化，固有的客家文化，例如：禮俗、藝能、飲食、語言、空間文化，開始消失。而客家人的文化認同，亦隨著客家文化的消失而消失。在主體文化的主導下，開始由「客家人」的文化認同轉移至「香港客家人」的文化認同，再慢慢地由「香港客家人」轉移至「香港人」的文化認同。當中涉及的是文化接觸 (cultural contact)、涵化 (acculturation) 和同化 (assimilation) 的互動過程。當客家文化與香港文化接觸時，形成支配與附屬、主流與次流的文化接觸，這是文化接觸的第一步。其后，基於以上各種原因，香港的強勢文化 (dominant culture) 開始吞噬客家的弱勢文化 (subordinate culture)，香港的客家人在主體社會的強勢文化下，從客家的文化體系，遂漸轉為香港文化體系，但仍然保留了自己的文化認同，這個第二步的涵化過程。最后，在長期的涵化過程中，不同的文化產物和文化內涵開始消亡，大家擁有共同的「文化符號」，導至香港的客家人在文化認同上開始了一個轉移的現象，這是一個同化的過程。

2. 從語言角度看客家人的文化認同

在今次的深入訪談中，筆者發現受訪的香港客家人，視客家話為文化認同的主要工具，而香港客家人的文化認同，亦會隨著客家話的消失而消失。每個文化都有自己的語言特色，不同的語言可以反映出不同的文化，它包涵了整個文化體系，更是主要的「轉移工具」 (transitional tool)，將文化一代一代的傳遞的下去，是一個灌輸和接收的過程，除了維持該族群的文化外，更維持了該族群的文化認同。由客家人從北方遷移至南方的過程中，客家發展出一套自己的方言，反映出他們遷移過程中的所見所聞，而客家方言的稱謂 (terminology) 亦反映出它們的文化特色，以及他們如何吸納不同地方的文化去融入自己的文化之中。而客家人所以能維持其獨特文化，使用客家方言是重要因素之一，

由此可見語言對客家人在文化認同方面的重要性。

從文化的差異來看，客家人和香港人之間雖有差異，但仍及不上客家人和潮州人之間的來得大；何況香港社會既無新加坡華人會閩、粵、潮、客等各群鼎立的幫權 (Freedman 1960:26)，后者甚至表現在早期的居住形態之上 (Hsieh 1977:69-70)；亦無菲律賓佔絕對多數的土族對華人社會所構成的強大壓力，使華人致力於保存自己的文化，並使其精緻化，形成施振民氏 (1976:119-206) 所說的文化內衍 (cultural involution) 的現象。反之，作為漢族一支的香港客家人，是散處在以廣東話為主的漢族社會，他們較少或沒有前述任何類型的壓力。時日一久，在意識型態中作為本群文化認同的『直接模式』 (immediate model)，將因客家方言的消失而消失，再配合主體社會的客觀環境，取而代之，將是以廣東話為主導的文化認同模式。

今天的香港，第二代會說客家方言的已經不多，更不必論第三代，這情況的持續發展，必會加速本地化的來臨。香港的客家人將由「客家人」的文化認同轉移為「香港人」的文化認同，香港客家人在文化認同方面的消亡，是透過今次研究所得到的結果。

3. 從多樣性的文化認同 (Multi-cultural Identities) 看客家人的文化認同

根據訪問內容，筆者發現香港的客家人是擁有多樣性的文化認同 (multi-cultural identities)。在訪問中，受訪者均同時認為自己是或可以是「客家人」、「香港人」、「中國人」。這三種不同的文化認同，對他們來說是沒有太大的分別，這個情況，正好說明社會內部的文化差異 (intra-cultural diversity)，是導致香港客家人在文化認同方面減弱的原因。雖然「客家人」、「香港人」、「中國人」代表了三種不同的文化認同，涉及不同的族群、地域、歷史和文化因素，然而，這三種不同的文化認同，只是一種社會內部的文化差異，是中國多元格局下的一個異變，對於

客家人來說「客家人」、「香港人」、「中國人」這三種不同的文化認同，是互補的，而非對立的；是互通的，而非相對的；是分享的，而非排斥的，為他們提供了多樣性的文化認同的選擇，而多樣性的文化認同，最終會削弱客家人對單一文化認同的凝聚力，基於這個因素，形成客家人在文化認同中可轉移的特性。

4. 從血緣、地緣和文化因素看客家人的身份認同

從今次的訪問中，筆者發現香港的客家人，在塑造個人的身份認同上，文化因素往往凌駕在血緣和地緣的因素之上。受訪的客家人表示，他們之所以稱自己為客家人，全因為自己的父親是客家人，又或他們的父母是來自客家人聚居的村落。他們對客家人的文化認同，只是形式上和名義上的，並非實質上的，故他們對「客家人」的文化認同感，並不強烈，甚至有疏離 (alien) 的感覺。綜觀其因，原因有二：1、血緣和地緣的不穩定性；2、欠缺客家文化的支撐。客家人是由北方遷至南方的中原人士，本身根本沒有固定的地緣可言，而在遷移的過程中，客家人雖然施行內婚制來維持客家人的血統，但內婚制是有其本身的限制，再加上人口的流動和客居他方的特性，與其它族群的通婚是無可避免。而今天聚居於廣東一帶的客家人，亦可能只涉及到三至四代的事情，根本無法形成一個強而有力的宗族組織，來維繫自己的客家族群。因此，單單利用客家人的血緣和地緣因素來確定客家人的身份認同，是有很大的限制性和不穩性。

