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RICE UNIVERSITY

STRATEGIC RECOGNITION:
WATCHING THE STATE IN SHENZHEN

by

MARY ANN O’DONNELL

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APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE

George E. Marcus, Professor, Director
Anthropology

James D. Faubion, Associate Professor
Anthropology

Richard Smith, Professor
History

Houston, Texas

April, 1999
Abstract

Strategic Recognition:
Watching the State in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone

by

Mary Ann O’Donnell

Based on three years of ethnographic fieldwork in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, People’s Republic of China, I offer a reading of Reform and Opening (Gaige Kaifang) in terms of how individuals recognized, manipulated, avoided, and responded to the Chinese state apparatus during the Deng years (1978-1997). I suggest that strategic recognition—a concept I develop through an analysis of the performance and interpretation of mianzi—provides useful insight into the political, economic, and cultural infrastructure of contemporary China. My analysis of strategic recognition in Shenzhen has a double focus: the changing structure of the Chinese state within a world system and the concomitant production of legal residents. This double focus allows me to track how interlocutors strategically read each other’s mianzi and provides the empirical basis for a working definition of strategic recognition: the ability to judge relative degrees of freedom within relationships that were variously mediated by the state apparatus.
Acknowledgements

A grant from the National Science Foundation Division of Ethics and Values supported my first two years in Shenzhen; when that money ran out Dr. Wu Jiahua, editor-in-chief of World Architecture Review offered me a job as the journal's Foreign Relations Officer, which sustained another year of fieldwork. I returned to Rice University in 1998, where the Department of Anthropology provided a year of write-up funding. These kinds of institutional support facilitate the production of Anthropology as both knowledge-about-the-world and a kind of "world knowledge." I am grateful to have benefited from this system.

During the course of my three years in Shenzhen, I met, laughed, argued, and worked with many people whose insight and opinions shaped my thinking about the social significance of Reform and Opening. Early into my stay, Lin Laoshi, Tao Yitao, and Zhang Lingying of the Institute for the Study of Special Zone, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan Economics encouraged me to understand the economic restructuring of South China as a national response to post-Cold War globalization. Later, Liang Xiaoli, Liu Erming, Rao Xiaojun, Zhang Li, Zhang Tong, Zou Qi—all architects and planners—helped me work through the history of urbanization in Shenzhen.

I debated many of these issues with Wang Gan and Lyn Jeffery, anthropologists-at-large in Shenzhen and Beijing, respectively, as well as with Zhao Dongming, a philosopher at Shenzhen University. From the Zero Sun Moon collective, Chen Zhanglan, Liao Haiyan, Xiong Ting, Yang
Dongmei, and Lao Wang were especially generous with their time and opinions. Chen Yun, Feng Ling, Joe, Kathy, Li Bing, Li Hong, Li Kaixuan, "Xiao" David, Wang Xue, Wei Aiyi, Xu Hua, offered much needed companionship.

At Rice, my thesis advisor, George Marcus provoked me into thinking about the material in new ways and Jim Faubion expected rigorous thought. Rich Smith helped me place Reform and Opening in historic context. Fellow graduate students kept me sane. I would like to thank Lisa Breglia, Jamila Bargach, Nityanand Deckha, and Dejan Kusmanovic.

Over the course of the past ten years, my family has continued to support my efforts to understand China. More than anything, it is their love that enabled my persistence. Yang Qian made this work joyful.
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Note on Transliteration

The system of transliteration of Chinese words is based on Mandarin readings rendered in pinyin, the system used in the People’s Republic of China. However, I have used Cantonese transliterations for Hong Kong names and places. With respect to personal names, I have followed Chinese nomenclature: Surname first, given name second.
Prologue

The narrator is confronted with an ethical conundrum and turns to anthropological theory of performance in order to understand her predicament. Despite critical engagement with a variety of texts, however, she feels dissatisfied. Several warnings are issued.

A month or so after I moved into a Shenzhen University dorm room, Deng Lifang invited me to dinner. Deng Lifang was a Shanghai native who taught Chinese literature and social physiology. She was also the friend of a friend in the philosophy department; he thought that as woman intellectuals we would have much to talk about. “She’s also interested in modern Chinese culture.”

I arrived wearing a cotton print skirt and tee-shirt, which already stuck uncomfortably to my sweaty skin. Should I mention that my face was an unflattering burnt pink or that my sandals were covered in cement dust and grime? I had yet to cut my hair and it hung like braided hemp, wet and heavy, irritating my inflamed neck. “How long,” I repeatedly asked myself, “before the rainy season starts?” (At the time, I did not realize that even after a thunder-shower the humidity in Shenzhen does not fall below seventy percent.)

When Deng Lifang opened her door, I had been expecting a gust of air-conditioned coolness. Instead she apologized, explaining, “The electricity’s blacked out, we’ll have to go to a restaurant.”

Despite the heat, Deng Lifang had carefully styled her hair and face; the perfect arch of her eyebrows defied gravity. I watched enviously
as her stylish high-heels lifted her above the prickly clutter, which dragged down lesser mortals and anthropologists. That muggy October night, I trudged and she glided, I sweat and she? She delicately pressed a silk handkerchief to her upper lip before speaking.

"You shouldn’t limit your research to what you think you see."

Deng Lifang’s cultured voice suddenly derailed my train of uncouth thoughts. ("The restaurant will be air-conditioned; I can order a cold beer, maybe a plate of Sichuan-style rice noodles with sesame oil and minced garlic.")

"Foreign researchers come to China for a week, sometimes a month or two, then they go home and write books about us. But what have they really understood? They learn what we tell them, they write about what they see."

I felt, if possible, more ridiculous than I had when I knocked on her door only ten minutes before. At the time of this conversation, I still hoped to investigate the formation of grass-roots environmental consciousness in a South China boomtown, aware that since the establishment of Shenzhen fifteen years earlier, many “dirty industries” had migrated from Hong Kong across the border.¹ Unfortunately, but

¹ From that long-ago statement of purpose: my dissertation research will address modernization in the People’s Republic of China with reference to the production of a global, industrial-capitalist ecology. On the one hand, I will explore how a specific modernization project, waste management rationalizes environmental systems in ways which are specific to Shenzhen. On the other hand, I will study how the cultural form of this rationalization process, the application of particular Western science and technology to economic problems situates the PRC within the production of a global ecology.
perhaps not unexpectedly, the task proved less feasible than I had imagined. After a year of approaching garbage collection stations and watching methane bubbles pop on the surface of the Shenzhen river, I decided to study the built environment instead. My choice was as pragmatic as my proposed environmentalism had been idealistic. For the past twenty years, except for manufacturing, the main industry in Shenzhen has been construction. There were architects, construction workers, urban planners, support staff to interview. In contrast, there were no environmentalists to interview, while friends in the Sanitation Department politely evaded taking a white, note-taking foreigner on inspection tours.

“Mary Ann,” Xiao Pan laughed nervously, “Maybe you should consider researching something less dirty.” She concluded her refusal generously, offering to introduce me to friends in real estate development. “They deal more directly with improving environmental conditions.”

(Ironically, after I had changed my research topic for lack of a local environmental movement, I finally met an environmentalist. Yang Xin was attempting to use Shenzhen money to save the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, but seemed remarkably unconcerned about pollution in the Shenzhen River.)

Deng Lifang continued, “Chinese surfaces aren’t like Aristotle’s images, an untrue copy of some underlying reality. It’s important to understand that both the surface (biaomian) and the template (dizi) are
true; only however there are two different truths (zhibuguo you liangge butong de zhenli).

She ended her warning as abruptly as she had begun, "Don't forget to give China a little face when you write your dissertation," and gracefully stepping aside, Deng Lifang politely gestured for me to enter the restaurant first.

How to give China a little face in a critical ethnography?

The concept of "face," both mianzi and lian have been widely discussed in the ethnographic literature on China. Mayfair Yang (1989) has placed her discussion of the economy of facial transactions at the heart of an analysis of the Chinese gift economy. According to Yang, the gift economy encompasses the personal exchange and circulation of gifts, favors, and banquets and is sustained through the skillful mobilization of cultural norms in the pursuit of particular and diffuse goals. Translating from the Chinese guanxi, she calls these practices "the art of relationships." For Yang, the relational production and performance of Chinese subjects that is implicated in guanxi (relationships or connections) results from symbolic violence through which other persons may be incorporated into the self. Metaphorically, this symbolic violence is discussed through mianzi:

"Besides 'wanting face' (yao mianzi), 'losing face' (diou [sic] mianzi), and 'having face' (you mianzi), one can also 'borrow face' (jie mianzi), 'give face' (gei mianzi), 'increase face' (zengjia mianzi), 'contest face' (zheng mianzi), 'save face' (liou [sic] mianzi), and
compare face, as in the phrase, 'his face is greater than others'  
*(tade mianzi bi bieren da)* (Yang 1989:43).”

Andrew Kipnis (1995), on the other hand, has teased out some of the subtle distinctions between *mianzi*, the superficial face of power and *lian*, the face of the moral being. *Mianzi* seems both malleable and unstable. Subject to unforeseen changes in fortune, *mianzi* changes and adapts, stretching to cover respectably errors of judgement, bad taste, and inappropriate emotion. *Lian* is the moral other, the self who does the right thing despite those changes. Importantly, as Deng Lifang’s use of surface and template indicate, both *mianzi* and *lian* are visible: “The issue of correspondence to an underlying reality is simply not important with *mianzi* and *lian*.” Kipnis posits, “Rather, *mianzi* and *lian* involve what I will call constitutive visibilities: those things that influence a person’s *lian* are there to see,” before concluding, “If the *mianzi* or *lian* is seen, then it has had its effect; if acknowledged, it exists (1995:129).”

As analyzed by Yang and Kipnis, both *mianzi* and *lian* are unceasingly constituted within the context of specific interactions. Interlocutors simultaneously perform their own/respond to the other’s face. Yang characterizes this dynamic as surfeit with Foucauldian bio-power; productively constraining, *mianzi* enable social intercourse by reproducing various hierarchies. Kipnis, on the other hand, points to normative constraints in addition to power relations. In the work of both scholars, however, the fact that *mianzi* appears only through increasing knowledge of one’s interlocutor’s extra-contextual *guanxi*, status, and credentials remains implicit in both these discussions of *mianzi*, but is
nowhere developed. I would therefore qualify both Yang's analysis of *guanxixue* and Kipnis' category of "constitutive visibilities" with the skill of recognizing *mianzi*. I will develop my understanding of strategic recognition later, for the moment, I would like to point out that although *guanxi* have a materiality which can, *pace* Kipnis be "seen," extra-contextual *guanxi*, status and credentials are not self-evident. Of course, some extra-contextual knowledge is pre-given. A uniform, an introduction by a third party, a regional accent—all provide clues as to the shape and scope of an interlocutor's *mianzi*. Nevertheless, in order to effectively gage a *mianzi*, interlocutors must understand each other's background (*beijing*). Hence, the usefulness of first meeting questions about hometowns, classmates, and jobs, or more commonly third party gossip and speculation; it is only through knowledge of those extra-contextual social relations that *mianzi* become apparent.

Despite their different analytical emphases—political and social, respectively—Yang and Kipnis eventually end at the same analytic space: the embeddedness of subjects within the state apparatus. Yang begins her essay by reminding her readers of the extent to which Chinese life has been organized as bureaus within the state apparatus; access to work, housing, education and medical care have all been distributed by the state to its client-citizens. This organizational structure has powerfully positioned bureau heads and lesser functionaries to allocate resources, and on Yang's reading, created the necessity/possibility of *guanxixue*. Kipnis suggests (1995:130): "Mianzi as a metaphorical surface has a size whose area is constituted by the scope of one's social
network mapped out in two dimensional space." Mianzì suddenly appears the site where useful traces of the state may be observed precisely because bureau heads and functionaries not only have their own mianzì, but also by definition, are linked to and therefore part of other people's mianzì.

Despite these provocative leads toward a theory of how mianzì materially presents the links between individuals and the nation-state to an informed interlocutor, neither Yang nor Kipnis remark on the globalization of face as implicitly constituting concrete interactions. Deng Lifang did not frame our interaction in terms of individuals, present or absent, but rather she set the terms of our relationship with respect to how social scientific representations of China are implicated in global processes. Clearly, U.S. American citizenship supplied fundamental information about my mianzì and therefore the possible trajectory of our guanxi. Nor was she alone in troping international relations as issues of face. In fact, one of the most persistent critiques of the United States that I was to hear in Shenzhen concerned the role of America as globocop.

"If your system is the best in the world," a friend reasoned as we watched CNN footage of war games in the in the Taiwan Straights, "then you don't need to enforce your point-of-view because people will naturally study and learn from you."

At the same time, this friend supported US intervention in Iraq because Saddam Hussein had gone too far.
He said: "In order to maintain order, sometimes the laoda [an expression meaning the oldest and the biggest] has to control the situation."

He suddenly brought this analytic logic to the Tian'anmen crackdown: "The students should have known better than to provoke the Party. When has the Party ever shown a weak face?"

I lurched.

In what seems a natural extension of the state-inflected grammar of miánzì, when speaking with an American anthropologist both Deng Lifang and "Hawk" assumed that our dialogues—our friendship even—was grounded in the social drama of Sino-American relations. Victor Turner has defined "social dramas" as political processes which (1982:71-72), "involve competition for scarce ends—power, dignity, prestige, honor, purity—by particular means and only by the utilization of resources that are also scarce—goods, territory, money, men and women." He saw social dramas at all levels of social organization, ranging from fights between married couples and friends through age cohorts and matrilineal villages all the way to the nation state, and one might add, between regions of the world. As a unit of social analysis, a social drama consists in four phases of public action: (1) breach, (2) crisis, (3) redress, and (4) either reintegration or recognition of schism. The social drama commences when the routines and rhythms of daily life are disrupted ("breached"), forcing other members of the group to take sides with one or other of the antagonists ("crisis"). It is during the crisis phase that non-rational considerations prevail as norms regulating
collective behavior lose their binding force and other antagonisms erupt in the public domain. As the crisis spreads, the community affected collectively or through representatives attempts to resolve the crisis ("redress"). Turner indicates a variety of remedial methods, some of which are institutionalized within the state apparatus, some of which fall to non-state organizations, and others of which are invented as a reflexive response to the crisis. Turner stressed that the social drama is a liminal space-time through which participants pass. When they emerge, the individuals and possibly the collective have been transformed.

I am wont to mark the Sino-American breach with the Korean War followed by bouts of anti-Communist witch-hunts and anti-American imperialism movements. This time frame dovetails nicely with the establishment of the PRC (1949) and the rise of US hegemony in the postwar world system. I might also note that US-Soviet rivalries notwithstanding, it was in Asia, Socialist Asia, that too red Chinese sphere behind the bamboo curtain where the Cold War heated up. John W. Garver (1997) parses the Sino-American war zone into two regions. In the first region (Korea, Taiwan, and Indochina) the two countries fought proxy wars, while in the second region (Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Japan) both actively pursued ideological combat. On either side of the great divide, the United States and the People's Republic divvied up little Asia, the countries irrelevant to realpolitik. To pursue this social drama to its denouement, Nixon's visit to China in 1972 staged the beginning of remedial processes which eventually resulted in the
simultaneous integration of China into the world capitalist system and also the recognition of schism. Relations have been normalized, in a manner of speaking.

Chinese scholars, on the other hand, tend to identify the Opium War as the first act of a Sino-West social drama which will continue until China finds its rightful place in the world. To anticipate one of the main themes of the dissertation, that rightful place is Superpower status: recognition by the Western powers of China’s relevance to world governance. It is not the number of acts in this play that strike an uninitiated member of the audience (Fall of the Qing Dynasty, The Republican Era, The Mao Era, Reform and Opening), but rather its interminable length: When in the modern period has China not been under attack? Or perhaps it is more to the point to ask: When have Sino-West relations not threatened the integrity of China as an independent polity? In this context, the martial nationalism of Chinese National Day celebrations (October 1) makes sense: it is a celebration of the possibility of a specifically Chinese nationalism in a hostile world.

Turner assumes an analytic emphasis on the centrality of the actor to the meaning of a social drama, obscuring the cultural politics of recognizing a breach. Turner’s favorite subjects, for example, are ritual initiands. Likewise, when he shifts to an experimental interface between ethnography and theatre, he advocates having students perform rituals and then analyze the feelings and insight provoked by the exercise:

“In our experience the most effective kind of performed ethnography is not the simulation of a ritual or a ceremony torn
from its cultural context, but a series of “acts” and “scenes” based on detailed observations of processes of conflict (1986:152).” I believe that two assumptions underpin Turner’s privileging of the role of the actor in the social drama: (1) in the case of non-state social organizations (a village, for example, or a church), should reconciliation become impractical one of the antagonists can pack up and move, and (2) at the level of the state, a kind of domestic balance of power obtains. “Recognition of schism” as a model of crisis resolution therefore implies, at the very least, the legitimacy of multiple political parties, but also alternative and possibly opposition organizations within the state itself. In contrast, CCP politics have not been based on a domestic balance of power model of governance but rather, “[t]he basic assumption of CCP politics has been that a group or a coalition of groups can and does decisively defeat a major rival group or coalition, and eliminate it (Tsou 1986:99)” To use Turner’s vocabulary, the expected outcome of social drama is always (and if necessary forced) integration.²

The all-or-nothing character of Chinese political drama combined with the social fact that traces of the state apparatus may be recognized in individual mianzi has important implications for theorizing the establishment and development of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. On the one hand, in a polity where the recognition of a breach may escalate into fatal crisis, strategic mis-readings of breaches are as formative of social cohesion as is the pro-active cultivation of guanxi.
The Cultural Revolution remains the preferred example of how political
drama brought daily life to crisis, however, even in Shenzhen—the
flagship of Reform—it was possible to perceive how strategic recognitions
of the state apparatus configured daily life. The latent statist
infrastructure of mianzi was most evident in exchanges between (known)
bureaucratic functionaries and those known to be outside the
government, such as getihu (entrepreneurs).3 Without fail, entrepreneurs
who needed a variety of licenses complained of the need to ignore the
blatant rudeness and offensive arrogance of petty officials.

Dajie, a friend's older sister, came to Shenzhen in 1997. She
hoped to open a small restaurant. Many of the licenses were easily
finessed; the lease was actually a sublet of a building already zoned for
commercial purposes, the sanitation inspection agent was the friend of a
friend, and the police could be placated with banquets and hongbao (red
envelops stuffed with money). However, a business could not be opened
without proof that Dajie was in compliance with the one-child policy,
which is enforced through a series of licenses. First, a married couple
must register in order for the wife to become pregnant and have legal
rights to pre-natal care. Then, once the child is born, either the father or
the mother must be sterilized. Only with these two documents will the

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2 Tellingly, the Mandarin for “unification” (tongyi) is used to describe the
historic conquest of the Chinese mainland by Han Chinese.
3 In Streetlife China, Michael Dutton (1998) juxtaposes analysis, state
documents, and interviews with migrant workers in order to locate
analytically the site of human rights violations in contemporary China.
He argues and I concur that it is people outside the state apparatus who
child be given *hukou* (legal residence, which usually follows the mother) and assigned an identity card (*shenfenzheng*). A fifty-one year old widow, her sex life was still subject to intense scrutiny.

"He insinuated that I might still be trying to attract a husband," she raged indignantly. Everyone listening knew that Dajie had swallowed the insult, politely asking if there was anything else she needed in order to open the restaurant. We also knew, she would send a small gift, a token of her appreciation for his help in settling this matter.

On the other hand, given that outside of interactions with specific functionaries the scope of an interlocutor's *mianzi* was not self-evident, every public encounter required that an individual acted *as if* an interlocutor's *mianzi* warranted respect. Courtesy and caution co-mingled in the public virtue of *rang*, which literally means "to allow," as in the expression "my mother allows me to go" (*wo ma rang wo qu*), but can also mean "to cede," as in the verb *ranglu*, "to give way." Public gestures of *rang* included allowing a friend to enter a building first, cheerfully eating whatever the host ordered despite personal culinary preferences, and re-arranging a meeting in order to accommodate another's schedule. The ability to give way was so implicated in the mutual construction of courtesy and caution that each gesture of *rang* was taken as a sign of good breeding. ("Mary Ann you're really casual (*ni tebie suibian*)," a friend enthusiastically complimented a trait that my mother once called "wishy-washy.") At the same time, the refusal to *rang* are most likely to be victimized. In Chapter 1, I discuss the legal
implied either a general boorishness or power. After all, who else but the powerful could ignore the implicit threat of an unknown mianzi?

In this dissertation, I will argue that the privileged moment in analyzing Chinese social drama is not performance per se, but instead the cultural politics of watching political performance, which I call strategic recognition. I understand strategic recognition to entail the ability to locate traces of the state in the mianzi of one's interlocutors and to respond appropriately. An appropriate response depends upon the way in which statist infrastructure constitutes a particular mianzi as well as the nature of the relationship which connects two interlocutors. The contingency of strategic recognition derives from the bureaucratization of society that has been central to the Chinese planned economy and alternative structures of obligation and affection which continue to inform Chinese daily life. I will take up each of these aspects individually.

First. The bureaucratization of society means that it is not only citizen-clients who must read the mianzi of a functionary, but state functionaries must also be able to interpret the mianzi of superiors as well as the mianzi of higher levels of government. In these contexts, strategic recognition manifests as an ability to distinguish between those traces of the state which must be enforced, those which can be finessed, and others which might be safely ignored. Dajie, for example, was not only constrained by the nature of the relationship (petitioning a

residence system and minimal preconditions to participate in society.
functionary for a license), but also by the degree of importance that the government placed on the one-child policy at that time. Her other licenses (lease and health inspection), less central to current policy, were more easily obtained and thus, entailed less sucking up to unpleasant functionaries. In other words, strategic recognition presupposes a refined and up-to-date understanding of how relevant leaders interpret the relationship between the state apparatus and its client-citizens. Theoretically, mianzi ultimately indexes the policies and preferences of the current Party Secretary (Jiang Zemin) and Prime Minister (Zhu Rongji), with the Tian'anmen crackdown differently etched in their respective mianzi. Jiang Zemin replace Zhao Ziyang because the current Party Secretary supported the decision to send troops into the plaza, while Zhu Rongji (then Mayor of Shanghai) had the Shanghai Labor Union send representatives to surround protesting students, simultaneously preventing the crisis from escalating and protecting protestors from the military. One leader exhibits the face of a policy of maintaining power at any cost, the other the face of a just leadership. Both stage normative models of bureaucratic behavior for functionaries who must strategically read their mianzi in order to administrate the laws and policies of the PRC.4

4 Lisa Rofel (1997:173) has described the spatial order created through the Chinese gaze “a hierarchy of display,” where hierarchical relationships are manifest through the material organization of the built environment. Analyzing the spatial practices in a Hangzhou silk factory, she contrasts the cultural grammar of a “hierarchy of display” with that of a disciplinary gaze, pace Foucault. Rofel rightly argues that at stake in these different versions of how the gaze structures space is a working
However the *mianzi* of leadership is not only displayed during the forced resolution of crisis. The bureaucratization of society which followed Liberation resulted in the administration of daily life as a series of interrelated but hierarchically ranked government projects. Collectivization, public sanitation, number of children in a family—each project manifested the *mianzi* of a particular leader and political line. Not only the Shenzhen built environment but also the process of construction, for example, embodied the *mianzi* of Deng Xiaoping. Throughout the Deng years (1978-1997) to live and work in Shenzhen was to watch indirectly the changing *mianzi* of Deng Xiaoping. Locals and migrants based personal, business and social decisions on their interpretations of this *mianzi*. What might the limits to economic liberalization be? At the national level, the identification of Deng Xiaoping with Shenzhen meant that the SEZ served as a template for watching the paramount leader's *mianzi*. Indeed, on a visit to Shanghai in 1991, Deng Xiaoping lamented: “The fourteen open cities include Shanghai, but nevertheless they're only average. If only Pudong was like

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definition of the structure of international modernity. As Deng Lifang observed the danger of assuming the Western definition exposes the anthropologist to two possible errors: either considering Chinese practices “not modern” or misinterpreting how modern discipline is effected in China. Moreover, as she understandably worried, the production of this knowledge is linked to how China is viewed by dominant members of the world system. Given the current hegemony of the United States within the world system, our disciplinary gaze continues to evaluate, reward and punish the PRC within that system without consideration of the varieties and problems of modernity in China.
the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone and had opened several years earlier."

Given this identification between Deng Xiaoping and the SEZ, debates over how Shenzhen should be developed, which industries should be encouraged, what kinds of people should be given legal residence resonated at both the national and the regional level. Indeed, municipal debates inevitably escalated into debates over national policy. What did it mean “to study Shenzhen?” When could the lessons start? How radical the restructuring? Answering these questions forced political leaders, administrative functionaries, and citizen-clients to carefully shape the trajectory of national reform.

Second. Because of alternative structures of obligation and affection also organized daily life, strategic recognition served as a site—albeit unstable—for the public expression of ethical values. Yang and Kipnis are not the only scholars who have discussed how the intersections between the personal and official spheres of the lives of state functionaries generate both “corruption” and “subversion” of the state apparatus.\(^5\) Notice, however, that “corruption” and “subversion” refer more to positioned evaluation of an act than the act itself. To help a friend overcome difficulties securing licenses (which might be read as

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\(^5\) In fact, since the early 1970s informal politics has been the basis of Western political analysis of China. “Factions” or “informal groups” are hierarchically organized patron-client networks which are based on face to face guanxi. Although formally outside the institutional structure of the state apparatus, informal groups are embedded in that structure, constituting a supportive and/or alternative subsystem of political power.
subversion of the state apparatus), is from the point of view of a less
popular entrepreneur, corruption. Yet the nuances of ethical
interventions into strategic recognition can not be reduced to a simplistic
dyad: good for me, too bad for you.

"Life is too tiring (shenghuo tai lei)," Xiao Wang complained, one
hot afternoon. The electric fan hummed and we sat on rubber pillows
filled with a petro-chemical cocktail called "liquid ice," drinking
chrysanthemum tea.

Xiao Wang worked in an office as a minor account. Unluckily, the
office manager was the mistress of the company CEO. Their relationship
was described as "special," but it was not uncommon. In Shenzhen,
accounting was considered a particularly suitable job for a woman, just
as leadership suited a man. Many CEOs installed their wives or
mistresses as head accountant, while ambitious accountants often
pursued the CEO. Xiao Wang occupied a small but not inconspicuous
desk, ignoring what transpired between the CEO and her office manager,
hoping against hope that they were ignoring her.

"I don't know what they did," she said, "but now she wants the
boss to fire me. Of course, he can't fire me [because it's a state-owned
industry], so she's trying to make me quit. Everyone knows she's
harassing me, but who dares contradict her?"

Xiao Wang's office-mates offered moral support. "But," she
explained, "only someone with influence can help me. And you know
how Chinese men are. The boss just can't sleep with her and then let
her go. The head account knows too much about him. She suspects me, so now he suspects me.”

*Mianzi* thick with contradictions. As an employee of the state, Xiao Wang was eligible for state-subsidized housing and therefore did not want to compromise her eligibility by quitting. For over a year she smiled politely and endured the head accountant’s. The head account could not fire Xiao Wang without sufficient cause, while the CEO gave his mistress a little face and accepted her evaluation of the situation. At the same time, any direct support for Xiao Wang might have been interpreted as an attack on the authority of the CEO because as the largest *mianzi* in the company, his policies and preferences (including indulging a mistress’s whims) shaped office *guanxi*. The head of another department who was aware of the accountant’s attack on Xiao Wang’s livelihood strategized to obtain her transfer into his department. Once in another department, her tenure at the company could be credited toward her application for housing. Would the CEO be satisfied with a transfer as a resolution to the problem? In the end, a retired friend of both the CEO and the department head intervened, successfully suggesting the transfer and introducing another accountant.

