

# **With Chinese Characteristics:**

Documenting Patterns of Cultural Implantation, Intersection and Infiltration

by  
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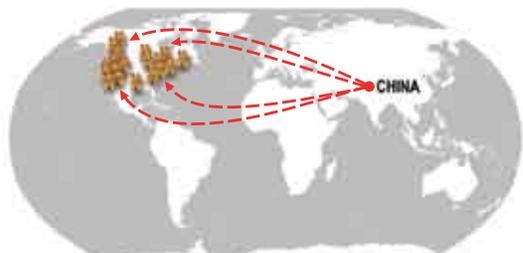
## Author's Declaration

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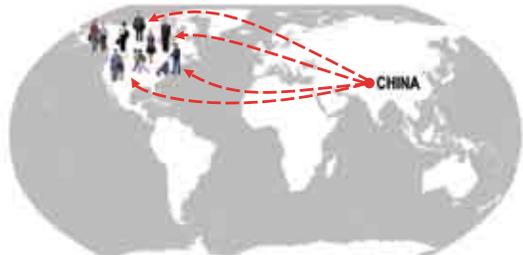
Kyle Sanvictores





Flow of commercial capital

Fig.0.01



Flow of human capital

Fig.0.02



Flow of symbols of consumption

Fig.0.03



Flow of models of habitation

Fig.0.04

## Abstract

This thesis explores the global traffic in culture and its effects on the urban environment. Two overlapping forces are documented: first the proliferation of Western models and cultural signifiers in China and second the emergence of corresponding patterns resistance. Both these forces are explored on the global and urban scale as they affect the shaping of Shanghai and Toronto. The profusion of Western culture into China has reshaped the country through various periods in its history. Most recently, the whole scale application of Western aesthetics to the built environment has given rise to numerous anomalous places that border on the absurd. This act of cultural erasure has also given rise to a new population, an informal floating population that exists outside of the prevailing system of “progress”. Their forms of habitation and cultural transaction are articulated by informal and non-conforming patterns of development—an underground world. This represents a reaction to marginalization and cultural disenfranchisement. When looking at the formation of Toronto’s own Chinese community, similar patterns of marginalization have promoted the constitution of ethnic enclaves, first in the traditional sense of the urban Chinatown and more recently in the forms of suburban ethnic enclaves. In both cases, the proliferation of these subversive patterns offers a form of reverse colonialism. The thesis parallels the tension of these two forces as they are played out in the formation of the new suburban Chinatown, exploring how this phenomenon is redefining the traditional parameters of Asian Diaspora communities and how these new patterns challenge the traditional model of the suburb. In the last part of the book a speculative proposition is made about the intersection of these two worlds, a world where the thresholds between official and unofficial have been blurred, where they are now coincidental. Throughout the body of research offers a broad sampling of past trajectories and the meeting of current trends. It is an incomplete road map that traces the pathology of cultural exchange in the past and projects their intersection in the future. It offers a way of navigating through the emergent transnational territories engendered by cultural trafficking, documenting anomalies, phenomena and emergent patterns that renegotiate our traditional ideas of the nationality.



## Acknowledgements

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Committee: Val Rynnimeri, Lloyd hunt

External Reader: David Lieberman



## Dedication

This book is dedicated to the memory of my father,  
Antonio Sanvictores. Miss you dad.



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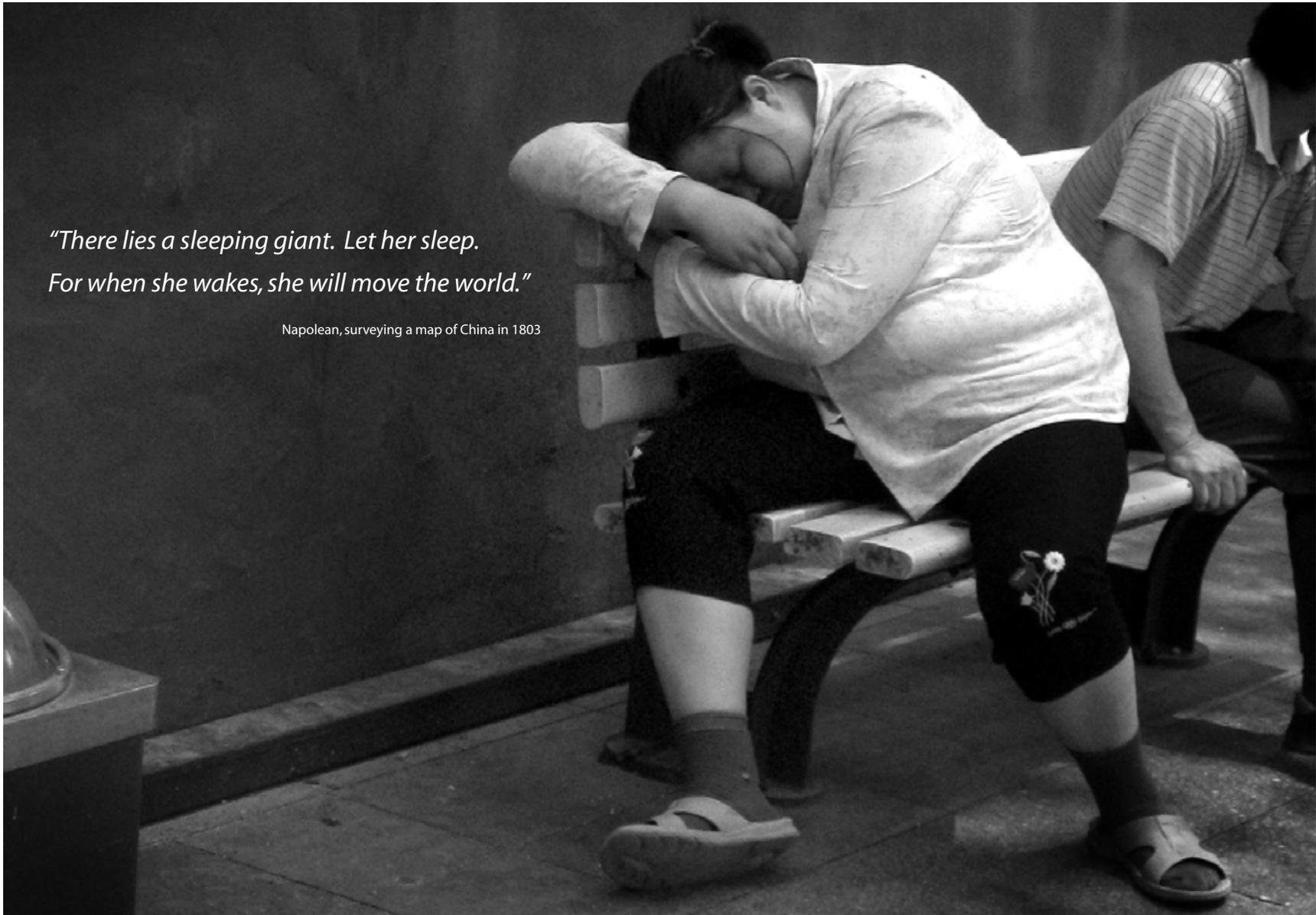
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*"There lies a sleeping giant. Let her sleep.  
For when she wakes, she will move the world."*

Napolean, surveying a map of China in 1803

Fig. 1.01

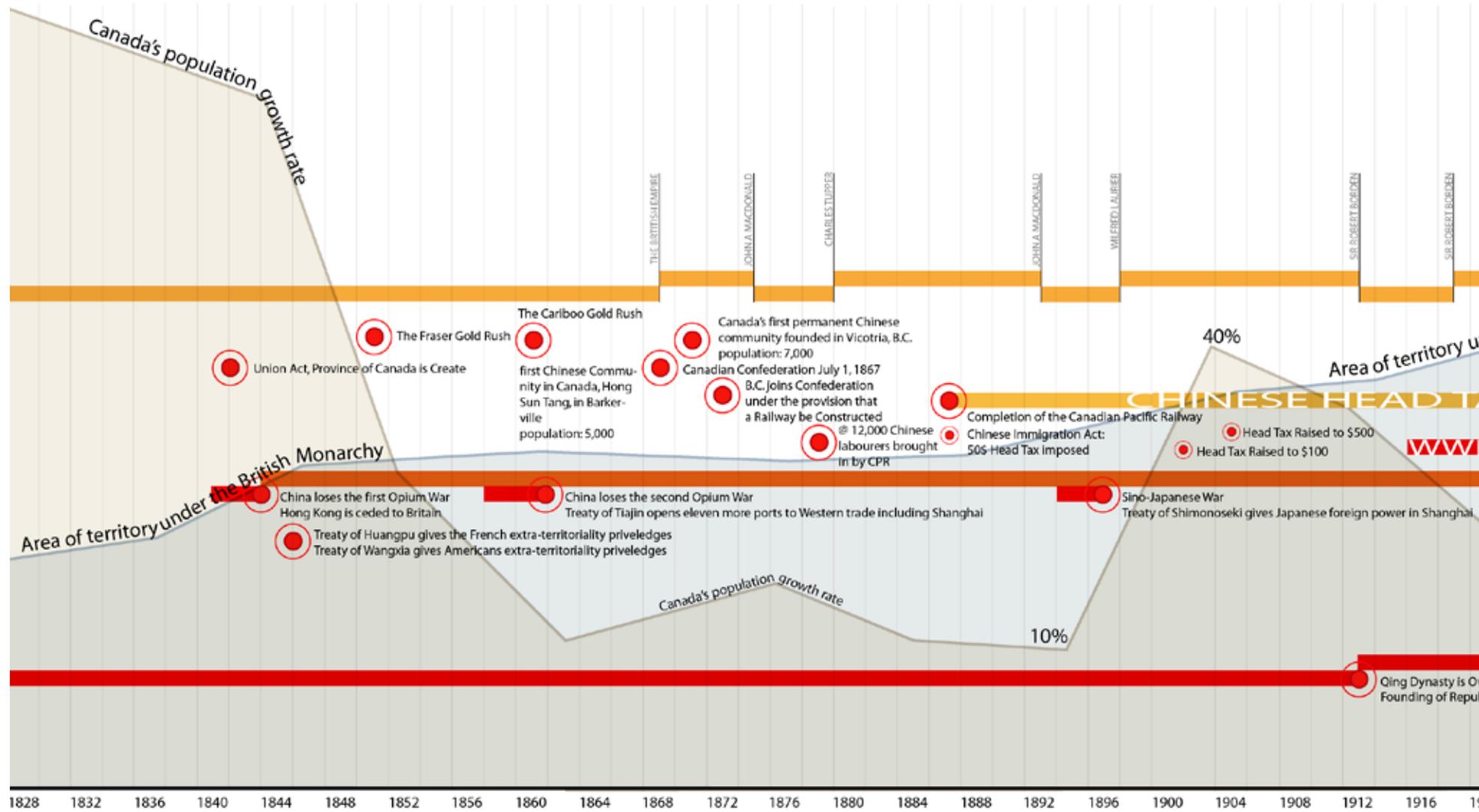
# CHAPTER 1: EPISODES

## **ep·i·sode: n.**

One of a series of related events in the course of a continuous account;

An incident or event that is part of a progression or a larger sequence

The following chapter is a collection of anecdotes and historical events that have individually peppered the life experience and research findings of the author. Though not evident from the beginning these seemingly inconsequential events, collectively, begin to inform the connections between time, place and history that have shaped making of two cities, Shanghai and Toronto.



# Mapping Fields of Intersection: CHINA and CANADA

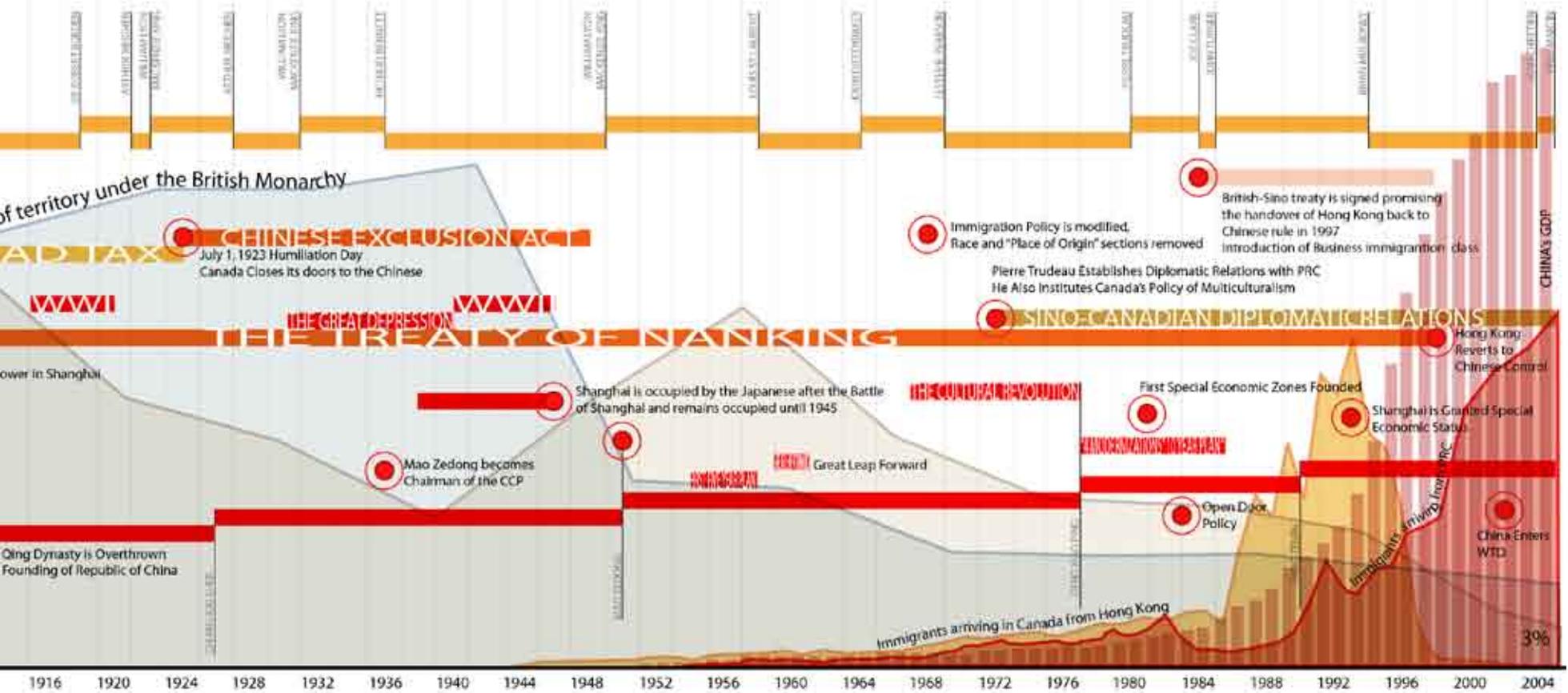


Fig. 1.02



Fig. 1.03



Fig. 1.04

Living in Shanghai is grossly self-indulgent, it is a place to disappear and live large at the same time. You are at once anonymous and infamous.

It is nearly 6 months since I left Toronto to come to Shanghai. I have pushed my luck one too many times in this place. It is time to leave. I have what I came for.

We've been up for almost 48 hours straight, and I had collapse on the couch after one last night of drinking. We are at a friend's apartment, where we all had been crashing—the end of a weeklong farewell party.

Sunrise, time to leave. Late, of course. Slept in. I am awakened by the ringing of my cell phone. Luke is downstairs waiting with a cab. In a panic, I scramble to find the phone and my clothes.

Lucky, my bags are packed. The place is a mess – empty bottles, half-filled glasses, and fruit juice cans. Still half asleep, I move quickly. I wake my friend. We have less than 45 minutes to make it to the airport. Ting grabs one bag and I grab the other. We bolt out the door.

We take the elevator one last time. The door lady stares at us with relief: we seem to be leaving at last. She never did like us. It's a clumsy struggle to jam the bags into the cab. With two other passengers and four suitcases full of t-shirts, cigarettes, and pashminas, this is not going to be a comfortable ride.

I dodge into the convenience store for an iced coffee and a Redbull— for stamina to run to the gate. Ting and I share the backseat. We're pinned against each other by the immense suitcase in the back with us.

"Kuai dien!" We explode out of the gate, heading for Pudong International Airport, a good 45 minutes away. It begins to rain.

Sheets of water cascade down the cab's windshield as we pull out onto the main thoroughfare. The cheap wipers flap hypnotically, and do little to clear the view. My heart rate races in matching rhythm. Sweaty. Nervous. Caffeine and adrenaline pulse through my body. I'm going home.

We weave through morning traffic, out of the city center. Our wheels glide over

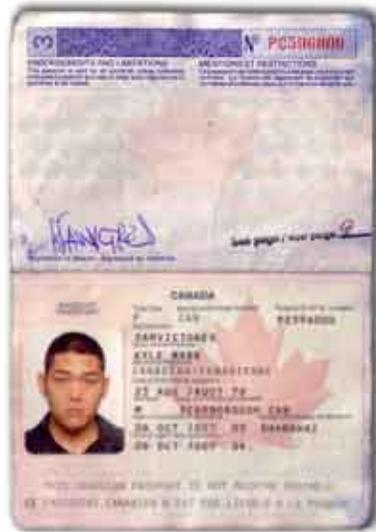


Fig. 1.05

the road's surface. We dodge delivery trucks, pedestrians, and other maddened cabbies. The driver honks indiscriminately, swerves left. Changes lanes. Several times we come within inches of a collision, once close enough to see the gap in another driver's teeth as he curses, honking hopelessly. No one seems affected.

With Shanghai cabbies, brushes with death are commonplace. Notorious for their aggressiveness, cab drivers here are also among the most skilled at illegal maneuvers. They are a fact of daily life. You develop a level of tolerance, a sense of invincibility. It is a matter of survival. Flinch, or hesitate, you're as good as dead. The one-time insurance payout for a fatality is far cheaper than it is for crippling someone for life, so driving with the intent to kill is simply a matter of economics.

Minutes later, we skid into the arrival lane of Pudong International Airport. Storming into the check-in line, I scramble to collect myself. I check my luggage in, but not before dishing out an additional \$100 for exceeding the weight limit. Luke and Ting cannot follow me past the next gate. We make hasty goodbyes. There is no time for proper farewells.



Fig. 1.06

I make my way to the first of several controlled gateways. Staring at my watch, twitching from the Redbull, sweating profusely, I present my passport to the officer. I have less than five minutes to board the plane. The officer flips through my passport, stopping at the page containing my visa. He moves in slow motion as I stare at the overhead clock. Inspecting it more closely, he pushes it towards my face and yells something to me in Chinese. I snap out of my daze. In broken Mandarin I tell him I cannot understand him. He gestures more forcefully. I finally notice that he's pointing to the stamp on my visa—my date of entry into China.

I calculate, and realize that I have been in the country past my allowed 60 days. Three weeks before, I rescheduled my return flight to extend my stay but had forgotten to revise my visa. *I'm going to spend the rest of my life in a squalid Chinese prison*, I think. The sweat flows.

I am escorted to another room where the contents of my wallet are spilled onto a table. Several officers rifle through my cards. They pull each one out and examine it carefully. They seem agitated as they hold them up to the light and shine their flashlights



Fig. 1.07



Fig. 1.08

through them, checking for forged documents. This goes on for about an hour. I don't even have any cash to bribe them with. I miss my flight.

Incidentally, my passport is of dubious origin—issued in Shanghai three years before by the Canadian Consulate. It cannot be electronically scanned and is only meant as a temporary replacement for an original lost during my previous trip to China. But I had somehow managed to extend it for three years. To add to their suspicions, my seemingly Latin American last name—Sanvictores—doesn't match my Asian appearance. Until this point, I had always derived pleasure from the disconnect between my appearance and name. At this moment, however, I would happily forfeit that privilege for a white face and safe passage onto a plane. As they pass me off from one officer to the next, I keep quiet. *Be cool, I think, maintain composure.*

1 hour later. The contents of my wallet are now sprawled on the table before me. Several officers converse, they are arguing over one piece of my identification. *They must think I am trying to leave the country with illegal or stolen documents.* I put on my best English

accent to tell him where I am from, and what I was doing in China. "I am a student," I say, gesturing to my Citizenship Card and my Student ID.

About an hour and a half later, they are sufficiently convinced of my Canadian citizenship. They escort me back to the airline check-in desk where I am rebooked for the next flight back to Canada. It will be another four hours before I can resume my journey home. I wait by the gate. My time in Shanghai was already extended by three weeks; a few more hours are not going to kill me.

Shanghai was reluctant to loosen its grip.



Fig. 1.09

When I first left for China, in 2003, I knew that, when I returned to Toronto, it would be to a neighbourhood vastly different from the one I left. Although I would only be gone 6 months, a momentum was building.

In the months prior to my departure, the neighbourhood driving range had closed its doors, the land purchased by developers. There was talk of the arrival of a Building Box or Rona Lansing, but public opposition had forced company executives to consider another location. Also, there was talk of Big Box retail campus, ubiquitous to the suburbs of Toronto. But even that plan failed to materialize. This was odd, given that the site was prime suburban real estate. By the time I left, the grass had grown long on the field. A temporary fence had been erected around the property, and construction crews had begun site preparation for several bisecting roads. Though the fate of the site was undetermined for some time, there was anticipation for new development.

Not far from it, the recently minted Go Transit commuter train station was celebrating its inaugural month. With increased ridership over the last few years, the



Fig. 1.10

previous platform had been renovated, with a redesigned station and a full-sized parking lot. Once little more than a canopied concrete slab, it now resembled a quaint Victorian cottage. The effect—already incongruous within the context of the neighbourhood—was particularly jarring given the railway’s adjacency to several large industrial plants.

Within a stone’s throw of the train station was the recently completed, Phase II development of the City Walk International Food Street (in reality, simply yet another Chinese shopping plaza). A recent trend had emerged among new commercial projects in the area involving the alliance of Western retail chains and Chinese businesses. Whereas the majority of the developments in prior years maintained a physical distinction between “Canadian” and “ethnic” retailing, here Staples, No Frills, Tim Hortons, and Wendy’s prospered alongside smaller non-chain privately-owned Chinese businesses. A symbiosis was developing, on an ever-increasing scale. The latest developments were two major strip malls located along Steeles Avenue, each anchored by T&T (a Western-modeled Chinese grocery store chain), Shopper’s Drug Mart, and Boston Pizza.



Fig. 1.11: Construction site at the corner of Midland Avenue and McNicol Road, December 2004

Another indication of change was the closing of our local Canadian Tire, a neighbourhood staple for at least the 22 years that I lived in Scarborough. I bought many of my firsts there—my first bike, my first fishing rod, my first power tool. But somehow, with the growing presence of Asian retailing, Canadian Tire no longer seemed relevant to the community. Or perhaps Canadian Tire's National Initiatives were merely looking elsewhere for more profitable pastures.

Around the same time, Canadian Tire announced the opening of a distribution office in Shanghai.<sup>1</sup> In order to respond to an increasing supply of Canadian Tire products from China, the company saw fit to increase accessibility to the East. So, its doors were closing on my side of the world even as they were opening on the other side of the world, the side where I was headed.

But nothing announced change more loudly than the erection of a billboard just outside the closed Canadian Tire in my neighbourhood. On the lawn between the parking lot and Steeles Avenue, a huge sign showcasing the arrival—on the old Canadian

Tire lot—of Phase III of the City Walk development. Entitled “Splendid China Tower,” it was a monstrous building that would be part of the “largest Chinese shopping area in North America.” The main rendering showcased a large red gateway resembling the Forbidden City in Beijing, flanked by walls of glass and pillars of masonry with a flag atop each. It resembled a city wall—fitting for a mall on the northern border between metropolitan Toronto and Markham.

By the time I left, there was little activity on either the driving range site or the Canadian Tire site. What was becoming clearer was the acceleration of change over the past few years—vacant lots and older businesses were being phased out in the wake of new development. Construction at this pace had not been seen in the neighbourhood since ten years earlier when all the major Chinese malls were first established.

## 03 Shen Nung



Fig. 1.12: Shen Nung from 18th Century Copy of the Pen Ts'ao Ching

The second emperor of China, Shen Nung, is immortalized in Chinese mythology as the father of agriculture, inventor of the plow and teacher of the arts of animal husbandry and grain cultivation. Part man, part deity, Shen Nung is venerated in various parts of China for his many contributions to the growth of Chinese culture and advancement of civilization—he is the god of fire, and the god of agriculture.<sup>2</sup>

Shen Nung is also the fabled founder of Chinese Traditional Medicine. He earned this title, as legend would have it, by testing hundreds of herbs and substances on himself in order to document their medicinal value. His findings were recorded in the *Shen Nung Pen Ts'ao Ching* (Shen Nung's Herbs), the earliest treatise on Chinese pharmacology dating back as far as 2737 BC, making him China's first pharmacist as well.<sup>3</sup> Shen Nung's Herbs describes 365 medicines derived from minerals, plants, and animals, including the first known reference to the psychoactive properties of cannabis.

While the cannabis plant had been cultivated for centuries in China, used for its fibrous properties to make rope, paper and cloth, Shen Nung's account of the plant's

effects on human physiology are the earliest extant documents of the plant's medicinal properties. Focusing on cannabis as an agent for relieving rheumatism, gout, malaria, and oddly enough, absent-mindedness, the *Pen Ts'ao Ching* also mentions that excessive consumption of the female flower can conjure visions—describing the plant as the “*liberator of sin.*” It is believed that the psychoactive properties of cannabis played a large role in the work of shamans and witch doctors in remote regions of China, but had a marginal profile in mainstream Chinese medicine.<sup>4</sup>

Of the mind altering substances that Emperor Shen Nung is credited with, none has shaped the direction of China's history more than tea. As the legend goes, Shen Nung had taken his royal court on a trip to visit a distant region of the kingdom. While resting under a tree, Shen Nung, who had become accustomed to boiling his water, saw a few dried leaves fall from a nearby bush into the pot of boiling water. Curious about the infused liquid, Shen Nung drank the substance. Finding the brew delicious and refreshing, he “discovered” the stimulating beneficial properties of the tea leaf.

The earliest written reference to Tea, dating back to 350 AD, documented the cultivation and preparation of Chinese tea. Prepared primarily as a medicinal beverage, dried tea leaves were soaked in a kettle of boiled water. During this period it is believed that Chinese hill tribes of South west China began cultivation of the tea plant, *Camellia sinensis*. Another Chinese dictionary, this one from the 5th century, described the infusion of processed Tea leaves.<sup>5</sup> It involved pressing the leaves into cakes which were roasted, pounded and then broken up into little pieces. To make an infusion the pieces were placed in a china pot where boiling water was poured over them and then, to improve the flavour, ginger, onions and orange were added.

By the end of the 5th century, Tea was an article of trade for which Turkish traders bartered along the Mongolian border. At this time, Tea was still drunk primarily as a medicinal herb. During the T'ang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.), methods of Tea manufacturing developed, greatly assisting the spread of Tea, which finally received its own character, *ch'a*. Around this time, Buddhist missionaries brought the tea drinking tradition to Japan.

By 780, the tea industry had grown so large that the imperial court imposed



Fig. 1.13

taxes on its sale, both locally and abroad. That same year, Lu Yu published the first treatise on tea, the *Ch'a Ching* (the *Classic of Tea*). As an orphan he was raised in a monastery by Buddhist monks. In his adult life, he drew from his memory of observed events, rituals and places, codifying the various methods of tea cultivation and preparation in ancient China. The text is subdivided into ten parts covering all aspects of Tea culture, from the art of drinking to the science of pruning and harvesting. Lu believed that beyond healing properties, tea was to be consumed as a ritual to promote meditation. It was around this time that Buddhist missionaries began traveling to Japan, carrying with them the traditions of tea drinking.

The common preparation of Tea during the T'ang Dynasty was to pound the leaves, shaping and pressing them into molds then drying them over heat, producing a Tea brick. These Tea bricks were used as currency in remote areas of China. Later, during the Sung Dynasty (960-1280 A.D.), the Chinese favoured a delicate Tea created by grinding the leaves to a powder, pouring boiling water over the powder and then whipping the mixture



Fig. 1.14

into a froth with a whisk.<sup>6</sup>

By the end of the Sung Dynasty, tea drinking moved into more mainstream consumption. No longer exclusively for religious and healing practices, it had become a widely consumed beverage amongst all classes in society.

In 1564, the Portuguese became the first country to gain right of trade with China. Through this relationship the Dutch East India Company was founded. The trade between the two nations helped in the development of one the Netherlands' contemporary art forms, delftware pottery.<sup>7</sup> The tradition of elaborate blue and white earthenware evolved as an imitation of traditional Chinese glazed pottery. It was also through this trade relationship that tea was first introduced into Europe. Like other Chinese imports such as silk, when tea first appeared, it was extremely expensive. As an exotic drink it was reserved for the wealthy, but by the year 1675, tea was sold in common food shops throughout Holland. The trend of tea drinking spread to France and other parts of Europe as well as the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam.



Fig. 1.15: Princess Catherine Braganza of Portugal

Tea first reached Great Britain in 1660, when King Charles II received two pounds of dried leaves from China.<sup>8</sup> After Charles introduced the beverage to his bride, Princess Catherine Braganza of Portugal, she quickly made tea-drinking a fashionable ritual of the Court. Within a few decades of their marriage, tea became the national drink of choice, so chic that alcohol consumption declined.<sup>9</sup> In 1663 the poet and politician Edmund Waller wrote a poem in honour of the queen for her birthday:

*Venus her Myrtle, Phoebus has his bays;  
Tea both excels, which she vouchsafes to praise.  
The best of Queens, the best of herbs, we owe  
To that bold nation which the way did show  
To the fair region where the sun doth rise,  
Whose rich productions we so justly prize.  
The Muse's friend, tea does our fancy aid,  
Regress those vapours which the head invade,  
And keep the palace of the soul serene,  
Fit on her birthday to salute the Queen.*

In the early 1800s, Anna, the seventh Duchess of Bedford, created the custom of 'Afternoon Tea' as an intermediary meal between the main meals of the day, breakfast and dinner.<sup>10</sup> Since the servants were off duty during the middle of the day, lunch was rarely satisfying. When servants returned to full duties in the afternoon, Anna began ordering Tea and cakes to satiate her hunger pangs. Inviting her friends over at five o'clock for tea and snacks soon became a fashionable social event. This pause for tea became popular among the wealthy aristocrats, and soon permeated into all classes of British society.

The tradition of afternoon tea evolved into an English ritual. Tea sets, specific menus and even furniture revolved around a new tea-drinking culture. During the Victorian era, upper-class and society women would change into long gowns, gloves and hats for their afternoon tea which was usually served in the drawing room. This period conjures images of lace doilies, raised pink fingers and floral tea sets.

But behind this facade of respectability and decorum, the history of tea is one of the most sinister chapters of global manipulation. It can be argued that it was the catalyst that brought about the expansion of the British Empire and the beginning of transnational drug trafficking. The stimulant's role through out the 18th and 19th centuries is inextricably connected to a much larger geo-political picture of world history.



Fig. 1.16: Hong Kong Skyline

At the start of the nineteenth century, the island of Hong Kong was little more than a tiny fishing community, inhabited, mostly, by a mix of subsistence farmers, fishermen and pirates. During the 1800's Britain had used Hong Kong and other islands as refueling stops during peak trading season with China.

The Island of Hong Kong first came under British control at the end of the First Opium War in 1842. At the time, Hong Kong was a rocky and mountainous island with little promise for development. Less than two decades later, the demand for resources and limitations of land on the growing colony led to The Second Anglo-Chinese War. The British victory, through the Convention of Peking, gave London perpetual control of the territory on the Chinese mainland known as the Kowloon peninsula across from Hong Kong Island.

However, Kowloon also suffered from lack of water and arable land, so much so that in 1898, the British again presented demands to the Chinese government for expansion of the colony's territory.<sup>11</sup> A large area adjoining Kowloon, which became known as the New Territories, was signed over by the Chinese government in a 99-year lease with the British government.

Under these new conditions, the British colony prospered, and expanded to

become the most innovative and reliable center in Asia for banking, shipping and insurance. Under a British-styled system, the colony established itself as the gateway to the East for foreign investors and entrepreneurs. Its colonial history made it a Pacific headquarters, and a stepping stone for multinationals into China and the Orient. Its central location provided access to markets of the greater Pacific region, while the familiar British system provided the instruments and the creature comforts of Western culture. By the 1980's Hong Kong had risen as an economic city state alongside the economies South East Asia. It had become a metropolis and city of wealth for both foreigners and locals alike.

By the mid-80s the deadline for Britain's lease on the New Territories had become an issue of heated debate. On December 19, 1984, after lengthy negotiations with the Chinese government, Britain agreed to hand control of the entire colony back to China. In response, China agreed to give Hong Kong an unprecedented measure of autonomy, allowing a grace period of 50 years during which the existing social and economic systems would remain unchanged. The handover took place July 1, 1997.

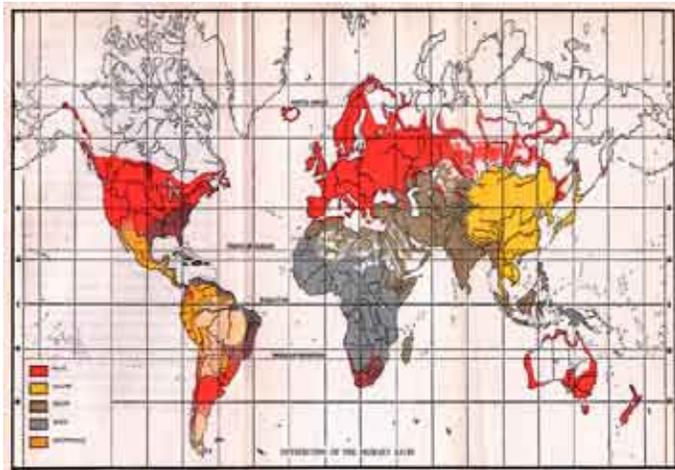


Fig. 1.17: Distribution of the Primary Races: Map from *The rising Tide of Colour*

*"[China] will use the most incomparable and advantageous labor force: the Chinese worker, who will be paid 5 cents, while our workers get five dollars or more. Our products will be evicted from the Chinese market; and then China will sell us its own products. Initially defensive, it will quickly become offensive, and we will organize its assault. We already did!"*

Member of the French Parliament – in 1899

In the late nineteenth century, with an influx of Chinese coolies (a derogatory term for cheap labourers from Asia) into various countries around the world, the "Yellow Peril" became a Western anxiety. As the title of a book published in 1901 by the economist Edmond Théry, *Yellow Peril* crystallized Asia's perceived threat in the west. In America these sentiments motivated the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which closed the nation's doors to Chinese immigrants. In 1920, the American author Lothrop Stoddard wrote *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy*, advocating the preservation of White Hegemony in the world and warning of the dire consequences resulting from immigration.

The beginning of the book details the difference between the two main races in the world: *whites* and *colours*. The coloured races are then subdivided into: red, black, brown, and yellow. The first chapter in his book describes the "Yellow Man's Land" as the *greatest potential threat to White supremacy*. Stoddard details how the "yellow" nations of Asia were the only nations among the colored races that had yet to be ruled by the white race. He cites the imperialist ambitions of Japan and the alarming population growth of China as evidence of the yellows' capacity to challenge whites in terms of technological advancement.

*"...have an instinctive assurance in their own capacities, they know how they have ultimately digested all their conquerors, and many Chinese to-day think that from a Chino-Japanese partnership, no matter how framed, the inscrutable "Sons of Han" would eventually get the lion's share. Certainly no one has ever denied the Chinaman's extraordinary economic efficiency. Winnowed by ages of grim elimination in a land populated to the uttermost limits of subsistence, the Chinese race is selected as no other for survival under the fiercest conditions of economic stress. At home the average Chinese lives his whole life literally within a hand's breadth of starvation. Accordingly, when removed to the easier environment of other lands, the Chinaman brings with him a working capacity which simply appalls his competitors."* <sup>12</sup>

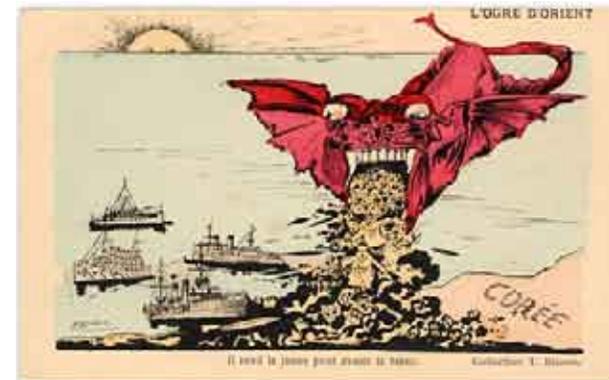


Fig. 1.18: The Yellow Peril



Fig 1.19: Head Tax Certificate

Promoted as a “get rich quick” opportunity, Chinese men were enticed to come to Canada with the promise of riches and a quick return to their homeland. Canada was marketed as the “Golden Mountain”—a land abundant with opportunity and wealth. In 1858, the first major influx of Chinese came to British Columbia during the gold rush in the Fraser River Valley, drawn by the lure of instant prosperity. Soon there were about 5,000 Chinese in British Columbia. Many formed their own mining companies, working the mines abandoned by Canadian miners. Others took service jobs in remote mining and logging towns – cooks and laundry operators – typically reserved for women. In the beginning, Chinese were generally welcomed because of their industry, and their support of the local economic and mining industry.<sup>13</sup>

In 1867, Confederation provided the impetus for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), connecting British Columbia to the rest of Canada—from sea to shining sea. Canada depended on the Chinese for cheap labour to complete the CPR; 17,000 arrived between 1881 and 1884.<sup>14</sup> Many left China under labour contracts, planning

to earn enough to send money back home, and to return to China after fulfilling their obligations.

When the railway was completed and BC’s gold mines exhausted, thousands of Chinese were left without work. Unable to find steady employment and incapable of financing their return trip back to China, many became destitute—living in tents and shanty towns in Vancouver. Although they could not leave, the Canadian government wanted to ensure that they did not settle permanently in the country either.

Desperate, coolies were willing to take any work available, for wages far below the standard. Fear of depressed wages and a flooded labour market, motivated labour protests that painted the Chinese coolies as a threat to the vitality of the local economy. Lobbyists pressured the BC government to restrict further immigration. In 1885, the Federal Government responded by instituting a head tax on Chinese immigrants of fifty dollars, a tax that increased steadily to one hundred dollars by 1900, and then five hundred dollars by 1903. This was equivalent to two years salary of the average Chinese labourer. It was impossible for families to reunite on either Chinese or Canadian soil. Canada Day July 1, 1923, 56 years after confederation and only three years after the publication of Lothrop Sotddard’s *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy*, the Canadian government made its strongest policy against incoming immigrants. Canada’s Chinese Exclusion Act, like that of the United States effectively banned entry into Canada for all those of Chinese descent.

Between 1923 and 1947, when the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed, less than 50 Chinese immigrants had made their way legally into Canada. Between 1885 and 1923, the federal government collected \$23 million (\$1.2 billion in current dollars), affecting some 80,000 Chinese-Canadians directly.



Fig 1.20: China Shipping

Christmas 2004. I am back in Toronto after my first trip to Shanghai. Aside from a suitcase full of bootleg DVDs and pashminas, I have done no Christmas shopping. At the local mall, I find myself in the centre of consumer madness: fluffy cotton blanketing store fronts, oversized Christmas ornaments, banners advertising Boxing Day Prices Now!

While I was fighting my way through crowds of last minute shoppers, ports along the west Coast of North America were experiencing similar levels of congestion, overwhelmed by record-breaking shipments from China. As early as October of 2004, news reports described merchandise stranded, and cargo ships forced to wait up to two weeks to unload.<sup>15</sup> The lag time for deliveries for shipping a cargo container between Shanghai and Toronto doubled. Much of this backlog was traced to the port in Vancouver, the entry point for most of Canada's goods arriving from the Pacific region. In October 2004 terminal operators in Vancouver began reporting of reported overwhelmed shipyards. Inundated, by shipments arriving from China, they could not process and unload all the ships in time, leaving some stranded with a full cargo for days at a time. Rail delivery was backed up by as much as ten days.

One response by importers has been to bypass Vancouver all-together using the Panama Canal enroute to the port of Halifax. Although the travel time by ship is almost two weeks longer and one-third more expensive than the route to Vancouver, suppliers desperate for products to make it in time for the Christmas season could no longer wait for the backlog in Vancouver shipyards to be resolved.<sup>16</sup>

The neighbourhood kids were gone. Their parents had called them off the streets. The sun had set. The summer BBQs were over. Beneath the window of his room the air conditioner hummed. His window overlooked a sea of backyards like his own. Against the wall was a single bed, neatly made, with two pillows and recently pressed sheets. Alongside the bed was his night table. On it was Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*.

Jason stood in front of the mirror as he dressed for bed. He emptied the pockets of the pants he had been wearing. He placed his wallet on top of the loose change. The rest of the contents were piled carefully on the desk, next to the terra cotta pot. He returned to the mirror and flexed his left bicep, then his right. He was awkwardly proportioned. He had a nose too big for his face, a head too big for his body. His hands and feet were clownishly oversized. He knew that he could not rely on his looks. He had to out-smart, out-talk, and out-play the other guy. He grinned at his reflection and moved towards the bed.

Propped up against his two pillows, he considered the day's activities:

- ... Home Depot purchases: 4" terracotta pot \$2.99, Miracle grow 355 ml. \$4.99, 2lb bag of all purpose potting soil \$4.99
- ... with finger push a hole 2" deep into the soil. [check]
- ... drop single seed into indentation. [check]
- ... fill hole loosely with all-purpose soil. [check]
- ... water generously. [check]
- ... maintain consistent lighting conditions. [check]

His eye lids began to droop. The dim light of his desk lamp was focused on the earthenware pot of dark soil sitting on the desk. He removed his glasses and placed them on the night table. Now the pot was blurry. The glare of the light bulb forced him to squint. His eyelids started to feel heavy. As he drifted off, he asked himself, "How long does it take a marijuana seed to germinate?"

I have known Jason for almost 25 years now. We grew up together, attending the same elementary school, and high school. Our parents still live in the same neighbourhood, the community of Upper Chartwell. Growing up in the area since it was first built, I've gained a particular perspective of shifting dynamics within the neighbourhood, starting with the proliferation of grow houses.



Fig 1.21: Jason Chen

## 10 A Paper Bag

May 18, 2006. For the third time in two months, there was a blackout in my neighbourhood. It was only May, and nowhere near the summer temperatures that had resulted in the great blackout of 2003. Even stranger, lights could be seen just beyond Steeles Avenue; it was just our section of four blocks that were affected.

Neighbours began to gather on their lawns, chatting with each other, wondering if this was going to be a regular occurrence through out the summer. It was nearing five hours that the power had been out.

My mother wandered a few houses down, where a crowd was forming. Two people in particular appeared in distress, arguing in Chinese. They lived next to each other, four houses from mine. A small fenceless patch of lawn joined their two lots. "Is someone sick? Do we need to call an ambulance?" another neighbour interjected from outside the darkened crowd.

"Someone dumped this between our houses!" one of the arguing homeowners disclosed as he pointed towards the ground. "We already called the police!" announced the other. At their feet lay a large paper bag, the kind used for yard clippings. "It was full and dumped here. We just found it. We have nothing to do with it. We think it's marijuana."

My mom put her nose to the bag in disbelief. Several other neighbours felt the need to take a sniff too. The conversation soon turned towards the busting of the grow house on our block just a few years ago. And then naturally they began to speculate on who amongst the newcomers to the street could be responsible, each one offering a suspect and a string of reasons.

At around 10pm, a police car arrived, seven hours after the power went off. The officer confirmed that the bag was in fact full of marijuana leaves, with a street value of approximately \$20,000. He placed it in his trunk and took statements from the crowd. Whether the blackout was connected to a blown fuse from a grow house was never confirmed, but the officer alluded to a likely connection.

For the remainder of the summer, there would be several more blackouts. No more weed was found. But a paper bag on the lawn never looked at the same. Many homeowners on the block—my mother included—observed one another more closely, reporting the strange comings and goings of those new to the block. My mom even joined the Neighbourhood Watch, and to this day insists that the home across the street is a front for a marijuana grow house.



Fig 1.22: Clipping Bag on Front Lawn



Fig 1.23: Red Light District in Shenzhen, May 2005

Confusion between my nationality, my appearance, and my citizenship always lead to misunderstandings, no matter where I find myself. Whether signing for a package delivery, dining at a Chinese restaurant, or crossing international borders, clarification is often required. Depending on the style of my hair or shade of my tan, I have passed for everything from Samoan, to Malaysian, to Mexican. But in most instances, I am mistaken for Chinese. Even amongst my own countrymen, of the Philippines, I often have to present my family photos or I.D. to prove my Filipino heritage.

But all this has some advantage. I can associate myself with numerous groups—the people I look like, the people of the same background, the people who speak the same language. This enables me to adopt various personas. I have exploited this privilege to gain access to many places that might, otherwise, be off-limits, if I didn't look and speak the way I do.

On my most recent trip to China, wandering in Shenzhen, near midnight, jetlagged, I stumbled across a red light district. It was late and the streets were alive and

bustling. Around me bright lights flickered and scantily clad girls wobbled across the street in high heel shoes, on the arms of drunken men. People yelled back and forth from one side of the street to the other. The atmosphere was intense. It was a scene out of Las Vegas, but seedier. Music blared from speakers, and hostesses called out to passers-by.

Blending in, I began to snap several photographs of alleyways crowded with sex workers and their potential clients. This was a side of Shenzhen that the tourist books do not cover, but it is a common aspect of big city life in China. Doing my best to go unnoticed, I shot from the hip, not sure of what I might capture. I browsed and snapped for several minutes. Some people noticed the camera, but they were unconcerned, apparently entranced by the atmosphere. In retrospect, I probably could have been a little more discreet.

My photo-journalism was cut short when I was stopped by a local armed security guard who gestured for me to forfeit my camera. Clutching my camera with both hands, I found myself surrounded by a dozen armed guards. One wore a red band around

his right arm. I thought he might be a party member. I thought of spending the rest of my life in a prison cell. I saw my beaten body discarded in a roadside ditch. The guards circled me and motioned for me to follow them. I refused. They signaled again for me to “come this way.” “This way” seemed nothing more than a less obvious place to beat me up. The guard with the red band talked on his walkie-talkie. I stood my ground, protesting that I was a Canadian tourist, not a real journalist. It took several minutes of arguing to convince them that I was in fact a Canadian citizen. Perhaps convinced of my story, or aggravated by our communication barrier, they eventually allowed me to leave. Several guards escorted me to the exit, while my eyes stayed fixed on their guns.

I passed through the main gates of the area and ran to my hotel. The lights of the brothels and the noise of the streets faded as I gained distance from my first encounter with communist authority. At my hotel, I shared the elevator with one patron and several giggling sex workers. I slept little that night, and wondered how clean the sheets were. The incident intensified my curiosity about my identity and background. I was no longer satisfied that my appearance and surname were a mere fluke.

That hunch took me across the globe again, this time to Hawaii. I had only been back from China for a month before I left for Honolulu in October of 2005. I was on my way to see my Aunt Elvie. She is the second eldest of my father’s eight sisters, and was known to our family as the Sanvictores historian. She was about to shed some light on the issue of my appearance and mismatched last name.

The day I landed in Hawaii, I lost my wallet and passport. I had come all this way in search of some answers, only to lose all evidence of my own identity. The first few days there were spent calling airport security, lost and found and the Canadian Consulate. The panic subsided when I realized that I could be trapped in Hawaii for some time. It was comforting. It also allowed me to sit at home with my aunt and ask her about our family history.

One conversation quite early on in my visit yielded many of the answers I was seeking, the origin of my Chinese features and the root of our family name.

Chinese had traded amicably with the Philippines for centuries prior to the

arrival of Europeans. Around 1571, there was a small Chinese population numbering some 150 in the capital city of Manila when the first Spaniard arrived. As the Spanish colony grew, many more business and trading opportunities became available to Chinese merchants, the Spanish opened up the islands to global trade markets. This fostered a drastic change in the Chinese population. By 1600, the ethnic Chinese population in Manila had grown to 15,000 and by the turn of the seventeenth century Manila’s Chinese population had grown to 20,000, far outnumbering the Spanish settlers.<sup>17</sup>

The majority of Chinese originated from China’s Fujian province, geographically the closest province to the Philippines. Because this province was covered by more than 80% mountains, its local economy flourished on sea faring trade as opposed to agriculture. In the Philippines this community of merchants and businessmen flourished as middlemen for this new trading network, establishing themselves at all levels. They carried on a rich trade between Manila and China’s coast, distributing imports from China into the interior islands of the Philippines and bringing provisions from these regions back to Spanish settlements.

The relatively stability of the Chinese population in the Philippines was dramatically altered in the years after the Opium War of 1842, fought between China and Britain. As a result of its losing the war, China signed the Treaty of Nanjing on August 29, 1842.

The Treaty of Nanjing accelerated the exodus of Chinese laborers. The traffic of Western Ships at Chinese ports increased and labourers were lured with the promise of jobs and adventure. With the Industrial Revolution and the abolition of the international slave trade, Britain was looking for alternative cheap labor for its colonies. In many of the newly conquered Southeast Asian nations, there were not enough laborers for colonial plantations and mines. The Dutch in Indonesia, Spanish in the Philippines, British in Malaysia, and French in Indochina imported labourers from China in great numbers.

Some emigrated voluntarily, but millions were impressed by European colonials to work in tropical plantations and mines. Whether these Chinese came as contract labor or debtor labor – committed to work several years to pay off their transportation expenses – many were treated as slaves. In Chinese history this was the “coolie trade,”<sup>18</sup> when Chinese

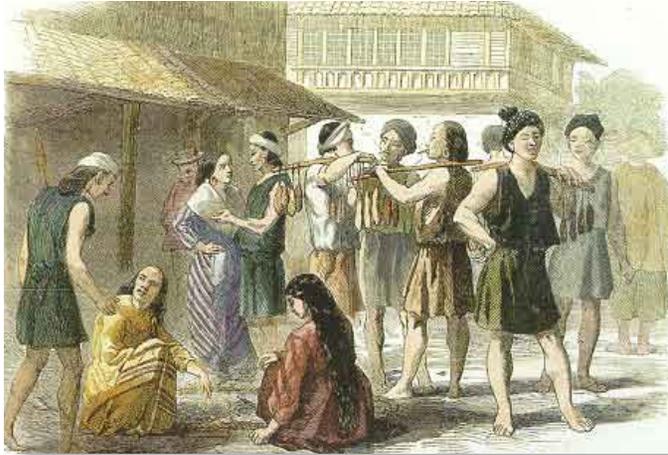


Fig. 1.24: Chinese-Mestizo Cultural Scene



Fig. 1.25: Chinese-Mestizo Street Life

coolies spread to Britain, the United States, South America and Canada, working in labour-intensive industries such as the gold mines of California and the silver mines of Peru.

As facilitators of global trade, many coolies found themselves in the ports of trade frequented by Western traders. Naturally, the Philippines, with an already established Chinese community, saw its numbers increase dramatically. Over time, the Chinese population settled in towns, established communities and businesses and even sent for their families. As the Chinese population became more economically and culturally integrated others married locally. The resulting hybrid culture has come to be called *Chinoy* or *Chinese-Mestizo*.

*Chinoy*s descend directly from those migrants who arrived during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The word *Chinoy* is a merger of two terms, "*Chino*" which is used to describe ethnic Chinese and "*Pinoy*," used to distinguish an ethnic local of Malay descent.

The term Chinese-Mestizo is used to describe those descended from both Chinese and ethnic Filipino roots – a local Filipina mother and Chinese father. The term

Mestizo is, a vestige of the Spanish colonization, used – with implied class distinctions – to describe children of mixed parentage. Descendants of the landed aristocracy and ruling elite, Mestizos were distinguished from locals by their western features — a high and narrow nose structure, wider eyes and a fairer complexion. The persistence of such class indicators has been transferred to the ethnic Chinese-Filipino population which today comprises about three percent of the nation's population.

Throughout the history of their inhabitation of the Philippines, the Chinese have struggled to resolve issues of integration. The term Mestizo can be seen as both a term of admiration, for someone of status, but can also be used as a term of resentment for a foreign invader. This complex interpretation reflects the dual response to the Chinese-Filipino population in contemporary Filipino culture; they are both a revered and a despised population.

Today the film, fashion, music and entertainment industries are dominated by Mestizos of both Chinese-Filipino and Spanish-Filipino decent. Because of their popularity,

many celebrities make the successful transition to careers as politicians, even to the presidency. Distinguished primarily by their fairer complexion and blend of Western and Asian facial features, they represent idealized Filipinos.

On the other hand, ethnic Chinese, who are among the country's most visibly wealthy, are often the target of kidnapping and extortion. They have highly visible roles in the economy, dominating real estate, manufacturing, and resource extraction industries. Although comprising only three percent of the country's population, they control close to 70 percent of nation's wealth, making them obvious targets for extortion. A report prepared by the Pacific Strategies and Assessments (PSA) put the number of kidnappings in the Philippines during 2005 at 132, estimating one kidnapping every three days somewhere in the country. According to the same report, Chinese-Filipinos are the most prominent ethnic group to be kidnapped, accounting for 35 percent of all kidnappings in the past three years.<sup>19</sup>

To cope with modern issues of intolerance, the Chinese population has adopted several practices to mediate public perception. Many Filipinos of Chinese descent, like earlier waves of Chinese migrants, have modified their monosyllabic surnames, adopting Spanish-Filipino surnames instead. One way families have modified their identity has been to slur components of their father's (or grandfather's) name. For instance, if the Chinese surname was Sy Kia, the Mestizo surname would become Syquia. Other examples include Gokongwei, Limchayseng or Yuchengco. Another trend, one that dates as far back as the Spanish colonization, was to Hispanicise or disguise the name within a more accepted Filipinised surnames.

My Aunt Elvie said the second of these methods explained the origin of our surname, Sanvictores. My great grandfather came to the Philippines during the first wave of immigrants from Fujian, China in the mid nineteenth century. He bore the last name Tan, which in Mandarin is known as Chen, Chan in Cantonese. At the time the name Tan was recognized as the most popular Chinese surnames in the Philippines. Author Edgar Wickberg, in his book "The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898", cites a 19th century census showing that the most common surnames were Tan, Uy, Sy, Lim, Chua, Ong, Dy, Go, Co, Yu, Yap and Que, in that order. "Tan" alone accounted for over 10 percent of the names.

To this day, the name Tan represents a large proportion of Chinese currently living in the Philippines, hence the popular expression: half the world is made up of Chens, Chans, or Tans.

Whether to escape discrimination from the Spaniards or perhaps to distinguish themselves from the mass Chinese population, my great grandfather altered his name to a more local sounding one. His original surname "Tan" was modified to "San". And to Hispanicize it further "Victores" was added so that the new name would read as Spanish for "Saint Victor".

My Aunt's family history answered many of the questions I've grown up with. It went a long way towards explaining why my brothers and I never fit the mold of the typical Filipino. Perhaps it even explained why I have always felt more at home in a Chinese community.

Three days before my departure, the travel pouch containing my passport and wallet reappeared, on the driveway of my Aunt's house, waterlogged and wrinkled. I was happy to see everything was still present, minus a few hundred dollars.

I left Hawaii with a more complete picture of my own personal history; a new piece of my past was in some small way related to research I had been collecting in China; subtle fragments in my own history were part of the larger arc of global narrative— clues to a much bigger picture. Travels to China and Hawaii allowed me to tap into the global nervous system for a brief moment. I returned to Toronto to tap into that system again.



Fig 1.26: Etching of Rudyard Kipling

*“EAST IS EAST AND  
WEST IS WEST AND  
NEVER THE TWAIN  
SHALL MEET”*

Rudyard Kipling

In February 1899, British novelist and poet Rudyard Kipling wrote “The White Man’s Burden: The United States and The Philippine Islands.” The publication of that poem coincided with the commencement of the Philippine-American War that, in time – by 1933 – liberated the islands from Spanish rule. The poem describes a Eurocentric World view, a time when the “white man” was obliged to conquer and develop the rest of the world.

Take up the White Man’s burden--  
Send forth the best ye breed--  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives’ need;  
To wait in heavy harness,  
On fluttered folk and wild--  
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,  
Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man’s burden--  
In patience to abide,  
To veil the threat of terror  
And check the show of pride;  
By open speech and simple,  
An hundred times made plain  
To seek another’s profit,  
And work another’s gain.

Take up the White Man’s burden--  
The savage wars of peace--  
Fill full the mouth of Famine  
And bid the sickness cease;  
And when your goal is nearest  
The end for others sought,  
Watch sloth and heathen Folly  
Bring all your hopes to nought.

Take up the White Man’s burden--  
No tawdry rule of kings,  
But toil of serf and sweeper--  
The tale of common things.

The ports ye shall not enter,  
The roads ye shall not tread,  
Go mark them with your living,  
And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man’s burden--  
And reap his old reward:  
The blame of those ye better,  
The hate of those ye guard--  
The cry of hosts ye humour  
(Ah, slowly!) toward the light--  
“Why brought he us from bondage,  
Our loved Egyptian night?”

Take up the White Man’s burden--  
Ye dare not stoop to less--  
Nor call too loud on Freedom  
To cloke your weariness;  
By all ye cry or whisper,  
By all ye leave or do,  
The silent, sullen peoples  
Shall weigh your gods and you.

Take up the White Man’s burden--  
Have done with childish days--  
The lightly proffered laurel,  
The easy, ungrudged praise.  
Comes now, to search your manhood  
Through all the thankless years  
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,  
The judgment of your peers!



Fig. 1.27: Night Scene on Nanjing Road

My first time in the Shanghai, sitting on the curb on Nanjing Lu. It is city's busiest shopping street, packed with tourists and locals marveling at the wonderful light. Four blocks of neon signage provide a view out of the Las Vegas strip. I am a wide-eyed foreigner.

I am waiting, people watching. It is less than a week since my arrival in the city. I am bored, a little lonely, a little homesick. From the corner where I sit, I can survey the Disney-style trolley that passes by, routinely taking shoppers up and down the street. Young people congregate at the benches. Families from other cities snap photographs against the backdrop of multi-floor neon signs. Foreigners soak in the view as well. The whole time, little street children hand out flyers to passers-by. They could easily be pick pockets. They scatter when a policeman strolls by.

It's the middle of summer—the hottest part of the year. The air is thick. It's the kind of heat that makes you want to take a shower the second you step out your door. On days like these I would divide my time, floating between people watching outdoors and air conditioned interiors like department stores or coffee shops.

Two young gentlemen approach me as I sit on the street corner. They complement me on my shoes. I had just bought them the day before, fake diesels. I was impressed by their English at first. They appeared to be locals. They offered to buy me a coffee.

Call it naivety, but I decided to go. They seemed nice enough. And their English was a welcomed change. I followed them down the main pedestrian road and into a side street. It was still well lit and not far off from the main area so there was no immediate concern.

Walking a little further, the sounds of the main public area began fading. I ask where we were going. They assure me it is nearby. We arrive at an entrance of some sort. Styled like the entrance of an Egyptian Tomb, clearly not a coffee shop.

I enter after them. It's a night club, still kind of quiet. It is only 10 pm. We grab a seat in a corner booth. There is hardly anyone around. One of the guys tells me not to worry, that his friend owns the place. "We'll have a good time," he assures me.



Fig. 1.28: Night Scene on Nanjing Road

After we order several drinks, I start to feel a little more at ease. Then the parade of hostesses comes. I'm not positive but I'm pretty sure they are prostitutes. The two guys tell me to choose one, assuring me that they only want to sit down and have some drinks with us. "My friend owns the place, don't worry."

Three ladies are pulled from the line up. They are wearing gold silk gowns. They introduce themselves and order a waiter to bring more drinks. For a steady hour drinks are flowing, games of dice are played and cigarettes are passed out. I lose track of time. One of my new friends disappears with his girl behind a curtain leading to another part of the club. By now the music is louder and more people have arrived. I make my way to the dance floor. I lose sight of my table. I am drunk, but the girl I am with insists on dancing more.

When I finally make it back to the table, my two friends are gone. Their belongings are also gone and the table has been cleared. I look around the dance floor and search the bathrooms. I assume that they have taken the party to another level. I am not keen on exploring the possibilities with the girl I am with. A friend of mine had a name for girls like



Fig. 1.29: Night Scene on Nanjing Road

her who worked in bars: petri dishes. I head towards the door, only to find my girl arguing with the manager. A bouncer stops me from leaving. Panic. The manager hands me the bill. The amount is insane. I tell him my friend was supposed to take care of it, that he knew the owner. He laughs in my face. The girl, whose English is better than the manager's tells me they have left. "You have to pay." Screwed.

I never carry that much money with me. A pair of goons is instructed to follow to the bank machine. I exit the club. I deserve to pay for my stupidity.

On subsequent trips to Nanjing Lu, I would be approached by English-speaking locals offering to introduce me to their friends. Often, I would watch them perform their sales pitch on expats, by far their best customers. I had learned my first lesson of Shanghai. It was an expensive lesson. Trust no one.

In the 1930s, an American missionary wrote: "If God lets Shanghai endure, he owes an apology to Sodom and Gomorrah." I was becoming aware that the city remained a place of deception.



Fig. 1.30: Night Scene on Nanjing Road

Shanghai is permeated with a paranoia; everyone is trying hard to make a quick buck at your expense. Everyone seems to be a caricature of the mobsters and shysters from an Asian gang movie. Bright neon lights, dark alleys, shady deals, fancy cars, and scantily clad women: nothing seems real here. Everything is a façade. But one thing is clear: the magnetism of this city, its uncanny ability to suck into itself all worlds, dimensions, and realities.

China may be at the dawn of a new era, but there is also a nostalgia for faded glories. Immortalized by cities like Shanghai, China is seeking to reclaim its allure and ascend the ranks of the global power hierarchy. While a city like Shanghai wrestles with the collision of several histories and trajectories, the entire nation remains calibrated to one ticking clock. China is the single largest area in the world governed by one time zone, one unifying vision, one schedule to govern all.

China refers to itself as *Zhongguo*, meaning “the Middle Kingdom”, though this is not a reference to geographical location. It is a nation that, since its inception, has had



Fig. 1.31: Night Scene on Nanjing Road

its eye on being the center of the world. In many ways, the new China *is* the center of the world, drawing everything into itself—foreign direct investment, factories, smog, and expatriates like me. And like a drain, once caught in its current, it is difficult to escape from. It has a gravity like no other: the offer of potential stardom, instant success, or perhaps death in some seedy alley way. In any case, it’s an adrenaline rush that someone growing up in the suburbs of Toronto should never hope to enjoy. And yet here I am with throngs of others—in pursuit of the next big high, one notch higher on the scale of pleasures sought. You come to Shanghai to make your fortune; you leave your past behind. You arrive, gawk, and then try to enter the game as best you can.



Fig. 1.32: Man in Pyjamas

When you travel across the globe, part of the enjoyment comes from the adventure, the chance to reinvent yourself and disappear in a place where no one knows you. In Shanghai, Fuzhou Road is only one block removed from the main pedestrian shopping street. Less crowded, but still full of people, Fuzhou Road was my route if I were in a rush to get somewhere. Stopping at an intersection, I look up and meet the stare of two white guys. From across the street, I can only begin to make out their faces. My eyes and brain do not make the connection until the light turns green and we approach. It was my former coworkers from Canada, Misha and James. We haven't seen each for more than a year—since our last time in Shanghai, before being sent home. This time around they were here on business and I was here for school. A reunion occurs on the street corner as crowds of people make their way through the intersection.



Fig. 1.33: Girls in Waitress Uniforms

Sunday afternoon at the Hengshan International Church in Shanghai. A call for visitors goes out to the congregation. A lone hand goes up in my area. He stands up and introduces himself, "I am from Toronto, Canada." *A fellow Canadian?* I look up to catch a glimpse of his face, but he's in front of me. At the end of the service, I approach to introduce myself. His name is Kenny Ting. I learn that the home he grew up in is two suburban streets away from mine. We rejoice in finding local blood in this city of 18 million. Having grown up in our suburb for 20 years, we had never once met, but here, on the other side of the world, two *Scarberian* paths intersect. We talk over dinner. Joking about how many times we must have passed by each other—trying to remember if, in the archives of our memory, we can reconstruct the image of each other's house on the street.



Fig. 1.34: Mini-skirt on the Sidewalk

Eating an egg tart on the street in the French Concession. A bicycle zooms past. But not the generic bicycle one is accustomed to seeing in China. A racing bike of some sort. The rider is a man wearing dress pants, a business shirt, and tie. I stare at him as he idles at the intersection. *I know that face.* I wander in his direction to get a closer look. The light turns and he slips away, but not before I get a good glimpse of his face. It was my former boss from a New York City-based architecture firm where I worked three years back. I hadn't seen him since that co-op term, yet here again is another chance encounter, in a city of millions 11,000 kilometers away from home. Was this mere coincidence? After all, the firm did have a Shanghai office. In New York, we would often send our drawings there to be worked on overnight because of the 12-hour time zone difference. Perhaps he was here managing that branch. Still, in all my time in New York after that work placement I never once ran into a former coworker, or anyone for that matter. And here I was, three years latter, halfway across the globe—staring at my former boss race past me on a bicycle.



Fig. 1.35: Mother and Child and Intersection

It's odd when, in casual conversation, you mention that you're from Canada, and the other person asks if you know so-and-so. Of course, the odds of actually knowing the individual in question are literally a million-to-one shot. So it's particularly disconcerting when it turns out that you *do* know him or her. One day, I found myself at the home of my friend Linda, who had organized a luncheon for her fellow house-bound trophy wives and their friends. In attendance was Shirley, a single business woman who, like myself, shared a mutual acquaintance with the host. After learning of my Canadian roots, she mentioned that one of her best friends in Hong Kong was also from Canada. I was surprised to hear the name of one of my childhood friends, Jenny Zerudo. We had grown up together until age 15, when she won a modeling contest and relocated to Asia to pursue a career in the entertainment business. Shirley informed me that Jenny had made quite a name for herself, landing a hosting position in Asia's Channel V (a take on MTV). A few weeks later, the three of us would meet for drinks.

I became interested in China while working at Forrec Ltd. in 2003. Forrec is a Toronto-based firm specializing in theme park master planning and entertainment design. I was assigned to work on several projects in China, including the expansion of the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum and the master planning for a new ecological-city to house 50,000 residents in the South of China.

When one of my team members returned from a site visit in Shanghai, I asked him what it was like over there. His response was, “Like New York, but 10 times more intense.”

*10 times?* I have spent a fair amount of time in New York on various co-op term and family visits, enough to accumulate a story for almost every street and intersection. *But ten times that? Was that even possible?*

It wasn't long after my coworker returned that I was given the chance to put the city to the test. I was offered the opportunity to be stationed in Shanghai to oversee the next phase of the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum expansion. It was an easy decision to make. But I had few ways to prepare mentally for what I was about to embark upon. What began as a curiosity mushroomed into a two year endeavour to unravel the allure of this city and its connection to my own past, present, and future.

When I returned to Shanghai for a second time almost a year and half later, it was to conduct field research for my graduate thesis. Meeting with a local friend, I told him why I was back. He cautioned me with this ancient proverb:

*“To stay in China for a day, you can write a book;*

*To stay a week, you can write a good letter;*

*To stay any longer than that, and you won't be able to even write a sentence.”*

After a certain period of time, the experience of China defies documentation. This speaks not only to the pace of development in modern China but also just how *normal* it all feels from the inside. There is simply no way to fully communicate the vastness and speed of China's transformation. Surroundings change on a daily basis; no building, street, or even neighbourhood promises to be there the next day. It wasn't a big shock returning after only a year and half to witness the transformation in areas I had become accustomed to during my first visit. Augmentations to the city fabric were dramatic and ongoing. I could

have easily lamented the loss of some of my favourite spots, but the sheer energy that I witnessed infused my experience of China with awe and fascination instead.

An attempt has been made here to offer a snapshot of the energy that is driving China's vast make-over, the effects of which are felt across the globe.

This thesis explores the collision of two cultures, two systems, and two histories. It unravels and at time reweaves the intertwined narratives of two places that have been bound to each other through seemingly chance flows of global currents. Like the mapping of tectonic shifts, minute movements are charted to reveal massive global phenomena—namely, the influx of Western models of consumption into China and the complementary assertion of Chinese culture within Western environments. It examines the effects that past colonial empires have had shaping both China and Canada. It searches for the ripples of cultural hegemony and documents a shifting balance of global economics and cultural dominance. At the core of this research is an exploration of the local impact—in both countries—of the rise of a new global force. The cultural traffic between these two realms unravels the unstable relationship between location and identity.

As an alternative to systematic and organized effort required in completing an encyclopedic and conclusive body of work, I have assumed the role of a “guerilla ethnographer,” combining personal experiences growing up in the suburbs of Toronto, and observation studies compiled over 8 months in China. It is important set out what this thesis intends to do. It is not a tourist's viewpoint, nor is it a “way of life” expose. It chronicles change and growth, old and new, what was, what is, and what's to come.

The cultural traffic that has shaped the growth of Shanghai and Toronto are embodied in varying scales and modes. This thesis is therefore intentionally and necessarily promiscuous in its source materials, spanning local and global, East and West, past and present, objective and anecdotal. It is believed that, when taken collectively, recognizable patterns emerge from these seemingly disparate elements to form a preliminary sketch of the contours and borders of a global phenomenon still in flux. The reader is asked to approach the work as a constellation of episodes that offer a non-traditional reading of concepts of border, time, place, and power.