此外，在訪問期間，大部份的客家受訪者均表示「自己會話自己係客家人，但自己不覺得自己是客家人」，原因是他們並不知道客家的文化，而他們自言要知道客家的文化，才會覺得自己是一個真正的客家人。由此可知，要明確認定自己是一個客家人，是需要客家文化的支撐，客家人的血緣和地緣因素，只為客家人的身份認同，提供了一個初步的輪廓，而客家人的文化因素，才是身份認同的真正內涵。

在客家人確定自己身份認同的過程中，尤其在年青一代的客家人中，文化認同往往凌駕建基在血緣和地緣的身份認同之上。由此可知，客家人的文化因素，是決定客家人身份認同的重要因素之一。

五. 結語

從以上的分析，可知香港的客家人正處於一個文化認同的轉移的年代，客家人的文化認同，由原本的「客家人」轉為「香港客家人」，再由「香港客家人」轉移為「香港人」，這是一個文化接觸、涵化和同化的過程。當中原因是多方面的，如濡教化和社會化、「轉移機制」、客籍團體、主位和客位的態度，語言和文化等。各項因素，是相互影響和配合，才造成這個現象。而以上這些因素，是值得我們加以了解的，以掌握當中的發展脈絡，達至通盤性的理解，這是本文目的之一。

此外，香港客家人在文化認同的轉移，是受到外在和內在因素影響。筆者認為，若要維持香港客家人的客家文化認同，在客觀環境的限制下，必需從內部重新建立一個強而有力的客籍組織，以維持客家的文化特色，為客家的文化認同，提供所必需的文化內涵，將客家的文化植根於本土之中，才是維持香港「客家人」之道。

這個報告的內容，是跟據五名客籍人士和五名非客籍人士的訪問而成，出發點的是希望從微觀層面，了解宏觀層面；從特性通則 (particularism)，了解普性通則 (universalism)；從質的角度，了解量的現象。本文目的，是希望從文化的角度，探討香港客家人的文化認同現象，並進而了解香港的文化特色，以及三者之間的相互關係，並且作為一種資料性的記錄，將香港客家人在文化認同方面的現象，在日後和其它地方加以比較，以達到人到人類學跨文化比較的研究精神。

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Book Section



The Anthropological Perspective: The Relationship Between Hong Kong Hakka Cultural Identity and the Construction of Hong Kong Culture

So Kwok Wai

Abstract

This article starts with the question of Hakka cultural identity, and by using etic and emic (Hakka and non-Hakka) points of view, analyses multiple ways in which interaction constructs ethnic identity. The author attempts to examine the problem of Hakka cultural identity through a number of cultural factors including cultural contact, acculturation and assimilation, multi-cultural identities, blood, and regional origins. In this way, the article adds to our understanding of the special characteristics of culture and identity of Hong Kong people.

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Contents: Introduction: The Anthropology of Contemporary Hong Kong (*Grant Evans & Maria Tam*); IDENTITY Hong Kong Ethnicity: Of Folk Models and Chang (*Gregory Eliyu Guldin*); Back to the Future: Herbal Tea Shops in Hong Kong (*Cheng Sea Ling*); CULTURAL STUDIES Of Mimicry and Mermaids: Hong Kong and the Documentary Film Legacy (*Philip Robertson*); Resurgent Chinese Power in Postmodern Disguise: The New Bank of China Building in Hong Kong and Macau (*Cheng Miu Bing, Christina*); Treading on the Margins: Performing Hong Kong (*Rozanna Lilley*); GENDER AND KINSHIP Negotiation Tradition: Customary Succession in the New Territories of Hong Kong (*Selina Ching Chan*); *Jyuh Fòng Néuh*: Female Inheritance and Affection (*Eliza Chan*); Motherhood in Hong Kong: The Working Mother and Child-care in the Parent-Centered Hong Kong Family (*Diana Martin*); RELIGION AND BELIEFS Traditional Values and Modern Meanings in the Paper Offering Industry of Hong Kong (*Janet Lee Scott*); Sacred Power in the Metropolis: Shrines and Temples in Hong Kong (*Graeme Lang*); Ghosts and the New Governor: The Anthropology of a Hong Kong Rumor (*Grant Evans*); LANGUAGE Bad Boys and Bad Language: Chóu Háu and the Sociolinguistics of Swearwords in Hong Kong Cantonese (*Kingsley Bolton & Christopher Hutton*).

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