“My new department head is a good man,” Xiao Wang confirmed several months later. “He never mentioned this affair again. Another leader might have had ulterior motives, or just ignored the situation. Helping me couldn’t bring any benefits (*dui ta meiyou li*), but even worse might have damaged his relationship with the CEO.”
Like society, the ethics of strategic recognition are hierarchical and pivot on gradations of contextually determined recognition (of the most important *mianzi* in an environment) and the non-recognition (of the least important *mianzi*). For all concerned, the head accountant’s behavior provoked the need to read the CEO’s *mianzi*. Although the CEO did not display an attitude toward the situation (*biaoshi yige taidu*), he nonetheless permitted the head accountant to harass Xiao Wang. If he chose to ignore the head accountant, they too could ignore her. In fact, it was possible to read the CEO’s silence as ethical paralysis. He might have known Xiao Wang was being treated unjustly, but he could not publicly contradict his mistress over so insignificant an employee without (at the very least) raising a few eyebrows and more likely, inviting retribution. Thus, the head accountant depended upon this silent complicity in order to harass Xiao Wang. Office mates at the same level as Xiao Wang could not be expected to intervene as all they could accomplish would be to direct the head accountant’s wrath toward themselves. They could, however, abstain from harassing Xiao Wang and, more pro-actively, eat lunch with her in a show of moral support. (“In the end,” Xiao Wang griped cynically, “that’s all Chinese people are good for. We call it the A Q spirit (*A Q jingshen*),” a reference to Lu Xun’s portrayal of a Chinese everyman who bullies underlings and curries favor with superiors.⁶) Only another department head (the same bureaucratic

⁶ The is an allusion to Lu Xun’s famous short-story “Ah-Q Zhengzhuan” (The True Story of Ah-Q), which satirizes a Chinese “everyman.” Yang
level as the head accountant) was positioned to intervene, his lack of material reward evidence of disinterested concern (duì, ta meiyòu lì).

By giving an inferior a little face (i.e. helping Xiao Wang resolve her problem with the head accountant) instead of ignoring her plight, the department head intervened ethically in a social field that was created through strategic recognition of traces of the state apparatus in the mìanzi of relatives and neighbors as well as friends and colleagues. At first glance, the ethics of strategic recognition appear vaguely familiar. The five basic relationships of classical Confucianism (father/son, ruler/minister, husband/wife, older brother/younger brother, and friend/friend) were constituted through hierarchical reciprocity. Excepting the friend/friend dyad relationship which was predicated on affective equality, the inferior of the dyad (son, minister, wife, and younger brother) owed the superior (father, ruler, husband, and older brother) loyalty, obedience and affection in return for protective incorporation into society. The fixed hierarchy of these dyads placed inferiors in a state of domination with respect to the superior. On Tu Wei-Ming’s reading, abuses of power in this system were monitored by the Confucian intellectual whose

“... faith in the perfectibility of human nature through self-effort, the intrinsic goodness of the human community, and the possibility of the unity of man and heaven enabled him to maintain

a critical posture toward those who were powerful and influential (1993:10-1).”

The department head’s disinterested concern for Xiao Wang’s well-being seems to exhibit similarities with the ethical patronage promulgated by Confucianism.

Ethical patronage resulted from the self-cultivation of the Confucian intellectual. According to Tu, self-cultivation entailed expanding knowledge of oneself within the context of the five basic relationships. The ethical life began with “small learning” (xiaoxue) and culminated in “great learning” (daxue). Small learning referred to the integration of a child into society through ritualization of the body. In addition to proper etiquette, the child learned both his place in the family as well as his expected roles in society by role playing and instruction. Indeed, family order was the metaphorical structure through which societal relations were apprehended. Great learning began when a youth reflexively examined his life in light of the Confucian canon. The goal of this daily practice was to enable the intellectual to respond creatively to a ceaselessly changing environment and thus engender the virtuous transformation of society. “In Mencian terms we need to go through the strenuous effort of accumulating ‘righteous acts’ (jìyì) (Tu 1994:37).”

Michel Foucault once analyzed Greco-Roman ethics in resonant terms: “The care of the self is ethical in itself; but it implies complex relationships with others insofar as this ethos of freedom is also a way of caring for others (1997:287).” Like the ethics of the Confucian intellectual, the ethics of the Greco-Roman freeman entailed knowledge
of the self which enabled him to create and maintain appropriate
relations with his inferiors (wife and children), superiors (government
and teachers), and equals (friends). Significantly, in both models, ethical
behavior appears a privilege of position. The ethical subject not only
refrains from abusing his power over others, he uses it to promote a
better society. In a gesture significant for my discussion of the ethics of
strategic recognition in Shenzhen, however, Foucault (1997:292
following) frames the issue at stake in terms of respective degrees of
freedom within relations of power. By relations of power, Foucault means
relations in which both interlocutors enjoy the possibility of changing the
conditions of the relationship. Where power relations are perpetually
assymetrical, the inferior in a relationship is reduced to strategms that
do not reverse or undo the state of domination; that is the relationship is
defined by a narrow margin (if not the absence) of freedom.

In order to pinpoint how the question of freedom shapes important
differences between the department head’s ethics and those of the
Confucian intellectual, it is not only useful to sketch the characteristics
of the intellectual, but also to remember three social pre-conditions of
those ethics. First, the intellectual occupied a privileged social position.
Unlike, women, bond servants, and indentured peasants, the intellectual
was a man who could assume the superior position in all four of the
hierarchical dyads. As we know, the intellectual groomed to be a
subordinate minister, but was evaluated by his conduct in relation to his
son, his wife, his younger brother, as well as his peasants and
household servants, being “ruler” to their “minister.” Second, the
audience for this ethical performance was constituted by friends who were neither superior nor inferior to the intellectual. In other words, the ethics of friendship were predicated on a suspension of the hierarchy that structured all other social relationships. Friends shared analogous experiences, pleasures, and responsibilities. In contrast, the intellectual shared with who with his son, ruler (and subordinates), wife, and younger brother disparate experiences, pleasures, and responsibilities. Third, it was possible to retire from public office, assuming only the roles of father, husband, younger brother, and friend.7

Like the Greco-Roman freeman’s ethics, the ethics of the Confucian intellectual were contingent upon a freedom that was secured through the political subjugation of the majority of society. On the one hand, the four hierarchical dyads were also administrative categories that gave the superior control over the life of the inferior. Fathers could and did sell children (especially daughters), rulers could and did execute ministers, husbands could and did abuse wives, older brothers could and did mistreat younger brothers. Only friends entered into relationships that were not also enforced by the state bureaucracy. On the other hand, retirement provided intellectuals with a space outside the political realm where their behavior was not subject to any power other than themselves. The limited reach of the imperial government and its concomitant dependence on the informal participation of the

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7 Merle Goldman (1981:3) reminds us: “Unlike the West, Confucianism did not legally guarantee a loyal opposition, but it justified one
intellectuals in local government generated a space in which intellectuals might avoid the consequences of subjugation. In addition, the informal participation of Confucian intellectuals in government provided them with another source of "independent" income (Wakeman 1975). On this reading, ethical behavior entails the freedom to shape a relationship or to use Foucault's gloss, ethical behavior emerges in the context of "relations of power." No wonder that for both the Confucian intellectuals and Greek philosophers, friendship was the preferred relationship; as an (ideally) non-hierarchical relationship it provided the greatest degree of freedom for ethical conduct. In addition, friendship provided a context in which ethical conduct might be recognized as an expression of personality rather than as the fulfillment of expected duties in contrast with the other four relationships where correct behavior—despite the quality of performance—always already entailed the threat of coercion.

The ethical differences between the department head and the Confucian intellectuals might be summarized as the difference between the kinds of relations of power that were possible in imperial China and those possible in the People's Republic of China since Reform. By the time I arrived in Shenzhen, economic Reform had opened some spaces for a livelihood outside the state apparatus. Nevertheless, even entrepreneurs who were administratively defined as outside the state

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8 Foucault (1997:292) notes that "power relations are ... mobile, reversible, and unstable ... [P]ower relations are possible only insofar as the subjects are free."
apparatus depended on good relations with local government in order to conduct business. If the Party no longer overtly used its monopoly over national resources to enforce a particular ideology, it nevertheless had yet to release control over economic and political resources. Governmental ministries controlled zoning the built environment, land development projects, commercial development, and the majority of domestic capital. In short, only functionaries enjoyed a freedom analogous to that of the Confucian intellectual and the free Greek.

Although the five relationships still have emotional currency in contemporary Chinese society and indeed influence the distribution of collective resources, I would nevertheless suggest that the privileged category for understanding ethical behavior is functionary/citizen-client. In contemporary China, the five relations are mediated by functionaries in the state apparatus, making “government functionary” rather than “Confucian intellectual” the privileged site of ethical behavior. “Fathers” are identified on birth certificates issued by the state; “rulers” are recognized by their position in the state apparatus; “husbands” are legally constituted through registration with the state, and “older brothers” are only possible in rural areas where a two child policy is in affect or minority areas. (Citizens with minority status may have two children in urban areas and three children in rural areas). Of course, “friend” is both an affective category and a euphemism for acquaintances and business partners in the government.
("Shenzhen," a friend explained his alienation from political life, "is a paradise for cadres of chuji or higher."\(^9\))

Patricia Mann (1994) has discussed female agency under Western patriarchy in a way that sheds useful light on strategic recognition as a response to domination. Mann defines agency as, "[T]hose individual or group actions deemed significant within a particular social or institutional setting (1994:14)" emphasizing that agency has three dimensions: motivation, responsibility, and expectations of recognition or reward. For example, in Western patriarchy the male sexual gaze has constituted women as sexual objects, limiting female social agency to specific sexual or non-sexual relationships with men. In this system, women were trained both to attract and repel the male sexual gaze, modifying their behavior according to the sexual content of their relationship with the gazer. Consequently, Mann theorizes female agency has not been passive, but rather responsive entailing the ability to recognize and respond appropriately to the sexual gazes of particular men. In constraining the scope of female agency, Western patriarchy thus limited the necessary social freedom for ethical relationships between men and women. Likewise, Chinese citizen-clients had to learn to read the mianzi of Shenzhen functionaries, a political arrangement which promoted corruption and cynicism in most functionary/citizen-

\(^9\) I discuss how gender has shaped Shenzhen society in *Pathbreaking: Constructing Gendered Nationalism in the Shenzhen SEZ.*

\(^10\) Chuji is the third level of a seven level ranking system.
client relationships. The question, as Foucault so aptly put it, "is knowing where resistance will develop (1997:292)."

I ask: "How might these models help us reconsider the task of giving China a little face?"

I conclude this prologue with two propositions, an outline of the dissertation, and a personal statement.

First, for both the Confucian intellectual and the Greek freeman, the condition of ethical possibility was relative "freedom" within a hierarchical polity. Clearly, an understanding of the political construction of "freedom" in the contemporary People's Republic must predicate any ethnography of Chinese "culture." Mianzi explicitly incorporates the state apparatus into contemporary Chinese ethics, socially mapping coercion, complicity, corruption, subversion, kindness, and ethics. It also points to strategic recognition as a means of tracking the social consequences of these relationships. Indeed, strategic recognition might be understood as a measure of the limits to political and economic freedom in Shenzhen.

In each of the following chapters, I unpack strategies for watching the state in the history and development of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. In one sense, this process may be described as an exploration of Deng Xiaoping's mianzi. The oldest and largest of the Chinese special economic zones, Shenzhen represented the experimental limits to economic liberalization throughout the deceased leader's tenure (1978-1997). In another sense, it may be understood as an interpretation of the possibilities of everyday life in Shenzhen. Given the
fact that Shenzhen began with the sanction of the Central government, the process of development itself provided useful information about how the municipal government interpreted the relationship between the state apparatus and its client-citizens. I am interested in narrating how residents in Shenzhen strategically recognized Deng Xiaoping’s *mianzi* to craft everyday life. The skill of watching the state in Shenzhen construction sites, I would suggest enabled the production of certain kinds of subject positions, even as it precluded others. By analyzing the history of the Shenzhen built environment, I have attempted to trace the changing contours of the state *mianzi* during the Deng years. The largest state sponsored project in the city, construction was the space where the state redefined the national drive for modernization (chapter one), cultural Chineseness (chapter two), rural-urban relations (chapter three), relations between the state and its client-citizens (chapter four), and new ethical choices (chapter five). Rather than close this dissertation with a definitive conclusion, in chapter six I speculate how strategic recognition might inform further ethnographic efforts in Shenzhen.

Second, in what seems a natural extension of the state-inflected grammar of *mianzi*, Deng Lifang assumed that our conversation as well as the possibility of friendship were paradoxically formed across political borders but nevertheless within a shared system. *Mianzi* suddenly seems a historical product that simultaneously amalgamates and reconfigures the expansion of a world system into the Chinese polity. On this reading, *mianzi* enables tracking the expansions of capitalism as a world system and the emergence of alternative forms of modernity. In
addition, it is also a productive metaphor for reflecting on the kinds of freedom which produce the possibility of ethnographic knowledge, and by extension, the kinds of ethics that might be produced in this space. Here, the issue of citizenship which Deng Lifang and "Hawk" assumed as the basis of our respective relationships looms problematically. As an American in Shenzhen, I was a welcome guest. Unable to directly intervene in the Chinese state apparatus, but able to wield a pair of chopsticks, I appeared both non-threatening and human, easily appeased, quite possibly civilized, and always appealingly naïve: the anthropologist as exotic pet.

The relative positions of the United States and the People's Republic predicates the possibility of an American ethnography of China. Indeed, the entire enterprise of U.S. anthropology depends upon political and economic configurations that (1) allow U.S. citizens to travel freely across international borders, (2) finance the overseas investigations of U.S. academics, and (3) justify the production of "world knowledge." These institutions provide the infrastructure of my miànzi. Given the relative freedom that accrues to an U.S. anthropologist in the world system what might an ethnography of Shenzhen entail? In other words, what do I need to know about myself in order to write ethically about Shenzhen?

(Dongmei shrugged and lit a cigarette before answering.

"It's not that we Chinese think you Americans are stupid. But Chinese people are very complicate (fuza). We don't understand how
people who aren't crafty can be *laoda*. Anyway,” she reassured me, “nobody thinks you’re stupid.”)

Contrary to what my philosophic friend thought, Deng Lifang and I did not have all that much in common because our different forms of feminism produced incompatible personalities. I thought that she spent too much time conforming to social expectations, she thought my casual disregard of those expectations rude and immature. This question of style permeated our respective understandings of polite discourse among intellectuals, let alone our preferred topics. She tended to look for psychological explanations, while I argued for social causation. More divisive perhaps was my passion for debate, which she interpreted as a penchant for argumentation. (Nor was she alone. Formal interviews notwithstanding, I managed to contradict most of my friends in inappropriate ways. I usually discovered that I had transgressed the boundary between friendly conversation and general boorishness when a third party would interject a new, less provocative topic, which my interlocutor immediately picked up. One of the more common tactics for changing an unpleasant topic was to ask, “Doesn’t Mary Ann speak Chinese well?”)

Nevertheless three and one half years later as I try to force my Shenzhen experiences into something resembling an ethnography, that first conversation with Deng Lifang continues to haunt my efforts to write
Chinese culture.\textsuperscript{11} It is not simply that there are at least two truths, a surface and a template, and we disagreed over how to evaluate the distance separating the two. (Where I saw the cultural legitimization of unjust power inequalities, she felt the necessity for some external order despite her personal preferences, indeed she recognized her place within that system as dependent on necessary inequality.) But rather, Deng Lifang cared profoundly about those truths because they fixed the coordinates of her life, while liberating me to write ethnography. She sensed that those monstrous truths, which generate and are generated by Shenzhen surfaces and templates have practical consequences for the lives of modern Chinese and she wanted to regulated my graphic behavior accordingly. She strategically recognized the U.S. state apparatus in my \textit{mianzi} and responded accordingly. Thus, if my narrative seems suspiciously dependent on hyperbolic fictions and critical omissions, it is out of respect for the tenacity of dreams and values that demanded the appearance of elegant femininity despite a hostile environment.

\textsuperscript{11}James Clifford explains the orientation of the essays in \textit{Writing Culture} (1986:2): “No longer a marginal, or occulted dimension, writing has emerged as central to what anthropologists do both in the field and thereafter.” Explicitly situating his commentary within an analysis of representation in the social sciences, Clifford and his collaborators iterate the important insight that the “culture” of ethnographic texts has been produced through genre conventions and beliefs about language through the process of transcription.
1. The Lay of the Land

Our anthropologist establishes her narrative authority by reconstructing the administrative history of Shenzhen. She comments on some characteristics of the local residents. A confession of methodological perversity is made.

Administratively, the "special" of the expression "Special Economic Zone" (jingji tequ) refers to the de-coupling of political and economic functions and subsequent re-alignment of the administrative hierarchy that occurred under Deng Xiaoping. The contemporary organization of the Chinese State is based on equivalencies made between territorial and bureaucratic administration, which is adaptation of a rural administration to the needs of urban modernization.¹ The rural framework has three levels: national, provincial, and county. Cities are ranked within the rural framework according to size and importance. As of 1998, for example, there were four cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin,

¹ The rural—in the form of the county (xian) formally remained the center of Chinese government until July 1921. At that time, the Beiyang government promulgated the City Self-governing Ordinance establishing two categories of city, the Special City and the Ordinary City, but only for internal regulation within the city itself and not as an organ of state administration. Nine years later the Republican government promulgated the City Organization Law designating Cities as the seat of regional administration. In this way, a second line of administration was introduced into Chinese government with Special Cities having equal status to provinces and administratively directly under the central government and Ordinary Cities having equal status to Counties and placed under the administration of Provinces. By the end of 1947, the Republic had 35 provinces, 1 region, 12 national cities (formerly called special cities), 2016 counties, 57 provincial cities
and Chongqing) with the rank of province, while provincial capitals (such as Guangzhou) are the most important city within a province. Shenzhen represents a further restructuring of this already complex order. Economically, Shenzhen was placed directly under the Central government, its status equivalent to that of a province or an independent city. Politically, however, Shenzhen was ranked a sub-provincial city, subordinate to Guangzhou. I have adapted Kenneth Lieberthal’s (1995:210) useful chart of the structural organization of the People’s Republic of China in order to familiarize the reader with one set of important political landmarks.²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart 1: The Structure of Chinese Government</th>
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<tr>
<td>NATION/“CENTER”</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry</td>
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<td>General Bureau</td>
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<td>Division</td>
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²The other set is, of course, the internal organization of the Chinese Communist Party. Once in power, the Party had to delegate the administration of the country to bureaucrats in the State apparatus. The Chinese leadership adapted the system of parallel rule first deployed by the Soviets. Parallel rule entailed the appointment of Party members to the top position in any government agency in order to supervise Party members in the government and lead government administration. Moreover, the Party was hierarchically organized into communities which correspond to all levels of government, effectively making the organs of government redundant (Shirk 1992).

(formerly called ordinary cities) 40 administrative departments, 2 administrative bureaus, 93 qi and 175 zong.
Located just north of the Hong Kong New territories, the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone (SEZ) occupies 327.5 km\(^2\) of the Shenzhen Municipality. An 84.5 kilometer administrative boundary, commonly called the second line (erxian) divides Shenzhen Municipality into two sections: the SEZ (encompassing Yantian, Luohu, Futian, and Nanshan Districts) and "the suburbs" of Longgang and Bao'an Districts. The second line plays an important role in managing the flow of Chinese in and out of Shenzhen as well as determining wages and rents. Shenzheners consequently refer to the rest of China as "the interior" (neidi), a rhetorical gesture which positions the SEZ as a buffer zone between China and the world outside (guowai). The world outside begins at the 27.5 kilometer Shenzhen-Hong Kong border, which until July 1, 1997, was recognized internationally as delineating the limit of Chinese sovereignty in South China. The Shenzhen-Hong Kong border has been and continues to be fundamental to the regulation of human, capital, and commodity flows in and out of the People's Republic.

Since 1970, East Asia has emerged as a new epicenter of capital accumulation on a global scale, challenging US American hegemony in the world system. Indeed, the discussion of the world system in terms of "regions" may be attributed to the Japanese strategy of regionalization. The Japanese system is based on the radical externalization of costs within the inter-state system, allowing Japanese firms to concentrate on the production of high value-added products and global finance. These externalizations include the costs related to military protection.
environmental protection, labor management, and increasingly, production infrastructure.

This pattern of cost externalization has resulted in the hierarchical subordination of South East Asian economies to Japanese capital (Hart-Landsberg and Burkett 1998). Importantly, this is development pattern which allies capital with the international system, rather than with a domestic economy. Hence, Korean, Taiwanese and Hong Kong capital have followed Japan in investing in states comparatively weaker than themselves, a pattern which has left national economies proportionately weaker the further they are away from the initial Japanese impulse. The importance of this shift, however, lies not only in the rise of this new form of capitalist accumulation, what David Harvey (1989) has dubbed “flexible accumulation,” but precisely in the radical separation of the respective sites of global superiority of force (in the United States) and capitalist accumulation (in Japan). It is this structural dissonance which makes flying goose capitalism meaningful, even as it problematizes issues of municipal identity, nationalism and citizenship in South East Asia.

Chinese comparative advantage, like that of the newly industrialized economies (NIEs: Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Burma, and Laos) is understood to derive from a relatively broad base of labor-intensive manufacturing. Moreover, as Masaru Yoshitomi, Vice Chairman of the Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan
Research Institute reminds the reader, "'Standard' arguments posit that China, because of its vast scale, may have three advantages over the Asian NIEs...and ASEAN-4 countries: a relative abundance of natural resources; a potentially huge domestic market; and a seemingly unlimited supply of surplus labor (1996:54)." On this reading, Chinese economic strategy would be the continuing control of labor, while increasing the number and amount of value-added production to its organization. These two activities--both export oriented--seem to indicate that the natural constituency of this regime would be state bureaucrats who control access to those costs which the investment regime externalizes, legitimating the necessity of a strong state (with respect to labor) and liberal policies (with respect to capital).

These contradictions are captured in a popular expression "store in front, factory in back" which refers to a complex of political and economic institutions by which Shenzhen and Hong Kong, in the context of global capitalism, have been made co-extensive. Despite claims that Shenzhen is more than simply a glorified export processing zone -- along the lines of Malaysia or Indonesia, for example -- a 1996 report issued by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development stressed that with the decline of the central plan, China's export structure had shifted to labor-intensive manufacturing. In 1992, 89% of Hong Kong investment in China went to Guangdong Province, while 31.5% went to Shenzhen. Moreover, bankers and urban planners work on the assumption that over 70% of all foreign investment in Shenzhen is from Hong Kong. More indicative of the critical role that the Shenzhen-Hong
Kong axis plays in linking the Chinese domestic economy to the global is a report by Yun-Wing Sung (1992), which documents that 62% of China's exports to the US were re-exported through Hong Kong, while the corresponding figure for US exports to China was 20%. In other words, the Shenzhen-Hong Kong axis not only enables Hong Kong foreign direct investment into South China, but also serves as a conduit between the US and Chinese economies. Sung views the role of Hong Kong as a broker between China and the world positively. Nevertheless, he also notes that economic integration must be predicated on political separation (1992): "To qualify for GATT membership, Hong Kong must be able to effectively distinguish between goods made in Hong Kong and those that are made in Shenzhen and elsewhere. The abolition of Hong Kong border controls against Shenzhen would jeopardize Hong Kong's GATT membership and Hong Kong's textile and clothing quotas."

In order to capture the hybridity of this space, I refer to it as "ShenKong," a transliteration, half Mandarin/ half Cantonese, of the Chinese contraction for "Shenzhen-Hong Kong" which is used in expressions such as "ShenKong relations" or the "ShenKong border." If translated, the two characters mean "deep harbor," one of several points of competition between the two cities because Hong Kong is and Shenzhen is attempting to become, a major entrepôt harbor in the South China Sea. Nevertheless, the transliteration "ShenKong" is useful because it calls attention to how the contradictions between domestic politics (here staged in Mandarin) and global capitalism (staged in
Cantonese) constituting the Shenzhen SEZ disrupted the possibility of an unproblematic "Shenzhener" identity.

In September 1995, when I first arrived in Shenzhen, the question of whether Shenzhen should maintain its "special" status was widely debated. Administratively, 1995 would mark the end of this status, which gave the municipal government the right to grant tax incentives to foreign and domestic investors as well as a relative degree of freedom from Beijing (the national capital) and Guangzhou (the provincial capital) to plan the course of urbanization. With respect to economic policy, Shenzhen was directed by the national government. But, with respect to political policy, Shenzhen fell under the authority of, first, the Guangdong provincial government and then Beijing. With its economic plans submitted directly to Beijing, Shenzhen enjoyed a greater degree of independence from the provincial government than other similarly ranked cities.

As Shenzhen leaders were well aware, special status was both an economic resource and an institutional precondition for continued economic privilege. The fury of the debate, however, arose from the ideological stakes of larger debates over the meaning and direction of modernization in the PRC. Deng Xiaoping's (1978-1997) identification with the city meant that "Shenzhen" had become a code for Reform and Opening, the political slogan glossing economic liberalization. Reform and Opening had begun as a negation of the Cultural Revolution and much of its moral force was connected to the economic and social reform of the PRC. However, after the 1989 Tian'anmen crackdown, it became
clear that only the economic structure was being selectively reformed. Could Shenzhen continue to be a model and experimental center for "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" in this context?

The establishment of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in 1980, along with three other SEZs (Zhuhai, Shatou, and Xiamen), created an exceptional space within Chinese system where experiments in reforming the Chinese system by selectively opening to the world outside might take place. Excepting Xiamen, which was located in Fujian Province, the other three SEZs were all situated in the South China province of Guangdong. Shenzhen and Zhuhai border Hong Kong and Macao, respectively, while Xiamen faces Taipei across the Taiwan Straits. The location of sites as been attributed to (1) the increasing fiscal independence of Guangdong and Fujian during the Cultural Revolution and (2) the centrality of these sites in the Pacific Rim economies. Indeed, the models for the SEZ project -- Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines -- were all members of ASEAN. Nevertheless, the selection of Guangdong, especially at the Sino-British border had a special place in the symbolic mapping of Chineseness. Guangzhou had been the first port opened to western trade, while the enforced bounding of Chinese identity within the nation-state system began in South China with the Opium War. Moreover, after the establishment of Hong Kong, South China became the primary source of the Chinese Diaspora. In short, the mapping of Chinese identity was at stake in the debates over the special status of Shenzhen.
These stakes are clear in the narrative structure of official Shenzhen origin stories which begin, "After ten years of chaos, Comrade Deng Xiaoping personally established the policy of opening China's door to the world outside." At the same time, the goals of Deng's project -- improving the average standard of living of Chinese people within the world system -- embedded it firmly in the trajectory of Chinese modernization since the Opium War. The contradictions which define Shenzhen manifest the difficulties of negotiating and improvising on the Maoist past, including the project of creating a modern Chinese people. The modernist project of making oneself in the process of making history was the defining feature Maoism, and has remained a central trope in the construction of Shenzhen. Indeed, the production of Shenzhen constantly refers to and remakes the collectivist legacy. This doubling of modernist construction -- both revolution and then re-forming the revolution -- simultaneously engenders critique of the Mao and Deng legacies and by extension informs challenges Party hegemony. In this sense, Shenzhen must be understood as a national rather than a regional project.