Three voices will come together to document this phenomenon:

*Photographer*, through whose lens, snapshots of time are captured. The images are presented as a catalogue of memory. Susan Sontag in her book *On Photography* writes: "The photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitering, stalking, cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes."<sup>20</sup>

*Curator* seeks to understand the pieces of the past and present that inform emergent realities of the urban environment. From the year 1927 until his death in 1940, Walter Benjamin compiled an extensive collection documenting his observations of Paris' city life, the *Passagenwerk* (later translated to *The Arcades Project*). In this body of work, he aimed at developing collage and montage as a new form of progressive writing. He stated once that the *Passagenwerk* "must develop to the highest point the art of citing without citation marks. Its theory connects most closely with that of montage."<sup>21</sup>

*Wanderer* records the memories and events that have shaped a personal impression. The Situationist's applied methodologies such as the *Dérive*—an explorative exercise in documenting the visceral experience of the city, translated into non-conventional reports and maps. Their emphasis on Psycho-geography dealt with the inexact science of the personal observation of spaces.

These three voices work in concert—their fragmentary perspectives, images, quotations, connect what may appear dissimilar in order to present new insights and understanding of the future dynamics between East and West.

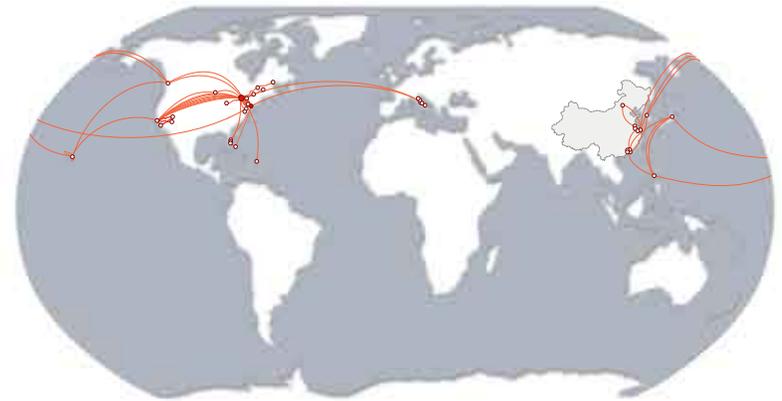
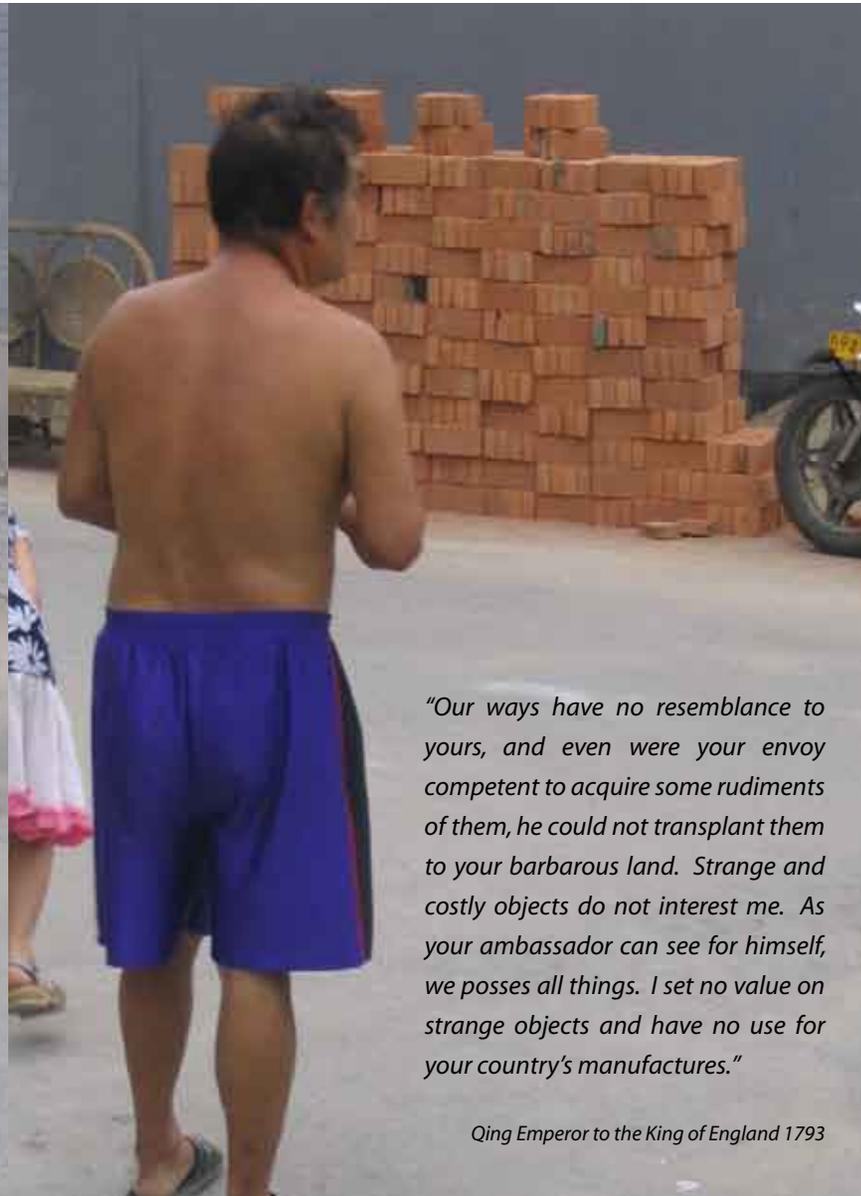


Fig. 1.36: Map of my Travels: 1979 - 2006



Fig. 2.01: Toronto Raptors in China Front



*“Our ways have no resemblance to yours, and even were your envoy competent to acquire some rudiments of them, he could not transplant them to your barbarous land. Strange and costly objects do not interest me. As your ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on strange objects and have no use for your country’s manufactures.”*

*Qing Emperor to the King of England 1793*

Fig. 2.02: Toronto Raptors in China Behind

# CHAPTER 2: PATHOLOGY of EXCHANGE

## **ex·change: v.**

The act of putting one thing or person in the place of another; hand over one and receive another

The following chapter examines the pathology of Western infiltration and how the treaty ports founded after the Opium Wars were the forbearers of today's special economic zones. In the latter, special economic benefits attract foreign direct investment in order to finance high profile redevelopment schemes. Urban glamour zones modelling themselves after Western ideals of success, complete with theme parks, shopping malls, and high-rise towers redefine the modern Chinese city.



Fig. 2.02: 'Life along the River on the Eve of the Qing Ming Festival'; Zhang Zeduan, 11th Century, Beijing Museum

The Chinese civilization had thrived for centuries by organizing its universe around a set of principles that emphasized balance. From family structure to village layout, the world was governed by a hidden order that when harnessed would yield prosperity and success. At its most basic level, the universe consisted of Heaven and Earth. The circular shadow of Heaven projected over the centre of the Earth defined China itself. The Chinese, therefore, considered their homeland to be the convergence of Heaven and Earth and hence referred to itself as the "Heavenly Middle Kingdom". In its own view China was the land around which all humanity was centred. At the heart of the kingdom, was the Emperor, the "*Son of Heaven*", who mediated between the two realms. The Chinese civilization was under the dominion of supreme beings, making all those who existed beyond the dominion of the Middle Kingdom "*barbarians*." Thus, morally to the Chinese, the "*foreign devils*" could not be on equal grounds with them or their Emperor.

Guided by this attitude of superiority, China considered itself the pinnacle of civilization on the planet. Through nearly four centuries of history the Chinese had invented

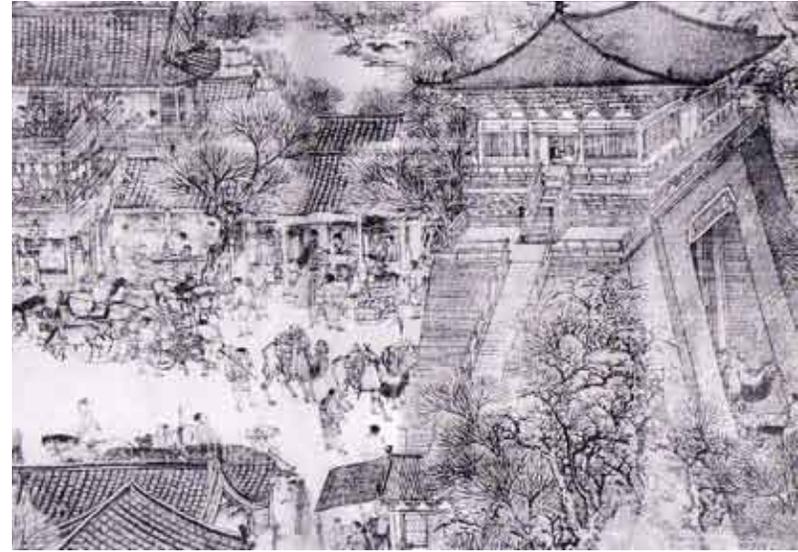


Fig. 2.03: 'Life along the River on the Eve of the Qing Ming Festival'; Zhang Zeduan, 11th Century, Beijing Museum

gunpowder, paper currency, eyeglasses, the printing press, among many other innovations in agriculture and discoveries in astronomy centuries before the Western world. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, China was ruled by the Qing dynasty and had become the richest and most populous country in the world.<sup>1</sup> The empire had doubled in size, laying claim to large portions of Central Asia, Outer Mongolia, and parts of Russia.

Emboldened and self-reliant, China maintained a foreign policy of isolation from the rest of the world; one that had fostered prosperous dynasties of the past. Its vast territory provided sufficient resources for a largely self-sustaining agrarian economy that was based on domestic trade. For this reason, China heavily restricted trade with the outside world. In its view, the world beyond had nothing to offer of value. *Barbarian* goods were no comparison to anything the Chinese already possessed or knew. As Evariste Huc noted in 1844 after his journey through China, "One excellent reason why China is only moderately fond of trading with foreigners is that her home trade is immense... China is such a vast, rich and varied country that internal trade is more than enough to occupy the



Fig. 2.04: Typical Kowtowing Position

part of the nation which can perform commercial operations... there is everywhere to be seen movement and a feverish activity which is not to be found in the largest towns of Europe."<sup>2</sup>

China carefully guarded its secrets by regulating contact with the outside world. This was also a way to keep imperialist Europeans at bay. China had witnessed the collapse of surrounding nations into the hands of foreigners, India to the British, Vietnam to the French, the Philippines to the Spanish. To safeguard their country from Western infiltration, the Chinese government restricted access to foreign merchants, opening only one of its ports, Canton, for external trade. Here, trading would take place in a controlled environment and monitored by the "Canton Trade System", where foreign traders were forced to deal exclusively with a group of government appointed merchants called *Gong Hang*.<sup>3</sup> Within this framework, the *Gong Hang* controlled the volume of trade and the prices of goods entering and leaving the country. In addition, they regulated the personal activities of Western merchants who were confined to live within specific districts in the



Fig. 2.05: Ancient Chinese Coin Depicts the Harmonious Relationship Between Heaven and Earth, Circle and Square

city. All contact with the Chinese except in trade, was strictly forbidden.

*"When the "barbarians from across the sea" first appeared, they hardly seemed capable of being the menace that would puncture the Celestial Empire's splendid isolation... To the Chinese, the "fan kuei" or "foreign devils" were bizarre creatures. Everything about them, from their bushy whiskers to their unnaturally pale flesh, seemed outlandish, even grotesque. When they spoke, they made harsh, guttural sounds; their "legs and feet stretched out and bent with difficulty," reminding one scholar of "prancing Manchu ponies" and "water buffaloes"; and they dressed ridiculously. Another official also remarked on the devils from across the seas' resemblance to animals. They appeared to him to be "playing the parts of foxes, hares and other such animals on the stage." Even more striking, he commented, was the fact that foreigners "really do look like devils; and when people call them 'devils,' it is no mere empty term of abuse." Altogether, from the Chinese point of view, Europeans were no less than beasts given human form..."<sup>4</sup>*

Stella Dong, Shanghai: The Rise and Fall of a Decadent City. 2001



Fig. 2.06: British Tea Clippers ca. 1850

Aside from the established restrictions for allowed trading partners, opening the process of trade with China was in itself a difficult process. In order for a country to first establish a trading relationship with the China, it had to first pay homage to the Emperor. In the views of the Chinese, foreigners did not come to negotiate; they came as subjects to pay honor. In the imperial court, foreign emissaries were received as “tribute bearers” not as ambassadors and equals. Upon arrival, emissaries were expected to kowtow before the Emperor, a ritual that consisted of bowing, then kneeling, and touching one’s forehead to the floor nine times.<sup>5</sup>

In August of 1793, Britain sent its first delegation to China, hoping to establish an embassy in the capital and gain permission to dock British ships at ports other than Canton. At the time Britain had seen the lucrative possibilities of booming trade with China that were stifled by bottlenecking in the sole port of entry. Eager to access the new frontier of resources and untapped markets, Britain sent a fleet of vessels full gifts for the Emperor. Intending to dazzle the imperial court, the cargo included: telescopes, brass howitzers, globes, chime clocks, musical instruments, two carriages, and a hot-air balloon.<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 2.07: Colonial Trade Routes ca. 1850

Leading the delegation was Viscount Macartney, a former governor of Madras in India and experienced diplomat. After landing on the coast of China, cargo and baggage were transferred to Chinese junks before they could proceed up the Bei He River towards the Capital. By order of the Chinese government, the Ambassador’s ship bore a large sign that read in large black letters: “*Tribute from the Red Barbarians*”.

The encounter between Viscount Macartney and the Emperor was a diplomatic debacle. Before any negotiations could even begin, egos of both individuals clashed over the issue of kowtowing. Macartney refused to bow before the Emperor, an acknowledgment of his kingdom’s inferiority, unless the mandarin courtiers do the same to a portrait of King George III. With neither side willing concede defeat, the meeting was over before it even began. The envoy left China empty-handed. The Emperor maintained his position that all British trade continue through the clogged port of Canton. There was to be no British embassy established in the Capital. Shortly after Macartney’s departure, the Emperor sent a letter to the King of England asserting:

*“Our ways have no resemblance to yours, and even were your envoy competent to acquire*



Fig.2.08: Depiction of Traditional Afternoon High Tea

*some rudiments of them, he could not transplant them to your barbarous land. Strange and costly objects do not interest me. As your ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on strange objects and have no use for your country's manufactures."*<sup>7</sup>

While China found little use for British imports, the English could not get enough of China's most popular export, tea. London diarist Samuel Pepys recorded his first taste of "tee (a China Drink)" in 1660. It was first presented to King Charles II as a gift in 1644.<sup>8</sup> Less than half a century later, tea had become Britain's most popular beverage. Some Englishmen were soon knocking back 50 cups a day. The English East India Company held the monopoly on all Eastern imports which included its largest generator of revenue, tea imported from China. Sales had grown from 213,400 pounds in 1713 to 15 million pounds by 1785.<sup>9</sup> By 1813, The East India Company was shipping 32 million pounds of tea from Canton to Britain a year.<sup>10</sup> The government had a lot to gain as well from the importation to tea. At one point, a third of the members of Parliament owned shares in the East India Company.

The country's love affair with the mild stimulant also developed into an economic dependency, because a 100 percent tax was levied upon tea shipments

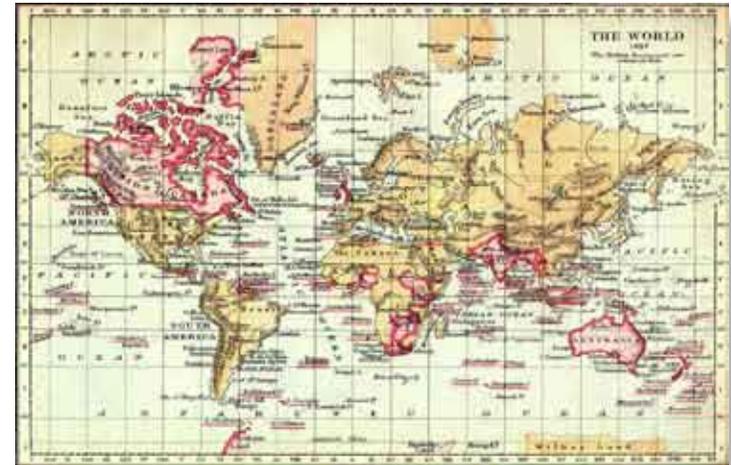


Fig. 2.09: Expanse of the British Empire ca. 1897

arriving at British ports. Part of the reason for the excessive taxation, was a measure to curb the ballooning trade deficit with China. At the time, Britain was importing three times the volume of Chinese goods than it was exporting. Because the Chinese showed little interest in Western products, the only form of payment the Gong Hang merchants accepted was silver medallions (a form of international currency). During this period, Britain paid out close to 26 million pounds in silver in order to feed a nationwide demand for tea leaves.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of the American Revolution, ignited in part by the monarchy's taxation on tea imports, the British had nearly bankrupted its stock of silver. With demand for tea growing in both Europe and North America, the East India Company was desperate to find a commodity that could balance the trade deficit with the Chinese.

To locate a product that could replace silver as the preferred method of payment for tea, the East India Company turned to the fields of the monarchy's latest acquisition, India. There lay a stimulant even more potent than the tea the country devoured in mass quantities, Opium. Derived from the poppy flower, opium had been used both in India and China for many centuries in small quantities for medicinal



Fig. 2.10: Tea Shipping Routes

reasons. But the British saw an opportunity to use the addictive properties of the substance for financial profit. The Company was given the monopoly for opium growing by the British government and it set out to grow the crop in mass quantities on Indian farms. Across India, farmers were forced to destroy other crops in order to grow opium for the Company at below subsistence income. Once processed, the drug was taken from India and shipped by British clippers to China, which then brought tea back to England.

At first the Chinese court did not actively object to the importation. The Imperial Court in Peking tried to impose an edict in 1729 forbidding the use of opium for anything except medicinal reasons, but nothing much was done about enforcing it. Cooined by layers of officials and courtiers, the consequences of the activities of their own merchants who negotiated the buying of the drug took some time to penetrate the consciousness of the ruling elite.

In 1799 the Chinese government issued a decree that condemned the trade more forcefully: "Foreigners obviously derive the most solid profits and advantages, but that our countrymen should pursue this destructive and ensnaring vice is indeed odious and deplorable."<sup>11</sup> Heeding the government's condemnation of the opium trade, the East

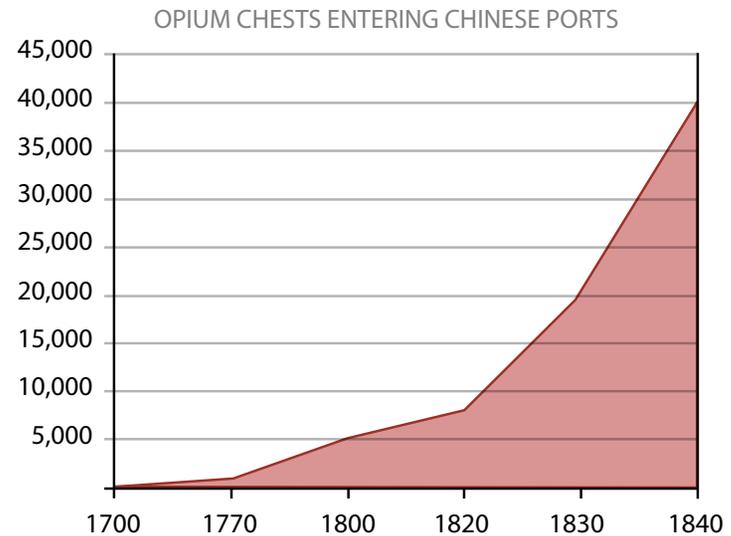


Fig. 2.11: Source: The Opium Wars, Hanes III, W. Travis

India Company formally banned its ships from carrying the drug. But this ban did not extend to ships outside the Company's fleet. Soon independent British and Indian trade vessels were buying opium from the East India Company and smuggling it into Canton. Even as an outlawed substance, the East India Company could not ignore the profits.

The addiction in China was well advanced before the scale of smuggling was realized and affirmative action taken by the Chinese authorities. In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, opium was arriving in Canton at the rate of five thousand chests a year. In 1833, the British Parliament abolished the monopoly held by the East India Company. With trade open to all comers, the stakes grew much higher and competition fueled the smuggling of opium to unparalleled heights. Two years after the monopoly was dropped, opium shipments arriving in Canton had climbed from 5,000 chests to 35,445 chests.<sup>12</sup> Opium had become a pervasive vice in China, penetrating all strata of society, from the upper class down; from merchants to Taoists.

The total number of addicts in China in the 1830's was as high as 10 million.<sup>13</sup>



Fig. 2.12: 'A Mandarin Dinner Party', Thomas Allom, 1843

Britain's trade deficit with China had quickly turned into a trade surplus. The Gong Hang could not export enough tea and silk to balance the amounts of opium arriving from Indian ports. Instead the difference in trade was made up by the export of Chinese silver. In the 1835-1836 fiscal year alone, China exported 4.5 million Spanish dollars worth of silver.<sup>14</sup>

The drain of silver was crippling the Chinese government. The Emperor appealed to the British monarchy for assistance in stopping the flow of opium into the country, but gained no support. After decades of unheeded warning and disingenuous promises, the Emperor finally adopted a hard-lined approach to opium suppression. In 1839 the Emperor issued 39 articles which imposed extremely severe punishments for smoking and trading opium, instituting summary execution for native drug traffickers. The edicts also demanded that all British merchants sign a bond which pledged them to cease the smuggling of opium and acknowledge Qing legal jurisdiction if that bond was broken. The British refused to take the Emperor seriously. In their views, the import of opium was as crucial to their profit as it was to the Chinese government. Furthermore they were not



Fig. 2.13: 'Opium Smokers', Thomas Allom, 1843

willing to sign away the legal protection of the monarchy.

The entire situation was transformed, however, when Commissioner Lin Ze-xu was dispatched to Canton on March 10, 1839 to enforce the emperor's new regulations. One week after his arrival in Canton Lin reiterated the Emperor's position, warning both to the Gong Hang and foreign merchants: all opium cargoes in foreign store ships in the harbor were to be handed over. Addicts were given an eighteen month grace period to surrender their drugs. Any foreigners who were caught in opium trade were to be beheaded, while Chinese dealers faced strangulation. Corrupt officials linked to drug trafficking would also face the death penalty. Lin took no time in sending this strong message of zero tolerance. By the spring of 1839 Lin's had made 1,600 arrests, from dealers to users to corrupt bureaucrats. Forty-two thousand pipes were seized and 11,000 pounds of opium confiscated and publicly burned.

As word of Lin's vicious interrogation tactics on native Chinese reached foreign merchants, it became clear that as far as opium traffic was concerned, business would never

be same. Lin set a deadline of March 21, 1839 for the unconditional surrender of twenty thousand chests of opium that lay in foreign ships anchored off the coast of China. When that deadline had passed and no action had been taken on the part of foreign merchants, Lin placed the entire foreign community under house arrest, stationing soldiers outside the foreign factories.

British merchants refused to cooperate with Chinese legal officials because of their routine use of torture. Chief Superintendent of Trade, Charles Elliot was dispatched from Macao to pacify the situation. Despite numerous attempts to negotiate a diplomatic compromise, Lin responded to the stalling by barricading the foreign community street by street. To increase pressure on those detained within Lin began a series of intimidation tactics. Chinese soldiers banged huge gongs around the clock to keep foreigners from getting sleep. All food and supplies were forbidden to cross the barricades. Only two buckets of water were provided daily. Chinese servants abandoned their positions, only to be conscribed into an ad hoc militia that performed drills outside the factory windows. They wore pointed caps that bore the name of their former employers to demoralize those inside. Finally, Lin ordered the gates of the factories nailed shut. Armed soldiers were posted at all exits and stationed on adjacent rooftops.

After a week of these conditions, the foreign factories were reduced to squalor. With no servants, refuse had begun to pile up. With limited water, the living conditions were quickly becoming unhygienic. The besieged merchants and their families grew hungrier and more restless by the day. Numerous attempts were made on the part of British merchants to negotiate a partial surrender of the opium Lin demanded. But Lin refused, torturing the Gong Hang merchants outside the factory to show his unwillingness to back down. Elliot finally relented to Lin's demands, issuing this plea to opium traders to forfeit their cargoes:

*"I, Charles Elliot, Chief Superintendent of the trade of British subjects to China, presently forcibly detained by the provincial government, together with all the merchants of my own and the other foreign nations settled here, without supplies of food, deprived of our servants, and cut off from all intercourse with our respective countries . . . have now received the commands of the High Commissioner [Lin Tse-hsu] . . . to deliver into his hand all the opium held by the people of my own country.'*

*Now I . . . do hereby, in the name and on the behalf of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, enjoin and require all Her Majesty's subjects now present in Canton, forthwith to make a surrender to me for the service of Her said Majesty's Government, to be delivered over to the Government of China, of all the opium under their respective control: and to hold the British ships and vessels engaged in the opium trade subject to my immediate direction: and to forward me without delay a sealed list of all the British owned opium in their respective possession. And I . . . do now in the most full and unreserved manner, hold myself responsible for, and on the behalf of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, to all and each of Her Majesty's subjects surrendering the said British owned opium into my hands, to be delivered over to the Chinese Government. And I . . . do further caution all Her Majesty's subjects here present in Canton, owners of or charged with the management of opium the property of British subjects, that failing the surrender of the said opium into my hands at or before six o'clock this day, I, . . . hereby declare Her Majesty's Government wholly free of all manner of responsibility in respect of the said British owned opium.*

*And it is specially to be understood that proof of British property and value of all British owned opium, surrendered to me agreeable to this notice, shall be determined upon principles, and in a manner hereafter to be defined by Her Majesty's Government."<sup>16</sup>*

Once surrendered, Lin had all the opium chest burned publicly and scattered across the sea. On May 24, all foreign merchants engaged in the opium trade were ordered to leave China and never return. Charles Elliot captained their departure. Terrified by the siege, most of the remaining non-native residents fled the city as well. By June, only fifteen Americans and six British remained in the city of Canton. The factories were left abandoned and Lin ordered their dismantling—he considered this a symbolic act of his victory. He considered the opium problem in China solved for good. In a report to the Emperor, a triumphant Lin explained, "Judging by their manners, it appears that they feel a sense of shame. Henceforth, it seems that all will reform themselves and be greatly improved."<sup>17</sup>

But the opium trade continued from ports other than Canton. The British merchants on the run from Lin, had stationed their new operations in Macao. Lin was determined to expel the British from China once and for all. He pursued the fleeing merchants to the foreign port of Macao where he forced another stand off. Lin ordered

that delivery of all rice, tea, meat and fresh vegetables to the anchored ships at Macao to be cut off. Freshwater springs used by the docked British ships were poisoned. Large banners were posted to warn Chinese villagers not to drink from the streams. Lin then pressured the Portuguese authorities at Macao to evict the British from their harbor, under penalty of severe trade restrictions. For fear of trade embargoes, the governor forced the British ships to retreat from Macao to Hong Kong. By August, thirty-eight trading vessels were hijacked by Lin's fleet in Hong Kong harbour. With no supplies and no foreseeable way to sustain their living conditions aboard the ships, Elliot responded by threatening military intervention.

Fighting began on November 3, 1839. In a sea battle that came to be known as the Battle of Chuanbi. Twenty six Chinese ships suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of two small British warships. The Chinese could not match the technological and tactical superiority of the British forces. By January 1841, the British had captured the Bogue forts at the mouth of the Pearl River—the waterway between Hong Kong and Canton. Subsequently, the British navy scored victories on land at Ningbo and Chinhai, crushing the ill-equipped and poorly trained imperial forces with ease. By the end of June British forces occupied Zhenjiang and controlled the vast rice-growing lands of southern China. In August 1841 the British launched a secondary offensive against Ningbo and Tianjin.

By the middle of 1842, the British had advanced as far as the Yangtze River, occupying the city of Shanghai at the mouth of the great waterway. China, overwhelmed and overpowered backed down. His forces utterly defeated on land and sea, a disgraced Commissioner Lin was recalled to Beijing and sent into exile.

The Treaty of Nanjing (August, 1842) and supplement treaties (July and October 1843) signed between the British and the Chinese were the first of the humiliating "unequal treaties". It radically increased the openings for trade in China and expanded the scope of British activities. The treaties opened five ports, Canton, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Linbou and Shanghai to conduct foreign trade as treaty ports. A war indemnity of 21 million silver dollars to be paid by the Chinese government. Hong Kong was surrendered to the British, giving the British a base for further military, political and economical penetrations of China.

The surrender of Hong Kong was only the first step in breaching China's territorial integrity. The Treaty stated that all custom duties must be negotiated with other countries.

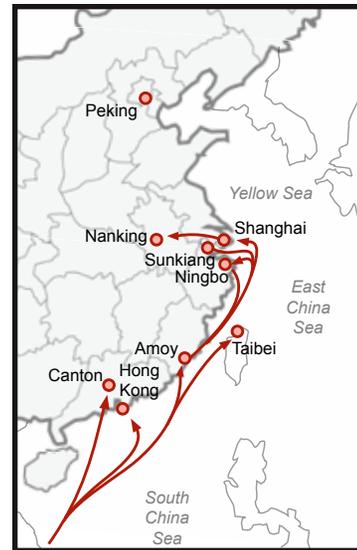


Fig. 2.14: British Assaults, the First Opium War 1842

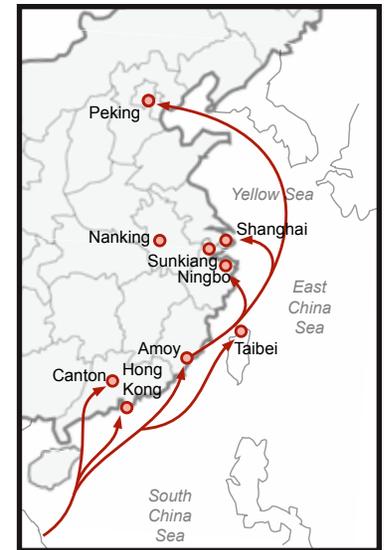


Fig. 2.15: British Assaults, the Second Opium War 1856

The cumbersome Gong Heng system was abolished, forcing the country to recognize foreign consuls. The Nanjing Treaty allowed British merchants to bring families to live in the treaty ports. Furthermore, it also stated that Chinese local authorities must provide housing or other foundations which British merchants could rent. The "most favoured nation" clause, gave the British any privileges extorted from China by any other country.

Perhaps the most devastating of the clauses was that the British were allowed to station a Military ship at each one of the treaty ports. Thus for the first time foreign warships were allowed free entrance to Chinese waters—a constant reminder of their military defeat.



Fig. 2.16: The British Concession, Shanghai 1843

Recognizing the strategic position of this gateway into China's interior, Shanghai was seen as the beachhead for the lucrative trade endeavour into China. At the time, Shanghai was a flourishing trade market, sitting at the mouth of the Yangtze River. Under semi-colonial control, the city would be transformed into an international port for the global traffic of both Tea and Opium. The British claimed a large chunk of the city along the shore of the Yellow River for the empire. From that point on, the city was divided into two entities: the old walled city, and foreign concession. In the latter, the British claimed extraterritoriality which exempted British nationals from Chinese law, thus permitting the operation of foreign sovereignty on Chinese soil. Furthermore, any Chinese who either dealt with the British, or lived with them or were employed by them were also exempted as well. Incidentally, this made the city a haven for Chinese criminals. Under this system, the Chinese government was left powerless to prevent the foreign concession from operating and expanding as it saw fit.

It was not long after the British set up shop that other foreigners arrived to lay



Fig. 2.17: Shanghai's Foreign Concessions 1865

their claim to other parts of Shanghai. The city was carved up again to accommodate a French concession and an expanded British concession which incorporated the Americans. In these extraterritorial zones, Chinese and foreigners lived "in mixed company" but led essentially separate lives. The Chinese city was confined to its original walls for several decades, while the foreign concessions expanded around it.

For those who flocked to Shanghai, China was the new frontier and an untapped market that was ripe with goods and resources to be exploited. Many came on the heels of British traders who had amassed fortunes by supplying opium to the Chinese and tea to the British.

The influx of multi-nationals not only brought investment of silver medallions, but more importantly, new ideas and a new way of life unlike anything China had ever experienced. Banked by foreign investment, Shanghai began a process of dramatic architectural and urban transformation. With walls and check posts set up around concessions clusters of British architecture were erected along the waterfront with pockets of French, Russian, American and German architecture springing up through the concessions. These buildings were signifiers of Western hegemonic presence in the



Fig. 2.18: Political Cartoon, 'China's Open Door Policy' 1923

city, demarcating where Chinese city ended and the international settlement began. Banks, hotels, churches, cinemas, coffeehouses, restaurants, deluxe apartments, and a racecourse recreated all the comforts and luxuries of Western culture. As a result of Western presence, Shanghai was the first to enjoy many modern facilities that had yet to arrive in the rest of China. Among China's firsts, Shanghai boasted the first banks, Western-style streets, automobiles, gaslight, electricity, telephones, running water, automobiles, and streetcars, stock markets, and night clubs.<sup>18</sup>

Because the foreign settlements functioned outside of the law of the land, they quickly became entry points for new ideas into the country. In addition to architecture, foreigners brought new ideas to the Chinese public. Shanghai grew to be known as the 'Paris of the East' offering a rich nightlife, a booming local film industry, the latest fashions, and the free expression for a growing community of intellectuals and writers. This air of modernity drew even more foreigners to the city. Even migrants from the country's interior, hearing of the prosperity of the city came in search of jobs in the numerous factories that were springing up on the outskirts of the city. In the years that followed the Opium War, Shanghai had grown to over three million inhabitants.<sup>19</sup> Although foreign inhabitants



Fig 2.19: Political Cartoon, 'China Carved Up' ca. 1927

only made up less than 2% of the city's population, under their influence Shanghai had grown into the fifth largest city in the world, and China's largest harbor and treaty-port.<sup>20</sup> While Shanghai was gripped by the promise of modernity, most of the interior of China remain tradition-bound. There was a rising tension as the ruling Qing dynasty struggled with the inundation of Western ideologies. Furthermore, encroachment of foreign powers began to expose China's delayed progress relative to the rest of the world. The growing wealth witnessed in the coastal treaty ports, brought on by industrialization and urban renewal, had thrown into question China's previous reluctance to adopt Western attitudes of progress. The dynasty's weakened relevance coupled with political fragmentation and civil unrest ultimately led to toppling of Imperial rule in China and the founding of the Republic of China in 1911.



Fig. 2.20: View Along Shanghai Waterfront, the Bund ca 1920



Fig. 2.21: View Along Shanghai Waterfront, the Bund ca 1920



Fig. 2.22: View Along Shanghai Waterfront, the Bund ca. 1920



Fig. 2.23: View Along Shanghai Waterfront, the Bund ca. 1920



Fig. 2.24: Rendering of Proposed Master Plan for Shanghai 1929

By the time China had emerged as a Republic, the foreign foothold in China had expanded to over 30 ports, 6 leaseholds and handful of strategic territories along the coast.<sup>21</sup> China had been partitioned even further into five spheres of influence (governed by France, Germany, Britain, Russia and Japan) that operated as expanded concessions. These concessions and colonial holdings on Chinese soil provided a gateway for the wholesale importation of foreign influences, as they had done for Shanghai in previous decades. China's landscape began an immense wave of transformation at the hands of foreign powers that were determined to redefine Chinese city. Strong emphasis was placed on improving the safety, health and quality of urban life, a trend that emerged in American and European cities after the industrial revolution. Relying heavily on imported expertise, Chinese cities were overhauled to accommodate sewage systems, piped water access, broadened streets, regularized grids and transportation infrastructure. Centuries of tradition in site planning and construction were abandoned in the wake of broad renewal projects that envisioned the modern Chinese city as a derivative of those in Europe and



Fig. 2.25: China's Spheres of Influence, ca. 1939

United States. The cities left in disrepair after the decades of civil unrest and inactivity, on the part of Qing dynasty, were revitalized by public works projects that included parkspace, shopping streets and updated commercial centers. City walls and long standing neighbourhoods were torn down to make way for newer forms of public buildings like libraries, museums, sports stadiums, and concert halls.

1843



Fig. 2.26: Treaty Ports Open by 1843

1865



Fig. 2.27: Treaty Ports Open by 1865

1900



Fig. 2.28: Treaty Ports Open by 1900

1920



Fig. 2.29: Treaty Ports Open by 1920



Fig. 230: Shanghai Poster Girl



Fig. 231: Shanghai Poster Girl



Fig. 232: Shanghai Poster Girl



Fig. 233: Shanghai Poster Girl

In the years that followed the Opium Wars, Shanghai's rapid development paved the road for foreign merchants and entrepreneurs to set up economic bases in the city. To generate market visibility and consumer appeal for their Western products, they began to print calendar posters as promotional give-aways for their customers. While the art of advertising had become rather common place in the West, the Chinese had never before been exposed to advertising poster art, so the merchants modified the content to better suit the tastes and sensibilities of the local market. The common thread amongst all the posters though, was the use of young female, often dressed in hybridized fashions of Chinese and European origin. They associated decadence, beauty and status with the products arriving from Europe. Many employed the likenesses of famous heroines, ladies from history, popular singers, models, and actresses of the day. Distinct to Shanghai, they became emblems of the modern era and the proliferation of Western fashions in the city, a local version of the Pinup girl.



Fig. 234: Shanghai Poster Girl



Fig. 235: Shanghai Poster Girl

*"He ALWAYS looked forward to the evening drives through the centre of Shanghai, this electric and lurid city, more exciting than any other in the world. As they reached the Bubbling Well Road he pressed his face to the windshield and gazed at the pavements lined with night-clubs and gambling dens, crowded with bar-girls and gangsters and rich beggars with their bodyguards. Crowds of gamblers pushed their way into the jai alai stadiums, blocking the traffic in the Bubbling Well Road. An armoured police van with two Thompson guns mounted in a steel turret above the driver swung in front of the Packard and cleared the pavement. A party of young Chinese women in sequined dresses tripped over a child's coffin decked with paper flowers. Arms linked together, they lurched against the radiator grille of the Packard and swayed past Jim's window, slapping the windshield with their small hands and screaming obscenities. Nearby, along the windows of the Sun Sun department store in the Nanking Road, a party of young European jews were fighting in and out of the strolling crowds with a gang of older German boys in the swastika armbands of the Graf Zeppelin Club. Chased by the police sirens, they ran through the entrance of the Cathay Theatre, the world's largest cinema, where a crowd of Chinese shopgirls and typists, beggars and pickpockets spilled in the street to watch people arriving for the evening performance. As they stepped from their limousines the women steered their long skirts through the honour guard of fifty hunchbacks in mediaeval costume. Three months earlier, when his parents had taken Jim to the premiere of The Hunchback of Notre Dame, there had been two hundred hunchbacks, recruited by the management of the theatre from every back alley in Shanghai. As always, the spectacle outside the theatre far exceeded anything shown on its screen."*

J.G. Ballard, *Empire of the Sun*. 1937



Fig. 2.36: Interior of an Opium Den in Shanghai ca. 1930

By the 1930s, the reproduction of Western decadence and consumer lifestyle in Shanghai gave rise to all the vices of urban life. Out of the roaring twenties Shanghai emerged with a new reputation as the “Whore of Asia”. Its free wheeling mentality and air of toleration in conjunction with the blurred administrative regions of the concessions provided a safe haven for outlaws looking to profit from a pleasure seeking society targeted to Westerners. An underworld culture emerged, replacing the celebrities, gliterati and elite with hit men, gangsters, warlords, spies and prostitutes.

The Opium traders, who had initially ignited the opening of Shanghai, were now among the wealthiest citizens. Sir Victor Sassoon had revitalized the family dynasty, which had its roots in the opium trade, by building the luxurious Cathay Hotel. At hotels like the Cathay, opium often came with room service. Through out the city as many as 1,500 opium dens were in operation at the turn of the century.<sup>22</sup> There were an estimated 100,000 prostitutes populating the city’s streets and night clubs.<sup>23</sup> Gangs proliferated, enforcing



Fig. 2.37: Interior of an Opium Den in Shanghai ca. 1930

their own brand of the law. Gang lords operated gambling houses and smuggled drugs into the concessions. Shanghai had descended into lawlessness where abductions, torture and death had become commonplace. To use a vernacular term, the city had become “Shanghaied”, its culture, hijacked by devious means and rendered insensible.

While a select few profited from Shanghai’s descent into corruption, the rest of the city remained below the poverty line. For the pauper majority, Shanghai was the site of vast inequality where rampant imperialism had created a city bereft of Chinese virtues. The city had become a bastion of evil and rampant imperialism and the shame of native patriots. Unsurprisingly, the pauper underclass that watched the foreigners party and grow wealthy developed an appetite for revolution. Within this climate, Shanghai was host to a young Mao Zedong, then only 27, as he presided over the first session of the Congress of the Communist Party of China in Shanghai.



Fig. 2.38: Dark Alley in the Old City ca. 1930



Fig. 2.39: Bank District in Shanghai Concession ca. 1930

*"In Shanghai's prime, no city in the Orient, or the world for that matter, could compare with it. At the peak of its spectacular career the swamp-ridden metropolis surely ranked as, the most pleasure-mad, rapacious, corrupt, strife-ridden, licentious, squalid, and decadent city in the world. It was the most pleasure-mad because nowhere else did the population pursue amusement, from feasting to whoring, dancing to powder-taking, with such abandoned zeal. It was rapacious because greed was its driving force; strife-ridden because calamity was always at the door; licentious because it catered to every depravity known to man; squalid because misery stared one brazenly in the face; and decadent because morality, as every Shanghai resident knew, was irrelevant... Half Oriental, half Occidental; half land, half water; neither a colony nor wholly belonging to China; inhabited by the citizens of every nation in the world but ruled by none, the emperor's ugly daughter was an anomaly among cities."<sup>24</sup>*

Stella Dong, Shanghai: The Rise and Fall of a Decadent City. 2001

## Shanghaied

1. To kidnap (a man) for compulsory service aboard a ship, especially after drugging him.
2. To induce or compel (someone) to do something, especially by fraud or force: We were shanghaied into buying worthless securities.

[www.thefreedictionary.com/shanghaied](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/shanghaied)



Fig.2.40: Propaganda Poster from the Mao Era

The Japanese invasion and the occupation of Shanghai during World War II had provided the climate for political upheaval within the country. In the decades before the war, Shanghai was at the mercy of Western powers. Under the Japanese occupation, the city was besieged by bombings and air raids. Mao Zedong campaigned to reclaim the country from foreign hands. By 1943, allied nations formally ended the concession system. Shortly thereafter in 1949, the communist party under Mao Zedong came to power and was determined to regain control over the nation from imperialist hands. The rise of the Communist Party of China (CPC) marked a new epoch in China's history, one to be shaped by its own people. Over the next thirty years under Mao Zedong, China retreated from the world—closing its doors to the foreign influence and infiltration. In Mao's eyes, China's destiny was once again in the hands of the Chinese and could no longer be bullied or hijacked by foreign interests. To accomplish the nation's rise to self-governed supremacy, China would require dramatic restructuring guided by the principles of Marxism and socialism.



Fig.2.41: Propaganda Poster from the Mao Era

With the CPC's rise to power, Shanghai quickly lost its status as an international metropolis. Foreigners were expelled and the local elite fled to neighbouring Hong Kong and overseas to America. Beijing placed hard-lined non-Shanghai politicians in the city's top positions in order to bend the capitalist stronghold to Marxist ideals. Those placed in charge of city were quick to close markets and nationalize private enterprises, to integrate the autonomous industries into the new centrally planned economy. All remnants of the city's rich cultural life were also squashed by the CPC. Prostitutes and gangsters were rounded up. The horse racing track and cabarets silenced. The legend of Shanghai's decadence was fading into the gray haze of smog. The war on the Western capitalist city had begun.

In 1958, Mao inaugurated China's Great Leap Forward—the start of a massive campaign against the city. Overlooking Tiananmen Square he proclaimed to the Mayor of Beijing Peng Zhen, "Imagine, we'll see a forest of chimneys from here!"<sup>25</sup> In his eyes, the city stood for everything the party was opposed to – cities were the site of capitalist



Fig. 2.42: Propaganda Poster from the Mao Era

ambitions and indulgent consumption. Their existence was predicated on the pursuit of a bourgeois lifestyle and personal wealth. Furthermore, the cities had long been the site of Western bastardization and the erosion of Chinese ideals. Declaring war on the city, Mao was determined to transform it from “centers of consumption to centers of production,” erecting smoke stacks and chimneys as monuments to the new social order.

In the new society, the city would no longer be the playground of the wealthy but rather the work place of the proletariat. The citizens of the new city would not be divided into class hierarchies, but rather into small self-contained units, known in Chinese as *Danwei*. Industrial compounds that sprang up within the city fabric would house these work units, providing a place to eat, live, work, and sleep collectively. By blanketing factories across the city, the contaminated city of glamour would dissolve as would the disparity between the countryside and the city. Instead of localized centers, the new movement towards de-urbanization called for establishment of “field urbanism,” an evenly distributed mix of residential industrial and agricultural areas. Mao shifted the centre of

China’s progress from urban centres to the rural countryside.

In the largest mobilization in China’s history since the construction of the Great Wall of China, close to 650 million citizens were called upon to revitalize the nation’s economy. China’s interior was transformed overnight with new roads, factories, cities, dikes, and dams. The “forest of chimneys” was realized by one million make-shift furnaces built to jump-start industrialization in the countryside. In this campaign, regions of the countryside were mandated to produce steel to supply the nation’s building agendas. Close to 100 million people were mobilized in a cottage industry of steel mills, melting everything from pots to zippers in order to meet quotas. The “backyard” industry proved successful at first (more than doubling the nation’s annual output) but the limited training, poor refinement and the impure sources of metal made much of the steel unusable.

Meanwhile, farmers who had abandoned their livelihood were left with no way to support themselves, having melted down much of their farming implements like rakes and ploughs. This led to declines in production of most goods other than steel. The Great



Fig. 2.43: Propaganda Poster from the Mao Era



Fig. 2.44: Propaganda Poster from the Mao Era

Leap Forward, ended with the famine of 1959 as the nation plunged into economic chaos. It is estimated that some 20-30 million people died as a result of Mao's efforts to rebuild the nation from its interior.<sup>26</sup>

By 1965, the country was on the brink of civil war. Mao's attempts at socialist reform had ended in disaster and diminished integrity for the CCP. Dissention among the ranks and pressure from reformists in Beijing led Mao back to the birth place of his revolution, Shanghai where he could peddle his leftist ideologies among his party cadres. In collaboration with Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, and three of her close associates, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen (forming the Gang of Four), Mao launched the Cultural Revolution in 1965. In search of a scapegoat for the failure of the Great Leap Forward, leftists again targeted the class division between city dwellers and rural workers. Mao's supporters began an aggressive attack to squash subversive elements of the population who were likely to derail the plans of the CCP for an egalitarian society. Over the course of 10 years, university professors, musicians, writers and artists were imprisoned

or relocated from urban centres to remote regions of China's hinterland to be reeducated as farmers.

Through out both the Great Leap forward and the Cultural Revolution, Shanghai was forced to do penance for its sinful embrace of capitalist ideologies. Mao's appointing of ultra-leftist politicians to Shanghai's highest positions were an effort to conform the city's population to the party's ambitions. Mao wanted to send a message to the rest of the country, that foreign decadence and capitalist pursuits had no place in the new China.

The distrust of the city was expressed by the *Jingji Zhoubao* (Economic Weekly), in August 1949: "Shanghai is a non-productive city. It is a parasitic city. It is a criminal city. It is a refugee city. It is the paradise of adventurers."<sup>27</sup>

As a result the foreign banks and hotels along the Shanghai's waterfront that had once housed the city's great fortunes, lay vacant and in disrepair for decades. The grand villas of the foreign concession were repurposed for party efforts, many of them subdivided to house multiple families and work units. The scholars, journalists and artists



Fig.2.45: Propaganda Poster from the Mao Era



Fig.2.46: Propaganda Poster from the Mao Era

that had made Shanghai a cultural hot spot for the wealthy and intellectual elite were expelled. The party mandated that the Shanghai shed its self indulgent past and assume its new role in the planned economy.

At the time of Mao's death in 1976, Shanghai had been reshaped into an industrial workhorse, forced to produce and finance the modernization of the rest of the country. To ensure the city would not once again rise to preeminence, the city was required to surrender eighty percent of its annual revenue.<sup>28</sup> Through out this time, Shanghai's contribution of tax revenue to the central government surpassed all other Chinese provinces and municipalities.<sup>29</sup> Consequently the city's infrastructure and capital development were severely crippled, leaving the city in near ruins after 30 years of neglect. Other than factories or housing blocks, there was no new construction in the city. The city had remained imprisoned in a fading shell of its pre-1949 days, a tarnished and rundown version of its former self.



The death of Mao, and the end of the Cultural Revolution paved the way for officials in Beijing to put China on course for reform once again. On December 18, 1978 Deng Xiaoping, an official who had long advocated for economic change, came to power and began an experiment that dramatically altered China's trajectory. Under his reform doctrine China embarked on the most paradoxical undertaking of the twentieth century: to build socialism by employing the prevailing capitalist models of production. Deng Xiao Ping termed his peculiar hybrid: "One dragon with two heads". To implement these reforms, the government began deregulating certain state controlled industries and reduced restrictions on rural farmers, allowing them to sell their surplus in open markets for the first time. The most radical of his revisions was the opening of 6 pilot cities that would embark on China's first private enterprises and semi-free market economies.

The six cities of Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamen, termed Special Economic Zones (SEZs), were designed to attract foreign investment and technology by lifting trade barriers and offering tax incentives to potential investors. These cities were chosen because of their proximity to lucrative financial and trade centres of Macau, Hong

Kong and Taiwan, already established gateways to the international market.

Shenzhen showed the most promise of the SEZs. It offered a 15% company tax rate, two year income tax exemption in addition to three years of half-tax reduction.<sup>30</sup> Factories and foreign offices positioned in Hong Kong just across the river were quick to sweep up the fiscal incentives. This was followed by international manufacturing operations that were keen on exploiting the cheaper labour costs in China. In a few short decades, Shenzhen had risen from a fishing village with a population no more than 30,000 to a bustling metropolis of four million; its booming industries and financial sectors elevating many of its citizens to instant wealth.

Passing a large billboard of Deng Xiao Ping near the centre of Shenzhen, visitors are observed placing flowers and paying homage to his effigy. He has become a hero of mythological proportions in this city. Many of these venerators belong to China's new breed of millionaires who owe the realization of their wealth to Deng's visionary reforms. Today their number has risen to close to one million.



Fig. 2.47: Shenzhen Skyline at Night 2005, Source: [www.skyscrapercity.com](http://www.skyscrapercity.com)

1980



Fig. 2.48: The First Special Economic Zones, 1980



Fig. 2.49: View Towards Window to the World Theme Park, Shenzhen 2005

One of the first legs of my research trip to Shanghai took me to Shenzhen. Driving along newly minted highways, I instruct my driver to take me Window to the World Amusement Park. The view out my window is like scene from *Blade Runner*—a chaotic mix of towers and sinuous overpasses. The city is one of China’s “miracle stories”. Founded in 1970 as a fishing village, Shenzhen had grown to a population of 30,000 by 1976. Today, it is a world-class city of four million residents - boasting factories, shopping centers, five star hotels, and office towers that rival those of its closest neighbour, Hong Kong.

As we make our way past soaring skyscrapers and newly constructed residential districts, my anticipation builds. I had only read about the park where loose comparisons were made to an oversized miniature golf course. There was nothing that could have prepared me for what I saw as we approached. As far as ten blocks away I spot the peak of the 108-meter replica of the Eiffel tower. My face is glued to the window as we pull into the drop-off area.

At the entrance of a huge plaza, I find myself staring at the base of I.M. Pei’s glass pyramid - a miniature recreation of the Louvre. I have entered into World Square.

Capable of accommodating more than 10,000 visitors during peak hours, the plaza is teeming with eager park-goers. A newlywed couple poses in front of a grand fountain that shoots water 100 meters into the air, while a fleet of school buses spills children onto the plaza amidst a sea of visitors toting the latest digital cameras and camcorders. I stop to take a photo, only to be shoved by crowds pouring out of tour buses. Six colossal statues from across the globe, 108 giant pillars of varying architectural styles, and a large 2,000 square meter relief of with mythological creatures greet our arrival. Six towering gates, representing birthplaces of the ancient civilizations, funnel us through the ticketing queue. Purchasing my day pass for 120 RMB, I clutch my ticket and push my way through the gates. I rediscover my inner child as I anxiously pass through the turn-style – shoving a school girl or two along the way.

Just past the entrance, I pay an additional 150 RMB to purchase a commemorative passport to document my travel through *The World*. 48 hectares, subdivided into four sections: Asia: the Pacific, Europe, Africa, and America, boasting over 118 exhibits, cultural performances and a myriad of themed eateries and souvenir shops – *It’s a pretty big*

*small world after all.* The temple of Karnak in Egypt, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, Park Guell in Barcelona ... there is not a moment to lose. Everything fights for my attention, but a trip up the Eiffel tower seems an irresistible place to begin my travels. With map and passport in hand, I make my way towards Paris.

At the top of the elevator, I grab a quick coffee from the kiosk on the observation deck. The park's expanse is unbelievable. From this vantage point I can see the Piazza San Marco, the Taj Mahal, the Great Pyramids of Egypt and St. Peter's Basilica. They tower over the visitors, some as large as fifth in scale to the original. Working my way around the platform, I trace the skylines of New York, London and Sydney. Appropriately, the music rendering of Bette Midler's hit *"From a Distance"* plays over the PA system. From above, the world looks *"blue and green and the snow capped mountains white"*. The landmarks blur into one schizophrenic but well manicured landscape. Even the surrounding apartment buildings contribute to the vista with a panoramic mosaic depicting an abstracted map of the world.

I sip the remainder of my pseudo-French coffee, relishing my last few moments in Paris before I board the elevator back down. Exiting through the Arc de Triomphe, I proceed to North America. I can choose from a monorail, a golf cart, ancient Europe-style carriage, Gypsy caravan, old-fashioned car, mono-paddled sampans or an inflatable raft to get there. I decide to board the monorail: 50 more RMB. Whizzing past the Alps, the Serengeti, and the Grand Canyon, I leave the congested pathways below. I catch a glimpse of costumed performers parading the streets, attracting the same large crowds of photo-snapping visitors. For a steep fee, one can put on a costume and take a picture with several props—a camel, or a life-sized stuffed horse. Girls in Kimonos and Saris recall images of choreographed animatronics – their automated greetings activated by passers-by.

I get off the monorail in North America, searching the park for anything distinctly Canadian. I come to the United States first, where a wet-log ride takes me through the Colorado River, past Mount Rushmore, the White House and Capitol Hill, dropping me close to miniature Manhattan Island, where I make eye contact with the Empire State Building, and fight the temptation to reenact a scene from King Kong. I hold myself back, drawn instead to the roar of falling water. Arriving, at Niagara Falls, I find the ever-present photographers and posers. It is a breathtaking site. The falls are impressive, at 10 meters tall and 80 meters wide. The word miniature just doesn't seem appropriate. I scan the

identification placard for some tribute to Canada, but read that the park has attributed the Falls to the American landscape. The only Canadian content in the park is two badly sculpted totem poles tucked in the back corner. There were no snap-happy visitors there.

On my way out the park, disappointed, I pass the "American" Niagara Falls once more. The smiling visitors are unaware of the misnomer and offense to Canada. They seem satisfied to pose alongside these monuments, whether they are accurate or not. This was not the last visit to a theme park in China. There is actually a similarly themed World Park outside of Beijing—eerily boasting many of the same recreated monuments of the world.

There is something to be celebrated about a theme park in China, even one that seems to borrow a page from the Disney handbook. It was only 25 years ago that Mao declared war on such forms of leisure and entertainment, condemning them as idle fixations of the bourgeois. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao did his best to suppress the influence of all western forms of entertainment, including parks and gardens. If the presence of a theme park in post-Mao China is any indicator of a bourgeoisie, then Shenzhen's four theme parks (Happy Valley, Splendid China, Window to the World, and China Folklore Village) indicate an unusually high concentration of prosperity.



Fig. 250: Entrance Ticket to Window to the World Theme Park



Fig. 2.51: Window to the World Theme Park, 'Brazil', Shenzhen 2005



Fig. 2.52: Window to the World Theme Park, 'Vatican', Shenzhen 2005



Fig. 2.53: Window to the World Theme Park, 'Egypt', Shenzhen 2005



Fig. 2.54: Window to the World Theme Park, 'Niagara Falls', Shenzhen 2005



Fig. 2.55: Window to the World Theme Park, Paris, Shenzhen 2005



Fig. 2.56: Window to the World Theme Park, Taj Mahal, Shenzhen 2005



Fig. 2.57: 1:1 Model of Le Corbusier's Cathedral du Ronchamp, Shenyang China 2005



Fig. 2.58: 1:1 Model of Le Corbusier's Cathedral du Ronchamp, Shenyang China 2005



Fig. 2.59: 1:1 Model of Le Corbusier's Cathedral du Ronchamp, Shenyang China 2005



Fig. 2.60: 1:1 Model of Le Corbusier's Cathedral du Ronchamp, Shenyang China 2005

*"Today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor survives it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory—precession of simulacra—that engenders the territory, and if one must return to the fable, today it is the territory whose shreds slowly rot across the extent of the map. It is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges subsist here and there in the deserts that are no longer those of the Empire, but ours. The desert of the real itself.*

*In fact, even inverted, Borge's fable is unusable. Only the allegory of the Empire, perhaps, remains. Because it is with this same imperialism that present-day simulators attempt to make the real, all of the real, coincide with their models of simulation. But it is no longer a question of either maps or territories. Something has disappeared: the sovereign difference, between one and the other, that constituted the charm of the abstraction. Because it is difference that constitutes the poetry of the map and the charm of the territory, the magic of the concept and the charm of the real. This imaginary of representation, which simultaneously culminates in and is engulfed by the cartographer's mad project of the ideal coextensivity of map and territory, disappears in the simulation whose operation is nuclear and genetic, no longer at all specular or discursive. It is all of metaphysics that is lost. No more mirror of being and appearances, of the real and its*

*concept. No more imaginary coextensivity: it is genetic miniaturization that is the dimension of simulation. The real is produced from miniaturized cells, from matrices, and memory banks, models of control—and it can be reproduced an indefinite number of times from these. It no longer needs to be rational, because it is no longer measures itself against either an ideal or negative instance. It is no longer anything but operational. In fact, it is no longer real the real, because no imaginary envelopes it anymore. It is a hyperreal, produced from a radiating synthesis of combinatory models in a hyperspace without atmosphere."<sup>31</sup>*

Jean Baudrillard, *Simulation and Simulacra*. 1995



Fig. 2.61: The World Park, Beijing China 2005



Fig. 2.62: The World Park, Beijing China 2005



Fig. 2.63: The World Park, Beijing China 2005



Fig. 2.64: The World Park, Beijing China 2005



Fig. 2.65: The World Park, Beijing China 2005

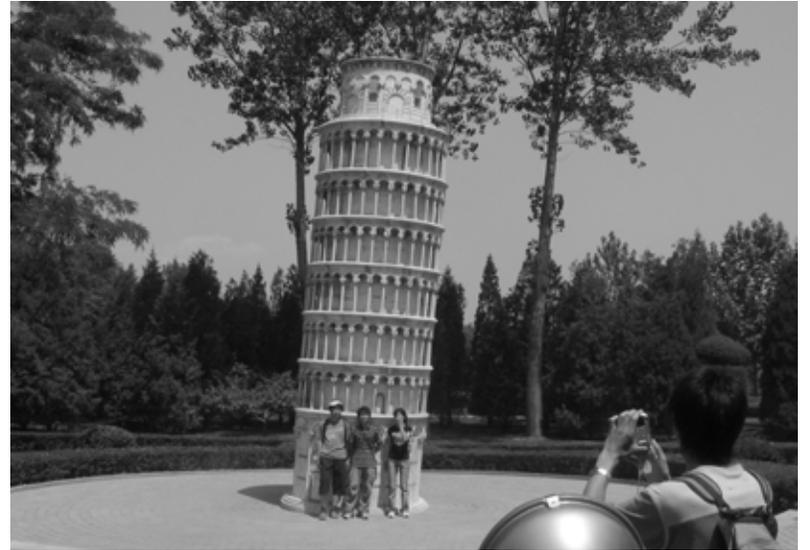


Fig. 2.66: The World Park, Beijing China 2005



Fig. 2.67: The World Park, Beijing China 2005



Fig. 2.68: The World Park, Beijing China 2005



Fig. 2.69: Portrait of Mao Zedong



Fig. 2.70: Portrait of Deng Xiaoping

Through out his reign, Mao's championed the slogan "serve the people." China was to rise as a superpower by mobilizing a great egalitarian society. No more than 5 years after Mao's death, Deng's response to that mantra was "To get rich is glorious."<sup>32</sup> This new philosophy has swept over China advocating hedonism and instant personal wealth. As early as 1995, a gallup pole revealed the greatest desire of 68% of those surveyed was to work hard and become a millionaire. In place of the collective well being of the people, is a personal desire to shape one's success and change the course of one's destiny.

Backed by consistent double digit GDP growth in the 90s, an emerging middle class has transitioned China into uncharted territory. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) reported that 15 per cent of China's population of 1.3 billion has risen into the ranks of middle-class status.<sup>33</sup> A figure that Global consulting firm Bain & Co. estimates will nearly triple by 2010, with a spending power that will surpass \$500 billion.<sup>34</sup>

The CPC has gone to great lengths in order to rebrand its ideologies. In February of 2000, President and general secretary of the CPC Central Committee of the CPC Jiang

Zemin delivered the latest iteration of communist doctrine, "*The Three Represents*," at the 16th CPC Congress.

*"Reviewing the course of struggle and the basic experience over the past 80 years and looking ahead to the arduous tasks and bright future in the new century, our Party should continue to stand in the forefront of the times and lead the people in marching toward victory. In a word, the Party must always represent the requirements of the development of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of the development of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people in China."*<sup>35</sup>

As of 2002, the CPC adopted "*The Three Represents*" by allowing the first capitalists and private entrepreneurs to join the 67 million members of the party. Furthermore, constitutional amendments on private property protection, has put private assets of Chinese citizens on an equal footing with public property. This symbolic shift towards private ownership and



Fig. 2.71: Statuette of Zedong

personal enterprise has updated the CPC's traditional role as a "vanguard of the working class."

Remarketing of Communist ideologies is one way that the party maintains relevance in the wake changing times. To use Deng Xiaoping's famous adage: *"It doesn't matter if it is a black cat or a white cat. If it catches mice, it is a good cat."*<sup>96</sup>

In Chinese the word for cat is "Mao." In the new China the chairman has been replaced by a cute little cat statue as the totem of the market economy.

Little porcelain waving cat figurines have become a staple décor when it comes to many establishments in China these days. After someone pointed it out to me, I began noticing them everywhere: in the window or on the counter in restaurants and shops, tucked among the bottles in bars, perched at the doorway of local businesses. They were hauntingly pervasive, waving, gazing, hypnotic. Their waving paws signaling the departure of Maoist China, they are the new talisman of personal wealth seekers symbolizing prosperity and good fortune.



Fig. 2.72: Waving Cat Figurine

A stroll down any shopping district in China's major cities will reveal how much has changed over the past three decades. Seemingly overnight, the Chinese consumer society has mushroomed. Mao Zedong himself has not been spared in the dramatic consumer transformation. Reduced to kitsch, his likeness is used to sell t-shirts, pocket watches, and lighters. His little red books, a novelty for tourists. The new market economy is a respecter of no one. It seeks only the means to realize wealth or in Deng's term, *catch mice*.



Fig. 2.73: South China Mall, Source: New York Times 2005

For years, China could not reap the material benefits of its mass producing capacities. The majority of cheap shoes, purses and garments its factories churned out were destined for ports in Europe, North America and beyond. For a great majority, the shopping experience was limited to a handful of malls that featured long lines, poor service and limited selection. But that was almost a decade ago. Today, China's growing middle class is swarming by the busload to enjoy the spoils of Capitalist consumerism. Retail sales in China have jumped nearly 50 percent in the last four years.<sup>37</sup> And with rising incomes, comes the desire for ways to spend money.

To meet the maturing tastes and increasing purchasing power of its consumers, China has embarked on a mall-building-frenzy. Like so much of what defines the construction industry in China, the rate of development is staggering. While only a decade ago a handful of malls existed in China, over the last six years upwards of 400 new large malls have been built across the country.<sup>38</sup> International mall developers are scrambling to enter into China's booming market, one that was previously centred in North America, the

Middle East and other East Asian countries.

For quite some time, the standard of large malls was defined by the Mall of America in Minnesota, measuring 4 million square feet and Alberta's West Edmonton Mall at 5.3 million square feet. But China's new malls are redefining that standard in a big way. Astronomical mega projects eclipse North America's giants by as much as two and three times in size. Already, four shopping malls in China are larger than the Mall of America. Two, Golden Resources and South China Mall are bigger than the West Edmonton, with more on the way.<sup>39</sup>

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Golden resources became the largest mall in existence. After only 20 months construction, it opened in the North Western outskirts of Beijing to fanfare and eager shoppers. At an estimated cost of \$1.3 billion, the six-million-square-foot mall spans the length of six football fields, two of which occupied by restaurant space. The complex is staffed by more than 20,000 workers. Everything from expensive bathroom fittings to the latest gadgets and imported fashions are sold in more than 1,000 shops



Fig. 2.74: South China Mall, Source: New York Times 2005

spread over 5 floors. The monolith boasts 230 escalators and an indoor skating rink. Its promoters also claim that like Beijing's other famous landmark, the Great Wall, it is visible from space.

The latest addition to China's growing addiction to oversized malls is South China Mall, located in Dongguan City. At seven million square feet it has temporarily captured the title of the world's largest shopping mall. But the title of "shopping mall" seems to fall short in describing the scale and entertainment factor of this theme park-styled mega project. At a cost of \$400 million, South China Mall is a schizophrenic jumble, drawing iconography from California, Egypt, Amsterdam and France, and Italy. It is the nation's answer to the over-the-top casinos of Las Vegas, rolled into one mega project. Plazas, hotels, water fountains, bridges, pyramids and windmills sprawl over 150 acres of shopping paradise. Visitors can take a Venetian gondola ride along the 1.3-mile artificial river that encircles the complex or walk along palm tree-lined boulevards to seven districts modeled on the world's "famous water cities." An 85-foot full scale replica of the Arc de



Fig. 2.75: South China Mall, Source: New York Times 2005

Triomphe, marks the entrance to the Champs-Elysees, while a reproduction of the famous Hollywood sign heralds one's arrival in Southern California.

But South China Mall won't have very long to enjoy its place at the top of the list. Already two malls under construction, the Triple Five Wenzhou Mall and the Mall of China in Qingdao, have projected total areas of ten million square feet each. By 2010, it is forecasted that 7 of the world's 10 largest malls will be in China.<sup>40</sup> Competition to build the grandest shopping mall represents just one of a series of big-ticket construction projects that contribute to the image makeover of growing cities in China. The race to conjure bigger, better and more entertaining retail spaces is a testament to the communist party's desire to create a stable, happy, middle-income class.



2005

Fig. 2.76: Urbanization Patterns 2005

After more than two decades of development, China's urbanization level still lags far behind the international average. By the end of 2005, its urbanization ratio—the percentage of population living in cities—stood at around 42 percent.<sup>41</sup> Though an impressive increase from 18 percent in 1978, this is still quite low compared with a normal 75 percent in developed countries. In recent years, the urbanization growth rate has increased by an average of two percentage points per year.<sup>42</sup>

As of 2005, China's cities numbered 666: 11 are mega-cities with more than 2 million people, 23 are big cities with populations between 1 million and 2 million, 44 cities have a population between 500,000 and 1 million, 159 are medium sized cities with populations between 200,000 and 500,000 and the remaining 393 cities, considered small cities with a population less than 200,000. World-wide, there are 462 cities with a population of 1 million or more.<sup>43</sup> 7 per cent of these are found in China.