As might be expected, these critiques are situation-specific given the different thrusts of Maoist and Dengian modernization projects. Workers -- ranging from immigrant laborers to low level cadres -- complained that under Mao they had been more respected, while women frequently commented on their still plummeting social position under Deng. At the same time, as we ate imported Thai rice and fresh scallops,
these same people admitted that Reform had been necessary to correct
the excesses of Maoist ideology.

"China's real problem," a young architect explained, "is poverty.
The greatness of Mao Zedong was that he took a weak, backward country
and made a not-so-weak, backward country. The greatness of Deng
Xiaoping is that he took a not-so-weak, backward country and made a
not-so-weak, not-so-backward country. But most Chinese people are
still poor."

In Shenzhen, the experimentation promulgated under the
leadership of Deng Xiaoping encouraged the capitalization of collective
resources by domestic and foreign investment in order to build a modern,
industrial economy. The actualization of modernization so defined
necessitated the selective dismantling of the planned economy and the
use of cities as the nexuses for integrating the People's Republic of China
into global capitalist production. The success of the SEZs, especially
Shenzhen, justified the further expansion of "special" privileges to other
cities. The tropes used to locate the "specialness" of these new
administrative zones: "window," "laboratory," and "link" indicate the
various but interrelated purposes informing the founding of SEZs. In
their capacity as "windows" to the world outside, SEZs would be the first
area to obtain foreign technologies, management practices, capital, and
commodities. As "laboratories," the SEZs would facilitate a "scientific"
testing of the relative merits of these new entities for Chinese socialism,
allowing national leadership to select what would be introduced
subsequently to the rest of the country. Once the leadership had decided
which entities would benefit the country as a whole, SEZs would then provide the necessary "links" between China and the world. These tropes also indicate that Reform must be understood as a re-spatialization of the Chinese nation-state. In Chinese, the process has been called "Reform and Opening" (gaige kaifang), indexing both the domestic and international contexts of the establishment of Shenzhen.

Chinese economists have attributed the so-called "Shenzhen speed [of development]" to three factors: (1) favorable policies from the central government; (2) favorable location next to Hong Kong, and; (3) large numbers of overseas Chinese relatives who were willing to invest in China. They also emphasize that none of these advantages reflect anything intrinsically valuable about Shenzhen, but rather instead point to the structure of the Chinese system under reform conditions and the global market. In other words, they theorize the SEZ as administratively produced through the institution and negotiation of Shenzhen's administrative domestic and international borders. This understanding can not be reduced simply to a re-capitulation of Party line. Although many western observers tend to reduce the relationship between the state apparatus and true, off the record thought, I would argue that this relationship should instead be read as an understanding of the necessary pre-conditions of producing Shenzhen at the border of the Chinese and world systems. The same economists point out that most Chinese cities now enjoy full reform policies but have been unable to take advantage of them. The collapse of the North East industrial core, which is represented by the dire condition of Tianjin dramatically
illustrates this point. Moreover, skill in negotiating the possibilities represented by the state apparatus distinguishes between individual Shenzheners. Official interviews and off the record gossip circulates different in the same circles. The debate over modernization is also a debate on how these two modes of communication should inform each other, as well as characterize public and private realms.

(This of course returns us to Deng Lifang’s warning that both the surface and the template are true; to trust one at the expense of the other is to court disaster. It also explains why many institutions literally stopped functioning during anti-corruption campaigns in 1997 and 1998. The grapevine warned that an office head was due to be arrested, but until the verdict became public, he still had the authority to “fry your squid,” a pun on the homonyms “squid” and “superfluous” that means to be fired (chao nide youyu).)

One of the first official events that I attended was a Shenzhen University seminar on the question of whether or not Shenzhen should remain “special” after 1995. Teacher Chu explained that an Export Processing Zone was “Small and only significant economically.” She also argued that all of the benefits of an Export Processing Zone accrue to the investors and not the host country. In contrast, Shenzhen as an open city could be used by anyone in China in order to develop. I suspect that at the time this was the municipal government’s argument for continuing special status: anyone who dared take on Shenzhen could profit. In addition to suturing national policy and individual possibility, Teacher Chu’s comments also express a particular understanding of the world.

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system. In this order cities, rather than specific activities (such as manufacturing) have a critical role. Indeed, manufacturing was, by definition, to enter into a relationship with an urban center. The PRC attempted to exploit both manufacturing and urban status in Shenzhen.

The double boundedness of Shenzhen -- against neidi in the north and Hong Kong in the south -- has been institutionalized both domestically and internationally in the forms of the hukou and passport systems, respectively. Importantly, Hukou and passport status index a hierarchy of international institutional belonging which may be traced by border crossing regulations. Like the passport system, the hukou system catalogues Chinese citizens by place of residence, determining access to social goods and livelihood. The primary division is between rural and urban areas. As noted earlier urban areas are also ranked hierarchically such that Beijing and Shanghai hukou are preferred over Wuhan and Suzhou hukou, for example. All Chinese visitors to the SEZ are required to secure a "crossing pass" (tongxingzheng) from the Security Bureau before crossing the second line. Unlike nationals of all other countries, Hong Kong citizens may enter the SEZ for 72 hours simply by showing their Hong Kong identity card. Shenzhen residents as well as their compatriots from the interior must apply for a visa in order to visit Hong Kong. In effect, Chinese citizens need a visa to enter the SEZ.

Hong Kong residents, as members of a space ranked higher than Shenzhen, have easier access to Shenzhen than do Shenzheners, as members of the relatively subordinate space, to Hong Kong. At the same time, Shenzheners, as members of a space privileged with respect to the
interior, may travel freely anywhere in China, while non-Special Zone residents, as members of the relatively subordinate space, must apply for permission to enter the SEZ. Indeed, one of the striking ironies of the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty was that although the flag flying over Hong Kong changed, the barbed wire separating Hong Kong from the Mainland was not been removed. Nor does there seem to be any willingness on the part of the Hong Kong government to loosen travel restrictions. Even Mainland born children of Hong parents must apply for residency in the Special Administrative Region, residency which is based on a fixed quota system and distributed through a lottery.

Practices associated with Shenzhen legal residence and with international borders create asymmetrical distinctions within China between Shenzheners and outsiders, and internationally between Chinese and foreign citizens. In turn, these distinctions predicate Chinese "comparative advantage" in the world capitalist system, such that the material interests of Shenzheners overlap with those of the Chinese State and global capital in ways that facilitate alliances between the State apparatus and international capital. Specifically, Shenzhen's comparative advantage is relative efficiency in the production of labor intensive products, an advantage which is secured by the labor differentials on the Chinese and Hong Kong sides of the border. Shenzhen residents had privileged access to the Shenzhen economy vis-à-vis residents of other municipalities and counties within China, even as they were denied direct access to the Hong Kong market. The resulting national economy has been described as an example of market-
preserving federalism (Lewis). Importantly in both Shenzhen and neidi, market preserving federalism is competitive international because of the regulation and management of hierarchically ranked populations, which have been created through the administrative categories of hukou and passport holder. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is therefore predicated on geopolitical value hierarchies created internationally through the institution of the nation-state and domestically through the hukou system.³

The elevation of Bao'an County to Shenzhen City consequently resulted in the de facto administrative creation of Shenzhen hukou. The restructuring did not, however, create people with Shenzhen hukou. Hukou could only be granted by the Shenzhen Municipal Government, case by case, hence Shenzhen's complicated hukou system. Former holders of rural Bao'an hukou, for example, were only integrated into urban Shenzhen hukou in 1992. Nevertheless, they provide the statistical basis for comparisons between Bao'an County before Reform and Shenzhen SEZ, after. Some early immigrants obtained Shenzhen hukou despite rural origins, while many who came from more desirable residences (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou) did not immediately "enter

³ In 1953, the planned economy had been implemented through collective purchasing and distribution in the rural areas and nationalization of industry in the cities. Individuals were integrated into this new system through hukou issued by their respective work units. Under the new system, urban residents were eligible for housing, work assignments and food subsidies. Rural residents, who had not been assigned to a cadre position or the military, were assigned to agricultural production. Importantly, agricultural production did not include food subsidies. Administratively, hukou could be transferred between units of the same level (urban-urban; rural-rural), from a higher unit to a lower unit (urban-urban; urban-rural), or from a lower unit to a higher unit (urban-urban; rural-urban). However, the change from a rural to an urban
Shenzhen *hukou* (ru Shenzhen *hukou*). Later rural migrants could only obtain Shenzhen *hukou* after they had obtained an urban *hukou* from the city in their home county. In Shenzhen, these three social groups were called "locals" (*bendi*), "Shenzheners" (Shenzhenren), and "drifters" (*liudong renkou*). Drifters were further distinguished by urban or rural hometown: Those "without *hukou*" (*meiyou hukou*) had the possibility of entering Shenzhen legal residence, while "laborers" (*dagongzul*) were expected to leave. Note that class distinguished these two types of drifters. Urban immigrants are not only better educated than rural immigrants, their *mianzi* included the tacit promise of Shenzhener status.

The importance of *hukou* to the individual construction of a Shenzhen *mianzi* becomes clear when it is remembered that Shenzhen has been a migrant city. In 1979, the total population of Bao'an County was 314,100 people (Bao'an Gazetteer 1997). Of the 1,500 who did not have Bao'an *hukou* most were State bureaucrats assigned to the county. Within the first six years of the establishment of the SEZ, the number of drifters surpassed that of the total number holding Shenzhen *hukou* (598,400 and 556,000, respectively). To put these figures in perspective, during this period, only about 240,000 migrants obtained Shenzhen *hukou* and 597,000 did not. Moreover, not until the late 1980s did the number of Shenzheners surpass the number of locals. In 1990, drifters outnumbered the combined population of Shenzheners and locals, two to

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*hukou* was only permitted via a national organization (such as the military) or within the same administrative territory.
one (Zhou and Wu 1993). Shenzhen's demographic profile was consequently unique in the PRC where most populations are predominantly *hukou* holding residents. In addition, changes in Shenzhen's demographic profile were registered at the level of civic identity.

"Used to be, in Shenzhen the most depressing day of the year was Chinese New Year," Zou Qin replied when I asked her to describe the difference between Shenzhen in 1986, when she first arrived and the Shenzhen of 1997.

"When I was a child, the Spring Festival was lively (*renao*). On New Year's eve, the whole family would gather together and wrap dumplings. The children waited impatiently for midnight and then we would set off as many firecrackers as we could. For at least a week, the sound of firecrackers exploding filled the streets."

Zou Qin paused in her narrative to complain about new regulations, which outlawed setting off firecrackers in urban areas. "It's not lively (*renao*)."

I pointed out that the hallways outside of apartment doors were covered in red paper and smelled like gunpowder. "That little bit is just so children can have some fun," Zou Qin snorted derisively.

"Anyway," she continued her tale, "The next day we would wear new clothing and go visiting friends. All of the older people gave us red envelopes with a little money and everybody sat around eating and chatting. I always felt very happy with my family. When I first came to Shenzhen, I didn't have enough money to buy a ticket home. So I had to
stay in the company dorm with only one other co-worker. Everyone else left. You couldn't buy any food because all the stores were closed. The only firecrackers were set off by locals. The rest of city—and it wasn't even a city then, just a construction site—was silent. No lights. No visits. No people. I did buy a new dress, though.”

Zou Qin suddenly smiled proudly. “Now I have my own condo and my situation is comfortable. During the winter I invite my parents to live with me here because Dalian is too cold for them. Even though most people leave, a lot of people also stay.”

On the table between us lay the Shenzhen Economic Daily, (Shenzhen Shangbao) one of the SEZ’s most important newspapers. A picture of several thousand migrants squatting outside the Shenzhen railway station had been published on the front page. Zou Qin answered my unasked question.

“That’s also different.” She said. “One or two days after Spring Festival, the rural people come to Shenzhen. Everyone has a little money for the train ticket, but they also know that new projects will be starting and want to be first in line for a job. Of course, they have no place to stay and end up sleeping in the station. I’ve heard that a million people arrived in Guangzhou in the first week after New Year’s Day.”

She then poured me another cup of jasmine tea and I again considered how the hukou system has structured participation in Shenzhen without generating a sense of belonging to the municipality. To the extent that Shenzheners live in the city without a sense of attachment, the experiment has resulted in a kind of exile at home,
mediated by a built environment, which constantly provokes that alienation. The problem is only deepened by Party control of cultural production, which limits public discussion of Shenzhen community. Consequently, there has been opportunistic borrowing of cultural forms from Hong Kong (by way of the mass media) without a corresponding sense of belonging to Hong Kong either. Indeed, many northern immigrants are contemptuous of Hong Kong and deride Shenzhen's attempt at mimicking the territory. These debates have been clearest in the production of the Shenzhen built environment for both public and private use.

The Shenzhen urban plan used Hong Kong as its model for an international city, both in terms of structuring conditions favorable for foreign direct investment and in terms of its "look." Public works in Shenzhen have increasingly reflected postmodern, name brand architectural norms. Government buildings from the 1980s, for example, were low level (four to six stories), low technology facilities. District level buildings built in the mid 1990s are all over thirty stories high, while the plans for the new administrative/cultural center of Shenzhen have been designed by Kisho Kurokawa, a world renowned architect. It is this architectural "look" that has become the defining feature of Shenzhen in part because construction and the emplacement of infrastructure defined activity in Shenzhen, but also in part because the establishment of Shenzhen has negated the three main narratives (imperial cartography, rural-laojia, and the communist construction of Modern China) that might have fashioned a civic identity.
At the same time, the private home became the primary alternative to an alienating public life. There was great pressure to live for the family, which is represented by investment in home decorating. This "cultural" imperative was further accentuated by the lack of other forms of social interaction. The privatization of life made family life the center of people's everyday life in a more extreme way than in hometowns where the family, although central, had been embedded in a larger society. The social networks of people who are not only on the guanxi circuit were primarily hometown friends who spoke the same language and college classmates (who were often hometown friends). Friendships are sometimes formed within work units, but these relationships are often embedded in unit politics which makes affective relationships difficult.

Except for the Zhuhai SEZ, which is significantly smaller than Shenzhen, all other Special Zones and industrial zones have been districted to augment and transform an extant city or rural community; the zones and the people living in them continue to identify with the "ancestor" city or town, changes instituted during the Mao era (1950-1976) notwithstanding. Guangzhou people, for example, continue to name themselves "Guangzhou people" (Guangzhouren) despite the city's annexation of surrounding counties. This practice generates a sense of national and regional continuity which may be traced historically to the city's founding during one or another of the imperial Chinese dynasties. Even Shanghai and Tianjin, which came of age as treaty ports, have imperial credentials.
The relative stability of Chinese place names since the Ming dynasty has reinforced a sense of the Chinese "nation" as having a continuous history despite the constant re-organization of the state apparatus during that same period. John Fitzgerald (1996) points out that during the Chinese civil war, Nationalists (KMT) and Communists (CCP) derived and promulgated different understandings of the Chinese nation from the specific political traditions informing their respective worldviews. Nationalists defined the "nation" within the context of a struggle for survival among races. In this sense, the Chinese nation was identified with the Chinese race. In contrast, Communists fixed the identity of the Chinese nation vis-à-vis a struggle for supremacy among international class formations, a rhetorical identification of the Chinese nation with a particular class. Nevertheless, once established, Mao Zedong claimed Tibet and Xinjiang not by an appeal to the revolutionary nation, but with an appeal to the historic borders of imperial China. Thus, as with all modern nationalism, that of the PRC has appropriated pre-modern identities in order to legitimate itself.

At the local level, hometown (laojia) identity formation both appealed to and re-inscribed this imperial cartography. Helen Siu and David Faure (1995) have argued that the control of land mediated the growth of the market, state building, and the evolution of local society during the Ming, Qing and Republican eras. They refer to the cultural expression of this historical process as "the territorial bond," an identity forged in a specific place, which was related to other places through the particular practices which constituted the state at that time. To be from
a particular place was also to be located hierarchically within the empire. Thus, Chinese place names simultaneously evoke both imperial and modern cartographies, giving modern China a mythic past.

In contrast, Shenzhen as the name of a city does not participate in imperial cartography. The administrative precursor of Shenzhen had been Bao'an county with its county seat at Shenzhen Market Town (Shenzhen zhen). Shenzhen Market became the county seat of Bao'an in 1953, until then the county seat had been locate in Nantou City, located on the Nantou peninsula of the eastern Pearl River Delta. Although both Nantou and Bao'an were place names associated with the imperial order and hometown cartography, as a result of both Mao and Deng era policies, they have been increasingly marginalized in official cartography. Under Mao, Nantou was the name of both a zhen and a commune. During the 1980s, the Shenzhen municipality was divided into two areas, the SEZ and Bao'an County, where Nantou referred to an administrative district (guanliqu) in the SEZ and Bao'an County referred to that area which had not yet been opened. In 1989, Shenzhen overhauled its administrative apparatus dissolving the Nantou Administrative District and making Nantou zhen part of Nanshan District. In 1992, another restructuring eliminated Bao'an County and established Bao'an and Longgang Districts. Consequently, the hukou category of "Shenzhener" does not correspond to either imperial or hometown cartography; as a territorial identity it has been fixed by administrative fiat.

At the same time, the constant negotiation of borders--domestic, regional, and international as well as administrative and ethnic--which
everyday re-produced the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, simultaneously problematized the question of a traditional "Chinese" identity. To claim to be a Shenzhener, thus, was to acknowledge the ruptures separating contemporary China from its Chinese past, ruptures which hometown identity practices occluded. This dependence of Shenzhen identity on the state apparatus contrasted with the territorially based identities in the rest of the PRC, incorporation into the state apparatus notwithstanding. The centrality of Shenzhen to the Beijing sponsored reform process and its concomitant economic dependence on Hong Kong raise important questions about how Shenzhen miarzi reflect the changing relationship between state and citizen.

In this dissertation, I trace the alliances within the state system that were generated by the proliferation of borders, both domestic and international, constituting the "Shenzhen Special Economic Zone." I do this by interpreting the transformation of the landscape on the Mainland side of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong border since Liberation. As indicated in the previous sections, however, I consider the cartographic SEZ, sandwiched between the Hong Kong New Territories and nei di, primarily an administrative category, a spatial "fix" to the material problem of integrating the Chinese domestic economy into the global capitalist system. The extreme saliance of administrative categories in Shenzhen highlight these contractions vividly.

This does not mean, however, that Shenzhen residents did not try to make sense of their new home, nor that Shenzhen leaders have only promoted statist rather than "zonist" forms of civic identity. Shenzhen's
borders have challenged, indeed often negated, the quotidian "cartographic common sense" that has infused postwar Chinese nationalisms, including (in interesting and paradoxical ways), Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao Chinese in addition to Mainland nationalisms. Crudely speaking, to be from a particular village or city, to identify and be identified with that place, was to participate simultaneously in Chinese history (or at least memories thereof) and Chinese modernity. This "cartographic common sense" derived, in part, from the continuity of place names despite the transformation of Imperial China (Huaxia) into a modern nation-state (Zhonghua Renmin Gonghe Guo), two Special Administrative Region (Xianggang Zhengzhi Tequ and Aomen Zhengzhi Tequ), and a half-state (Taiwan, once the Republic of China). Shenzhen, part of the Mainland but absent from both the imperial and collectivist map of China, problematized "cartographic common sense" because zonist mianzi required that people name themselves with respect to expedient political policies (Reform and Opening) rather than with respect to traditional or revolutionary China.

I will suggest that the return of "Imperial China" as a form of Mainland nationalist identity speaks not only to the so-called failure of Chinese collectivism, but also to the fact that Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao have continued to call themselves "Chinese" precisely because of their (albeit marginal) location on the imperial map. Within the private world, Shenzhen was also compared to hometowns, such that hometowns became sentimentally coded despite their existence within the state apparatus. It is a mark of the success of the Chinese State in
infiltrating everyday life that its categories were accepted as the point of departure for identity formation. By calling my fieldsite "ShenKong," I hope to underline three contradictions activated by the selective permeability of SEZ borders. First, the establishment of Shenzhen began a process of first challenging and then negating the communist past in the People's Republic. Although the SEZ was characterized as "exceptional" and "experimental," in practice Reform entailed dismantling economic structures that had defined the Maoist period, including guarantees for livelihood, housing and social welfare in the city. Second, although collectivization bureaucratized rural and urban relations, it was nevertheless parasitic upon pre-excising hometowns (laojia). Bao'an County was no exception. However, under Reform the rural represents what urban modernization needs overcome. This has meant that development in Shenzhen has eradicated as much of pre-existing Bao'an as possible (including the Ming Dynasty east gate of Shenzhen Market), effectively eliminating the possibility of Shenzheners identifying with rural Bao'an.

Third, by its administrative existence Shenzhen challenges the quotidian commonsense of Imperial/modern cartography. That is, within the Imperial cartography Hong Kong and Taiwan were both marginal spaces that were colonized (by Great Britain and Japan, respectively) as part of the disintegration of the Imperial system, while their contemporary centrality derives from their place within postwar global capitalism; Hong Kong, Taiwan, and now Shenzhen represent both the decline of the Imperial system and the subsequent failure of Chinese
socialism. In Shenzhen, these contradictions have been managed, both at the official and unofficial levels, by a search for common "Chinese" cultural characteristics, including language, kinship patterns, and "guanxi" which might enable the creation of a joint "Chinese" future, based on but no longer subordinate to the hierarchies constitutive of Imperial space. Significantly, the search depends upon the state apparatus to teach Mandarin, define family planning, and regulate labor relations. In this sense, Shenzhen stages Beijing's version of "one country, two systems," where economic success does not translate into political independence, while the versions staged by Hong Kong and Taiwan, tend more toward "one culture, multiple states."

I have been suggesting that the spatialization of Shenzhen occurs at the intersections of global, regional, national and local capitalist strategies. In Shenzhen these strategies are coded "the world" (shijie), "Asia" (yazhou), "the nation" (guojia), and "the local" (bendi). Narratives about "Chineseness" variously integrate these places into interpretations of the spatialization of Shenzhen. I have also indicated that the three experiential tropes for understanding this process: "China" (zhongguo), "hometown" (laojia), and "modernization" (xiandaihua) have been ruptured in the Reform process, forcing the creative appropriation of the state apparatus in order to produce a "local" identity. In order to analyze how the construction of Shenzhen has incorporated Hong Kong -- the other side of the border, both physically and imaginatively, I have accordingly collected urban plans, representations of the environment in addition to interviews with locals and Shenzheners. During interviews, I
asked about their understanding of Shenzhen history, the meaning of Chinese culture, and how they have participated in the construction of Shenzhen.

Nevertheless, not all the ethnographic material recorded in this narrative was collected in a scientific manner. I do not use “scientific” to mean “can be repeated by anyone with a notebook and pen.” Clearly, anthropology attracts refugees from other disciplines precisely because we have conflated—not always in an elegant manner—personal experience and research, calling this method for reflecting on the meaning of being human “participant-observation.” In fact, I have deployed texts and survey results such that elements of my theorizing have written precedents. Rather, I use “scientific” in an ethical sense, referring to the methods through which I went about the work of documenting my experiences, which, of course, were shared with other people. I did not always inform people that I was writing about Shenzhen, often I remained vague about my actual research topic, sometimes I lied. At the same time, I do not doubt that many of my interlocutors were often less than honest with me, even if it can be safely assumed that they were not exactly engaged in outright deception.

It is tempting to justify my behavior in terms of surfaces and templates, but I was not an undercover, investigative reporter. Instead, the complexity and duplicities arose from the length of my sojourn in Shenzhen and my changing status there. When I arrived in September 1995, I straight-forwardly presented myself as a researcher. When I left three years later, I was the wife of a low ranking cadre in the Propaganda
Bureau of a District Government. During our time together, my roles in Shenzhen society multiplied, as, in a tangible way, my presence became acceptable and expected in situations where previously it had required explanation and permission. Suddenly, I could secure interviews with various cadres in the government; I inherited a small, but active network of hometown friends; I had access to my husband’s miànzi and the question of whether or not I would give China a little face seemed unexpectedly irrelevant.

“So is she a Russian chick?” the groundskeeper at our housing complex asked Yang Qian.

“American,” he replied despite the older man’s apparent disbelief.

At a telephone kiosk, a young migrant from Sichuan complimented my “Japanese” friend’s Mandarin, “You know,” she told me, “most foreigners have an accent but if I couldn’t see him I would think he was really Chinese.”

It soon became a game. If one of our interlocutors knew Yang Qian’s nationality, we asked her to guess mine. If instead, our interlocutor knew my nationality, we asked him to guess Yang Qian’s. Inevitably, the appropriate Asian husband for an American was: Japanese, US born Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kong Chinese, and only then, after Korean had been rejected as impossible, Mainland Chinese. The appropriate foreign wife for a Chinese husband was: Russian, East European (“There are a lot of refugees from Yugoslavia,” one man explained his answer), Australian, West European, and then American.
Several things are noteworthy about these lists. First, they reproduce knowledge about the relative standing of China's Cold War and Reform trading partners. Second, there was a general expectation that marriage, like trade, was a transaction based on relational mianzi which were derived through the nation-state system. Third, given the patrilocal bias of Chinese kinship, it was assumed that I had married into China, but we would be residing in the United States. More important even than the quality of my Mandarin and chopstick dexterity, my marriage enabled people to talk with me about life in Shenzhen. By marrying a "Chinese Man," I had demonstrated respect for China. By living in a Chinese family, I would little by little begin to understand my new hometown. Indeed, a great many of my exchanges with people (and journalists) concerned how to be a good Chinese wife. I exploited the novelty of my position as well as my husband's connections in order to initiate contact, set up interviews, and collect data, making my mianzi the template of this reading of Shenzhen surfaces.
2. Reforming "Chinese" Identity

The anthropologist theorizes the connections between urbanization, Chinese cultural identity, and the Shenzhen built environment. Particular attention is paid to the architectural symbolism.

I went to Shenzhen under the impression that entering, let alone conducting ethnographic fieldwork in, the People's Republic would be difficult: obtaining a visa to conduct social science research required an invitation from a work unit; the invitation, in turn, depended on cultivating "personal relations" (the dreaded guanxi) with well-placed members of those units; personal relations, of course, were best cultivated through face to face meetings, preferably over a tasty meal. In the event that I was unable to enter into an appropriate relationship with a suitably placed Chinese academic, the visa-guanxi double bind (I needed guanxi for visa approval even as visa approval predicated the possibility of meeting Chinese academics in China) might be resolved by "doing guanxi" in the United States, specifically in Houston where I was enrolled in graduate school. Upon learning that Houston and Shenzhen were sister cities, I began ingratiating myself with the president of the Houston-Shenzhen Sister City Association. I also mentioned my dissertation: Could he help me secure invitations to events where I might meet useful Shenzheners? In return, I volunteered to be an organization "gofer," stuffing envelopes, making myself available to run errands, accompanying guests. In early 1995, a delegation of municipal cadres and representatives from the recently inaugurated insurance industry
came to Houston. During the three days that the delegation was in Houston, I interacted primarily with other gofers and the lower ranked members of the delegation, none of whom could provide the necessary invitation letter. They could, however, mention my problem to the secretary of the Shenzhen Municipal Government Friendship Bureau. Later, I learned that the president had also approached the secretary about my visa problem. Thus, it was, as I was handing out information brochures, the secretary of the Shenzhen delegation looked up from his lunch and asked me if I was having problems contacting a Chinese University. He then offered to deliver a letter of introduction to Shenzhen University on my behalf.

My early forays into the field were also prompted by mercenary concerns. I had been told that US grants for research in the PRC was based on evidence that either (1) a research visa had already been issued, or (2) the invitation letter had already been received. Apparently, these protocols reflected US funding agencies' understanding of the subordinate positions of social science research and researchers to the Chinese State; without official recognition by the Chinese state, US funding agencies denied research grants. In other words, my research mianzi had to be adjusted before I entered the field. I am admitting that such threats to my academic well-being were effective because without funding, I would be unable to enter the field, and only through fieldwork would I become an anthropologist. The Mandarin usefully describes my situation: my credentials were insufficient (zige bu gou). In everyday conversation, credentials (zige) refer precisely to one's administrative
standing. *Hukou* and a passport are both *zige*, as are an academic degree and recognition of one's accomplishments in the form of awards. *Guanxi* are an informal form of *zige*, often more effective than official standing in obtaining specific results. I did not have enough credentials to directly approach the Friendship secretary, nor did I have enough credentials to apply for funding. Nevertheless, I had *guanxi* (albeit tenuous) with the president of the Sister City Association, who could ask and expect the Friendship secretary to intervene on my behalf.

It was only after I had crossed the Shenzhen-Hong Kong border, however, that I learned of the more drastic situation constituting the PRC internationally; the US consulate regularly denies Chinese scholars the necessary visa to pursue their work abroad. Moreover, the credentials needed to apply successfully for a US visa are more difficult to obtain than those necessary to enter the PRC. I soon learned that a six month, multiple entry visa for the PRC could be bought at most travel agencies in Hong Kong. (Although my physical presence in the PRC would not necessarily translate into meaningful interviews; the initial introduction to interview various Shenzheners was more often than not based on my administrative association with Shenzhen University.)

I mention these bureaucratic inequalities to draw attention not only to the quotidian reproduction of the Sino-American border in the production of "world knowledge," but also to its fictiveness: geopolitically speaking, there is no Sino-American border. There are, of course, Sino-Russian, Sino-Korean, Sino-Vietnamese, and Sino-Hong Kong borders,
even US-Canadian and US-Mexican border guards enforcing geopolitical separation, but the Sino-American border is an artifact of transnational institutions which regulate the flows of capital, commodities and people. Indeed, there is a sense in which the borders exist to protect the institutions and their regulations. Once a passport holder has a visa, once a transfer of capital has been approved, and once exports have been inspected, border guards simply check whether or not the person, money or thing has sufficient zige to cross. The actual walking across a border is somewhat anti-climatic because the credential hurdles have already been jumped. By generating a sense of a monolithic "China" (in the US) and an even more impermeable "Meigu" (in the PRC), these institutions and protocols inform the basic infrastructure of any kind of global episteme.

It is not, however, only through transnational institutions that the Sino-American border, like the Shenzhen-interior and Shenzhen-Hong Kong borders are reproduced in daily life. These borders are also fabricated in the narratives of citizenship attached to the spaces so delineated. In the previous section, I sketched how place names have provided a mnemonic device linking the imperial past to the contemporary state in an ongoing construction of cultural Chineseness. In Shenzhen, narrating a civic identity for a space created explicitly as the administrative means for integrating the Chinese and global economies proved problematic. The state project narrated locals, Shenzheners, and drifters as participants in Reform and Opening who contribute to the arduous project of modernization. However, state
ideology has not served to provided individual Shenzheners, locals and drifters with a common, civic identity. This lack of local identity informed a tendency to describe Shenzhen with respect to statist Chineseness in contrast to historic Chineseness that was located in neidi. I first became aware of this experiential opposition at morning tea during my first year of fieldwork.

"Shenzhen is not," I was told at a morning tea in early 1996, "the real China. You want to see the real China?" My host inquired across the bamboo baskets of shrimp dumplings, pickled chicken feet, and rice noodles which the waitress, a young woman from Sichuan province had just served.

Half-asleep, I nodded politely but inwardly cringed. It was not yet 7:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning and my host, a Beijing University Economics Ph.D. and an Institute Head at Shenzhen University, wanted to debate the futility of finding culture in Shenzhen. "Go to Beijing, Xi'an or Shanghai. Even Tibet has more culture than Shenzhen," he asserted confidently. I agreed and slurped some gongfu tea, the incredibly strong oolong tea drunk by residents of Chaozhou, a city on the eastern coast of Guangdong, just south of Fujian Province.

It seemed that despite my host's preference for Cantonese dimsum, he maintained—as did so many others I had met and would met during my three years in the Shenzhen SEZ—that Shenzhen was not Chinese. No one disputed the importance of studying modern Shenzhen, and indeed, the morning tea in question had been organized in honor of a group of Beijing scholars who were on a research tour of the Special
Economic Zones, Hong Kong and Taiwan. (No one went to Macao except to gamble.) This research tour was perhaps unique in its scope—research tours to Taiwan were relatively rare—but not in its purpose. Scholars from the major Chinese Universities came to learn and study from the results of the Shenzhen experiment, publishing both domestically and internationally on the rapid economic changes, while local journalists and cadres from the Ministry of Propaganda wrote sentimental stories about the SEZ's transformation. This Shenzhen was an overnight city that changed everyday, a city of sparkling lights and modern glass skyscrapers, a city of international investment and newly built, three story private residences, golf courses and air-conditioned shopping malls, a city that would lead the People's Republic of China (PRC) into the next millennium. The value of Shenzhen seemed undeniably and successfully utilitarian.

At the same time, there was general agreement that there was no scholarly value in studying either pre-Reform Bao'an County or its former county seat, Shenzhen Market. That Shenzhen was just a small, border town, backward, dirty, and lamentably rural. Thus, the administrative redistricting of Bao'an County as Shenzhen Municipality and subsequent razing and construction of a new metropolis embodied the success of Reform and Opening under Deng Xiaoping. In the Shenzhen imaginary there was little space for the history of Bao'an, less space for the artifacts of early Reform--six story factories which could be adapted to any kind of labor added work, and none for the dank brick homes erected before Reform. Much as model cities of the collectivist era
(and who does not remember the prototypical oil fields of Harbin?) once symbolized the potential of modern China, now pre-Liberation cities were usest to assert an authentic Chinese identity. Importantly, authenticity derived from importance to the pre-Communist Chinese polities. Whatever glory post-Reform Shenzhen might aspire to, pre-Reform Bao’an was not representative of Chinese society, and, was the implicit assumption, Chinese society was represented by its historic cities; Shenzhen, in contrast, could only be studied for its success in modernization.

Regional differences compounded alienation from Shenzhen. My host turned to the visiting scholars and continued a more general discussion about his experiences in Guangdong and Taiwan. When he went to Taiwan for the first time, he felt as if he were in China because there were no important cultural differences between Beijing and Taipei, but to be in Shenzhen and Guangzhou was to live in another country. The language, the customs, the clear preference for money, and the weak human emotions characteristic of Guangdong people made him feel like a foreigner. He told us that he had been in Shenzhen for two years already and he still had yet to adjust. One of his colleagues confirmed our host’s evaluation of Guangdong culture with his own experience. He had lived in Hong Kong for a year before coming to Shenzhen University. The good things in Hong Kong--the efficiency of their public services, the quality of their products, and the strength of their economy--could be attributed to exposure to British culture. However, the bad things--the pervasive greed, a general prejudice against Mainlanders, and the
inability to speak Mandarin--were indigenous traits. Guangdong people were just as greedy, prejudiced, and unable to speak Mandarin as Hong Kong people. Moreover, locals were just as likely as Hong Kong men to have second wives. He then told the story of a friend's experience when designing a restaurant for a local millionaire. The millionaire, it seemed, had two houses on the same lot. His official wife lived in one house and his second wife lived in the other. When the friend visited the millionaire at home, they sat in the reception room of the official wife's house and she served tea. However, when the millionaire went out on business meals, he took his second wife with him because she was lively and entertaining.

The other scholars shook their heads disapprovingly. The older three had been to school before the Cultural Revolution and had studied Chinese Marxist economics and Russian. At that time, the model for modernization was the Stalinist mobilization of resources in support of heavy industry and military advancement. The younger scholars had been sent down to the countryside for anywhere from eight to ten years, testing into prestigious universities when the national examination system was recuperated in 1978. In contradistinction to the older scholars, the younger ones had studied Western, specifically American, economics and English, their preferred model of modernization market development through Most Favored Nation status. As generational cohorts, then, these two groups represented an antagonistic relationship to metropolitan capitalism under Mao and the cooperative (if leary) relationship with metropolitan capitalism under Deng. But as
academic colleagues each was attempting to improve their credentials. The older three were on a last trip before retirement while the younger scholars, all in their mid-forties, were trying to establish themselves in their respective disciplines. Although two of the participants were divorced, all of them understood the institution of second wifedom to be evidence of cultural backwardness, a regression to traditional feudal practices—like nepotism, cronyism, and graft—that had overtaken the country since Reform. Especially, it seemed, Guangdong.¹

When I wrote up my field notes, what remained striking about this conversation was the extent to which those scholars used Mandarin, urban culture, and dynastic history—rather than the political system, economic organization, or even geo-political boundaries—to manage contradictory forms of Chinese identity. This narrative strategy implicitly referenced the extent to which both colonialism and the Cold War had introduced contradictions into politically-based identities that were first mapped as Imperial China and then as the Socialist Mainland. In Shenzhen, both Colonialism and the Cold War, as well as the spatial products of these two forms of globalization—Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan—had returned problematically. Pre-Reform mainland discourse had defined Chinese culture in terms of statist goals; on the one hand,  

¹Ezra Vogel’s early work, Canton Under Communism (1968) testifies to the deep-rooted differences between North and South China. On his reading these differences were exacerbated by the historic unfolding of the Revolution itself. By the time Communist troops entered Guangzhou (Vogel says “conquered”), early liberated areas in the North had already completed basic land reform and political reconstruction. Moreover, given the province’s “capitalist” history and connection to the
the nationalist struggle against the colonial powers and Japan, and on
the other hand, the goal to establish an economy equal to that of the
capitalist West. Suddenly, the economic superiority of Hong Kong and
Taiwan forced re-evaluation of the Party as the best means for expressing
a modern Chinese identity. This "cultural" map of the Chinese world
also diverged from the territorial politics and economic interests of the
region, obscuring actual administrative links between Shenzhen-Beijing
and Hong Kong-Beijing as well as the absence of such links between any
of these cities and Taipei. At the time of morning tea, both Shenzhen
and Hong Kong had special relationships with Beijing, which, to a large
extent, placed both the SEZ and SAR (Special Administrative Region)
outside of the administration of Guangdong province, even though both
cities participated in the National People's Congress as part of the
Guangdong delegation. Moreover, in both Hong Kong and Taiwan, there
were powerful grassroots movements that asserted the integrity of their
borders against Mainland China. The Hong Kong Legislature (in its
colonial, transitional, and elected forms) voted to limit the number
Mainland-born children of Hong Kong residents who would be given right
of abode in any given year, while Li Denghui had, in 1997, been elected
President of Taiwan on an "Independent Taiwan" platform.

In this spatial imaginary, not only was Shenzhen categorized with
Hong Kong as distinguished from Beijing and Taipei, but local people
became representative of all Cantonese speakers, and Cantonese

Nationalist government, Northern revolutionaries tended to view the
Cantonese population with suspicious eyes.
speakers, in turn, representative of all Guangdong residents, including
Hong Kong residents. The fact that this linguistic division did not
obtain in Shenzhen where, before Reform, only western Bao'an had been
Cantonese speaking while eastern Bao'an had been Hakka speaking, let
alone the complex linguistic heritage of Guangdong, indicated that the
category "Cantonese speakers" referred to more than knowledge about the
culture of "locals," "Guangdong people," and "Hong Kong people," and
suggested that the political and economic struggles that had produced
the People's Republic of China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and which under
the leadership of Mao Zedong had defined membership in the Chinese
polity had, at least unofficially, been subordinated to a discourse of
difference and similarity with respect to "cultural Chineseness" and
"modernity."

How, I wondered, did these categories play out in the construction
of a specifically Shenzhen urban identity?

Outside of public forums, who claimed to be a Shenzhen
hener?
The impossibility of unproblematically enunciating a Shenzhen
identity while simultaneously struggling to obtain legal residence there
should alert us to the extent to which American and Chinese
identities—the Sino-American border, if you will—have been restructured
in sites such as ShenKong. At the same time, my initial crossing of the
Shenzhen-Hong Kong border "to enter the field" could be performed only
after the the ritual hassles of visa and grant applications, all of which
presupposed the hierarchical stability of a series of borders: USA-Hong
Kong-PRC. I will take up the historical linkage of national identities and
Cold War ethnographies implicated in this cartography in the next chapter, here I would like to emphasize the extent to which South China economic success, especially that of Taiwan and Hong Kong, has challenged North China cultural hegemony as the statist norm for Chinese person.

The cultural anxiety expressed by the older scholars about Shenzhen specifically and Guangdong more generally betrays the centrality of two culturally coded concepts implicit to the meaning of Chinese identity during the Deng years. On the one hand, was a belief in the necessity of industrial urbanization and consequently the superiority of urban to rural life. As a former rural area, Shenzhen was considered to be "without culture" (meiyou wenhua). At the level of the individual, "to have culture" referred to academic achievement. In this reading, a college graduate had culture and a high school graduate had some culture, while a person with only an elementary school education or less was without culture. At the level of society, "to have culture" referred to a cultural milieu of theater, art museums and movies, as well as pubs and cafes in which to gather and discuss the latest novels and exhibitions. By these standards, Beijing and Shanghai had culture, Shenzhen did not.

On the other hand, the discussion implicitly referenced a historically based understanding of Chineseness and the concomitant understanding of what a "typical Chinese city" (dianxingde Zhongguo chengshi) should be. Here, the evaluation pivoted on the dialectical relationship linking "typical" and "Chinese city." In Shenzhen, "typical"
simultaneously referred to a representative object or person of a particular category, and a standard to be surpassed. Accordingly, Shenzhen was a "typical" Special Economic Zone and Hong Kong a "typical" international city. However, "Chinese city" indexed what might be called China's "imperial cartography," including political hierarchy (culminating in Beijing), traditional urban planning and architecture. With respect to imperial cartography, cities of the northwest, including Xi'an and the cities of the lower Yangtze including Hangzhou and Suzhou were typical Chinese cities. However ancient, the cities of Guangzhou, Meizhou and Chaozhou were not representative of Chinese culture. Only the political and cultural dominance of Northern immigrants in Shenzhen provided a space for the free expression of anti-Guangdong sentiments. Unlike Guangzhou, where it was necessary to learn Cantonese, Meizhou where it was necessary to learn Hakka, and Chaozhou where it was necessary to learn Hokkien (the dialect of Fujian province, Taiwan, and northeasternt Guangdong), Shenzhen had become the Guangdong outpost of Mandarin power. Thus Shenzhen was deemed to lack the defining credentials of a "typical Chinese city": culture and history.

During the third Plenum of the Eleventh People's Congress, Deng Xiaoping had mobilized support for the four modernizations (Modernize Industry! Modernize Agriculture! Modernize the National Defense! Modernize Science and Technology!) Accordingly, the refrain "Modernize!" justified opening the state economic system to the capitalist world and reforming political institutions. And yet, how
abstract and slippery a thing, how culturally pernicious was this
command to Modernize! Simultaneously the means and the ends of a
society which yearned to catch up to the West, indeed dreamt of
surpassing the four little dragons – Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and
South Korea – as quickly as possible, the form of modernization
nevertheless remained open to negotiation. (After all, Modernize! was
the banner under which the Chinese people had united in order to end
the humiliation of defeat in the first Opium War. Modernize! had also
been the impulse behind the Great Leap Forward.) Just what kind of
world would this round of modernizing engender?

Guomao, Shenzhen’s World Trade Center, was explicitly associated
with these debates. Who does not know that in 1984, as part of the
battle to extend Reform and Opening to fourteen coastal cities, Deng
Xiaoping was taken to the top of Guomao in order to survey the progress
that Shenzhen had made during the Special Economic Zone’s first five
years of existence? On the way to the viewing platform, Liang Xiang, first
Party Secretary of Shenzhen regaled Deng with the history of China’s
first skyscraper, which materially demonstrated that Reform and
Opening could produce state-of-the-art modernization. (Later, as his
tour of Special Economic Zones came to a close, Deng Xiaoping opined
that, “Shenzhen’s development and experience proves the correctness of
the policy to establish special economic zones.”)

In 1981, just after the SEZ had been established, a group of
municipal leaders and architects designed a massive structure of glass
and reinforced concrete, which was crowned by a revolving restaurant.
The building was located in the Luohu commercial center at the Shenzhen-Hong Kong border and intended to house the Shenzhen offices of provincial, municipal and ministerial enterprises from all over China. From their Guomao offices, these cadres would then use Shenzhen to establish trade links between their neidi enterprises and foreign companies, especially those foreign companies based in Hong Kong.\textsuperscript{2} Guomao also embodied technical advances over Mao era architecture. For the first time in the history of the PRC, architects grappled with the problem of stabilizing a fifty-three story building with a revolving restaurant as well as installing exposed glass elevators. In addition to economic goals and technical achievements, Guomao indicated the social orientation of Reform: market-organized consumption. The first three floors of Guomao replicated a contemporaneous Hong Kong or Singapore shopping mall with small shops, restaurants, and a musical fountain, which infused the three story lobby with a permanent sense of festivity.

The happy gurglings of the Guomao fountain evoke memories of hard-earned satisfaction. Old Shenzheners remember making the decision to go to Shenzhen despite secure neidi jobs, the opposition of family, and the skepticism of friends.

"I didn’t come for the money,” teacher Chu laughed when I asked why she had left Zhongshan University, where she taught Marxist economics in order to work as a secretary in a Shenzhen construction

\textsuperscript{2} Neidi roughly translates as “the interior,” referring most generally to those areas of the country that have not been opened to foreign
company. "Nobody imagined Shenzhen would become this prosperous (fanrong). The year I arrived [1982], there were no dorms for women, no television, no telephones... The only time I received a personal telegraph was when my grandmother passed on." She paused before continuing, "I just wanted to do something."

"You can't feel it now," Mrs. Chen explained, "but when I first came to Shenzhen there was something special about the people. A person wanted to participate because they really were doing something for the country in those muddy construction sites."

Always a model student, organizing political demonstrations and study sessions, Mrs. Chen had avoided the violence of the Cultural Revolution because, "I didn't have the qualifications (zige) to join. Only the older students actually fought." Her senior year in a famous Beijing high school, she wrote her request to be sent to the countryside in blood. Instead, she was sent to Qinghua University to study architecture. Her dreams of practicing architecture, however, ended in the April 5, 1976 Tian'anmen crackdown against citizens who had gathered to memorialize Zhou Enlai. Two years later, her professional status was rehabilitated as part of the political reorganization promulgated after the Third Plenum.

"That kind of experience changes a person. I had always been a loyal Party member, and suddenly I was the victim of a political movement. Even so, I wanted to come to Shenzhen, because I believe that Party members should be willing to make sacrifices for the country."
Throughout the 1980s, Shenzheners and tourists who could not afford to shop in Guomao posed before both the front entrance and musical fountain. The resulting photographs—passed from hand to hand in neidi hometowns—testify to the extent to which Shenzhen was identified with Guomao. By Deng Xiaoping’s second visit in 1992, however, hypertrophied real-estate speculation had made the Shenzhen built environment seem little more than a template for the play of finance capital and a symbol of breathtakingly audacious corruption. Overnight, the “Guomao spirit” seemed strangely incongruous with the city it once symbolized. Indeed, land development corruption is so common that it has generated its own norms and morality. I am told, for example, that the standard kickback on any construction project is ten to fifteen percent of the total budget; people who ask for more than that are considered greedy and best avoided.

“My job was preparing the red envelopes (hongbao) for different level cadres. The amount of the bribe went up according to rank. However, it was the cadres who didn’t want money who were a problem (mafàn),” Wang Qin explained. “My boss would also give presents, a tour of Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore or sometimes a special dinner. But some of the cadres, you spent days trying to figure out what they wanted.”

“That’s true,” a former cadre in the National Land Bureau confirmed. “The smartest way to become rich is save your salary and accept gifts. Its safe.”
Nevertheless, the buildings themselves stage corruption. To be placed in charge of a building or interior design project is to be guaranteed at least a ten percent kickback, perhaps more. Consequently, superiors often assign project responsibility to buy back debts incurred to inferiors and friends, while inferiors and friends jockey to be in position when such an assignment comes through.

Completed in 1998, the interior decoration of each floor of a new thirty story District Government Building was assigned to a different leader. Despite the fact that the interior design budget for each floor was the same, the actual decoration varies noticeably from floor to floor. Functionaries claimed that they could tell which leaders were “easy to talk to” (haoshuo) and which were not simply by the quality of materials used on a given floor.

“But the real scandal was the District Party Secretary and District Head’s offices. They had four sections: a secretary’s office, the leader’s office, a bedroom and a bathroom. Of course it was a double bed with two pillows,” a friend answered my unasked question.

(When I mentioned these conversations to Mrs. Chen, she was visibly upset. “I remember the first time someone tried to bribe me. He was a contractor who was supposed to lay down a road of cement eighteen centimeters thick. Instead, I discovered he was laying down about half that thickness. Where did the money for the rest of the cement go? Anyway, that night he followed me home and forced himself into my apartment. I could tell something was wrong because he was stammering. I thought he was embarrassed because I had found him
out. Instead, he was embarrassed to give me an envelop with 3,000 renminbi. Can you imagine? Maybe it was the first time he ever tried to bribe someone.” She paused ruefully, “The next morning I brought the envelop to the head of the project. He led an investigation to find the cement money. But that was almost fifteen years ago. Now even if I wanted an investigation, it would be too difficult.”)

Constantly under construction, Shenzhen transmogrified at an astonishing rate and, less than a decade after the first real-estate boom, buildings that had not been razed had already been given shiny facelifts. (“This place is an architect’s wet dream!” a visiting American architect enthused as we picked our way around cement bricks that had been stored in the middle of a sidewalk. “My firm actually specializes in urban planning, but if we’re lucky, maybe we’ll get to design a small complex. Here, the firms bid on areas the size of a city block. Its outrageous!”)

The rhythmic beat of steel pilings being forced into the ground began at 6 a.m. and terminated at 10 p.m., seven days a week, fifty-one weeks a year, the work pausing only for Chinese New Year, National Day, and typhoons. In downtown Luohu, the last of “Old Street” was demolished to make way for new shopping malls, and in Dongmen the character for “remove” (chāi) was been spray-painted on Republican-era and temporary buildings alike.³ Heading west along the Northern Loop freeway, one encountered fleets of dump trucks hauling the remains of Meilin hills to the Nantou peninsula where the coastline was being filled and

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restructured for future development, while three story villas were being completed next to the Merchant's Golf course in Shahe.

In this explosion of speculative wheeling and dealing, China's first skyscraper was inevitably surpassed. The Shenzhen skyline soon boasted architectural marvels that were taller, technically more advanced, and altogether more impressive than Guomao. Along the stretch of Shennan Road that, since the mid 1990s has been known as "the financial center," a rainbow of postmodern glass and steel shimmered provocatively, the blue and green layers of the Diwang Commercial Center reflecting the luminescent pink of the Shenzhen Development Bank, which refracted the massive indigo of the Book City complex. At sixty-eight stories, Diwang not only loomed over Shenzhen, it towered over all of Asia, enticing shoppers with displays both larger and more luxurious than those offered in Guomao, while the Development Bank announced Shenzhen's efforts to upgrade the municipal economy from export-oriented manufacturing and trade to financial services.

In contrast to Guomao, Diwang had a rather controversial pedigree. Ironically, the controversy reflected the success of the Guomao project: the acceptance of economic rationality and concomitant integration of the Shenzhen and Hong Kong economies. When the Xionggu Group (HK) revealed their plans to build the tallest building in Asia there was no economic justification to erect another sixty-odd floors of office space and luxury apartments in Shenzhen. Unlike Hong Kong,

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3 The original East Gate (Dong Men), which gave the area its name, was built during the Ming Dynasty and razed in 1986. A three-story
Shenzhen was neither land poor, nor lacking commercial housing. Moreover, the leap from Guomao to Diwang necessitated a corresponding shift from concrete-based to steel-based architecture, a decision in conflict with China’s actual productive capabilities. For those architects who had established their reputations in the 1980s, this 1990s rage for even taller buildings seemed, at best, immature and, at worst, hypocritical. (“Shenzhen is only a middle-sized city,” Mr. Long lamented. “We need better infrastructure and traffic circulation. We don’t need another empty glass box. But Shenzhen leaders worry about the size of their mianzi.”) Nevertheless, proof of Diwang’s ascendancy came when the Deng billboard on Shennan Road was repainted. The only tribute to Deng Xiaoping in Shenzhen, the billboard places the deceased leader in front of an image of the SEZ skyline. Every year, the skyline was repainted in order to incorporate new buildings. Rather than reproducing the actual skyline, however, the billboard organized the included buildings according to their symbolic importance. Since the mid 1990s, Diwang, rather than Guomao, occupied the central position in the billboard skyline.

This billboard confirmed the connection between Deng Xiaoping's version of modernization and the Shenzhen built environment. Shenzhen leaders had planned to construct a memorial hall for Deng Xiaoping on one of the few remaining hills in Futian. However, the

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4 In Shenzhen, the decision to reform the system of providing housing for employees of government and state-owned industries was not put into
proposal was denied by the Central Government because (1) if Shenzhen were to build a memorial, then cities throughout China would also build memorials and (2) Deng Xiaoping did not belong to Shenzhen, so no special permission to build a memorial would be granted. The image of Deng has been carefully reworked three times. In the 1997 version, a relatively wrinkle-free Deng smiled benevolently over Shenzhen, his right hand displaying four fingers (Modernize!) Although there were Deng billboards throughout the Pearl River Delta, none were so well-maintained as the Shenzhen billboard. During the week following Deng's death (February 20, 1997), flower wreathes were laid at the base of the billboard and parents brought their children to bow three times to demonstrate respect for the deceased leader.

(When I commented that Shenzheners seemed to genuinely mourn Deng's passing, a northern friend cynically countered, “Of course the locals are crying. If Deng Xiaoping hadn’t zoned Bao’an county as an SEZ, would they be millionaires today?)

I have sketched the shift from Guomao to Diwang in order to highlight several themes, which have informed urbanization in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. First, Reform and Opening represented a continuation of the project to modernize China, rather than a wholesale re-orientation of the Chinese political economy. Although the political shift from Mao to Deng entailed a redefinition of how modernization was to be accomplished, it did not substantively

effect until 1997. The last batch of housing will be distributed throughout 1999.
involve new standards for evaluating the success of modernization. Mao advocated political consciousness as the means for increasing agricultural production and industrial output, while Deng favored economic liberalism, but both leaders intended to improve the domestic standard of living as well as increase the international standing of the People’s Republic. Within this framework of competing modernization strategies, the Shenzhen built environment could be presented as neutral “evidence” of the success of Reform and Opening; Guomao as counterpoint to the People’s Communes.