While the country's urban population has increased more than seven-fold, from 72 million in 1952 to 540 million in 2004, China's present urbanization rate is comparable to



2010

Fig. 2.77: Urbanization Patterns 2010

that of the United Kingdom in the 1850s and that of the US in 1911.<sup>44</sup> Unsatisfied with these figures, China has mounting a nationwide initiative that proposes the largest potential migration in human history. In 2001, Minister of Civil Affairs Doje Cering proposed the construction of 400 new cities over the next twenty years<sup>45</sup> This master plan encourages the migration of between 300 million and 500 million people to urban centers, which would raise the urbanization rate to 70 per cent and the urban population to 800 million by 2020. This rural exodus would involve the relocation of a population comparable to that of North America.<sup>46</sup>

An extreme variation of this plan, China's 11th five-year programme, put forth in 2005, proposes the building of over 300 new cities in the next five years, bringing the total number of cities in China with populations of over 200,000 to 1,000, and cities with a population of 1 million or more to 200 by the year 2010.<sup>47</sup>

Commenting on how China's designers are responding to renewed development of cities across the country, Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas says, "Photoshop allows us to



Fig. 2.78: Urbanization Patterns 2015

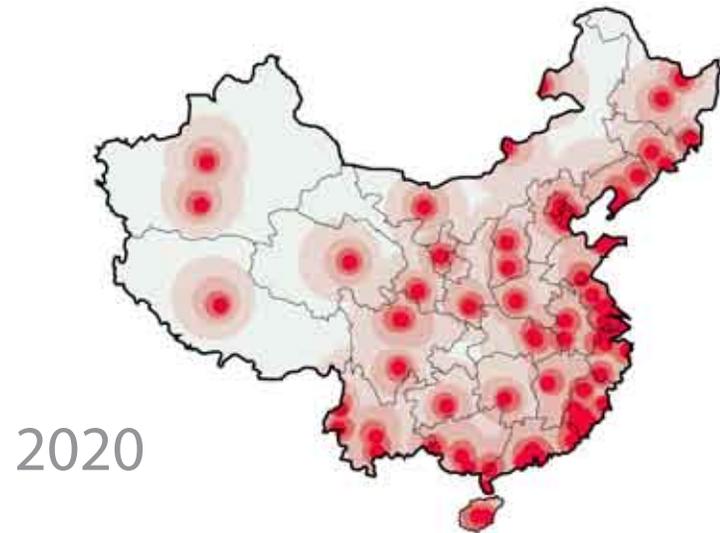


Fig. 2.79 Urbanization Patterns 2020

make collages of photographs – this is the essence of China’s architectural and urban planning...design today becomes as easy as Photoshop, even on the scale of a city.”<sup>48</sup>

Across the country, small villages are rising to the challenge, retrofitted with modern infrastructure and updated skylines while other cities are “cut-and-pasted” into existence. According to Koolhaas, Chinese architects design the largest volume in the shortest time and for the lowest fees –2,500 times more efficient than the average American architect.<sup>49</sup> For every one per cent increase in the nation’s urbanization rate, China must add 300 to 400 million square meters of housing, consume 1,800 square kilometers of land, pump 140 million cubic meters of potable water, generate 640 million kilowatts of energy, and expend 260 to 270 billion Yuan (CA\$39 billion) of capital.<sup>50</sup> According to these figures, by the time China achieves a 70% urbanization rate, it will have built close to 9.8 billion square meters of housing, consumed 50,400 square kilometers of land, pumped almost 4 billion cubic meters of water to the cost of some 7.5 trillion Yuan.

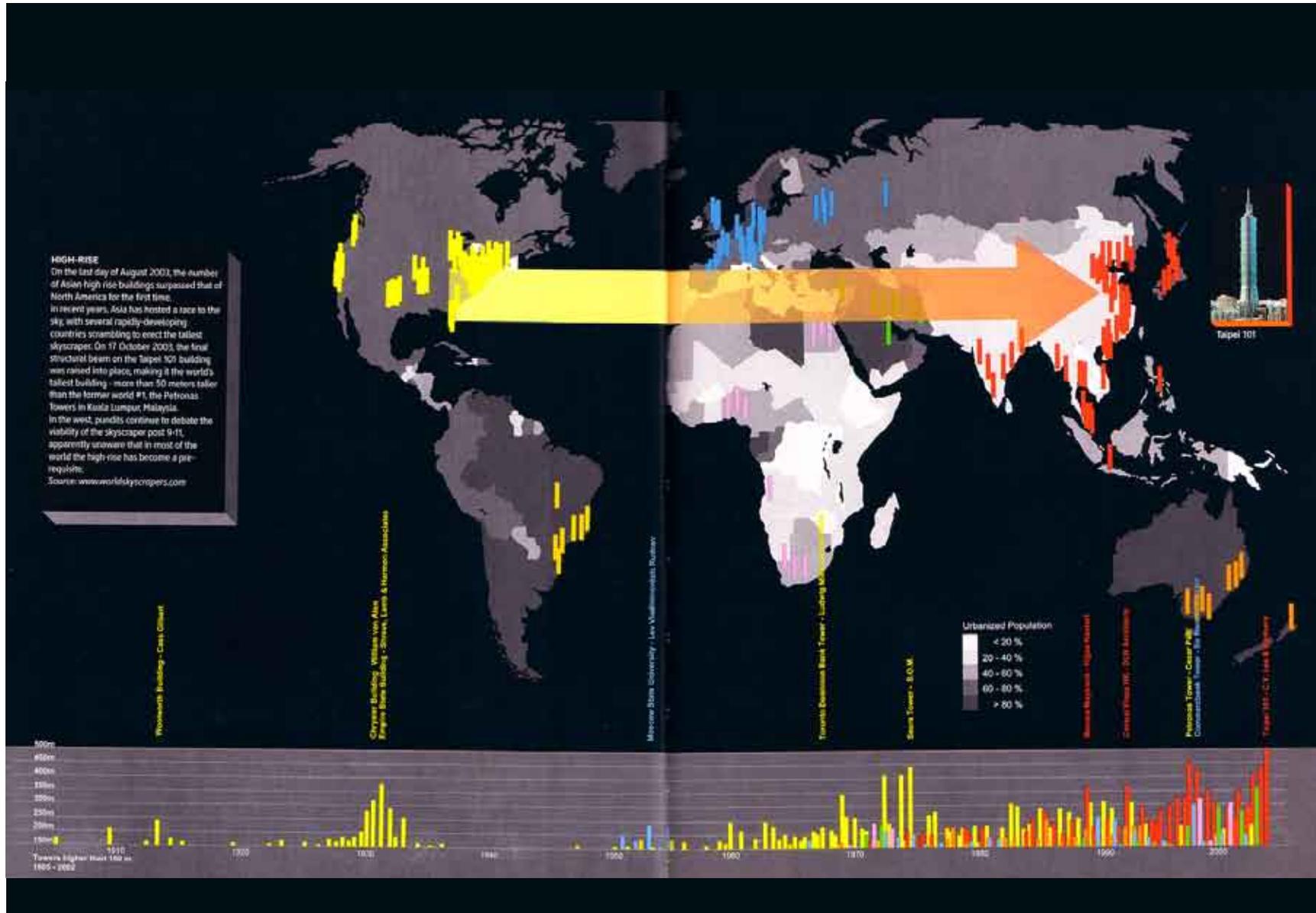
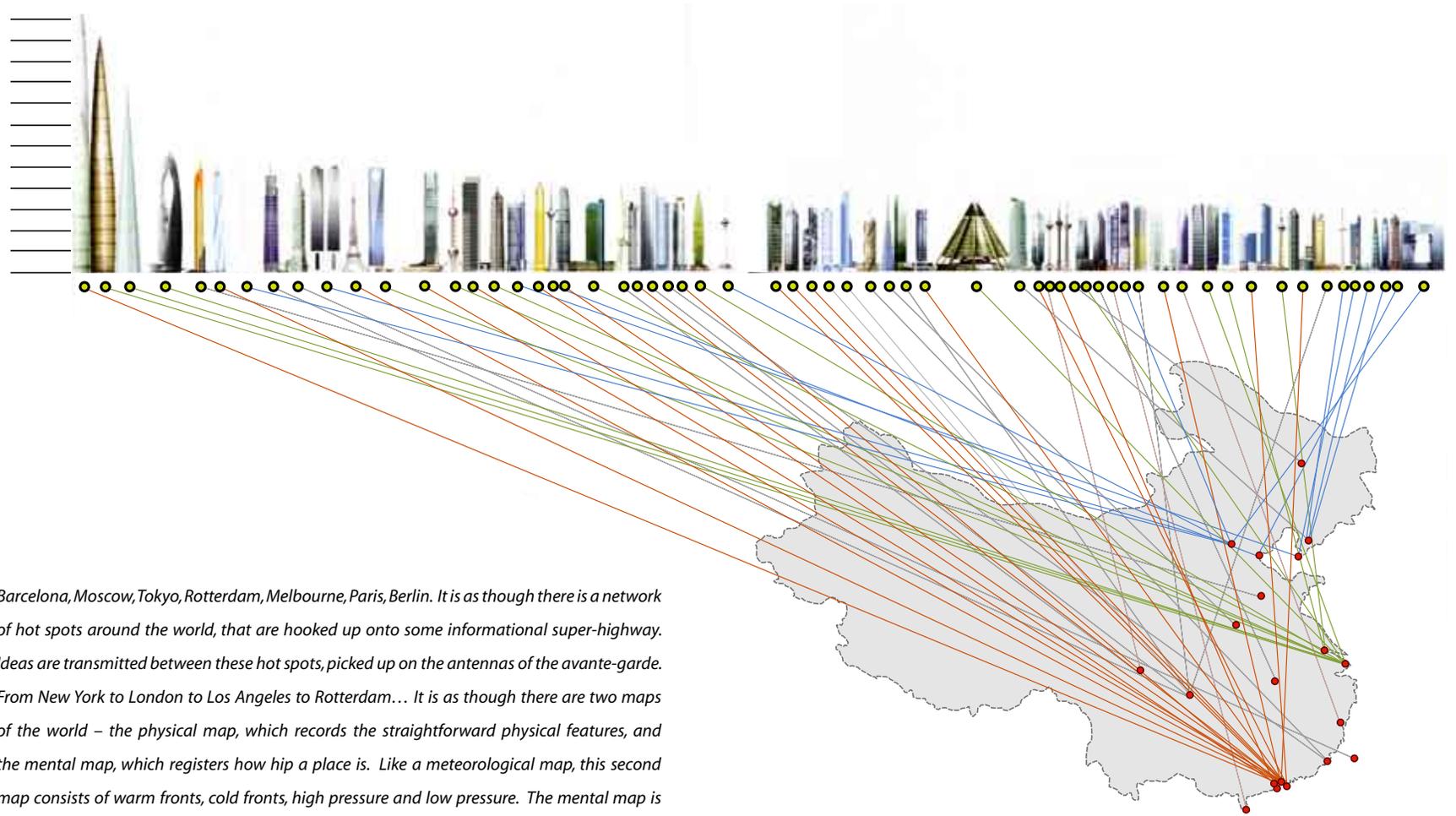


Fig. 2.80: Go East; Source: Content Rem Koolhaas



*Barcelona, Moscow, Tokyo, Rotterdam, Melbourne, Paris, Berlin. It is as though there is a network of hot spots around the world, that are hooked up onto some informational super-highway. Ideas are transmitted between these hot spots, picked up on the antennas of the avante-garde. From New York to London to Los Angeles to Rotterdam... It is as though there are two maps of the world – the physical map, which records the straightforward physical features, and the mental map, which registers how hip a place is. Like a meteorological map, this second map consists of warm fronts, cold fronts, high pressure and low pressure. The mental map is superimposed over the physical map. Like an estate agent's map of expensive real estate, the mental map demarcates where the 'hot spots' are, where the desirable, fashionable places are to be found."*<sup>53</sup>

Neil Leach, China. 2005

Fig.2.81: 'Skyscraping Skyline', Source: Urban China Review 2005

1980



Fig. 2.82: Special Economic Zones 1980

At the core of China's construction craze is the pressure to project symbols of affluence and modernity. Partly because the country has a lot of lost time to make up for, there is an almost desperate search for emblems of progress, which include world class airports, shopping malls and sky scrapers. The SEZ model, having proved its success in Shenzhen has quickly transplanted to cities along the coast, fostering competition amongst municipalities to attract investment. On the heels of Shenzhen's transformation, many smaller and mid-sized townships have used larger metropolises as a template for their own growth. By 2004, 183 of China's 666 cities had plans to position themselves as "internationalized" metropolises—modern cosmopolitan cities.<sup>51</sup> In their pursuit of global competitiveness, many cities are desperate to expand, refurbish, and reconstruct their older districts on a large scale. Vast public squares, luxurious office complexes, suburban settlements, airports, shopping malls and urban glamour zones have spread throughout the country. Huge commissions are awarded to high profile designers that lend celebrity endorsement to city-wide redevelopment projects.

2006



Fig. 2.83: Development Zones 2006

Through grand redevelopment schemes, armies of construction workers are transforming the Chinese city into globalized nodes for the new world economy. Billions of dollars have been invested to ensure that China's rising cities stay competitive with the more established global players of New York, London and Tokyo. In the post-Mao era, industries have been transplanted to outer lying areas of the city to make way for new industries in minted developing high-tech zones, science parks, and business incubators. Currently, more than 6,000 "development zones" have sprung up nationwide, covering a total area of 3.6 million hectares.<sup>52</sup> The site of modernization has once again recented on the city. Seemingly overnight, the urban landscape has been turned upside down—giving rise to many anomalous environments as old gives way to hyper new.

While many celebrate the arrival of improved quality and functionality of new housing facilities and commercial centres, an equal number are alarmed that the uncritical adoption of Western lifestyle is remaking China into something not very Chinese. As particularly noted in architecture and urban planning, the profusion of Western capitalism into mainstream Chinese society is directly linked to the erosion of urban context and local

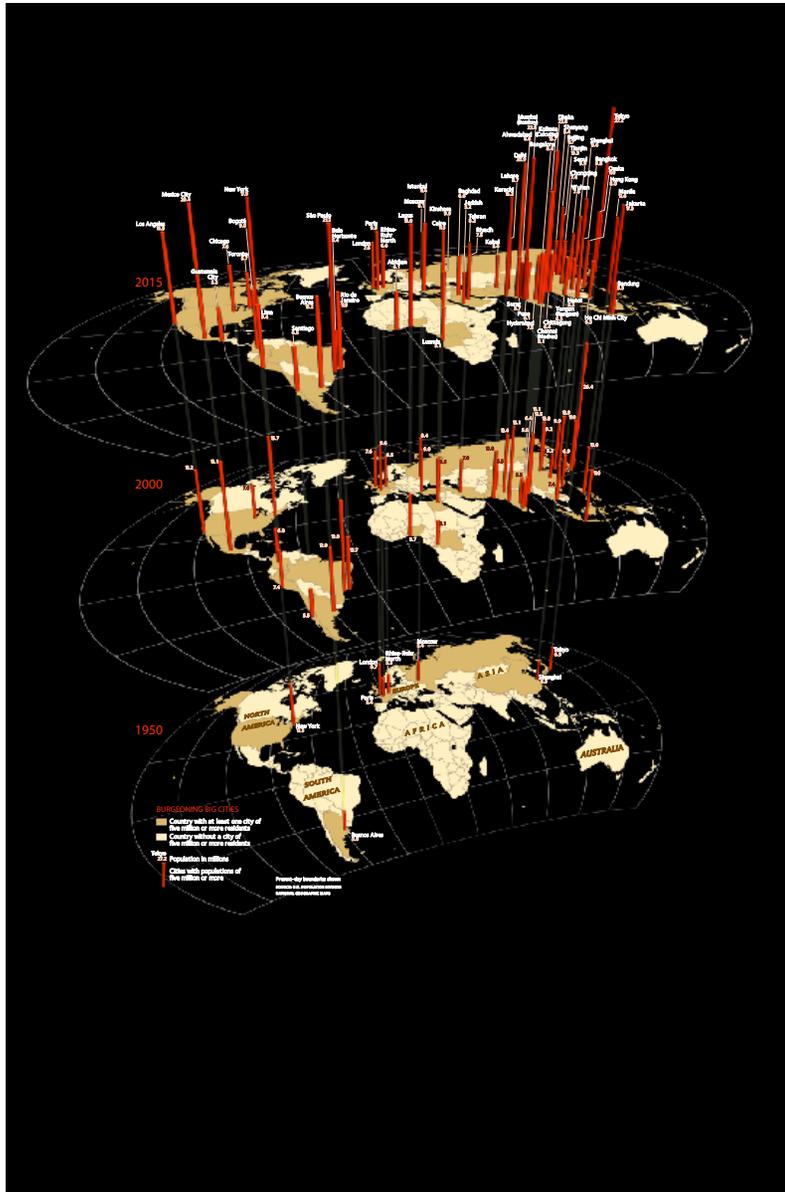


Fig. 2.84: 'Burgeoning Big Cities', Source: Time Magazine 2000

identity.

Furthermore, new forms of economic governance are in effect placing the trajectory of these growing cities in the hands of foreign powers. China's emerging cities, in their rush to attract global dollars, have created a home-bred version of extraterritoriality. They operate in much the same way as the treaty ports and foreign concessions of the nineteenth century. Here again overseas intruders have again infiltrated China's social fabric and replicated lifestyles based of Western models. At the whim of would-be investors, China's cities typically resort to large-scale demolition or massive resettlement programs in order to make way for new development. This is often to the detriment of local residents and community fabric and the constitution of the urban population. The globalization process intensifies income disparity within the city, marginalizing and even exploiting large sections of the city's population.

While the collapsed economies of China's East Asian neighbours have provided a clear example of dangers of unrestrained free market capitalist reform, China seems powerless to avoid, or learn from, the mistakes that American and European cities have made in the past. During America's post-World War II boom, the pattern of urban growth gravitated towards low density suburban neighbourhoods that consumed a lot of land and were dependent on the private automobile. The consequences have been felt across North America; congested roads, polluted air, loss of arable land and a crippling dependence on petroleum.

As China moves towards full integration within the global sphere, uncertainties are amplified. How will the struggle between foreign investment and state control dictate the future of China's growth? Can a balance between the two make China the world's largest economy? Or will the rising star burn itself out, crumbling under the weight of internal tensions?

*"Soon it will join the ranks of other hot spots in the world – New York, London, Los Angeles,*



Fig. 2.85: Current and Projected Urbanization Rates

In many parts of the World, the road to modernization has been accompanied with pervasive flattening of local identity. Many nations on this path have displayed a tendency towards one universal culture—a gravity towards sameness. Consequently, new comers to the race of modernization find themselves becoming more and more similar as they break from dependence on local a geographic location and begin to access more standardized forms of production and servicing. Fostered by new technologies and communication and transportation between places becomes more fluid. This heightened traffic of people, goods and ideas erodes the finer characteristics between one place and another—fostering a disconnect between identity and location.

In human terms the most distinct form of identification from one place to another is the fingerprint. This is an indisputable marker of one's unique constitution from the other billions of people around the world. In a similar way a topographic map whether cartographic or cultural is one way to express the unique contours of a place. Within the framework of modernization is the desire for control and predictability, it consequently

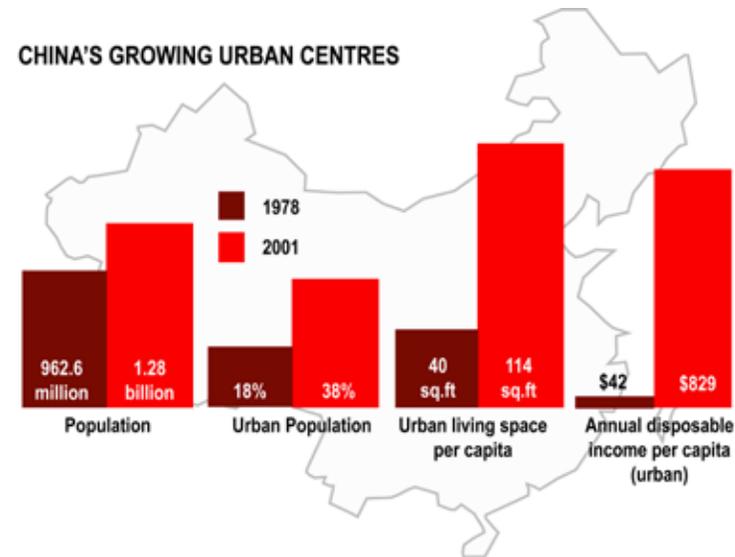


Fig. 2.86: Comparative Progress 1978-2001

flattens intellectual terrain. In other words there is the erasure of the fingerprint—the leveling of the spatial distinctions between domains.

China has displayed little attempt to diverge from this pattern. The nation's race towards modernity is marked by a wholesale embrace of foreign icons and models of consumption. The race to modernity embodied by a race towards sameness. Across the country, the desire for cultural uniformity with the west is spreading rampantly. The new opium in China is packed in a Styrofoam cup and is marketed in a catalogue. This new drug's grip on the population may prove infinitely more fatal to the Chinese civilization.

# Global Distribution of WalMarts 2005

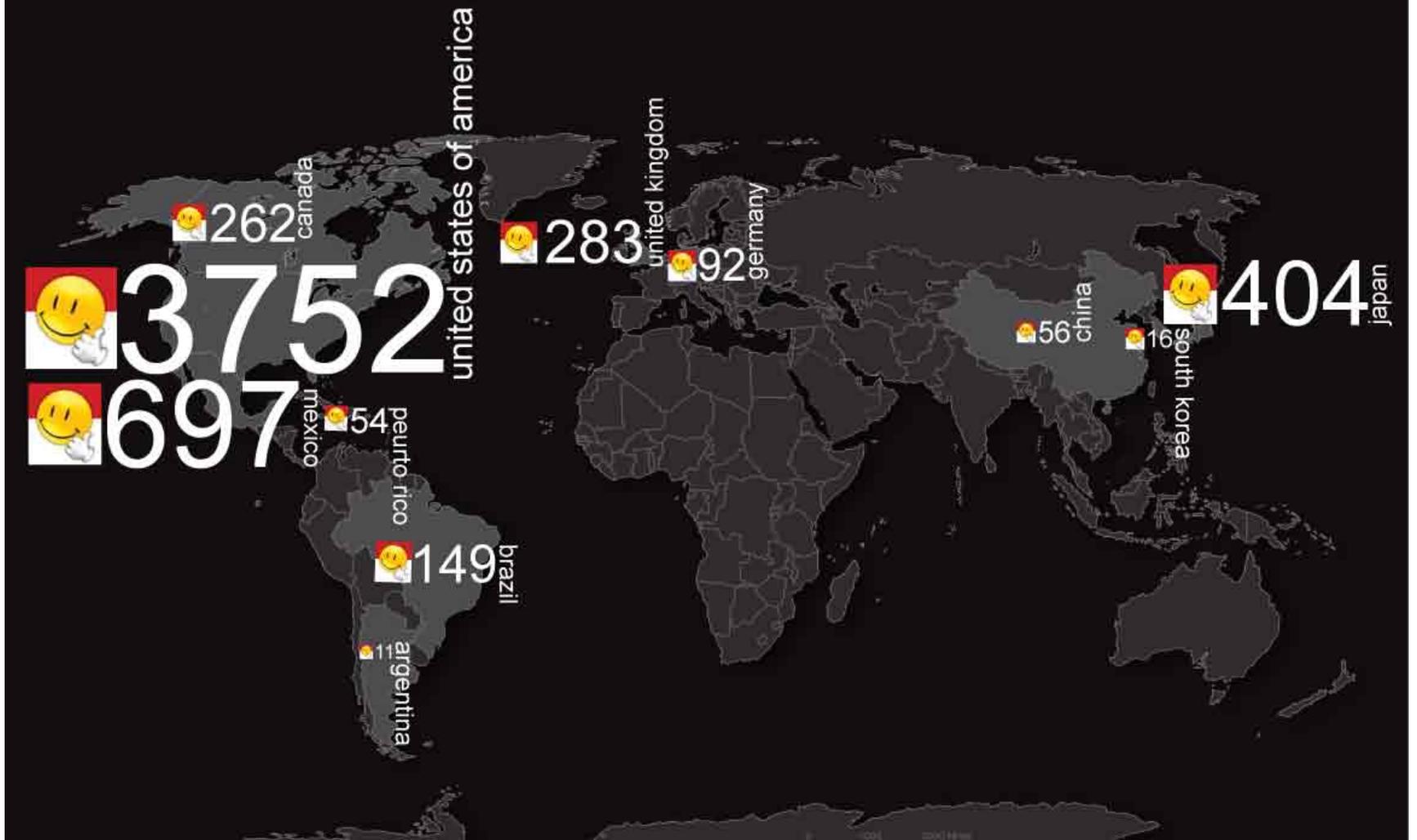


Fig. 2.87

# Global Distribution of MacDonalDs 2003

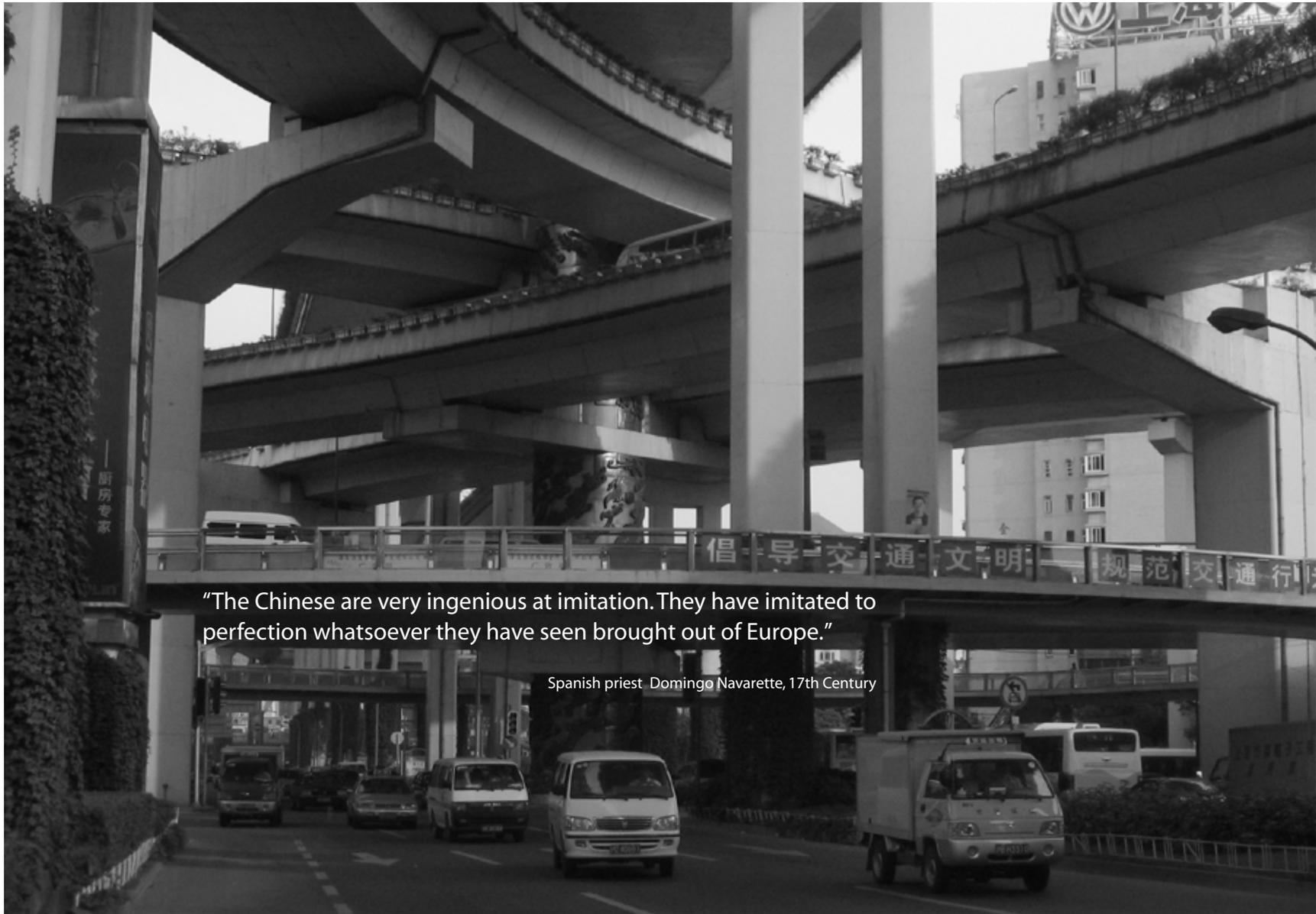


Fig. 2.88

# Global Distribution of Starbucks 2003



Fig. 2.89



“The Chinese are very ingenious at imitation. They have imitated to perfection whatsoever they have seen brought out of Europe.”

Spanish priest Domingo Navarette, 17th Century

Fig. 3.01

# CHAPTER 3: THE SYSTEM

## **sys·tem: n.**

An organized and coordinated method, a procedure; the prevailing social order; the establishment

This following chapter looks more closely at Shanghai and how its role as an entrepot has galvanized its place in China's history and future. The World Expo in 2010 is now a catalyst for city-wide redevelopment, but often the shape and articulation of a correct aesthetic remains illusive. Furthermore the pervasive influence of Western culture has inundated the market with a myriad of options and knock-offs that fight for consumer attention. The housing market employs fads and gimmicks to attract an increasingly segmented consumer population.

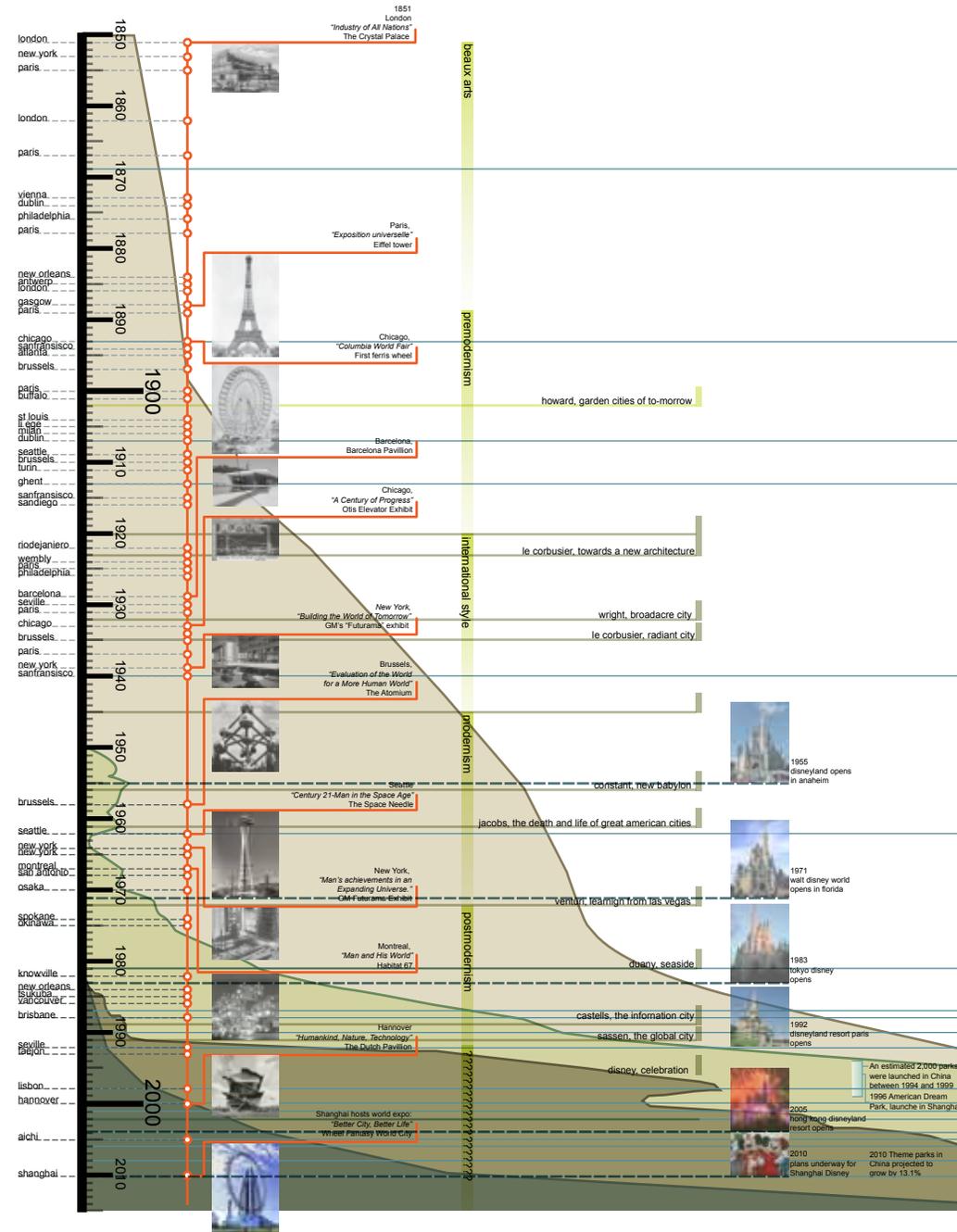
"In carrying out our modernization program we must proceed from Chinese realities. Both in revolution and in construction we should also learn from foreign countries and draw on their experience, but mechanical application of foreign experience and copying of foreign models will get us nowhere. We have had many lessons in this respect. We must integrate the universal truth of Marxism with concrete realities of China, blaze a path of our own, and build a socialism **with Chinese characteristics**—that is the basic conclusion we have reached after reviewing our long history."<sup>1</sup>

Deng Xiaoping at speech delivered to the National congress of the Communist Party in 1980

China has embarked on modernization with breakneck speed. The term breakneck is used because every milestone that took the Western world decades to transition through, China completes overnight. In the West, the transformation from traditional society to modernity was a century-long process, perpetuated by dramatic changes in the restructuring of rural economy and the introduction of Fordist-style productions. The transition from congested industrial urban centres to sprawl, from a manufacturing to a technology based economy present overlapping timelines of development. Simultaneously, China is in the midst an industrial, technological, consumer and car revolution—defying all economic models.

Today, the premodern, modern and postmodern co-exist in China. All trajectories have been collapsed. Cars, suburbs, Big Box retailers and theme parks have arrived within the span of half a generation—dramatically transforming the urban landscape.

There is nothing in modern history that can match China's growth over the last three decades. Since Deng Xiaoping first spoke of socialism with Chinese characteristics in 1982, the country's economy has grown at an annual rate of 9.5 percent.<sup>2</sup> Since then, the nation has not ceased economic growth, doubling its economy 3 times between 1992 and 2000.<sup>3</sup> No nation can boast such a track record. Even the post war economies of Japan and Korea, while impressive, have slowed and suffered the effects of the Asian economic crisis. China has yet to discover the breaks on its ride to the top.



# CHINA'S Milestone Moments

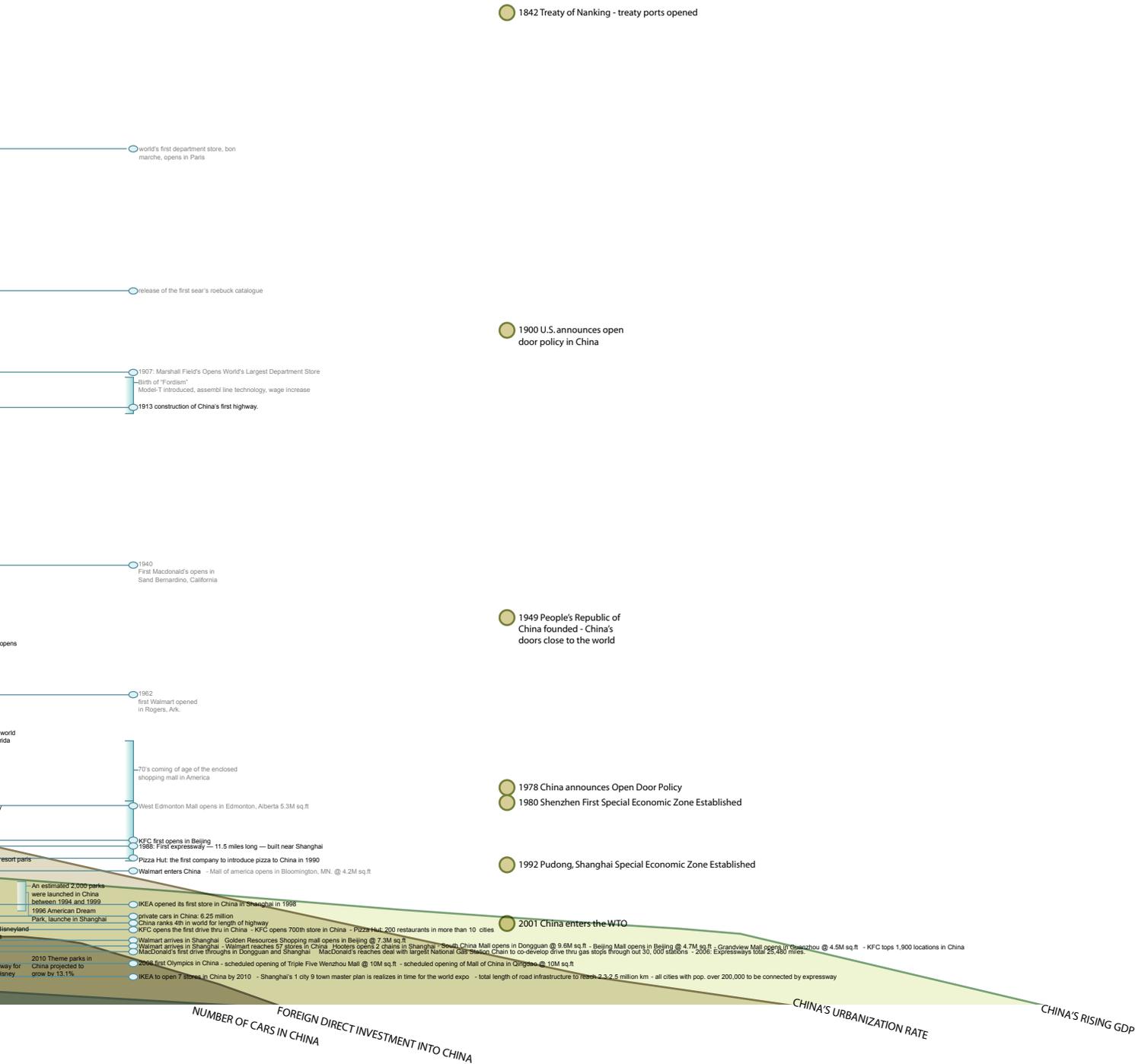


Fig. 3.02



Fig. 3.03: Shanghai Skyline

20 years of reform and modernization were not evenly felt across China. Pamela Yatsuko, author of *New Shanghai, The Rocky Rebirth of China's Legendary City* describes Shanghai in the mid-80s as “an overworked middle-aged woman who had lost her good looks—her deterioration underscored by the appearance of a number of fresh-faced rivals.”<sup>4</sup>

While development zones like Shenzhen were booming at a dizzying pace as a result of Deng's experimental socialist capitalist model, Shanghai had changed little—silenced by years of decay and neglect. It was overlooked by Deng Xiaoping in the first wave of reforms for two reasons. First, as the vanguard for the Cultural Revolution and the home city of the Gang of Four it had earned disfavour with Beijing. The legacy of its political past led Party leaders to distrust the city. Secondly, Shanghai had been transformed into an economic generator that government did not want to tamper with. By 1980, one eighth of China's total industrial output, one quarter of its exports, and one sixth of the central government's revenues were coming from Shanghai.<sup>5</sup>

But the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989 soon turned the tide in Shanghai's

favour. In the wake of the political aftermath, Deng was forced to look for more fertile ground to peddle his reforms as a left minded Beijing had grown resistant to his progressive ideas. In a subsequent visit to Shanghai, Deng Xiaoping lamented that, “in retrospect, one of my biggest mistakes was leaving out Shanghai when we launched the four special economic zones...otherwise, the situation of reform and opening to the outside in the Yangtze River Delta, the entire Yangtze River valley, and even the entire nation would be different.” In 1990 Deng placed Shanghai on a correction course for reform. The green light came by way of dozens of preferential policies that would make Shanghai attractive to foreign investors. Shanghai was immediately established as a new Special economic zone elaborated by free trade, export processing, and high-tech industrial zones.

On top of that, Deng placed former mayors of Shanghai, Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji, at the top positions in Beijing. These efforts galvanized Shanghai's path to rebirth. Serving as General Secretary of the Communist Party of China from and President of the People's Republic of China, Jiang Zemin put forth big plans for the city. At the 14<sup>th</sup> National



Fig. 3.04: Lujiazui Central Business District, Pudong Skyline

Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in October 1992, Jiang Zemin announced, “We must take the development and opening of Pudong in Shanghai as the dragon head, advance another step to open cities on the banks of the Yangtze River, and establish Shanghai as an international, economic, and trading centre as soon as possible...”<sup>6</sup>

At the time of his speech, Pudong was nothing but an expanse of farmland and countryside that lay across the river from Shanghai. But the Special Economic Zone was inspired by mega projects like London’s Canary Warf and La Defense in Paris. Both projects had been built on a clean slate, in proximity to but outside of historic urban cores. The success of both projects was predicated on the visual contribution to the city’s skyline as well as an ability to anchor the city’s contemporary vision for itself. The creation of Pudong as the “Manhattan of the East” would solidify Shanghai’s role in the country’s meteoric rise.

After a 1992 visit to Paris which included a visit to La Defense, then Shanghai Mayor Zhu Rongji reached an agreement with the French to help organize an international

competition for the design of Pudong’s Central Business District. Given a tabula rasa, the primary guidelines for the competition included a reinforced connection between the East and West axis of the existing and new city and an emphasis on the visible impact of the new Central Business District. Massimiliano Fuksas, Toyo Ito, Dominique Perrault, and Richard Rogers were invited to participate in the master planning competition of the new city.

While none of the 4 invited schemes were selected for the design, the project forged ahead under the revised scheme of the Shanghai Urban Planning and Design Institute which incorporated elements from each of the proposals.

Within a year of the competition the site had become a swarm of cranes, bulldozers and labourers. It has been rumoured that during this building boom one quarter of the world’s construction cranes were in Shanghai, leading to Pudong’s title as the world’s largest construction site.

In less than two decades Pudong has propelled Shanghai to the forefront of China’s development—a showcase of China’s economic prowess. The agglomeration of new skyscrapers forms a futurist skyline in dialogue with the historic waterfront—symbolic of Shanghai’s old and new empires. The new image represents an act of victory over the colonial artifacts on the opposite side of the Huangpu River. Pudong has come to symbolize the future of Shanghai. Its glass orbs, whimsical towers, neon lights and digital screens the height of 20 storey buildings have risen from a field of rice paddies.

Bridges, pedestrian tunnels, subway lines crisscross the twin cities. A new airport and a container port provide gateways for Shanghai’s new global traffic. Pudong New Area, boasts six lane boulevards, tree lined avenues, grand museums and cultural venues, five-star hotels, restaurants and even its own version of Central Park.



## Rapid Economic Growth in Pudong New Area

Source: [www.pudong.gov.cn](http://www.pudong.gov.cn)

*After 15 years' development and opening up, the GDP of Pudong New Area has maintained an annual growth rate of over 20%, reaching RMB178.979 billion yuan which is nearly 30 times more than that in the early days of its development and opening-up, accounting for 24% of the GDP total of Shanghai.*

*In 2003, China: 9.3%, Shanghai: 11.8%, and Pudong New Area: 17.5%*

*In 2004, China: 9.5%, Shanghai: 13.6%, and Pudong New Area: 16.4%*

## Total Industrial Output Value

The industrial output value for Pudong in 2004 reached RMB352 billion, taking 25% of the total in Shanghai.

## Imports and Exports Volume

The total volume of imports and exports for Pudong in 2004 was USD80.8 billion, accounting for 51% of that of Shanghai, among which the volume of the exports reached USD32.3 billion, and the imports USD48.4 billion.

## Handling Capacity of the Airport and the Port

The handling Capacity of Waigaoqiao Port in 2004 reached 79.965 million tons, accounting for 22% of the total capacity of Shanghai. The cargo and mail handling capacity of Pudong International Airport reached 1.88 million tons, with 21.044 million passengers in and out of the airport.

## Finance and Insurance

311 financial institutions had been established by the end of 2004, among which 173 institutions were foreign-funded with a balance of deposits



Fig. 3.05: Panoramic of Shanghai Nightlife

and loans reaching USD21.617 billion. 30 foreign-invested banks were allowed to handle RMB business, with a balance of deposits and loans reaching RMB584.7 billion. The number of foreign-invested insurance companies located in Pudong reached 18.

#### **Securities, Futures and Property Rights Exchange**

The Shanghai Stock Exchange is the largest stock exchange in China with a transaction volume of RMB7670 billion in securities, RMB8430 billion in futures and RMB361.2 billion in property rights which is nearly 1.2 times increase over that of last year.

#### **Commercial Turnovers**

At present, there are nearly 32,000 retail stores in Pudong New Area, covering an area of commerce of 3.3 million square meters, among which

1.23 million square meters are under construction. Retail volume of 2004 reached RMB293.2 billion, among which RMB35.8 billion was from social consumable goods, accounting for 15% of that in Shanghai.

#### **Fiscal Revenues**

The fiscal revenues of the Pudong government in 2004 was RMB40.223 billion, an increase of 36% over the previous year and higher than the GDP growth rate. Local fiscal revenues reached RMB13.44 billion.

#### **Investment in Fixed Assets**

From 1990 to 2004, the total investment in fixed assets exceeded RMB530 billion, a quarter of which was invested into infrastructure.<sup>7</sup>



Fig. 3.06: Billboard of Expo Redevelopment Zone, Source: Urban China Review 2005

The World Exposition was founded in London, 1851 at a time when Britain was enjoying the fruits of industrialization and recent conquests around the globe. The first exposition was launched under the title “Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations,” conceived to symbolize this industrial, military and economic superiority of Great Britain. It represented an ambition to encapsulate the entirety of the world.

The first expo was housed in The Crystal Palace constructed in the middle of London’s Hyde Park. The huge iron building was among the largest of its time, requiring over 900,000 square feet of glass. It was originally designed by Joseph Paxton to be the centre piece of the fair grounds. Its size was important because it needed to house over 13,000 exhibits. The millions of visitors that journeyed to the Great Exhibition of 1851 marveled at the industrial revolution that was reshaping Britain into the greatest power of the time. The Jacquard loom, an envelope machine, kitchen appliances, steam hammers and hydraulic engines were among several attractions that displayed the wonders of new technology. Others represented just about every marvel of the Victorian Age including pottery and porcelain, perfume, textiles, houses and diving suits. The objects on display came from all parts of the world, including India and other European conquests, such as Australia and New Zealand.

From then on, the World Exposition became a platform for the latest discoveries in science and technology to be unveiled. Inventions such as the telephone, the elevator, and the Ferris Wheel made their debut at the World exposition. Later exhibitions would go onto explore visions of the future as designers and inventors showcased the wonders of space travel, futuristic transportation, the wonders of automation and the revolution of lifestyle that technology could afford.

Throughout the history of World Expositions, architecture has remained a consistent vehicle for communicating ideas of progress and optimism for the future. They have often been the site for most advanced and impressive buildings of their time. The Eiffel tower, Unite Habitation and the Barcelona pavilion are images from past World Expos that have been engrained in a nation’s global identity long after the exposition has ended. In this way, architecture has played a key role in projecting the success and prosperity of both the participating and the host nation—each building an opportunity for national

branding.

A city’s hosting of the world expo can be seen as its coming of age party—a debutant’s ball of sorts where it will be showcased on the global stage. Examining the list of cities that have hosted in the past, economic and political growth has always preceded the arrival of the Expo. For the majority of the nineteenth century, the world’s fair stayed in Europe. The great cities of London and Paris that were crystallized during this century hosted the world’s expo a total of 11 times. New York, a city that experienced its growth spurt during the early twentieth century hosted one of the most memorable of the world’s fairs in 1931. Many other American cities came of age during the automobile era during the 40’s and 50’s.

Tokyo was emblematic of the rapid industrialization and reforms of Japan during the 1960’s. Similarly, Seoul’s development was representative of South Korea’s rapid economic boom through out the 70’s. At a time when both nations were on the rise the World Expo operated as both catalyst and reaction to rapid development.



Fig. 3.07: Rendering of Shanghai World Expo Master Plan

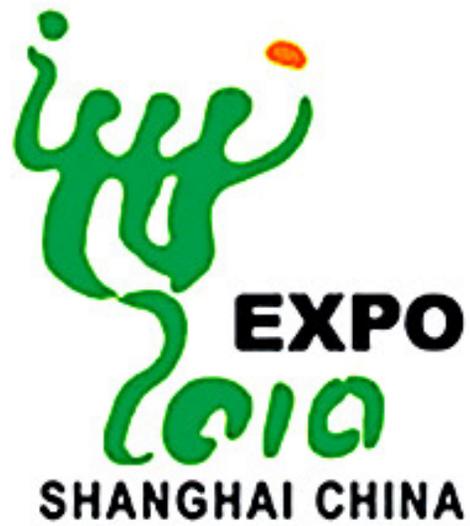


Fig. 3.08: Shanghai World Expo Logo



Fig. 3.09: Rendering of Shanghai World Expo Master Plan



Fig. 3.10: Rendering of Shanghai Wheel Fantasy World City

China has now taken centre stage as the one of the world's most dynamic economies. Shanghai, sits at the helm of the Nation's rapid transformation and is emblematic of the raw energy and determinism of its people.

2010 marks the arrival of the World Expo to China. Several clocks around the city count down to this day as the city undergoes daily transformation in preparation. They serve as a constant reminder to the Shanghainese of the target in site, the unveiling of their city.

Under the Expo theme, "Better City, Better Life," Shanghai has embraced its new role as China's preeminent city. In its unapologetic race, Shanghai is being remade—rebranded as China's city of the future. By 2010, Shanghai will host the nation's tallest skyscrapers, magnificent bridges and most modern facilities. Cranes and labourers work furiously against the countdown to ready Shanghai for the world's arrival.

Along the banks of the Huangpu River over a 20km stretch massive redevelopment projects are shaping rundown districts into the World Expo site. The



Fig. 3.10: Rendering of Shanghai Kiss., Wil Alsop

design of the site is the result of an international design competition. The winning design features an oval-shaped canal built across both banks of the Huangpu River. During the Expo period, the canal will serve to outline the site. Located at the centre of the Expo site, a new footbridge will become the landmark of the international event. The 240-hectare Expo site will house a China pavilion, national pavilions, corporate pavilions, a convention centre and an integrated hall. The key exhibition venues will occupy a land area of 3.4 square kilometers in Pudong. National pavilions will sprawl along both sides of the Huangpu. In addition, a continuous green belt will flank both sides of the river forming a new civic parkspace.

And just as the World expos of the past have done, Shanghai will showcase some of the world's latest architectural marvels and feats of engineering. Included in the plans are the "Shanghai Wheel Fantasy World City," to be the world's tallest Ferris wheel at 200-230 meters, and Will Alsop's "Shanghai Kiss." At 250 meters it will be as tall as the Eiffel tower and take visitors up the legs of the structure in viewing pods.



Fig. 3.11: Billboard Atop Office Tower in Huangpu District Counting Down the Days Until the World Expo



Fig. 3.12: Clock in the Heart of People's Square Counting Down the Days Until the World Expo



Fig. 3.13: Cartoon about Anticipation for the World Expo, Source: Urban China Review 2005



Fig. 3.14

Expo fever runs high in Shanghai. Take a trip to People's Square in the heart of the city where on the third floor of the Shanghai Urban Planning Museum a scale model of the city in 2020 stretches the size of basket ball court. It is the largest of its size. Every high rise, stadium, and mall to be built over the next 15 years is meticulously crafted by hand, requiring upwards of 100 model builders to keep it up to date. It changes so frequently that even the staff cannot keep track of it (at best estimates, the city planning department counts over 7,000 buildings over 8 stories).<sup>8</sup>

A catwalk surrounding the entire model ushers visitors into a vision of the Shanghai of tomorrow, most stopping to take photos by the World financial centre in Pudong, which when complete hopes to be the tallest building in the World.

But not limited to the tallest, Shanghai is also in the race to build the worlds longest double level cable-stayed bridge, the highest Ferris wheel, the worlds fastest maglev, the world's largest cargo port and Asia's largest railway station. It's a city of superlatives, where size matters. The search for "big ticket" items are part of Shanghai's makeover—a chance to reclaim its title as the "Pearl of the Orient" and assert its new role as the "Manhattan of the East". Here, the postcard image of the city prevails. A modern skyline



Fig. 3.15

littered with symbols of monumentality is as good as a celebrity endorsement when it comes to branding the city. Architecture has become the new propaganda poster, championing the city's commitment to remake itself by its own strength and determinism.

Here at the Urban planning museum tourist come to marvel at the prospect of transformation. Looking for what new development plans to arrive at their doorstep over the next few decades they lurch over the guard rail to snap a photo—a snapshot of things to come.

If one goes by numbers alone, Shanghai has already arrived at megalopolis status. In 1985, there was only one sky scraper in Shanghai. Today, the city boasts over 4,000 buildings over 18 storeys (that's double the number in New York).<sup>9</sup> In 2004, Shanghai was building close to 1 billion square feet of new real estate, a figure that more than triples the amount of office floor space existing in New York City.<sup>10</sup> The average density in the city is 15,500 people per square kilometer. In the core, it's as high as 50,000, at its densest as high as 120,000 per square kilometer.<sup>11</sup> By comparison downtown Toronto is 6,732 per square kilometer.<sup>12</sup>



Fig. 3.16



Fig. 3.17: Portrait of Charlie Wang

Sipping a beer on the banks of the Pudong's new waterfront development provides a vista into Shanghai's history. The Bund, a collection of Stone Art Deco and Neoclassical buildings, is a legacy of its treaty-port days, recalling a golden age when Shanghai was a bustling metropolis for the global elite. In China's recent history, these were viewed with disdain as symbols of cultural corruption. Today these relics have been incorporated into Shanghai's rebranding as a global city. The historic legacy of yesterday is digested into a vision for the city of tomorrow as the old skyline provides a link to tradition and new skyline a departure from it. Along both banks of the Huangpu River droves of tourist pose against the backdrop of the competing skylines, capturing moments of nostalgia and utopia.

Charlie Wang, a Canadian, is the fabled hero who credited with bringing Shanghai its modern appearance. While you may have never heard of Charlie Wang in any architectural magazine, mention the name to anyone in the Shanghai-Canadian Architecture circle and you sure to garner a fond smile or a chuckle. His story of self-made wealth has become folklore in the myth of Shanghai's revolutionary makeover.

Back in the early late 80's when Shanghai was still an overlooked metropolis and Pudong was a field of rice paddies, Charlie was a struggling immigrant to Toronto from Shanghai, aspiring for a better life for himself and his family. At 38, he was among the last of his relatives to emigrate to Canada, mainly because he was an accomplished cello player in the National Symphony. He left that position to come to join his parents and siblings in Canada where he would have to start from scratch.

With no English, and limited education, Charlie's first job was at a furniture shop working doing general labour for six dollars an hour. He worked there for almost three years, struggling to improve his English so he could get a better position. His second job was at a millwork work shop where he could now exercise more of his people skills, marketing and selling products. By this time he was earning fourteen dollars an hour.

It wasn't until 1990 when Charlie gained Canadian citizenship that he could really pursue his goals more aggressively. Using what little savings he had he made several expensive trips to China in search of joint venture opportunities. After several trips back with little success he was out of money and options. His big break came when he landed a position with Otis elevators as sales agent for Shanghai. While this was not the joint venture he was looking for it did afford him exposure to people who were poised for Shanghai's rebirth as a modern city. His charisma and networking skills helped him integrate quickly though he had no experience. Among the earliest projects he was involved in were the Shanghai Subway System and the newly erected Oriental Pearl Tower.

Both projects were catalysts of Shanghai's emergence and would lay the framework for Shanghai's visionary skyline. It was while working on these two projects that Charlie made essential connections to visionary planners and developers who were eager to be part of Shanghai's ascension. Many of them, though, had limited resources in the design industry and the pool of design talent in Shanghai at the time left much to be desired. Because he was a Canadian citizen, Charlie was approached by the developer of the Oriental Pearl tower to connect with Canadian architects back home and bring their talent to Shanghai.

At the time there was little foreign presence in the architecture scene and there was limited transparency between the two countries. Charlie would be among the first to



Fig. 3.18: Shanghai Skyline

broker deals between foreign designers in modern China. So with no professional design training and experience within an architecture setting, Charlie returned to Canada and began to make introductions between developers, city planners and Toronto's larger design firms. Through out the 90's he helped broker some of the largest and most prominent civic commissions including the Shanghai Stock exchange by Webb Zerafa and Menkes and Housden, and the interiors of the Oriental Pearl Tower by Yabu Pushelberg.

Charlie's name would later be attached to many projects through out Shanghai. He later served as a member of Jean Chretien's "Team Canada" in 2001 and would be appointed an honorary member of the Ontario Architects Association. His name has become synonymous with Shanghai's overnight transformation. Of the two dozen Canadian architecture firms currently operating satellite offices in China, most are indebted to Charlie who helped them get an early foothold in what is now perhaps the largest market for international design firms.

I first was introduced to Charlie in 2003, while working at Forrec with the

Shanghai Science and Technology Museum. Almost three years later he remains one of the best connected people to have in your corner when trying to land a project in Shanghai. These days many people refer to him as "Uncle Charlie". In his office sits a picture of him with former Prime Minister Jean Chretien. Charlie is now the owner and manager of his own architecture and design firm, STW that has offices in Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong. More recently he was positioned as Forrec's head of China operations dealing with mega entertainment projects like Universal Studios Shanghai. With a full plate in Shanghai, Charlie still enjoys the opportunity to return to Canada, where his wife and son reside in Scarborough, not far from where I grew up.

In Shanghai size matters. The city's relative late start has fostered an inferiority complex; one that city officials are overcompensating for by building bigger and higher. The city appears in an anxious frenzy to acquire visible symbols of progress. Despite the central government's recent efforts to slow the rate of inflation and cool the white hot property market, construction still races at the rate of at least "one high-rise a day".<sup>14</sup> Shanghai presently boasts 25 structures over 200m. By comparison New York has the most with 47. Toronto has only 7.<sup>15</sup> Foreign architects have had a field day designing the Shanghai skyline. The design mandate is oversimplified, "the taller, the better".

Today KPF's Shanghai World Financial Centre is leading the construction race, rising at the rate of several floors a day. When foundations were first laid, the project was proposed to reach a height of 460 meters. Before the completion of Taipei 101, it was going to be the world's tallest skyscraper with 94 storeys.<sup>16</sup> Since construction first began in 1997, the project has already grown, gaining 32 more meters and 7 additional storeys. When completed in 2008, it will be the world's tallest skyscraper.<sup>17</sup>

KPF is also building another record setting building across the river. The Phase 2 tower of Plaza 66, will be the tallest building on the adjacent side of the Huangpu River, a title currently held by its own Phase 1 tower.

Skyscraper fetish. Today's China is consumed by a desire to express enormity. The image of the city that reaches to the sky is not a contemporary invention. But in China, perhaps because of the socialist imagination, there is a heightened symbolic potential for architecture. Towers become mass symbols of the regime, providing the iconography and brand identity of its greatest cities.

"The battle is on...Taller, smarter, better. Each city is vying to become the showcase of the world, the city with the tallest building. There is little to justify such extravagance except pure prestige. The actual use of a building is not important. What count is it ranking on the world list."<sup>18</sup>



Fig. 3.19: Construction Photo of Plaza 66 Phase 2 Tower, Source: [www.skyscrapercity.com](http://www.skyscrapercity.com)

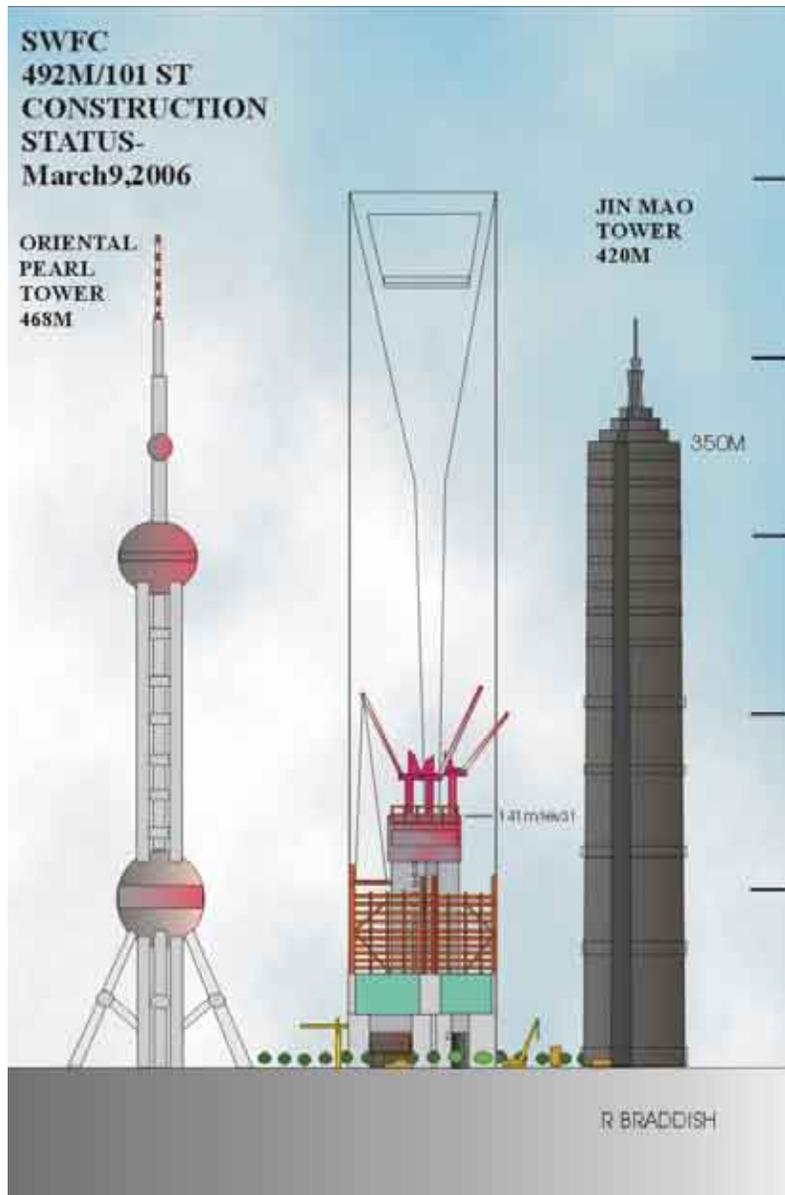


Fig. 3.20: Construction Diagram of Shanghai World Financial Centre, Source: www.skyscrapercity.com



Fig. 3.21: Construction Diagram of Shanghai World Financial Centre, Source: www.skyscrapercity.com

*"...China [is] the world's toughest adolescent looking*



Fig. 3.22



Fig. 3.23



Fig. 3.24

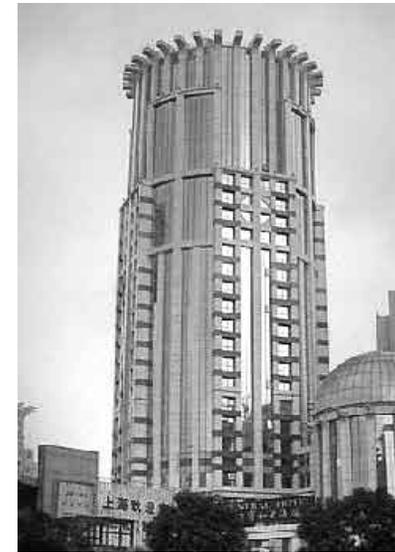


Fig. 3.25

*"Chinese Architect: The most important, influential and powerful architect on earth. The average lifetime construction volume of the Chinese Architect in housing alone is approximately three dozen thirty storey highrise buildings. The Chinese Architect designs the largest volume, in the shortest time, for the lowest fee. There is one-tenth the number of architects in China than in the United States, designing five times the project volume, in one fifth the time, earning one-tenth the design fee. This implies an efficiency of 25000 times that of an American architect."*<sup>13</sup>

Rem Koohaas

*for a new identity mixing and matching as he grows...*"<sup>20</sup>

Neville Mars, [www.dynmiccityfoundation.com](http://www.dynmiccityfoundation.com)



Fig. 3.26



Fig. 3.27



Fig. 3.28



Fig. 3.29

*"However, in some cities, most notably in China, there is a jarring, outlandish, downright ugly, or 'over-the-top' aspect to parts of the urban landscape. To be sure, the pursuit of 'symbols of progress' is at work, although the garish, haphazard architecture seems to have more to do with wholesale appropriation and then amplification of styles of building from abroad. Frequently, those involved are without adequate intellectual and professional grounding and exhibit a real confusion about architectural qualities being required to stand for something else, rather than simply being architecture."*<sup>14</sup>

Peter G. Rowe



Fig. 3.30

The empires of the past have often borrowed motifs and monuments from their conquered frontiers to display the expanse of their dominion. The Roman Empire collected obelisks from Egypt and statues from Greece, a way of both asserting power over the fallen empires as well as cannibalizing their legacy. Positioning stolen monuments around the city was a way to associate Rome's power with great civilizations of the past as well as convey its dominance over them.

The super powers of today employ similar tactics, applying Neo Classical or Neo Imperialist styles as a representation of their strength. Styles have even become synonymous with great conquerors and rulers: Napoleonic, Edwardian, Victorian. Architecturally, modern empires utilize Neo Classical architecture on state buildings and seats of government as a way of associating themselves with the great conquerors of the past.

As China reasserts its rise to super power status, there is a desire across the country to immerse itself into this continuum of architecture history, a way of validating its



Fig. 3.31

recent drive towards global integration. Shanghai, as China's preeminent city has had to reinvent itself in a short span of time. With the desire to shed its post-Mao industrial image and project its new internationality, Shanghai is in search of a state architecture.

However, the intellectual gap left by the Cultural Revolution has left present day designers with a limited repertoire and lexicon to draw from. Additionally, the rate of growth has meant that designers have had less than a generation to conjure an architecture style appropriate for modern China.

Perhaps it is both a function of insecurity and the pressure to project an image of global competitiveness that has led many Chinese designers to employ a Western architectural vocabulary in their search for appropriate symbols. Across cities like Shanghai, the historical motifs digested by one empire are regurgitated and reapplied in peculiar ways, giving rise to anomalies in the Chinese urban landscape.



Fig. 3.32



*“At best a necessary burden, architecture in China is applied last minute. It seems to be squirted against the facades like sauce from a squeeze pack. The most prevalent style is neo-classical; an unassuming recipe of Greek, Roman, Gothic and Rococo ornaments. Suitably branded Eurostyle it is the predominant choice of the Chinese developer, even though recently other styles, such as the luxurious Local Style have gained momentum. The successful developer keeps track of the subtle shifts in tastes and trends. At his command a team of Chinese architects will resourcefully drape the columns entablatures and parapets over the basic structures of the apartment block and sprinkle the cast-iron lions around the property... They become the ingredients of an instantaneous history...”<sup>21</sup>*

Neville Mars, [www.dynamiccityfoundation.com](http://www.dynamiccityfoundation.com)



Fig. 3.33



Fig. 3.34



Fig. 3.35



Fig. 3.36



Fig. 3.37: Minhang Courthouse Building, Shanghai



Fig. 3.38: U.S. Capitol Building, Washington DC



Fig. 3.39: Shanghai Pentagon Mart, Jiading District



Fig. 3.40: The Pentagon, Arlington VA



Fig. 3.41: Pudong Financial Centre, Shanghai



Fig. 3.42: Rockefeller Tower, New York City



Fig. 3.43: Screen Grab from [www.hongkongdisneyland.com](http://www.hongkongdisneyland.com)

In North America, the theme park emerged as a permanent adaptation of world expositions. They were places of fantasy and entertainment that responded to the raising incomes and increased leisure time of the middle class. The formula seems simple enough, the more time and money people have at their disposal, the more they will demand new forms of spending. This has been the case in North America and can be seen in almost every consumable product. A maturing consumer culture feeds of fantasies generated by mass media and marketing which in turn spawns a multiplicity of products. The car is one image-driven consumable that has consistently been synonymous with lifestyle. Theme parks represent another. On a personal level, they are one more way to express one's upward mobility and access to leisure and entertainment. On a city wide level, they represent a maturing population whose economy is shifting towards mass consumption over mass production.

The next five years of China's amusement parks and attractions industry are expected grow rapidly. The international Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) recently held its annual conference in Shanghai, heralding the nation as the place

to be. At the opening of the IAAPA Asian Expo 2005, the association's president and chief executive officer Charlie Bray said, "the explosive development of China's theme parks has seen the country emerge as a driver for the Asia-Pacific region, which is set to enjoy the fastest growth of this industry in the coming five to 10 years."<sup>22</sup>

According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers report, "Global Entertainment and Media Outlook", the growth of U.S. theme park industry has slowed in recent years. The average annual growth rate of 3.9% seems sluggish in comparison to the 5.5% the industry experienced between 1999 and 2000.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile the report forecasts that Asia-Pacific's theme park market will experience the largest growth over the next five years, ballooning from \$6.1 billion to \$8.1 billion (an average annual growth rate of 5.7%). China sits at the helm of this boom with theme park revenues expected to grow 7.1% annually reaching \$1.8 billion by 2010.<sup>24</sup>

"If you look worldwide, the mature markets are in the U.S. and Western Europe," says Beth Robertson, vice president of communications at IAAPA. "There's not that much land available for building. Where we're really seeing a tremendous growth



Fig. 3.44: Screen Grab from www.hongkongdisneyland.com



Fig. 3.45: Screen Grab from www.hongkongdisneyland.com

is in Asia and the Middle East. In China, for example, you have a huge population with very few parks and attractions. It's a great area to find large amounts of land."<sup>25</sup>

Park attendance in the Asia-Pacific region will grow by nearly 20%, hitting the 278 million mark by 2010.<sup>26</sup> Soon to be the world's largest growth sector in the industry, companies in North America have been eager to diversify their holdings and enter the Asia-Pacific market. The region's dense population, rising incomes and proven taste for public amusements has made it the prime target for multinational entertainment companies. In China particularly, foreign investors are injecting billions of dollars into building up new theme parks and redeveloping existing ones. The IAAPA trade show held in the Shanghai is just the beginning of what promises to be a long partnership between industry big-names and the burgeoning amusement craze in China.