Second, as the English translation of Guomao, “World Trade Center” suggests Reform and Opening was simultaneously responding to and constitutive of changing international conditions. In the frenzied rush of millennial globalization, it is often forgotten that during the Cold War, the People’s Republic of China represented a viable political-economic alternative to US American hegemony, especially for poor, usually colonized agrarian countries. Significantly, the Cold War “heated up” in Asia (not Europe as U.S. strategists feared), and the

5 Jiwei CI (1994) argues that during the Mao era the contradiction between improving the domestic standard of living and increasing the international standing of the PRC was resolved by constantly deferring satisfaction of material desires in order to reinvest in national production. A political ideology of self-sacrifice and deferred gratification enabled national self-strengthening at the expense of individuals.

6 Aijaz Ahmed notes (1992:31), “The overwhelming fact of the Chinese Revolution, seizing state power in 1949 and remaining a key defining polarity until after the end of the Cultural Revolution, exercised enormous influence on anti-colonial struggles throughout this period, from the end of the Second World War up to the mid 1970s.” The current isolation of North Korea further illustrates the relationship
United States fought with the People’s Republic of China in Korea and Vietnam, in addition to polarizing the United Nations over the status of Taiwan. Domestically and internationally, then, the construction of Guomao signaled a shift from an antagonistic to a cooperative relationship with Western capitalism, prefiguring the expansion of metropolitan capital into socialist Asian space. In a similar vein, the translation of Diwang, “Earth King” heralded a transition in Chinese modernization from manufacturing to financial services and commerce that explicitly challenges the post-Cold War hierarchy of nation-states. How else to understand the metaphorical shift from “world trade” to “earthly dominion” if not as a bid for greater Chinese power within the extant world order?

The impatient emergence of Guomao and its abrupt displacement by Diwang suggests the third theme in Shenzhen’s project to modernize: accelerating synchronicity. In addition to refiguring the economic structure of Chinese modernization, Guomao set the standard for its post-Mao temporality. From initial design to grand-opening ceremony, Guomao was completed in three years. During that same period, the municipal government also implemented the “five connections and a leveling” policy to support export-oriented manufacturing. The five connections were: roads, electricity, water, telephone lines, and sewage pipes, the one leveling, the Shenzhen hills.7 In other words, Guomao

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between the form millennial globalization and the decision of the PRC leadership to cooperate with Western capitalism. 
7 Later the infrastructure policy was expanded to “seven connections,” with the addition of flood control and gas lines.
was built at the same time that municipal infrastructure was being installed. The expression “Shenzhen speed” refers to compression of four separate activities into one timeframe. During the 1980s, Shenzhen developers simultaneously obtained building permits, designed a skyscraper or housing complex, put in the necessary infrastructure, and erected the building.\(^8\) Despite the fact that Shenzhen streets must be regularly excavated in order to adjust electrical lines and water pipes, older architects remember the 1980s as a time of efficient production, in large part because they did not “waste time” on things like zoning permits. (“Nowadays, these buildings grow beards waiting to be completed,” an old architect humphed disdainfully. His son disagreed, “You know, there’s an expression in Shenzhen: There’s no business that can’t be accomplished, only people who can’t accomplish it.”\(^9\)

On the one hand, the on-going production of the Shenzhen built environment staged the temporality of modernization as a rush toward the future; Guomao emerged in only three years. Only a decade later, Diwang exploded on the skyline, demonstrating that, if possible, Shenzhen had accelerated its already famous velocity. On the other hand, this acceleration was only possible through synchronicity. Insofar as every thing occurred at the same time, the construction process

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\(^8\) The national government has begun enforcing the temporal separation of these activities in order to insure safer buildings. “Three-at-a-time” (getting approval, designing the building, beginning construction) construction has since become a criminal offence, albeit difficult to prosecute given the necessary cooperation between local government and developers.

\(^9\) Meiyou banbucheng de shi, zhi you banbucheng shi de ren.
flattened temporal distinctions; roads were laid, permits were approved, concrete was mixed, a completed building was painted onto the Deng billboard. These contradictory temporalities informed the sense that the Shenzhen built environment existed in a kind of quantum time, lurching from one state of being to another (from Guomao to Diwang) without warning. (Another urban myth: The city changed so quickly that residents returned to old haunts only to discover that they had lost their way because familiar landmarks had been removed.) Moreover, Shenzhen incorporated the rhythm of quantum time into its civic identity, marking important dates with construction timetables. In fact, in Shenzhen “history”—the legitimating discourse of Chineseness—was expressed as advances in architectural form. Guomao was finished in time for debates on extending Reform and Opening to coastal cities, Diwang was completed before the 1997 transfer of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty. A new town center was being designed for the next millennium. It goes without saying, perhaps, that this quantum time ruthlessly obliterated past accomplishments, except as a statistical challenges to be surmounted (much in the way that Olympic records exist to be outstripped.)

The fourth theme that I would like to mention is transformative mimesis. Ann Anagnost (1997:45-74) argues that mimesis, “seizing upon the appearance of things in order to appropriate their power” is central to the deconstruction of representation of power at play in post-Mao China. Anagnost traces how tricksters and imposters exposed the informal power structure of the party-state to be little more than a self-referential
sign system, rather than the natural manifestation of a legitimate authority. Nevertheless, in interpreting the mimesis at play in Shenzhen, it is important to recall that Anagnost wrote about events that occurred during the 1980s; the deconstruction of representations of power that she observed in localized practices, in the aftermath of the June 4, 1989 Tian’anmen crackdown permeated Shenzhen society. (Indeed, many northern intellectuals admitted that they came to Shenzhen only after they lost hope in social reform.) The journey from Guomao to Diwang was a journey from hopeful possibilities to cynical disillusionment. (Here I am reminded of Vincent Crapanzano’s discussion of Hamlet.) Most Shenzheners assume that the Party-State was tricking the people with the image of a world city, but as a wealthy developer pointedly asked, “What’s the alternative? Do you know what people are saying?” At the time we had been discussing the Fifteenth National Congress of the CCP and the rise of Zhu Rongji. “If it’s a real anti-corruption movement, the Party is finished; if it’s a false anti-corruption movement, the country is finished.” He stopped laughing, “That’s why everyone is grabbing as much as they can. No one knows when they will have to step down. No one knows when it’s all going to collapse.”

The Shenzhen built environment deliberately reproduced architectural and urban planning forms from Hong Kong, although developers increasingly turned to Japanese and US American architectural firms to design significant buildings. (“Do you know why Shenzhen taxis are red?” a friend inquired mischievously. “Because
Hong Kong taxis are red.") During the early 1980s, Shenzhen leaders and architects toured Hong Kong in order to learn about what a modern city looked like. In addition, young architects were sent abroad in order to learn the latest architectural techniques and fashions. It is telling that their object of study was the architecture and design of what have come to be known as "world cities," an architectural negation of the economic structure of cross-border relations. In addition to direct China-Hong Kong trade in commodities and services, Hong Kong earned re-export mark-up profits on Chinese goods, which passed through the SAR. 10 The re-export mark-up included profits earned on local transportation, storage, insurance, packaging and minor processing. Moreover, in the mid 1980s, Hong Kong became a center of finance capital.11 The world city architecture of Hong Kong spoke to the profits earned through their arbitrage role with respect to the PRC and the concentration of finance capital on Hong Kong shores. Shenzhen, in contrast, was integrated into the world economy as an exporter of low-value added manufactures, which required cheap, flexible factories. The typical factory in Shenzhen, a changfang (copied from 1960s Hong Kong) was designed for simple, labor-intensive manufacturing and was equipped with water and electricity. Upon renting the space, the

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10 As of July 1, 1997 Hong Kong has been a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China.
11 The Hong Kong stock exchange is the seventh largest in the world and Hong Kong currency markets influence many national economies in Asia. Nevertheless, Hong Kong itself is increasingly dependent on the PRC. During the recent financial crisis, for example, the stability of the Hong
manufacturer supplied both the production equipment and materials. In fact, the factories presumed interchangeable use; many of the changfang from Bagualing, one of the first industrial zones in Luohu, have since been converted to restaurants and clothing stores.¹²

As the first effort to reproduce the form of a world city, Guomao thus indexed the contradictory spatial practice of transformative mimesis, which continues to shape the Shenzhen built environment. Municipal leaders aimed to create a world city by reproducing the architecture style of Hong Kong. In the early 1980s, Guomao represented state-of-the-art modernist architecture, in the early 1990s, Diwang epitomized state-of-the-art postmodern architecture. ("After traveling roads without number, we might be architects from anywhere, we don’t belong to any school, nor do we follow the trends."¹³) And yet...

Shenzhen was not Hong Kong. Indeed. Guomao and Diwang could be erected precisely because land and labor were significantly cheaper in the SEZ than in the SAR. The breach between what Guomao and Diwang signified (World City, Anywhere) and their physical location (Export Processing Zone, China) effected a strange displacement. Who can deny that by reproducing Hong Kong architectural forms and urban layout, the Shenzhen leadership did produce a city? And yet, it was a city that

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¹⁲ The ironies of Shenzhen changfang include the fact that in the 1960s, Hong Kong turned to labor-intensive light manufacturing because after the Chinese border closed, the territory lost its role as entrepôt to South China manufactures.
should be someplace else, but where? The Shenzhen built environment uncannily mimics a world city that does not exist.

In his discussion of the material conditions informing the modernism of underdevelopment in Russia, Marshal Berman (1982:175, emphasis in the original) notes, “[U]ntil the dramatic industrial upsurge of the 1890s, Russians of the nineteenth century experienced modernization mainly as something that was not happening; or else as something that was happening far away, in realms that Russians, even when they traveled there, experienced more as fantastic anti-worlds than as social actualities...” It is conceivable that May Fourth intellectuals shared this sense of modernization as other worldly, but for Shenzheners and Chinese people in the post-Cold War period, modernization is something that should have already happened and, due to a cruel twist of socialist fate, did not. The undeniable grandeur of Shenzhen architecture reinforced a sense that, the prodigious efforts of the SEZ notwithstanding, Shenzhen continued to duplicate the past of the rest of the world. The Shenzhen built environment did more symbolic work than simply spatialize the conviction that Cold War modernization in Hong Kong and Taiwan was in fact more authentic than modernization under Mao, however. It may be that the ephemeral world city which the Shenzhen built environment mimicked was a dream of an impossible past, a past, which anticipated the current world system and would legitimate Shenzhen. Far-fetched speculation? Perhaps. Nevertheless, a

popular aphorism located Shenzheners in a museum of world architecture, "wanguo jianzhu bolanhui" condemning the living to the halls of the dead.

(Rumor had it that during the process of planning the new town center, Shenzhen leaders were shown pictures of internationally known buildings, in addition to original designs. In the end, they selected the European Parliament Building, Brussels as the model for the future Shenzhen Cultural Center. The decision outraged architects who thought Shenzhen should sponsor the development of original works, unique to the SEZ. After all, modern architecture, like modern art, valorizes the individual act of creation. How could Shenzhen claim to be a modern world city if it did not attend more strictly to the rules of self-representation? Apparently, the Shenzhen leadership remained unmoved by these appeals to High Art. They countered that most Chinese people had never been to Brussels, and even if one or two people had seen the European Parliament Building, so what? The European Parliament Building was more attractive than any of the proposals that the architects had submitted to the selection committee.)

The fifth and final theme that I will treat is the necessary un-making of historical Bao'an County in the ongoing production of Shenzhen's paradoxically cynical rush to past-futures. This un-making occurred through the dialectical interaction of at least two sites: the physical environment and official representations of modernization in Shenzhen. Thus far, my interpretation has assumed that the construction of Shenzhen has taken place through the material
transformation of Bao’an. The “five connections and a leveling,” for example, glossed the displacement of an agrarian environment with one suited for industrial manufacturing, while the respective locations of Guomao and Diwang index the trajectory of development: from Dongmen, the border town market area toward Caiwuwei, the former administrative center of Bao’an County. The representative disappearance of Bao’an, however, was embedded in the redistricting that began in the late 1970s and continued until 1992. The SEZ was established in 1980 in an administrative order that eliminated Bao’an County. However, Bao’an County was re-established in 1981, dividing Shenzhen Municipality into (New) Bao’an County and the SEZ. The final restructurinig happened in 1992, when (New) Bao’an County was re-zoned as two municipal districts.

“After five years of determined construction,” Liang Xiang writes in the introduction to the first Shenzhen Special Economic Zone Yearbook, “every project in the Shenzhen SEZ has developed rapidly, and its backward appearance has changed greatly. Comparing 1984 with 1979, investment in basic infrastructure has increased thirty-one times; the area of completed construction projects has increased twenty times, and of that total the area for housing has increased twenty-two times; industrial output has increased twenty-nine times; even after reducing total arable land by 100,000 mu, agricultural production has increased eighty-five percent; total consumer spending has increased fifteen times; government revenue has increased thirteen times; local revenue in foreign currency has doubled; fixed investment has increased fifteen
times over the total investment during the thirty years preceding 1978; industrial productivity per capita has increased 3.8 times; the average monthly salary has increased 1.7 times; the average monthly salary for city residents has increased 3.3 times, of this total, salaries within the SEZ have increased 4.3 times; per capita housing space has increased 2.5 times.” Liang Xiang then summarizes the social meaning of these statistics, “At the same time, the average annual salary of SEZ residents reached $US 1,000.00, leaping into ‘the basic standard of living’ (xiaokang shuiping).”

Liang Xiang’s account of the SEZ’s first five years elides any reference to Bao’an County, despite reference to “thirty years before 1978.” However, it is the writing of Bao’an history that reveals more clearly the dependence of representations of Shenzhen space on administrative categories. 1985, the Central Government ordered all county governments to produce County Gazetteers (Xianzhi). (New) Bao’an County leaders complied, despite imminent administrative restructuring, which would permanently eliminate Bao’an County and its value as a historic category of analysis.

The preface to the 1997 Bao’an County Gazetteer begins rather defiantly, “Although Bao’an County has already been abolished to form Bao’an and Longgang districts and three volumes are redundant, nevertheless the new gazetteer is a “complete book of one aspect,” and

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14 Shenzhen Special Economic Zone Yearbook 1985: 36. From the beginning of Reform and Opening, Deng Xiaoping emphasized that the true standard for evaluating the success of modernization was whether
still has latent value. This book is not only a historical record of Bao'an's many centuries of industry and prosperity, it will also provide Shenzhen Municipality with valuable lessons to learn from as it constructs material and spiritual civilization. The purpose of the gazetteer was to document county level progress since Reform as well as update local history. (The last Gazetteer for the area had been written in 1573 for Xin'an County, Bao'an County's predecessor.) Consequently, in addition to a small research group, Shenzhen municipality appointed a historian to oversee the composition of the gazetteer. The historian's role, however, was not limited to the research of local history, but also included the authority to determine which historic sites belonged to (New) Bao'an and which belonged to the SEZ.

"For example," one of the gazetteer editors explained, "We were allowed to write the history of Wen Tianxiang Ancestral Hall up until 1979. From 1980, the history of the Wen Tianxiang Ancestral Hall was to be written by the Shenzhen Gazetteer Group."

(The Wen Tianxiang Ancestral Hall was built during the rule of the Jiaqing Emperor during the early Qing Dynasty. Although in 1984 the Ancestral Hall was the second historical artifact identified by the Shenzhen Municipal Government for historical restoration, it was not until preparations for the Hong Kong Handover over ten years later that the Municipal government and a Canadian firm converted the Wen

or not each Chinese person had achieved xiaokang, which translates roughly as "decent standard of living."
Tianxiang Ancestral Hall into part of the Xin'an County walking museum.)

“There were sites mentioned in the 1573 gazetteer, which we had hoped to investigate. Unfortunately, they were situated in the SEZ, so we couldn’t write about how they had changed. After a while, we limited our historic investigations to (New) Bao’an.”

Nor did the Bao’an Gazetteer write about sites after 1992, when the county had been eliminated. “The main focus of the book is 1983 to 1992.”

The explicit link between administrative territories and the writing of Bao’an County/ Shenzhen SEZ history supports Pasenjit Duara’s (1995) claim that the categories of modern historiography have been determined by the nation-state and its ideological apparatuses. Yet to argue for reflexivity is not to explain why the Shenzhen municipality actively produces history. Nor does it clarify the editors’ dedication to accurate historical representation despite knowledge that they were writing already-irrelevant documents. Instead I would like to suggest that even if U.S. American and Chinese historians both deploy national(ist) categories to narrate history, the respective institutions in each country that support historiography remain different enough to argue for the different social value of history in China and the United States.

Jonathan Unger (1992:11) contends that in China, “[H]istory was and is considered a mirror through which ethical standards and moral transgressions pertinent to the present day could be viewed.” Confucian
historians had chronicled the moral qualities of the Emperor, his inner
court and high officials, while Marxist historians focused on the
economy and society. Moreover, Confucian and Marxist historians
differed in the representation of national time, the former explaining the
rise and fall of dynasties as cyclical, the later having posited uni-linear
progress into the future. Nevertheless, both traditional and modern
historians of place(d) their writing at the service of the nation because
history (not philosophy) remains the hegemonic knowledge for
understanding China and its place in the world. By requiring counties
to publish gazetteers, the Deng administration confirmed the cultural
importance of writing local history to legitimate and enable national
government. By limiting the scope of the Bao'an County Gazetteer to
the territory of (New) Bao'an county, the Shenzhen Municipal
Government performed the identity of the state and modern historical
categories. In Reform China, Bao'an County was nothing more nor less
than political ground zero for evaluating the success of Shenzhen
according to the norms of modern historiography. A tentative
hypothesis: The statist history of Shenzhen/Reform and
Opening/urbanization could only take place through the obliteration of
Bao'an/collectivization/ agriculture.

The vanishing of Bao'an County from representations of Shenzhen
is therefore overdetermined by the articulation of modern historical
categories within the context of a culture that has traditionally placed
history at the center of its self-identity. This is a link more “absolute”
than the historical politics for which Duara argues; it also speaks to an
understanding of modernization as a historical project, rather than the completion of a philosophical project, which began during the Enlightenment. Guomao and Diwan replaced Dongmen and Caiwuwei as symbols of the Shenzhen/Bao’an polity through a dialectic between the implementation of modernization projects and the mobilization of history as the knowledge produced by the state about itself.\textsuperscript{15} The vanishing of Bao’an county therefore indicates a tragedy that arises out of the culturally-conditioned practices of historiography as China modernizes: the knowledge practice through which the Chinese polity has understood and represented itself becomes the vehicle eradicating that self both in the physical landscape and history books on Shenzhen.\textsuperscript{16} I will return to the vexed proliferation of Shenzhen history books in Chapter Four, for the moment I would like to highlight the ethnographic implications of Bao’an’s erasure from Chinese History.

Lisa Rofel (1997:155) has based her challenge to rethink the analytic category of modernity on participant-observation of changing

\textsuperscript{15} In her exploration of the historic trajectory linking May Fourth literature, the political ritual of “recounting bitterness” (suku) and the violence of the Cultural Revolution, Ann Anagnost (1977:17-44) analyzes how, “What was first written as fiction came to be spoken as the unmediated truth of History speaking itself and was then written again as inscribed speech in the forging of a revolutionary culture.” Anagnost develops her insight through an engagement with Derrida’s articulation of “writing” as the process through which individuals are made subject to the symbolic. I would like to emphasize that the Marxist search for the subject of History dovetailed powerfully with the Chinese expectation that understanding came through a correct interpretation of history.

\textsuperscript{16} Berman posits that Goethe’s \textit{Faust} demonstrates an affinity between the cultural ideal of self-development and a social movement toward economic development. “The only way for modern man to transform himself, Faust and we will find out, is by radically transforming the whole physical and social and moral world he lives in (1982:40).”
spatial relations in a Hangzhou silk factory, arguing that, "[H]egemonic transnational flows of commodities and values create a powerful discourse on modernity spreading out of the West, but we must nonetheless remain wary of creating unified readings out of local Euro-American practices and allowing those to overpower interpretation elsewhere." In particular, Rofel carefully examines the relationships between space, memory and resistance in order to specify the local content of modern spatial practices. Likewise, I have indicated that at the level of State-led modernization in Shenzhen, a similar warning obtains; if in Shenzhen modernity is framed as a historical rather than a philosophical project, how useful are Western theories that were developed to critique modernization as a dialectic of Enlightenment in a critique of modernization as a dialectic of History? Even as communist forces rewrote "speaking bitterness" as "History speaking itself" (Anagnost 1997), Unger (1993) reminds us that the major critiques of the Maoist regime were historical dramas.\(^{17}\) Placing this history at the center of a narrative about the interpretation of modernization in Shenzhen is not to exoticize Chinese modernity, rather it is to acknowledge that the reasons which inform the birth of a national project are not necessarily the same as those that insure the historical

\(^{17}\) Tom Fisher (1993:9-45) and Rudolph Wgner (1993:46-103) examine how historical plays on the Ming official Hai Rui became the first targets of the Cultural Revolution, demonstrating that Party control of historical representation was fundamental to CCP legitimacy. Despite an admitted loosening of constraints on history as an academic discipline, nevertheless the Shenzhen municipal government enforced a history of (New) Bao'an County in keeping with the aims of Dengist modernization.
unfolding of that project, especially when modernization has been provoked by threats to national sovereignty.

As we have seen, Deng-era modernization in Shenzhen had two aspects: improving the domestic standard of living and improving the standing of the PRC in the world system through cooperative relationships with Western capital, especially Hong Kong capital. Guomao constituted the space in which the terms of cooperation would be negotiated, while Diwang announced China’s desire to re-negotiate those terms. The temporal and spatial coordinates which the trajectory from Guomao to Diwang produced must thus be fixed with respect to how the Chinese State has negotiated and represented the expansion of that world system into socialist Asia. In this context of defensive modernization, “accelerated synchronicity” and “transformative mimesis” are simultaneously symptoms of the assertion of the PRC as an independent nation in the world system and the means by which the PRC is being integrated into that system in a subordinate role. The contradiction between national sovereignty and international subordination symbolized by the Shenzhen built environment constantly undermines a critical position against the Shenzhen government despite widespread dissatisfaction with corruption.

(“Shenzhen isn’t as bad as nei di,” a savvy developer contended. “Do you know the difference between a good cadre and a bad cadre?” He chuckled as he shook my head “no.”

“A good cadre takes your money and does what he promises. A bad cadre just takes your money. In general, Shenzhen cadres are good.”)
Most architects, developers, historians, even government officials on the take were critical of how Shenzhen was being constructed. Corruption, the lack of a political means to obtain justice, the lives of immigrant laborers enraged each of them to different degrees. (In the case of illegal strikes, for example, most Shenzheners expressed sympathy for the strikers; they were also aware that China's constitution protected labor rights. "Maybe the inspector wants to do his job, but what if his boss doesn't? Will he risk his job for some outside workers?") Yet the specter of failed modernization under Mao still haunted the Shenzhen landscape precisely because across the river, Hong Kong enjoyed a material standard of living still beyond the reach of most Chinese.

During the summer of 1997, Shenzheners frequently compared the respective fates of Hong Kong and neidi. modernization during the Cold War, "Maybe we don't need to Reform, just give Hunan Province to England to colonize for a while" friends joked in a bitter reference to Deng Xiaoping's call to construct ten Hong Kongs, "then China will become prosperous."

The Central Government and Shenzhen Municipal Government were able to deploy architectural symbols of international modernity in order to legitimate a one-party system precisely because the buildings, electricity, wide roads, and running water not only represent a material advance over Bao'an County, they also symbolized the hegemonic role of world cities in the contemporary international system. In some sense, Chinese modernization depended upon the form of the city—its
buildings, its institutions, its markets and fashions—to alter the relations between the state apparatus and the world system. Indeed, the international borders necessary to generate this integration could only be produced by concentrating multi-national institutions in a city. We now turn to the history of urbanizing Shenzhen and the social effects of emplacing multi-national institutions.
3. Bao'an Under Erasure

The meaning of urbanization in Shenzhen was not limited to the all too visceral experience of expanding construction sites, but included a trans-valuation of the rural as a marker of Chinese identity. This trans-valuation has been ongoing (at least) since the Opium War. In this chapter, the anthropologist turns her gaze to rural-urban contradictions embedded in the ShenKong landscape, knitting together tales told in history books, ethnographic monographs, interviews, and gossip. She comments on the so-called “South Chinese” cultural identity.

Almost twenty years after the Shuiwan Brigade, Shekou Commune had been designated the future site of the Shekou industrial park, the first export processing zone in the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Mr. Guo, a Shanghai architect who had come to Bao’an County in 1962 as part of the zhiqing movement, remembered the unrelenting poverty of the area. He defined poverty in terms of a fundamental lack of the material culture which now proliferated in Shenzhen: electricity, four-lane highways, skyscrapers, industrial manucaturting, and shopping malls with imported goods. During a formal interview, he explained that historically Bao'an County had been one of the poorer and smaller counties in Guangdong when compared with Dongguan, Zhongshan, and Nanhai. The local economy had been determined by geography, agriculture, and production quotas. Roughly speaking, fruit trees were cultivated in the eastern, mountainous half of the county, while rice fields, fish ponds, and oyster farms constituted production along the
narrow coast and the western half. From 1950 until 1978, annual production increased slowly, with an increasing emphasis on industrial manufacturing. However, even in the late 1970s when industrial output had grown from twenty to thirty percent of the total GNP for the county, most residents remained engaged in agricultural production. In addition, industrial output was primarily in the service of agriculture: food processing, canning factories, and production of small tools and were located primarily within an area of 120 square meters in Shenzhen Market, the pre-Reform county seat of Bao'an.

This narrative of Bao'an County as backward and poor with respect to the rest of the Pearl River Delta, figured prominently in official descriptions of Shenzhen. Indeed, a central element in origin stories about the SEZ was the speed at which highways and skyscrapers had replaced rice fields and single-story houses. Zhou Ganshi, and Chief Advisor to the Shenzhen City Planning Commission, boasted that in Shenzhen, "after a decade of development, investments on the fixed assets have amounted to RMB 16.6 billion. On average, 5-6 km square per annum, a rate of urban land development has been maintained continuously. What the other cities in China would require twenty years to complete a planning phase, Shenzhen will only take ten years at the most (Zhou 1990:4)." Concomitantly, explicit comparison with Hong Kong inevitably stressed the underdevelopment of Bao'an through its exclusion from the English (i.e global) economy, despite a common history. Throughout the collectivist era, Shenzhen was just a "small border town (bianchui xiaozhen)" occupied by women and children.
because, "at that time, there was nothing to stop you from going to Hong Kong, all the people had to do was pack a bag and cross the river (Zhonggong Shenzhen Xuanchuanbu 1995:8)." In these stories, young, able-bodied men went south into the Hong Kong factories; women, the elderly and children remained behind subsistence farming. A writer recollected returning to Bao'an from Guangzhou:

The second time I went to my uncle's house was in the winter of 1975. This time, my grandmother had already died, and my uncle's hair had turned white. I don't know why, but the green bamboo in front of the door had been cut down yet again. I was very concerned and asked my uncle about his life. Uncle shook his head of snow-white hair and signed saying, "There's only a thin border between here and Hong Kong, so originally every direction led to money. Now they say that planting rice, flowers and vegetables in order to sell on the English side is only serving rich capitalists and young women. This way, we can eat twice a day, but there's no spare money. Even when I get my hair cut, I have to use 100 grams of rice instead of money (Chen 1993:383)."

Another version of this story, told about those villagers who went to Hong Kong or even further abroad, again emphasized the "obvious" link between improving material conditions and political loyalty. When Wu Weitai's kinsman and fellow villager, Wu Huoqi, visited Nanyuan Village, he sighed regretfully and said, "Weitai, you're a communist party cadre, you do socialism (gao shehuizhuyi), you've done it now for several decades, and what's the result? I'm not going to mention anything else.
just this alley, isn't it as decrepit and dirty as ever?” Wu Weitai was rendered speechless: "He staunchly objected to saying that socialism was bad, but Huoqi spoke the truth, this alley really was as muddy and dirty as it had been several decades before (Zou 1991:119)."

As these citations suggest, criticism of the failure of collectivist policies was implicitly (Zhou 1990) and explicitly (Chen 1993) incorporated in official accounts of Shenzhen. Moreover, this critique was based on the artificial, almost arbitrary, nature of the Bao'an-Hong Kong border and the ultimate dependency of nationalism on economic prosperity; those young men who might have otherwise contributed to the construction of China, simply packed a bag and crossed, via the Shenzhen river, from destitution to opportunity (Zhonggong 1995). Practically speaking, economic out-migration also entailed a change of status (shenfen) insofar as staying abroad required that the immigrant obtain legal residency in the host country (or territory).

In addition to critique, I also sensed in these re-workings of Shenzhen history political opportunism, an effort to salvage the Chinese Communist Party from the rubble of socialist dreams. Notice how alienation from the centrally planned economy, one of the primary means through which Chinese people were incorporated into the People's Republic, was deployed in order to legitimate the policies of Reform and Opening. Reform succeeded (where the centrally planned economy had failed); Deng Xiaoping triumphed (when Mao Zedong had erred). Wu Weitai, (unlike his mercenary kinsman), remained dedicated to collective village life, eventually—as Reform progressed and the Nanyuan Village
industrial zone began attracting Hong Kong investors—replacing unsanitary public outhouses with indoor plumbing. Nevertheless the fortuitous opening of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong border remained vexed by the reasons for its 1950 closing. Other identities and previous alliances pre-empted unproblematic identity with the economic neo-liberalism animating socialism with Chinese characteristics, not least of which was the moral-political history of the CCP itself.

Dachang island (one of the sites of British customs houses after 1898), was, even by Bao'an County's lamentable standards, poor. The Guangdong Provincial government had only built the two rows of one-story brick and concrete rooms (one family per room, with a cooking area in the back) after a typhoon destroyed the original small shacks squeezed between the Pearl River and Dahan mountain. Obviously neglected since Dachang village abandoned the site in the early 1980s (to establish a new village and industrial zone in Shekou), but in 1997 the small rooms still asserted a collective history and Mao Zedong's silhouette, carefully painted onto the walls almost forty years old, dominated the space. Uncle Liao and I had joined a group of New Dachang villagers who had returned "home" for a barbeque on the beach in front of the old village. Finding a spot to picnic, however, required a bit of ingenuity because the beach was under construction; the straits between Dachang Island and Nantou were being converted into a port.

The new villagers, many of whom had left Dachang as children, were hosting a small writing group from the Nanshan District Ministry of Propoganda. Apparently, "Old Mother Zhang," an elementary school
teacher and communist party cadre from Guangzhou had endured the hardships of Dachang in order to educate village children. The recently appointed District Party Secretary felt her example should be publicized. The villagers and writing group remained unimpressed; cadres of that generation, they reminded me, actually cared for the people's welfare. Uncle Liao agreed. He had decided to stay on Dachang because for people like himself, an illiterate fisherman, Hong Kong in 1949 only offered coolie wages without land reform. By the time it was better to be in Hong Kong, he already had a wife and children.

These other stories about ShenKong—a generation of self-sacrificing cadres (including zhiqing Guo, if not land-developer Guo) and pragmatic peasants—illuminated how rural Bao'an County was placed under erasure in Shenzhen origin stories, poverty justifying both the emancipatory promise of the Chinese revolution and explaining subsequent disenchantment with the Party and its policies. These shifts were marked temporally such that to confirm one was to deny the other. The emancipatory promise of liberation had been marked by the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The end of the Mao era began officially with Reform and Opening. In these two contradictory narratives—the first a negation of traditional China and the second, a negation of new China—Hong Kong became frightfully polysemous, simultaneously representing the first instance of colonialism, one of the sites where socialism and capitalism met in Asia, and something like regret: this is what Bao'an should have become. "Shenzhen" was the
name of that wish as if already fulfilled; “ShenKong” the means by which it might happen.

Teacher Liu and I sat surrounded by maps and blueprints, a plan of land use zoning in Shenzhen hanging on the wall. I had seen a picture of the 1982 master plan: four colors, four zones (residential, industrial and grain storage, agricultural, and tourist.) The largest area was zoned for agricultural use, with Lizhi orchards given particular preference. In contrast to the solid blocks of color characterizing the 1982 plan, the 1996 plan seemed an exercise in pointillism. Thirteen colors, running the entire spectrum competed for ever-smaller bits of space. Suddenly, there were hot pink commercial zones, tangerine residential areas, and even dark green “greenbelts,” but no farmland.

“Urban planning in Shenzhen was a case of ‘the city surrounds the country’,” Teacher Liu joked, neatly reversing Mao Zedong’s revolutionary call for the country to surround the city.

His ironic sense of history, notwithstanding, Teacher Liu clearly wished that the Shenzhen urban forces had been more successful in their siege of the rural; he found the layout of the new villages to be oppressive and the street life within, disorderly.

“You can always tell which village heads (cunzhang) have a little culture simply by looking at the proportion between building height and street width,” he claimed. “Some village heads had planners from the District Planning Office design the new village. Those villages are comfortable. Some village heads did not concern themselves with an
overall plan, so villagers built haphazardly, speculating in real estate. Who dares go in those villages?” he wondered.

A liberal instructor, Teacher Liu had considered sending his students into the Old Villages in order to map the traditional layout and sketch the homes before they were razed. In Nantou City, the Chinese University of Hong Kong had performed similar cultural preservation (Peng 1989). Nevertheless, Teacher Liu abandoned the project for both practical and aesthetic reasons.

“Not enough of the original buildings remain. There’s no sense of a complete village. And what remains,” he shook his head despairingly and began again. “An architectural style which has survived several hundred years must be a good thing. Chinese peasants are very practical, adapting their buildings to the natural environment. But honestly speaking, these houses aren’t as attractive as peasant housing in the central plain (zhongyuan).”

Initially, Shenzhen was to be developed by the Shenzhen Municipal Government, a representative of the urban state apparatus as opposed to developed by the extant rural collectives. Practically, this meant that the Central and Guangdong provincial governments elevated the ranking of rural Bao’an county to urban Shenzhen Municipality and then installed an urban apparatus to govern and develop the new administrative district. Former cadres of the Bao’an county government were integrated into ministries and agencies within the new government, however, leadership positions were assigned to pro-Reform cadres from Beijing and Guangzhou. These new leaders were invested with the authority to
develop and approve projects in Shenzhen, thereby reproducing in the administrative structure the rural-urban hierarchy. Concomitantly, Bao'an county communes dissolved into "villages". The geographic borders of these new villages were based on brigade boundaries, which in turn had been based on the village boundaries that had been recognized during the collectivization movements of the 1950s.

The first constitution of the PRC, approved in 1954, reordered this structure into a five tiered structure of the state, provinces, regions, counties, and xiang, after land reform and cooperatization had begun.¹ In 1958, the lowest level of rural administration, xiang, became People's Communes and villagers were organized into brigades which were based on extant villages. County and City were formally distinguished into two separate political, economic and cultural areas, which were linked through the scissors policy designed to strengthen urban areas at the expense of the rural. Central to this separation was the distribution of resources, particularly land ownership and landuse rights. In urban areas, the state owned all land and land-use was determined by units which were integrated into the State apparatus making urban residents dependent on the State for employment and housing. However, in rural

¹ The period from Liberation until the beginning of the first five-year plan in 1953 is called the period of restoring the national economy (guomin jingji huifu shiqi). During that time, it remained unclear as to how the issue of Hong Kong was to be resolved. After all, as a result of the alliance between Republican China and the Allied Powers during World War II, the foreign concessions in China’s port cities had been returned to Chinese sovereignty. The Sino-British border was closed as were the customhouses, which had encircled Bao’an. In July 1950, the PRC
areas, land was owned by the collectives and, although land-use was determined by the collective, rural residents had the right to land on which to build a house. During the period from Liberation in 1949 until Reform in 1979, the PRC leadership attempted to transform "China" from an agrarian into an industrial society by rationalizing the rural-urban relations through policies which deliberately exploited agriculture in order to strengthen industry. Importantly, this strategy to re-distribute agricultural surpluses had a spatial or geographical dimension, benefiting cities at the expense of the countryside.

The effects of this policy were two-fold: First, the traditional economic emphasis on agriculture shifted to an emphasis on industry. The scale of this transfer, when placed within the context of the predominantly rural population of the PRC, suggests the extent to which industrialization has marginalized agriculture in the national economy, despite relative improvements in rural quality of life. In 1949 agriculture accounted for 70% of the total output in the PRC, with industry accounting for 30%. By the time of Reform in 1978, those figures had been reversed, with agriculture accounting for 24.8% of the total and industry, 75.2% -- even though the population distribution had not changed significantly. Second, administrative policy institutionalized citizenship status with respect to residence. "Rural" and "urban" were more than adjectives, they were also institutional categories that determined an area's bureaucratic ranking and privileges as well as

government outlawed the use of Hong Kong money within the PRC, and
individuals' freedom of movement. During the Mao era, a system of household registration blocked mobility between country and city, thereby determining an individual's access to material social benefits, all of which were available to individuals with urban residence cards. The transfer of surpluses from rural to urban areas, involved their re-distribution in the form of social benefits, based on hierarchical administrative rankings within the state apparatus.

The reforms begun in 1979 attempted to redress the stark disparities between rural and urban life. In the country, changes included a decision to raise gradually the price of grain while simultaneously lowering the price of industrial products for farm use. At the same time, taxes imposed on rural brigades were reduced. In addition, farmers who had fulfilled their compulsory production quotas could now legally sell their surplus produce. In urban areas, reform aimed at enlivening commodity circulation and resolving unemployment problems. These goals were to be met by expanding enterprise autonomy from the state, stressing the role of market mechanism, and implementing an employment policy that looked to private businesses as well as collective enterprises to absorb labor (Shi 1994.). But such changes were unaccompanied by any such reform of the legal residence system designed to control China's population. Without the abolition of this residence system (and by extension the international immigration laws which prevent Chinese labor from working legally in Hong Kong), in

then on February 15, 1951, closed the border.
fact, the effect of these new policies actually increased the 
marginalization of farmers, from both the urban economy and from those 
forms of international capitalism that were introduced only in urban 
areas (and other countries).

The administrative structure inaugurated in Shenzhen was 
implicitly predicated on a continuation of the rural-urban division of 
labor which had enabled Mao-era growth; the urban state apparatus 
would industrialize Shenzhen and the rural villages would produce food 
for the new city. The process of land expropriation was an extension of 
this logic. The city assumed responsibility for developing urban 
infrastructure, while urban units were assigned specific development 
projects. After approving a general plan, the municipal government 
assigned the necessary land to an urban unit, which paid the 
government a land use fee. Subsequently, the unit then approached the 
village to which the land belonged and negotiated a settlement. In a 
second method, the unit submitted a project proposal to the government 
for approval. Once the project was approved, the unit petitioned the 
Bureau of Urban planning for a piece of land, and then approached the 
relevant village. In neither case, however, were villages directly 
integrated into the development process.

Nevertheless, the centralization of authority over land was not 
complete because as rural residents, Bao'an county villagers had the

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In 1987, Shenzhen attempted to control this process by instituting a 
system of auctions, bidding, and contracts to assign areas for 
development.
right to: (1) compensation for their land; (2) a new house to replace the house that was expropriated, and; (3) a new livelihood. These three issues organized village negotiation with urban units. Although villages were mandated to release their land use rights to an urban unit, the conditions of that release were subject to negotiation. Claiming that manufacturing would be the new basis of collective livelihood, villages laid the foundation for village-level industrial zones; arguing for new houses, the male heads of households obtained land on which to build three to six story rental units, and; basing compensation on population all villagers were given a percentage of the compensation money. Often village leaders invested this compensation money in a village level industrial park, issuing stock options to villagers instead of cash. Unlike property, male and female villagers had the right to village issued stock as well as to buy stock. Effectively, in Shenzhen, the primary means for producing the means of production—land and capital—were shared by the municipal government and villages, which were both differently integrated into the state apparatus. The implication is that Statistics from the annual report on Shenzhen economic performance continue to reflect the founding political-economic division between urban (Shenzhen state apparatus) and rural (former Bao'an county collectives) in the categories of "town and above" and "village and below", respectively.³

³ An example of village wealth: As of 1991, Futian District had fifteen village corporations, which had a combined gross annual income of 120 million renminbi, or 50% of the District's gross annual income (Zhu and Yu 1992c). One village, Shazui had a population of 633 villagers (168
Unlike Shenzheners and drifters who saw local wealth as governmental benevolence, locals remembered the establishment of the new villages as a fight for just compensation.

"The Nanyou Company expropriated all the land (zhengyong) on the Nantou peninsula," Mrs. Wu recalled. "Everyday the four of us [she, her husband, and two other village leaders] biked over to the Nanyou company to negotiate (shangliang) with company representatives."

She sighed. "Already in 1982 they had some idea about how valuable our land was. The company proposed to expropriate our land for manufacturing, which was the cheapest price. But now look what they're doing, it has all gone to real estate speculation."\(^4\)

Her husband snorted, but remained silent.

"You know the Chairman of the Nanyou Company was Liang Xiang," Mrs. Wu explained her husband's outburst.

"The first Party Secretary of Shenzhen?" I asked.

"They wanted to make Nantou into another downtown or even another Shekou."

Similar to other areas win the SEZ, the topography of the Nantou peninsula in Nanshan District spatialized this administrative bifurcation of the Shenzhen Municipality into rural and urban administrative systems. Four roads defined the Nantou peninsula: Nanyou Road, Nanshan Road, Nanxin Road, and Old Nantou Road. In addition to the

\(^4\) Prices for expropriation in early eighties.
first three roads (literally: "Southern Oil," "Southern Mountain," and "Southern New"), the road map of the Nantou peninsula included other roads, which had yet to be built (Qianhai and Gangwan Roads), but had erased Old Nantou road. Although both Old Nantou Raod and Nanyou Road linked the peninsula to Shekou harbor in the east and the Guangzhou-Shenzhen super highway in the west, they did so in ways, which exposed the contradictory history of the area. Built by a subsidiary of the national Oil Ministry, Nanyou Road followed the contours of the southern banks of the peninsula. Everyday, semi-trucks transversed Nanyou Road, hauling goods westward toward Shekou for overseas shipment to Hong Kong and eastward toward downtown Shenzhen for overland shipment to Hong Kong. In contrast, Old Nantou Road ran from the West Gate of Nantou city along the northern banks of the peninsula. This narrow road—barely wide enough for motorbike traffic, let alone the Mercedes and Lexuses driven by wealthy locals—connected (from east to west): Nantou City, Daxin and Canqian Villages, Duntou Market, Xiangnan, Beitou, Nanyuan, and Nanshan villages.

On either side of Old Nantou Road, Banyan trees shaded small benches, and the long, newly built two story shopping units remained only partially occupied because most shop keepers had rented commercial space in one of the old, pre-Reform buildings that abutted the street, arranging baskets of fresh vegetables and displays of clay pots in the street itself. From behind the walls of those buildings, which had been converted into small print shops and toy assembly changfang came
the incessant clanging of machinery. Young men repaired bicycles and motor bikes, their tools lay discarded among Banyan tree roots, their clients squatting nearby and smoking a cigarette. Farmer's wives sold fresh fruit in palm baskets, calling out the names of produce in Cantonese. Remnants of the walls, which used to separate this string of fishing villages still remained ("There used to be terrible fighting between villages," an octogenarian gleefully reminisced one summer afternoon over English tea,) as did the small gates to Nanyuan and Nanshan villages.

By 1996, the chaos of Old Nantou road foretold its immanent demise; now that no farmland remained to be developed, the Nanshan District government had zoned the built environment for new construction. Section by section, village by village, the older sections of the Nantou peninsula were being razed to make way for shopping malls and luxury apartments. Some villages still boasted an ancestral hall, the building's front plaza providing the only open space in the area. Often, as I walked through, I chanced upon young boys playing soccer. Some ancestral halls had been refinished with donations from both local and overseas kin. Other halls slowly decomposed, the ceramic roof tiles sprouting grass and the massive doors permanently locked. Excepting infrequent ceremonies (Chinese New Year's, grave sweeping day), the halls were primarily used by older men to gather, to chat, to play mah jong, Chinese chess and dominos, to watch television. The older buildings surrounding the plaza, as well as the housing, which had not
yet been razed were rented to migrants because local villagers had collectively moved to the new villages.

Ms. Wang, a real-estate developer who had leaped from the National Land Bureau into the sea of commerce had successfully mediated between a Futian District village and the Municipal government; they planned to construct several high-rises and a large business center on the site. One Sunday morning, she invited me to attend a groundbreaking ceremony in the village.

"You'll love it. the villagers are so enthusiastic," she promised.

The ceremony amalgamated government pronouncements and village ritual. First, representatives from the District, Neighborhood and Village governments spoke about the benefits that development would bring. Next, the village lion dancers performed in front of the leaders, subsequently dancing into the cleared land where a large apparatus for pounding poles into the ground had been covered in fire crackers. As firecrackers exploded, the lions danced the entire area, sometimes being instructed by the village head to return to a specific site and dance again. The ceremony ended in a small, but spiffy restaurant, which served da pengcai, a regional specialty. After, we had eaten Ms. Wang introduced me to Mrs. Zhang, wife to the village head. I asked what she thought about Reform.

"It's been good. Now I don't have to work in the rice polders."

What did she do during the day?

"Same things other wives do. I shop for groceries, play mah johng, visit friends."

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Were there any problems?

"My son doesn't listen to me any more. None of the young people do. They play around all day and night."

Later, Ms. Wang commented on this rather terse interview.

"Mrs. Zhang only went to elementary school, so she can't even read a newspaper. Why should she think about issues like Reform? Her opinion doesn't matter. It couldn't matter." Ms. Wang finished, but I persisted.

She said, "Now she has a nice house and clean clothes. Before Reform she worked in rice polders. Her son graduated from High School and has a good job. Unlike his older brother, he won't run to Hong Kong. He'll live here, so Mrs. Zhang will be able to hold her grandson (bao sunzi)."

"What more could an illiterate peasant want?" I thought disturbed as much by Ms. Wang's complacency as by the suspicion that she might be right. Some what abashed, I followed her to the car that would transport us from the village to her apartment complex, less than ten minutes away.

Depending on relative wealth of the village, the new villages had been designed as either a residential area of apartment complexes or individual houses. These buildings have provided the basis for individual household accumulation in distinction from the collective resources that were shared in the form of stock options. Stock options had been distributed on a person by person basis (in keeping with hukou), housing was distributed according based on male heads of
households (traditional laojia organization). This later group included villagers who had been incorporated into the village as rural labor during land reform in the early 1950s (former tenant farmers, for example). These options also crossed borders, as many villages issued two kinds of stock options, "natural" (ziran) and "de facto" (shishu). "Natural" stock holders lived and worked in the village, contributing to village development since Reform. "De facto" stock holders had left the village to find work abroad, but nevertheless had maintained ties to the village (usually through parents or siblings). Moreover, unmarried sons also had claims to household space, which was distributed as either an apartment in the village residential complex or land on which to build a private building.

Households used family property to generate income in a variety of ways. Some families rented the empty condominiums to migrants until their sons married and began a new family. Families who had access to several plots, often built several three to six story apartment complexes, living in one or two floors and renting the other floors. Another strategy entailed building small shops in the first floors. In addition to homes, new villages nevertheless provide the material base for village level cultural consumption. Richer villages have built libraries and parks, but all have constructed cultural centers for showing movies and singing karaoke. In contrast to the older village men who occupied the ancestral halls, older village women gather in these new community centers, while younger men and women frequented bars and discos, dispersing the village across a new landscape.
(Rumors of new village wealth circulated constantly, viscously confirming incommensurable difference.

“One of my first grade students,” a young teach from Sichuan complained, “Told me that he doesn’t do his homework because his father has already bought him a place in the Beijing University class of 2012.”

“Do you think its possible?” I asked.

“Ay, even if he can’t buy his way into a freshman class, he can probably buy a diploma.”)

Despite the economic success of village enterprises, they nevertheless remained a symbol of the backwardness, which Reform was to overcome. There were expressions in Mandarin, "not like language" (bu xiang hua) or "not like the type" (bu xiang yangzi), used to express disapproval for something that was "not in line with the standard" (bu he ge). Implicit in these expressions was the cultural expectation that there should be a model to be studied and approximated. In Shenzhen, the closest approximation to an international model city was downtown. Compared to modernist Guomao and postmodern Diwang, Nanshan architecture was considered "too much unlike the type" (tai bu xiang yangzi). Part of this evaluation rested on the relatively late development of the Nantou peninsula, but most derived from the combined presence of old villages as a center of migrant life and new villages as a center of non-Mandarin cultural production and consumption. On the one hand, neighborhood level security bureaus estimated that the ratio of locals to drifters in the villages (old and new) might be as low as five to one and as
high as eleven to one. On the other hand, locals not only continued to sponsor lion-dances and drum troupes for important occasions, they also used their new wealth to support Cantonese opera performances, attend concerts by Hong Kong stars, and screen Hong Kong films.

In 1991, the Shenzhen Municipal Government began the Rural Urbanization Movement (Nongcun Chengshihua Yundong), its purpose: to effect a double transformation (liangge zhuanbian). The first transformation was to incorporate the New Villages into the municipal state apparatus, the second, to change locals' status from a rural to an urban household registration (hukou). Bringing the villages into the municipal apparatus had material effects. First, village assets were (again) expropriated by the state as the basis for neighborhood level (jiedao banshichu) economies. The board of directors for these new enterprises came from the villages and from the District Government. Thus, in 1992, the Shenzhen Municipal Government transformed 68 administrative (xingzheng) and 173 natural (ziran) villages into 241 neighborhoods (juweihui) and stock-holding corporations. At the same time village borders were permanently fixed, limiting village land. Second, village rights to land and collective resources were fixed

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5 The Rural Urbanization Movement was also the means by which Bao’an County was brought into Shenzhen. From 1983 until 1992, the Shenzhen Municipality had two sections, rural Bao’an County and urban Shenzhen SEZ. After 1992, Bao’an County was zoned into two municipal districts (Bao’an and Longgang) and directly subject to urban rather than rural administrative law.

6 Villages (cun)—both administrative and natural—are the lowest level of rural administration. Neighborhoods are the lowest level of urban administration.
temporally. Until 1992, all children born to villagers had natural rights to collective resources, which were based on birth and expected contribution to the village economy.⁷ 1992 through 1996 represented a transition period. Children born during those years still received a percentage of collective resources including stock options and housing. However, after 1996, participation in the village economy was no longer based on birth, but directly tied to inheritance and participation in the economy, making parents rather than the collective responsible for children’s well-being.⁸ Thirdly, locals became subject to the one-child policy. As rural hukou holders, they had been legally entitled to two children, as urban hukou holders, they could now only have one child.

As narrated by state historians, the Rural Urbanization Movement had two beneficial effects. On the one hand, Shenzhen Municipality intended to improve the standard of material civilization in the New Villages by modernizing production. Part of a larger plan to bootstrap the SEZ from a manufacturing to a service economy, the Rural Urbanization Movement focused on eradicating and/or upgrading village-based labor-intensive manufacturing. On the other hand, by adjusting locals’ hukou status Shenzhen intended to improve the “quality” of

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⁷ Village level “social security” was also based on maintaining the quality of the village. Many villages issued “responsibility contracts” (Zhize zhidu gongyue), which outlined the responsibilities of everyone in the village, ranging from Village Head and Village Enterprise CEO to simple villagers. The distribution of village-level social security were fulfillment of pedagogical, sanitary, and environmental responsibilities in addition to obeying municipal laws.

⁸ Villages still offered scholarships on a competitive basis, for example, but parents rather than the collective paid tuition.
villagers. Rural Urbanization and the attendant transfer of assets from the collectives to the municipal apparatus was legitimated by the mutually reinforcing tendencies of labor-intensive manufacturing and the quality of village culture.

Researchers asked: "What is the situation of "people of talent" (rencai) in the fifteen stockholding companies in our [Futian] district (Zhu and Yu 1991c:87)?"

They claimed: "[I]n total, there are two college graduates, fifteen graduates of vocational school, and only three people working in technology. But, there are 126 people working in administration (in jobs like plant manager) with only a high school diploma or lower (Zhu and Yu 1991c:87)."

They gave three reasons for the low quality of locals:

1. Labor-intensive manufacturing has a low level of technology. Therefore, production itself does not produce the need for people of quality.

2. There was no systematic method for attracting people of quality in place.

3. The municipal government had neglected village development.

Raymond Williams (1973) has alerted us to the ways in which concepts of country and city, especially the changing relations between the two have provided tropes for understanding the changes associated with capitalist industrialization. The rural and the urban, materially present and opposed enable thought as the relations are explained and
debated, transforming and transformed. In Shenzhen, the rural had come to symbolize a variety contradictions. The rural was poor, backward, but traditional (in the best case, in the worst case, urbanites despaired of China’s feudalism.) The urban was wealthy, advanced, but western, informing possible Chinese identities in ShenKong. The transformation of rural Bao’an into urban Shenzhen staged an arbitrary but not random progress in terms, which had been set and reworked in South China since the time when Guangzhou and not Hong Kong, Nantou and not Shenzhen structured the relations and meanings of town and county. The rise of Hong Kong, the persistence of Guangzhou, the explosion of Shenzhen and the decline of Nantou materially embodied imperial, colonial, Cold War and Reform legacies.

In this historicized topography, Guangzhou and Nantou represented the age of "traditional China" before the Opium War; Hong Kong symbolized the compromises with western capitalism that British colonialism forced upon China; and Shenzhen exemplified Chinese triumph over its own socialist past. At the same time that their collective histories pointed to a narrative of Chinese unity, however, these four

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9 Williams asserts, “The country and the city are changing historical realities, both in themselves and in their interrelations...Clearly the contrast of country and city is one of the major forms in which we become conscious of a central part of our experience and of the crises of our society (1973:289).”

10 A Chinese timeline corresponding roughly to the age of Western capitalism: Ming Dynasty 1368 –1644; Qing Dynasty 1644 –1911; Republican Period 1911-1945; Civil War 1945 – 49; People's Republic of China 1949 – present; Taiwan 1949 – present; Return of Hong Kong to PRC Sovereignty 1 July 1997; Return of Macao to PRC Sovereignty 1 July 1999.
cities were also important to the production of Lingnan as politically, economically and culturally distinct from other regions in China, including North China and Shanghai. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the most important of these differences had been the development of local lineages in conjunction with changing patterns of corporate landholding, and the intense commercialization of both agriculture and industry in response to domestic and international trade, while after Liberation, the promulgation of Mandarin as the national language highlighted the linguistic variety of Lingnan.