The news of US-based Walt Disney Co. bringing the *Happiest Place on Earth* to Shanghai is the latest indication of the pull the Chinese market is having—the *Magic Kingdom* meets the *Middle Kingdom*. Disney sees Asia as the key growth market for its otherwise mature theme parks business. Both Disneyland Tokyo and the recently

opened Disneyland HongKong, have increased the brand presence in the region. The Shanghai Disneyland, which would be the first Disney theme park on the Chinese mainland, is expected to begin construction in 2008. The site of the park is planned for the outskirts of Shanghai's Pudong New District and would cover an area of 4.25 square kilometers.

News of the parks ground breaking comes just a month after Walt Disney Co. launched a 100 performance engagement of The Lion King Stage Show at Shanghai's Grand theatre. Shanghainese will join the more than 34 million people worldwide who have seen the production.<sup>27</sup> The city itself will join the list of large cities such as London, Tokyo, Toronto, Hamburg, Los Angeles, Sydney and Melbourne that have hosted the show. It won't be much of a wait for Shanghai to obtain its next fix of Disney, the new park is slated to open in 2010, coinciding with the city's World Expo.



Fig. 3.46

Of many vices available to visitors to Shanghai, I became addicted to egg tarts. A pastry originating from Macau, Chinese-style egg tarts consist of a flaky outer crust with a middle filled with egg custard. While some of the better egg tarts I had were from street vendors and roadside stalls, the best I ever sampled were from Kentucky Fried Chicken.

It was during the summer of my visit in 2005 that the chain introduced the dessert to their regular menu. But this was not the first local addition to the menu. In fact, since KFC opened its first location in 1987 just outside the Forbidden City in Beijing, close to twelve modifications have been made to the regular selection. Some recent additions include: preserved Sechuan pickle congee, Peking duck style wraps, mushroom rice, and a salad of shredded carrot, fungus and bamboo shoots.

As the first western fast food chain to penetrate the market, KFC has established itself as the leader in China with a ratio of three locations to every two Macdonald's. It is a rare occasion to be walking in Shanghai and not be under the Colonel's gaze. In one district, I counted five locations within a three minute walk. Between China and Beijing there are over 100 branches. In total there are to 1200 KFC locations, with more on the

way. The Colonel is making an aggressive invasion of China, planning a total of 200 new branches this year, at an alarming rate of one opening every other day.

"We are really positioned as a part of the fabric of the city in China," said David Novak Chairman and Executive of Yum Brands.<sup>29</sup>

And part of the urban fabric they are. But KFC has also set its sights outside of major urban centers by opening branches in over 280 cities, with at least one branch in every province except Tibet.<sup>30</sup> The Colonel's goateed face is penetrating deeper and deeper into China's hinterland, bringing with him an insatiable appetite for western style dining. "In many parts of China, the local municipal governments actually view the arrival of a KFC as a sign of the city's coming of age," says Sam Su, President of Yum's China division.<sup>31</sup> At a recent opening in Qiandaohu, a tiny fishing village in China's coastal Zhejiang province, eight security guards had to be brought in to manage the crowd's eagerness to be the first inside. "This happens every time KFC opens a new store," the store manager says matter-



Fig. 3.47

of-factly.

Tapping the Chinese market has been exceedingly profitable to the parent company Yum Corporation. Last year profits reached to 200 million USD, representing more than half of the company's international profits.<sup>32</sup> That is a staggering figure when sales within North America are dwindling in the face of health conscious consumers and increased competition. It is currently the largest growth sector for the company.

The mass appeal of KFC is convenient meals, efficient service, comfortable environments, pleasing music and jovial atmosphere. A walk into a KFC establishment is comparable to walking into a trendy restaurant in Toronto – there are floral arrangements, modern furniture, mood lighting, and armies of attendants to clear your table. One KFC location even recently hosted a wedding reception. “The food isn't cheap, but it's kind of fashionable,” one patron says. Fashionable? Most of my KFC visits back in Toronto are accompanied by feelings of guilt and shame. But as urban citizens are increasingly on the go, the appeal for quick western-style food is gaining momentum. Shanghai recently opened the city's first drive through branch to meet the needs of a progressively

automobile-reliant culture. Sister company, Pizza Hut, now offers a delivery service to capitalize on an emerging generation of Chinese yuppies who want to watch a DVD or play a video game while eating supper on the couch.

Even children are not spared from aggressive marketing. To lure younger consumers, KFC recently introduced Chicky, a fluffy chicken mascot to rival Ronald Macdonald. The strategy is working: one KFC restaurant hosts an average of two birthday parties a night.<sup>33</sup> But just as “Chicky” is a one-off on Ronald, so “YongHe King” is a copycat of the Colonel. As with almost everything in China, once one thing is proven successful, there is an inevitable bootleg version. The Shanghai-based chain called YongHe King employs the familiar red, white and blue colour scheme in addition to an orientalized Colonel Sanders mascot. Offering similar amenities: quick, affordable, and clean dining experiences, Yonghe King is seeing increased patronage with plans to expand across China.



Fig. 3.48



Fig. 3.49



Fig. 3.50



Fig. 3.51



Fig. 3.52

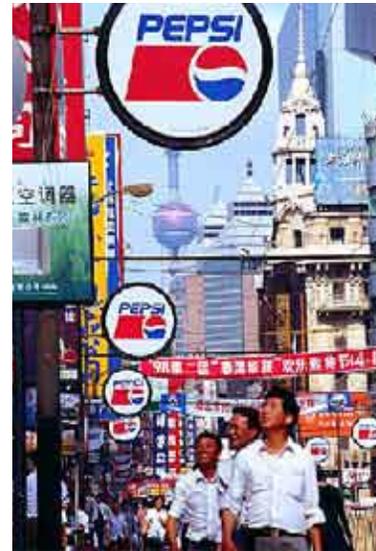


Fig. 3.53



Fig. 3.54



Fig. 3.55

Market penetration in a county of 1.3 billion potential consumers represents a gold mine for multinational brands. In order to titillate the richest of China's citizens, advertising in Shanghai is all muscle. The city's streets of have become the battlefield for the world's largest brand names. To get a sense of the weapons of warfare, stroll up Nanjing Road, the major shopping street in the city. A five storey neon CocaCola bottle glows in the night like a Las Vegas billboard. Take a walk down HuaiHai Road, Shanghai's other major shopping street. Overhead, block after block and street post after street post, the Pepsi logos glow like red white and blue runway strip. Entire streets around the city are flanked by lamp posts with corporate sponsorship, from 7up to Salem cigarettes. Advertising in the city has taken on the scale of public furniture.



Fig. 3.56

It may be argued that China's Great Wall was never designed to stop an invader. There are even rumors of gaps along its length. In effect, what it was successful at was unifying the country and consolidating disparate special interest of a diverse and vast nation. For that reason alone it deserves a place amongst the "wonders of the world".

The idea of a "wall" plays a unique role of defining the "other" or the boundary. In the case of the Great Wall, it was the Mongols from the North. It ultimately failed. But even if the tectonic boundary itself was breached, its presence in the collective imagination was enough to unify China as a nation. Its legacy is rooted in the mythology and symbolism of the Middle Kingdom.

Despite any symbolic or physical barrier the wall may have provided in the past, it was powerless in keeping the global coffee giant, Starbucks, at bay.

As of Tuesday, September 21, 2005 mythology attached to this 2,000 year relic was eroded significantly by the opening of a Starbucks at the Great Wall.

Catering to the more than 130 million domestic and foreign visitors to the



Fig. 3.57

Wall, the Badaling shop follows on the heels of the success of its other "cultural treasure location"

In 2000, Starbucks had already breached the Forbidden City. In a place once held to be the sacred realm of the Emperor, frappuccinos are served up to the droves of tourists who visit the palace complex year round.

There are currently 140 stores in China,<sup>34</sup> 27 are in Shanghai.<sup>35</sup> Starbucks' representatives are confident that China, a nation of tea drinkers, will soon be the largest market after the US. Starbucks' Chief Executive Officer Jim Donald has big plans for China, claiming that Starbucks might add as many as 6,000 or 7,000 stores in China over time.<sup>36</sup>



Fig. 3.58

But Starbucks is not the only thing these days that is hell bent on breaching the Great Wall. On July 9, 2005, extreme skate boarder Danny Way, rolled down a towering wooden ramp, reached speeds of up to 50 MPH and leapt 61 feet over the Ju Yong Guan Gate of the Great Wall. He entered the record books as the first person to clear the wall without motorized aid.

“I was aware of the dangers and my heart was pumping in my chest the whole time, but I managed to pull it off with the help of my team, and I’m honored to have my visions embraced by the people of China,” said Way in a statement.

The last person before Danny who tried to jump the wall without the aid of a motor was Wang Jiaxiong of Shaanxi Province in 2002. The 30-year-old stunt cyclist cleared the wall on his mountain bike, but tumbled midair, falling over 50 feet onto his head. Wang died later that day.

Among several thousand supporters and curious on lookers who came to witness the event, was China’s own minister of extreme sports and culture. Over 100

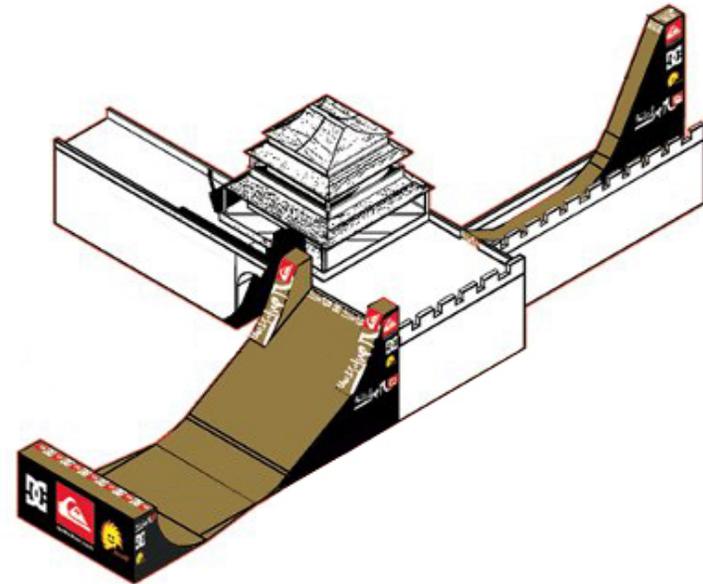


Fig. 3.59

million Chinese watched the Great Wall leap live. The jump became the highest rated live broadcast in the history of Chinese television for its timeslot in 2005.

The Beijing MegaRamp is the largest skate structure ever built. Without the use of heavy machinery, it took 60 labourers and one camel several weeks to complete. In total, 60,000 screws, 4,000 framework joists, 410 sheets of plywood and 200 sheets of special engineered plywood were imported were used for the ramp’s construction. The final estimated cost of the spectacle, including construction, security, travel and other miscellaneous expenses was nearly \$1.7 million.

Danny Way has made recent plans to leap over Suzhou creek in the heart of Shanghai. The creek, which averages between forty and fifty meters in width would require a seven-storey ramp to be built.

# 17 One of Those Leapfrog Moments



Fig. 3.60



Fig. 3.61



Fig. 3.62

In 2004 SMP international – the global licensor of the SMP and Shy lifestyle clothing brands opened the SMP Sports center just 12 kilometers North East of Shanghai's central business district. The 7000 square meter leisure, retail and entertainment facility sits within a 27,000 square meter sports park which is three times as big as the largest park in the USA, American Sports Parks. At the heart of the complex is the newly built Jiangwan Skatepark. At 12,000 square meters it currently holds the title of the largest in the world. The park which cost about 100 million yuan (US\$12.35 million) played host to some of the world's top skaters, bladers and extreme riders during the SMP Gravity Shanghai showdown held on September 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of 2005.<sup>37</sup>



Fig. 3.63

*"It is one of those leapfrog moments, like where an undeveloped country skips the expense of building a land line network and moves directly to cell phone technology... China, rather than spending a few generations developing a middle class, fostering a culture and economy based on recreational expenditures such as swimming pools, building an educational and social system which disenfranchises their children, ignoring any resulting underground culture as it commandeers and subverts those same symbols of class but eventually embracing a clean-scrubbed, de-politicized version as an extreme sport, just went ahead and built the raddest f#\*ing skatepark ever."<sup>38</sup>*



Fig. 3.64



Fig. 3.65



Fig. 3.66



Fig. 3.67

*What is Hooters: A casual, beach-theme restaurant known for the Hooters Girls – the surfer girl next door. Hooters serves seafood, burgers, sandwiches and “nearly world famous” chicken wings.*

*Atmosphere: Hooters Girls hula-hooping and singing; open kitchen with boisterous cooks; Rock and roll playing from the jukebox; cold beer flowing, and sports on television. Hooters describes itself as “delightfully tacky, yet unrefined.”*

*Locations: Over 375 in 46 states; Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, the Caribbean, England, Guatemala, Mexico, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, Venezuela, and now, right here in Shanghai!<sup>39</sup>*



Fig. 3.68

December 18, 2004. On the eve of my departure from Shanghai I meet with some Asian American Students currently studying in Shanghai. We have dinner and grab several drinks in the trendy shopping district of Xintiandi. After dinner we pose for several photos underneath an enormous Christmas set up much like Rockefeller plaza. Amongst us there was one friend of mine whom I had met through the strangest of circumstances, ones that reaffirmed my belief in serendipity that had followed me to Shanghai. Through a strange of coincidences I was introduced to Tim Wu on two separate occasions by two unrelated acquaintances.

Before my departure for Shanghai, four months earlier, my sister-in-law had forwarded me the email address of her friend Gisele—a girl she had grown up with that had recently relocated to Shanghai. I had sent a few emails prior to my departure with very little information to go on. My sister-in-law was not forthcoming with much information other than that she was about my age and a recent graduate of Rutgers University in New Jersey.

After arriving in Shanghai for a week, I finally managed to arrange a meeting

with her over lunch, where I would learn much more about Gisele's reasons for coming to China. The official story is that she was in Shanghai attending Fu Dan University studying Chinese. Unofficially, she was a member of a covert evangelical organization implanting American students into Chinese campuses to spread the gospel. For the protection of her safety and that of her team I was instructed to keep her "mission" to myself and even to avoid using common Christian terminology in our conversation. Words like *God*, *church*, *prayer* and *Christian* were to be kept out of all phone conversations and text messages. Instead *dad*, *house*, *rap* and *cool* were to be substituted. These were efforts to divert surveillance of their activities in light of action taken against members of their team on several recent missions where team members had their dorm phones tapped, and some even arrested and questioned.

For fear of being followed and monitored she could not accompany me to the International church that I had heard about. Instead she gave me the phone number of a "cool" friend of hers that she had met while at school in New Jersey. This friend was Tim. We made contact over the phone and arranged our first meeting at the gate of the Hengshan Community Church, the venue for Shanghai's only sanctioned international Christian Congregation.

It would be several months into my visit that I would be introduced to Tim again for the second time. It was American thanksgiving. I had been invited to the home of Lydon Neri. At the time he was the director of operations of Michael Graves's studio in Asia and was currently overseeing one of the most exclusive renovation projects on Shanghai's Bund. I had been introduced to Lydon rather casually by his sister whom I had met just prior to leaving for Shanghai.

While waiting for dinner for other guests to arrive, Lyndon mentioned that someone else my age would be arriving that he had been meaning to introduce me to. He was someone from his hometown in Princeton New Jersey—a good family friend. "he can probably show you around the city better than I can...he has been here for almost a year," were his words.

Tim was the same age as me. He had quit his job at Microsoft close to a year before, to move to China and learn Mandarin. He was a graduate of programming from Princeton University. Some might have considered him a fool to leave a high-paying

reputable job like Microsoft to go and learn Chinese, but Tim had a grander vision. He saw a greater potential in investing in China and the expanding opportunities there so he left it all and was now living in cramped quarters in a student slum. Nonetheless his vision and optimism for the future were infectious. We would often forecast “arriving” in Shanghai—landing the perfect job with a foreign firm with a Shanghai division. The dream job of any young person would be to get paid in American dollars and live lavishly in a city that offered everything to a young professional.

By late December, my contract with Forrec was coming to a close with no certainty of my return. Tim was finishing up his school term and had not secured anything concrete that could keep him in Shanghai. By the time I left the closest he had gotten to anything stable was hosting a Learning-the-English-Language game/ variety show. It wasn't quite the dream job we had in mind, but it did keep him in Shanghai longer than me.

When I returned to Shanghai almost a year and a half later, I had made good on a promise to come back. Unfortunately it was not to land the dream job I had once day dreamed about but rather to pursue research for my graduate thesis. I had lost touch with Tim a short while after I returned to Canada in 2004. I wasn't sure where he was or if he had finally made it in Shanghai.

When I finally did reestablish contact with Tim he was in Beijing, working for a video game company. I was now the student and he the working professional. I had the slum apartment and he the serviced pad. Looking for any excuse to abandon my cell-like apartment and mooch of someone with a plasma TV, I had made plans to visit his new place in Beijing.

But somewhere between me being very excited to hear from him again and making plans to visit in Beijing, communication with him went silent. After a week of emails I figured, either work was too busy or he was unavailable for the week of my visit. I did end up going to Beijing, and I also saw Tim. But not in person. He was on TV, but not as the English teaching television host that I had known. This time he was a contestant on China's reality television hit “Lycra Wo Xing Wo,” which means “Lycra My Way” (Lycra is a major sponsor), a blend of “Survivor” and “American Idol.

He was a semi finalist, among 100 contestants narrowed down from 50,000

from five cities across China, Beijing, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Hongzhou and Shanghai. In the episode I was watching, Tim was flown to Shanghai, where he and the semi finalists were put up in a hotel and given tours of the city. It didn't surprise me that an American who could speak Chinese would make it onto a show like this. In fact a great majority of China's mega pop stars were American-born or American-raised and then reimported back to China with all the authentic Western cultural baggage. What I did find surprising was to watch my computer programming friend free style rap in Mandarin.

The last episode I watched was Tim making it to the final 20 finalists. This was the point in the show where the finalists were relocated to a posh apartment in downtown Shanghai to be shared and filmed twenty four hours a day. The show was then divided into two segments that featured the performances of the contestants and segments of their misadventures living together. After thirteen weeks of competition and eliminations, the winner would be named by nation wide vote to claim a contract with Universal Music Asia that included professional image and voice training, cutting an album, promotional videos and a national tour.

Tim didn't win. But reality TV did! The finale of the show attracted more than 8 million voters across the country via text messaging.<sup>40</sup> Several copy cat shows arrived shortly after the runaway success of Lycra My Way. And in 2006 the show itself got a bigger sponsor, and is now entitled Sprite My Way. The presence of such voting forums is a new concept within China. Polling companies arrived only a decade ago in China. With the dawn of reality TV in 2005 the Chinese government has taken recent action to regulate the proliferation of such television programs that are based on American prototypes. These sentiments, some have suggested, are linked to fear that such programs organize the population to vote en-mass.

While Americans are subverting the Chinese government to promote faith amongst Chinese youth, American values of a different kind are seeping into new media savvy generation. Individuality and freedom of expression are at the root of Government concerns. After all the empowerment to choose one's idol is not such a far leap from choosing ones faith or even political leaders.



Fig. 3.69



Fig. 3.70



Fig. 3.71

2004. Xinhua, China's largest state-run news agency proclaimed "China has begun to enter the age of mass car consumption. This is a great and historic advance."

In 2005, with 5 million new-car purchases, China became the third-largest automobile market in the world, behind the U.S.(17 million) and Japan (5.9 million).<sup>41</sup> It is estimated that China will become the world's largest car market by 2015.<sup>42</sup>

Only 50 years ago, private car ownership was targeted by the Communist government as symbols of capitalist excess and luxury. As with personal property, the government confiscated all privately owned automobiles to be repurposed for state use. As a result, owning one's own car remained a distant dream for the vast majority of Chinese until the market reforms of the 1980's.

Today the Chinese consumer population has re-entered the world of car ownership with no trepidation. It is estimated that by the year 2020, China will be home to more than 140 million cars, almost 7 times more than it presently has.<sup>43</sup> In today's China the car is once again expression of wealth, fashion and lifestyle. But perhaps beyond the

staggering business implications, the emerging car culture is promoting new ideologies that were impossible to imagine in China's Maoist past.

Cars offer all sorts of entertaining new choices for consumers to craft a personal style, an individual flair.

The emergence of car clubs is a sign that the long held idea of having a driver as a sign of status is fading. Before, the idea of driving oneself was associated with lower class citizens, while all the wealthiest officials and celebrities all arrived in style—in the back seat. But today, that mentality is giving way to a newer vision of the car and what it can offer beyond a status symbol, freedom.

The idea of the open road, private ownership comes with it the desire to move freely, to see the country, to be in charge, to expand one's horizon, to be at the helm of one's own destiny and whim. The seclusion of the private car, in and of itself, strengthens individualistic strains within Chinese culture that have long been limited by the collectivist orthodoxies sanctioned by the Communist Party. Today, people in cars are making

decisions to find their own answers to their personal set of problems.

This romance of the open road has only been fueled by the Chinese government's aggressive approach to infrastructure expansion. Over the past five years, China has spent more on transportation infrastructure than in the previous five decades of Communist Party rule.<sup>44</sup> China is in the midst of the greatest road-building boom since the United States began linking the Lower 48 with interstate highways in the 1950s. From 2001 to 2005, expressways grew by 15,350 miles, more than doubling the total length to 25,480 miles.<sup>45</sup>

The United States has 46,000 miles of interstate. By 2020, China plans to double its present motorway length, allowing it to replace the United States as the country with the most extensive expressway network.<sup>46</sup> "No other country can compete with China when it comes to the expansion speed of road building," says Wang Yuanqing, a professor at the Highway College of Chang'an University in Xian.<sup>47</sup>

In 1949, the length of highways in China was just over 80,000 km, and more than one third of the counties nationwide were not accessible by road. However, by 1999, the total length of highways opened to traffic had reached 1.352 million km. Now, all counties, towns and townships are accessible by road.<sup>48</sup>

The dream of freedom on the open road stands in stark contrast to the view overlooking Shanghai at around 6:30pm on any given evening. Smog rising, cars sit for hours in stand-still traffic on many of Shanghai's tangled overpasses. The major urban centres across China from Beijing to Shanghai are experiencing major congestion as the wealthier urbanites eagerly purchase cars as reflections of new affluence. Shanghai, as in much of China, getting rich and growing attached to cars has increasingly gone hand in hand. The resulting disturbing side effects, familiar to older automobile-addicted cities, range from filthy air and stressful commutes to sharply rising oil consumption. On Shanghai roads alone there are 18,600 buses, 46,000 taxis, close to a million cars and trucks, and another million or so motorcycles and scooters.<sup>49</sup>

This was not always the case in Shanghai. When Shanghai first received the green light from Deng Xiaoping to begin reforms in the early 90's, it came almost a decade after the wild success of cities like Shenzhen and Guangzhou products of the first generation of

Special Economic Zones. Consequently Shanghai, was eager to take its place among the glowing metropolises of the world and it was ready to reclaim its title as the "Pearl of the Orient". Backed by the Central government, officials made hugely ambitious plans called for Shanghai to be built anew.

Toward this end, large parts of the city were cleared to make way for soaring over passes and widened road networks. Huge sums of money were directed towards large infrastructure projects like bridges and tunnels. But even then, the visions of urban designers two decades ago could not have predicted the prolific return of car culture in Shanghai. The original blueprints for a major expansion of Shanghai's road network predicted Shanghai would pass the threshold of two million cars in 2020. Frighteningly, that figure was breached in 2004.<sup>50</sup>

And even as the city scrambles to reassess, officials cannot seem to keep up with Shanghainese appetite for automobiles. Two years ago, the city government sought to alleviate some of the pressures on congested routes with the construction of a new, elevated loop expressway for central Shanghai. This new route promised to distribute traffic more evenly and dissipate peak hour gridlock along some of the cities older expressways. "Just one year after some roads were completed, they reached vehicle flow volumes that were forecast for 15 to 20 years from now," said Yang Dongyuan, a professor at the School of Transportation Engineering, and vice president of Tongji University.<sup>51</sup>

This combination of soaring car ownership, frantic motorway construction and a booming economy evokes images of a bygone era in America. In the 20's Ford introduced the car to the masses—shaping the collective aspirations of the new consumer culture. In the 50's America built interstate highways, opening up the open road to increasing numbers of car enthusiasts. It was an era that saw unprecedented expansion and romance of the road. Today, many North American cities are struggling to solve congestion and traffic problems along with health and environmental issues that our car dependent society has bred. In China's case, these phases of development are occurring all at once and at a perilous scale. What took decades to occur in the West has been compressed into just a few years.

## 21 Drive Through



Fig. 3.72



Fig. 3.73

The rise of car culture also means the adoption of car lifestyle. And in the west that translates to *drive by's*, *drive-in's* and *drive-through's*. While KFC's first drive-through was met with lackluster results in 2001, MacDonald's is betting that, four years and nearly 15 million new car purchases later, China is more than ready to eat-on-the-go.

In a landmark deal announced in July of 2006, Macdonald's, the world's largest restaurant company, reached an agreement to build drive-through McDonald's outlets in the filling stations of China's largest gas retailer, state-owned Sinopec.

Mike Roberts, president and chief operating officer of McDonald's in Beijing heralded his enthusiasm in a statement made in a USA Today article, "With the incredible development of China's economy and society, car ownership continues to grow at a rapid pace."<sup>52</sup> Jeffrey Schwartz, chief executive of McDonald's China division confirmed by stating, "We see the future of China with cars, communities and houses spreading out."<sup>53</sup>

At present there are only three drive-through's amongst the 760 operating Macdonald's stores in China, but this new deal will give McDonalds access to over 30,000 pump stations nationwide. Mike Roberts promises to "open 100 restaurants a year for as far as the eye can see."<sup>54</sup>



Fig. 3.74

The arrival of Big Box retailing in China is a clear indication of the maturing consumer spending habits of its population. As its economy transitions towards a latter stage of capitalism, the market is inundated with product selection. Distinguished primarily by logos and image branding, these products offer the realization of a myriad of consumer fantasies that are fueled by the mass media. The endless aisles of merchandise herald the arrival of a media savvy consumer with tastes refined and honed by hours of priming. In this arena, prices are slashed, campaigns launched and competitors bullied in order to satisfy the demands of consuming masses.

Based on 2005 estimates, China's consuming masses are on their way to becoming the world's 5<sup>th</sup> largest retail market. Fuelled by rising spending power, China's retail market has grown 7 percent annually over the past five years, outpacing that of the U.S. by 2 percent. Over the next fifteen years it is expected to grow by 8-10 percent annually to reach some \$2.4 trillion by 2020.<sup>55</sup>

Shanghai has become the battleground for the world's major retailers. In



Fig. 3.75

2005 alone, 28 new 'hypermarkets' (all-in-one stores) were opened, adding to the 97 already operating.<sup>56</sup> The Three new WalMart outlets in Shanghai will have to compete with 8 of France's Carrefour as well as hypermarkets from Germany's Metro and UK's Tesco. Additionally, American retail giants Toy R US, Best Buy and Costco are on their way, transforming Shanghai into a crowded arena for hypermarkets supremacy.

The 18,000 square-meter Pudong outlet opened on July 28, 2005, the first of three to be opened in Shanghai that year and the 48<sup>th</sup> location to open in the country. WalMart plans to have 90 in operation by the end of 2006.<sup>57</sup>



Fig. 3.76



Fig. 3.77



Fig. 3.78



Fig. 3.79



Fig. 3.80



Fig. 3.81

Opening day. Doves of people turn out, some having traveled from nearby provinces on overnight buses. They line up outside for hours, waiting for the outlet's doors to open. The eager shoppers are hoping to be the first to enjoy the chains legendary low prices and vast product selection. Part of the buzz stems from gate crasher offers that include a carton of 8 eggs for 3 RMB (less than 50 cents Canadian) or a 24-pack of Coca Cola for 40.4 RMB.

The doors fling open. Shoppers cannot get enough of the great deals. Shelves are cleared, aisles mobbed and carts filled before the entire crowd even makes it into the store. One store assistant tries to keep order, "this is chaos, just utter chaos. I've never seen so many people show up for a store opening and we're struggling to make sure things remain stocked."<sup>58</sup>

The novelty of one-stop shopping in hypermarkets explains the draw of the opening of outlets like WalMart. The recognition of WalMart's foreign brand identity is another. Ironically, over 90 percent of products sold in their Chinese stores are acquired domestically—produced in cheap manufacturing plants that litter the nation.<sup>59</sup> WalMart's international success is dependant on China's cheap labour. If WalMart were a country, it would represent China's sixth-largest export market. The company bought US\$18 billion worth of goods from China last year, more than the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Singapore and France.<sup>60</sup>



Fig. 3.82: Portrait of Victor

Landed at Pudong International Airport. My closest friend in the city, Luke, has sent Victor to meet me. I had never met Victor in person, only spoken to him via email. He was introduced to me as Luke's brother. It was puzzling at first to learn of this sibling because in the time I had gotten to know Luke, I had never heard of his other siblings. After meeting at the airport and boarding a bus to my apartment for the next few months I get to know Victor, who is studying to be a lawyer.

He 22 years old with all the trappings of a Western youth culture: baggy jeans, sports jersey, an earring, and Nike shoes. His command of English is excellent, which makes it easy for us to communicate upon my arrival. He has just finished his final year of Law School and is on his summer break before entering into a master's program where he hopes to become a defense lawyer. On the bus ride from the airport we exchange stories from our upbringing, our family, and the places we have traveled to. I probe into his familial relationship to Luke, still wondering why Luke had never mentioned a brother before.

He tells me of several other siblings they have: a brother in Guangzhou, two

more in Shanghai and a sister in Ottawa, Canada. Strange I thought. Especially in light of China's one child policy. I knew of recent relaxations of the policy but nothing that could have allowed 6 children, especially several decades ago. *Was there a loop hole I was unaware of?*

It wasn't until several days later when we were all gathered at a dinner that I had to ask for clarification. Two new people were introduced to me as Luke and Victor's siblings at which point I had to interject and ask how it was possible to have so many children during the era of the one child policy. It was soon revealed to me that they were all cousins. While there are many elaborate systems within the Chinese language for naming family members differentiating from cousins on mother's side to cousins on the father's side, in English they refer to all cousins as a brother or a sister. This, they explained was the closest blood relationship they have so they naturally used the term that most represented that in English. They were in fact all single children, but have expanded their definition of immediate family.

China is seeing massive change within its cultural environment. And those who seem to be enjoying it the most are my peers. Those who were born of the single child policy that began in 1979, the same year that I was born. They belong to a generation is the byproduct of two immense forces that have redefined the traditional Chinese family. When Deng Xiaoping enacted the one child policy in 1979 in an effort to curtail the population explosion that occurred during the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government restricted married couples to one child, and within 20 years the population growth rate was reduced to 1.3% annually. This was the first factor. The second was the economic reform policy of the 1980's and 90's that saw the growth of a middle and upper income class within the country. Together, these factors have promoted smaller families with higher incomes – a generation of single children born with a silver spoon in their mouth. Parents who have amassed wealth in the new market economy are eager to indulge their children. This new generation who are reaping the benefits of over-compensating parents are called the little emperors.



Fig. 3.83: Portrait of Maggie

At one of Shanghai's busiest street markets, Maggie and I riffle through the endless aisles of stalls that sell everything from one-dollar bras to inflatable pool toys to knock-off Gucci sunglasses. The narrow passageways are packed with products, garbage, and people. Vendors employ inventive tactics to attract buyers. One man claps loudly as we walk by. It grabs my attention for one second, but the momentum of the crowd forces me onward. Another vendor blasts euro-techno through a ghetto blaster. Another plays an obnoxious promo over a bullhorn, bellowing "Yi Kuai, Yi Kuai, Yi Kuai," (1 Dollar, 1 Dollar, 1 Dollar). Yet another slips alongside us with a folded magazine clipping from Western fashion magazines. "You want like dis?"... "Dis is Gucci...I have...follow me....I have *many many*."

Ignoring the man, Maggie gravitates to one stall hocking knock-off Abercrombie and Fitch attire. She is a regular customer. She had a voracious appetite for Western brand clothing and a fat wallet to support her buying habits. The two of us had started hanging out because neither of us worked. She was a recent graduate from a University in London. She had a Bachelors degree in Media and Communications from a local school, and a

Masters degree in English. She had moved to Shanghai from her home town of Hangzhou to start her career, but most of all, to start a life away from her parents.

Maggie comes from a generation who escaped the hardships of the Cultural Revolution. More extreme than a generation gap, her lifestyle is in stark contrasts to that of her grandparents and parents. The exposure to a variety of media, to cuisine, to fashion, and to career opportunities is something her parents could never have imagined.

Today, little emperors possess the largest buying power in China, comparable to the 'tween' phenomena in North America. Numbering more than 100 million, they are the iPod shuffling, TV watching, French fry chomping generation. They drive expensive sports cars, deck out in Nike sneakers and frequent only the most exclusive nightspots. Hungry for luxury brands and anything "Western," they are feeding a huge consumer industry and ushering in a new era of decadence. Companies from the West have been quick to jump into this market, forecasting enormous potential growth. Luxury brands, soft drink companies, athletic sportswear are all competing for the dollars of the nouveau riche. Walking down the streets of this fashion market it's hard to believe that only a generation before there were only grey or blue government-issued jumpers to choose from. Now, young shoppers have everything from Hugo Boss to Levis to choose from.

The Little Emperors describe themselves as modern, open-minded, worldly, Westernized, confident and cynical; they make no apologies for their lavish taste. The "Manifesto of the 1980's-born," heavily circulated on the Internet, declares:

*"What's bad about the 1980s generation? We're open, audacious and honest. We start dating young. We jump rope. We dye our hair, drink, and smoke. At 16 or 17 we find a 'boyfriend or girlfriend to make love'. We like Nike, Elle, 5 Street. We decide our own style. It's none of your business. If you approve of us, then you're modern. If you oppose, you're a foggy."*<sup>61</sup>

I have kept in touch with Maggie over the months since I left Shanghai. Her on-line pseudonym, "I want to be a material girl", accompanies a photograph of Angelina Jolie.



Fig. 3.84

Waiting outside a private school in Shanghai, a crowd gathers. Parents, Drivers, Grandparents wait with anticipation for the children to be dismissed. As the gates fly open, the children are scurried off into waiting black Buicks, but not before their waiting care givers take their back packs.

It's dismissal time at a local grade school in Shanghai. Waiting just outside the entry are a mob of eager parents, grandparents, nannies and drivers. As the children emerge in their scout like uniforms, each one is whisked away by an entourage of caregivers. One parent brings her child his bike. Others bring after-school snacks. Another parent takes a child's back pack and carries it as they walk towards an awaiting black Buick. In China, the family dynamic has been rearranged toward the new generation. Where once a strong tradition of respect for the older generation governed family relationships, the child now takes centre stage.

Both hope and fear motivate this new phenomenon—*we only have one child, there are no second chances*. Many parents and grandparents have surrendered their



Fig. 3.85

traditional role as instructors and disciplinarians. In place of that, the scene outside the Shanghai elementary school unfolds—doting parents and grandparents pampering their young children and blanketing them in a world of luxury. Some have termed this phenomenon the perilous “4-2-1 indulgence: four grandparents and two parents indulging one child.” Consider up to six adults showering all their attention, time and money onto one child. These children enjoy the latest toys, the latest fashions, the latest movies and DVD’s as well as happy meals and snacks. One Shanghai magazine was instruct parents on how best to raise their little emperors: “a hearty lunch at KFC, a visit to the theme park of his choice, viewing a Disney film together on a big screen, followed by a refill at McDonald’s.”<sup>62</sup>



Fig. 3.86



Fig. 3.87



Fig. 3.88

In the 1990's when Shanghai began opening up to the West, Gubei emerged as the first land made available to foreigners. Huge, deluxe apartment complexes, built with all the subtlety of a Las Vegas hotel, sprang up, with names like: Victoria Mansion, Paris Garden, Rome Garden, Vienna Plaza, Pearl Mansion, Diamond Apartments, Jasper Apartments, and Golden Lion Apartments.

As with old Shanghai, Gubei is something of a foreign concession, providing the wholesale importation of an alien lifestyle created for and by outlanders. And like the concessions of Old Shanghai, which catered to the creature needs of Europeans and Japanese, Gubei is now a city within a city that replicates the prosperous lives its foreign inhabitants once lived in their countries of origin.

Cruising on the overpass above the clamoring streets of the city below, the young man glances in the rear view mirror. She was resting now. It was a different scene three nights ago, when he was called to drive her to the emergency room. She had ingested a bottle of sleeping pills and slashed her wrist. Today was all about relaxation. They were on their way to the country to visit his family vineyard.

Today, like every morning at 10:30, Yu Bing, in his capacity as her driver, had

picked up Angel from her home in Gubei. Usually he would take her around the city, running errands, shopping at the market, visiting tourist attractions. If not for the time spent with Yu Bing, Angel was often alone for weeks at a time. With very few close friends, Yu Bing and Angel found themselves spending more and more time together. They had forged a unique friendship, one that she had to keep a secret. In the car they would exchange their life stories, Yu Bing struggling with English and Angel struggling with Chinese. Together they had developed their own version of "Chinglish".

From Angel's 3,000 square foot villa, it was an hour's drive out to the city of Songjiang. There, Yu Bing's family owned a huge vineyard. They picked me up around eleven that at my apartment in the centre of the city. While Angel slept, I chatted with Yu Bing, practicing my Mandarin. He gestured for me to look at Angel's wrist. I was only moderately surprised. I knew Angel had been troubled for the past little while. She felt imprisoned, isolated, and broken, longing for something to change her life. There was little I could do for Angel other than be a friend. She seemed a far cry from the young girl she once was, resigned to her fate.

She had grown up in a small village outside the US naval base in Subic Bay,



Fig. 3.89

Philippines. Her parents were farmers, and she and six siblings struggled to put enough food on the table. As a child, she dreamed of the day an American from the base would rescue her from her peasant life. She would pick up American fashion magazines and imagine herself a movie star with jewels and beautiful clothing, hanging off the arm of a Western prince.

Angel was 19 when she decided to leave her village. She couldn't wait for her hero. She had already dropped out of school, had a baby and married her childhood sweetheart. But she wanted more from her life and more for her son. So she resolved to change her fate. And, like many in her situation, she went to Hong Kong. When she landed in Hong Kong in 1994, there were approximately 90,000 of her Filipinos working in the city. She had come looking a higher paying job that could help send her son to school. In Hong Kong this meant to one of two jobs made available to migrant workers with no skills: nanny or gogo dancer.

Within weeks of her arrival, she had landed her first job in one of Hong Kong's newest nightspots. Using her height and looks as assets, she worked her way up from dancer to headliner in a month. The Hong Kong night scene opened many doors for

Angel, lucrative contracts to pose nude, travel abroad and enjoy the lifestyle of high paying clients. Moreover, it enabled her to escape the poverty that she was almost doomed to repeat, had she stayed in her provincial village.

By 2001, she was living in a waterfront condo overlooking Hong Kong's picturesque Victoria Harbour. Back in the Philippines, she had invested her earnings in two beachfront properties and three American luxury cars. Her son was now six years old and attending a private school. He was in the care of her husband back home. Angel made occasional visits back to the Philippines, on Holidays and when the club had some down time. She had "made it" according to the standards of her peers back home. She had a high-paying job, lots of spending money, a great apartment, and freedom to travel. But Angel knew that her career could only take her so far. She knew that the key to the really "good life" could only be found in securing a Western husband. That would ensure a regular work schedule, and both emotional and financial stability. She envied the girls foreign bankers brought to the club. They had something she had only dreamed of as a child. Like her, they sported the latest fashions and wore extravagant jewelry but they also seemed secure in the arms of their men. Seeking out a white rich man of her own,



Fig. 3.90

she entertained a string of Western suitors. Bob caught her attention one night when he requested her services, privately, when her shift was over.

Bob was a consultant for a London based logistics firm. In London he had a modest home, a wife he no longer found attractive, and four young children. Bob was entranced by Angel's youthful sex appeal, and Angel was attracted to his lavish spending habits. They complemented each other in more ways than one. After a four-week whirlwind courtship, Bob offered her something she had dreamed of since she was a child; she would be his "second wife".

When Angel accepted his offer, she gave up the Hong Kong night scene, her friends, and her waterfront condominium. They landed in Gubei six weeks after they first met. Moving there meant getting used to a new lifestyle in Shanghai. Angel is more domesticated these days. Gardening, tending to her fish tank, and light cleaning are scheduled between hours in front of the TV. On special occasions, is Angel permitted out at night. Yu Bing drives her, as instructed, to meet Bob at a fancy restaurant where it is her duty to look good amongst his business associates. For all this she is compensated with American dollars, approximately 1500 USD a month. A portion of this sum is remitted to



Fig. 3.91

her family, back in the Philippines.

Within four months of her arrival in Shanghai Angel realized that she had agreed to more than she had bargained for. Her home in Gubei is quite isolated from the city centre. Gubei is off the main subway lines. She would have to drive long distances if she wanted something. In Hong Kong she had worked hard to learn Cantonese, but in Shanghai, Mandarin is the preferred dialect. In addition, Bob was often called abroad for business—leaving her alone for weeks on end. Since she had agreed to be his second wife four months earlier, they had spent a total of only three weeks together. She spent lonely nights in her villa staring at a 46" plasma TV, sipping a fruit shake. She found no pleasure in eating out alone, and Bob would rarely let her out of the house unless accompanied by Yu Bing. From his business trips, he would call Angel to make certain she was not out reliving her wilder days.

I was drawn to Angel when I first met her. We both had little to do in the daytime. Most of my friends worked and she did not have any. In the last weeks that I was in Shanghai, I spent many days with both Angel and her driver. Bob was away in Japan, so we took advantage of his absence. We made an unlikely trio. Whether we were dining



Fig. 3.92

out, shopping, or snapping photos at various tourist attractions, people could not help but stare. A scantily clad Angel would speak to me in Tagalog, I would respond in English and Yu Bing in Chinese.

We spent several hours at his sister's estate, sampling over forty varieties of grapes. It was an opportunity to distance ourselves from the clamour of the city, and its realities. We toured the complex, enjoying the scenery and the grapes along the way. The complex featured a five star restaurant, its own fish pond, and a state of the art karaoke bar. It was a good time to get away and experience a different side of Shanghai.

Returning to Gubei, we pass a string of new subdivisions. Behind their closed gates, business men were returning to their homes away from home. On the surface it appeared serene. But amidst the manicured lawns and neoclassical homes, this foreign enclave - said to be the spark that ignited the real estate craze in Shanghai - is nothing more than a playground for the rich and the gold-digging young women who loved them. It was a pleasure ground catering to the desires of greedy, mischievous little boys.

Shanghai seems quite comfortable being the world's playground. Shanghai is the land of dreams and fantasies. Gubei offers a gateway into that world. For people like



Fig. 3.93

Angel, Shanghai opens a field of opportunity and provides resources to realize ambitions. For people like Bob, an anonymous corporate suit back home, it offers a chance to live glamorous fiction. If I learned anything in my time in China, it is that Bob and Angel are not unique. In the days prior to my departure, I would go on to meet several more couples from Gubei, their stories eerily familiar to each other.

The city holds out a promise of a new life. You come here to make your fortune; you leave your past behind. Everyone seems to be running to something or running from something—some in search of love, some in search of capital, some searching for a new life, some search for an escape. Some come to find a new home for their family, while others come in search of a second home and family. It's a black hole of sorts - drawing people from across the globe closer together. Their lives intersect here in this city, a vacuum for the searchers. Gubei has indeed become the new prototype for the modern Shanghai - whose motto should read ... *Only in Shanghai*.



Fig. 3.94

*You must know that the city of Cambaluc hath such a multitude of houses, and such a vast population inside the walls and outside that it seems quite past all possibility. There is a suburb outside each of the gates, which are twelve in number; and these suburbs are so great that they contain more people than the city itself. In those suburbs lodge the foreign merchants and travelers, whom there are always great numbers who have come to bring presents to the Emperor, or to sell articles at Court, or because the city affords so good a mart to attract traders. ... And thus there are as many good houses outside of the city as inside, without counting those that belong to the great lords and barons, which are very numerous.* <sup>63</sup>

Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*



Fig. 3.95

The view from the observation deck atop the Jin Mao Tower, currently the world's third tallest building, is both awe inspiring and frightening. At the foreground of this panoramic view is Pudong, sprawling at the feet of the tower. An astonishing array of glass and concrete. In this view, foreign investment is manifested in broad 8 lane boulevards, bank towers, and rolling green spaces, almost all of it built within the last decade and a half. Looking past the Central Business District and across the river, this dynamic change is seen pouring over the river banks onto the older part of Shanghai, Puxi. Here a sea of construction cranes too many to number are furiously updating Shanghai's older stock of buildings with revamped apartment highrises, urban shopping malls and commercial tower. On a clear day like today, the view stretches for kilometers in all direction with no end in site.

Where the towers begin to diffuse, vast new suburbs stretch towards the horizon. The endless array of cookie cutter subdivisions litters the landscape in all directions while an ever growing network of asphalt and pavement carve deeper and deeper into the



Fig. 3.96

countryside.

Close to five decades after the arrival of communism to China, Western style suburban sprawl is proliferating the outskirts of all of China's boomtowns. The setting where the intellectuals and bourgeoisie of the city were relocated during the re-education programs of the Cultural Revolution, is now the site of a new form of cultural revolution—inundated by the new bourgeoisie. No longer the victim of forced resettlement, the elite are fleeing the city in droves for personal fulfillment and expression.

After the Communist takeover of China in 1949, the party became everyone's landlord. Not until 1998 when China unveiled its "housing reform," that individual home was again encouraged. As China transitioned from a centrally planned economy to a market driven one, the government increased the availability of mortgages. Where it was once impossible to accumulate private wealth let alone private ownership of land, the government's efforts to promote spending would hopefully stimulate growth within the economy.



Fig. 3.97



Fig. 3.98



Fig. 3.99



Fig. 3.100



Fig. 3.101



Fig. 3.102



Fig. 3.103



Fig. 3.104



Fig. 3.105



Fig. 3.106



Fig. 3.107

When the Special economic zones of the early 80's started to explode with wealth and foreign investment, the amount of private wealth became more and more visible. Increasingly China's nouveau riche turned to Western models to articulate their new found wealth. Western lifestyle became a prototype of consumer culture in these emerging economic powerhouses. As other cities followed suit, they could only replicate the patterns already established. There was little time to seek newer more appropriate models.

In Shanghai, the speed of economic growth and social transformation left even less time to evaluate the appropriateness of Western models. The congestion and infrastructure pressures were evident only ten years after beginning reforms in the 90's. The booming real estate sector flooded the market to appeal to speculative buyers. Developers had to seek more clever ways to attract buyers and began attaching foreign names to their projects like Rancho Santa Fe, Shanghai Riviera, Buckingham Palace and Golden Vienna Villas. Too much low quality housing was built too quickly.



Fig. 3.108

It was during an inspection tour to the suburbs in September 2000, that Executive Vice Mayor of Shanghai Mr. Cheng Liangyu pointed out that "the suburbs of Shanghai lack characteristics and do not look as nice and colourful as its urban area"<sup>64</sup>. The planning authority translated these sentiments into a strategy entitled "Overall Urban Planning of Shanghai (2001-2020)" which planned to accommodate 500,000 of Shanghai's citizens in the surrounding townships. Encompassed within this plan was a vision for Shanghai that would reduce the effects of sprawl while reinforcing the viability of the individual economies of Shanghai's outlying districts.

Huang Ju, Shanghai's former Communist Party secretary, presented this dream plan for the expansion of Shanghai to the public entitled "One City Nine Towns". In this master plan, 9 new satellite cities located on the outskirts of Shanghai were designated as new redevelopment and intensification zones. By 2010 they would become the nodes of an intercity commercial, industrial and residential support network for the city of Shanghai. In conjunction with the creation of these nine new towns, the new district of Pudong

would undergo massive suburban and periphery development to encourage expansion and growth outside of the city center.

Many of the areas earmarked for redevelopment were in underdeveloped rural areas. City planners knew that these more remote back water districts would have little appeal to Shanghai's urbanites. In order to make these new cities attractive to city dwellers and foreign investors, the plan called for each new town to be themed according to a specific European influence.

Professor Zheng Shiling, vice president of the Architectural Society of China, was instrumental in getting the project off the ground. As a key advisor on the project, he is presently a professor at Tongji University, Honorary President of the Architectural Society of Shanghai and Chief Curator of EXPO 2010 Shanghai. Acknowledging the inherent danger in erecting new towns that sought to replicate European flare, Professor Zheng was quick to comment, "From the very beginning, we (members of the advisory group) were determined not to copy Disney Land. If the government decides that the suburban environment and architecture shall bear the influence of a certain country or region, we all agree that it's better to directly invite the overseas architects to make the planning and design."<sup>65</sup> By 2001 several competitions were launched simultaneously for the new towns of Songjiang, Fengjing, Fengcheng, Zhujiajiao, Anting, Loudian, Gaqiao, Pujiang, Zhoupu, and Buzhen.

When it came to deciding which foreign influences should be appropriate for each town, Zheng Shiling had to admit that deliberation process was a little arbitrary, "It's just decided by the authority and then you can find a reason for the choice. For example, since Volkswagen JV is located in Anting town, so naturally the overall planning of Anting is according to a German style. The same rule applies to Loudian, where Swedish Volvo is present."<sup>66</sup>

Beginning in 2002, the bulldozers started their work of reshaping the Shanghai countryside in the images of New Zealand, London, Germany, Canada, Italy, Spain, France.



Fig. 3.109: Shanghai City Centre and New Satellite Towns

Located in Shanghai's Jiading District, a semi-rural expanse dotted with factories about 30km from the city centre, Anting is emerging as China's response to Detroit. Crowned "Shanghai International Automobile City", Anting is home to Volkswagen head quarters and operations. Additionally over a dozen other car makers and more than 100 industry suppliers are located nearby. It seemed like a natural progression that Anting, be rebranded as a German "auto town".

Zhu Ningning, deputy director of the municipal team in charge of the auto city is proud of what his team has accomplished within a short timeline. "We've built this in three years. It took Detroit a hundred years,"<sup>67</sup> he says. Even more impressive than Detroit Anting boasts an impressive car related program for the 50 square kilometer project. With its own automotive engineering university, a theme park which, convention center and car museum in addition to China's first formula one race track, Anting sits at the wheel of the nation's growing car obsession.

Much of Mr. Zhu's confidence comes from the visionary German architect who planned and designed the Anting new city, Albert Speer. Speer designed mixed-use block structures that will house the 50,000 residents of Anting. The brightly hued lego-block homes, pedestrian pathways and public open spaces pay homage to Weimar, Germany. A city whose famous residents like Goethe, Johan Sebastian Bach, Walter Gropius and Nietzsche helped earn it the distinction of European Capital of Culture.



Fig. 3.110



Fig.3.111



Fig.3.112



Fig.3.113



Fig.3.114

The promotional brochure of Thames town reads: *“For at least five centuries, the English culture has captivated and mesmerized the world. Few places can boast of having been the source of major world events and the focus of international attention over such an extended period of time. For at least five centuries, Songjiang – the birthplace of modern-day Shanghai, has enjoyed a prominent status in the city. It is indeed uncommon that a town of such modest scale should eventually develop into a world-class cosmopolitan city. Songjiang, with its lofty ambitions and spirit of yesteryears, embraces the architectural culture of a faraway land along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean.”*

In Shanghai’s Songjiang district, 40 kilometers away from the central business district, Thames town has been built with an English style. Box hedges, leafy roads, football pitches amidst manicured lawns and at least one garden maze recall the quaint English countryside. The town draws from styles of all imaginable eras – Roman baths, medieval pubs, and a Gothic church.

Nestled within this rolling landscape is China’s finest stock of Tudor-style and cottages and Georgian villas. If villa life is not your fancy, you may choose to live in the Victorian Brick warehouse apartments that line the waterfront and face onto the commercial main streets. Another option may be the “renovated” lofts in the factories adjacent to the wharf.

Across the town shops, museums, and restaurants open off of alleys and small plazas to offer an authentic English experience. In total 8,000 residents will soon be able to enjoy a merry stroll down the cobbled main street, a cool pint at the local pub and even a traditional European wedding in the town square’s gothic-styled cathedral.

A placard near the entrance to the main street greets residents and visitors: *“We wander among the blocks in Thames Town, with the fresh and tranquil aroma floating in the air, the streets and lanes in the town are totally immersed in the classical past times remembering architecture details. The town space mingled with wisdom and inspiration brings us back to those romantic times. It is right here, in this elegant place, we meet...When the spiritual power of art turns into figurative architecture; people must be moved and chased by her. Thames town which is constructed with culture and art will be our spiritual land in the end. In this symphony, she fused with art, aesthetic and humanity, she advances to the future bringing our dreams.”*



Fig. 3.115



Fig. 3.116



Fig. 3.117



Fig. 3.118



Fig. 3.119



Fig. 3.120

## 30 Scandinavian Town

If China's love affair with Ikea is any reflection of their affinity for Scandinavian lifestyle and design, then real estate salesmen should have no problem selling homes in Luodian, a seven square kilometer new town in Shanghai's Baoshan district. After six years of construction the gates to Shanghai Golden Luodian Scandinavian Town were opened in 2006.

The gated community will house between 30,000 and 50,000 people. Luxury villas, a Nobel Science and Technology Park, a five-star hotel and nine-hole PGA-approved golf course are among some of the amenities available to residents. Luodian is the brainchild of architectural consultancy Sweco and inspired by urban planning traditions in Swedish towns. The light, pastel houses in Scandinavian Cultural Street are based on those in historic Sigtuna, a small town north of Stockholm. And just like the city of Sigtuna, in Citizen Square, a square-shaped church-like tower overlooks Lake Meilan (derived from Mälaren, the third-largest lake in Sweden).

The showcase of the city is a park fronting the manmade lake that is shaped like the Scandinavian Peninsula. Here, pavilions representing each of the countries from the region offer cultural attractions and traveling museum exhibits. In conjunction with these venues, Science Celebrity Hall, Science and Technology Center and the Memorial in the Nobel Garden showcase the various cultures and contributions of the Scandinavian people. Liu Jianguo, vice-general manager of Shanghai Golden Luodian Development proclaims "if you live in Luodian you don't need to go abroad." <sup>68</sup>



Fig. 3.121



Fig.3.122



Fig.3.123



Fig.3.124



Fig.3.125 Maple Town Rendering courtesy of KF Stone

Peter Fu graduated from the Architecture Department at Tonji University, where he was named among the top 10 talented young architects of his year. In 1984 there were not many opportunities for young architects in his home city of Shanghai so Peter went to where all the development was happening, Shenzhen. At the time, the recently opened Special Economic Zone was creating a lot of buzz but also presented a lot of uncertainty. No one was sure of the road ahead—if reforms would lead to growth or further economic decline. Even Peter admitted, “it needed great courage to take that step because even my mother warned me: ‘You’ll starve and die in such a capitalist society!’”

For several years after graduation, Peter struggled as a young designer. He worked long hours in a small office for little pay. In the rapidly developing city of Shenzhen, Peter would often be sent to remote rural locations with dirt roads, bad plumbing and poor facilities. The conditions in these back water underdeveloped areas left much to be desired, but the work was satisfying and exciting. Peter saw the promise of Shenzhen’s coming economic and construction boom. Shortly after his arrival, he took over the project



北美现代生活社区，营造中国深圳人性化生活环境中，体现健康文明、舒适、绿色环境的生活气息。

Fig.3.126: Maple Town Rendering courtesy of KF Stone

to design and plan the new Shenzhen University—a prestigious appointment that landed him a name in academic circles around the country.

He received a teaching position at Shenzhen University. He returned to Shanghai to earn his Masters degree back at Tonji University. He later parlayed his education and experience in Shenzhen and Shanghai to earn a full scholarship at Canada’s McGill University where he earned a PHD in Architecture.

After graduation from McGill, he worked at several large architecture firms in Toronto. He moved from Petrof Architects to Zeidler Partnerships, finally settling at Bregman and Hamann. His work won him a considerable reputation in Canadian architecture circles and he became vice-principal of B and H Architects International Company. Through out this time he also managed to obtain Canadian citizenship. He married and had two children in Toronto, settling in a home in Scarborough.

In 1996, Fu was sent back to Shanghai where opportunities were booming for Canadian designers. At first he worked with B and H as a vice president of their Shanghai



Fig. 3.127: Portrait of Peter Fu

office. But by 2001, he had established two companies of his own, KF Stone in Shanghai and DGBK stationed in Vancouver. To date, KF Stone has finished designs for a total area of 5 million square meters. Mega projects like Shanghai Gardens and Da'an Garden have earned Peter a place among the big Canadian designers operating in China. His blend of Western education and local connections make for smooth transactions between developers seeking foreign names to attach to their projects.

Commenting on the success he has enjoyed through out his career, Peter, now 41, said, "A city has only 20 to 30 golden years of construction and an architect has only about 20 golden years from 30 to 50. I am fortunate because my career period just matches the rapid development of two cities, first Shenzhen, and then Shanghai." One of the most prestigious projects came Peter's way when he was invited to represent Canada in the international design competition for the World Expo of 2010. Although his design did not win the competition, he came out with another large commission.

KF Stone was selected as the Master Planner for Canadian Maple Town, one of

the nine foreign satellite cities of Shanghai. When asked to comment on the design of the community and how he brought his knowledge of Canadian design to the project, Peter commented, "It was about designing a lifestyle and not necessarily a specific aesthetic... That is how I won the design competition... think about North America, big land, 2 car garage, baseball diamonds, hockey, tomatoes in the garden and making wine... here, people can do all that: play golf and ride horses, and pick strawberries. It will be just like living in Toronto."

Fu described his vision another way in an interview to the Shanghai Star. "I have a lot of time to carefully design the town which has often appeared in my dreams. The community centre is located in the very centre of a lake. Buildings are not high - only two or three storeys - convenient and comfortable for residents' lives. Children are skiing on the grass because it's impossible to have snow in Shanghai... I want to design not only buildings in the American style but also for a peaceful and leisurely lifestyle."\*

Peter later admitted that there is a surface appreciation of Western culture, and that recreating parts of Toronto or any other city in Shanghai is of questionable value to the fabric of the Chinese city. I asked Peter if, in his practice, he felt a sense of responsibility to preserve or maintain Chinese values in the new projects that he comes across—whether as a designer educated abroad he had a commitment for better design. His response, "Some say what I am doing is so ugly... so what. Shanghai is a huge city. This is just a small thing. Just enjoy it... ha ha ha... and then go home"

That same attitude towards the quality of his work was transmitted to his workers as well. I arranged for an interview with one of his employees, a coop student and fellow classmate of mine from the University of Waterloo. Kfir was hired specifically to work on the Maple town project, because Peter had wanted homegrown talent to propel the project into the next phase of development. Kfir would sit in on design meetings and was expected to inject some "Canadianess" into the discussion.

"This place is hell... look at the crap I have to sit and do all day." He revealed a days worth of sketches, semi-detach homes modeled after his own in Toronto. "They want Canadian, but they don't even know what that means, I am just drawing the ugliest house I can think of and they eat it up."



Fig. 3.128: Maple Town Rendering courtesy of KF Stone

After designing numerous facades for single family dwellings, Kfir showed me his most absurd task, the design of the quintessential Canadian church. Kfir was a secular Jew and had never even stepped into a church. He couldn't even begin to describe a Canadian aesthetic that could be attached to places of Christian worship. But like all the projects he had been given in his time there, he reluctantly accepted it and did his best. No matter what he drew up, even when he knew how terrible it was, it would be rendered and in the hands of overjoyed clients by the next morning.

Perhaps what frustrated him the most and what eventually led him to leave the firm prematurely was the task of selecting the next incoming co-op student. After receiving a pile of resumes and portfolios that came attached with head shots, Kfir was instructed to filter for "white males" only. As in many firms across China, white faces are often paraded in front of potential clients. The presence of Western faces an indication of foreign talent present in the firm.

After Kfir had left, I put him in touch with another Canadian architecture firm, one with a more responsible approach to design. "I couldn't continue to work there. That



Fig. 3.129: Maple Town Rendering courtesy of KF Stone

guy is a prick and I felt guilty for helping him create such an ugly world."

Peter Fu's name would come up several more times in my encounters with the architecture community in Shanghai. Many rolled their eyes when I mentioned his name, citing questionable practices and shady deals with high ranking government bureaucrats. I was also quite puzzled that he was working on Maple Town at all. Up to that point, all material I had read on the project named the Toronto firm Six Degrees Architecture as the lead designers. There was obviously confusion or underhanded practice afoot. In a previous work term I had worked with Lisa Bate who is now the president of Six Degrees Architecture. I emailed to clarify the matter.

*"Hi Kyle...Peter Fu...yes, quite the character. He, of course, was canned by the client before we were retained, but he still seems to see himself as the Master Planner...although the scheme was as redesigned as it could be. Bregman and Hamann and Zeidler are both trying to get him onto Canadian soil so that they can sue him...he has projects of both of those companies, in fact DRAWINGS prepared by those companies on his website! If you ever want to hear an earful,*



Fig. 3.130: Maple Town Rendering courtesy of KF Stone

*Speak to someone at Bregman and Hamann about him as he worked there for a short period of time on a couple of projects but then has used their portfolio of work in China ever since as his own. They have not been successful in suing him in China. I've never met him."*

To this date I am not sure who has actually been awarded the project of master planning Maple town. Both firms seem to be working on it at the same time. This situation is quite common in China. Commissions do not necessarily mean that your design will be built. And just because a firm wins a competition does not mean they will be retained to follow through on the design. Characters like Peter Fu represent the swashbuckling aspect of the new economy. If you have good connections, a foreign cache, you can go far in the business. It's a cutthroat environment. Lydon Neri, an architect practicing in Shanghai described it like this: "You aren't paid, buildings change, designs copied. You really have no protection here. China is a cowboy place"



Fig. 3.131: Photo of Vancouver Forest, Canadian designed gated community on the outskirts of Beijing



Fig. 3.132: Photo of Vancouver Forest, Canadian designed gated community on the outskirts of Beijing



Fig. 3.133



Fig. 3.134



Fig. 3.135



Fig. 3.136



Fig. 3.137



Fig. 3.138



Fig. 3.139

While commenting on the development of the nine satellite towns, one urban planning official announced in a 2002 press circular, “foreign visitors will not be able to tell where Europe ends and China begins.”<sup>69</sup> The remaking of Shanghai has brought up some very old issues.

In the late 19th century, Shanghai was hijacked by foreign powers who carved the city into concessions that recreated the images of their own homeland. This era marked a humiliating time of defeat, one that the Communist sought long and hard to eradicate. The legacy of art deco apartment, neo classical bank buildings, and stuccoed villas that remain in Shanghai today are a constant reminder of a time when foreigners controlled the fate of Shanghai.

The memory of humiliation has not prevented history from repeating itself. Today, in order to accommodate Shanghai’s ballooning population and project the image as an international gateway, city planners have turned once again to foreign models. The same trap that made Shanghai a bustling port city in the past, has been replicated on a grander scale. The indiscriminate application of foreign treatments to major redevelopment projects has been criticized by many as impractical and insensitive—the Disney syndrome. To these critics, the One City Nine Towns project is as inauthentic as an oversized miniature-golf course as the city once served as a stomping ground for foreign imperialists, has again become a victim of Western bastardization.

That criticism is echoed by Shanghai’s own government planners, who are keenly aware of the need for balance between foreign concepts and local settings. In 2004, Vice-director of the Shanghai Planning Bureau Wu Jiang, concerned by the inundation of North American and European concepts asserted in an interview granted to the Toronto Star, “We don’t want Shanghai to have too many British-style towns or North American-style towns.”<sup>70</sup>



Fig. 3.140



Fig. 3.141

The hallmarks of any world class city are not only limited to monuments of glass and steel that contribute to postcard skylines, but also the city's attention to history, heritage and narrative. Memorable cities like New York, London and Paris have been identified in the cultural imagination as evenly embracing the old and the new as part of their unique identities. The "brown-stone", the "row house", the "walk-up", speak to a collective memory of a city's foundation. The equivalent to New York's brown stone is Shanghai's Shikumen courtyard house. To many critics, recognition of this past architecture is where Shanghai's race towards modernity and world-class status falls short.

Many point to the indiscriminate leveling of vibrant communities with traditional architecture as a gross oversight of zealous city planners. It is estimated that since the mid nineties when Shanghai first openly embraced the open door policies of Deng Xiaoping, two thirds of the old housing stock has been lost to redevelopment. While the magnitude of Shanghai's modernization is impressive, the displacement of over one million people and the growing scarcity of heritage architecture reveal the insidious by-

product of progress.

In Shanghai the tradition of stone-gated courtyard housing, the Shikumen, a fusion of European and Chinese aesthetics that emerged during the 1900's has been under steady assault. As residents of Shikumen communities are relocated to the outskirts of the city onto land deemed less valuable, clusters of gated apartment complexes are sprouting up in their place. With internal security guards, camera surveillance, fences and controlled access, they represent a new form within the urban dynamic of Shanghai. Real estate in the city core is no longer home to the poor, old and outdated, but rather the new class of hip urbanites. As swaths of land are swallowed up by developers, clear lines are being drawn between the "have"s and the "have not"s, a dramatic shift away from the classless mentalities of communism.

The inundation of these newly minted apartment complexes represents more than just a class division. Their arrival signals the systematic demise of diversity within the city—diversity of both architectural type and cultural activity. The spontaneity found



Fig. 3.142

in Shanghai's street markets, impromptu ballroom dance studios, and roadside casinos is something gated communities make little allowance for. The generosity and malleability of Shanghai's streets characterize a rich celebration of public space are increasingly harder to find.

Commenting on a traditional Shikumen style neighbourhood in the early 90's, architect Benjamin Wood was said, "I saw the magic of the place. It was amazing. There was laundry hanging everywhere, all these people, parents with kids, flying kites, the whole litany of human experience." In a later comment to real estate developers Wood went on to say, "Look past the obvious, the dirt, the decay, the crowded, unsanitary conditions and see (the area) as what it is...a cultural artifact that could for generations to come symbolize the meeting of East and West"<sup>71</sup>

Wood later went on to materialize his vision as he redesigned the two-square block neighbourhood that had made such a strong impression on him—a vision that would offer an alternative to the leveling of local identity. While preserving a selection



Fig. 3.143

winding alleyways and traditional stone-gate houses, Wood created a new pedestrian shopping, dining and entertainment district. Inaugurated in 1997, the \$170 million restoration project was given the name Xintiandi—a name that literally translates to "New, Heaven, Earth." Within the framework of the stone gate architecture a collection of Shanghai's hippest bars, fanciest restaurants and trendiest shopping boutiques has been inserted. Here tourists, expats, and locals visitors meander under the glowing signs off set from century-old stone facades.

Praised as a new benchmark for style, Xintiandi offers developers a planning model that is being replicated around China by those eager to capitalize on the profitability of dilapidated historic sites. Xintiandi proved, for the first time in China, that the old can be fashionable and above all lucrative. Admirer's of this project claim that charming streets and pedestrian scale provide visual relief from the garish sky scrapers that litter Shanghai. And even though the streets are charged with energy of visitors day and night, there is a light handedness to the design. In a city where megalomania is preferred mode of



Fig. 3.144

developers, Xintiandi offers a lesson in subtlety and sensitivity.

I am sipping a Starbucks latte, watching droves of tourist flood the promenade when I receive a text message on my phone, "Going to be late by five minutes." I am waiting for my friend TianPing, known to many as Dog Bird because he has a pug like face and stick thin legs. He is a graduate of Shanghai's top university, with a major in environmental design. Currently he works in an architecture office but has hopes of attending graduate school in Canada. Because his English was near perfect we enjoyed discussions about architecture, design and urbanism. Tonight, however, we were going to watch the latest Star Wars prequel, *Revenge of the Sith*.

It's about 10 pm and the bars are starting to fill up. Many of them offer live entertainment in the form of Filipino cover bands. Through out my time in Shanghai, I have been fortunate enough to meet at least half of the members of the Filipino entertainment industry in Shanghai. Glancing into several bars, I wave to the singers and band members I know. From the windows tunes by artists as diverse as the Beatles to Eminem resonate



Fig. 3.145

in the street. Their ability to replicate western music draws crowds from across the city. Noticing the time I head back to the Starbucks, where I am to meet Tianping. I pass by a monument of true irony in this neighbourhood. More so than the architectural value, the main reasons this site evaded a wrecking ball is that it contains the location of the first meeting place of the Communist party. There is a crowd gathering by the entrance to a museum showcasing wax figurines of China's first comrades who are presided over by a young Mao Zedong. Not far from there is a McCafe, McDonald's response to Starbucks.

"I use to live here you know?" Tianping mentions as we enter into the northern plaza of Xintiandi. "My house stood right here". As I glance down at the paving stone, the bright lights of a 25,000 square foot leisure and entertainment complex cast our shadows in all directions. "I was six when we were moved out of this area. The land was bought by a developer, and my family and neighbours were moved to apartments outside of Pudong."