Guangzhou, long the regional center of Lingnan, was the port-of-call for all tributary missions from vassal states in Southeast Asia, a status of increasing importance when the Ming dynasty outlawed foreign trade except in conjunction with tributary missions. Indeed, in 1511 after successfully colonizing Malacca, the Portuguese followed the Malaccans to Guangzhou in order to participate in the Guangzhou trade fairs. Ultimately, the traders failed in their attempt to impersonate the Malaccan mission and consequently the Ming dynasty denied Portugal the privilege of becoming a vassal state and trading in Guangzhou. Nevertheless, despite their initial faux-pax, the Portuguese entered into illegal trading relationships with the Japanese and Chinese living Fujian and Zhejiang, supporting piracy in smuggling in the South China seas. The alliances between the Fujian and Zhejiang ports and Portuguese and

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11 Lingnan, literally “South of the mountain range” was an area covering roughly the territory of Guangxi and Guangdong provinces. Immediately
Japanese traders also influenced the fairs at Guangzhou because the trade prohibition extended to Portugal's new South East Asian colonies, many of which had been Chinese vassals. It was only much later, when the court realized that the problem of "pirates" included trade relations with Chinese ports that trade relations with the Portuguese were formerly established and Portuguese trades permitted to establish a presence in Macao in 1557 (Fok 1984).

Situated on small peninsula on the western banks of the Pearl River, Nantou was the walled county seat of imperial Xin'an County and Republican China. Archeological and documentary evidence suggest that a city was founded on the site several hundred years before the common era, but it is only after the pacification and sinification of Lingnan (116 bc) that historical records refer to the eastern salt intendent of the Nanhai prefecture, "Dongguan," which was also called "Wucheng." With pearl farming and the cultivation of incense trees, salt farming was one of the important government monopolies along the western banks of the Pearl River, producing government salt for over 1,000 years. In 1573, Dongguan County was split into two counties, Dongguan in the north and Xin'an in the south. Unlike Dongguan, which was located on the newer sands of the Pearl River Delta (and therefore provided the opportunity of land reclamation for cash crops), the topography of Xin'an was characterized by low lying mountains and limited farmland with settlement occuring primarily on coastal plains.

after the establishment of the PRC, the Two Guangs ("liangge Guang")

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Indeed, the relative lack of natural resources in Xin'an (including Hong Kong island) must be understood within the context of regional wealth generated by Guangzhou centered trade. The vibrant pre-Liberation economy of polders and fish ponds, markets and regional trade, temples and large ancestral halls that Helen Siu (1989) described in her ethnography of Xinhui County, for example, was located between a tributary of Xi River on the east and the Tan River in the west on the western side of the delta. Nevertheless, despite a limited capacity for agrarian production, Nantou marked the maritime frontier of Guangzhou, making it the most important military-naval outpost in the region. Foreigners could sail to Macao, but the water route from Macao to Guangzhou was too shallow for the passage of heavy galleons and junks. In order to enter Guangzhou, the large ships had to first pass through the Lantao channel, and then, via the Nantou peninsula sail to Humen, and only then enter harbor at Guangzhou (Fok 1984). Indeed, this is the route that the British ships sailed in the battle against the forces of Lin Zexu during the first Opium War.

This Guangzhou-centered trade was made truly global when China's paper money system collapsed in the middle of the fifteenth century and merchants used silver to compensate for the worthless paper currency in circulation. Increasingly the private sector preferred to accept payment in silver, a trend which spread to the government sector and culminated with the Ming dynasty's "single-lash-of-the-whip" tax

served as military district.
system that specified payment in silver (Flynn and Giraldez 1994). The Ming never minted silver coins, instead introducing a bi-metal system of payments where copper coins were utilized for daily transactions and silver ingots for larger commercial transactions. The mines of Japan and Peru supplied the largest portion of the white metal in exchange for Chinese silks, ceramics, and medicines. However, formal trading relations between China and Japan were severed after Hapan invaded Korea. The prohibition afforded the Portuguese an excellent opportunity. Portuguese galleons carried Guangzhou silk from Macau to Nagasaki to trade for silver until the Tokugawa Emperor expelled Catholics from Japan in 1639 (Wakeman 1975).

Contemporaneously, Spanish galleons transported Peruvian and Mexican silver from Acapulco to Manila to exchange before making the long trip back across the Pacific. From Manila, the silver was loaded onto Chinese junks and then brought to Gangzhou and Ningbo (the major trade entrepôt on the Changjiang river delta before Shanghai), as well as minor ports along the China coast. There were two important implications of China's move to a "silver standard." First, all vassal states made tribute in silver, in addition to other goods, effectively converting all China's trading partners to the silver standard for bilateral trade. The China silver standard thus made it necessary for the country's vassal states to procure silver in order to maintain relations. Second, until roughly 1800, the Spanish mines in Peru and Mexico continued to produce most of the world's new silver, which meant both a
constant supply of silver into China as well as Spanish dominance in early modern trade.

Lingnan identity emerged within the context of international competition for the wealth organized, produced and redistributed at Guangzhou. This competition provided both elites and commoners with means to improve their relative position in a local hierarchy outside a strictly "Chinese" system. By the 1660s when the Dutch had colonized the spice islands and England had acquired Bombay through the political alliance of Charles II and Catherine of Braganza, piracy in the South China seas had reached such proportions that in 1661 the Kangxi Emperor issued an edict of evacuation, requiring the populations of Shandong, Jiangnan, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong within fifty li of the coast to move inland. As a result, the military forces abandoned Nantou, while villagers deserted most of the cultivable and productive land in coastal Xin'an, only returning when the edict was rescinded in 1668-9. The eight year evacuation transformed the political-economic and demographic constitution of Xin'an. Coastal transport, which had integrated the area with Guangzhou had ceased and needed to be restructured; the salt pans did not recover, although there was some limited salt farming; and, in addition to the former villagers and fishermen who returned, a new group of settlers, the Hakka, occupied the eastern portion of Xin'an.

Nonetheless, despite regional differences, all Chinese cities had been built as centers of imperial authority after agriculture had been established in a particular river basin. This meant that unlike
contemporaneous Western cities, which were sites of the disintegration of feudal power and the rise of a new class, in imperial China rural and urban areas were integrated symbolically through the Emperor. The absent Emperor was represented by functionaries who lived with yamen. The yamen building, like the Forbidden City in Beijing, separated the Emperor from what he represented, the world. It was this symbolic whole which was rupture by colonization. The symbolic impact of new patterns of administration since the Opium War re-ordered the relationship between counties and cities in such a way as to suggest a political system suddenly lurching from rural to urban hegemony, but also some of the cultural re-codings of rural areas as stagnant, backward and traditionally Chinese with respect to the advancing, modernizing and therefore increasingly westernized areas. In contradistinction to the territorial imaginaries shaping imperial cartography, Duara argues, "What is novel about modern nationalism is not political self-consciousness, but the world system of nation-states (1996:39)." Central to the nation-state system is the subordination of all territorial based identities to that formed by internationally recognized and maintained boundaries. In Lingnan the history of modern China is read as primarily a process of progressive urbanization, which in turn is linked to the making and un-making of the Sino-British border in southern Xin'an.

The political-economic work of making and unmaking the Sino-British border in South China is conventionally thought to begin in 1842 with Chinese defeat in the Opium War, concomitant with the putative start of Chinese modernization. The Treaty of Nanking abolished
Guangzhou's (Canton) monopoly on foreign trade through two provisions. First was the forced opening of four other treaty ports: Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai and second, the annexation of Hong Kong island by the British Empire (Wakeman 1978). The first five treaty ports opened with the Nanjing Treaty were important entrepôts integrating this system, and it was precisely the wealth generated through these trade routes which the Western powers sought to incorporate into their own systems. In this context, Japanese scholars have recently suggested that Japanese industrialization occurred as a result of competition with China, rather than is commonly assumed, the West. As for the status of a world money, Flynn and Giraldez posit that the conversion of China to a silver currency and with China the country's dependent trading partners marked the beginning of a world money because it was the pacific trade, from Acapulco to Manila, which shaped world trade. On the other hand, "Chinese culture"--identified with pre-Opium war forms--has since obtained the status of a sacred object. The point, of course, is not simply that there were other global formations before the British began pushing opium in South China, but also, in some fundamental way, the making and un-making of the Sino-British border has been as necessary to the ideology of capitalism triumphant as it was to the restructuring of Chinese inter-Asia trade in favor of the British Empire.

Shenzhen Market, a xu not yet a zhen-, became a border town as a result of the Shimonesekei treaty when, after Japean had defeated China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, Great Britain grabbed the Hong Kong New Territories, a not inconsequential bit of booty as the area comprises
93% of the total land area of the SAR. The border was drawn along the Shenzhen River, giving the British access to Shenzhen Bay in the west and Dapeng Bay in the east. However, the British did not limit themselves to these boundaries, eventually establishing customs houses along the both the eastern and western coasts of Bao'an county, effectively occupying the entrance to the Pearl River Delta and Guangzhou (in the northeast) and the maritime route to Chaozhou and Xiamen (in the northwest). At the time, Shenzhen, along with Yuen Long (on the western coast of the New Territories), was the most important market in the southern half of Xin'an county. Commodities and produce from the area were brought to Shenzhen where they were traded, and if necessary, transported to Guangzhou. It is this border town/ market--admittedly not unimportant to local trade (Faure ), but certainly not the most important Chinese city in the area--that has organized origin stories about the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone and the SEZ's backwardness relative to Hong Kong.

Defeat in the first Opium War brought about the gradual recognition that the Western barbarians, pale-skinned ghosts of superior technology and mercenary tendencies, would not, unlike previous invaders, adopt Chinese ways in order to govern the central kingdom. The irrelevance of Chinese ways to the success of western restructuring of the political-economy, resulted in a rupture of something once complete unto itself. In order to insure national survival, China was compelled to adopt Western ways including industry, technology, and international finance. These initially forced and latterly voluntarily
undertaken concessions to a world-order not of Chinese making were labeled *Westernization*, a betrayal and abandonment of Confucian China (Ci Jiwei 1994). Consequently, Qing reformers took as their goal the modernization--both economic and political--of China as the only means to maintain sovereignty. The Reformist principal of "Chinese essence, Western use" referred to the idea that Western technology could be deployed toward the end of preserving Chinese civilization. The process of defensive modernization, however, led to the agonizingly compulsive and eventually self-destructive cultural, political and economic re-evaluation of things Chinese (tradition) and Western (technology). This re-coding was made palatable through a telling mathematics of suppression and re-articulation. Each pair, "Chinese tradition" and "Western modern" was broken down into its constituent parts of "Chinese," "tradition," "Western," and "modern." Then the opposition of Chinese tradition versus Western modern could be made in a way that simultaneously confirmed Chinese (cultural) superiority and acknowledged (Western) technological superiority. "China" was valorized with respect to "the West," while "tradition" was denigrated with respect to "modern," enabling reformers to call for modernization without seeming to denigrate China, indeed making imaginatively possible what had previously been an oxymoron, namely, Modern China. At the same time, this calculus of despair identified two very real, very present enemies--tradition and the West, which eventually came to be mapped as a distinction between rural and urban China.
Colonialism marked an important rupture in the meaning of Chinese cities and urbanization. Previously, cities had served to integrate an agrarian empire, something, which was, if not whole, at least complete unto itself. In this sense, Chinese cities were unambiguously Chinese even when they adopted foreign things. After the Opium war, however, these cities became the site of westernization serving also to integrate China into the world economy. In the built environment, this new social order -- the form of modernization -- appeared as factories and banks, Man-of-Wars in Chinese harbors and railways. Cities were no longer unambiguously Chinese, but at the same time to the Chinese intellegensia they represented the only means for overcoming Western occupation. Rural landscapes, however, remained Chinese insofar as their products rather than their land were the object of Western greed. Rice polders and family temples in the south and wheat fields with low houses in the north continued to define rural Chinese landscapes. It is this seeming continuity with pre-modern times that made the rural areas appear more Chinese than urban landscapes. At the same time, rural areas provided no means for overcoming Western occupation and were therefore defined as weak and backward with respect to the West.

There was a sense then that the symbolic meaning of rural and urban areas in modern China took on the contradictory and ambiguous means of modernization. On the one hand, urban areas were both "western" and the site of Chinese political independence. On the other hand, rural areas were both "Chinese" and the site of Chinese economic dependency. Thus, in the symbolic order of Chinese landscapes, urban
landscapes symbolized potential political and economic strength, at the same time that the source of their strength was the abandonment of Chinese political and economic forms. Rural landscapes symbolized authentic Chineseness at the same time that the source of their authenticity (not modernizing) was the cause of their political and economic subjection.

The rural—in the form of the county (xian)—formally remained the center of Chinese government until July 1921. At that time, the Beiyang government promulgated the City Self-governing Ordinance establishing two categories of city, the Special City and the Ordinary City, but only for internal regulation within the city itself and not as an organ of state administration. Nine years later the Republican government promulgated the City Organization Law designating Cities as the seat of regional administration. In this way, a second line of administration was introduced into Chinese government with Special Cities having equal status to provinces and administratively directly under the central government and Ordinary Cities having equal status to Counties and placed under the administration of Provinces. By the end of 1947, the Republic had 35 provinces, 1 region, 12 national cities (formerly called special cities), 2016 counties, 57 provincial cities (formerly called ordinary cities) 40 administrative departments, 2 administrate bureaus, 93 qi and 175 zong.

During the first years of the PRC, the CCP neither redrew nor renamed extant spatial units. Instead, it changed the meaning of those boundaries by restructuring the bureaucratic hierarchy, which linked
one place to another. A scholar of Chinese administrative history, Liu Junde (Liu 1996:3830) can rightly claims, "Throughout Chinese history, the highest level of government, mid-level government regions made up of counties, and county level government have all undergone re-classification, but when comparing the three, county level government is the most meaningful because whatever changes a regional government underwent, county government remained the basic level of local government and the locus of decision and implementation." In other words, after October 1, 1949, Bao'an County was still called Bao'an county; what had changed was the administrative significance of the category "county."

The Chinese leadership’s decision to build cities in order to attract foreign direct investment reflected the structure of global capitalism at the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, just as their policies of self-reliance had arisen in response to anti-Communist isolation imposed by the western powers after the Korean War. The world system in which the Deng leadership aspired to integrate functioned as an integrated set of hierarchically ranked nation-states that were spatially articulated through a system of correspondingly ranked world cities. Within the first ten years of Reform and Opening the PRC reproduced the geographic inequality necessary to stimulate capitalist growth. Initially, the primary means of creating this inequality was legislation, but by the early 1990s, the increasing economic disparities between open cities and the rest of China was accepted as having an economic dynamism independent of political legislation.
In short, the transformation of a rural border town into a modern city, and the concomitant expansion of urban residence to former peasants, could be read as a successful moment of transcending rural-urban inequality, except for two groups of rural residents: those of Bao'an County and those of the yet-to-be-opened rural areas of the interior.
4. The Shenzhen Spirit

An environment thick with mianzi which must be recognized, negotiated, subverted, and possibly evaded. A space of experimentation. The anthropologist continues her excavation of ruined mianzi and future lives. Indications of narrator unreliability continue to erupt in the text.

Outside the second line in Longgang District, a rusting memory of collectivist modernization loomed above diminishing rice fields. A lesson in how mianzi are made visible only through socialization. An indication, perhaps, of the unreliability of what we think we see.

"Why was there so much money in this area?" my companion, an architect mused. We had driven two hours in order to visit Hakka compounds that had been built during the Qing Dynasty. My friend was active in an effort to preserve traditional architecture and had participated in the conversion of one compound into a museum, evicting the migrants who had occupied the rotting structure when the former residents, “rich Shenzhen peasants” had built individual villas nearby.

“This is a poor area, but less than two hundred years ago there was money to build two story compounds for three or four hundred people."

I interrupted his thoughts and ask.

“That?” he turns around and squints, “Cement factory. Great Leap Forward.”

Not the first time that I would be reminded that my interests in Maoist China ran counter to friends interest in everything but. We were
the same age, thirty-four and had both attended university during the 1980s when post-Cold War hopes seemed to color Sino-American relations, but that afternoon he saw traces of opium smuggling and I saw modernist revolution.¹

A premise: Shenzhen began as a negation of the Cultural Revolution within the context of re-interpreting the legacy of Maoist modernization.

A supposition: If the moral legitimacy of Maoism had derived from the War against Japan (a metonym for a more general anti-colonial impulse) and a commitment to rural change, then the moral authority of Dengism was predicated on appeals to scientifically managed modernization through cooperation with western capitalism, a peculiar re-reading of Mao's dictum to “seek truth from facts” (shíshí qūshí).

Some analysis and a question: In a country where leadership has been traditionally staged moral guidance—indeed, in a country where governance has been legitimated by pedagogical metaphors and the historic development of the state—the re-reading of “seeking truth from facts” implied more than a simple disentangling of the economic and the political. Throughout the Mao years, the alignment of the political and the economic was also explicitly a question of public morality and

¹ Tani Barlow (1997:398) argues, “In Cold War geopolitical schemes, China—the good, “Cultural” China, that is—was assigned the role of the exception, the limit case for natural society.” Indeed, that is the “China” I expected to critique ethnographically.
appropriate cultural expression. This tendency climaxed during the Cultural Revolution, when traditional Chinese culture was equated with classist society and hence became the object of intense and often violent struggle. All signs of past inequality which had (despite roughly fifteen years of socialist education) continued into the present were to be eliminated. Work unit relations were expected to replace family relations as the organizing center of individual life. In fact, both Western and Chinese observers of collectivization have focused on congruencies between work unit hierarchy and family hierarchy, specifically the unit as the institution through which individuals were incorporated into society. The intersection of family role and work unity identities coalesced in the practice of tuixiu dingti, where a parent retired early in order that their child could take their place in the work unit. Members of the same work unit lived more or less similar lives insofar as any signs of social differentiation—ranging from apartment size to hairstyle—might be taken as evidence of a lamentable class background. In the case of the built environment, this orientation resulted in the destruction of traditional architecture, furniture, and art objects as well as the concomitant construction of industrial projects in rural areas.

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2 Richard Smith (1998) analyzes how despite different political goals Chinese leaders of the Qing dynasty, Republican era, and People’s Republic of China deployed similar cultural means to achieve these goals, specifically the rectification of customs. “[C]hinese authorities on the mainland continue to evince a deeply rooted concern with issues of ‘civilization’ and ‘propriety,’ as well as a more modern, Meiji-style sensitivity to the perceptions of outsiders...[1998:1213].”
Given this history, the political organization of urbanization in Shenzhen would be seen not only as performing new social norms, but also as permitting, even encouraging a new social morality. Wither social Reform, if economic Reform necessitated political adjustment of the relationship between the individual and the state?

A possible answer came in the form of the Shekou Industrial Zone. On October 9, 1978, even before the Central Government had approved the establishment of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, a working group of party leaders from the national Ministry of Transportation petitioned to develop ocean shipping and low-capital, small enterprises in Hong Kong and Macao. The agent of this process would be the Ministry's Hong Kong-based China Merchants Bureau. Although the Central Government approved the petition, it was soon ascertained that the price of land in Hong Kong exceeded Mainland finance capital. A counterproposal: .1 to .15 square kilometers could be used to build five assembly plants and factories, which would hire approximately 800 to 1,000 workers. On a tax-free basis, the factories would import material and export labor-added products with the profits divided between Guangdong Province (30%), the foreign investor (30%), and the China Merchants Bureau (40%). After a tour of possible sites, the working committee selected the Shuiwantou Brigade/village, the Shekou

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3 The shift from isolation to strategic cooperation with the capitalist world economy was indicated in the wording of Shekou's guiding principal: "By relying on the interior and facing the world, to establish in Hong Kong and Macau various businesses, bringing together buying and selling, industry and commerce."
Commune, in the western part of Bao'an County as the future site of the Shekou Industrial Zone.

Unlike the Shenzhen billboard which commemorated Deng Xiaoping, the billboard located before the Shekou Industrial Zone on Nanyou Road promoted a specific understanding of the content of Reform. It read: “Time is money, efficiency is life.” In ten characters (shijian shi jingqian, xiaolu shi shengming), Yuan Geng, former Party Secretary and first elected Chief Executive Officer of Shekou summarized the radical edge of Reform and Opening: There is nothing political about the economy and the economy is everything. Shekou was also the inspiration for another, less publicized slogan: “Big Society, little Government” (Da shehui, xiao zhengfu), which was both an economic and a social manifesto, conflating laissez-faire economics and personal freedom. Later, after it became clear that the economic policies of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics exacerbated, rather than ameliorated pre-Reform inequalities without significantly increasing the space of public debate, faith in the curative powers of capitalism would dwindle, to be replaced by cynical resignation. But until then, especially during the 1980's, Shekou sparked on the national horizon.

“When did I first hear about Shenzhen?” Ms. Wang repeated the question, thinking. “I was at University studying economic geography. A friend of mine—you remember, the one who went to America in 1991?—sent me a letter saying there were all kinds of opportunities in the SEZ. A little later, I saw a documentary on TV and then just started noticing all the newspaper articles. Everyone talked about the
“Shenzhen spirit.” I began University a year before my city reformed [1984]. When I graduated in 1987, I didn’t want to be sent to a small office somewhere, so I just came to Shenzhen without notifying the University or my future work unit. After I found a job, then I had to have my dossier (dang’an) transferred to my new unit, but because I had a job in the government, it wasn’t so difficult as it is now.”

She laughed ruefully, but secure, she had bought a Hong Kong identity card in the early 1990s: “Of course, I was worried about my dossier. Without a dossier, no one in neidi would even consider hiring you.”

She offered a cryptic phrase as explanation: “China affairs” (Zhongguo de shì)."

“For example,” she continued when I pressed, “sometimes, your leader would hold on to a dossier out of spite, trapping you forever. Because changing a job wasn’t just between you and the new leader, it was really between your old leader and your new leader: would they let you go?”

Throughout the 1980s a social drama of national importance occurred in Shenzhen: the competition between the Shekou and Shenzhen models of modernization qua urban reform. In order to understand the development of this ten-year drama, one might take the metaphor of “experimental” zone quite seriously and think of Shekou—older, more progressive, and initially the favored model of modernization—as the social hypothesis to be proven against the null hypothesis of Shenzhen—an assertion of the need for economic change
without corresponding political liberalization. Importantly, the experiment had two parts. The first, was the actual construction of Shekou and Shenzhen. What were the two zones respective rates of growth? The second—less evident and more difficult to measure—was the response of the people living in Shenzhen as well as throughout the country. Would Reform and Opening challenge the authority and position of the Chinese Communist Party?⁴

During the 1980s, two possible interpretations of Reform, one economic and one administrative, competed in Shenzhen. Crudely speaking (for of course there were shades of gray), the economic model, represented by Shekou took performance within the global system as its standard. Governance, production, social order—all could be regulated with reference to the world outside. The administrative model, symbolized by Shenzhen emphasized Reform rather than Opening. In this model, the Party would continue to monitor and regulate both exchange with the outside world and the direction of Reform. The orientations of these two different trajectories may be sensed in the rhetoric of reports made by Yuan Geng, Party Secretaries of Shekou and Liang Xiang, Party Secretary of Shenzhen to the Central Government.

⁴ In a retrospective evaluation of Reform and Opening, Hsi-Sheng Ch’I (1991) argues that Deng Xiaoping never intended democratic reforms. Instead, economic rationalization was to be a means of restoring the Party to its role in the 1950s, rather than a transformation of the tripartite relationship between the Party, the state apparatus, and the Chinese people. He identifies the radical faction of Reform with General Party Secretary Hu Yaobang (whose death in April 1989 provoked the commemorative demonstration which escalated to the June 4 crackdown) and Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang.
Yuan Geng, for example, began all reports to higher officials with an account of Shekou’s economic indices, the mianzi of functionary and territory merged.  

“How great is Shekou’s power?” Yuan Geng asked. “[We] may approve projects of up to five million US dollars, and borrow money from foreign banks (SZNJ 1985:61).” Of course, approval of any project and borrowing from foreign banks had once defined Central Government authority.

In contrast to Yuan Geng’s assertion that the economy was all, the first Party Secretary of Shenzhen, Liang Xiang advocated Party-controlled economic liberalization. The Shenzhen Party Secretary’s reports always situated the history of Shenzhen within the continuity of the Party, locating the success of modernization in a rectification of history. In the opening statement of the first Shenzhen Yearbook (1984) for example, Liang Xiang reminded readers: “‘After the establishment of New China, in this area [Shenzhen], as in every other area in the country, the people became the masters of the country. However, due to the influence of ‘leftist’ though, the border area emphasized ‘class struggle as the guiding principle.’ For a long time [the area] neglected economic construction, causing the economy to grow slowly, the people’s welfare not to improve,

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5 This interpretation of Shekou is based on Zhengyi yu Qishi: Yuan Geng zai Shekou Jishi (Debate and Enlightenment: History of Yuan Geng in Shekou) by Ju Tianxiang and interviews in Shekou and Nanshan. Debate and Enlightenment was part of an effort by the Nanshan District Government to reclaim Shekou, both economically and, perhaps even more importantly, symbolically.
the border region to become chaotic, and the serious out-migration of
individuals."

Liang Xiang left Shenzhen in 1986 for an assignment in
Hainan—once the site of internal exile within the Chinese Empire,
suddenly independent of Guangdong Province, and declared a Special
Economic Zone—but his successor, Li Hao not only promoted this more
conservative interpretation of Reform and Opening, he deployed it in
order to construct a city which conformed to overall planning: ""The land
for construction in the SEZ must be under unified supervision by the
state. The land used for construction by any group or individual must be
brought into line with the state plan, particularly the land used for
building housing by peasants and other individual people. If peasants
occupy and build houses at will, the overall urban planning will be in a
mess. Such phenomena should not be treated lightly (SZMUPC 1987:7)."

Juxtaposed, these quotations imply a history (from the necessary
recognition of past mistakes through a new party line to the
establishment of a modern city), but it is a history, to paraphrase Julia
Kristeva, which is not one. Whose mianzi might be a more reliable guide
to action? Both Yuan Geng and Liang Xiang had served in the People's
Liberation Army, approaching power by way of the military. However, a
generation older than Liang Xiang, Yuan Geng had come to the
Revolution before Liberation, eventually and fatefully serving under Liu
Shaoqi and, by extension, Deng Xiaoping—a direct link to the more
radical Reform group. Nonetheless, Liang Xiang was the titular head of the administrative territory: would that official status be more important than the strength of Yuan Geng’s background? At stake in Shenzhen was not the political system as such, but rather the form of urbanization which might be measured through technological advance and per capita income, making Reform a re-ordering of economic priorities without questioning the structure of the relationship between government and the governed. Up until the Tian’anmen crackdown in 1989, the economic model seemed ascendant. In 1984, the Party Secretary of the Shekou Industrial Zone, Yuan Geng (rather than the Shenzhen Party Secretary, Liang Xiang) was selected as Gu Mu’s representative to the newly opened coastal cities, bringing the winds of radical Reform to China’s coastal cities. However, after Tian’anmen, the administrative model became the national and municipal archetype of Reform, a gesture which limited civic self-expression to images of the construction of Shenzhen—the chuang spirit. Political scientists have described the post-Tian’anmen shift as a movement from Deng Xiaoping’s to Chen Yun’s definition of economic liberalization. In Shenzhen, this shift was expressed as a changed mission. Once built to reform the nation, Shenzhen became

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6 During the early 1950s, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping controlled the Party, Mao Zedong controlled the People’s Liberation army, Zhou Enlai the State Council and foreign ministry, and Kang Sheng controlled security. A map that already suggests policy and loyalty. Yuan Geng had allied himself with the bureaucracy and the Party, while Liang Xiang came to power through the PLA during the Cultural Revolution. A follower of Mao.
simply a city under construction. This then the space, in which migrants and drifters became Shenzheners.