When I ask Tianping whether he thought the preservation project was successful



Fig. 3.146

he responds, "They tore down a lot of what used to be here. It's hardly recognizable from when I used to live here. What they kept is very tasteful...I am not so sure the lifestyle has remained the same. When I grew up here the people walking around were friends, relatives and neighbours, not tourists, and bar hoppers. I guess it's successful... look how many people there are here."

For every person who applauds Xintiandi's success, there is another who condemns the project's underlying drive. To critics, Xintiandi is symptomatic of a trend in cities across North America where main streets, waterfronts and historic centers are refurbished and converted into savvy shopping destinations. The problem lies not in the preservation efforts, but in the wholesale rebranding of heritage to boost profits of multinational chains. In their views, surrogate environments like Xintiandi are the work of clever developers capitalizing on nostalgia. At the heart of the argument is the marketing of inauthentic reproductions and the repackaging of history. Ada Louise Huxtable in her book *Unreal America* laments, "What concerns me is...is [that] illusion is preferred over



Fig. 3.147

reality to the point where the replica is accepted as genuine and the simulacrum replaces the source."

Designer Benjamin Wood admits the inherent flaws in heritage reclamation: "The danger, I guess is that it becomes a cliché, like some sort of Disney."<sup>72</sup> Also rejecting the wholesale preservation of heritage neighbourhoods, Wood explains, "I disdain preservation...I don't believe you should proclaim things dead and turn them into museums. I believe you should breathe life into places. That's my goal. I want to make living areas, where people can eat, drink and enjoy themselves."<sup>73</sup>

Clearly, Wood's plan did not include the original inhabitants of Xintiandi as many like Tianping were relocated only returning to the site to spend their dollars in Western style multiplexes. But it's difficult for anyone to condemn Xintiandi completely. As Tianping says leaving the movie, "I have seen the alternative; this a lot easier to accept...at least I can come back and walk around... besides Starbucks makes good frappuccinos."

At 10:45pm, November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2003, I am in a line of avid movie goers outside Shanghai's largest multiplex within Super Brand Mall. We have been waiting for several hours. The mall has been abandoned since 9. There is a palpable anticipation in the air.

Simultaneously, we are connected to thousands of other Matrix enthusiasts around the globe. In somewhat of an odd promotion gimmick, Warner Brothers Studios has scheduled to open the movie around the world at exactly the same moment. For example, it opens at 6AM in Los Angeles, 7AM in Denver, 8AM in Chicago, 9AM in New York, 2PM in London, 5PM in Moscow and 11 PM in Shanghai. The world wide premiere is a preemptive strike against illegal bootlegging. Because most movies have staggered international release dates, it is quite common for pirated DVD versions of movies released in North America to find their way into Asia months in advance.

In this final episode, a band of resistance fighters leads an insurgency against an army of machines. Sporting super human powers, black leather outfits and Rayban sunglasses, their mission is to liberate the remainder of humanity from mentally

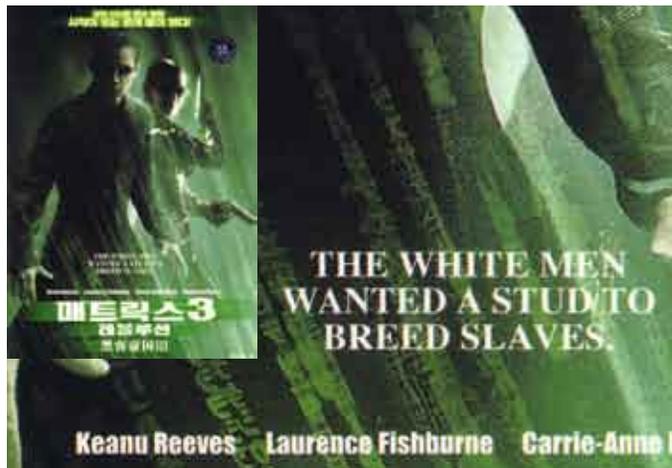


Fig. 3.148

imprisonment in a simulated world - the Matrix.

But more than profit driven success, the writers and directors of the Matrix trilogy, the Wachowski brothers, have taken the world of Hollywood box office movies to the realm of social commentary. In addition to the cyber gothic techno geeks who reveled in sexy tight leather super heroes, an intellectual discourse that began in the 1980's resurfaced.

In 1983, Baudrillard published the essay "Simulacra and Simulations." In this seminal work, Baudrillard criticizes the proliferation of images in advanced capitalism. In the new era, the expansion of commodities and the relentless advance of technologies of visualization have rendered our symbols devoid of meaning. Everything from fashion to car culture to household appliances has been reduced to an image that is based on an idea of something else. Their appearance no longer pay reference to an intrinsic use-value function, but rather gain value in their ability to connote something else, such as the appearance of status. Baudrillard describes this as a movement away from representation (of something real) to simulation (with no secure reference in reality). The shift from representation to simulation alters the relation between sign and referent, so that we lose the connection between sign or image and the reality to which both were thought to refer.

In the Matrix, the substitution of real life for the simulation is at the heart of the protagonists' quest. As viewers we are asked to question whether the objects that we find ourselves surrounded by are artifacts of a life or merely illusions of a fictional reality. At the end of the movie however, I am no more moved to denounce my affinity for shopping than I am determined to watch Keanu Reeves in a title role again.

1 am. Leaving the movie house, I grab a cab back home, but not before stopping off at a nearby night market. I have a hunch that there are bootleg versions already for sale. I pay a visit to my favourite vendor. He knows me well - I am one of his best customers. Sure enough, I pick up my own copy at cost of 8 Rmb, the equivalent of \$1.50 Canadian. It's case, a digital reproduction of the movie poster. It's title, a Chinese mistranslation.

In August of 1996, a 28-hectare theme park opened 20 km Northwest of Shanghai. The



Fig. 3.149



Fig. 3.150

brainchild of developer Robert Lamb, a remote plot of barren land was transformed into the American Dream Park (ADP)—a cotton candy, popcorn, soda pop thrill park.

An elaborately choreographed experience catered to the growing leisure demands of Shanghai’s middle class. The park offered over 31 thrill rides and 17 shows that were housed in five themed zones. Guests entered through Main Street USA, a Disney-like collection of small-town store fronts. Guests could glide over the park in parachutes released from a 108-foot tower or take a ride on an old-fashioned train. In the American Heritage Area knights of the medieval era jousted in elaborate stunt shows. Miami Beach portrayed art deco facades along a 25-acre man-made lake. Children’s Treasure Island offered pirate inspired attractions while gun slinging cowboys were the main attraction in the Wild Wild West.

The park promised state of the art technology and thrilling attractions that rivaled Disney. Hong Kong based investors were so confident that ADP would be the model of success that they put \$600 million towards 4 other projects that were to be developed in Guangzhou, Wuhan, Chengdu and Beijing. The long term objective was to build a media

conglomerate. The string of cartoon mascots developed for the park was to form the cast for feature films and an empire based in spin-off merchandising.

It had begun well enough. Soon after opening, the park’s partners showed off lavish rides and thrilling shows to the media. With much fanfare and spectacle, thousands of visitors flocked to the park in the first year. Over 2,000 employees brought the fantasy of the American Dream alive. It was projected that the park would attract some 10 million guests. But by 1999, when park attendance was expected to be as high as 10,000 a day, it had dwindled to less than 12.

By 2000 the park was closed for good. None of the other projects ever made it off the ground. Today, American Dream Park sits deserted and decaying—a real life ghost town.

Was it hubris of its developers that killed the American Dream Park? Did they enter the market too early? Or was it something else? Had Shanghai already achieved American Dream? Has Shanghai, in remaking itself rendered the theme park?



Fig. 3.151

This year marks the 17th anniversary of the massacre at Tiananmen Square. During a string of demonstrations that began on April 15, 1989 a 10 meter effigy in the likeness of the Statue of Liberty was erected in the heart of Beijing. Constructed from styrofoam and papier-mâché by students of the Central Academy of Fine Arts, it stood at the center of the gathered masses, a totem of their cause. Thousands of university students, intellectuals and labour activists gathered at its feet, facing the large portrait of Mao Zedong on Tiananmen Gate shouting for democracy, reform and political freedom.

In an interview to the Western media, one protestor read out a list of 10 demands that included the freedom to vote and freedom of expression. The first nine represented the demonstrators' call for democracy. The final demand came as a shock because it did not pertain directly to political upheaval. The tenth demand read: the freedom to buy sneakers.

Was it such preposterous demand? The Western world had long championed the hand-in-hand development of democracy and capitalism. The freedom to choose one's preference in fashion, food, living spaces and transportation was part of the package in choosing one's political leaders.

In the end, the statue named the "goddess of democracy and freedom" was burned to the ground as Chinese military dispersed the crowd with brutal force. The standoff ended in on the morning of June 4th, 1989 as the world watched with unabated tension and disbelief over the unfolding events. It is not clear how many died that day. The Chinese government claims 23 while the Chinese Red Cross estimates as high as 2600. The quest for the American dream of liberty died that day. But its spirit has been reborn in a new form. The last of protestors 10 demands, the freedom to buy sneakers, seems to have been the most profound in reshaping China in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square.

In the years since the protest, the development of China's consumer culture has not kept pace with political democratization though. While the Nike revolution has already swept over China, in conjunction with Pepsi, McDonalds and WalMart, China remains under an autocratic system—forging its own path to global ascendancy.

There is little doubt about that the direction the Chinese economy is now towards a higher stage of capitalism as opposed to socialism—a disproportionate "two

headed dragon" forging its way up the ladder of progress. What remains the big question is how China's autocracy will handle the higher tiers of capitalism. Unlike the primary stages of development which are marked by rapid growth and industrialization, mature capitalist economies require the establishment of rule by law, a democratic form of government, systems to guard private property rights and a form of social welfare to protect the weak. In the industrialization of the West, patent laws, public spending on infrastructure, franchising the population and the establishment of social safety nets developed along side rapidly growing economies. These measures ensured a smoother transition from industrialized economies to ones based in service and technology. They also galvanized a pattern of development that China hopes to defy. China steams ahead. Embarking on multiple trajectories and rapid transitions, the path that lies ahead is not necessarily a smooth one.

*"Out of great disorder,  
great order will be revealed"*

Mao Zedong, ca. 1967



Fig. 4.01

# CHAPTER 4: THE SUBVERSION

## **sub·ver·sion: n.**

Action designed to undermine the military, economic, psychological or political strength of a regime

With the founding of distinct precincts of redevelopment, both on a national and city-wide scale, an internal border is drawn that separates the population into two segments. The following chapter explores how those marginalized segments of the population employ a reactionary form of architecture and development that subverts the conventional model of expansion. Their systems of resistance and survival favour informal, emergent and situational responses to cope with harsh conditions.



Fig. 4.02

A trip to the mall in North America. Pick up almost anything these days; whether it be a shirt, a toy, a running shoe and chances are you will find the words “Made in China” on it. Until recently, Asia’s manufacturing base economy was centered in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. This region experienced rapid economic growth in the decades after World War II. The opening of their markets provided cheap labour for the West. Global systems realigned to accommodate the world’s new manufacturing plant. From Far East ports, shiploads of the goods found their way into the hands of a maturing consumer class in the West. The terms “Made in Taiwan” and “Made in Hong Kong” grew synonymously with affordable products. Meanwhile other Asian countries, such as Japan or Korea, specialized in technological items for the hi-tech revolution.

But that was almost twenty years ago. Today, these countries are fighting to stay competitive amidst the arrival of a new manufacturing juggernaut, China, whose unparalleled economic rise over the last 20 years has made it the world’s leading manufacturer of cheap products. The nation currently sews more garments, stitches more

shoes and assembles more children’s toys, TV sets, DVD players and cell phones than anywhere else in the world.<sup>1</sup>

The effect this transition towards manufacturing has made destabilized Mao’s efforts, throughout his tenure, to mobilize China’s heartland. Mao had always envisioned the rural populous as the key to China’s transformation. His agenda was to deemphasize the urban centres and make the countryside the leader of China’s economic growth. A look at today’s concentration patterns of China’s GDP distribution or foreign direct investment, however, suggests how important urban centres have become in the new economy. These regions have mobilized the rural population, but not as Mao had hoped. Today economic activity and development is concentrated primarily along China’s coastal urban centres. The gravitation of rural migrants to urban centres has provided a vast supply of cheap labour, a workforce that is estimated in the hundreds of millions.<sup>2</sup> Their mobilization has helped make China into the world’s new manufacturing giant.

One of the greatest ironies of China’s economic development is how it has

GDP DISTRIBUTION (2004)

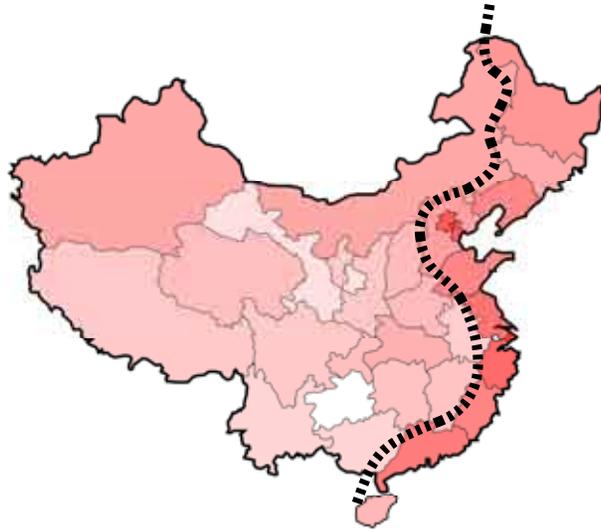


Fig. 4.03

PERCENTAGE GROWTH IN FDI (1991-1996)



Fig. 4.04

re-activated divisions between coastal China and inland China, a legacy of the country's treaty port era. The SEZ opened in 1980, and the 14 coastal cities that were opened in 1984 correspond essentially to the chain of ports opened under diplomatic and military pressure after the Opium Wars. More recently, as other cities haphazardly adopt policies that have led to high growth rates, the imbalances that colonial land holdings had fostered in the nineteenth century have resurfaced.

All of this disproportionate development has created an internal border—reversing Mao's efforts to distribute the nation's wealth more evenly into the rural interior. Essentially China has grown into two separate nations with two distinct economic, cultural and political landscapes.



Fig. 4.05

As modernity forges onward, the divisions within the country are intensified within the Chinese city. The difference between: rich and poor, young and old, homegrown and imported represent some of the more visible. But in Cities like Shanghai there is also a rich contrast of vision for the future. One vision is the city of the postcard – neon-lit towers that glow in a forest of glass and steel. Dense activity, vibrant entertainment, soaring towers, inter-modal transportation are its characteristics. The second vision is presented in the real estate ads for new subdivisions and gated communities on the outskirts of the city. They offer the alternative to the bustling metropolis, a place of rolling lawns, chirping birds and pitched roofs. These seemingly dissimilar visions are, in fact, exports from the West—“the two most sterile outcomes of the vertical and horizontal – the skyscraper and the themed (often gated) suburb” according to Rem Koolhaas.<sup>3</sup>

Both of these forces of renewal can be described as an *urbanism of distance and separation*.<sup>4</sup> As cities across China are quick to erect new structures, they marginalize large segments of the population. The tower, “the project of glamour”, forces the relocation of



Fig. 4.06

local residents, as well as elevating land values in surrounding areas to the point where homes become inaccessible to lower income families. The gated community too emerges as an act of separation. They have evolved as privatized ghettos that operate in direct opposition to the traditional patterns of dwelling in Chinese cities.

Traditional housing in Shanghai from the mid-nineteenth century consisted mostly of *lilongs*, or dense networks of connected two-storey buildings occupying a city block with shops fronting outwards onto public streets, and residences above accessed from internal alleyways. The term *lilong* refers to these alleyways which are first reached through gateways from main streets, and then are hierarchically organized through semi-public, semi-private and private lanes and courtyards throughout the block. These laneways form the primary public space of large residential blocks. Residents talk, cook, eat, wash and play in these alleyways and form a strong social fabric which extends the nuclear family unit to a network of extended family and neighbours. This homogeneous mat of housing throughout the city is characterized by its adaptive form of communal living. Often one



Fig. 4.07

family compound will grow and adapt as the family changes. As the space evolves, new more complex social relations are built into the architecture, representing the order of the household. They become manifestations of a family tree, revealing the transformation of the community through additions, expansions and home modifications.

At the onset of the Communist revolution, the state assumed ownership of land and enforced a collectivized model of living. The commune or *danwei* structured society around collective ownership and the sharing of resources. All the needs and amenities were supplied from within the commune. Communities were unified within a classless and rank-free environment that pursued a common goal.

Both models of community, the old city fabric and the *danwei*, life revolved around shared activities and intimate connection with neighbours. The connection to place is fostered by the presence of several generations within one household. The family unit is expanded. On the site of one building multiple generations of one family live together or even several families with no blood relation. These relationships form an



Fig. 4.08

extended circle of community. Houses, clusters, blocks, precincts represent varying levels of association that extend beyond blood ties in a culture of permeability.

Whereas typical communities of the past operated as a network by pooling resources, newer developments market themselves as self-contained units within compounds that provide all the amenities within the confines of the gate to the exclusion of all others. As they stake their claim on the city, the grey brick and mortar walls are being demolished and the old neighborhoods they encircle and the narrow alleys they delimit are being torn down. The unremitting thrust of modernization and urban expansion has overhauled the old and replaced it with the new.

At the same pace that these walls are crumbling, new gates and fences are erected. Up-market residential areas, built as fully-fledged gated communities, are mushrooming across the city. The arrival of these new typologies has erased the history and social complexity of traditional neighbourhoods. While modern amenities are to be celebrated by many, new housing units are isolated from on-street interaction. They



Fig. 4.09



Fig. 4.10

are clearly defined by gates, walls and doorways. The interstitial zones have disappeared within the city, leaving only two extremes, within and without.

The concept of the modern gated compound was introduced by Westerners who came to China shortly after the reform. At the beginning the Chinese government made little effort to house incoming foreign businessmen—suspicious of contact between locals and foreigners. Many businesses that entered the market during that era were forced to run their operations through hotel rooms.<sup>5</sup> Not until later did the government start allocating land for foreign communities to be built. Sectioning off parts of the city for foreign occupation was also a measure to ensure containment.

With the green light for development, Western investors erected compounds of their own with the quality and amenities that replicated the creature comforts of their homeland. What emerged, were isolated groups of luxury apartment towers that sat in stark contrast to the housing options available to China's mass population.

When a rising Chinese elite began searching for ways in which to express their new found wealth they naturally turned to the only models present, that of the foreign gated compound. Developers were quick to seize the opportunity. As China's wealth mushroomed so too did the appearance of gated communities modeled after Western prototypes.

In the decades that followed the reform, cities were remade overnight by the money of foreign investors, and often they were remade in their own image. The explosive ascension of the Chinese consumer only fueled this trend. The values of equity, unity and community that were instilled within Maoist China were quickly eroded as values of conspicuous consumption flourished within the real estate market. The dawn of the material culture fractured the uniformity of China's communist era. The pursuit of personal wealth was accompanied by increasing demand for varied expressions of status and upward mobility.

As urban developments were increasingly dominated by rising middle income families, the upper-class seeks to dissociate itself from the masses and the chaos of the polluted urban realm, a space increasingly relegated to labourers, elderly, and less educated. To escape the encroachment of a rising middle class, suburban flight



Fig.4.11



Fig. 4.12



Fig. 4.13

and fortification have become the preferred method of asserting one's importance and status. Again modeled after Western prototypes gated villa communities that initially catered to expatriates are now the realm of the cities wealthy locals.

Not only the product of their desire for seclusion and protection from the masses, the Chinese government itself encourages the construction of autonomous residential districts and compounds. Since the success of municipalities is often gauged by the level of new development and profit, land is sold at a premium to large developers who come with the promise of updated industries and foreign wealth. Seemingly overnight entire cities spring up in the country side. Some projects can easily be between 30 and 50 million square feet. Other mega projects can span as much as 100 million.<sup>6</sup>

Entire enclaves that are intended to function without the city offer their own man made rivers, manicured parks, shopping districts and universities. The national government even urges these large developers to provide their own form of policing and security—stationing guards, concierges and doormen to reduce the responsibility of the state. Increasingly the governance and regulation of gated communities is left in private hands.

Instead of developing interconnected developments, short sighted investors promote the latest and trendiest villas and apartments that boast the finest in luxuries and amenities within the self contained community. The community retreats behind high stone walls and controlled gateways. The insufficient connections reinforce the isolation of the enclave.

Today China's booming housing production undeniably imbalanced towards the top of the market. The saturation of high end developments further disregards the demographic make up of the majority of China's population. Contrary to the *danwei*, which was promoted community and interdependency within a community, the gated community has become an emblem of the growing disparity between the rich and poor. Ultimately the peasants are the ones who are left behind. Usurped of their land, and denied affordable housing, they are left to fend for themselves. Priced out of steep apartments in the city centre and walled out of gated complexes in the suburbs, peasants become a disenfranchised population.

Although China's race to modernity has accomplished glamorous projects of renewal, the final product is an architecture of alienation and isolation.



Fig. 4.14



Fig.4.15



Fig.4.16



Fig. 4.17



Fig. 4.18



Fig. 4.19



Fig. 4.20



Fig.4.21

The traditional laneway houses of Shanghai offer a glimpse into a fading world. It's a world where you know what your neighbour ate for dinner and what he argued with his wife about the night before. When you walk through a neighbourhood like this you are struck by the sense of vibrancy.

Sunday morning at sunrise. Walking through the winding streets of Shanghai I catch a glimpse into the past. The city fabric seems frozen in one moment. The daily rituals, choreographed over decades, are performed with a precision – far from mundane to the eyes of a foreigner. Here Shanghai ceases to be the bustling international metropolis.

I have entered old Shanghai, a Shanghai left behind by time and development, overlooked by the hordes of expatriates and tourists and often even ignored by other Shanghaiese, except those who have no choice but to live here.

People emerge from their red lacquered doors to brush their teeth, wash their bed pots in the communal water basins outside. As the community awakens, the sounds and smells of street fill the air. The street stall owners have been awake long before sunrise,

preparing breakfast buns and porridge, their makeshift tables and seats now filling with residents who seem like their in no rush to be anywhere. On another street a group of old agile women perform traditional morning exercises with swords. The air fills with acrid smell of urine being washed out onto the street-side mingling with it the aromas and steam of the food vendors.

I walk past a small shop. Outside a man stands with a cigarette. I stop and ask him for a light. It's actually a dentist office. It is about a meter and a half wide and two meters long. The man gesture for me to come in, I peer into the small dimly lit room, a decade old dentist chair, aging equipment held together after numerous repairs with electrical tape and twine. The man shows it off with pride, his own set of teeth, tarnished and incomplete. I show him my teeth to indicate I am not in the market for a new dentist. He smiles and I thank him for the light and walk on.

A glance down the street towards a cacophony of street life. Down a narrow canyon created by three and four storey buildings in various states of disrepair clothes



Fig. 4.22

hang from poles sticking out of every window. An old man and woman sit on low rickety chairs sharing a cup of tea. A hot barbecue shoots up flames, while a skewer seller behind it pushes coals with a stick. Store owners stand or wait inside their customer-free establishments. They sell a random assortment of wares, electrical supplies, cell phone batteries, lace, rope, shoes, purses, drinks, T-shirts, pots and pans, brooms, furniture, lamps, and cleaning products. A wrinkled man on a bike offers to sharpen knives, scissors and cleavers. An old woman walks around with a plastic bag on her shoulder collecting recyclable bottles. A younger woman sweeps the street.

"The surrounding rest of the city changes at a dizzying pace, but this place remains relatively unchanged," says one of my friends, Colin, who grew up in the old city. "We used to live in a place like this, four families to one house. There was no toilet, no kitchen." He and his family had been fortunate enough to move out of the neighbourhood. For those who remain it is only a matter of time before the government slates it for demolition. "People here are eager to upgrade. They hope their buildings will be demolished next.

They are hoping to be relocated by the government," said Colin. "There are just too many people and the living conditions are not good, compared to what they see growing around them." Many will wait it out in the old city, hoping for the day the "chai" destruction signs to go up and signal the end of this way of life and the move to better quarters.

For the time being I enjoy the old city. It is an area that lives to its own rhythm. Here the private domain spills out of the confines of the dwelling and into the streets. Spaces are transformed by varying levels of impromptu activity. A ballroom dance session, group calisthenics or an on-street mahjong game activate the streetscape, making it at once a place to eat, sleep, cook, play or work.



Fig. 4.23



Fig. 4.24



Fig. 4.25



Fig. 4.26



Fig. 4.27



Fig. 4.28



Fig. 4.29



Fig. 4.30



Fig. 4.31

Within a half hour of sunrise the streets are in full swing. Delivery bikes zoom past me and store fronts swing open. The sidewalk is enveloped by vendors and shops spilling over and onto the curb. An impromptu book market draws a large crowd of old men flipping through piles of revolutionary comic books. The rising sun casts deep shadows into the narrow streets and alleys that constitute this forgotten part of the city. I have stepped out of Shanghai 2005, and into a Shanghai of some 1920's movie. And then just as unexpectedly as I stumbled across this site, my experience is truncated.

The shadow filled clamour of the alleyway gives way to deadening silence as I enter a clearing, a demolition site. It is one of hundreds in the city where entire communities like the one I had just passed through are leveled to make way for apartment complexes. It resembles a war zone. Where shoes, furniture and signs of life remain mingled among the rubble as if people were rushed off in a hurry. Perhaps even more jarring is that in people are still living in the structures that remain standing—the portions of their home half exposed to the elements, laundry hanging from disconnected telephone wires. It



Fig. 4.32

is a shocking but all too familiar scene. In Shanghai's craze to modernize, hundreds of neighbourhoods are being leveled to make way for new face of the city.

Nestled in the Shadows of glimmering towers this dichotomy plays out all over the city. From 1998 to 2002, Shanghai tore down 15 million square meters of old neighborhoods and developed more than 80 million square meters of new residential land, an amount equivalent to 20% of the city's total residential space.<sup>7</sup> The city is growing faster and on a larger scale than any in human history.

Most of the world's great cities have developed over decades or centuries, their neighborhoods evolving to accommodate the shifting needs of the people who inhabit them. China's cities, by contrast, are razed and rebuilt almost overnight. But the bulldozers are also eradicating more than just history of buildings. They are leveling the complex social networks and bustling street life these close quarters nurtured—the lively urban street life of China's cities. Surveying what replaces them, luxury complexes with names like Merlin Champagne Town and Versailles de Shanghai, the alternative is a sterile,



Fig. 4.33



Fig. 4.34

psychologically isolating and inefficient environment. The face of this new fabric is defined by super blocks, broad motorways, and fenced off garden areas. The congenial adjacencies of sidewalks, storefronts and stoops that form the foundation of urban community life are erased or forced into smaller and smaller parts of the city.



Fig. 4.35



Fig. 4.36



Fig. 4.37



Fig. 4.38



Fig.4.37

Fig.4.39



Fig.4.40



Fig.4.41



Fig. 4.42



Fig. 4.43



Fig. 4.44

*"We grew up in a spiritual vacuum, cut off from the rest of the world. A wasted generation. When the country started to open up, we were the first to fall. Foreign culture is the only religion now, but we have no means to understand it, or appreciate its worth. Half a century has gone by, and suddenly we find ourselves in the forest of modern life without a map or a compass..."<sup>8</sup>*

Ma Jian, *The Noodlemaker* p65



Fig. 4.45



Fig. 4.46



Fig. 4.47



Fig. 4.48

The nationwide imbalances are manifested in the urban fabric, and the transformation of the city population. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences estimates that by 2015 Chinese cities will have collectively absorbed some 200 million rural migrants.<sup>9</sup> In the past, the communist party took great measures to limit the voluntary movement of the population. The *hokou* policy—regional residency permits—required special papers and permits for people to travel and get work in the cities. It was believed that through this process, China could mobilize its rural workers into an industrial workforce without incurring all the added economic burden of an increased urban population. Mao new that the cost of maintaining an urban population was far greater than that of standard of living in the countryside. Furthermore, by restricting the growth of the cities, he could deemphasize the importance of urbanites in China's new economy.

But the legacy of this policy has only been the creation of unstable floating population. These people are called *mingong* (popular workers) to mark the difference from proper city-dwelling citizens, *gongren*.

Despite the relaxation of the *hokou* policy in recent years, there remain

persistent inequalities between registered and non-registered citizens. Registration can occur for some migrants but only those with specific skills can gain approval. For the vast majority, migration has no legal basis or support. The lack of formal registration means that migrants are excluded from official civic activities. They face limited access to healthcare, job safety protection, education and housing, benefits available to those labourers working in state run factories. But the benefits of city life seem to outweigh the risks. Migrants are willing to live at substandard conditions within the city, taking what jobs they can. They are unofficial, unnumbered, unaccounted for. As a marginalized population, they are left with few options other than channels of smuggling, forgery, black markets and underground networks.

Across China their numbers are estimated between 90 and 300 million.<sup>10</sup> At the low end, that is a workforce greater than that of the United States. At the high end, China's floating population outnumbers the work force of America and all of Europe combined.<sup>11</sup> It is estimated that the floating population will increase at a speed of 5 million a year in the coming five to 10 years, reaching 130 million in 2005 and 160 million in 2010.<sup>12</sup>



Fig. 4.49

4am leaving a club. Little children scramble by the exit tugging at my shirt. I clench my wallet. Uttering little phrases in English they follow us from the club exit to the street, where other club goers swat them away as they get into waiting cabs. The children's parents keep watch from a distance, encouraging them to pursue other patrons that are leaving—target the foreigners.

Ting I sit down in front of a convenience store. One little girl approaches with a flower. Resisting the urge to shoo her away, I invite her into the convenience store. I tell her to pick something to eat. She heads immediately for the candy aisle.

Within a few minutes 10 other children arrive, begging for same treatment. I invite them all in. Only this time they knew the drill. They had been prompted to get more nourishing items, instant noodles, eggs, and milk.

The first girl returns crying, she didn't get any instant noodles and was pleading for a second chance. In the distance her friends are taunting her with their warm meal. The little girl's English is impressive. She knew all the phrases to illicit sympathy. Ting and I



Fig. 4.50

gesture for the father to come and talk with us. By now all the children are parading farther down the street with their loot.

The father and the little girl are from Anhui province. The little girl is only 5 years old. The father says that her mother is sick back home and that he had just come to the city to make some money to pay for the doctor's bills. He and the little girl would be returning home soon, she was about to start school in the fall. The little English she did know, she had picked up some from a foreigner who like me had treated them to a meal.

Days after I run into the father and the daughter again. I was with another friend who informed that, the sick mother story was a common lie. And that in all likelihood the girl would not be returning to her province for school. They would remain in the city; she would continue to earn a living begging for money until she could find other forms of employment. If she was lucky, she could use her English to work in a restaurant, but in all likelihood she may just continue to sleep by day and earn a living by night.



Fig. 4.51

In 1997, the number of rural migrants working in Shanghai was 2.76 million. The number grew to 3.87 million in 2000. Spot checks last year showed Shanghai's floating population was around 4.98 million, about 80 per cent of whom were migrant workers.<sup>13</sup>

Today the city's floating population of rural migrants is estimated between 4 and 5 million.<sup>14</sup> If included on Shanghai's official census, they would bring the city's population to over 20 million.

They arrive at the train station by the thousands on a daily basis, camping out just beyond the station exit. They arrive with little knowledge of what to expect. One can easily spot a *mingong*. They are thinner and shorter versions of most of the people you see on the street, wearing work clothes, blue or brown. They crowd the arrival platform daily, having stood on a train, often for more than 24 hours. Clinging to tightly-packed red-white-and-blue nylon sacks, they carry with them the hopes of their loved ones back home. From the station they disappear into the city's fabric and enter into the networks of cheap labour. Remarkably, many of them do find work—an unofficial survey of migrant workers

in Shanghai reported only a 3% unemployment rate last year. This begins to describe the resourcefulness of peasants as well as the capacity of the city to absorb cheap labour.<sup>15</sup>

*Mingong's* jobs in any Chinese city come without any guarantees. They can often be characterized by the 3 D's: difficult, dirty and dangerous.<sup>16</sup> They make on average from 500-1,000 yuan (US\$60-\$120) per month, a small fortune in the economically bleak countryside but hardly enough to survive in the metropolis. Besides subsisting on lower than average salaries, they do not get any of the benefits that are provided for registered city residents. They have no health insurance. They are lucky if their children can attend school and their housing, if they have it, is quite poor. Most of them live in dormitories or other precarious accommodations on the city outskirts.<sup>17</sup>

Those working in restaurants can often be seen sleeping on the chairs or floors after closing. Those working in construction will often inhabit the buildings they are constructing. Walking the city at night many construction sites remain occupied even after construction has stopped, their laundry and bedding tucked into one corner.



Fig. 4.52

Or if the construction company has some level of legitimacy, they live in tight barracks where dozens of workers will occupy one room, often sharing one bathroom per twenty workers.

Luckier new-comers connect with family members or people from the same hometown assuming other forms of lower tier employment. They may end up working in a factory, washing windows, collecting garbage, or working in the service industry.<sup>18</sup> They belong to an army of Shanghai's unsung heroes—instruments of China's spectacular miraculous make over, erecting monumental towers at the rate of one office tower a week in Shanghai. Fuelling the enormous informal economy of the big city.

At the annual Chinese New Year Holiday, their presence within the city becomes apparent. During this one week national holiday, they are permitted to return home. They can be seen inundating Shanghai's train stations with bundles of goods and presents to bring home, in addition to wads of RMB, their year's savings. Their families will be waiting for this money more than anything. Typically, loans are taken out to send a family member

out to the city. For these families, they are the key to survival. To the city, they are a vast, cheap labour pool that can operate around the clock to present a sanitized Shanghai to the world.



Fig. 4.53



Fig.4.54



Fig.4.55



Fig. 4.56



Fig. 4.57



Fig. 4.58



Fig. 4.59

On my first trip to China in 2003, I was living the life of a foreign executive. My serviced apartment came furnished with a king sized bed, down comforter, TV, air conditioner, full kitchen and maid service. I had access to a driver and could eat the city's finest restaurants on a daily stipend of one hundred Canadian Dollars a day.

I recall one morning waking up and having a cigarette on my 18<sup>th</sup> floor balcony. Looking down over the driving range, the morning mist slowly rising, I could spot several blue uniformed workers on their hands and knees. It took a moment for me to figure out what they were doing. Praying? Inspecting? They were cutting the grass. With scissors. I watched them for several more minutes.

On another occasion I passed by the same driving range. I slowed my usual quick pace to see these odd machines lumbering around the field. They looked like home made golf carts. I thought perhaps they were some cheap substitute for high tech ball retrieval machines. Upon closer inspection, there were actually people manning the carts, but not driving them, pushing them. The contraptions were nothing more than protective

boxes on wheels. The carts would inch forward, the employee bend down and pick up a few balls, place them in a bucket and then inch forward some more.

In this driving range, as in many industries in the city, it costs less to employ half a dozen migrants than it does to buy a piece of machinery, including a lawn mower.

## 07 Bike Man

A bell's clang wakes me the next morning—not so much a bell as someone beating a piece of metal with a stick. Fire alarm? Ambulance? I jump out of bed to see what is making the ruckus. But the clanging has stopped by the time I make it out the front door. The source of the clanging is gone. I resolve to find the bell, and the garbage bags.

Clanging his makeshift bell, he passed through the winding alleys of Shanghai's Nanpu district. It was 6am and he was making his rounds on a route he had become far too familiar with. Each morning before sunrise he would leave his dingy shack and pedal his way to my neighbourhood to collect the district's refuse and recyclables. After filling his tricycle's cart, he would then deliver his load to the local sorting station almost half an hour away. It took almost six hours to complete his routine. It had been three years since he first arrived in Shanghai in search of work. And it had been nearly a year since he last saw his family.

His name was Lang Yiwei - a name he shared with China's first man in space. Far from dreams of leaving the world's atmosphere, Lang left his hometown with the simple dream: make money and send it home. He came from Anhui province, one of China's poorest.

The draw of the big city became obvious after I read through some statistics. The average Shanghainese income was seven times greater than that of the rural poor, in Anhui.<sup>19</sup> People in Shanghai make 10 times higher than anywhere else in China. Shanghai is a city where people change their cell phones every six months. If he could just feed off the residual of such a population, surely he could get by. I made sure to save all my plastic bottles and leave them out for him every night.

Recycling and scavenging is a way of life for many of Shanghai's unregistered and unofficial population. They feed off the scraps and refuse of the city proper. Across the city, tricycles teeter alongside Shanghai's new drivers. Their loot often piled so high and so precariously that they often have to walk the bike with the aid of a friend.



Fig. 4.60



Fig. 4.61



Fig. 4.62



Fig. 4.63



Fig. 4.64



Fig. 4.65



Fig. 4.66



Fig. 4.67



Fig. 4.68



Fig. 4.69



Fig. 4.70



Fig. 4.71



Fig. 4.72

## 08 Salvage Operation



Fig. 4.73



Fig. 4.74

As older parts of the city are flattened, its materials are reprocessed into new forms. Doors, bricks, glass are harvested and sold to salvage yards. Other parts find use in temporary dwellings. Nothing is wasted. Walking the streets of the old city, a group of women and men sit in an open area amongst densely built houses. They are stripping wires. Collecting what valuable metal, we in North America would normally discard without a second thought. Here, everything has value. Everything must be stripped down to the smallest divisible components to be repurposed.



Fig. 4.75



Fig.4.76



Fig.4.77

## 09 Bastard Chairs



Fig. 4.78

Michael Wolf chronicles the path of some of the city's refuse in his photographic series entitled "Bastard Chairs." Like Frankenstein, these chairs are freakish amalgams of refuse, string, parts of other discarded chairs and found objects. As a collection they display the capacity for items to be reused and recycled in an economy where wastefulness is not an option.



Fig. 4.79



Fig. 4.80

# 11 Customize

Darkness. Only the blue neon lights of the towers above glistens on the wet pavement. The rain has stopped. It brought an unfamiliar silence. I can barely see where my feet land. Puddle of water? Urine? Soup? Can't tell. My toes probe the darkness, looking for solid footing. Has the rain washed away the dirt, or merely stirred it up? The streets are usually chaotic at this hour but the rain even shuts down construction at the Regency Hotel—the first night all week it hasn't been crawling with steel workers. Though the streets are empty, the air is thick with the smell of sweating bodies. The fetid odours of fermented tofu (a local delicacy) and warm bodies mingle in the air forming a dank and unforgettable stench—suspended particles of grease and perspiration. It's hard to breathe the rain doing nothing to the relieve humidity.

I creep slowly through the alleyway. The darkness heightens my senses of smell and touch. In my mind, I trace the contour of the street – my memories of the space guiding me. I pass the shack where the old people gather to play mahjong each morning, then the community exercise equipment. I feel my way past the bamboo scaffolding and the debris from a new bicycle parking lot.

The silence is broken as something hurtles down through the air. It grazes my face, and lands with a “thwack” on the ground in front of me. It triggers a motion-sensor and the street awakens, every surface illuminated. My eyes adjust to the glare. I look down. It's a garbage bag. There are dozens of them littering the walkway. Some didn't survive the fall, their contents splatter on the ground, juices oozing in all directions. It's a warscape of refuse. To be cleared by morning by some impromptu garbage collection program. I muddle my way into the vestibule.

The sensor light goes off. Damn! I have to feel my way through the darkness again. I fuss for several minutes trying to pull the keys from my bag, then fidget for several more trying to get the key in the lock. The door swings open and the light from the room floods out. I am home.

I pay 1200 RMB per month, the equivalent of 200 Canadian dollars. In an older part of the city that has yet to meet the wrecking ball of redevelopment schemes. The building I live in is a remnant from Shanghai's industrial days. A stark concrete block, five storeys tall it was part of a dormitory unit housing factory workers. It is a modest



Fig. 4.81

apartment, clean by local standards. There are no garbage bags on this floor, but there are roaches and ants crawling around. My mattress rests in one corner and the fridge in the other. There is little room for anything but my luggage. A small doorway by the bed leads to a tiny bathroom with a sink in the middle of the shower stall. The ceiling is so low I have to tilt my head to urinate.

With the government weaning people of its state supplied resources such as guaranteed pensions, health care benefits and housing, many have had to seek other ways to generate income and security for the future. In the past my apartment would have been part of the *danwei*, where employment, food rations, housing were all supplied by the state. With the closing of many state run factories and the transition towards a market economy many layoffs have left older factory employees with few options for the future. Left to fend for themselves, the former housing compound, once the model of Chinese society and the provider of everything, is hacked up and retrofitted to become an income generator. To make ends meet, my landlord had spent what little savings she had to convert a bedroom area in her apartment into a separate unit. It now generates 1200 RMB a month for her, more than doubling her monthly income.

This process of redigesting older buildings and layering upon the existing skeleton new programmes and new occupancy patterns is expressed even in apartment towers. The patterns of home modification on the façade alone transform the array of shapeless windows and repetitive order into a dynamic collage of air conditioning units, planter boxes, hanging laundry and balconies. This trend represents the tendency within the confines of a regularized system to gravitate towards self appropriation. They represent yet another improvisational tactic applied to a situation under stress, in this case space restrictions. The facades become an articulation of interior activities. They are customized, transformed, rejigged, retrofitted, and reorganized according the occupants's needs and preferences.



Fig. 4.82



Fig. 4.83



Fig. 4.84



Fig. 4.85

According to statistics Shanghai's residents enjoy some of the largest livable space per person in the country with an average between 100 and 150 square feet.<sup>20</sup> Within the confines of a relatively small living space, people are forced to be inventive and practical in their approach to space appropriation. Photographer Michael Wolf captures this tendency towards adaptability in his photographic series entitled 100 X 100. Here, Michael Wolf surveys a series of living spaces that are no more than 100 sq.ft. in total area, portraying through them the skills of improvisation given tight quarters—a true art form in and of itself. Despite having limited resources the series reveals both the pride in ownership and craftsmanship in shaping one's environment, transforming a generic 10' x 10', windowless space into a home. These apartments illustrate an elastic way of utilization and personalization of one's private domain.

## 13 Migrant Enclaves



Fig. 4.86

The wave of redevelopment has little to do with the lower strata of Shanghai's population. The construction of high end housing is grossly disproportionate to lower income dwellings. And those that are made available are often relegated to the fringes of the city that are inaccessible to amenities and employment.

Marginalized from civic resources and institutions, migrants have developed their own resources to meet the gaps in public service. They mainly rely on kinship and native place connections for mutual assistance and community formation in cities like Shanghai. These networks provide two key avenues for peasants leaving the countryside. First, they facilitate chain migration. Second they promote the growth of migrant enclaves—satellite communities where migrants from various provinces and regions have coalesced.<sup>21</sup>

The obstacles in obtaining official status in the city prevent the majority of rural migrants from accessing state amenities. As an unofficial population they are stigmatized and marginalized. One response to marginalization has been for migrant labourers to band together. By pooling resources and spreading responsibilities, migrant enclaves



Fig. 4.87

have emerged as self sustaining communities, thriving despite the lack of government assistance. Massive squatter communities have emerged in larger cities like Shanghai and Beijing. Here, parents can take turns caring for the children while they look for work or cooking duties can be shouldered by a larger group. This level of social networking provides a support structures to assist in integration.

These communities have developed into highly organized self sufficient precincts that operate outside the traditional agencies of the state. They have developed a source of affordable housing, networks for finding employment, schooling and even healthcare.<sup>22</sup>

They are successful because they reduce the costs and risks of migration as well as helping provide assistance with acclimatization and adaptation.<sup>23</sup> They form an expanded ring of community that offers a transitional environment and the possibility of economic mobility. Within these communities social fields are developed that transgress geographic, political and cultural borders.



Fig. 4.88



Fig. 4.89

The process of chain migration can also be seen as a self organizing system that grows from within as a cumulative process. More people participating fortify the infrastructure required to sustain growth. For instance, one family member will go ahead, establish accommodation and employment and then send for their relatives and friends from their home regions.

Community formation has been one of the migrants' responses that improve living conditions and status within urban centres. Migrant enclaves act as self-contained communities of people from the same province, county or village. Because they are regarded as informal settlements the government provides no services to these communities. In response to this, some have been able to organize their own schools, clinics, hospitals, restaurants, child-care centres, hairdressers, repair shops, and markets.<sup>24</sup> Some communities have also been able to successfully create internal economies that have channeled capital back into the community in the form of public toilets, electricity and even long distance phone lines.



Fig. 4.90

Pushed to the marginal areas of the city migrant enclaves are left to occupy the city's derelict spaces. In many cases, this means filling in the gaps that the city has neglected: They occupy abandoned sites, squat in condemned buildings or erect temporary structures in construction sites. The numerous demolition sites around the city provide building materials for make shift homes. In all cases the informal city feeds on the waste of the official city. Routine raids and abrupt eviction notices deny such settlements any permanence.

Out of necessity they must be responsiveness to dynamic, local and temporal conditions, employing improvisational tactics. In the face of new demands, these settlers must negotiate daily obstacles and conflicts that arise within their environment. These communities represent the emergent landscape within the city that defies or operates against the grain of the planned city. Quite often these settlements will insert themselves in between the vacuum of what is planned by central authorities and what is built by private developers. The informal sector shifts in configuration, blurring the lines between



Fig. 4.91

what is built through authorized channels and that which is operating by its own set of parameters. Its programme changes constantly, contingent and transient. It grows in an unplanned, unforeseen and opportunistic manner.

The faces of the informal economy are numerous and multifaceted. The pressure to find employment often works itself out in ingenious and whimsical ways. In China the concept of the mobile office takes new meaning. Here the bicycle is transformed into more than a means of transportation; it facilitates a way of life as a mobile kitchen, shop, farmers market, or aquarium. These images of adaptability illustrate the face of China's capitalist future.



Fig. 4.92



Fig. 4.93



Fig. 4.94



Fig. 4.95

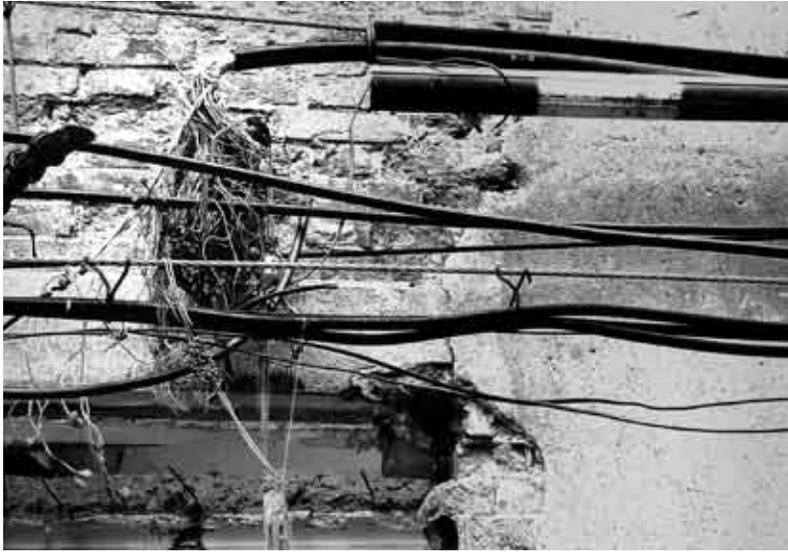


Fig. 4.96

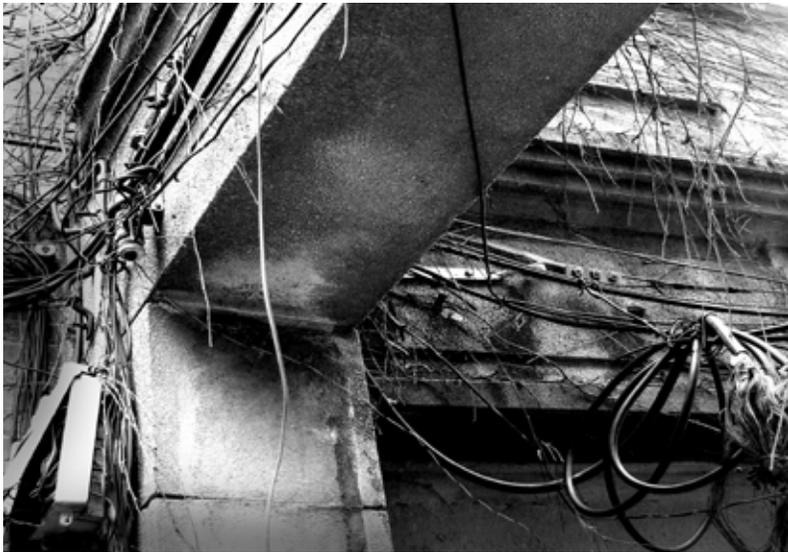


Fig. 4.97



Fig. 4.98



Fig. 4.99



Fig. 4.100



Fig. 4.101



Fig. 4.102



Fig. 4.103

Fledgling private companies that pop up across the city are the product of a rapidly changing economy in which state control mingles with freewheeling capitalism—an environment where cheating is not only possible but is seemingly essential. Individuals are experimental in their enterprise, oscillating between legitimate and murky channels of commerce.



Fig. 4.104



Fig.4.105



Fig.4.106



Fig.4.107



Fig.4.108



Fig.4.109



Fig.4.110

Standing outside the train or bus station it is very common to be accosted by vendors selling black market vouchers. In whispered tones they sell official receipts which can be redeemed for government benefits. Other common black market goods are phone cards or cigarettes. Street hawkers walk back and forth near subway exits, (convenient for a quick get away incase of a police raid) mobile phones offered in whispered asides.

You learn very quickly to develop a rapport with your dealer, get used to his stash so you know you are getting legitimate bootleg goods. Otherwise you are left to the mercy of the market, where you are likely to be cheated. Even amidst bootleggers there are counterfeits, DVDs that you buy off the street that do not work when you take them home, American brand cigarettes that just don't taste right or invalid phone cards. Often by the time you realize you have been cheated it's too late. I remember buying a pirated DVD of the Disney movie "Finding Nemo". The movie was of decent quality but the mismatched subtitles belonged to some R-rated gangster movie. The entrepreneurial spirit amidst China's underground economy champions the mantra *let the buyer beware*.



Fig.4.111



Fig.4.112

Everything is fair game. From the fashion spreads of design magazines, the latest designs of luxury hand bags and watches make their way into the black market of counterfeited goods. Mobile black markets spring up all over the city. Vendors with garbage bags and blankets sprawl their wares onto the street or on the platforms of subway stations. Others operate in the back of legitimate establishments. They employ hidden doors, false bottom briefcases to store and display their products. They talk with great speed and precision. Sales have to be made quickly. At a moments notice or at the sign of a policeman they quickly fold up their operations and flee. It is also at a moments notice that their bootlegs fall apart.

Other types of business service the local community, an on-street tailor or shoe repairman. It can be as simple as a home phone line with an extension chord running to the exterior of a building where someone will charge a nominal fee for its use. The informal economy offers a variety of options that oppose the forces of legitimate and formal commerce. They are mobile, responsive, independent and self sustaining.



Fig.4.113

In the 17th century, Domingo Navarette, a Spanish priest, complained that “the Chinese are very ingenious at imitation. They have imitated to perfection whatsoever they have seen brought out of Europe.”<sup>25</sup> Domingo could not have imagined that the country he spoke of would one day become world’s leading producer of pirated merchandise. Everything from software and car parts to luxury brand goods are flooding the international market. China has done very little to refute its reputation. Speaking at a Congressional-Executive Commission on China, International trade law expert Daniel Chow says that part of the problem is the depth to which counterfeiting supports local economies. “Shutting down counterfeiting will mean in many instances shutting down entire towns and municipalities, which causes problems of unemployment, dislocation, and social chaos—which is something that the Chinese government fears more than anything else,” Chow told the Commission.<sup>26</sup>

However, under increasing pressure from the international community, the Chinese government is taking steps to display a stronger commitment to crack down



Fig.4.114

on a seemingly out of control underground industry. After six year’s as Shanghai’s most trafficked shopping out door bazaar, the gates of Xiang Yang Market were ordered closed by the municipal government on June 30, 2006. The Shanghai government posted notices that all business transactions were to end and all stalls in the market to be completely vacated by July 7.

Housing over 800 stalls and shops, Xiang Yang market was the city’s most notorious source of counterfeit fashions and pirated goods. The market, located in downtown Shanghai attracted buyers from both home and abroad looking for deals on counterfeit goods of such world-famous brands as Louis Vuitton, Hermes, Chanel and Prada. Shoppers eager to capitalize in close out sales, were seen leaving the market in its final days of operation with garbage bags filled with pirated Nintendo games, fake luxury brand wallets, counterfeit Nike shoes and brand name sunglasses.

The market lured locals and expats alike for its variety of goods and bottom line prices that could be as low as one tenth the actual price. But even with such bargains, the



annual trade volume of the market was reported at more than 400 million yuan (US\$50 million).<sup>27</sup> The government also reported that market brought in nearly 30 million yuan (\$3.7 million) in tax revenues a year.<sup>28</sup> "The [Chinese] government itself estimates that the counterfeit trade in China is between \$19 billion and \$24 billion per year," Chow said, "and [accounts for] about 8 percent of its gross national product." International trade law expert Daniel Chow<sup>29</sup>

Bootlegging is big business in China, but one that the government is hoping to gain better control of even through such symbolic victories as the closure of Xiang Yang market. While commenting on the closure of the market, Xu Zhanglin, an official with the city's Intellectual Property Rights Bureau told the *Oriental Morning Post*, "This market full of fake goods, the atmosphere of piracy, have given Shanghai a very bad image."

In 2004 The United States posted its first intellectual property attaché in Beijing with plans for expansion in 2006. Above all, the United States has signaled its willingness to wield what's considered one of its most powerful weapons: a formal WTO complaint

against China for inadequate enforcement of copyright protections; a ruling against China could lead to strict sanctions.

It is estimated that the U.S. auto industry loses 9 billion industry dollars annually to Chinese counterfeit operations. Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Twentieth Century Fox Film and other MPA member studios lost a combined US\$565 million in China last year.<sup>30</sup> U.S. officials say, that seizures of counterfeit goods from China account for nearly 70 percent of all pirated products seized at the U.S. border last year—more than 10 times greater than any other American trading partner.<sup>31</sup>

The fear in both the U.S. and the European Union, China's largest trading partners, extends beyond intellectual property protection. A recent *Economist* article drew upon the similarities between the counterfeit industry and transnational drug trade: "This international trade depends on sophisticated distribution networks. Increasingly run by organized-crime syndicates, these use many of the same routes that have been established for trade in narcotics."<sup>32</sup> Furthermore the Recording and Motion Picture Industry Association of America speculated in a 2006 press release that the link between piracy and organized crime had grown to the point where the entire counterfeit CD production business in the eastern half of the United States "is now dominated by organized criminal syndicates, intent on monopolizing the illicit market." One reason for the proliferation of counterfeiting operations is sheer economics. Warner Music spokesman Craig Hoffman said in the report, "the markup for a kilo of heroin is 200 percent, the markup for pirated CDs and DVDs is 800 percent."<sup>33</sup>

Part of the biggest problem facing local and international governments combating counterfeiting is the vastness and variety of operations. They remain fluid and adaptable—ranging from back-street sweatshops to full-scale factories. Distribution networks can be as simple as a stall in the street, or a shop on the other side of the world. Furthermore increased availability of technology has refined counterfeiting systems, making them more mobile and easy to set up in remote locations.

# 18 Bootl"EGG"

Xinhua has a report about artificial eggs that were apparently sold by a street vendor in Handan, Hebei Province. The report says that the man who took the eggs home found that the eggs' yolk and white were all mixed up, and did not have any flavor. After inspection by "relevant departments" it was found that the dodgy eggs' shells were made from calcium carbonate while the fake yolks were made from a mixture of gelatine, starch and other chemicals.<sup>34</sup>

Some eggs are simply filled with dirt, while others are chemically made from borax, alum, glue and other less describable things. The eggs have been sold in Mainland China, Macau, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Vietnam and other countries. Fake eggs cost about 1/2 the price of the real thing 0.15 yuan (\$0.03) each - half the price of a real egg.<sup>35</sup>

Consumers have a hard time telling a genuine egg from a fake one. This is good news for unscrupulous entrepreneurs, who are even conducting three-day courses in the production of artificial eggs. A reporter with Hong Kong-based Chinese magazine East Week enrolled in one such course, and published the elaborate egg-making process:



Fig. 4.115



Fig. 4.116

To create egg white, assorted ingredients such as gelatin, benzoic acid, coagulating material and alum, which is normally used for industrial processes are combined.<sup>36</sup>



Fig. 4.117

For egg yolk, some lemon-yellow colouring powder is mixed to a liquid and the concoction stirred. The liquid is then poured into a round-shaped plastic mould and mixed with so-called 'magic water', which contains calcium chloride.<sup>37</sup>



Fig. 4.118

This gives the 'yolk' a thin outer membrane, firming it up. The egg is then shaped with a round-shaped plastic mould and mixed with so-called 'magic water', which contains calcium chloride. Paraffin wax and an unidentified white liquid are poured onto the fake egg, which is then left to dry.<sup>38</sup>



Fig. 4.119

The artificial egg can be fried sunny-side up or steamed. Although bubbles appear on the white of the egg, those who have tasted it say the fake stuff tastes very much like the real thing.<sup>39</sup>



Fig. 4.120

These eggs can cause serious health problems as they are made from Alum, Calcium chloride paraffin wax, gelatine, lactone, carboxymethyl cellulose, sodium alga acid, sodium benzoate and lysine. Excessive consumption has been proven to cause dementia.<sup>40</sup>



Fig. 5.01

# CHAPTER 5: FEEDBACK MECHANISM

## **feed·back: n.**

The return of a portion of the output of a process or system to the input,

The process by which a system, often biological or ecological, is modulated, controlled, or changed by the product, output, or response it produces

The following chapter documents the evolution of the Chinese enclave in Toronto and how recent shifts in the economic and political strength of China are remaking Scarborough and Markham into a new form of treaty port, whereby inflowing immigrants are layering new utilities and patterns of occupation over the existing suburban fabric. Through numerous non-conforming patters, Chinese enclaves in the GTA operate against the grain of mainstream development, offering a new paradigm for the future growth of our cities.



Fig. 5.02

Chinese merchants had a long history of establishing trading centres in ports throughout South East Asia, but emigration to other parts of the world was greatly accelerated in the 1860s after the enactment of the Treaty of Peking. Signed between the Qing dynasty and the three European powers of the United Kingdom, France, and Russia, the treaty was the direct result of the Second Opium War. Among its stipulations, China was forced to grant greater border permeability in addition to the surrendering a large portion of land adjacent to the colony of Hong Kong to British rule. These conditions enabled early emigrants to spread throughout much of the Western world. They came predominantly from coastal provinces in China, those most accessible to foreign trading vessels and thus where Western nations began to establish treaty ports.

Canada received its first wave of Chinese immigrants in 1871, after the discovery of gold in the Fraser River in British Columbia. Close to 2,000 Chinese miners traveled north from California where gold stocks had already been depleted. These first sojourners often bought out older mines after North American companies had moved onto more profitable sites. Using the money they earned, they set



Fig. 5.03

up small companies, buying equipment and employing their own countrymen.

News of their countrymen making personal fortunes in North America led many in China to heed the call when the Onderdonk Construction Company began recruiting labourers for the building of Canada's Pacific Railway (CPR). The Canadian government granted the American-based company permission to bring 17,000 labourers from the southern province of Kwangtung.<sup>1</sup> These labourers came to Canada with dreams of making their own fortunes.

Upon the completion of the CPR, however, Chinese labourers found their cheap labour not only no longer in demand, but increasingly resented by white Canadians. In Vancouver, for example, thousands of impoverished Chinese were forced to live in tents and shanty towns. The B.C. government lobbied the Dominion government in Ottawa to institute measures to restrict further entrance of Chinese migrants. In 1885, as the first in a series of measures aimed at deterring continued migration, a head tax of \$50 was imposed on all Chinese entering Canada. It was believed that this figure, representing an entire year's savings for each labourer, would be high enough to stop the influx of migrant

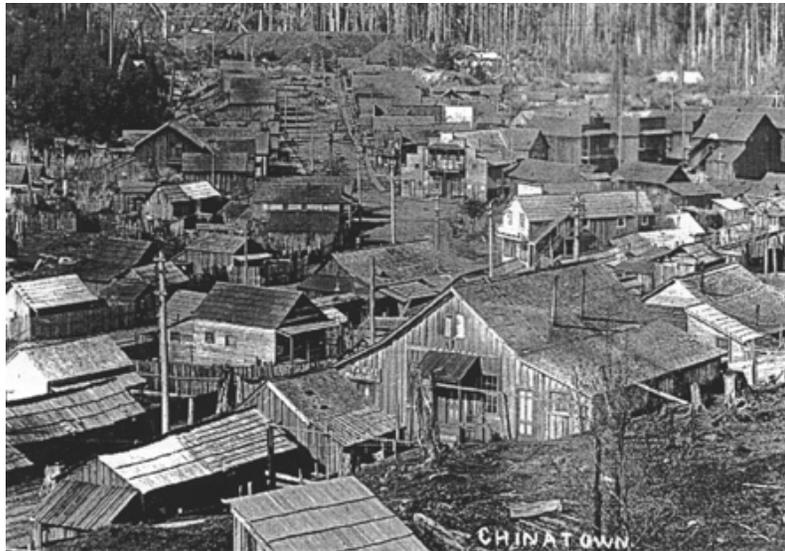


Fig. 5.04

labourers at Canadian ports.

As it turned out, conditions in China were a far more decisive push factor. In Guangdong province in China's southern coastal region, an area greatly affected by Western expansionism, a population explosion was fueling widespread food shortages and rampant poverty. Many families were kept afloat by the wages remitted by their husbands, fathers, and sons who had taken jobs as indentured labourers abroad. Though the life of a coolie was in no way a guarantee for prosperity, many did whatever they could to finance the head tax. Even after it was increased to \$100 dollars in 1900, and to \$500 in 1903, large numbers of labourers still found their way to Canada. This was partly due to misinformation by labour traders who garnished a commission from the head tax, but also because the stories of overseas Chinese labourers setting up businesses of their own reached legendary status in poorer regions of China. Canada came to be known as the Gold Mountain, a land of prosperity with endless opportunities.

The continued influx of Chinese immigrants far exceeded the dwindling demand for their labour power in Canada. Many dreams were quickly dissolved upon



Fig. 5.05

arrival in Victoria or Vancouver. With nowhere for them to go or work, many settled with other unemployed countrymen in temporary camps along the railway line, a marginalized ghetto-like existence with limited opportunities. Out of desperation, many accepted low-wage jobs in factories and mills. Those few who did open businesses were relegated to peripheral commercial activities like restaurants, groceries, and laundromats where they posed little threat to local businesses.

By this time, the opium epidemic in mainland China had filtered its way to Canada by way of newly arriving Chinese labourers. In order to cover the head tax of \$500, most newcomers had agreed to spend years in indentured servitude. Unable to bring their spouses over, or even afford the trip back home, the emerging bachelor society grew restless and susceptible to drug abuse. Furthermore, discriminatory legislative measures that restricted property ownership and the right to vote ensured that the Chinese population remained at the fringes of society. Drug use became an easy way to cope with the hardships of living in the Canada.



Fig. 5.06

One of the few benefits to come out of this systematic oppression was the formation of the first Chinatowns. Faced with discrimination and prejudice by the white majority, the Chinese banded together and established their own distinct communities in big cities like Vancouver and Victoria. In many cases, Chinese were forbidden either through explicit laws or implicit agreements from purchasing land or residing outside of their enclaves. Labourers responded by pooling their resources to open small shops, hand laundries, and restaurants, businesses that required little overhead. These establishments served as live-work environments where a group of individuals could shoulder the costs of living and operation.

Eventually, as the population migrated east to the Prairies and as far as Toronto, they grew more dependant on kinship ties and homeland networks in order to secure mobility and opportunities in an unstable environment. In the early days, these networks took the form of several organizations: the *tong* (headquarters), the *hui kuan* (mutual aid society), and the clan association.<sup>2</sup> These organizations, modeled on the support networks

found among Chinese villages and merchant communities, provided an impromptu structure of social welfare for newcomers. Services included protection from harassment, funding for funeral costs, and startup loans for businesses. These self-assistant programs exemplified what the Chinese call *guanxi*—social networks based in kinship, friendship or native place connections.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of—or perhaps, as a result of—continued isolation from mainstream society, these organizations continued to expand their role within the Chinese enclave. What started out as an informal support network for kinship members soon became the formal backbone of the Chinese community. Under the official auspices of a Chinese Benevolent Association, these networks coalesced into defacto governing bodies in Chinatowns across the country, responsible for settling disputes, regulating business practices, raising money for the community, and caring for the destitute and the homeless.<sup>4</sup>

# 03 The Exclusion Era



Fig. 5.07

With the growth of Chinatowns across Canada through the early 1900s came a corresponding resentment from the mainstream population. As had happened in America just a few decades earlier, anti-Chinese hysteria in Canada led to exclusionary legislature that ultimately boiled over into acts of violence against Chinese communities. Organized labour movements within British Columbia, fearing that depressed wages and a flooded labour market would destroy the local economy, quickly came to see the Chinese “coolies” as their enemies. An economic slump in Vancouver set the stage for the establishment of the Asiatic Exclusion League in 1907. That same year, growing public resentment towards Chinese immigrants climaxed in labour riots, where leaders of the Asiatic Exclusion League stirred a parade into a frenzy of 8,000 men who looted and burned their way through Chinatown.

William Lyon MacKenzie King, acting as the Deputy Minister of Labour, was appointed to investigate and settle Chinese property damage claims resulting from the 1907 riot in Vancouver. Echoing the racism of his day, King framed the labour crisis as



Fig. 5.08

attributable to the use of opium among the Chinese population, arguing that the only way to eliminate the civil unrest was to eliminate the Chinese altogether.<sup>5</sup> His subsequent report, entitled “The Need for the Suppression of Opium Traffic in Canada,” pointed to the moral decays that opium would unleash on society if not suppressed, and cited as evidence sensational newspaper stories depicting the ruin of white women by drug abuse. In response, the federal government passed the *Opium Narcotic Act of 1908*, which prohibited the import, manufacture and sale of opiates for non-medical purposes. This Act has since provided the basis for all other Canadian legislation dealing with the use of illicit drugs to this day, despite the fact that it was created solely to eliminate an undesirable element from the labour pool, and gave regard neither to medical nor social research to back up its findings. Rather, it was designed specifically to target the Chinese population, and was used to fine, imprison, or deport thousands of unwanted Chinese labourers from Canada.



Fig. 5.09

The effects of the opium suppression laws were still not enough to pacify public resentment towards the Chinese population. Fears of a Chinese takeover spread throughout North America during the early 1900s. The phrase “Yellow Peril” was popularized by the media to promote anxiety about the rise of Asiatic countries to contest Western supremacy. To prevent the growth of the Chinese population, the Canadian government passed the *Chinese Exclusion Act* on July 1, 1923, which all but stopped any Chinese from entering Canada for nearly a quarter of a century. Between the years 1923 and 1947, when the Act was repealed, a total of 50 immigrants from China were able to make their way to Canada legally.<sup>6</sup> July 1<sup>st</sup> came to be known within the Chinese community as “Humiliation Day.”

The resulting Chinese “bachelor society” became a horrible reality for the married men left in Canada because they were forcefully separated from their families in China even if they could afford to send for them. Consequently, the Chinese communities in Canada became increasingly isolated and inward-looking, relying more and more on internal networks within the enclave to uphold the community. These cultural organizations



Fig. 5.10

and the many family/clan societies and benevolent associations helped provide political structure and cultural identity to the Chinese community through periods of hardship. As with other ethnic enclaves, Chinatowns became an expression of self-preservation amidst discrimination. By providing mutual assistance, access to economic housing, and general welfare support to its members, these organizations ensured the viability and growth of Canada’s earliest Chinatowns.



Fig. 5.11

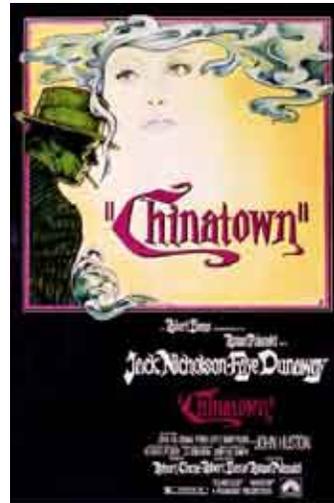


Fig. 5.12

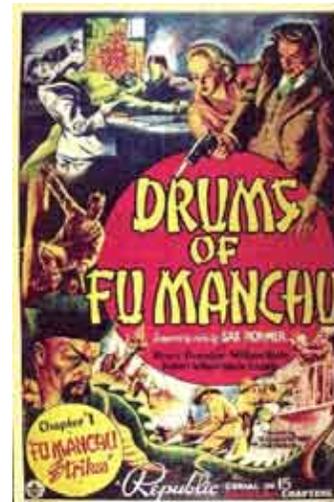


Fig. 5.13

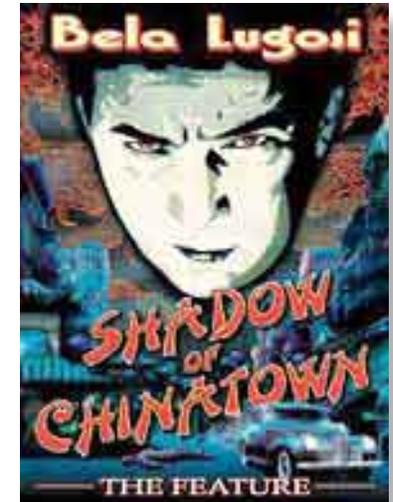


Fig. 5.14

With the development and growth of Chinatowns in the Western world came also a corresponding polarity between the ethnic enclave and the city proper. Throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the image of Chinatown grew as both a shadow and foil to the mainstream city. The myths of Chinatown centred on opium use, corruption and clan warfare, fueled by literature and popular media that sensationalized the illicit aspects of the area. In 19<sup>th</sup> century London, tours were offered to adventure seeking tourists in search of sleazy excitement. In later years, Fu Manchu and Triad warlords would become archetypal villains produced by Chinatown's dark underworld.

These ideas developed as a means to distinguish the acceptable and known elements of the city from the exotic and alien. Much as the foreign "Chinaman" was villainized by mainstream society to placate the latter's economic and social fears, it became more and more necessary to define Chinatown as a foreign entity within the larger city, a malignant district of vice, perversity, and moral decay. In her analysis of the formation of Vancouver's Chinese enclave, geographer Kay Anderson describes the popular mythology

of Chinatown, the construction of an imaginary border between the larger city and a perceived blight:

*Chinatown was [seen as] lawless; as the home of opium addicts, the area was a pestilential den; as the home of evil and inscrutable men, it was a morally retrograde prostitution base where white women were lured as slaves. "Is there harm in the Chinaman?" Reverend Dr. Fraser asked a meeting of the Asiatic Exclusion League in 1907. "In this city," he said, "that could be answered with one word, 'Chinatown,' with its wickedness unmentionable."*

The origins of Toronto's original Chinatown date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, the Chinese population in the city—numbering less than 100<sup>8</sup>—began settling in the area around York Street near the site of present-day Union Station. This neighbourhood was close to the waterfront, and an important point of access for the growing city. Forming their own settlements, the first Chinese immigrants kept to similar businesses that had proven successful in other Chinese settlements across Canada, such as food shops, laundries, and restaurants. These first establishments were the first ethnic Chinese commercial activities in Toronto.<sup>9</sup> Over the next several decades, the Chinese population would grow to accommodate between one and two thousand residents.<sup>10</sup>

During the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Toronto experienced unprecedented growth. The city's economy was booming, and its central business district was expanding. The pressure of encroaching business and office buildings pushed the Chinese community to relocate to the north side of Queen Street in the vicinity of Chestnut and Elizabeth Streets.<sup>11</sup> Here, in the area that would become known as "Old Chinatown,"<sup>12</sup> the traditional clan, district, and political associations began solidifying their roles in the community. The neighbourhood would continue to house the highest concentration of Chinese commercial activities in the city until the 1970s. Describing the growth of Toronto's Chinatown, author Richard H. Thompson writes:

*Chinese success in restaurants led more and more Chinese to this economic adaptation. Like the laundry, the small cafe was particularly suited to Chinese social institutions such as the clan where several Chinese "cousins" would invest in a restaurant (which, like the laundry, also served as a home as well as a place of business), share the work, and keep business and personal expenses to a minimum, thereby insuring some small margin of profit. According to one former restaurant owner of this period, Chinese restaurants were substantially cheaper than non-Chinese. An entire meal consisting of soup, sandwich and dessert cost only 20 cents. Most Chinese preferred the restaurant to the laundry as a business enterprise. The initial capital investment was two to three times greater (approximately \$500 for a laundry, \$1000-\$2000 for a restaurant), but so was the margin of profit. In either case the work was hard. A normal work week was fourteen hours a day every day of the week. Hence, the growth of Chinese restaurants seems to have resulted from the relative economic advantages of the cafe over the laundry since each was equally adaptable to Chinese business practices.<sup>13</sup>*

ESTIMATED CHINESE POPULATION IN TORONTO  
1880 - 1923

YEAR	POPULATION
1880	11
1891	33
1901	159
1908	1,000
1917	1,800
1923	2,500

Fig. 5.15: Source: Richard H. Thomas 1989

NUMBER OF CHINESE BUSINESSES IN OLD, CENTRAL AND  
EAST CHINATOWNS 1951 - 1986

CHINATOWN	1951	1961	1971	1981	1986
OLD	78	84	56	67	69
CENTRAL	7	6	12	135	324
EAST	2	2	1	35	80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>473</b>

Fig. 5.16: Source: Wong 1987

Beginning in the late 1950s, the Toronto Chinese community underwent a second relocation.<sup>14</sup> The cause was again attributable to urban expansion, in this case the construction of the new City Hall and the development of surrounding areas. Redevelopment caused a dramatic increase in land costs and rent, making it difficult for business operators to secure long-term leases. As a result, Chinese residents and businesses started to migrate westward to settle in the southeast Spadina area, bounded by College Street to the north, University Avenue to the east, Queen Street to the south, and Spadina Avenue to the west.<sup>15</sup> This new settlement became known as Central Chinatown.<sup>16</sup>

Historically, Central Chinatown was densely populated by mix of industry and retail, working- and middle-class. Originally a settlement for European Jews before the 1950s,<sup>17</sup> the migration of these older residents into newly built suburbs left the area to be succeeded by Chinese business owners. The availability of affordable properties along Dundas Street allowed the expansion of the commercial district, enabling Central Chinatown to grow to its present location along both Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street.

In the 1970s, a third Chinatown emerged in the area of Broadview Avenue and Gerrard Street on the east side of the Don River. This new district, Eastern Chinatown, catered to Chinese who migrated from Vietnam, many of whom entered Canada as refugees.<sup>18</sup> By the 1980s, the area had grown to be the second largest cluster of Chinese commercial activity in Toronto.<sup>19</sup>

In all three Chinatowns, the nature of commercial business formation followed a similar pattern. Most businesses operated out of residence-like buildings, employing mixed uses at grade level and housing above. The concentration of these types of businesses formed unplanned retail strips in residential zones.<sup>20</sup> With no tenant control or off-street parking to accommodate the community's expansion, the rapid growth of both Central and East Chinatowns began exhibiting signs of saturation by the mid-1980s. Stores began to spill out onto the streets, the lack of parking led to congestion along neighbouring residential roads, and odours from organic waste from grocery stores generated community-wide concerns.<sup>21</sup>

### LOCATION OF OLD, CENTRAL AND EAST CHINATOWNS IN TORONTO

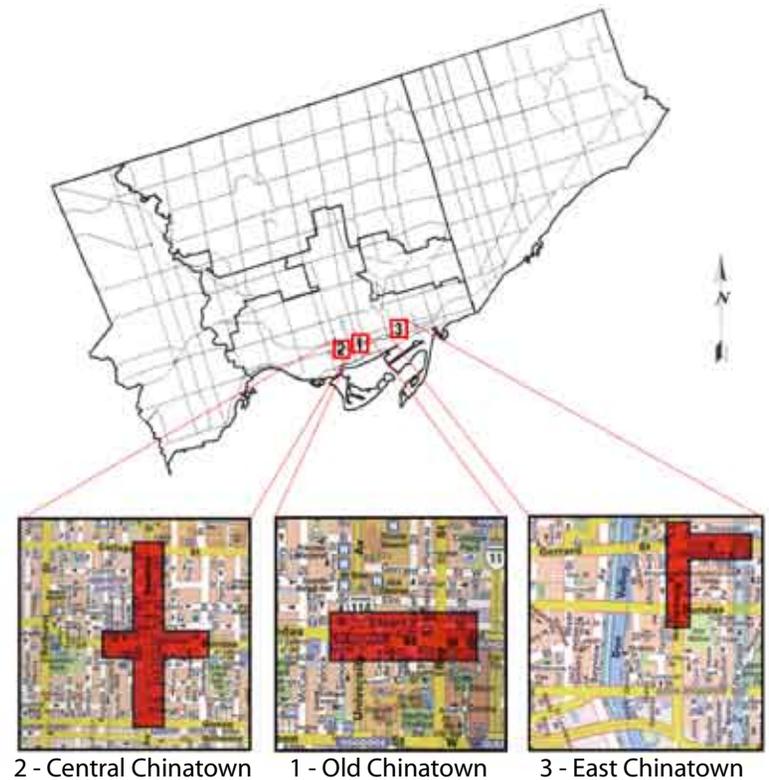


Fig. 5.17



Fig. 5.18



Fig. 5.19

Chinatown maintains its unsavory reputation in large part because of the proliferation of non-conforming patterns of development. When viewed in the context of the larger city, Chinatown remains a place that is governed by a set of unique rules and systems. The profusion of informal economies and ad hoc business practices add to the neighbourhood's distinction from conventional planning and retail practices. Street-side stands, portable market stalls, and vendors specializing in pirated merchandise reveal a capacity within the economy to absorb all levels of commercial activity. In addition to the expansion of storefronts onto the street, various inventive solutions to temporality and mobility indicate a willingness to operate against formal regulations on street allowances.



Fig. 5.20



Fig. 5.21



Fig. 5.22



Fig. 5.23



Fig. 5.24



Fig. 5.25



Fig. 5.26



Fig. 5.27



Fig. 5.28



Fig. 5.29



Fig. 5.30



Fig. 5.31



Fig. 5.32



Fig. 5.33



Fig. 5.34



Fig. 5.35



Fig. 5.36

1954



Fig. 5.37

2002



Fig. 5.38

The neighbourhood in which I currently reside takes its name from one of the first families to settle in the area, the Milliken's. These early settlers were of Scottish descent, making their way to Upper Canada via Maine and New Brunswick in the 17th century.<sup>22</sup> In 1807, the family purchased lot no.1, concession 5 on what is today Old Kennedy Road and Steeles Avenue. Setting up an establishment that catered to the logging industry, the site bears to this day the name Milliken Corners.<sup>23</sup>

The site underwent redevelopment with the expansion of the Toronto and Nipissing Railway in the 1870s. The rail line was part of a project sponsored by Gooderham and Worts linking Milliken Corners and the suburban towns of Unionville and Markham Village to the rest of Toronto. A railway stop was built on the site to allow timber, livestock, and farm produce to be transported in from surrounding areas for sale in Toronto markets. The same rail line now carries commuters on the Go Transit System, picking up passengers from a station not far from the original railway stop.

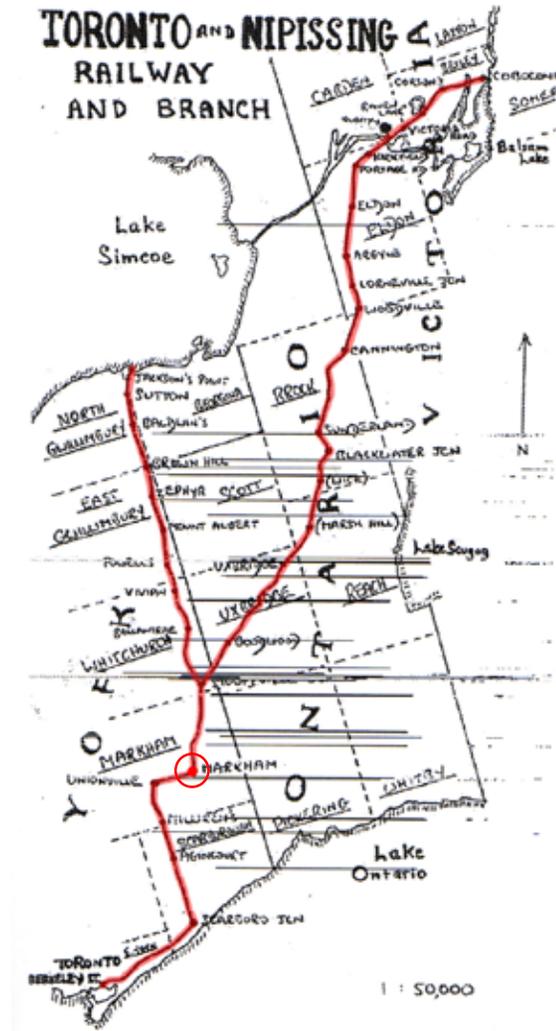


Fig. 5.39

## 09 Barn Raising

For more than a century, the area surrounding Milliken Corners was based on an agricultural economy. The area remained unchanged for many generations, untouched by the development of the City of Toronto. But the expanding Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and the advance of suburban communities dramatically transformed the direction of the site.

On the last day of August in 1983, Cullen Country Barns, a new retail outlet specializing in crafts and garden products, opened its doors for business on the old site once occupied by the Milliken family, in what was now the suburban GTA community of Markham. Perhaps in a nod to the agricultural farmland that it was displacing, Cullen Country Barns was made to resemble a quaint county barnhouse. In actuality, it was an enormous concrete construction clad in boards reclaimed from demolished barns. At 110,000 square feet, it housed a garden centre, bakeries, and restaurants, a 30-meter-high silo and a 150-seat playhouse offering family-oriented movies, live music, and theatre.<sup>24</sup> The project, costing approximately 6 million dollars to construct, was the second themed attraction built by owner-developers Weal and Cullen Nurseries in Ontario (Miniature Village in Whitby, Ontario, being the first).

As a child, I would often accompany my parents to Cullen Country Barns to look at the elaborate model train system that ran throughout the building. When I wasn't following my mother through aisles of potpourri and baked goods, I was riding on a wagon through the garden section with my dad. The business model could best be described as a fusion of Ikea and Anne of Green Gables. As one Globe and Mail reporter observed while covering the store's opening:

*What do people actually do in the world's largest barn? Well, they don't play in the hay or swing from the rafters...This barn is for shopping...All of the merchandise has one thing in common: it's all folksy stuff, oriented toward craftsmen and hobbyists and presented in a way that makes people feel as though they are shopping in a large but comfy country store...It presents Ontario's rural heritage in a commercial setting.*<sup>25</sup>



Fig.5.40: Weal and Cullen Craft and Garden Centre, 1983



Fig. 5.41: Canada Trust Centre, Market Village



Fig. 5.42: Canada Trust Centre, Market Village

The arrival of Cullen Country Barns in many ways gelled with the ideals of Markham's town planners. In congruence with the town's motto, "Leading While Remembering", it captured much of the nostalgic charm and heritage preservation that the community held with great pride. Along with other commercial areas such as Main Street Unionville and Markham Historic Village, these developments offered a connection to the area's pioneering history packaged within an aesthetic of historicism.

By 1987, the success of Cullen Country Barns had spawned the adjacent development of the Canada Trust Centre. A combination of offices and retail spaces, the project incorporated a similar rustic barnhouse aesthetic in tune with the city's vision of small-town appeal. The following year, the designers of Cullen Country Barns, Deacon, Arnett, Murray and Rankin, designed another addition to the growing collection of faux-heritage retail spaces on the site. Market Village was designed as an outdoor pedestrian shopping destination, similar to the historic main streets of Unionville and Markham Village. A series of Tudor-style cottages and farmhouse buildings flanked two exterior shopping streets, anchored by a "town square" complete with its own bandstand.



Fig. 5.43: Exterior shopping strip, Market Village

Beginning in 1967 and continuing over a period of five years, the Federal Government of Canada transitioned from an official policy of biculturalism and bilingualism to one of multiculturalism. In 1967, the merit-based “points” immigration system was introduced, replacing a system that favoured Britain and France as source countries. By 1971, all discriminatory clauses were removed from immigration policies, paving the way for the enactment of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988). Through these enactments, Canada embarked on the most liberal programs of multiculturalism in the world.

In 1984, Canada introduced the Business Immigration Program of Canada, in which potential immigrants could bypass the procedures of the points system, provided they had substantial amounts of money to invest in Canadian businesses or start-up capital for a new business of their own. With the introduction of this new entrepreneur and investor class of entrants, Canada’s immigration focus shifted from members of the working class to those of skilled professions with significant capital.

The introduction of this class in Canada’s immigration regulations coincided with the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, which promised the repatriation of Hong Kong to China on July 1, 1997, after existing as a British colony for more than 100 years. The perceived fear of Hong Kong’s handover into communist rule coupled with the amendments to Canada’s immigration policy resulted in a surge in immigration from Hong Kong to Canada. Many of these newcomers settled in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal, where established Chinese populations already existed. When measured by mother tongue, the Chinese population in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) increased by 39% between 1981 and 1986 and 74% between 1986 and 1991. By 1991, 39% of all Chinese living in Canada called Greater Toronto home.<sup>26</sup> Of these, 28% lived in Scarborough, 22% in the City of Toronto, 17% in North York, 9% in Markham, 8% in Mississauga, and 3.4% in Richmond Hill.<sup>27</sup>

The growth of Chinese populations in and around Toronto was coupled by the proliferation of suburban developments on the fringes of the expanding GTA. The patterns of new developments were a significant departure in type, form, and scale of previous commercial activities. Whereas historical Chinese commercial concentrations were

relatively small and confined to a specific area, developments that appeared in the 1980s and 1990s were dispersed and had an unprecedented impact on mainstream society.

Demographically, the new wave of Chinese immigrants that were arriving in Canada during the 1980s and early 1990s were different from preceding generations. Generally, they were younger, better educated, and in possession of significantly more capital upon entry. They had sufficient resources to buy homes upon arrival, in more affluent neighbourhoods in suburban municipalities. In this way, they were able to bypass the traditional entry points of immigrants: ethnic enclaves concentrated in the urban core. Between 1986 and 1991, the Chinese population in 12 of the 27 suburban municipalities in the Toronto CMA more than doubled.<sup>28</sup> In contrast, the same population of the City of Toronto only grew by 18% during the same period.<sup>29</sup>

Many new Chinese immigrants entered as entrepreneurs and investors with dependants. To qualify as an investor, an individual had to first demonstrate a successful track record in business or commercial undertakings and an accumulated net worth of at least \$500,000.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, they were required to invest at least half of these funds in Canada through direct business ventures. These provisions sought to attract investments in a Canadian economy on the cusp of recession. Additionally, they marked a shift in the nation’s approach to incoming immigrants from an emphasis on social integration to one of economic participation.

In addition to bringing large sums of investment to the Toronto suburban region, the growing Chinese population also created the demand for a wider array of professional services and amenities catering to their specific needs. To meet the changing dynamic of the suburban fabric, businesses and professional offices were forced to diversify and depart from traditional models and types. This expansion rapidly altered the shape of Toronto’s suburbs and the form of development in all sectors, including the retail landscape.



Fig. 5.44



Fig. 5.45



Fig. 5.46

A landmark event in the evolution of Chinese commercial activity in Toronto came in 1983 with the proposal to convert a suburban roller skating rink into an indoor Chinese shopping mall. Situated in the older postwar neighbourhood of Agincourt, the project was initially met with considerable opposition from the local community. Local residents feared that many of the problems that plagued downtown Chinatowns, such as garbage odours and congested streets, would come to their doorsteps. The size of restaurants and the mix of stores were also issues of contention. Concerned residents and business owners voiced their concerns over the possible devaluation of their property and about being pushed out of their neighbourhoods. Following one particularly heated public debate at city council, anti-Chinese flyers were distributed throughout the neighbourhood. After several more contentious council meetings, approval was finally granted for the construction of Dragon Centre. The former skating rink would be revamped into a 32,500 sq.ft. mini-mall accommodating some 25 stores, including a bank, a large restaurant, and several beauty salons.

The success of the project soon spawned the development of adjacent projects that also catered specifically to Chinese interests. Chinese retail plazas and offices began to concentrate along Shepherd and Midland Avenues, forming the first suburban concentration of Chinese commercial activities in the GTA. Agincourt became known as Scarborough's Chinatown. Dragon Centre was followed by other shopping malls, plazas, and office complexes, constructed over a short period of time between 1984 and 1987. During this time, 11 more malls were proposed in Scarborough with a combined gross floor area of 709,630 sq.ft.<sup>31</sup>

LOCATION OF CHINESE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN  
NW SCARBOROUGH -- AGINCOURT AREA

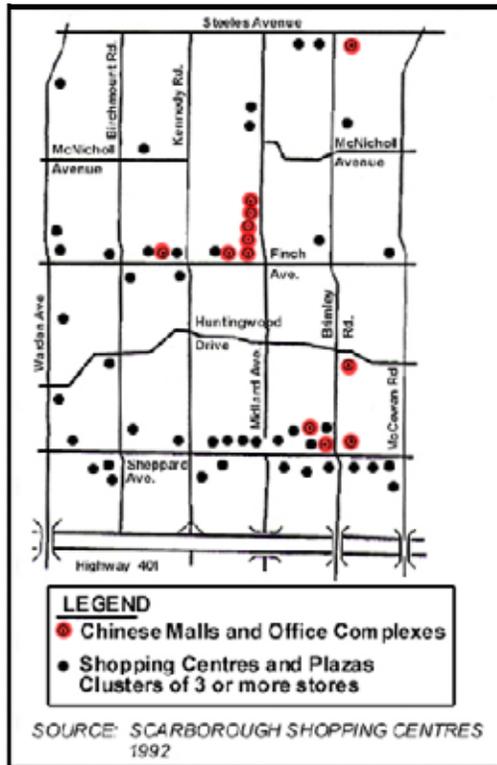


Fig. 5.47

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE MALLS IN  
SCARBOROUGH

YEAR	NAME	SITE AREA (ACRES)	GROSS FLOOR AREA (sq.ft.)	USES
1983	Dragon Centre	2.27	32,500	stores and restaurants
1984	Scarborough Village Mall	2.61	76,000	stores and offices
1984	Finch/ Midland Centre	5.06	111,000	offices and stores
1984	Mandarin Shopping Centre	1.35	17,669	stores
1984	Wayside & Finch Ave.	1.11	36,222	offices and stores
1984	Miliken Square	7.95	131,000	offices and stores
1984	Midland Corporate Centre	1.43	31,155	offices and stores
1985	Silverland Centre	1.92	48,200	offices and stores
1985	Chartwell Plaza (Phase 2)	7.90	92,600	offices and stores
1986	Prince Mall	1.45	27,007	stores
1987	4955 Steeles/ Brimley Rd.	0.66	15,877	stores
1987	Midland Business Centre	484	90,400	offices and stores

Fig. 5.48

# 13 Market Village



Fig. 5.49: Exterior shopping strip, Market Village



Fig. 5.50: Exterior shopping strip, Market Village

This growth in Chinese retail activity in suburban Toronto during the late 1980s and early 1990s was all the more remarkable for having occurred during the peak of a nation-wide recession, when other retail sectors suffered declines. Even Markham's Market Village and the adjacent Canada Trust Complex survived the economic downturn only by abandoning its quasi-Main Street pretensions and converting into an enclosed Asian shopping centre. The recession also claimed the nearby Cullen Country Barns. In 1993, the craft and garden centre permanently closed its doors, a decision based on "a serious drop in tourism over the past four years, along with a cultural change in the surrounding area."<sup>32</sup> In its place would emerge a new paradigm in the expanding repertoire of Chinese commercial activity in the area.



Fig. 5.51: Newly enclosed shopping strip, Market Village

PLAN OF MARKET VILLAGE



 Area defined by new enclosure

Fig. 5.52: Floor plan of Renovated Mall

# 14 Pacific Mall

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995, ground-breaking ceremonies were held for a new mall to be built over the former site of Cullen Country Barns. The project was first initiated in 1993 by the Torgan Group and Living Realty and was later joined by Hong Kong-based media company Fairchild Inc. Almost immediately after the ceremony, concerns were raised about the style and configuration of the new mall. The modernist architecture of the original proposal was rejected in favour of a design more sensitive to the heritage feel of the surrounding retail complexes. Planners were adamant on preserving the nostalgic facade of the commercial projects in the area.

After nearly two years of delays, Pacific Mall opened its doors in June 1997. At 270,000 square feet, Pacific Mall was the biggest enclosed Asian shopping centre in Canada. The mall contained over 350 stores and was served by both indoor and outdoor parking areas with over 1,500 spaces combined. Aberdeen Mall in Richmond, B.C., another project of the Fairchild company, has since claimed the title as the largest Asian mall in North America; however, Pacific Mall remains the largest structure dedicated exclusively to retail that is entirely based on condominium-retail units.<sup>33</sup>

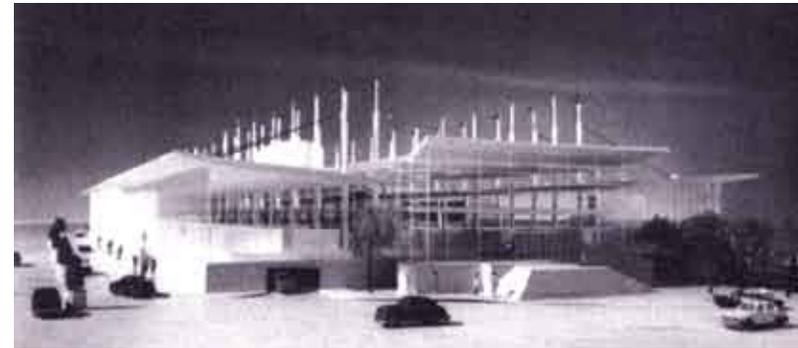


Fig. 5.53: Original design proposal for Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.54: City of Markham redesign proposal for Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.55: 1995 construction site



Fig. 5.56: 1997 Pacific Mall completed



Fig. 5.57: South Facade of Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.58: Typical shopping aisle, Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.59: Ancient China themed shopping street, Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.59: Ancient China themed shopping street, Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.60: Ground floor plan, Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.61: Typical shopping aisle, Pacific Mall

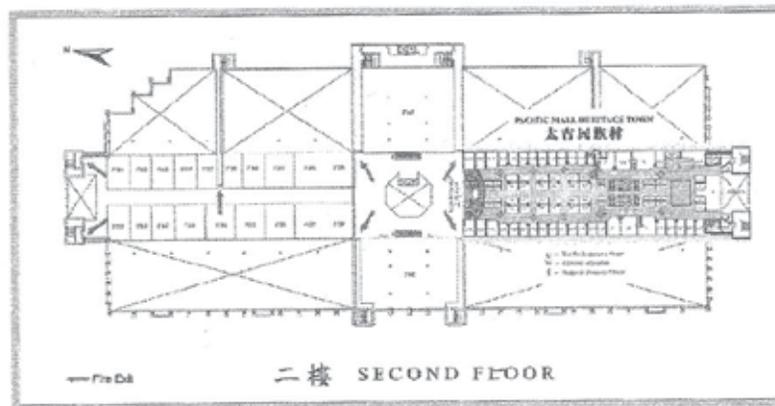


Fig. 5.62: Second floor plan, Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.63: Typical shopping aisle, Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.64: Skylit North South axis ,Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.65: Skylit North South axis ,Pacific Mall



Fig. 5.66: Evergold Centre, Scarborough



Fig. 5.67: Chartland Centre, Scarborough

A pioneering enterprise in many regards, Pacific Mall was also the first in Canada to challenge existing assumptions about retail development that had dominated commercial projects in North America since the mid-1950s. Pacific Mall—and the numerous imitators that followed in its successful wake—marked a significant departure in both form and tenor from the traditional Gruen-style shopping mall concept by employing a condominium-retail model.

In the typical mall or retail strip, a developer generates income by renting or leasing retail space for a set period of time, typically 5-year terms. Rents are based on predictable patterns of traffic, as well as access to entrances, parking structures, and amenities. The developer maintains overall control of the complex, selectively cultivating a rich mix of tenants to maximize its appeal to the community. In condominium-retailing, a developer's involvement is limited to the early stages of the project. Prior to construction, investment in the project is generated by selling units within the proposed development. Once sold, the developer has little to do with the type of business or adjacency of tenants.

As in residential condominium projects, once construction is complete, the developer's only remaining responsibility is as caretaker of the building.

This retail model developed in conjunction with the introduction of the entrepreneur immigrant class. The availability of land in Markham and Scarborough as well as the influx of wealthy immigrants from Hong Kong converged to popularize the condominium-retail model in the late 1990s. Coincidentally the average cost of a unit in a retail development—approximately \$250,000—was exactly the same amount required to gain entry into the country as an entrepreneur.

In addition to its development strategy, retail condominiums also differed in their physical form and configuration. In North America, mall designers have made a science of positioning store fronts and signage in relation to traffic flows and points of view so as to maximize sales. Whereas conventional mall planning and development rely heavily on these established formulas and systems, retail condominium projects like Pacific Mall have less centralized control over tenant mix and store adjacencies. Examining a plan



Fig. 5.68: International Gourmet Street, Scarborough



Fig. 5.69: Cathay Plaza, Scarborough

of a typical condominium development, units are small and consistently sized throughout. Unlike conventional malls that place large retailers and department stores as anchoring points, condominium-retail projects display limited hierarchical organization. Units are delivered upon completion as uniform glass boxes, typically organized along a grid of interior "streets."

The condominium-retail centres offer a decentralized alternative to the conventional shopping mall model. This was particularly advantageous during the recession because banks were reluctant to grant loans for construction projects. By selling units to investors rather than leasing them to tenants, developers were more quickly able to get their projects off the ground. The condominium system also reduced the risk for developers, since they had already earned a profit regardless of the success or failure of the purchased units.

The success of the condominium system is evidenced by the rapid growth of the Chinese retail sector, even through periods of recession. While other sectors of the

market were buckling down and reducing expenditures, Chinese malls were inundating the landscape. In 1995 alone, 400,000 square feet of Chinese-oriented retail space was added across the GTA.<sup>34</sup> With the exception of two of these projects, all were situated in the burgeoning suburbs of Scarborough, Markham, Richmond Hill, and Mississauga. By 1996, just one year prior to the Hong Kong handover, 51 Chinese shopping centres of various sizes had been developed in the Toronto area.



Fig. 5.70: Dynasty Centre, Scarborough

The proliferation of Asian malls in Toronto's outlying suburbs caused significant community outcry from long-standing residents. Some critics charged that the malls were a product of unbridled commercial speculation. Others accused the condominium-retail model of being an immigration scam, claiming that "investors" were simply purchasing units in order to satisfy the entrepreneurial class entry requirements and had no intention of developing a successful business or store. Their greatest fears were that surrounding properties would be devalued by empty and abandoned malls, or worse, that their own neighbourhoods would be transformed into ethnic ghettos.

The most well-documented case of public opposition to the spread of Chinese retailing came—perhaps surprisingly—from Markham's deputy mayor, Carole Bell.<sup>35</sup> In 1995, during a speech made at municipal council, Bell complained that the growing number of Chinese malls and their consistent use of Chinese signage were driving long-time residents out of the area:



Fig. 5.71: Mandarin Shopping Centre, Scarborough

*I see the fabric of our whole country changing, and people who have lived here for generations are moving out of Markham because of these malls... Markham has had the finest development in North America; now all we have are [Chinese] theme malls. [The two million square feet of proposed Asian theme malls awaiting council approval] is way beyond our needs.<sup>36</sup>*

In a letter to the local newspaper later that summer, Bell elaborated by claiming that "when dozens of individuals who are the backbone of Markham say they are moving away...we have a problem."<sup>37</sup>

The public media published sensationalized headlines describing and the invasion of Chinese retailing and the subsequent "white flight." The Chinese community responded with their own public demand for an apology. At the time, the deputy mayor defended her comments, saying she was simply expressing the sentiments of her constituents. To date, Carole Bell has never apologized for her comments. She no longer lives in Markham.

## 17 Monster Homes

In the years leading up to communist China's July 1, 1997, takeover of Hong Kong, many immigrants arrived in Vancouver and Toronto to secure their wealth in tangible assets. During this period, numerous rumours surfaced about Hong Kong residents arriving with suitcases of cash to purchase houses and cars. Media reports fueled fears among long-time residents of North American communities about the growing encroachment of immigrants.

In Vancouver as elsewhere, the transformation of suburban homes into mansions became an expression of conspicuous consumption among landed wealthy immigrants and a point of contention for other locals. Residents complained about the insensitive demolition of older traditional single-family homes in their neighbourhoods and the oversized gaudy mansions that were erected in their place, claiming that the new homes were ruining the aesthetic character of their neighbourhoods. Writing her thesis at the University of British Columbia on the issue of Vancouver's monster home syndrome, Barbara Pettit reported, "Neighbours kept trying to find reasons to say why they didn't like the houses and one of the reasons was their neighbourhood would be overrun by people that they couldn't even understand."<sup>38</sup>

The syndrome of monster homes was a form of real estate speculation on the part of both developers and home buyers. Monster homes were designed to maximize allowable floor space on a given site and were made to resemble mansions in Vancouver's more exclusive neighbourhoods. By redeveloping smaller and older homes, developers and home buyers could turn over large profits. What made the homes stand out was that they were rarely designed by architects. Instead, they were easily distinguished by their use of pastel colours, elaborate verandahs, and cathedral-height etched glass windows.<sup>39</sup>

## 18 Astronauts and Satellite Kids

Even during the late 1990s, at the peak of immigration from Hong Kong to Canada, many newcomers maintained strong links to their point of origin. A new migratory pattern emerged, whereby wealthy businessmen would immigrate to Canada with their families, acquiring citizenship (often dual citizenship) while maintaining a business or employment back East. In this way, their children could take advantage of educational opportunities in Canada and they themselves could secure tangible assets against political instability during Hong Kong's repatriation without having to give up their successful jobs or businesses.<sup>40</sup> Because of the frequency of their trips back and forth across the Pacific, they earned the nickname "astronauts," orbiting between two worlds. Complementing this phenomenon were "satellite kids," the children of immigrant families who were jettisoned to Canadian cities (primarily Vancouver or Toronto) with both parents maintaining careers back in Hong Kong. Parents would divide their time between two homes, dispatching money to support their unsupervised children.

The emergence of these new transnational family units are anecdotal evidence of a flexible citizenship created by the conditions of Canada's evolving immigration policy and the repatriation of Hong Kong. Within the context of Canada's multicultural policy, Chinese communities cultivated and occupied a hybrid terrain that was neither wholly in Canada nor Hong Kong. These communities displaced the emphasis of the nation-state in favour of a new transitory place, created by the intersection of social fields that transgressed geographic, cultural and political borders.

Wei Li's study of the Los Angeles suburb of Monterey Park identifies key differences in the formation of suburban Chinese enclaves that merit new classification: the "ethnoburb." The demography and patterns established by these new immigrants are markedly different from classic urban concentrations and entry points of previous generations. The recent influx of Chinese immigrants into North America has redefined the model of cultural assimilation and citizenship.<sup>41</sup>

What distinguishes ethnoburbs from the traditional urban enclaves are the development patterns and constitution of their inhabitants. Typically, ethnoburbanites are economically mobile newcomers that bypass the traditional economically depressed entry points of urban centres, jumping immediately into middle- and high-income suburban communities. By bringing capital and expertise into a new area, they foster internal networks for economic mobility as well as offer opportunities to avail of culturally tailored services. As Li summarizes, ethnoburbs are:

*fully functioning communities with their own internal socio-economic structures which are integral to national and international environments. They are not isolated ethnic communities, but an open system tied by information exchange, business connections and social activities with the mainstream society. Ethnoburbs have replaced or are replacing traditional downtown enclaves, as more important new 'ports of entry' for immigrants in some large American metropolitan areas. After they are established, ethnoburbs continue to grow and to diffuse spatially and develop socio-economically.*<sup>42</sup>

The proliferation of Asian commercial activity throughout Scarborough and later through Markham and Richmond Hill represents the transition of Toronto's Chinese community from the urban core to the suburbs.

The influx of foreign investment from immigrants was instrumental in establishing the locality and shape of Toronto's own emerging ethnoburbs. Whereas commercial developments in urban areas typically followed on the heels of population growth, many of the suburban Asian malls established in the mid-1980s and 1990s took place before sufficient local demand was firmly present. For example, there were only 8,000 Chinese people living in Richmond Hill in 1991, but eleven Chinese shopping centres with 700,000 square feet of commercial space were built within a ten-year period.<sup>43</sup> In this respect, Chinese shopping centres acted as catalysts in the growth of ethnic communities, supplying an underlying infrastructure upon which the community could expand.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHINESE POPULATION IN TORONTO CMA (2001)

Key Cities	Total Population	Chinese Population	Chinese Population Ratio
<b>Markham</b>	<b>207,940</b>	<b>62,355</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Richmond Hill</b>	<b>131,595</b>	<b>28,760</b>	<b>21.9%</b>
<b>Toronto City</b>	<b>2,456,805</b>	<b>259,710</b>	<b>10.6%</b>
- Scarborough	<b>588,675</b>	<b>105,195</b>	<b>17.9%</b>
- North York	<b>603,060</b>	<b>69,155</b>	<b>11.5%</b>
<b>Old Toronto City</b>	<b>667,325</b>	<b>64,290</b>	<b>9.6%</b>
- East York	<b>114,240</b>	<b>7,190</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
- York City	<b>148,935</b>	<b>4,715</b>	<b>3.2%</b>
- Etobicoke	<b>334,570</b>	<b>9,160</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>Mississauga</b>	<b>610,815</b>	<b>35,955</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
<b>Toronto CMA</b>	<b>4,682,897</b>	<b>409,535</b>	<b>8.7%</b>

Fig. 5.73

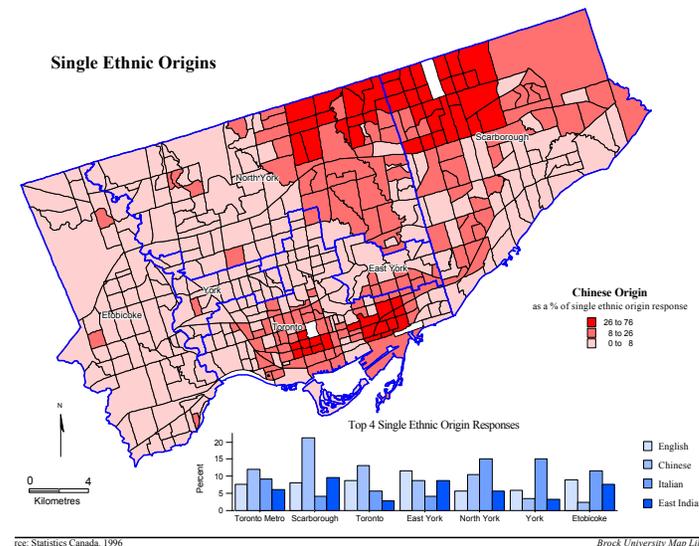


Fig. 5.74

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHINESE BUSINESSES IN THE TORONTO CMA (1994)

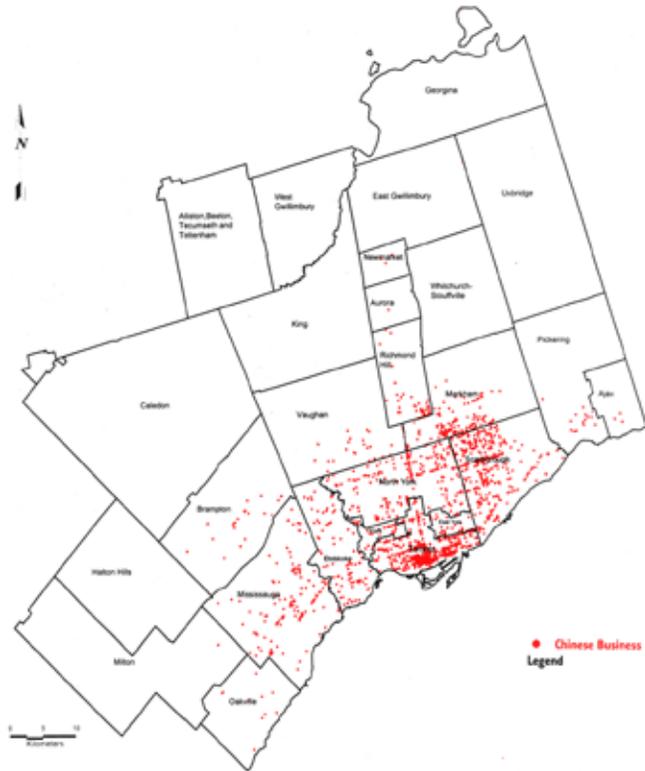


Fig.5.75

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING CHINESE SHOPPING CENTRES IN TORONTO (2005)

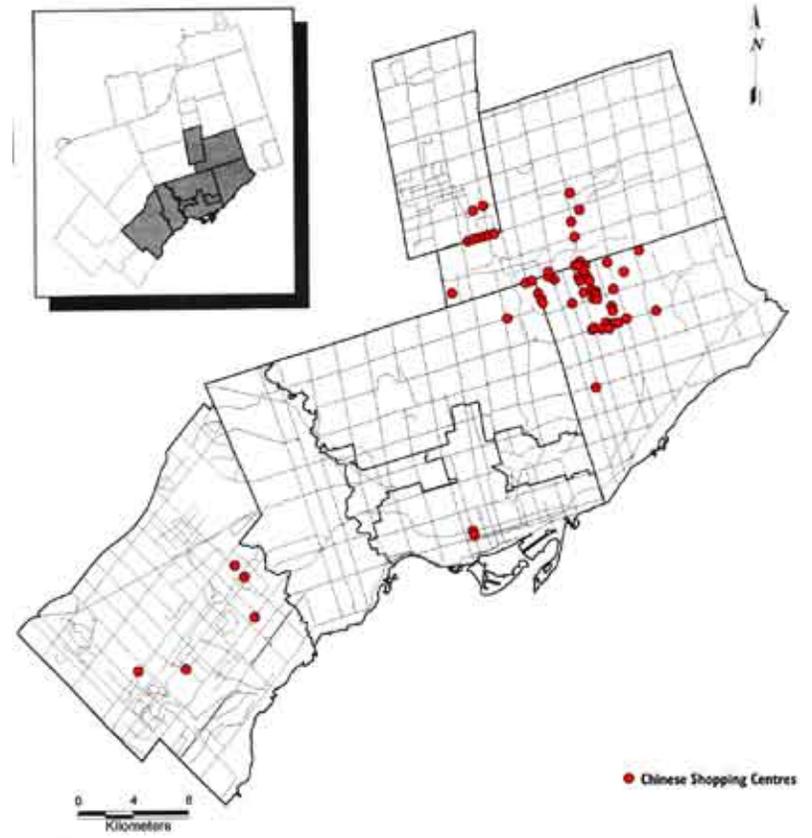


Fig.5.76

I recently went back to Scarborough to visit Jason, my childhood friend with whom I had grown up in the old neighbourhood. He was now a chartered accountant, though he still lived at home with his parents in the same house where I went to as a child after finishing my paper route or forgetting my house key. Together we sat in his room and I began to probe him about his past marijuana growing endeavors. These days, he had alternate sources for his drugs, but still kept a picture of the seedling he once nurtured to maturity on his desk. He presented it to me with pride as we discussed his brief foray into the world of illicit drug production ("It wasn't easy...it wasn't something that you just plant and leave for a while.") He showed me the desk lamp that he used, the Windex bottle he had filled with mineral-rich water left over from boiling eggs. Later, while rolling a joint for us to share, he paused briefly to reflect, "It's a primal urge to plant something, and tend to it, and then to enjoy the fruits of one's labour. These are the things that give life meaning."

Jason's room was a time capsule, having remained more or less unchanged since my newspaper-delivering days. His comic books were still in a neat stack on the shelf, the collection of folded palm leaf crosses from 20 years of Easter Masses in a jar on his dresser. His bed and desk were set in a configuration imprinted in my childhood memories. I joked about how long he had lived there and how he was the last of our friends to get out of the "hood." He replied that he was anxious to leave and was planning to buy a place "sometime later this year."

As we stepped outside and lit up, he rambled on about how the neighbourhood was changing. As evidence, he pointed to a house three doors down the street that police had recently raided and found a marijuana grow-op in the basement. Another house in view had "like, 14 Chinese squatters living in it." He went on to explain his theory that our street was slowly devolving into "a Mad Max society." I could not help but acknowledge that something had gone wrong in our neighbourhood. I also knew that if anarchy ever erupted in the suburbs, the safest place to be would be Jason's house. His Chinese-Jamaican family had always seemed oddly prepared for suburban warfare.

I have known Jason since I was 4. We were Kindergarten classmates at St. Rene Goupil Catholic Elementary School, and also attended the same high school. I have known Jason for 23 years, as long as I have known my younger brother. Our families are good friends and the relationship between them represents the idealized suburban experience. Exchanges of pies, casseroles, and loafs are, after 23 years, still a weekly routine.



Fig. 5.77: Photo of Jason's marijuana plant

## 21 Growing Up in the Neighbourhood

We moved into the neighbourhood in 1984, eight years after my parents came to Canada. Our house was a modest, 2,300 square foot fully-detached model, with four bedrooms and two-and-a-half baths. The home was part of the second phase of development along Port Royal Trail in the Upper Chartwell Community of Scarborough. My parents, proud first-time homeowners, had chosen the neighbourhood for no other reason than that it seemed normal, typical of the quiet, tree-lined bedroom communities that spanned across North Toronto.

For a young kid, our new neighbourhood was an amazing place to grow up in. The sod on the backyards was newly laid, but the backyard fences were not yet up. The resulting vast expanse of land became in equal measure a football pitch, a sprinting lane, and a bloodied battlefield for endless iterations of cowboys'n'indians. Even more exciting for us were the construction sites in parts of the neighbourhood that were just getting started. Mounds of backfill created prime dirt biking courses. Huge holes in the ground where rainwater accumulated into ponds provided the perfect conditions for tadpole farming. Stealing from construction sites provided a steady supply of building materials for forts and tree houses. The opportunities for mischief were endless.

Most of the trouble I got into was with my friends from grade school, almost all of whom were Asians, mostly Chinese. In fact, the majority of people moving into the neighbourhood were Chinese and there was a big divide between the diversity of older residents and the new home families of Upper Chartwell. If you looked at my grade school class pictures, the only clue that we were in North America was our teacher. Still, as a child, there was not much that led me to believe that the neighbourhood where I grew up was any different from the rest of Toronto. Aside from the profusion of Chinese retailers, there were few indications that my childhood experience was unique in any way.

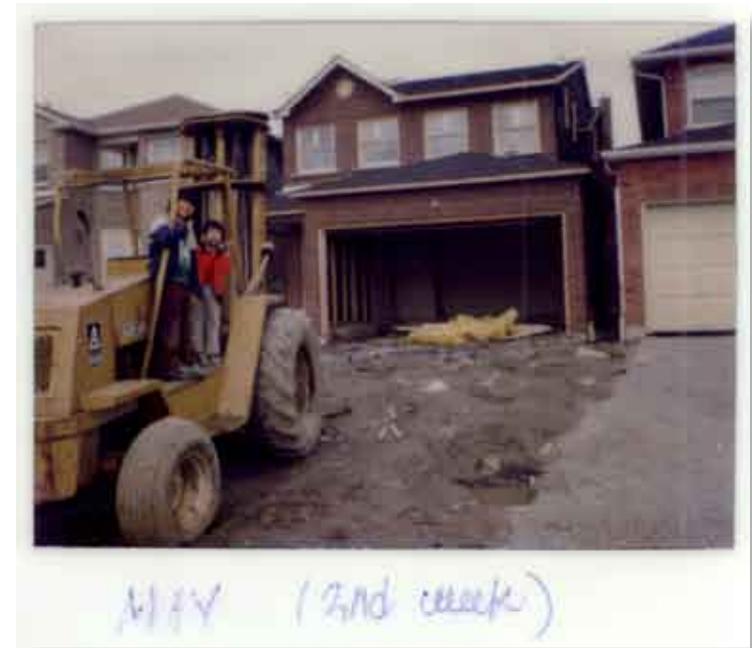


Fig.5.78: Photo of Sanvictores family home in second week of construction



Fig. 5.79: From Bas Balkissoon official campaign website, 2004

*Q. I've heard a lot about "grow houses" lately. What are they?*

*A. A grow house is a house, apartment, or condo that is used as a "greenhouse" for illegally growing marijuana.*

*Police report that grow houses exist in every type of neighborhood, particularly in affluent or established areas, and that these illegal operations are spreading rapidly. In the GTA area alone, it's estimated there are over 10,000 grow houses in operation at any given time.*

*Grow houses pose a serious risk to the safety of the community.*

*Marijuana grow houses often have links to criminal elements and organized crime. Individuals associated with grow operations have been found to carry weapons and may be considered dangerous. Also, there is a risk of increased violence and residual crime in neighbourhoods associated with illegal activity.*

*Grow houses pose a serious fire risk. Grow house operations are dangerous because electrical meters, fuses and circuit breakers are usually bypassed in the process of stealing large volumes of electricity. There have been several house fires caused by faulty wiring of the powerful grow lamps. Local brown outs and black outs triggered by these operations often lead to their discovery. Police estimate that 1 in 10 grow houses will eventually go up in flames.*

*CBC News reported that grow house operations consume more than \$500 million in stolen electricity each year in Ontario alone. These costs are added to the hydro bills of legitimate energy users.<sup>43</sup>*



Fig. 5.80: From Mike Del Grande official campaign website, 2004

In the spring of 2006, two Scarborough politicians—representing the community at the municipal and federal levels—embarked on a door-to-door campaign to combat the proliferation of grow houses in their overlapping ridings. In a subsequent interview, municipal councillor Mike Del Grande explained that he routinely monitored houses in his neighbourhood with a pair of binoculars and a digital camera. In what he called a ward-wide “census,” suspected rooming houses, grow houses, and houses with bylaw violations were catalogued for future investigation. As well, when he and MP Jim Karygiannis believe they have identified suspicious activity, they would approach the house under the pretense of canvassing for donations. If somebody opened the door, they would

*ask if that person has any concerns. If he doesn't look suspicious, then you go to the next door. If people don't open up, you ask the next door, 'Hey you know, seen something strange? Smell anything?'... This is how you get people involved. We're not trying to promote vigilantism, we're trying to promote 'watch your neighbours.'<sup>44</sup>*

According to Karygiannis, this type of hands-on work was required to promote community awareness and involvement where immigrants within his riding “tend to come from communities where looking out for themselves only is a means of survival.”<sup>45</sup> As part of his campaign, he handed out information pamphlets in seven languages entitled “What you can do to stop grow houses.”

# SPOTTING A MARIJUANA GROW HOUSE

## What is a Marijuana Grow House

A marijuana grow house is a home which has been physically altered in order to produce marijuana. These alterations may include tapping into the hydro lines in order to steal electricity, attaching filtering devices to hide the skunky-scent produced by marijuana plants or installing high wattage lights which can be a fire hazard.

Typically, large scale sophisticated marijuana grow houses are linked to organized crime. Organized crime rings purchase or rent a home and buy the equipment required to grow the marijuana. The harvested marijuana is then sold on the streets with the profit going back into the criminal organization.

A grow operation can generate considerable tax-free cash which is then used to finance various organized criminal activities.

Marijuana grow houses can be located in any rural, urban, or industrial area.

From 2000 to 2003, these illegal operations cost the Ontario economy upwards of \$260 million.

## How does a Marijuana Grow House affect me?

A typical grow house steals between \$1,500 - \$2,000 worth of hydro each month. One hydro company estimates customers pay an additional \$50.00 on their monthly hydro bill to cover these costs!

We also pay increased insurance premiums as a result of fire related costs and repairs due to structural damages.



- ✓ The house does not appear "lived in". Someone occasionally attends the residence and only stays for short periods of time.
- ✓ Activity inside the house seems to take place at odd hours. Items are moved in and out of the residence at odd times.
- ✓ The exterior appearance of the property is not cared for on a regular basis (ie. snow removal, grass cutting)
- ✓ Persons often back into the garage and enter the home this way.
- ✓ Garbage is minimal and may contain used soil and plant material.
- ✓ Windows are covered.
- ✓ Bright light can be seen escaping from windows. Windows are often covered with condensation.
- ✓ Sounds of interior construction may be heard.
- ✓ Timers may be set inside the residence.
- ✓ Marijuana homes can produce a strong skunk-like odour.
- ✓ Items being brought into the house include soil planters, fans, large lights.
- ✓ Garbage bags are being taken out of the home and transported away.
- ✓ A grow house may not have snow on the roof when other homes in the area will.
- ✓ Unusual amounts of steam from vents.

Fig. 5.81: From Ontario Provincial Police official website

In March 2004, representatives of law enforcement, government, banking, real estate, insurance, and public utilities participated in a two-day summit entitled “Green Tide” to find ways to combat the explosion of indoor marijuana grow operations in Ontario. The ensuing publication “Green Tide: Indoor Marijuana Cultivation and its impact on Ontario,” began with the caveat that most of the statistics were projections based on information which itself was partial.

Among the report’s findings:

- Between 2000 and 2002, the number of grow-ops in Ontario is estimated to have increased by over 250 percent
- Police estimate as many as 15,000 grow-ops are active in Ontario
- As many as 10,000 children may have resided in grow-op dwellings between 2000-2003
- In 2002, in York, Peel, and Waterloo regions combined, 17 percent of grow-ops were located within 500 meters of a primary or secondary school
- Between 2000-2003 period grow-ops may cost Ontario as much as \$260 million
- By the end of 2003 as much as 1.2 million kilograms of marijuana will be produced in Ontario – much of it destined to the U.S. market
- Fire from grow-ops may cost Ontario as much as \$5.7 million over the 2000-2003 period
- Over the 2000-2003 period, police services could spend as much as \$33.8 million investigating and dismantling grow-ops
- The number of grow houses shut down by law enforcement jumped from 33 in 2001 to 168 in the first six months of 2004, an increase of 400%
- At least 1 in 25 grow houses will go up in flames as a result of overloaded of electrical circuits, posing a direct risk to adjacent homes

The report also warned of toxic mould spores and chemical fumes that could easily travel through the air to surrounding homes, with health consequences ranging from aggravation of allergies to potentially fatal infections and cancer. Furthermore, it emphasized the threat of potential violence associated with organized crime. The prevailing message was that

grow houses were a serious threat to public health and safety.

For the community of marijuana advocates, reports like Green Tide and other government actions are tantamount to fear mongering—casting pot-growers as evil and dangerous and a threat to the safety of children. In combatting this negative image, many advocates cite a recent Statistics Canada study showing that more than 10 million Canadians have used marijuana in their lifetime and that more than 3 million Canadians regularly use marijuana. Moreover, a number of studies have demonstrated the efficacy of medical marijuana. Currently, more than 70 Canadians are allowed to smoke marijuana legally through medical exemptions under Section 56 of the *Controlled Drugs and Substance Act*.

Marijuana advocates claim that efforts by governments and police to encourage “community involvement” is nothing but a form of “tattle-tale-justice” in which citizens are rewarded for spying on their neighbours’ activities. Rather than fostering community cohesion, this call for tipsters encourages mistrust of others, enables police to bypass legal restrictions on surveillance, and diminishes the civil liberties of all Canadian citizens.



Fig. 5.82: Photo of electrical tampering in a typical grow house



Fig. 5.83: Photo of electrical tampering in a typical grow house



Fig. 5.84: Photo of electrical tampering in a typical grow house



Fig. 5.85: Photo of electrical tampering in a typical grow house

Having read the Green Tide report, I wanted to investigate for myself this apparent epidemic that was ravaging the suburban landscape. I pulled out an address book from the old days and tracked down the number of another old neighbourhood friend. Like Jason, Jamie and I had gone to the same elementary and high schools and had lived in the neighbourhood for almost 20 years. I had not spoke to him since graduating high school, but as “old boys from the ghetto,” I knew he would be willing to help. He was now a police officer with Toronto’s 42 Division.

A few nights later, I found myself sitting with Jamie at his kitchen table while his fiancé prepared dinner, feeling out of place despite having spent so many weekday afternoons there as a child. After a brief period of obligatory catch-up, I asked him what he knew about grow houses in our neighbourhood, curious to uncover whether his experience as a front-line officer would corroborate the reports I had read.

“From what I can tell,” said Jamie, “and this is just from the grow houses that I have been involved with busting, it’s wholly an Asian-related phenomena.”

I wasn’t surprised. After all, we did live in a predominantly Asian community, with a greater concentration of Chinese than either of downtown’s Chinatowns.

“And there are more houses within the Division than there are police to bust them. We simply don’t have the manpower and resources to get them all. Durham Region has helicopters equipped with infra-red cameras to detect heat emissions from the roof. We aren’t so lucky. If anyone needs those, it’s us. We have more grow-ops busted than all the police regions within Toronto put together.”

The resentment in his voice was palpable. I asked him why he thought it was a purely Asian problem.

“To be honest, it’s easy money,” he said. “There’s little threat of jail time. Usually you get one night in jail. Most of the people we arrest are uneducated. They’re really just house-sitting, responsible for daily maintenance and security. There’s definitely someone at a higher level organizing the supplies, renovations, and processing. It’s not the handiwork of the people we find in the houses.”

He handed me a confidential internal report containing a list of all the houses busted in 42 Division between January and November of 2004. “I don’t know what you hope

to find by going to these places. From the outside they look untouched. It’s completely undetectable to the untrained eye that any criminal activity once took place there. The real damage is inside. Holes punched through walls, large vents running through the floor. The whole place is disgusting: warped floor boards, wires everywhere, no sign of furniture—maybe a stool or a mattress at best.”

He pointed to a number on the list. It was two doors down the street from his own house. I recognized the address—it was the home of another friend who had moved out five years ago.

I copied out the list. Dinner was almost ready. Figuring I had imposed enough, I begged off dinner. I thanked Jamie for his time, said goodbye to his fiancé, and quickly left. Secretly I hoped to avoid any more encounters with old high school classmates. Our paths had diverged.

In any case, I wanted to walk around my neighbourhood and see the houses on the list. What did they look like? Was there really nothing to be detected from the outside? It was bitterly cold and the sidewalks were slippery and poorly shoveled. I clumsily dragged my feet, hoping not to slip as I scanned the list of houses. Houses in the area all look the same, a huge sea of banal repetition. The only difference is the colour of the brick each representing a different phase in Upper Chartwell’s development. Otherwise, any of the houses I walked by might as well have been my own.

I started taking pictures. It was awkward at first, but I soon realized no one was watching me. No one cared about what was going on outside. No one would come and ask me what I was doing. Perhaps worse than the “Mad Max society” that Jason had predicted, it had become a ghost town. In no way did it resemble the exuberant neighbourhood I had known as a child.

# 26 The List

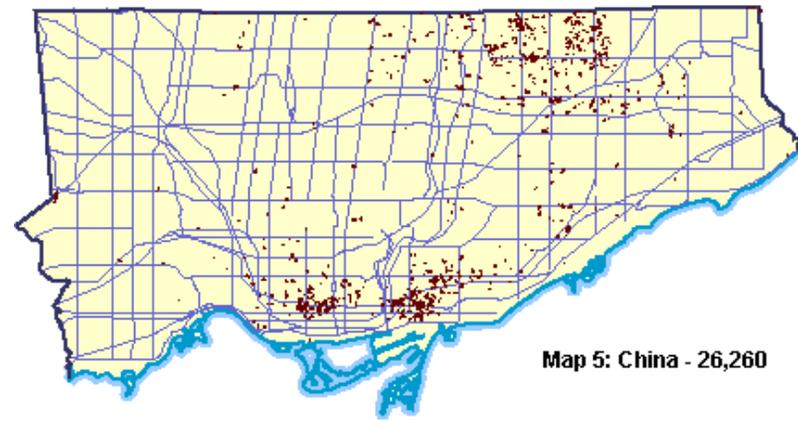
83 Melford Drive Unit 9	01.07.2004	16 Belgreen Avenue	06.22.2004
83 Castle hill Drive	01.08.2004	18 Moorehouse Drive	06.28.2004
24 Pipers Green Avenue	01.09.2004	670 Coronation Drive	06.30.2004
1703 Mcowan Road #209	01.10.2004	17 Inverary Crescent	07.05.2004
330 Alton Towers Circle	01.13.2004	153 Sandy Haven Drive	07.07.2004
2201 Brimley Road. Unit #5	01.16.2004	37 Little Leaf Drive	07.07.2004
42 Rainthorpe Crescent	01.16.2004	30 Carabob Court	07.11.2004
63 Siverstar Blvd.	01.26.2004	214 Timberbank Blvd.	07.12.2004
17 Rivergrove Drive	01.27.2004	93 Darby Court	07.15.2004
20 Silverstar Blvd.	01.28.2004	21 Raspberry Road	07.17.2004
182 Morningview trail	02.03.2004	39 Stanforth Drive	07.22.2004
27 Watson Street	02.04.2004	80 Alton Towers Circle	07.26.2004
21 Groverest Drive	02.06.2004	21 Templebar Crescent	08.07.2004
67 Holmbush Crescent	02.06.2004	2557 Kennedy Road	08.10.2004
210 Silverstar Blvd.	02.13.2004	3400 Eglinton Avenue	08.12.2004
50 Weybright Court Unit 20	02.20.2004	9 Eagle Point Road	08.12.2004
50 Weybright Court Unit 37	02.20.2004	54 Gorsey Square	08.14.2004
25 Bamburg Circle apt.2440	02.20.2004	31 Dalmation Crescent	08.14.2004
23 Sandyhook Square	02.25.2004	9 Sandrift Square	08.17.2004
154 Sandy Haven Drive	02.25.2004	22 Hatchet Place	08.19.2004
17 Pickford Road	03.01.2004	22 Queenscourt Drive	08.23.2004
2370 Midland Ave unit 22	03.03.2004	40 Marblemount Crescent	08.24.2004
2370 Midland Ave unit 23	03.03.2004	49 Westwater Drive	09.08.2004
151 Pony Meadow Terrace	03.08.2005	269 Goldhawk Trail	09.05.2004
129 Earlton Road	03.10.2004	189 Port Royal Trail	09.08.2004
50 Templebar Crescent	03.11.2004	52 Glanvil Crescent	09.08.2004
26 Orleans Drive	03.11.2004	93 Treetops Court	09.08.2004
80 Alton Towers Circle	03.12.2004	1 Linwood Avenue	09.09.2004
109 Chartway Road	03.16.2004	101 Confederation Drive	09.09.2004
124 New Forest Square	03.22.2004	3291 Birchmount Road	09.14.2004
10 Fort Dearborne Drive	03.22.2004	80 Alton Towers Circle	09.17.2004
37 Richbourne Court	03.26.2004	49 Alexmuir Blvd.	09.23.2004
20 Tuxedo Court	03.26.2004	33 Portico Drive	09.23.2004
2721 Markham Road	03.30.2004	1 Muirlands Drive	09.28.2004
32 Allanford Road	04.07.2004	19 Bramblebrook Avenue	09.29.2004
41 Merkeley Square	04.08.2004	99 January Drive	09.29.2004
25 Bellefontaine Street	04.08.2004	2410 Midland Avenue	09.29.2004
135 Pony Meadow Terrace	04.13.2004	17 Fluellen Drive	10.01.2004
270 Palmdale Drive	04.19.2004	80 Alton Towers Circle	10.03.2004
151 Valder Drive	04.19.2004	58 Shady Hallow Drive	10.09.2004
2716 Kennedy Road	04.27.2004	2 Innislawn Road	10.06.2004
19 Queenscourt Drive	05.10.2004	54 Chapeltown Crescent	10.16.2004
49 New Forest Square	05.27.2004	18 Queenscourt Drive	10.19.2004
6 Carondale Crescent	05.28.2004	120 Chapel Park Square	10.25.2004
410 Mclewin Avenue	05.28.2004	53 Lowestrest Blvd.	10.27.2004
66 Seagrove Crescent	06.01.2004	65 Oakhaven Drive	10.28.2004
15 Silbiry Drive	06.01.2004	16 LynnGate Crescent	10.29.2004
26 Dali Crescent	06.02.2004	4 Port Royal Trail	10.29.2004
3875 Lawrence Avenue	06.03.2004	50 Skagway Ave	10.29.2004
48 Newforest Square	06.04.2004	43 Candlebrook Crescent	11.04.2004
64 Wandering Trail	06.14.2004	3520 McNicoll Avenue	11.05.2004
9 Elmortit Drive	06.17.2004	39 Baronial Court	11.11.2004
31 Redhead Crescent	06.17.2004	37 Danjohn Crescent	11.12.2004
74 Alanbull Square	06.17.2004	23 Sonmore Drive	11.17.2004
119 Placentia Blvd.	06.22.2004	38 Piniery trail	11.18.2004



Fig. 5.86



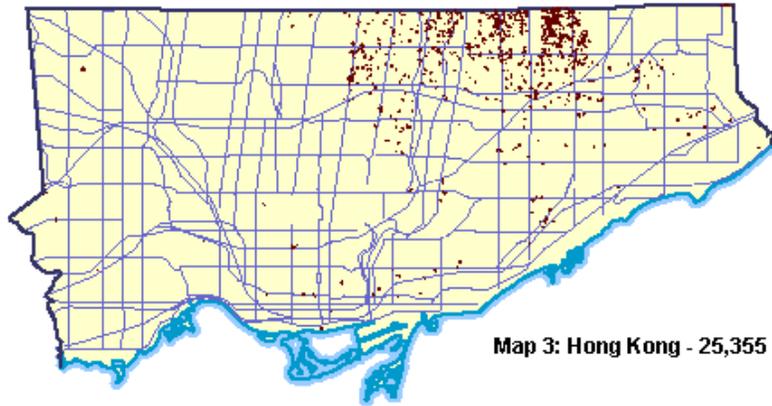
Fig. 5.87



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census  
 Prepared by Urban Planning and  
 Development Services

 **1 dot=20 people**

Fig. 5.88

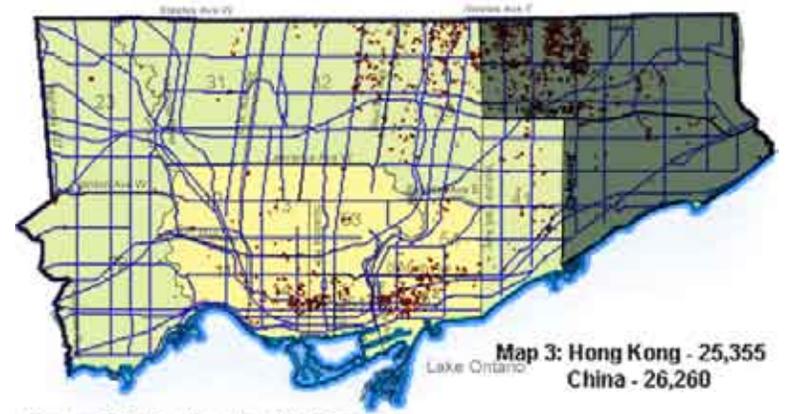


Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census  
 Prepared by UrbanPlanning and  
 Development Services



1 dot=20 people

Fig. 5.89



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census  
 Prepared by UrbanPlanning and  
 Development Services



1 dot=20 people

Fig. 5.90



Fig. 5.91: Location of grow house operations busted in 42 Division in 2004



Fig. 5.92: Location of grow house operations busted relative to my home

DISTRIBUTION OF CANADIAN-CHINESE POPULATION ACROSS CANADA (2001)

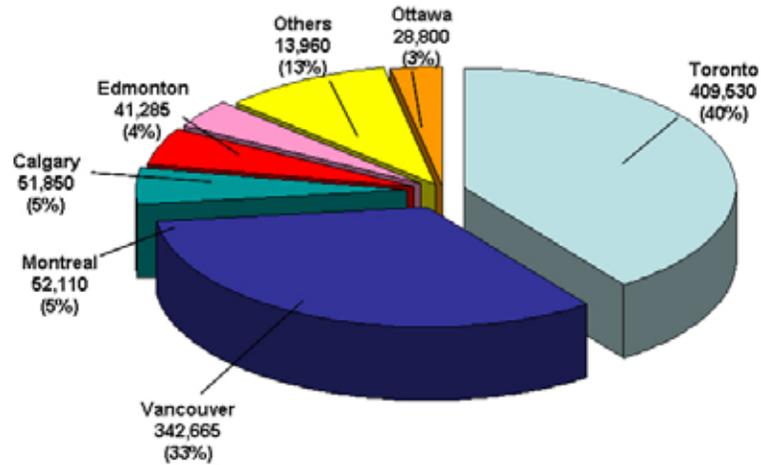


Fig. 5.93

According to the 2001 Census, the Chinese comprise the largest visible minority group in Canada, representing 26% of the visible-minority population and 3.5% of the total population. More than any other province, Ontario continues to be the preferred destination, home to nearly half of all Chinese in the country. Toronto's Chinese population alone represents 40% of all Chinese Canadians.<sup>46</sup>

In a June 2005 article in the Toronto Star, Toronto immigration consultant Alice Wu explained how Canada's longstanding policy of admitting skilled labourers and investment and China's recent entry into the world economy had made it easier for professionals from mainland China to enter Canada as independent immigrants, just as Hong Kongers had before. "It doesn't surprise me," Wu said. "Those who were qualified to immigrate to Canada had all left Hong Kong before 1997, and now it's the turn for those from mainland China."<sup>47</sup> The demographic change is also evident in the dramatic growth in membership of the Toronto-based Chinese Professionals Association of Canada, which has ballooned from less than 800 five years ago to about 13,000 today.

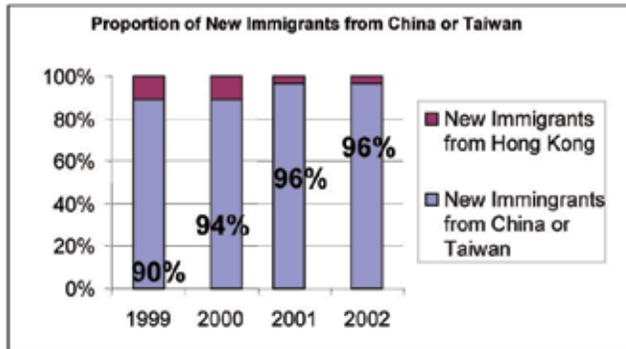
CHINESE-CANADIAN POPULATION GROWTH IN KEY CITIES

CMA	1996	2001	Growth
Toronto	359,450	409,530	↑ 14%
Vancouver	288,800	342,665	↑ 19%
Montreal	51,135	52,110	↑ 2%
Calgary	48,900	51,850	↑ 6%
Edmonton	42,145	41,285	↓ 2%

Fig. 5.94

The shifting population demographics, reflecting a new wave of investors, has in turn spurred a new wave of commercial and retail development along Scarborough's Steeles Avenue. These developments represent a third phase in the evolution of the neighbourhood, from traditional suburb, to ethnoburb, to a newer derivative of the ethnoburb model that fuses the ideas of old and new Chinatown.

In many ways, Scarborough has come to occupy the role that traditional Chinatowns had served for past generations of immigrants. The aging housing stock has made the area more accessible to lower income immigrants. As more economically mobile residents move to newly developed areas in Richmond Hill and Markham, Scarborough has been left to be repopulated by lower income immigrants who rely on the infrastructure established by the preceding wave of immigrants in the 1990s. In other words, the momentum of ethnic commercial activity that developed in earlier decades has provided the new immigrant population with a framework from which the fabric of the community can be transformed once again. Condominium retailing has resurfaced as a paradigm for



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

The recent immigration trend clearly indicates that the number of immigrants from Taiwan and Mainland China is growing rapidly.

Fig. 5.95

expanding the scope of ethnic commercial activity in the area. The proliferation of new projects and their size are evidence of a new wave of immigrants who are making their mark on the community.



Flow of human capital

Fig. 5.96



Flow of commercial capital

Fig. 5.97

## 29 Pacific Mall Expansion

On June 15, 2005, representatives of Remington Group Inc., owners of Market Village, and Torgan Group, owners of Pacific Mall, announced plans for a major expansion on the 34-acre site, including an additional 400,000 square feet of retail space (for a combined total of 1 million square feet), a multi-level parking structure, and a luxury hotel at the corner of Kennedy Road and Steeles Avenue. According to Sam Cohen, partner with Torgan Group, "This project will make the mall more attractive to the Chinese community and to the general public. Market Village and Pacific Mall are not just malls. They're cultural centres."<sup>48</sup>



Fig. 5.98

# 30 Casa Imperial



Fig. 5.99



Fig. 5.100



Fig. 5.101

The period house dates back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and is one of a few heritage pieces that remain in Scarborough. The Victorian mansion was converted and had been operating as a fine dining restaurant since the 1980s under the name Devonsleigh Place.

In June 2006, the restaurant was closed due to declining patronage. Following a brief period of inactivity, the restaurant was reopened under new ownership and management with the name Casa Imperial. While the building shell and interior remain the same, one key aspect has changed: it now serves a full menu of fine Chinese cuisine.



Fig. 5.102: Promotional Advertisement for Splendid China Tower

Directly across from Pacific Mall, where a Canadian Tire formerly sat, the Wah Shung Group is erecting the centerpiece to the largest Chinese shopping area in North America. Named Splendid China Tower, this development will house businesses and services that cater mainly to the growing population of residents in Scarborough and Markham originally from mainland China. In contrast to the more generically named Pacific Mall just across the street, Splendid China Tower is an unambiguous and specificity indicator of the project's target market.

Designed by D.Cho Design Inc., a small Markham firm, Splendid China Tower has a similar configuration to Pacific Mall, with stores ranging from 275 square feet to 800 square feet.<sup>50</sup> At a selling price of about \$675 per square foot, Splendid China tower will open close to 350 stores in direct competition with Pacific Mall and Market Village. Phase two of the project has enveloped the shell of the defunct Canadian Tire store. Phases three and four, yet to begin construction, feature an office tower and multi-storey parking structure.

Although some opponents have voiced concerns about the mall's impact on the

community, primarily in relation to traffic congestion and the saturation of Chinese retailing in the area, in general, many feel that the project will improve the market value of homes in proximity to the mall. As is the case with Pacific Mall, surrounding neighbourhoods within walking distance of the retail complex demand a higher selling price, especially when buyers are Chinese families. As of early November, the finishing touches to the project's exterior were underway, with tenants planning to move in by the new year.

Splendid China Tower is backed by Romspen Investment Corp. and is one of a cluster of four retail condominiums that the firm has been developing over the past five years on Steeles Avenue. Sheldon Esbin, president of Romspen Investment Corp. says, "They are geared to the Chinese ethnic market. Chinese entrepreneurs want ownership and retail condos meet that need... The demand for space is quite considerable."<sup>51</sup>

To date, more than 70 Chinese malls are spread across Scarborough, Markham, Richmond Hill, and Mississauga, with several larger developments currently under construction or awaiting approval.<sup>52</sup>



Fig. 5.103: Construction Site of Splendid China Tower Over Former Canadian Tire Store



Fig. 5.104: Rendering of Planned Landmark Shopping Centre

Proposed for the corner of Steeles Avenue and Markham Road, the Landmark will be the largest indoor condominium retail development in the GTA. Just a short distance from Pacific Mall, Market Village and the nearly completed Splendid China Tower, the Landmark is the latest addition to the resurgence in Chinese commercial activity along Steeles Avenue.

Covering 39 acres, the first phase of the development will house the flagship mall that will occupy half of the site. The new complex will boast 500 stores and over 310,000 square feet of new retail space. Construction of the mega-project began in the summer of 2006.



Fig. 5.105: Floor Plan of Planned Landmark Shopping Centre



Fig. 5.106: Rendering of Planned Landmark Shopping Centre



Fig. 5.107: Map of Planned Landmark Shopping Centre Location



Fig. 5.108: Site Map of Planned Landmark Shopping Centre



Fig. 5.109: Photo of T &amp; T Grocery Store at Steeles Ave. and Warden Ave.

Big box retailing first emerged in North America in the mid-1980s, supported by the increasing availability of cheap manufacturing abroad. Large retail giants such as Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and Staples were made possible in large part by the elaborate global transportation network that linked commercial outlets across North America to mass production centres in other parts of the world. Today they have saturated the market with a myriad of goods occupying a wide range of price points, altering the nature of shopping in the suburban landscape. The proliferation of big box chains can also be attributed to the increasing dependence on cars. The development of retail campuses are inherently linked to the car-dominated culture of the suburbs. As car usership increased, stores were able to locate themselves farther and farther from the city core. These campus-style outlets operate in competition with traditional mall typologies, offering a wider variety of products and brands under one roof. They further represent the evolution of the retail market towards volume and product selection.

Chinese commercial activity has seized upon the success of big box chains,



Fig. 5.110: Photo of T &amp; T Grocery Store at Steeles Ave. and Warden Ave.

attaching condominium-style developments to larger big box developments in both Scarborough and Markham. The alliance of more recognizable North American chains and Chinese-run businesses is evident in several new retail-campus developments along Steeles Avenue. Whereas Chinese malls of the 1980s and 1990s were predominantly stand-alone complexes, this new generation of projects illustrates a hybridization between conventional and less mainstream forms of commercial development.

Additionally, the market has also produced several big box chains that cater specifically to the Chinese market, suggesting a capacity for adaptation and succession. T & T Supermarket is a recent arrival to Toronto, offering a wide variety of Asian foods and specialty groceries along with household products and imported paraphernalia. Over the last three years, it has opened four locations in the GTA. Two of these are situated along Steeles Avenue at the border of Scarborough and Markham and are no more than five kilometres apart.



Fig. 5.111: Photo of Signage for Citywalk Plaza at Steeles Ave. and Kennedy Rd.



Fig. 5.112: Confiscated Pirating Paraphernalia



Fig. 5.113: Confiscated Pirating Paraphernalia

The United States recently labeled Canada as one of the five most active piracy hot spots in the world. Canada's appearance on the U.S. Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus' 2006 Country Watch List is conspicuous alongside less developed nations like China, Russia, Mexico, India, and Malaysia.<sup>53</sup>

Pacific Mall and neighbouring Chinese retail centres are known for their abundance of pirated DVDs. Travel to any of the larger malls and you will find a number of stores offering recently released movies, many still playing in local theatres, at drastically discounted prices. At 5 or more for \$20, these bootleg discs sell by the stack.

In May 2005, over \$800,000 worth of pirated DVDs were seized by the RCMP, part of a major crackdown on pirated merchandise offered at Pacific Mall and other bootleg hotspots. Almost a year later, police busted what they believed to be the largest DVD counterfeit ring in Canada, seizing 20,000 discs from three offices at the Dynasty Plaza in the Agincourt area of Scarborough. The offices were located adjacent to Dragon Centre and other Asian malls where police believed the bootleg DVD's were destined. The

piracy operation involved 142 DVD burners—enough equipment to turn out 560 DVDs an hour.<sup>54</sup>

## 35 The House of Ill Repute

From the outside, 88 Castleridge Drive in Richmond Hill is no different from any of the other stone-clad cookie-cutter homes in the area. Indeed, its generic façade was the perfect cover for an illegal bawdy house.

In the fall of 2006, the York Regional Police Department Drugs and Vice Enforcement Bureau conducted an investigation into the activities occurring at the private residence after being tipped off by neighbours of suspicious activity. Luxury cars were observed parked outside the house with up to 60 men coming and going at all hours of the day and night. After it was discovered that renters of the home were running a thriving Asian-oriented bawdy house, police raided the residence, making several arrests.

Over the past few years, York Regional Police have cracked down on illegal prostitution rings operating out of massage parlours around the city, but this most recent bust was the first in a suburban home setting. Describing the operation to the Globe and Mail, Detective Palmer said “this represents a shift in criminal behaviour that could be compared to the changes in marijuana production, where growers have made a wholesale change from outdoor rural operations to suburban grow-ops located in family neighbourhoods...They’re not stupid, and they go with what works. They move from bank robbery to debit fraud. They start grow-ops. This is a logical progression. They need to stay under the police radar.”<sup>55</sup>

Ironically, it was rising awareness of home-based grow-ops that helped tip off neighbours that business was not as usual at 88 Castledrive. “A few years ago, the operators of No. 88 might have kept their business secret,” Detective Palmer said. “Grow-ops have taught people to be suspicious.”<sup>56</sup>



Fig. 5.113: Photo of 88 Castledrive

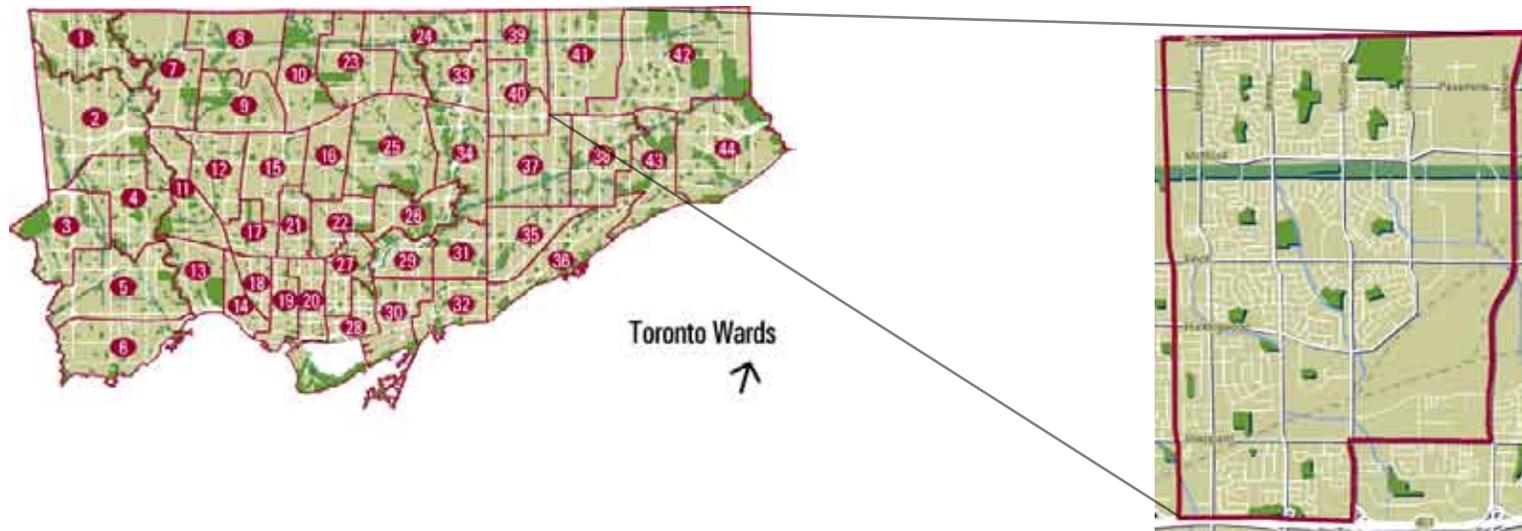


Fig. 5.114: Ward 41

For residents of Ward 41 (Scarborough-Rouge River), one of the top issues concerning the community during the November 2006 municipal elections was the perceived decline in community maintenance and pride. Bylaw infractions such as poorly maintained lawns, littered sidewalks, and illegal on-street parking were some of the specific concerns among voters. For many longtime residents, these complaints were symptomatic of a larger problem: the proliferation of illegal rooming houses in the neighbourhood.<sup>57</sup>

The neighbourhood is in a clear state of flux. Almost half of Ward 41's residents are newcomers, having been in Canada for less than 15 years. This has led many longtime residents to point the finger at newcomers for the community's apparent dilapidation. Among them Council candidate and local resident Chin Lee commented on the evolving nature of Scarborough-Rouge: "When I first moved into the ward 17 years ago, it was much cleaner, better kept. But the community seems to be falling apart, and we need to work hard to build a more stable, strong and vibrant community."<sup>58</sup>

One problem maybe the learning curve associated with first time home

ownership. A secondary reason is that new residents no longer subscribe to the pristine image of the picket-fenced manicured single family dwelling. My own family cannot deny the opportunities for reappropriation of our own home. On the advice of an old family friend, neighbour, and real estate agent, our family had renovated our basement to accommodate a rentable suite.

Sherry moved from Shanghai to our neighbourhood with her husband in the late 1990s. Their house is just several blocks from ours, in a newer area of Upper Chartwell. Sherry is now a registered real estate agent brokering deals and flipping homes in our neighbourhood as a secondary income. She arranged for her crew of contractors to take a look at our place and offer suggestions and quotations for the basement retrofit. Because the contractors spoke no English, the entire deal was arranged and brokered by Sherry, leaving my mother at the mercy of her broken Mandarin.

"The market is hot in this neighbourhood," she explained. "This neighbourhood is highly desirable for both purchase and rental. I wouldn't sell your house now. You'll

make more money by renting it out.” She assured us that although the contractors were not registered, they were very credible and that she used them exclusively in all her real estate ventures, including her own home.

To give us an idea of what we might consider doing, Sherry and her husband took us on a tour of their house. They have modified their single-family home into a triplex, housing two other sets of tenants, one each in the basement and on the second floor. “With just me and my husband, there is no need for such a huge house...this way, we can own a property and generate money from it.”

Throughout the recent decade of transformation in my neighbourhood, there has been an increase in the number of people and families being accommodated by the average single family home. Whether being opened up to extended family members such as grandparents, or rented to unrelated families, the typical functions and configurations of the cookie-cutter home across the neighbourhood are being modified. Accompanying the shifting demographic are new layers and attitudes towards the function and purpose of the private home.

The influence of this trend has also expanded into live-work spaces. For instance, my next door neighbour’s home has been modified to house a miniature cottage industry of garment manufacturing. Once a week, a minivan arrives in front of my neighbour’s house to drop off large bolts of fabric and pick up completed garments. My neighbour’s wife has set up a makeshift sewing room where she transforms the bolts of jersey into jogging pants and sweatshirts. During the summer days, she can be seen through the open garage door working away for hours on end at her sewing station—a convenient way to be a stay-at-home mom while still bringing in an income.

It is unclear whether this economic activity is best classified as exploitative or industrious. But the truth remains that within the immediate environs of my own home, the suburban home is being imbued with a new set of values that is making subtle but very decisive transformations to the neighbourhood.



Fig.5.115



Fig.5.116



Fig. 5.117

The transformation of the suburban house into a marijuana grow house, a workspace, or a rooming house are indicative of a trend of self-appropriation that is redefining the traditional role of the suburban community. Through these home modifications, aging suburbs like Scarborough begin to function in a similar way that traditional urban Chinatowns did in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, providing minority groups with a full range of social, economic and political services that ensure survival within a challenging environment. Whereas many of these activities in the past might have been used to vilify a community's constituents, here they offer a new paradigm for development, one that is adaptive, resourceful and sympathetic to rapid change. These new habitation patterns are malleable spaces that accommodate a wide variety of programmes, utilities and varying strata of the immigrant population. This evolution represents a hybridization of the ethnoburb and the downtown Chinatown.

As older and increasingly affluent Chinese Canadian residents move into newer developments in Markham and Richmond Hill, Scarborough has become a new entry point for lower economic strata of recently arriving immigrants. Occupancy adaptations to the



Fig. 5.118

single family home are just one indicator of this trend. As an aging ethnoburb, Scarborough has become a marketable destination because its older homes are more affordable and the neighbourhood already has an established and thriving economic infrastructure for growth. As one Toronto Star article describes the dynamic,

*[T]here's a divide within this community, too, isolating the affluent suburbanites of Markham and Richmond Hill from more struggling counterparts in Scarborough. Steeles Avenue separates the sprawling homes and lush lawns of the north from the rooming houses and basement rentals to the south... There is a clear line along social class within the community, you know, just like any other community.<sup>59</sup>*

While it may be easy to frown upon the class division within the community, the movement patterns from Scarborough to Markham and beyond represent a form of chain migration, just as the urban Chinatown provided a stepping stone for economic mobility from the ghetto and into the suburbs.



Fig. 5.119



Fig. 5.120

By 2017, Statistics Canada projects that visible minorities will make up more than half of Toronto's population, ranging between 2.8 million and 3.9 million.<sup>61</sup> Over the next 20 years, the total population of the GTA is expected to grow from five million to seven million people.<sup>62</sup> Inevitably, this will mean that more and more neighbourhoods will look less and less like they did in the past. Scarborough's transformation brings together new ideas about how the typical North American suburb can be reinterpreted, reinhabited, and repurposed to meet the needs of a shifting population. The transformation of the suburban home to accommodate new programmes and forms of occupancy reflect a dismissal of the traditional suburban fantasy and a layering of new meanings and systems over an existing system. As new retail developments inhabit derelict and abandoned spaces, new building uses and functions are imposed over built landscapes, offering new options for commercial viability as well as density into the suburban fabric. Together, these forces reflect the emergence of self-sustaining, self-regulating systems within the community and offer an alternative framework for community building.



Fig. 5.121



Fig. 5.122

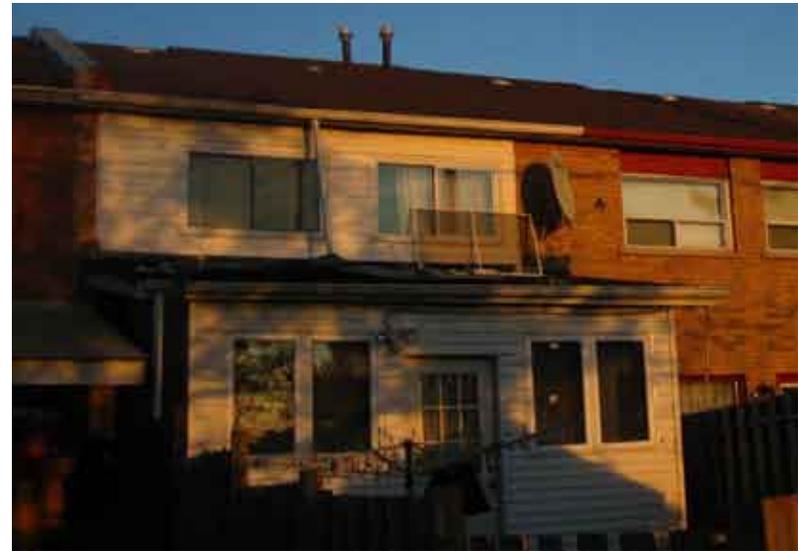


Fig. 5.123



Fig. 5.124



Fig. 5.125



Fig. 5.126



Fig. 5.127



Fig. 5.128



Fig. 5.129



Fig. 5.130



Fig. 5.131



Fig. 5.132



Fig. 5.133



Fig. 5.134



Fig. 5.135

*"The enemy advances, we retreat;  
The enemy camps, we harass;  
The enemy tires, we attack;  
The enemy retreats, we pursue"*

Mao Zedong, ca. 1967

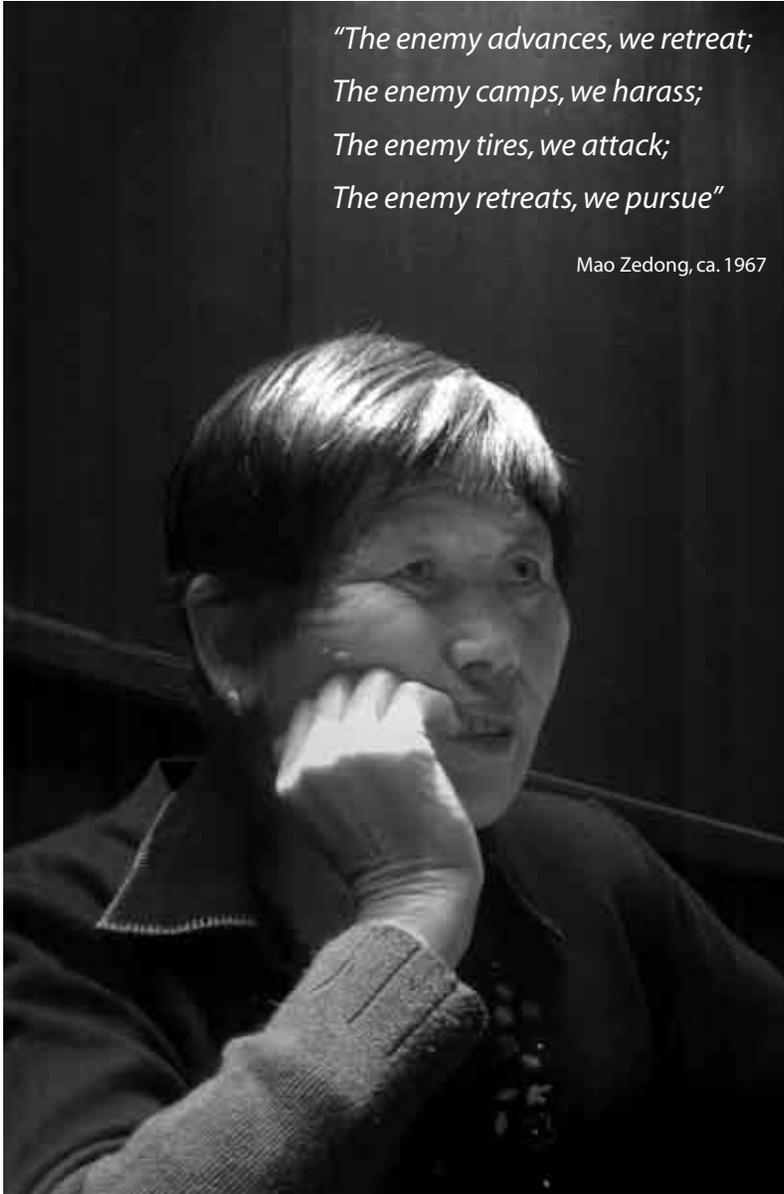


Fig. 6.01



Fig. 6.02

# CHAPTER 6: EPISODES

## **ep·i·sode: n.**

One of a series of related events in the course of a continuous account;

An incident or event that is part of a progression or a larger sequence

This final chapter offers a constellation of ideas about the current global condition, with a specific emphasis on how China's meteoric rise resonates throughout the world today, an impact that will continue to be a major influence in the immediate and distant future. The projection of these trajectories is then followed by a survey of varying developmental strategies that touch upon a new paradigm of progress—one guided by self-sustaining patterns of growth. As a ghettopia, the last part of this chapter offers a speculative vision that challenges the conventional image of progress, "starting from the fake, to talk about its reality."



Fig. 6.03: The Official City 1, Digital Collage



Fig. 6.04: The Official City 2, Digital Collage

Some of the earliest cartographers saw the map as a way to imbue their world with meaning. The use of elementary imagery and symbols became a code for memories and imaginations of places known and unknown. On the Lenox Globe, the oldest post-Columbian globe in existence (c. 1503), the Latin words *hic sunt dracones* (here are dragons) appear along the eastern coast of Asia near the equator. For these early cartographers, the phrase was used to demarcate the edges of explored territory—a way to delineate the edges of the contained world and the beginning of the untamed wilderness.

Other early maps used images of beasts over unconquered lands while associating their own homelands with heavenly beings. The act of drawing a map developed into a way to partition the world using relative concepts of “within” and “without.” In this respect, present day maps have changed very little. The drawing of today’s borders is seldom based on actual conditions of the land and the peoples who inhabit them. Instead, maps have become visual translations of a territory of influence and governance. For centuries, the state and military have employed the map as the symbolic emblem of power—a way of indicating dominance over a given territory.

Since the events of September 11, 2001, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency has employed a new map to outline its revised global agenda. Thomas Barnett, a professor at the Naval War College, recently devised “Pentagon’s New Map,” summarizing a plan of action to replace America’s outdated Cold War foreign policy. According to proponents of this initiative, the new enemy is no longer a singular nation or ideology but rather a collection of disconnected regions around the world where non-national groups threaten the existing political, economic, and social fabric. According to Barnett, the world is divided into two groups: (1) the “Functioning Core,” comprising nations that are already functioning in the new Global System or who are clearly and firmly going in that direction; and (2) the “Non-Functioning Gap,” comprising nations that are not yet functioning in the Global System and are not likely to do so in the foreseeable future. The new agenda of the Pentagon is to close this “gap” in order to achieve a truly globalized economy and thereby gain control over these rogue nations—a form of modern-day dragon slaying.<sup>1</sup>

The idea that the world can be divided into two realms, a “functioning core” and a “non-integrated gap,” can also be translated to the scale of the city. Already discussed



Fig. 6.05: The Unofficial City 1, Digital Collage



Fig. 6.06: The Unofficial City 2, Digital Collage

are numerous ways in which the established system has reshaped the physical form and aesthetic of the urban fabric—as executed by “functioning core” values. Corresponding acts of subversion to this system are carried out by parties of a “non-integrated gap,” often the marginalized members of that particular society. The city itself can therefore be defined by these two opposing forces, those of the Official City and the resistance of the Unofficial City. The two cities operate in parallel to one another.

The Official City, the city proper, remains the domain of the official population, often those who count themselves in the majority. It is regulated by governments, laws, enforcement agents, and informal codes of conduct. Its agenda is expansion and regulation of vast terrains. As implemented by regulatory bodies, governments, laws, boundaries, and borders, it parcels the world into precincts, districts, zones, units, and individuals for the primary purpose of management. This city celebrates the skyline, the project of glamour, permanence, and the public image.

The Unofficial City operates against the grain of the Official City, occupying the residual spaces and building itself in the shadows. Its growth is characterized by

subversive, informal patterns of development. These patterns are unconventional, non-conforming, and constantly renegotiating their survival in response to temporal and situational conditions. They form a reactionary architecture, one that is self-generating, improvisational, and unpredictable.

In the past, the Unofficial City remained confined to various precincts, its growth monitored and kept at bay by centralized governance structures. More recently, however, the city has been assaulted by emergent patterns that transgress the conventional terrain of the Unofficial City. As the threshold separating the two has grown more permeable, the distinctions between them have diminished. The outbreak of SARs and avian influenza as well as the diffusion of transnational terrorist syndicates reveal that the points of contact between these two realms are growing. Both worlds are increasingly occupying the same space. They are no longer restricted by borders, perimeter, nationalities, and citizenship. The world is collapsed.

## 02 Hegemony

For the time being, China is listed by the Pentagon as a member of the “Functioning Core.” However, its ongoing human rights violations, reluctance to integrate its currency into the global system, and persistent intellectual property rights violations, in addition to growing competition for natural resources and militaristic tension over Taiwan, continue to challenge its relationship with the United States.

What makes China’s ascendancy so noteworthy is not only the sheer scale of the national output, but also the all-encompassing spread of its influence. Equally astonishing is the speed with which China has leapfrogged up the ladder of development, transitioning in a very short time into a mature capitalist economy. This transformation is all the more remarkable given that China has remained under an autocratic regime. China remains the only Communist nation in the post-Cold War era to openly embrace capitalism without surrendering its one party rule—an exception to the prevailing model. For quite some time, the model for progress in the modern world has been the hand-in-hand development of free markets and democracy—the shift away from command-based societies towards capitalist democratic ones. For renowned economist Robert Heilbroner,

the growth of a capitalist society engenders the demand for rights and freedoms offered under the umbrella of democracy.<sup>2</sup> The growth of the two systems is mutually dependant and inseparable. In this respect, China is entering into uncharted territory, forging a path with global ramifications.

Over the past four centuries, there have been two great shifts in global power. The first came in Europe, with the onset of the Industrial Revolution during the 17th century. Europe’s rise over this period was marked by territorial expansion, the vast accumulation of wealth, and the diffusion of its dominant ideologies around the world. The second shift in global power was the rise of the United States in the late 19th and 20th centuries. By the end of the Cold War, the US had emerged as the single most powerful country in the world, the decisive player in global economics and politics.

For centuries, the rest of the world has been the stage for the ambitions and interests of the West’s great powers. As Ronald Wright, author of *A Short History of Progress* and the 2004 Massey Lecturer, explains, the success of the Western world, as defined by our “two century long bubble of freedom and affluence,” is not the convention when surveying



Fig. 6.07

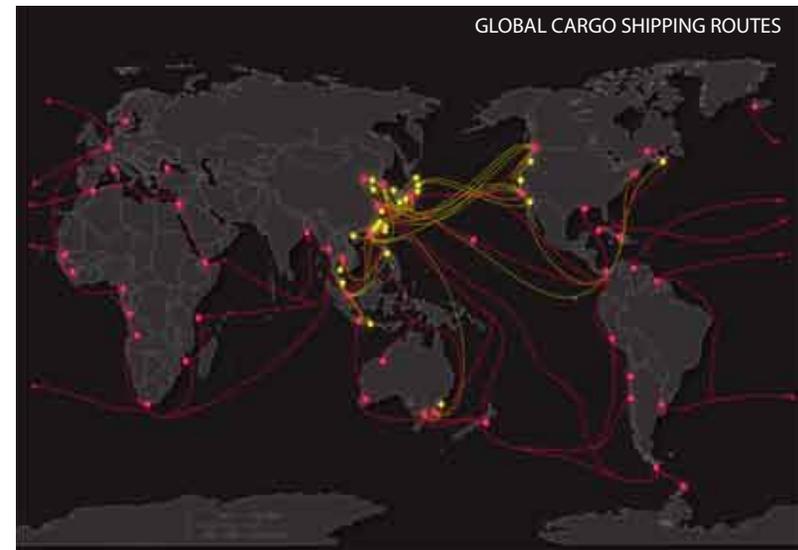


Fig. 6.08

the vast scope of human civilization: “[T]his new order is an anomaly: the opposite of what usually happens as civilizations grow. Our age was bankrolled by the seizing of half the planet, extended by taking over the rest of the remaining half, and has been sustained by spending down new forms of natural capital.” For these great nations, there are no more worlds left to conquer and pillage.

Great powers are not born every day. The list of current ones—the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia—has gone uncontested for the greater part of two centuries. The arrival of a new member usually produces tension if not turmoil, as the newcomer tries to fit into the established order—or overturns it to suit its purposes. Think of the imperialist ambitions of Germany and Japan in the early 20th century, or more contemporary examples of North Korea or Iran.

China’s rise represents a shift in the global balance of power—a destabilization of that long-standing world order. Along with the concurrent rise of India, and perhaps even the military posturing of North Korea, China’s ascendancy as the world’s next superpower is symptomatic of the relocation of centre of the world. Correspondingly, the

models and prototypes with which societies have been structured are also dissolving as the dynamics of global power realign and recalibrate. Traditional emblems of progress that have dominated much of the 20th century are now challenged by the alternatives posed by a world no longer in the grips of a single superpower.

What might that new world look like? What do scholars and visionaries tell us? What evidence is there to chart the course of civilization’s path? How can we mitigate the official, established order and the informal, unregulated world? This final chapter offers an incomplete blueprint for how these two realms might intersect, whether stitched together or violently collided. Oscillating scales of the globe and the city offer the conditions for the shifting polarity. Throughout, a constellation of imaginations propose a multifaceted response. Surveying various impressions and forecasts about the future offers a possible reading of a reality yet to come. Sometimes conflicting, sometime overlapping ideas about a new form of the city, each vision offers a different perspective, a possible reality.



Fig. 6.09



Fig. 6.10



Fig. 6.11

Consider: the world's urban populations will soon surpass rural populations for the first time in human civilization. The projections for the next 50 years indicate that urban growth rates will rise steadily, particularly in the developing world. Within that period, the urban population in those countries is predicted to double from 1.9 billion to almost 4 billion.<sup>3</sup>

For the vast majority of these nations, the population explosion will be absorbed in cities, exacerbating existing urban problems such as overcrowding, housing insecurity, poverty, and inadequate sanitation or potable water. In the next 15 years to come, one billion more people are expected to settle in those cities.<sup>4</sup> According to the UN, 24 of the 30 largest cities or city regions will be located in developing countries by 2015.<sup>5</sup> Over the next two decades, it is estimated that eight out of every ten urbanites will live in one of these developing regions.<sup>6</sup>

The conditions faced by new arrivals to the urban fringe are characterized by marginality. Formal housing markets rarely supply sufficient accessible housing stock to low income families. Out of necessity, many turn to self-built shanties, informal rentals, pirate subdivisions, or else the streets. The UN estimates that at least 921 million



Fig. 6.12

people worldwide lived in slums in 2001, and more than one billion in 2005.<sup>7</sup> Growing at a staggering rate of 25 million per year, the global population of slum dwellers will reach two billion by 2040.<sup>8</sup>

In order to survive, marginalized urban populations—new and old—populate the peripheral economic niches of personal service, casual labor, street-vending, ragpicking, begging, sex work, and crime. Slums have become the dumping ground for more than one billion informal workers.<sup>9</sup>

*"Instead of cities of light, soaring toward heaven, much of the twenty-first-century urban world squats in squalor, surrounded by pollution, excrement and decay."*<sup>10</sup>

Mike Davis, Planet of Slums 2006

## 04 Forbidden Garden



Fig. 6.13



Fig. 6.14

“Discover the mysteries of Imperial China,”<sup>11</sup> reads its promotional website. In the plains of Katy, Texas, just a short distance outside of Houston, a little piece of China has been recreated for recreational enjoyment. Completed in 1997, at the cost of some \$20 million by a private investor, Forbidden Gardens covers over 40 acres of land and 2,000 years of Chinese history. Among the park's many attractions is a one-third scale replica of the tomb of China's first emperor, Qin Shihuangdi, complete with the 6,000 terracotta warrior statues found buried adjacent to his burial mound. The park's version of the warriors was cast from the originals unearthed in Xi'an, China, in 1974. Nearby, under a 40,000 square foot canopy, are scale models of the Forbidden City in Beijing, the Temple of Heaven, the Calming of the Heart Lodge, the canal city of Suzhou, and other Chinese landmarks. In addition to the architectural replicas, visitors can explore the courtyards, gardens, arcades and koi ponds located through out the site, while traditional Chinese music plays in the background.



Fig. 6.15

Since its founding in 1976, Habitat for Humanity International has helped create homes and communities for hundreds of thousands of families in the US and globally. In 2003, the organization announced a major new initiative in its fight against global homelessness. At the Global Village and Discovery Center, an interactive museum located adjacent to HFHI's headquarters in Americus, Georgia, visitors are invited to learn about the housing realities of the world's poor as well as the organization's work in improving such abject conditions.

A "theme park for poverty housing," the 2.6-hectare development boasts no thrill rides or ferris wheels or cotton candy. Instead, visitors are invited to experience first-hand the living conditions common in city fringes around the world. The park's centerpieces are the Living in Poverty Area and the Village Area. The first is a painstakingly recreated slum, showcasing life-size models of poverty housing typologies from Africa, Asia, and Central America; the second is a life-sized 3D showcase of HFHI houses around the world. Visitors learn about construction materials and the costs of building secure housing, and can test their skills at brick-making, tile-laying, and well-digging, skills essential to any impoverished citizen of slum communities.

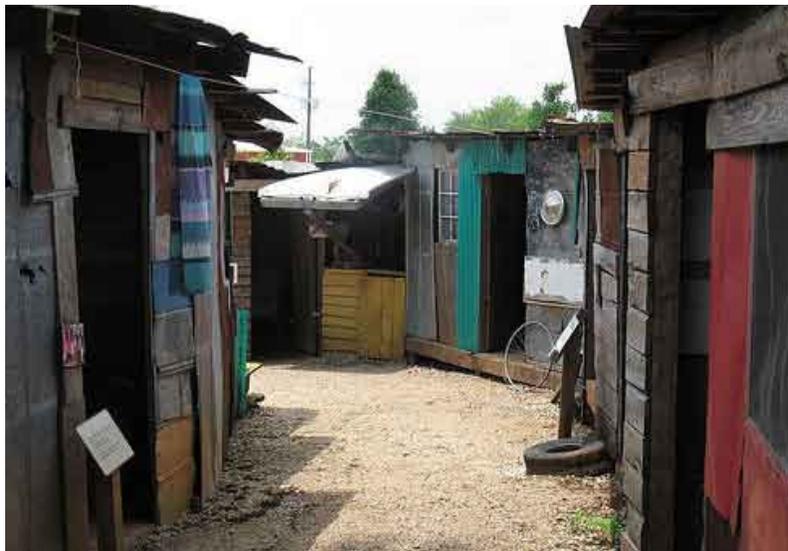


Fig. 6.16

**KASIGO: SKELETON HOUSE**

Guggenheim Museum, New York 2001

"Core units are hugely popular in South Africa. You build a small functional building with some electricity. They are very cheap. People can build around them any way they like or can afford to. For the Guggenheim exhibition I showed an example of Kaige, a suburb of Johannesburg. The city provides a simple structure: a roof on stilts and connections to the sewage and water system. Owners build the rest with whatever materials they have at hand."<sup>12</sup>

**NERLIDRE: THE 24 HOUR ORDINANCE**

Worcester Art Museum, 1999

"Another initiative I like is the 24 hour-ordinance in Turkey. Whatever you build in 24 hours that has a roof is allowed to stay in place. People live in permanently unfinished buildings, so they don't pay taxes. I think that's quite harmonious. These are just great solutions—they work fine. We all know that shantytowns have lots of positive sides to them. I read in Harvard Design Magazine a great article that said that people in shantytowns who are offered places in public housing just refuse to go there. They have their own aspirations to live better."<sup>13</sup>

The work of architect-turned-sculptor Marjertica Potrc explores building patterns in shanty towns and documents viable makeshift housing solutions that have emerged around the world in response to the rapid expansion of slum communities. Her installations feature recreated models portraying the improvisational building tactics and temporary structures of squatter communities—a celebration of ingenuity amidst adversity. These projects highlight the success of autonomous initiatives that have created communities with their own internal patterns of organization, economy, and social support.

Describing her work in Metropolis Magazine, Potrc comments,



Fig. 6.17



Fig. 6.18



Fig. 6.19



Fig. 6.20

*"What I am doing is celebrating the individual initiative, which usually cannot be controlled by city planners but can be approached by them... I don't go for those big city ideas; its better to make small additions to existing buildings."*<sup>11</sup>



Fig. 6.20

Xing Danwen uses large-scale photographs to explore the social impact of China's urban ascendancy. The Beijing-based artist has exhibited widely, including shows at the Whitney Museum in New York, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the 2002 Guangzhou Triennial, and the Millennium Art Museum of China. In *Urban Fiction*, her latest body of work, a series of large photographs taken of architectural models evokes the world of real estate sales office maquettes. Documenting future developments, Xing offers a dystopic vision of China's future. From a distance, the photos reveal the vast scale

of modern China's architectural transformation, evident in the repetitiveness of the massive housing blocks. The intricacy of the models highlight the labour-intensive manufacturing process, a theme common throughout Xing's work. The initial impression is that globalization and the homogenization of the urban landscape are remaking cities in China into spaces devoid of character. Closer inspection, however, reveals a secondary narrative weaved within the large prints. Amidst the sterility of the real estate maquettes, Xing inserts dramatic scenes revealing the underbelly of this recreated worldview. Scenarios of suicide,

murder, and clandestine love affairs offer a critique of modern expansionism and the pursuit of a consumer-dominated lifestyle. The photos highlight both the image-driven fantasies of status and wealth exploited by real estate developers as well as a reality of dysfunction that lies behind these hollow promises of glamour and prestige. Xing describes her own work as "starting from the fake landscape to talk about its reality."



Fig. 6.21

Fig. 6.22

The mythology of technology revolting against mankind emerged as a fictional genre after the Industrial Revolution, providing cautionary tales of the hidden danger within the promise of progress. This tradition continues in the contemporary story-telling medium of film. In more recent depictions of this story, the city of Shanghai is sometimes used as the setting for technology's revolt—the city where the conflict between official and unofficial populations collide. In both *Code 46* and *UltraViolet*, technology-mediated abuses by the mainstream lead to resistance from a marginalized underground population.

Set in the near future, *Code 46* (2003) creates a unique vision of an emotionally devoid future where genetic engineering has redefined population migration and border permeability. World population growth is regulated by in-vitro fertilization, embryo splitting, and cloning, processes so widespread that restrictions on unscreened sexual encounters are needed to avoid incestuous births. For the leading character, trouble arises when he falls for a genetically incompatible lover. In violation of Code 46, the two evade prosecution by pursuing their clandestine love affair in the swashbuckling Jabul Ali Free Zone. Escaping controlled checkpoints with forged papers, they forfeit their official status, jobs, freedoms,

and identity to join the banished masses existing outside of the mainstream society.

In *UltraViolet* (2006), the late 21<sup>st</sup> century is plagued by a genetically mutated disease called hemophagia. The infected form an entire race of marginalized citizens. Fear-mongering empowers the ruling elite to crack down on the infected populous, who are herded into compounds away from the general public. Insurrection arises when a systematic extermination campaign against the hemophages begins. In retaliation, the infected warriors, led by Violet, use their enhanced speed, intelligence, and strength—side effects of hemophagia—to launch a civil war against the army of military exterminators in a series of epic bloody battles.

In both films, Shanghai's modern skyline offers a glimpse of the architecture of the future society. Its glossy veneer disguise a hidden danger—a thin threshold between the regulated and unregulated city. Ultimately, both narratives end with the rupture of that barrier. *Code 46* ends with official city prevailing, having suppressed the informal anomaly. In *UltraViolet* as in *Frankenstein*, the created destroys its creator.

**7**: times China's urban population has doubled over the past 5 decades, from 72 million in 1952 to 540 million in 2004<sup>14</sup>

**900 million**: number of Chinese projected to be living in cities by the year 2010<sup>15</sup>

**4**: number of times China's gross domestic product (GDP) doubled between 1980 and 2000<sup>16</sup>

**75**: estimated percentage by which the Chinese economy will exceed that of the United States by 2050<sup>17</sup>

**2003**: the year China overtook the United States as the largest recipient of foreign investment. The following year, China attracted \$60 billion U.S. dollars<sup>18</sup>

**200**: number of Fortune 500 companies that have set up offices in Shanghai<sup>19</sup>

**260 billion**: amount of dollars in US treasury bonds and US foreign exchange reserves currently held by China (second only to Japan)<sup>20</sup>

**170,850**: number of Communist party officials disciplined for corruption in 2004<sup>21</sup>

**66**: percentage of counterfeit goods seized at U.S. borders that originate from China<sup>22</sup>

**200 million**: number of Chinese adults considered overweight (approximately 15% of the population)<sup>23</sup>

**90 million**: number of Chinese adults considered obese<sup>24</sup>

**15**: percentage of the country's GDP that pollution-related illness will consume by 2030<sup>25</sup>

**2**: China's ranking in oil imports, second only to the US. China is expected to more than double its imports by 2020<sup>26</sup>

**6**: number of the world's 10 most polluted cities that are found in China<sup>27</sup>

**600,000**: number of people between 2001 and 2020 who are expected to die prematurely in China each year due to urban air pollution<sup>28</sup>

**30**: percentage of cities in China on which acid rain has fallen<sup>29</sup>

**1**: China's ranking in world automobile deaths (680 die and 45,000 are injured every day, according to the World Health Organization)<sup>30</sup>

**5**: number of minutes in between every automobile death in China<sup>31</sup>

**63 million**: tons of pork consumed in China in 2004<sup>32</sup>

**50**: percentage of the global population of pigs found in China<sup>33</sup>

**32**: percentage of the world's rice consumed in China in 2005<sup>34</sup>

**5**: China's current ranking among the world's largest retail markets, expected to reach #1 by 2020<sup>35</sup>

**2000**: year in which the number of refrigerators and TV sets in China surpassed those in the United States<sup>36</sup>

**24 million**: number of motor vehicles registered in China in 2003<sup>37</sup>

**5 million**: number of new car purchases in 2005<sup>38</sup>

**10**: number of years (1994-2004) required for China to double its oil usage, from 4 million barrels per day to 8 million barrels per day<sup>39</sup>

**269 million**: number of cell phones in China in 2003, up from 7 million in 1996<sup>40</sup>

**218 billion**: number of cell-phone text messages sent in 2004<sup>41</sup>

**20**: percentage of the world's ice cream consume by China<sup>42</sup>

**28**: number of months in which the percentage of personal computer ownership in China doubles<sup>43</sup>

**700**: estimated number of Chinese ballistic missiles pointed at Taiwan<sup>44</sup>

**2.5 million**: number of soldiers in the Chinese army, the world's largest<sup>45</sup>

**4**: current global ranking of China's defense budget, which is rising by more than 10 percent annually<sup>46</sup>

**47**: percentage of the world's cement consumed by China in 2005<sup>47</sup>

**37**: percentage of the world's cotton supply consumed by China in 2005<sup>48</sup>

**26**: percentage of the world's supply of crude steel consumed by Chinese industries in 2005<sup>49</sup>



Fig. 6.22

*"OURS is a solemn moment. We stand at a crisis - the supreme crisis of the ages. For unnumbered millenniums man has toiled upward from the dank jungles of savagery toward glorious heights which his mental and spiritual potentialities give promise that he shall attain. His path has been slow and wavering. Time and again he has lost his way and plunged into deep valleys. Man's trail is littered with the wrecks of dead civilizations and dotted with the graves of promising peoples stricken by an untimely end.*

*Humanity has thus suffered many a disaster. Yet none of these disasters were fatal, because they were merely local. Those wrecked civilizations and blighted peoples were only parts of a larger whole. Always some strong barbarians, endowed with rich, unspoiled heredities, caught the falling torch and bore it onward flaming high once more...*

*...The earth has grown small, and men are everywhere in close touch. If white civilization goes down, the white race is irretrievably ruined. It will be swamped by the triumphant colored races, who will obliterate the white man by elimination or absorption. What has taken place in Central Asia,*

*once a white and now a brown or yellow land, will take place in Australasia, Europe, and America. Not to-day, nor yet to-morrow; perhaps not for generations; but surely in the end. If the present drift be not changed, we whites are all ultimately doomed. Unless we set our house in order, the doom will sooner or later overtake us all.*

*And that would mean that the race obviously endowed with the greatest creative ability, the race which had achieved most in the past and which gave the richer promise for the future, had passed away, carrying with it to the grave those potencies upon which the realization of man's highest hopes depends. A million years of human evolution might go uncrowned, and earth's supreme life-product, man, might never fulfill his potential destiny. This is why we today face "The Crisis of the Ages."<sup>50</sup>*

Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Colour*, Chapter XII The Crisis of the Ages

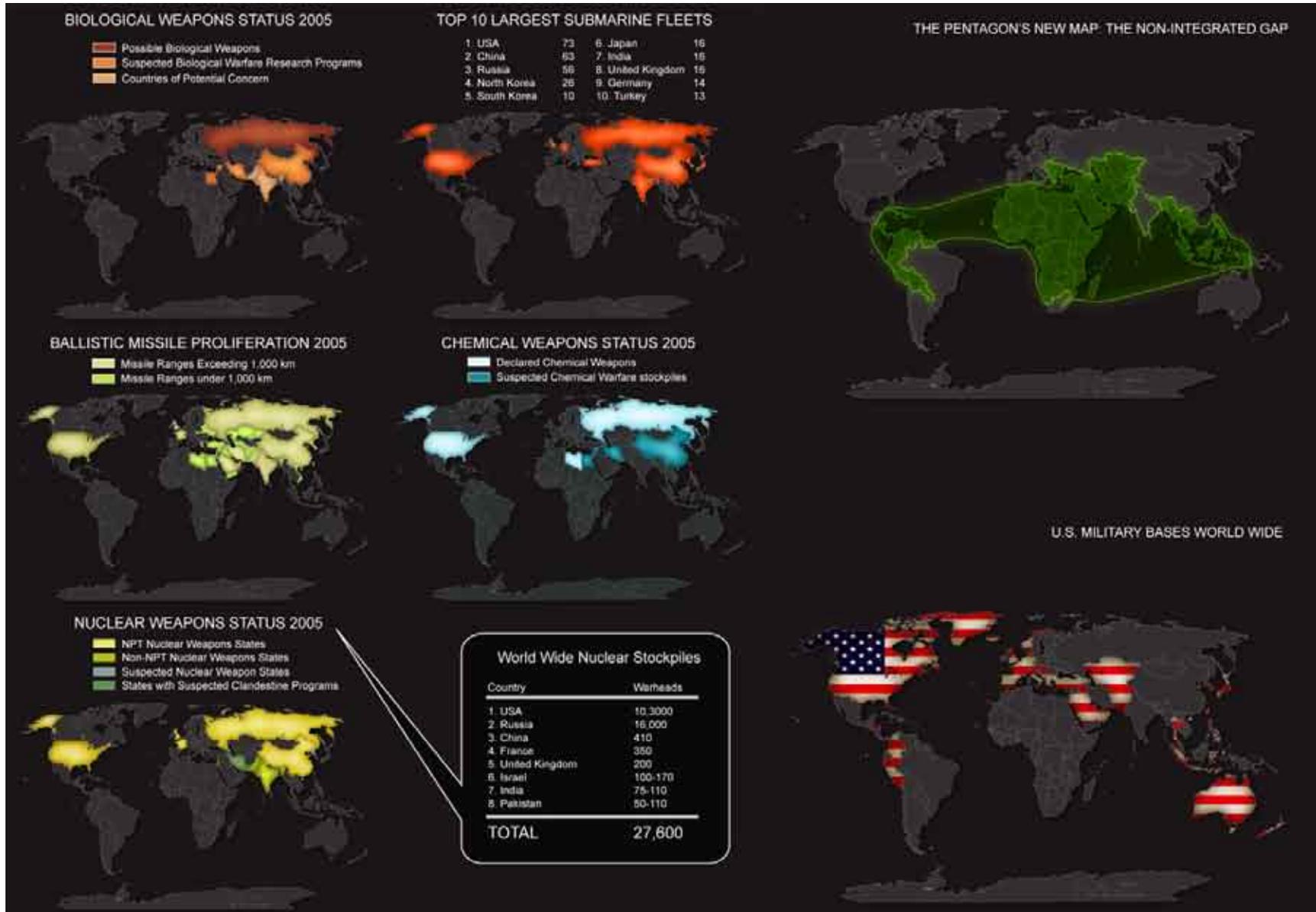
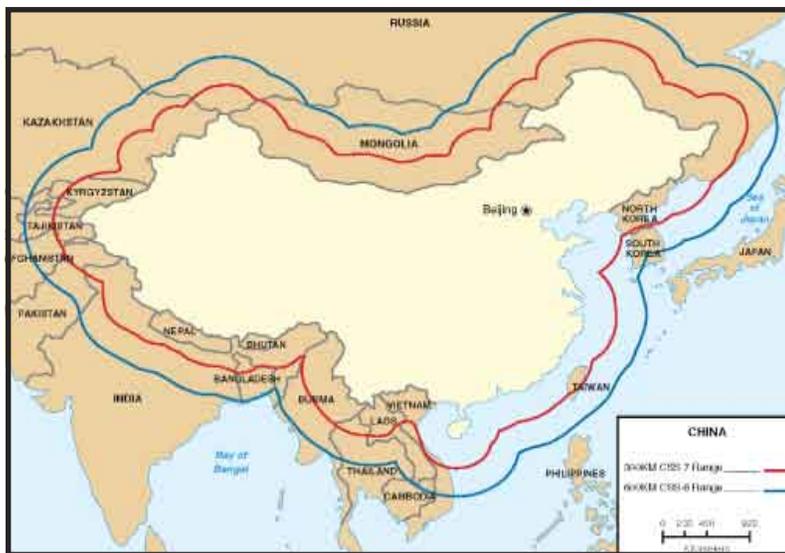


Fig. 6.23



Maximum Range for China's Conventional Small Range Ballistic Missile Force

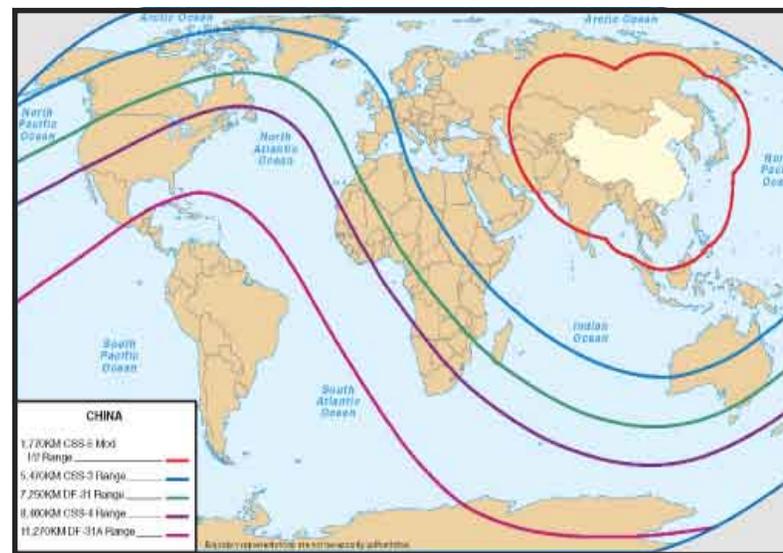


Fig. 6.25: Range for China's Medium and Intercontinental Range Ballistic Missile Force

*“[In a cross-Strait confrontation] if the Americans draw their missiles and position-guided ammunition on the target zone on China’s territory, I think we will have to respond with nuclear weapons.”*<sup>51</sup>

Major General Zhu Chenghu, the People’s Liberation Army, July 2005

*“...when a nation grows strong enough, it practices hegemony. The sole purpose of power is to pursue even greater power... Geography is destiny...when a country begins to rise it should first set itself in an invincible position.”*<sup>52</sup>

Lieutenant General Lin Yaxhou, Deputy Commisar of the PLA Air Force, January 2005

The United States has long consumed a disproportionate share of the world's resources. As the Chinese economy surges ahead, however, China has overtaken the US in the consumption of many of the world's energy and raw material stocks.<sup>54</sup> In a sign that the country's dependence on its own farmers is on the decline, China also imports vast quantities of grain, soybeans, rice, and meat products to feed its growing population. This transition to a manufacturing-based economy means that China now requires huge amounts of iron ore, aluminum, copper, platinum, potash, oil and natural gas, forest products for lumber and paper, and cotton to supply its expanding network of factories. These massive import volumes have put China at the center of the world's raw materials economy.

Speculations about impending record level prices for oil and steel commonly point to the demands that China has made on global stocks. They are not completely unfounded. In 2004, China consumed 8% of the world's petroleum, 10% of its electricity, 19% of its aluminum, 20% of its copper, 31% of its coal, and 33% of its steel. In 2005, it was drew 47% of the world's cement and 37% of the world's cotton supply.<sup>55</sup>

Oil remains the one major resource that the US consumes at a higher rate than China, by a ratio of about three-to-one. However, between 1994 and 2004, US oil consumption grew by only 15 percent, while China's more than doubled. Having recently eclipsed Japan, China is now the world's second leading consumer of oil, requiring 6.5 million barrels of crude oil per day.<sup>56</sup>

The effects of China's growing consumption extend beyond mere supply and demand. The new industrial giant's need for access to raw materials and energy is reshaping its foreign policy and security planning as well, wooing nations into lucrative trade partnerships and strategic alliances. Resource-rich countries such as Brazil, Kazakhstan, Russia, Indonesia, Australia, and Canada, all eager to tap the vast energy market in China, are building long-term supply contracts for products such as oil, natural gas, iron ore, bauxite, and timber.

Whereas China's growth in the previous two decades of reform has been defined by the influx of foreign investment, China's new growth frontier is increasingly defined by its investment in foreign companies. According to official estimates, Chinese investment abroad totaled about US\$10.7 billion by the end of 2005.<sup>57</sup> A large portion of

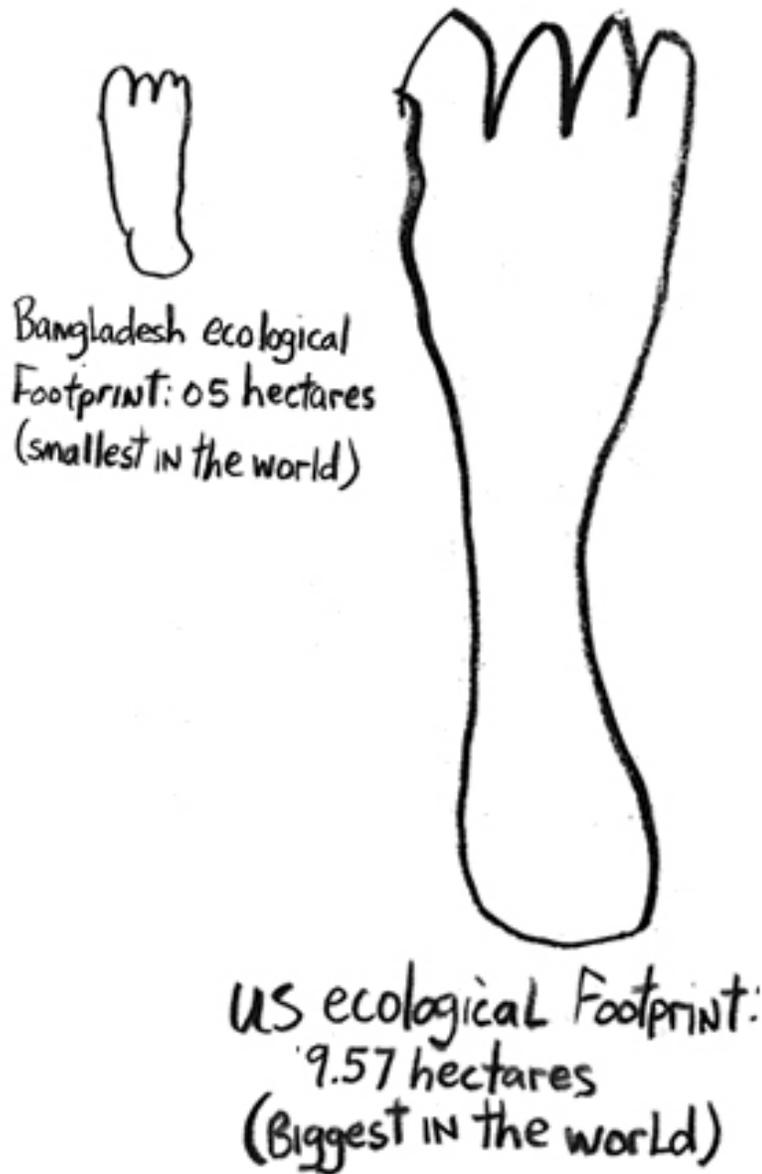
this international spending has gone towards the securing of foreign exchange reserves. As the second largest holder of US treasury bonds, China holds a top position in keeping the debt-ridden American economy afloat.<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore, the nation has stepped up its shopping spree abroad by acquiring a large number of shares or taking outright ownership of several international companies. These landmark deals suggest that China is using its size and market potential to secure a steady stream of technology and resources for the decades to come. Levono, China's largest computer manufacturer, purchased IBM's PC division in 2004. In that same year, TCL Group and Thomson Company, the leading television manufacturers in China and France, respectively, merged to form TCL-Thomson Electronics (TTE), the world's largest TV company. In 2005, China National Petroleum Corporation acquired PetroKazakhstan, a Canadian company with considerable oil interests in Kazakhstan, as well as Encana's oil assets in Ecuador and PetroCanada's oil and gas assets in Syria. Huawei, a telecom equipment giant, has reportedly stated an interest in Britain's Marconi Corporation, and Shanghai Baosteel Group Corporation is presently in negotiations with Brazil's leading oil and mining industries.

China's aggressive pursuit of international acquisitions have fuelled fears among US analysts of a similar Chinese expansion into and future domination of US assets and markets. Indeed, Chinese corporations have made bids on several high-profile US firms, including Maytag and, more sensitively, UNOCAL Oil Corporation. As a result of government fears, both bids were thwarted.

Lines are being drawn across the globe, as countries eager to capitalize on China's growing market presence align themselves as business partners, while other countries struggling to retain control of their own resources risk being left behind.

# 13 Footprint



*"An ecological footprint is the amount of productive land area required to sustain one human being. Globally, there are about 1.9 hectares of productive area per person, but the average ecological footprint is already 2.3 hectares. So we would need 1.5 Earths to live sustainably. The largest footprint belongs to citizens of the US, at 9.57 hectares. Five Earths would be needed if everyone in the world consumed at that rate. People in Bangladesh, on the other hand, need just 0.5 hectares. And China is somewhere in the middle, at 1.36 hectares. But what will it look like in a few decades, when China has a population of 1.5 billion? Supposing that Chinese levels of consumption then are equivalent to American levels now, the Earth doesn't stand a chance. If the US provides the benchmark for global consumption, 25 Earths will be needed to satiate everyone's wants."<sup>53</sup>*

[www.adbusters.org/metasteco/truecosteconomics/footprint.html](http://www.adbusters.org/metasteco/truecosteconomics/footprint.html)



Fig. 6.26: Graphic source: [www.adbusters.org/metasteco/truecosteconomics/footprint.html](http://www.adbusters.org/metasteco/truecosteconomics/footprint.html)



Fig. 6.26

*“Military tactics are like unto water; for water in its natural course runs away from high places and hastens downwards... Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing. Therefore, just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions. He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be called a heaven-born captain.”<sup>58</sup>*

Sun Tzu, The Art of War



Fig. 6.27

*“For a relatively long time, it will be absolutely necessary that we quietly nurse our sense of vengeance. We must conceal our abilities and **bide our time.**”<sup>59</sup>*

Vice Commandant of the Academy of Military Sciences, Beijing, General Mi Zhenyu



Fig. 6.28

*"China is the weed in the human cabbage patch... The weed is the Nemesis of human endeavour .... Of all the imaginary existences we attribute to plant, beast and star the weed leads the most satisfactory life of all. True, the weed produces no lillies, no battle ships, no Sermons on the Mount .... Eventually the weed gets the upper hand. Eventually things fall back into a state of China.*

*This condition is usually referred to by historians as the Dark Age. Grass is the only way out .... The weed exists only to fill the waste spaces left by cultivated areas. It grows between, among other things. The lily is beautiful, the cabbage is provender, the poppy is maddening - but the weed is rank growth ..."*<sup>60</sup>

Henry Miller, quoted by Giles Deleuze A Thousand Plateaus, p 19

***"Now the long feared Asiatic colossus takes its turn as world leader, and we – the white race – have become the yellow man's burden. Let us hope that he will treat us more kindly than we treated him."***<sup>61</sup>

Gore Vidal, essay appearing January 11, 1986 issue The Nation magazine



Fig. 6.29

Science fiction writer Kim Stanley Robinson is perhaps best known for his Mars Trilogy. But before writing these critically acclaimed accounts of humanity's colonization of the Red Planet, Robinson published the Orange County Trilogy. In this triptych, the author presents three very different yet equally possible futures, all set in California in the near future.

*The Wild Shore*, the trilogy's first volume, depicts life in a post-nuclear war America. After decades of global supremacy, America is violently ousted by the nations of the world, operating in concert to even the distribution of resources and wealth. American society is reduced to a barebones existence, struggling to survive off the land, disconnected from rest of the world and crippled by a lack of technology. It remains in an unreconstructed state for decades with the new global powers keeping the country under constant satellite surveillance to ensure it never regains power.

Against this dystopic backdrop, the story revolves around the inhabitants of the small Pacific Coast community of San Onofre. 60 years after America was quarantined following a devastating nuclear attack, the California climate has changed dramatically,

with storms and blizzards a common threat to rural communities. Only a few families remain in the town, struggling to rebuild their lives. Within this context, a resistance movement arises, drawing young people from San Onofre to guerrilla warfare in the ruins of Los Angeles. In this conflict, America's reconstruction is suppressed by troops from the surviving global leaders, with Canada controlling the northern border, Mexico the south, Japan the west, and Russia the east.

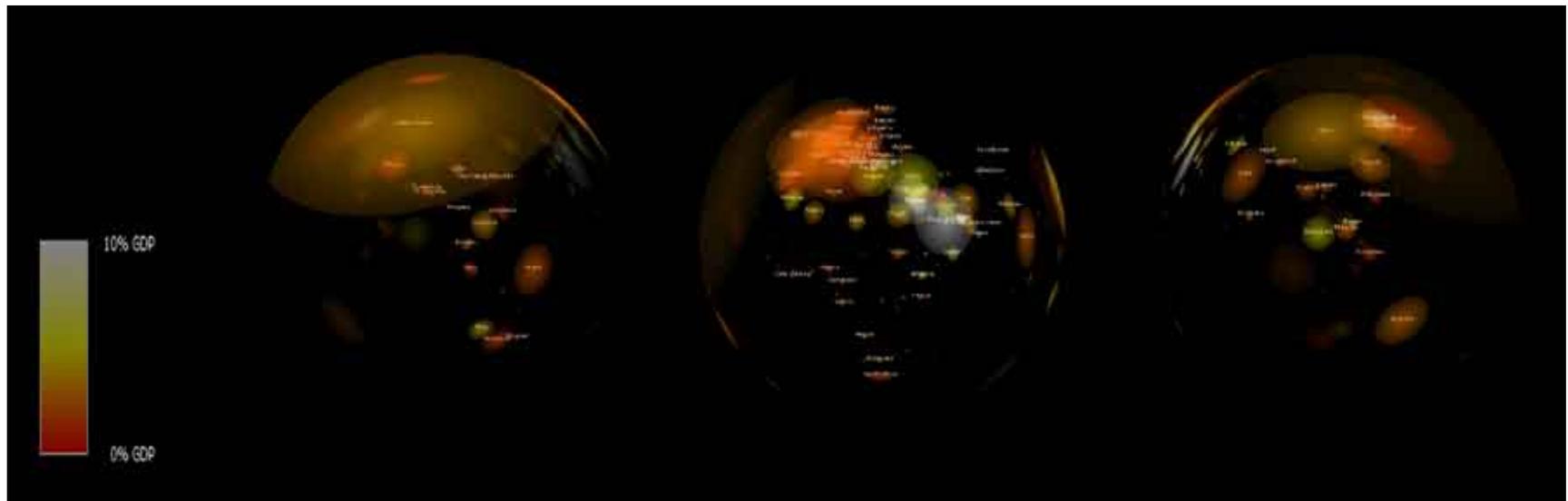


Fig. 6.30: Annual spending by country. Areas roughly proportional to annual budget.. Data from CIA World Factbook 2004. Drawn by Andrew Cooke, see <http://www.acooke.org>

*“The US invaded portions of China and Russia through the “Stans”, and attacked Iran from Iraq and Afghanistan. It convinced Pakistan to invade India, and Israel to secure Saudi Arabia, Syria and Kuwait. England was left to deal with the continental European powers France and Germany. From its bases in Costa Rica, Colombia and Honduras, the US moved swiftly to take the oilfields of Venezuela. The plan called for shock and awe and submission. But the world had not sat idly by as the US schemed. US and allied forces were sucked in, encircled and forced, in many cases, to surrender. They were trapped in the seas of indigenous populations who gave them no quarter. Buoyed by initial successes, the US and its allies never saw the conventional counterattack that followed coming. It was unlike any the world had seen.*

*Suffering defeat and stalemate on the conventional battlefield, the US and its allies resorted to the HNO solution (Hiroshima-Nagasaki Option) on the pretext that millions of lives—mostly American—would be spared. They fired nuclear weapons on forces overrunning the US and its allies on the Asian continent and in North America, specifically Alaska. The response was swift: a nuclear counterattack eliminated the remaining US Carrier Groups, US*

*refining capacity and Taiwan as an independent entity. Pakistan, being overrun by India, opted to switch sides. Japan and Australia did the same moving to assist the anti-US coalition...*

*The Treaty of Jakarta, signed in 2045, brought an end to the global conflagration that was World War III. That conflict saw the US, Pakistan, Israel, Japan, Taiwan, England and Australia in bloody conflict against China, India, Russia, France, Germany, Iran, Venezuela and Brazil...*

*The war killed billions, put to waste and made uninhabitable sizeable areas of the globe, and led to a global pandemic that killed millions more... The world's water and air supply were contaminated and billions of carcasses—human and otherwise—lay rotting. Disease and malnutrition would take hundreds of millions more. All this for oil & gas that, for the most part, has been depleted.”<sup>62</sup>*

In 1956, M. King Hubbert, chief geology consultant to the Shell Oil Company, published a paper proposing that crude oil production in any given region follows a bell-shaped curve over time (known today as a “Hubbert curve”). According to this model, oil production rises exponentially after a discovery is made, leading to a steep incline in supply. At some point, the peak output is reached and future yields from that source will decline in a symmetrical curve.

In 1974, Hubbert projected that global oil production would peak in 1995.<sup>63</sup> 10 years later, the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas (ASPO) suggested that peak oil would be reached closer to the year 2010.<sup>64</sup> Professor Kenneth Deffeyes, author of *Hubbert’s Peak* and *Beyond Oil* asserts that the peak was passed on December 16, 2005.<sup>65</sup>

Dismissed for their fanaticism, these so-called “peak geeks” strategize about the post-carbon world, drafting evacuation plans, training for lifestyle restructuring, learning survival techniques, and building lifeboat communities. Although some of the more radical fringes of the peak oil movement undoubtedly share an affinity with the long tradition of prophets whose predictions about the end of the world have come and gone unrealized (recall Y2K), the mainstream ideas behind the movement cannot simply be dismissed as apocalyptic hysteria. All debating points aside, the one pressing truth about the peak oil theory is that petroleum is inarguably a nonrenewable resource. Its supply will end someday. Peak oil theorists suggest only that the crisis will begin not when we have pumped the last barrel out of the ground but when we have reached the halfway mark (at which point the extraction of each subsequent barrel will become increasingly labour-intensive). And if we continue to rely on oil as though it were in perpetually abundant supply, what can we expect in the near or distant future? One article describes this scenario:

*The economy will begin an endless contraction, a prelude to the “grid crash.” Cars will revert to being a luxury item isolating the suburban millions from food and goods. Industrial agriculture will wither, addicted as it is to natural gas for fertilizer and to crude oil or flying, shipping and trucking its produce. International trade will halt, leaving the Wal-Marts empty. In the United States, Northern homes will be too expensive to heat and Southern homes will roast. Dirty alternatives such as coal and tar sands will act as bellows to the furnace of global warming. In response to all of this, extreme political movements will form, and the world will develop into a fight to control the last of the resources. Whom the wars do not kill starvation will. Man, if he survives, will do so in agrarian villages.”<sup>66</sup>*

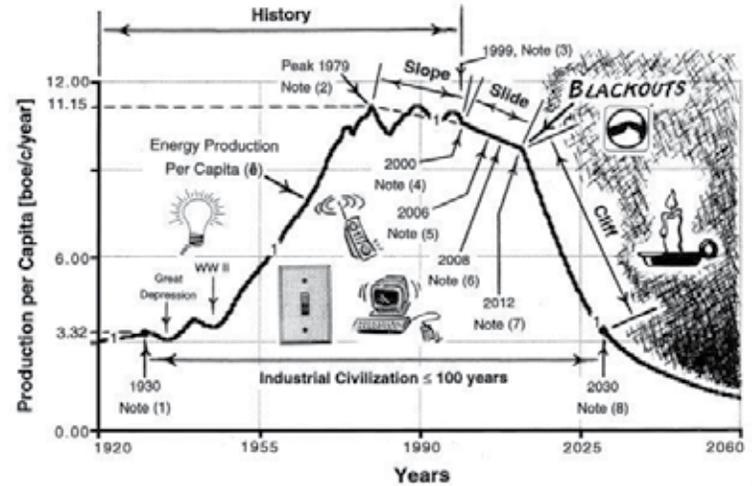


Fig. 6.31

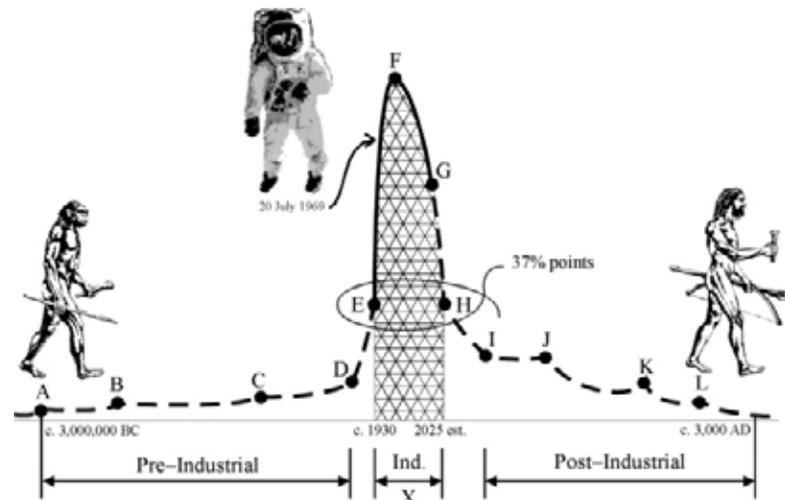


Fig. 6.32

## 18 End of Suburbia

In his 2005 book, *The Long Emergency*, urbanist writer James Howard Kunstler offers the following grim assessment: "America finds itself nearing the end of the cheap-oil age having invested its national wealth in a living arrangement—suburban sprawl—that has no future...Suburbia has a tragic destiny."<sup>67</sup>

Kunstler questions the viability of our contemporary patterns of consumption and travel. As global demand for fossil fuels begins to outstrip supply, Kunstler envisions the car-dependent landscape of the suburbs, especially the farthest-flung subdivisions, decaying into "slums of the future." He sees the doors of oversized, unheated tract homes flapping open forlornly to the chill of Midwestern winds. Big-box retailers that rely on trucks that get, at best, eight miles per gallon to deliver sneakers made in China will simply implode. The cavernous shell of the local Wal-Mart will "become anything from an infirmary to a Pentecostal roller rink."<sup>68</sup>

To dodge this horror scenario and avoid famine and guerrilla combat, Kunstler advocates a localized restructuring of our communities. Commuting great distances and relying on transatlantic shipments as well as the dependence on the automobile will have to be abandoned. Only trains and barges will be efficient enough to move goods. To fill the gaps in supply, communities will have to rely on more local supply chains. Neighbourhoods will have to intensify the mix of commercial activities and services in order to provide easy access to lighter forms of transportation such as cycling or walking. The new communities will be of human scale, self-supporting enclaves that rely heavily on an internally driven economy. People will work closer to where they live, obtain their food from local sources, and develop a closer connection to their surroundings.

The private home has become an emblem of success, the realization of a universal dream of family life, spacious living, and upward mobility. Over the past 50 years, North American suburbs have become ubiquitous symbols of the excess consumption of land and resources. If left unchanged, the pattern of habitation that once held so much promise could also be our great downfall, taking suburbia from dream to nightmare.

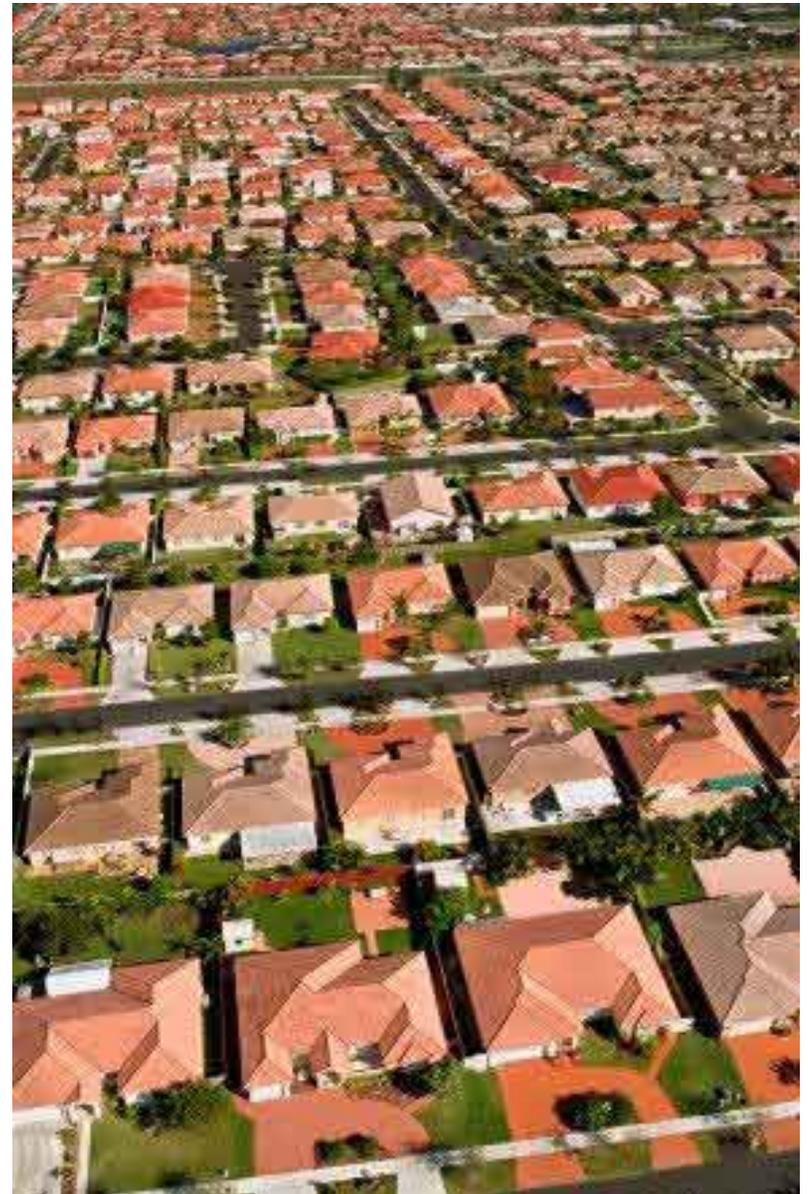


Fig. 6.33



Fig. 6.34

4:09pm. On August 14, 2003, at the height of a heat wave, with air conditions churning nonstop across the Great Lakes region, the overburdened electrical system gave out. Within a few minutes, the glitch had rippled through 100 electric plants, sending homes and businesses across the Eastern seaboard into darkness. Subway lines and streetcars were crippled, leading commuters stranded. The roads were instantly inundated with drivers trying to get home. Six international airports were shut down. In total, 50 million people in Ontario, parts of Quebec, and eight U.S. states, were left without power, some for as long as four days.

It was the biggest blackout in North American history. The days that followed were a sobering reminder of our ill-preparedness for such events and a challenge to the assumption that our energy sources are unlimited and unshakable. More than anything, the blackout of 2003 revealed the instability of our suburban lifestyle—a wake up call that its promises of comfort and freedom were highly conditional. Anyone trapped in the suburbs can attest to tense moments at, for example, gas stations where block-long line



Fig. 6.35

ups led to agitated drivers and clashes between those most desperate. As well, paralyzed bank machines and cash registers frustrated access to basic resources. People hoarded supplies, secured their belongings, hunkered down for uncertainty. News outlets reported several incidents of looting. Stores that remained open were inundated by people looking for essentials: batteries, flashlights, ice, water. Suddenly, everyday activities became inaccessible. Many in my neighbourhood remained at home. Some families gathered together, pooling their resources; others waited it out alone, listening to radio reports. Our area remained out of power for two and a half days. My family survived on barbecued hamburgers and bread.

Events such as the 2003 blackout present a schism in the threshold between the official and unofficial city. In the collapse of the established distribution systems, illicit and unregulated activities respond immediately to fill the vacuum, justified as acts of survivalism and self-preservation. The unofficial city is amplified in times of distress and calamity. It celebrates chaos and entropy—conditions in which it best thrives.



Fig. 6.36

*“Such a civilization is therefore most unstable at its peak, when it has reached maximum demand on the ecology. Unless a new source of wealth or energy appears, it has no room left to raise production or absorb the shock of natural fluctuations. The only way onward is to keep wringing new loans from nature and humanity. Once nature starts to foreclose – with erosion, crop failure, famine, disease – the social contract breaks down. People may suffer stoically for a while, but sooner or later the ruler’s relationship with heaven is exposed as a delusion or a lie. Then the temples are looted, the statues thrown down, the barbarians welcomed, and the emperor’s naked rump is last seen fleeing through the palace window.”<sup>69</sup>*

Ronald Wright, A Short History of Progress, 2004

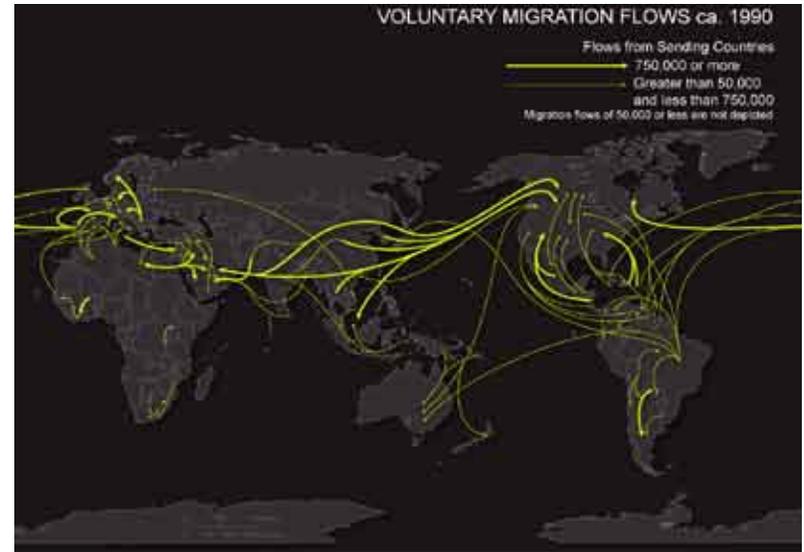


Fig. 6.37

*“The growth of every great city has exceeded all previous. This Growth has been a mad one, with disturbing possibilities... The new phenomenon of the great city has arisen within the framework of the old city. The disproportion is such that an intense crisis has been brought about. This Crisis is only at its beginning. It is a constant source of disorder. Such cities as do not adapt themselves quickly to the new conditions of modern life will be stifled and will perish. Other better adapted cities will take their place.”<sup>70</sup>*

Le Corbusier, 1924



Fig. 6.38: Photograph of New York City, source: Getty Images

*My wife and I got married right out of college, in 1978. We were young and naïve and unashamedly idealistic, and we decided to make our first home in a utopian environmentalist community in New York State. For seven years, we lived, quite contentedly, in circumstances that would strike most Americans as austere in the extreme: our living space measured just seven hundred square feet, and we didn't have a dishwasher, a garbage disposal, a lawn, or a car. We did our grocery shopping on foot, and when we needed to travel longer distances we used public transportation. Because space at home was scarce, we seldom acquired new possessions of significant size. Our electric bills worked out to about a dollar a day.”<sup>71</sup>*

This is actually a description of Manhattan, and is the focus of an article entitled “Green Manhattan” by journalist David Owen, published in the October 18, 2004, issue of *The New Yorker*. Owen argues that Manhattanites have a far smaller ecological footprint than the average American, due to their proximity to amenities, their reliance on public transit, and the density of activities offered within the city. In New York, hardly anyone owns—let alone drives—a car, dwellings are tiny, and per-capita energy use is relatively low. The city’s densely compacted infrastructure serves millions of people, transporting them to and from various itineraries.

After moving to the countryside, Owen notes the impracticality of rural life, suggesting it is far more detrimental to the environment over the long-term. The dispersal of essential amenities such as food markets, health care, and government offices means that every activity beyond the house requires a car. Although they work from home, he and his wife now own three cars and drive an average of 30,000 miles a year, mostly for the purpose of running ordinary errands. Additionally, the Owens now uses seven times more electricity than they used in Manhattan.

New York City remains one of the most man-altered and engineered landscapes in the world, an almost wholly artificial environment. The terrain of the land, even the shape of its shoreline, have been erased and reshaped to meet the demands of an exploding population. Elements of nature remain contained by walls of apartment blocks. It is hardly the first image that might be recalled when imagining the ideal environmentalist community, and yet, by Owen’s account, it is—or at least it is a more environmentally viable, if somewhat counterintuitive, middle ground to the rural, Luddist lifestyle often held up as the inevitable alternative to a smog-choked hyper-urban dystopia.

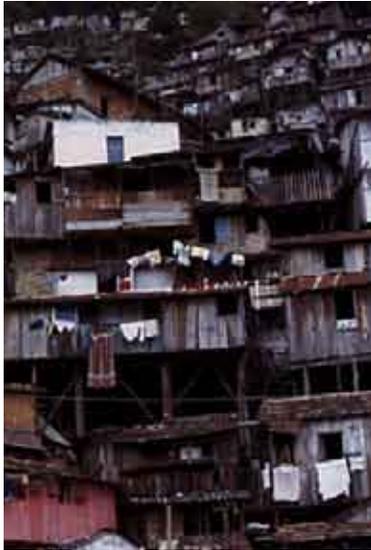


Fig. 6.39



Fig. 6.40

Rocinha is Rio de Janeiro's best-known favela, a dense shanty town built on the hillsides of the city. From its beginnings in the 1940s as a small squatter community, Rocinha's population has mushroomed to anywhere from 60,000 to 150,000<sup>72</sup>, making it the largest and most highly developed favela in Brazil.

Despite its large population, there is no official electricity grid or water line for most of its residents. Instead, most homes tap into the power lines and water mains that crisscross the slum. Homes are built in an ad hoc manner—on top of existing structures, inserted between buildings, teetering off rock surfaces, sprawling up Rio's granite mountains.

More recently, Rocinha has become a model for home-grown community initiatives aimed at upgrading poor neighbourhoods. Its transition from squatter village to shanty town to functioning community has demonstrated how the poor can evolve, against odds, stereotypes, and expectations, into a working-class district. Most of the growth has come from within the community to meet the daily needs of its citizens, rather than being imposed from above by a sympathetic state. There are now shops, banks, clinics, bus routes, schools, clubs, and other organizations. The community even boasts a

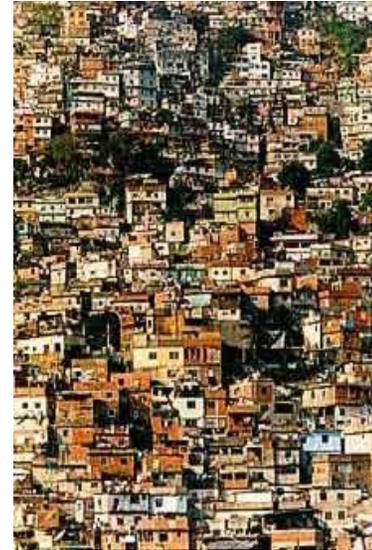


Fig. 6.41



Fig. 6.42

locally based channel, TV ROC, and its own website ([www.rocinha.com.br](http://www.rocinha.com.br)) to accompany its thriving tourist industry.

For better or for worse, much of the development in Rocinha has been made possible by the heavy hands of drug lords and organized criminal gangs within the favela. Atop the mountain, in stark contrast to shanty town below, mansions overlook Rocinha behind walled compounds and heavily armed guards. The drug lords serve as the de facto local government structure within the community, prohibiting street crimes such as rape, muggings, and break-ins. This informal law enforcement ensures a level of safety and order that residents enjoy, while enabling criminal gangs to maintain security and control over their "turf." The criminal leadership has even curried favour from the public through the provision of much-needed resources such as day care, hospital clinics, and social assistance for the poor. At times, they have contributed to public works such as asphalt roads, community centres, and soccer fields. Favela citizens thus enjoy essential services and a social infrastructure that the official government has been unwilling to provide. In doing so, they legitimize an otherwise unofficial population.



Fig. 6.43

The Kowloon Walled City (KWC) was an incredibly dense, self-sufficient mish-mash of building units constructed on top of and around each other on the border between Hong Kong and neighbouring China. At its peak, it housed one of the most densely-packed populations in the world. Today, it remains one of the few large-scale examples of functional anarchy.

The city had its humble beginnings as a Chinese Army fort, originally an outpost constructed in 1668. When the Chinese signed the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing, handing Hong Kong Island to the British, it was stipulated that the fort would remain in Chinese hands to ensure a Chinese military/administrative presence within the appropriated territory. As a political anomaly that straddled two geopolitical realms, the city remained under ambiguous governance. For almost 90 years of British rule, the KWC existed within the British domain, yet outside British control.

After Hong Kong's occupation in WWII and Japan's subsequent surrender, squatters began to occupy parts of the city. In the tumultuous years leading up to the 1949 formation of the People's Republic of China, thousands of additional refugees from



Fig. 6.44: Kowloon Walled City, source: City of Darkness



Fig. 6.45: Kowloon Walled City, source: City of Darkness

the mainland fled to the outpost, tacking their own residences onto the existing structures. The indeterminate nature of the site made it the perfect place of asylum for the thousands pouring south to escape famine, civil war, and political persecution. With neither Chinese nor British security forces wielding any real authority within the KWC, and without any physical protection or borders, the city quickly became a hotbed of criminal and unregulated activity. Drug dens, gambling areas, and brothels proliferated. Those escaping the constraints of taxes and legislation reshaped the city with improvisational building modifications. Local construction teams fabricated additions and offered home repair services. The KWC grew organically, the square buildings folding up into one another as thousands of renovations were made. Virtually none of the design was done by architects. Hundreds of square meters of floor space were simply layered on top of structures and existing foundations forming a vertical patchwork of impromptu design. The only rules of construction were twofold: electricity had to be properly wired to avoid fires, and the buildings could be no more than about fourteen stories high (because of the nearby airport).



Fig. 6.46: Photograph of Kowloon Walled City, source: [www.skyscrapercity.com](http://www.skyscrapercity.com)

Electricity was stolen, tapping from nearby electrical mains. The entire community's water supply was tapped by leeching connections to one of eight municipal pipes. Over seventy wells were also sunk throughout to supplement the fresh water supply. Via an ad hoc network of narrow pipes and connections to the homes, water was pumped up to rooftop tanks where it descended to apartments. Much of the work to connect and maintain the stolen utilities was carried out by official utility employees who were also residents of the KWC.

The KWC became a working model of a self-governing, self-sustaining society. Although illicit activities flourished, the presence of Triad gangs provided stability and security for residents. Even in the dense milieu of activities, the crime rate was far below the Hong Kong average, despite the lack of any real law enforcement.

Community life also flourished. Factories, small shops, restaurants, and even schools and kindergartens emerged, some of them run by charitable organizations such as the Salvation Army. There was even a temple in the heart of

the city. Medical and dental care clinics, operated by local professionals who could not afford official practices or certification in the official city, offered their services at a fraction of the cost, creating an informal health care system for residents.

In short, the city was a fully functioning autonomous organism. Within its intricate structure, the throb of hidden machinery provided the lifeblood for survival. The streets and rooftops were activated by community activities. Sounds of children playing, kitchens bustling, and the shuffle of mahjong tiles echoed throughout the complex. The roofs housed cages for pigeons, make shift gardens, and playgrounds. By the early 1980s, KWC had an estimated population of 35,000.<sup>73</sup>

Under government pressure KWC was finally demolished in 1993, and to the end it retained its rich diversity and seedy glory. An area 200 metres by 100 metres of solid building had risen from the ground as high as 14 storeys to provide a home to thousands of families.<sup>74</sup> It was arguably among the world's most efficiently run, self-regulating, and self-sufficient slums.



Fig. 6.47

*"Ivan Illich calls these communities "spontaneous architects of our postmodern future"; and the colonias are demonstrations of "survival on the technophagic fringe". These colonia-spheres are environments that experiment with more forgiving ways of existence and new forms of conviviality. Not to be revered, the colonia-spheres should be explored for insights into their resiliency, efficiency, and poetry.*

*"Informal survivalism" has thus become the way of life for one billion people around the world. From Lagos to Sao Paulo to Dhaka, slum dwellers subsist outside the formal economy amid raw sewage and along toxic rivers, building shacks on unstable hillsides or in flood plains, picking through garbage or discarded electronics to earn a dollar a day.*

*Ivan Illich once described this population as "the technophagic multitude" -- people who feed on the waste of development as their only means of survival. He marveled at the ragpickers in the vast garbage dump on the outskirts of Mexico City who he saw as "survivors who reassert unsquashable hope with the chilling character of the gang."<sup>75</sup>*

Excerpted from "Globalization's New Left," *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Spring 2006, by Nathan Gardels



Fig. 6.48



Fig. 6.49

Photographs by Michael Wolf, Architecture of Density



Fig. 6.50

*"In nature, as an organism evolves it increases in complexity and it also becomes a more compact or miniaturized system. Similarly a city should function as a living system. Arcology, architecture and ecology as one integral process, is capable of demonstrating **positive response to the many problems** of urban civilization, population, pollution, energy and natural resource depletion, food scarcity and quality of life. Arcology recognizes the necessity of the radical reorganization of the sprawling urban landscape into **dense, integrated, three-dimensional cities** in order to support the complex activities that sustain human culture. The city is the necessary instrument for the evolution of humankind."*<sup>76</sup>

Paolo Soleri



Fig. 6.51

*"There is no more beauty except in strife. No masterpiece without aggressiveness. Poetry must be a violent onslaught upon the unknown forces, to command them to bow before man... Time and space died yesterday. Already we live in the absolute, since we have already created speed, eternal and ever present. We wish to glorify war – the only healthy giver of the world – militarism, patriotism, the destructive arm of the anarchist, the beautiful ideas that kill, the contempt of woman... We shall sing of the great crowds in the excitement of labour, pleasure and rebellion; of the multicoloured and polyphonic surf of revolutions in modern capital cities; of nocturnal vibrations of arsenals and workshops beneath their violent electric moons; greedy stations swallowing smoking snakes; of factories suspended from the clouds by their strings of smoke; bridges leaping like gymnasts... Houses have a shorter life span than we do; every generation will have to build its own city... we must invent and rebuild ex novo our Modern City like and*

*immense and tumultuous shipyard, active, mobile and everywhere dynamic, and the modern building like a gigantic machine... The house of cement, iron and glass, without carved or painted ornament, rich only in the inherent beauty of its lines and modeling, extraordinarily brutish in its mechanical simplicity, as big as need dictates, and not merely as zoning rules permit, must rise from the brink of a tumultuous abyss..."*<sup>77</sup>



Fig. 6.52



Fig. 6.53

Deng Xiaoping's mandate in 1982 was to forge a distinct path under China's reform policies—to build a socialist Marxist state *"with Chinese characteristics."* The phrase *"with Chinese characteristics"* describes the challenge of diverging from mainstream patterns—in Deng Xiaoping's own words, *"to cross the river by feeling the stones."* More recently, these words have come to symbolize China's self-determining solutions and have been used more ironically to describe scenarios of opportunism and situational ethics. For instance, journalists often describe the 1989 events of Tiananmen Square as *"justice with Chinese characteristics."* In similar fashion, the discovery of egg pirating schemes might be described as the *"market economy with Chinese characteristics"* and condominium-retailing in Scarborough and Markham, as *"shopping malls with Chinese characteristics."* Along these lines, this final section offers a projection of the *"future with Chinese characteristics"*

*“In the future, the nexus of the world will be the city-state not the nation-state.”*<sup>78</sup>

Marjetica Potrc

Consider two countries, China and Canada, their histories entwined, their trajectories overlapping. In spite of the geographical separation of these two realms, the exchange of goods, people, and foreign investment are engendering the growth of a trans-national territory, CHINADA. In the new reality of global traffic, CHINADA contests the physical border, the dissolution of intangible blockades.

Consider two rising global cities, Toronto and Shanghai, in many ways the economic capitals of their respective nations. CHINADA's capital is Scarcity, the hybrid city. It exists where the cultural signals have been crossed, where the official and unofficial cities collide, reality and fiction, the imaginary and the actual. The symbols of the past have been rewired to define new relationships within the urban environment. Here, different imagined futures grind together, the newest and the oldest, the brightest and the shabbiest. Scarcity's exact location is impossible to pinpoint, as its borders are constantly renegotiating themselves. Even its existence is not entirely clear. It floats, appears, lands, and disappears.

It is a laboratory for new forms and visions of the modern city, an agglomeration of ideas, trends, trajectories, and mythologies. It is an indeterminate zone. It represents the bundling of complex networks of transnational loyalty and political governance.

Scarcity's materialization is fueled by increasing pressures to redefine the

suburban fabric and re-evaluate the patterns of growth over the last fifty years. By taking the ubiquitous suburbs at its starting point, Scarcity illuminates a new model for urban fabrication. Like the work of Xing Danwen, this paradigm “begin[s] with the fake landscape to reveal its reality,” grafting fictional narrative and reality to reveal something new and unforeseen. Scarcity is an incomplete blueprint for the world to come. It takes the form of several short design exercises that individually explore a different facet of this future.

The more apocalyptic-minded of the Peak Oil theorists advocate the creation of life boat communities, villages from which society can rebuild following our impending collapse. Their vision offers one alternative to life in an increasingly complicated world. Scarcity offers another: denser habitation patterns, compact living, localized economies, autonomous governance, the proliferation of informal patterns of development. Chinatown, the ethnic enclave, the shantytown, the Kowloon Walled City, the arcology are its predecessors. It is regulated and expanded by its own internal energy and logic.

In a bleak future, the official city will continue to struggle to regulate and distribute resources. The informal city will thrive, operating as it always has through subversive methods. Scarcity mitigates the two, out of necessity growing in shifting directions and alternating realities. It is at once a reality and fantasy, official and unofficial, present and future. It is a *GHETTOPIA*, *defining a new paradigm*.

**Yesterday**



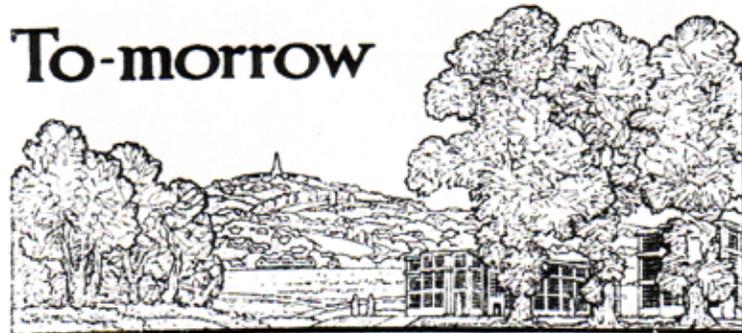
*Living and Working in the Smoke*

**To-day**



*Living in the Suburbs - Working in the Smoke*

**To-morrow**



*Living & Working in the Sun at GARDEN CITY*

**Yesterday**



*Living & Working in the Sun at GARDEN CITY*

**To-day**



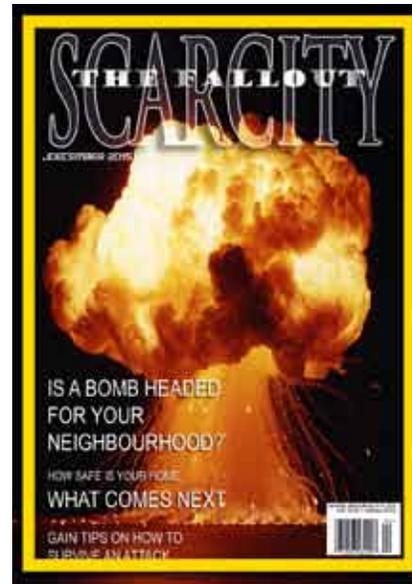
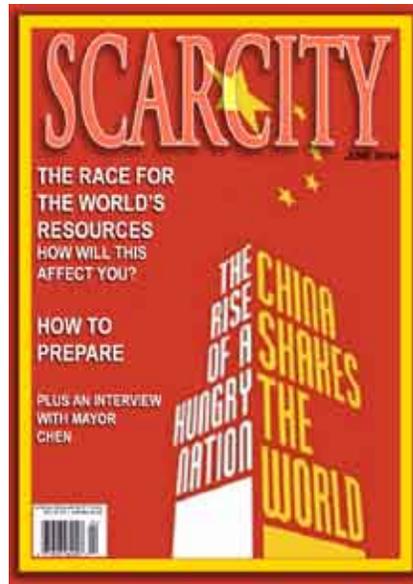
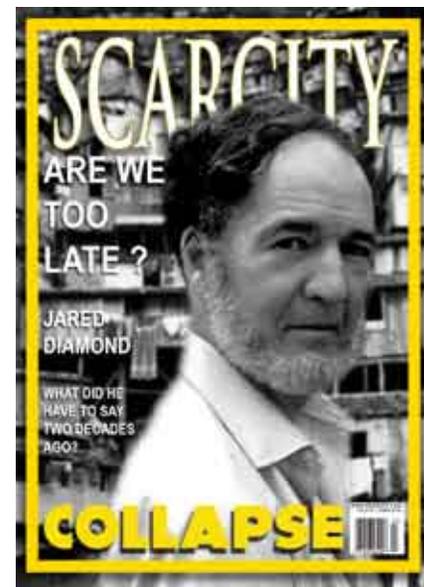
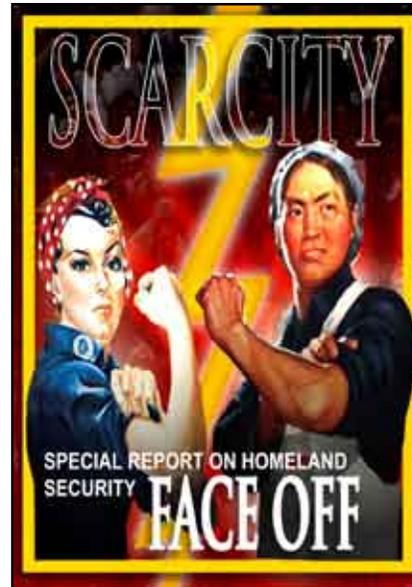
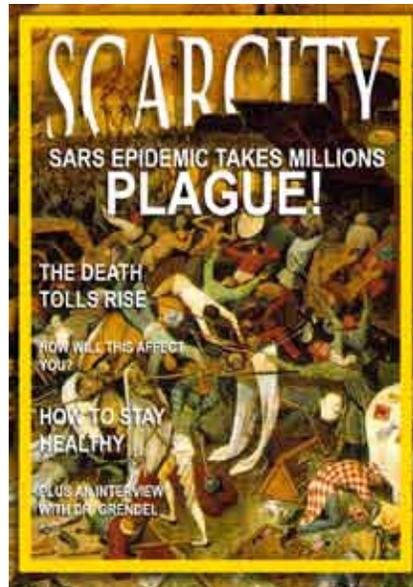
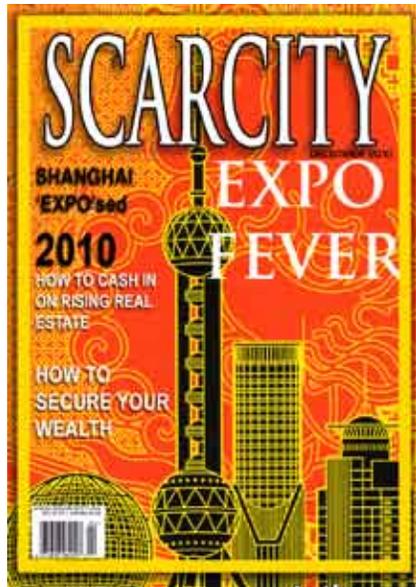
*Living in the Suburbs - Working in the Smoke*

**To-morrow**



*Living and Working in the Smoke*

Fig.6.54: Adapted from a publicity poster for Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire.



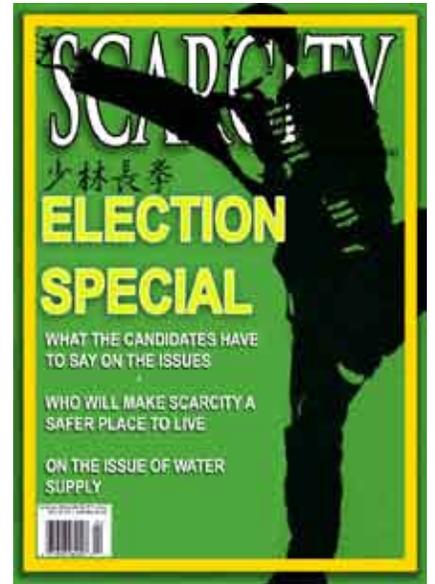
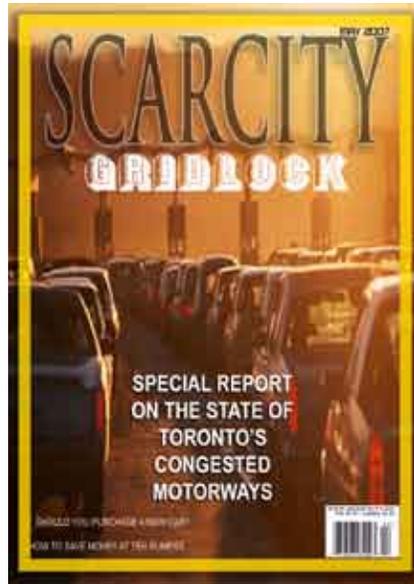
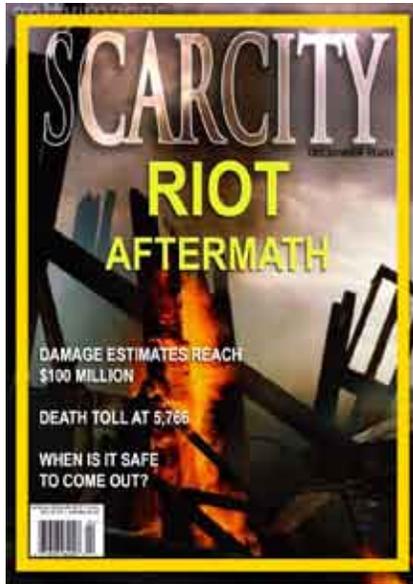
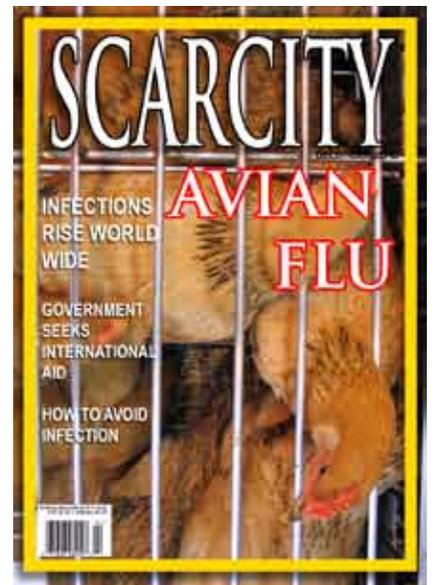
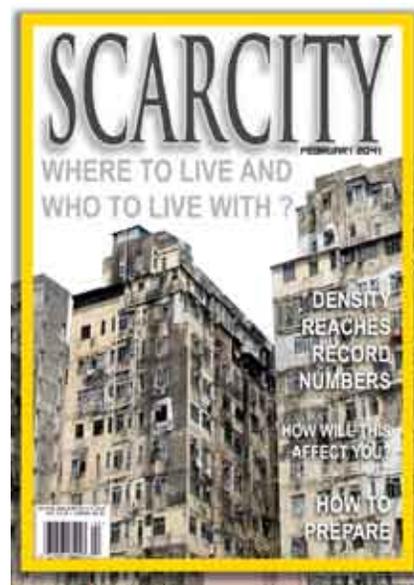
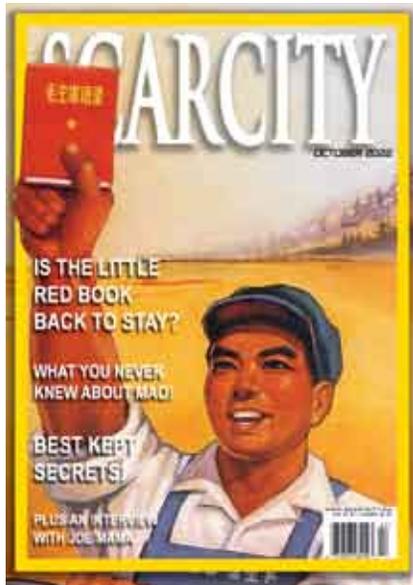


Fig. 6.55



Fig. 6.56



Fig.6.57







Fig. 6.60



Fig. 6.61





Fig.6.62: Entry to the Capital





Fig. 6.63: View of Scarcity Wall



Fig. 6.64: Scarcity Signage



Fig. 6.65: Scarcity Signage

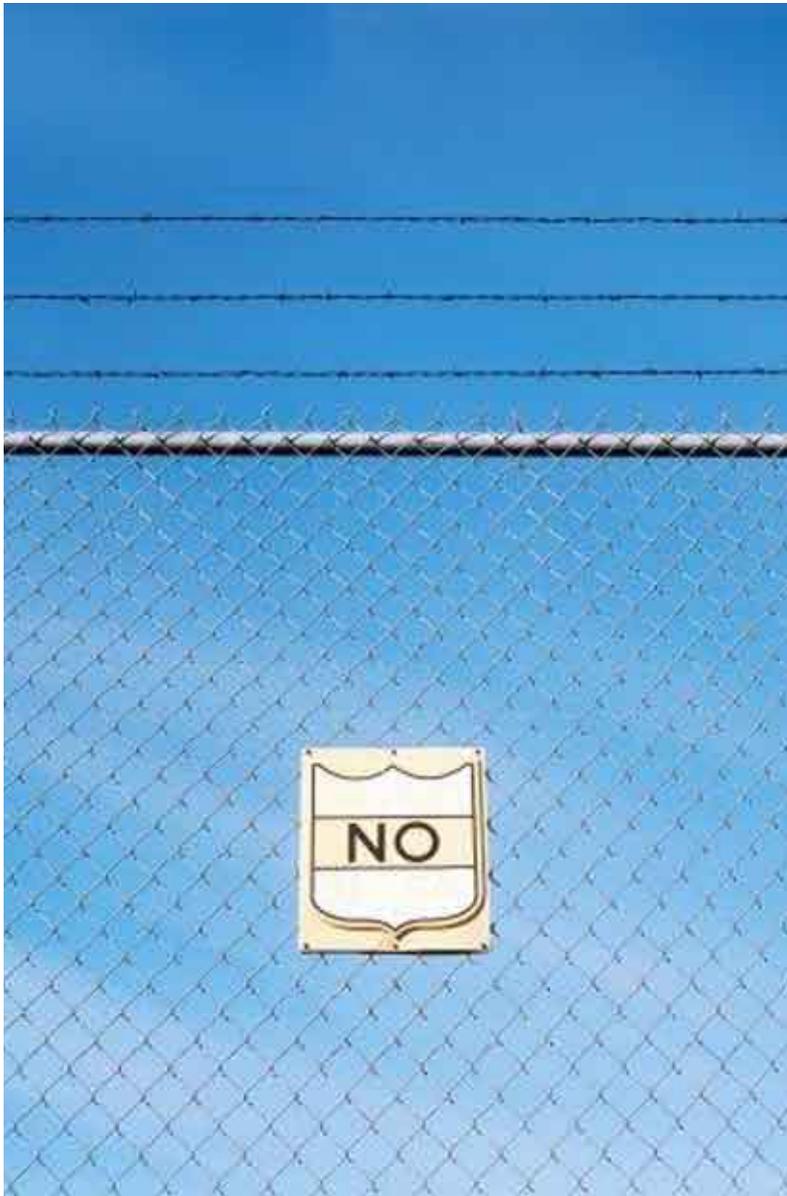


Fig. 6.66 Scarcity Signage



Fig. 6.67: Scarcity Signage





Fig.6.68 View of Scarcity Industrial Centre



HomeGuides.ca

# SCARCITY

## PROPERTY LISTINGS

CLASSIC COLLECTION  
- BIBLE WALK

### 40' SINGLES

12 Bedroom units - with electricity and water connections



**PRE-CONSTRUCTION SALE**  
Limited Edition Townhomes in the CITY



### Bellewoods Mansion



Set in a green surrounding, the property offers good security and access to open spaces. Part of a well established community only 25 minutes walk from the main city centre.

### MOVE IN READY!!!



With a total area of 100 sq.ft, this generous unit will make any large family comfortable. Large window provides views to neighbouring units. Off site plumbing located only steps from the front door. 24 hour surveillance available.

### SAFE COMMUNITY



Exquisitely designed and lavishly decorated, this dwelling is part of a compound of top end estates. Situated near main shopping markets, this home is ideal for young families and couples on the go. Recently renovated, new appliances.

### Rustic Park Villas



All the charm of rustic living. Enjoy the simpler life in this cozy home fabricated from the finest materials. Leave the congestion of the city for this generous and tranquil community. Offers or trades welcome.

### Golden Estates



Humble is not the name of this development. Live in style and safety in this newly built luxury dwelling. Home features its own private entrance and spacious sun deck. Over 14 bedrooms, fully furnished. Don't let this chance go by. Swing by the sales office TODAY!

### NEW! PRINCELY ESTATE



This unit comes with all the bare essential for making your own house into a home. Solid steel tubing construction and corrugated roof ensure your home will last another 20 years. Customize the interior finishes to suit your taste and preference.

### RENOVATED! FREEHOLDS



Phase 2 of the Everbright villas is now available for sale or lease. No security or maintenance fees apply. Occupancy available for june of this year. Be the first to own a home in this prestigious community.

### FULLY FURNISHED!



This fortress on wheels offers your family the very best in comfort and worry-free living. Built in generator means your home can be transported to anywhere off the grid. Titanium construction make this home ideally suited for any type of weather or unforeseen attack.

### NEW CONSTRUCTION



Be the envy of all your friends with this all weather home. It is transportable, waterproof and light on the go. Can house as many family members as you want. Open floor plan and wide passageways make for a flexible and adaptive space.

### Riverside Park Garden



Located only minutes from the Scarcity creek, this deluxe unit is nestled in a vibrant community of colourful neighbours. All roofs come with a 1 year warranty. Minutes walk for communal facilities and comes with electricity already wired in.

### FOR SALE BY OWNER



Don't miss your chance to take advantage of a rare opportunity. This first generation housing shelter has just come onto the market. Recently renovated and outfitted with running water and electricity, this shelter won't stay on the market for long. ACT NOW!

### Forest Manor



Situated in the treetops, this home affords 360 panoramic views. Secure access ensures your home is safe from intruders and unwanted guests. Enjoy the best of nature and city life.

Fig. 6.69



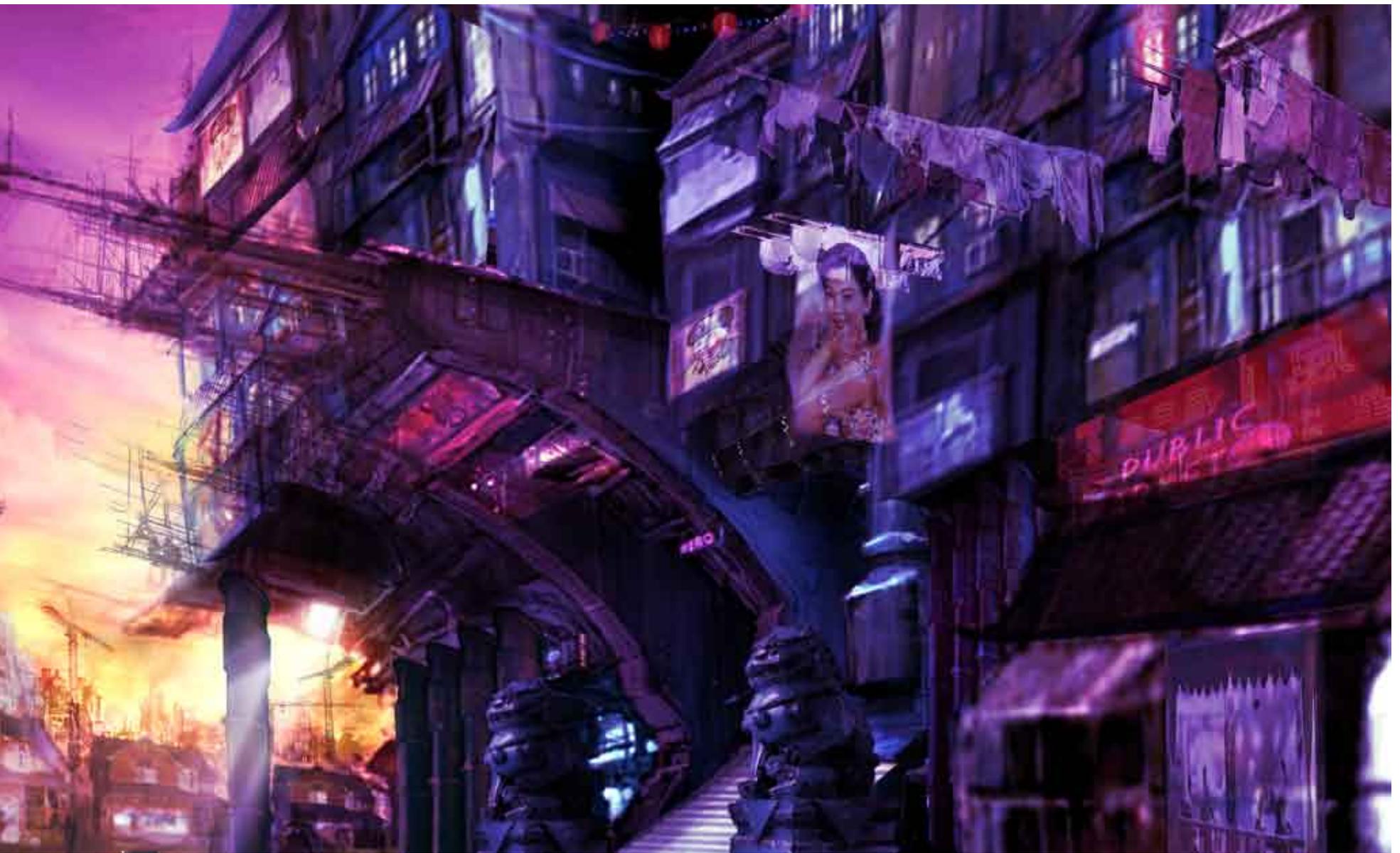


Fig. 6.70 View of Scarcity Reconstruction Zone





Fig.6.71:View of Scarcity Pedestrian Shopping District



Fig. 6.72 View of Scarcity Alley Network



Fig. 6.73:View of Scarcity Alley Network



Fig. 6.74:View of Scarcity Alley Network





Fig.6.75 View of Scarcity Enclosed Market District

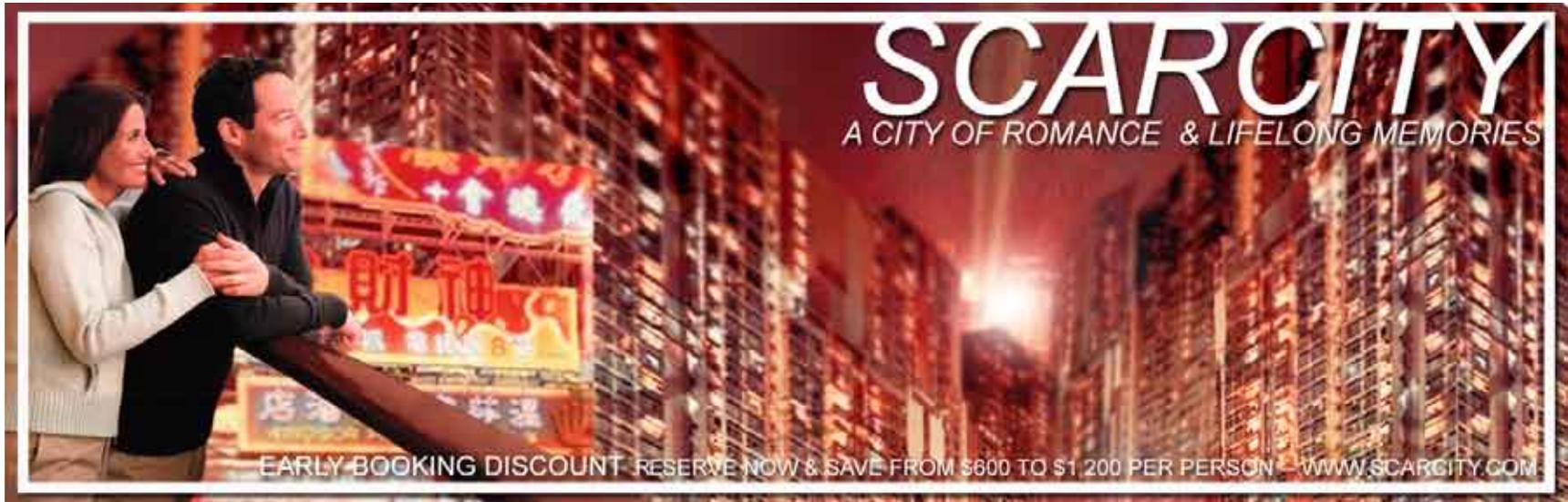


Fig.6.76 Scarcity Promotional Advertisement

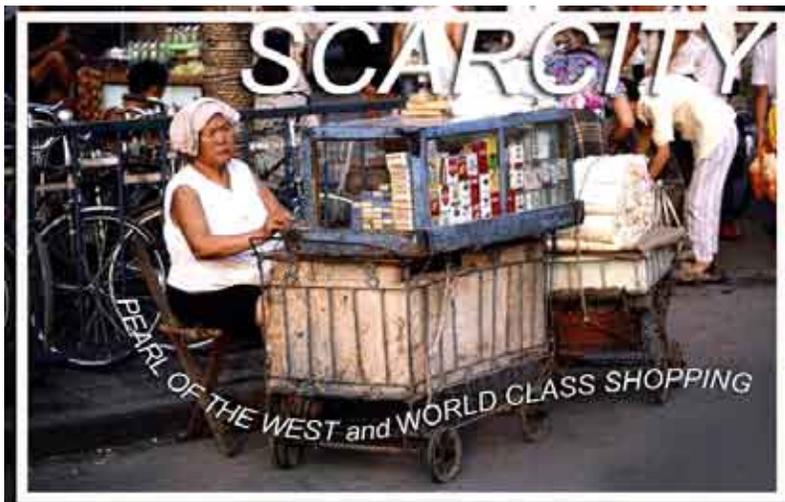


Fig.6.77: Scarcity Promotional Advertisement

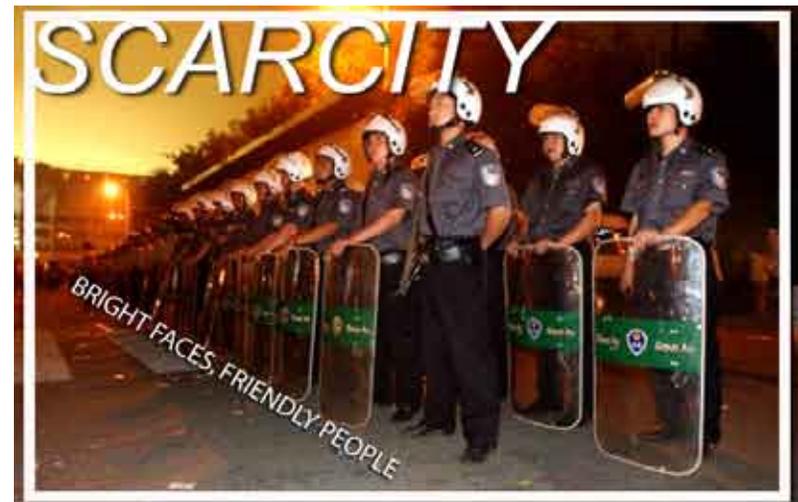


Fig.6.78: Scarcity Promotional Advertisement

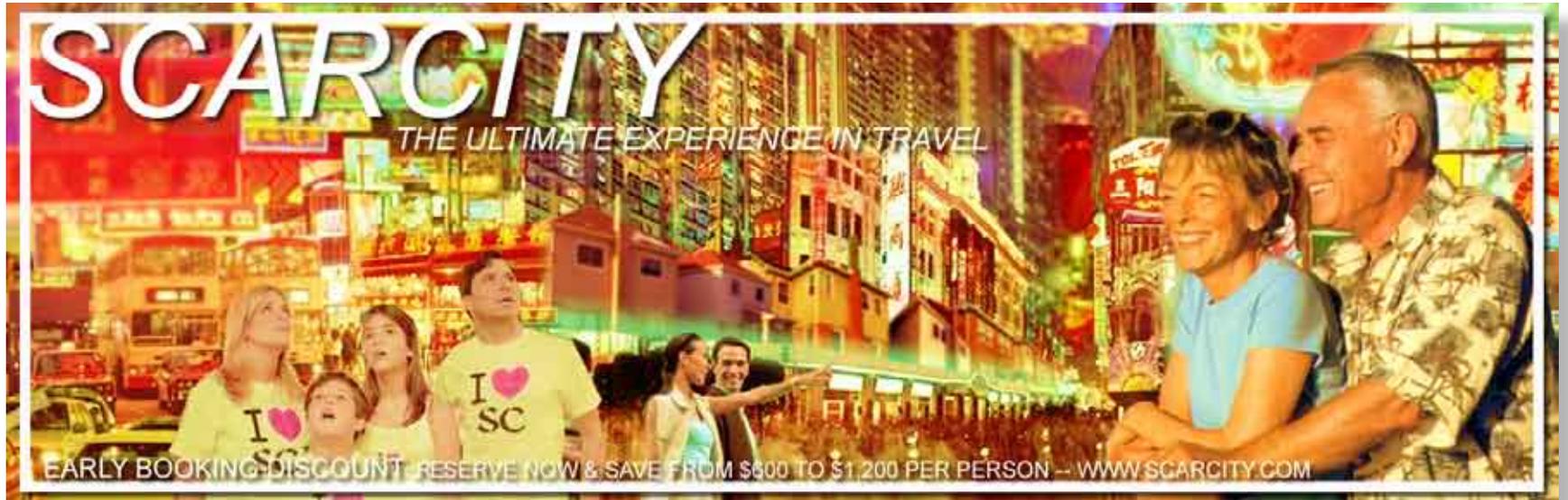


Fig. 6.79: Scarcity Promotional Advertisement

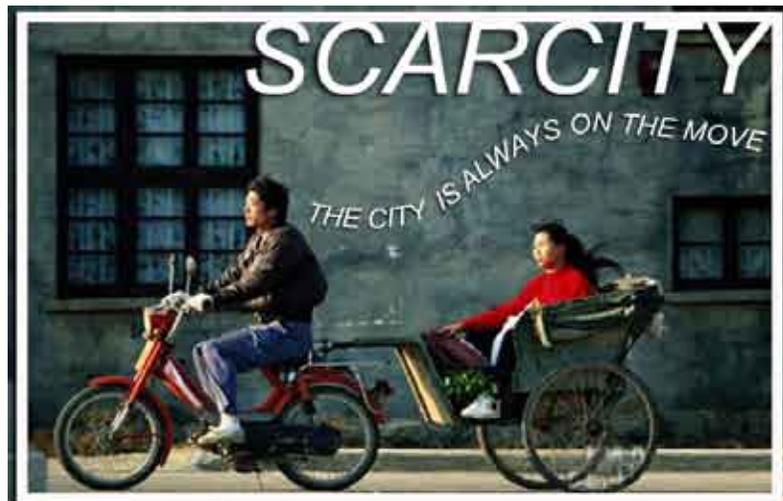


Fig. 6.80: Scarcity Promotional Advertisement



Fig. 6.81: Scarcity Promotional Advertisement





Fig. 6.82:View of Scarcity Entertainment District

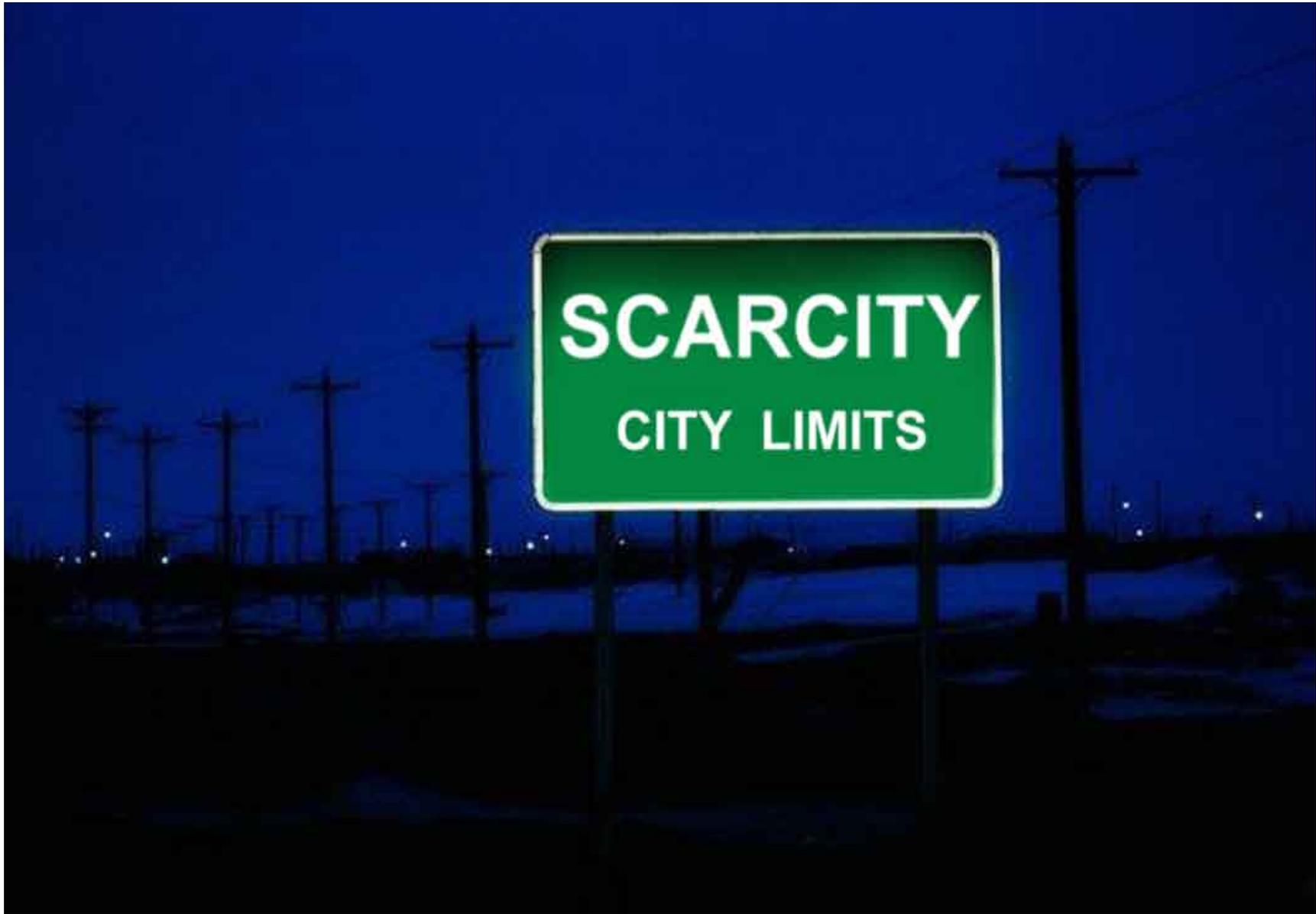


Fig. 6.83:View of Scarcity Road Sign



Fig. 6.84:View of Scarcity Road Sign

*"China is the weed in the human cabbage patch... The weed is the Nemesis of human endeavour... Of all the imaginary existences we attribute to plant, beast and star the weed leads the most satisfactory life of all. True, the weed produces no lilies, no battle ships, no Sermons on the Mount... Eventually the weed gets the upper hand. Eventually things fall back into a state of China. This condition is usually referred to by historians as the Dark Age. Grass is the only way out... The weed exists only to fill the waste spaces left by cultivated areas. It grows between, among other things. The lily is beautiful, the cabbage is provender, the poppy is maddening \_\_\_ but the weed is rank growth..."*

Henry Miller

For centuries the Middle Kingdom represented the pinnacle of civilization. By the dawn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, China was poised to be the largest and most prosperous empire in human history, with an elaborate social, economic and technological framework that rivaled all other nations of its time. With the longest continuous history of all the great empires, China's continued domination and influence over the world seemed inevitable. However, that path to supremacy was abruptly derailed by the industrial revolution in the Western world.

The growth of capitalism and the imperialism in Europe brought forth a new world order that spread to the far reaching ends of the globe, temporarily interrupting China's imperial aspirations. This was hardest felt after the Opium Wars, with a crushing defeat at the hand of foreign barbarians. The treaty ports established by Western powers transformed both the physical and political landscape of China, altering its development and halting its path towards progress. It was during this era that China came to be known as the '*sleeping giant*'.

Since China's fall, Western culture has risen to secure a monopoly over global influence. For more than three centuries, its dominance over culture, politics and economy has reshaped the world in its own image. Throughout

this time China has remained off the global radar, unable to exercise the kind of influence and power it once held.

Over the last several decades China has resurfaced onto the global arena as a major player—an awakening of the sleeping giant. Its meteoric rise is marked by double-digit economic growth over the past twenty-five years. China's ascendancy resonates throughout global networks of production, economic relationships and the supply chains of natural resources. The impact of this rapid development offers new trajectories for the future and many speculate this is the century that belongs to China. Increasingly the nation will magnify its impact on growth and change throughout the world. Its burgeoning consumer class, influence over the global supply of goods as well as its regional dominance represent a destabilization of global hegemony.

For those in the West, the models of progress have been championed by the paths of capitalism, consumerism and democracy. While China has been eager to incorporate portions of these concepts into its own schema of progress, it has also been very selective in forging its own path—*progress with Chinese characteristics*.

While on the surface China's largest cities seem to fall victim to the larger mechanisms of globalization by adopting superficial emblems of advancement, the informal patterns of habitation and commercial practices of China's lower class citizens offer an alternative paradigm for development of the modern city. Responsive, situational and impromptu, these patterns operate against the grain of conventional expansionism in a survivalist form which resists the wave of cultural flattening.

When examining the flow of these informal patterns into North America, this "subversion" of the prevailing system offers new insights into the formation of the first Chinatowns. In the cases of Toronto's outer suburbs, recent Chinese immigration has transformed Scarborough and Markham into a new form of treaty ports for an upwardly mobile class of global citizen. Through a form of inverse colonialism, waves of wealthier immigrants have reshaped the



Fig. 6.85: View of Splendid China Tower in Final Stages of Construction, November 2006

suburban and retail landscape, imbuing existing infrastructures with new utilities and complexity. These new settlements offer a new model that challenges the historical entry points of immigrants into the city. In many ways, they have reconfigured the treaty port system to benefit themselves. Previously relegated to dense urban districts, settlers in new ethnic enclaves enjoy large single family dwellings, elaborate social networks, and culturally specific commercial activities and services never before seen on the scale of the North American city. Here western typologies have been absorbed, digested and rebroadcast *with Chinese characteristics*.

These characteristics have often been met with considerable opposition throughout the growth of Markham and Scarborough. Many longtime residents have rejected the presence of Chinese malls, grow ops and rooming houses as signs of regression—a path towards disorder. But are they really evidence of systematic collapse or could these developments be, in fact, the signs new model being established—*urbanization with Chinese characteristics*?

For the coming decades Canada's forecast is increased diversity. A considerable amount of the nation's human capital will come from China—already the leading immigrant source. As the past of both nations is interwoven in the narrative of Western tea trade and railroad building, the future is intricately connected to the China's impending demand on resources and consumer goods. As the Middle Kingdom resumes its path towards global ascendancy we in the West are left to consider the validity of our models of progress. What paradigms are best suited for the new global terrain? Do all things ultimately fall into a state of China?

I am making one more journey before the completion of this thesis, to London England. I am pursuing a position at design firm in London with plans to be permanently relocated in the new year. On the eve of my departure, I am again stopped at the Airport Check-In Desk. This time it is on the Canadian side of the border. Once again my travel woes are the result of my passport. For several infractions, not the least of which is the fact my passport is issued in China, I am denied a boarding pass. I am grounded at Toronto Pearson International Airport. After an hour of futile protest I am sent back home and forced to apply for an emergency replacement passport to catch a flight the following day. Defeated.

Returning back from the airport I pass the construction site of Splendid China Tower. The billboard announces its approaching completion: February 17, 2007. The date coincides with the first day of the Chinese lunar calendar, Chinese New Year. It's opening will mark the completed transformation of the local Canadian Tire store into one of the GTA's largest Chinese-Themed Malls. With the exterior of the building styled after the Forbidden City in Beijing, there is little question who the complex is built by and built for. The Imperial flow has been reversed. The former Big Box outlet is now parceled into several hundred condominium-retail units to fulfill the dreams of the new local business class.

The following day I pass by the same billboard on the way back to the airport. *One day closer to a new year*. When I finally board the plane it is with a new passport in hand, the old one finally laid to rest. I am leaving behind a Scarborough under rapid transformation. The billboards for a new Chinese Mall even bigger than Splendid China are already up just down the street. The vacant site across from my house is teeming with bulldozers erecting a new Chinese commercial plaza. Even in the short time I am away, the momentum of change ensures that the neighbourhood I will be returning to will be vastly different from the one I am now leaving behind.



Fig. 6.86: Billboard at the corner of Midland and McNicol Ave. for Maxum Development, November 2006

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