If individual citizens had been incorporated into the state apparatus by way of the work unit, then leaders operated as the “face” of ministries—the institutional form of national policy. Throughout the early years of Reform, bureau heads used their ministries both to shape the content of economic liberalization and to capitalize state resources in the creation of an explicitly capitalist class. One is struck by the contradictory impulses informing Reform initiatives. On the one hand, Reform did liberate individuals from absolute dependency on the work unit, introducing greater freedom within relations of power. On the other hand, the process of liberalization, while decreasing the reach of the central authority, strengthened the relative power of local functionaries over collective resources.

This pattern of agency was characteristic of Yuan Geng’s mianzi in two senses. First, although Yuan Geng approached friends in order to achieve particular goals, he always represented the Shekou industrial zone and had his friends represent their agencies in handling the problem. Moreover, during the early years, construction in Shekou was organized along traditional lines with the assignment of labor to the area. Within the Ministry of Transportation, for example, the Fourth Air Engineering Bureau was assigned to design and build the basic infrastructure for the Industrial Zone. Under the planned economy it was the Ministry providing the services that paid for the construction, so that the Ministry of Transportation built the Industrial Zone which Yuan
Geng would eventually incorporate as a company. Initial investment thus paid for by the State, despite the fact that the site was to be used by capitalists (domestic and foreign). In addition, long distance telephone lines were put in by a Hong Kong company at the request of Jiang Zemin. However, Yuan Geng’s patron in the Politburo was Gu Mu, who actively pursued Deng Xiaoping’s vision of reform. At each stage of reform, Yuan Geng petitioned Gu Mu for a special exemption. In this, Yuan Geng’s administration conformed to what has been identified as traditional CCP political guanxi and behavior.

Second, within his own bureau, the Shekou Industrial Zone, Yuan Geng redefined political organization as economic necessity in order to create as space within the administrative hierarchy which was independent of CCP political norms, especially the job assignment system (fenpeij). In 1980, with the approval of Gu Mu, Yuan Geng began recruiting employees rather than requesting the Transportation Bureau to assign employees. In contrast to standard work unit practice of accepting workers assigned by the Ministry of Transportation, Yuan Geng implemented educational standards, tests and interviews in order to select cadres in Shekou. This measure disrupted the hierarchy of hukou in two, contradictory ways. On the one hand, individual accomplishment rather than political ideology became the standard for transfer to Shekou. This emphasis on merit rather than politics enabled individuals to capitalize on their education, providing a space of agency

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7 Recent Chinese publications document a massive transfer of public
that had been previously denied. Here it is important to stress the parallels with the capitalization of property; in early Reform state provided resources became the basis for capitalist production outside of capitalist competition. On the other hand, it placed a large measure of social control directly in the hands of the bureau chief. Where *hukou* assignments had formerly served the interests of the state, they could now be deployed by individual bureau chiefs in their interests. In short, decentralization of political authority increased the relative freedom of bureau heads but did not decrease the role of some part of the state apparatus in the redistribution of collective resources.

Two years later, Yuan Geng extended reform to leadership. In 1983, the Management Committee of the Shekou Industrial Zone was formed and participation was based on elections. All Shekou cadres were eligible to vote and to be selected for the Committee, which would be elected every two years. Contemporaneously, Yuan Geng suspended cadre promotions while in Shekou. This meant that a cadre in Shekou could not transfer their status to another bureau, even as the security of leadership positions was effectively undermined. Yuan Geng had hoped to make elections for political positions universal, but the Central Government balked at this measure. In a fascinating and instructive counter move, Shekou was incorporated and the new eleven member Board of Directors would be selected by the China Merchants Bureau (four seats) and the remaining seven seats to be elected by company capital to private individuals during the late 1980s and early 1990s.
employees. The re-organization introduced a proto-form of coalition politics into the governance of Shekou (although all candidates were Party members). This aspect of Yuan Geng's administration which gave rise to the expression "Big society, little government" (Da shehui, xiao zhengfu) that first circulated in Shekou, but which throughout the 1980s became a model of economic development. Importantly, the economic had come to stand for "society" in attempts to re-configure the relationship between the state apparatus and client-citizens.

Guiding these economic measures was a form of social eugenics. Yuan Geng believed that the low quality of Chinese products could be directly attributed to the kinds of people produced by the Communist system.

For Yuan Geng reforming the system meant specifically challenging the complacency engendered by the communist system in order to create workers responsive to the market and leaders responsive to their constituency. His efforts in this direction were most clearly manifest in his organization of propaganda work within Shekou. Shekou had a Office of Propoganda and associated publications, the most important of which was the Shekou Tongbao. Both the Office of Propaganda (chu level) and the Shekou Tongbao became sites where Yuan Geng's understanding of the separation between economic society and political administration played out. In government, he had made the political "economic" in order to create a different space, in cultural production, he made "culture" technocratic work which did not need ideological oversight. In
both cases, he interpreted Reform with respect to Hong Kong, unmaking processes of the Cultural Revolution.

The first head of the Shekou Propaganda Office was Zhou Weimin. Zhou Weimin had been one of the Standing Committee Members of the National Communist Party Youth League. After the fall of Hua Guobang and the Gang of Four, he was recognized as a hero of the 1976 Tian'anmen movement to commererate the death of Zhou Enlai. At the time, he also participated in the Democracy Wall Movement, which led to his incarceration as a political prisoner. After his release from prison in 1978, Zhou Weimin, although rehabilitated, remained outside the system without a job. His wife lived in Gansu and was unable to transfer her hukou to Beijing where Zhou Weimin lived. A friend recommended him to Yuan Geng for the position of Section Chief of the Shekou Propaganda Office. After the interview, Yuan Geng worked to have both Zhou Weimin and his wife transfered to Shekou. Indeed, in some ways transferring Zhou Weimin was more difficult than obtaining special permission for using Hong Kong long distance telephone lines. Guangdong Province expressed concern that Zhou Weimin still seemed pro-democracy and in need of thought work, while no one in the Central Government seemed willing to take responsibility for Zhou Weimin. The decision to allow Yuan Geng to transfer Zhou Weimin was eventually made by Hu Yaobang, an indication that the social consequences of reform were still debated by the Central Standing Committee.

In 1985, the Shekou Tongxunbao editorial department received an essay critical of Yuan Geng and the development of Shekou. The essay
was a response to Yuan Geng's challenge for more critical debate about issues in Shekou in conjunction with the election process. The letter itself began by complimenting Yuan Geng's political work in Shekou, but then criticized the economic development of the industrial zone, bringing the terms of the debate to the site that Yuan Geng himself had established a measure of independence from the party. Specifically, the essay criticized business practices in Shekou, including increasing bureaucratization of establishing business, the low quality of the foreign companies in Shekou (most were polluting and/or labor intensive manufacturing), salary distribution which did not reflect efficiency or contribution, and landuse planning in the face of an exploding population.

This situation was presented as a re-interpretation of Yuan Geng's claim that "time is money, and efficiency is life": "Efficiency is life, and efficiency comes from management (guanli). If industrial zone management continues to drag, then it will loose its vitality (Ju 1998:223-4)." The editorial board brought the letter to Yuan Geng three times in order to have publication approved. Yuan Geng not only approved the letter, he indicated that in the future anything that was not critical of the Party or its political line could be published and that publication did not require outside approval. Afterall, Yuan Geng reasoned that the editors were professionals who knew their jobs. This openness resulted in the Shekou Tongxunbao "News Salon," an open forum for debating the issues of democracy and legal system in Shekou. These
debates were summarized and published in the newspaper in order to bring the issues to a wider audience.

Throughout the 1980s, Shekou experimented with both structural and cultural reform. Nevertheless, at the national level, this experimentation was represented within the terms set by Deng Xiaoping, namely that the economic development of the nation was synonymous with modernization. The contradiction between national representation and local practice became apparent in January 1988 when three representatives of the National Youth Thought Education Research Center, Qu Su, Li Yanjie, and Peng Qingyi came on an inspection tour of Shenzhen and Shekou. As part of their tour of Shekou, the representatives were invited to speak to a group of approximately seventy youths who were migrant workers, rather than cadres. The program began with each of the guests expressing his views on Shekou and Shekou youth. These comments focused on the speed at which Shekou was developing as well as the contribution of migrant youths to the modernization of the nation. These rather bland and perfunctory compliments were, from the point of view of the visitors, unexpectedly criticized by the Shekou participants as simply repeating cliches published in the media.

The Shekou youths seemed less interested in hearing compliments than (1) hearing what people in the interior thought about Shekou and (2) forcing the leaders to recognize actual working conditions in Shekou. These criticisms crystallized around two very different interpretations of the figure of "gold diggers." The thought work representatives
maintained that most migrants were not simply gold diggers, but were actually expressing their patriotism by working in the Industrial Zone. Shekou participants, on the other hand, claimed not only that had they gone to Shekou for the money, but also that, just like gold diggers in the American West, their individual motivations were unimportant to the social result. A modern society emerged in the American West as a result of the Gold Rush, which provided the capital for modernization. Likewise, Shekou was built not because of the patriotism of individual youths, but because in working for money they were participating in projects that resulted in the construction of a modern society. Shekou youths emphasized that outside of the money, there was no compensation for working and encouraged the representatives to tour construction site shanties and factory dormitories in order to see how Shekou youth actually lived. Their experience had taught them that patriotism was expressed in the concrete and individualized practice of earning money.

Although the actual topic of the debate was critical of Shekou, the fact that the discussion escalated into a debate was interpreted as a direct and misplaced challenge to the authority of the guest speakers. Guo Haiyan, departmental head of the Foreign Youth Research Institute at Beijing Normal University, had accompanied Qu Su, Li Yanjie, and Peng Qingyi on the tour of Shenzhen. He analyzed the meeting in terms of pedagogical norms: Qu Su, Li Yanjie, and Peng Qingyi were called "teachers" and the Shekou youths cast as disrespectful students. In this troping, questions—no matter how phrased—reflected the dissolution of
ordered society, the malevolent transformation of "sincere discussion," to use Guo Haiyan's words. Significantly, Guo Haiyan named the participants who he felt had disrupted the meeting. This analysis was then submitted to the National Youth Thought Education Center and published in a Youth Newspaper. Shekou leaders, many of whom had not been present at the meeting, interpreted this analysis as "information" (caitian), which could be included in a youth's dossier and prevent future promotions. The Shekou Tongxunbao immediately published an editorial, by explaining that the new tradition of free discussion in Shekou meant that youths were no longer satisfied with outdated pedagogical models. The newspaper implied that debate rather than pedagogy should be the model of public meetings, implicitly challenging the relevance of youth thought work.

The "Shekou Torment" came to crisis when Zeng Xianbin, an editor at Renmin Ribao, interviewed the Qu Su, Li Yanjie, Peng Qingyi and Guo Haiyan, as well as representatives from Shekou about the meeting.\(^8\) Zeng Xianbin asked everyone the same questions and then juxtaposed their answers in order to highlight the diversity of opinions about the direction of Reform. This organization interrogated the changing meanings of gold-digging and respect in Reform, rather than the class issues which had originally informed the youths comments. Yuan Geng

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\(^8\) News, like every other aspect of society is hierarchically ranked with respected to the state apparatus. Consequently, news published in Shenzhen but not Guangdong newspapers is understood to be relevant in Shenzhen but not the province. Likewise, news published in the
distinguished himself from the other interviewees by ignoring the content of the meeting altogether. Instead he addressed the structure of the meeting. First, Yuan Geng confirmed that in Shekou, where democratic discussion was becoming common, pedagogy as a model of public discourse had no market among youths. Second, he stressed that Shekou did not enforce "language crimes." Even if the youths said incorrect things, the Chinese Constitution gave all Chinese citizens the right to have different opinions. As a leader in Shekou it was his responsibility to provide such an environment rather than to enforce a correct line of thought.

Unlike the hiring of Zhou Weimin, which had taken place through private channels, the Shekou Torment occurred in the most important national newspaper, legitimating public debate about the nature and direction of Reform. *Renmin Ribao* received letters from all over the country in response to this article. In the main, these letters debated Yuan Geng's response, either supporting or condemning his articulation of the problem as a question of public form rather than as a debate over the actual content of the debate. To Yuan Geng supporters, Reform implied the new norms of public debate outside considerations of ideological orthodoxy. By extension, the end of ideological orthodoxy also implied a reconfiguration of traditional pedagogy both as a practice and as a model of public discourse. In contrast, to Yuan Geng detractors, Reform implied the establishment of a new orthodoxy which could be

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national newspaper, *Renmin Ribao* is considered to most accurately
used to evaluate contemporary practices. Qu Su, Li Yanjie, Peng Qingyi and even Guo Haiyan represented efforts to establish this new order. In retrospect, there were claims that the Shekou Torment was a prequel to the Tian'anmen crackdown. However, it was the Tian'anmen crackdown which changed the terms of Reform in Shekou. In 1990, there was a governmental restructuring which brought Shekou directly into the Municipal Government as a neighborhood (banshichu) of Nanshan District. After Tian'anmen, Shenzhen, rather than Shekou, became the symbol of Reform.\footnote{During the 1980s, first Hu Yaobang and then Zhao Ziyang was the official leader of Reform, while a “retired” Deng Xiaoping continued to organize policy. Hu Yaobang who was more radical than Deng Xiaoping with respect to corruption and the retirement of cadres, was forced into early retirement. He was replaced by Zhao Zeyang who had an even bolder vision of economic Reform and demands for social reform accelerated under his leadership. . The Tian'anmen protests began as a commemoration of the death of Hu Yaobang. Then Premier Li Peng followed the more conservative impulses of Chen Yun to centralize key sectors of the economy. This political history has been erased from current political discourse in the PRC. In an analogous manner, Shekou has been purged from official histories of Shenzhen, except as a footnote or aside.}

In spring 1996, a young student graciously accompanied me to view Shekou. Her parents were early migrants and had made their fortune operating a toy assembly shop, which occupied two floors in a first-generation changfang. In fact, the family had earned enough money to send their daughter to a Switzerland Hotel Management School, paying exorbitant rates to obtain a passport and visa. Xiao Guo had sought me out in order to learn about life abroad.
As we strolled the promenade extending from the coastline into the bay, Xiao Guo pointed, “That’s Ocean World (Haishang Shijie).”

I looked at the landlocked luxury ship. “It used to float,” Xiao Guo explained, “it was actually one of the first nightclubs in Shekou and Deng Xiaoping visited in 1984. Lately they’ve been filling in the bay.”

The promenade offered a stunning view of Nanshan Mountain and the coastline architecture. In addition to the Nanhai Hotel, Shekou’s first five-star hotel, a development of small private villas had been built on the beach. I asked Xiao Guo how the homeowners felt about the demise of their beach.

She laughed, “Have you heard the joke about Shekou real estate? Every year they sell a new strip of beachfront property. They’re going to keep filling and selling until they reach Hong Kong on the other side of the bay.”

In contrast to the Shekou model of development, the Shenzhen model was highly technocratic, with an emphasis on administration by experts. The centerpiece of this ideology was the Shenzhen plan. Indeed, by the mid 1980s, Shenzhen planners had won numerous national awards. Nevertheless, Shenzhen was constantly described as manifesting the problems characteristic of "early capitalism," including exploitative wages, rampant crime and prostitution, and the sudden emergence of extremely wealthy capitalists. Not only Shekou, but also the Overseas Chinese Town and Shenzhen Science and Technology Park were planned by the respective investors. Bao’an County remained unplanned with the result that each village and market level Buji, which
is the second Chinese Station on Guangzhou-Kowloon Railway but located on the Bao'an side of the Second line, simply erupted. Thus, Ms. Chen, one of the more influential urban planners at Shenzhen University bristled when I suggested that Shenzhen seemed unplanned. In this environment, the right to govern was justified through skill—specifically the ability to administer the development of a modern city.

"Downtown we have a plan," she explained, "but we can't prevent investors from jumping over our plan and building in villages."

Mr. Huang, further from the center in the Nanshan District bureau of development, agreed: "You see all these mountains around us? If an investor puts in temporary generator and digs a well in one of the valleys, who will know? I'm too busy to investigate every nook and cranny. Anyway," he concluded, more tolerant of village initiative than Municipal planners, "villagers have to live (mosheng), too. Only ten years ago nobody wanted this land. If somebody invested a little, we thought it was a good thing."

"Our plan is very modern," Ms. Chen continued. "Shenzhen is one of the cleanest cities in China. We have the best roads, residents have the highest per capita income in China, and our schools all teach English starting in elementary school. I've heard that one out of every seven residents is on the internet (shangwang)."

Mr. Zhang, a sixty-three year old urban planner snorted.

"Early urban design in the SEZ was a case of "groping rocks to cross the river" (mozhe shitou guo he)," he said. "Nothing more, nothing
less. All you have to do is look at the population growth estimates to realize nobody knew how quickly Shenzhen would develop."

The image neatly undermined the official portrayal of the role of urban planning in Shenzhen and provoked associative speculation about the Shenzhen River itself as a barrier between socialism and capitalism. Unlike Shekou capitalists who were represented as knowing how to urbanize, how to make money, in short, how to be internationally modern, Shenzhen leaders appeared hesitant and unsure, grooping blindly in awkward passage from Shenzhen to Hong Kong. During the ascendancy of Shekou as a model of development, for example, complaints that SEZ leaders had been told to design a "special zone" and instead produced a city circulated in both Guangzhou and Beijing. Even more than Shekou, Shenzhen had export processing zone roots. In 1978, construction of the Bao'an Export Area (chukou jidi) began in Wenjindu, which the Foreign Trade Ministry had controlled since the 1950s when various provinces husbanded pigs, cattle and firecrackers for eventual sale in Hong Kong. Wenjindu foreign trade was determined by the central plan. Each year, the Ministry determined the quantity of products that each province could sell as well as the allocation of foreign currency earned through this trade. In 1978, as part of Reform, the scale of this traded expanded to include more cultivation of cash crops for export and tentative forays into tourism, extending foreign trading rights to Bao'an collectives. Moreover, these sales included more competition between producers. At the same time, temporary corrugated
steel factories had leapt across the border and crude assembling had begun.

The situation changed in 1980 when Bao'an County was designated Shenzhen Municipality, radically shifting the scope and orientation of production in Wenchang. Initially, all of Bao'an County (2,020 square kilometers) was to be developed, but by 1981 the borders for the second line had been determined and by 1983, Shenzhen Municipality had two parts, the SEZ and Bao'an County. In addition to permitting industrialization in the area, redesignation also entailed the emplacement of an urban apparatus to govern what was still an agrarian area, effectively making urbanization the central administrative project. More specifically, Shenzhen was to be planned as a mode for integrating economically the PRC into the world economy. This mission dovetailed with the reassertion of urban planning in the PRC. Although the scissors policy had institutionalized the systematic transfer of agrarian surplus into hierarchically ranked cities, during the Cultural Revolution, the State urban planning apparatus stopped functioning. Consequently, urban planning in Shenzhen has incorporated urban strategies from the Cultural Revolution, capitalist strategies from export processing zones, in addition to changing urban standards within the PRC, only stabilizing in 1986 with the promulgation of the first Overall Urban Plan for the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone.

After two years of haphazard experiments the Shenzhen staged the first Reform All China Planning Committee, inviting consultants from Guangdong, Xinan, Shanghai, Hube, the Sixth Machine Bureau (part of
the PLA's electronics production apparatus), and the Wuhan Smelting bureau to design the Shenzhen SEZ. They planned a fifty square kilometer area that would have a population of 500,000 by the year 1990. The group that met this first time was not enthusiastic. In 1973, cities had begun re-establishing urban planning bureaus but at that time there were only 700 planners in the country, 16% of the total in 1960.\(^\text{10}\)

Moreover education had been concentrated in a few institutes: Qinghua (Beijing), Tongji University (Shanghai), Tianjin University, and Chongqing University as well as at provincial institutes. Most of these were located

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\(^{10}\) In March 1966, the Southwest Section of the Central Politburo (Xi'nan ju) opened a conference on third line (sanzhan) development. Third line development had two purposes: (1) to locate Chinese manufacturing in areas that would be safe from foreign invasion and (2) to ameliorate the inequalities between rural and urban areas. As a result of this policy shift some provinces no longer financed urban construction while from 1966 until 1971 the organs for urban construction were dismantled and industrialization projects placed in the poorest areas of the country. At the recommendation of Zhou Enlai, the Construction troops were also formed in 1966. They were a select group of engineers and construction workers within the PLA. During the Cultural Revolution they replaced the no longer functioning organs of urban construction, eventually rebuilding Tangshan city after the 1976 earthquake. They were based primarily in the industrial Northeast, but also in each of the regional centers. However, despite the success of the Construction Troops (from 1966 until 1982 when they were disbanded they grew tenfold: 50,000 to approximately 500,000), by the early 1970s it had become clear that repairing cities was not enough. In June 1973, the Urban Construction Research Institute was established to begin the work of planning water supply and traffic circulation. Several months later, cities themselves began re-activating local planning bureaus. However, it was only after the Third Plenum that cities were again placed at the center of national policy. Gu Mu summarized the Central Government's new view on cities in four points: (1) Cities important part of national economy; (2) Urban planning therefore important to meeting national goals for economic development; (3) In 1979, all cities with a population of half a million or higher, as well as the forty-nine polluted cities, were required to invested annually five percent of municipal GNP in urban construction; and (4) The Central Government would begin investing in urban housing.

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in the northeast industrial core. After the conference, however, few of the planners and architects stayed in Shenzhen. Those who had participated in the conference as representatives of China's major cities were not willing to leave their institutions for what appeared to be years of unrewarded, rural work. They viewed the Shenzhen experiment itself as problematic because the Central government would not fund projects. Architects reasoned that Shenzhen could not guarantee that projects would be built, while they would be able to participate in the reconstruction of newly valorized cities.

Those architects and planners who were willing to come to Shenzhen were also responding to their place within the State apparatus and understanding of how professional opportunity was distributed across this structure. Crudely speaking, they had been lured by the possibility of designing skyscrapers. These pathbreakers had, by and large, been stuck mid-level bureaus and medium-sized cities, which designed factories and mass housing for their respective bureaus and municipalities. Like large-city architects, medium-city architects defined their profession in terms of the level of technology needed to construct a building. However, unlike large-city architects, medium-city architects had little opportunity to use their education to build state-of-

11 Throughout the 1980s, urban planning was still determined by municipal ranking. Medium sized cities had architects who had been trained in sky-scraper design, but never built anything over eight stories high. A young architect explained that his father was an architect in Chongqing and taught at the University architecture department, one of the few in the country. However, it was the son, in Shenzhen, who first designed a twenty story building.
the-art buildings. Mid-level bureaus, on the other hand, included bureaus in the heavy industry ministries of Coal and Metal Mining, and light industries such as electronics. Coal and metal mining had been located in peripheral regions that most architects wished to escape, while light industries had been systematically underdeveloped during the Central Plan. These groups viewed Shenzhen as an opportunity to trade one hardship case for a hardship case which might result in a transfer to a city where interesting architecture was practiced. The final group of pathbreaking architects and designers were made up of Guangdong cadres who had been assigned "North" (of Guangdong). Indeed, until the establishment of the Shenzhen University School of Architecture in 1983 (staffed primarily by Qinghua graduates) Guangdong residents who wanted to study architecture had to leave the province. Moreover, once graduated, they rarely returned to Guangdong because of the low ranking of Guangdong cities within the central plan.

12Placement in a high-ranking city or high-level bureau automatically made those architects higher ranking cadres. In addition to opportunities to build more technologically advanced buildings, they also had higher salaries and, as part of the study abroad trips sponsored by the Central Government during the early 1980s, opportunities to study the technologically most advanced buildings in Japan, Western Europe and the United States.

13Guangdong difference is two-fold. On the one hand, Guangdong is culturally different from the north of China. On the other hand, these cultural differences reinforce differences that came about institutionally because of the fact that Guangdong was liberated after the declaration of the People's Republic of China. Communist policies were always delayed in Guangdong, while northerner cadres suspected Guangdong people of Nationalist tendencies.
As a result of Shenzhen’s failure to attract a critical number of architects and skilled workers, from the end of 1979 until September 1983, an estimated 20,000 construction troops built the basic infrastructure of the SEZ. As during the Cultural Revolution when municipalities lacked the resources to perform even routine urban maintenance, the construction troops put in roads, bridges, water, sewage, flood production, and electricity, concentrating in the area from Wenjindu to Luohu/Shangbu, now called "Downtown." The original downtown, most of which was razed during the 1990s real estate boom, consisted of the Luohu railway station and the Bagualing and Shangbu Industrial Zones. By 1983-4, Shenzhen began attracting more investment capital and construction was transformed into a capitalist enterprise. In order to provide for the construction troops as well as take advantage of the construction market, the Shenzhen Municipal incorporated the construction troops into the government as seven construction companies. These new companies then began bidding against Hong Kong construction firms as well as construction bureaus from other provinces for building projects in Shenzhen. Thus, the overt military symbolization of both production and border space in Shenzhen

14 The division of the SEZ into a "downtown" and Nantou is reproduced on all city maps where downtown is the front of the map and Nantou is on the back. As we will see in chapter four, "downtown" has acquired the coding of urban and developed with respect to Nantou, which is thought of as "suburban."
ended as the construction troops who first built the bridges linking Shenzhen and Hong Kong became civilians.15

The leadership of this early construction was concentrated in the hands of three individuals: Mayor Liang Xiang, and vice-Mayors Zhou Ding and Luo Changren. Like Yuan Geng, Liang Xiang had a military background, but unlike Yuan Geng, Liang Xiang understood Reform as the implementation of policy rather than as the re-structuring of the state apparatus. The mayorship of Shenzhen was thus an administrative stepping stone to a higher post and until his transfer to the Hainan Special Economic Zone in 1986, Liang Xiang staged leadership as benevolent support. He visited construction sites hosted banquets for visiting investors. He also became the honorary chair of the Nanyou Corporation, which in 1984 expropriated most of the Nantou peninsula, excepting Shekou and extant villages. Nanyou intended to develop Nantou in the way that the China Merchants Bureau had developed Shekou. However, Nantou had neither maritime nor land connections to Hong Kong, which meant that the area could not be developed until after roads were put in place. Only in the 1990s, did the state apparatus begin construction, primarily real estate development, in Nantou. The result of Liang Xiang's leadership style was that the actual construction of Shenzhen was left to Zhou Ding and Luo Changren, who were

15 This is not to claim that the military is not symbolically important. But rather that production in Shenzhen began as an attempt to demilitarize production.
responsible for raising capital and the urban design of Shenzhen, respectively.\footnote{Thoroughly the 1980s, Yuan Geng actively competed with Liang Xiang in order to produce an alternative model of reform. After Tian'anmen, Yuan Geng ruefully commented that one of the mistakes of his administration was that he hadn't made good relations with Shenzhen.}

Luo Renchang was a Shanghai architect who came to his post by way of Guangzhou. He had been trained in modernist architecture and planning, envisioning Shenzhen in terms of wide streets, skyscrapers and park areas. The division of Shenzhen into zones and circulation conformed to the understanding of modern architecture advocated by Le Corbusier and the CIAM convention as did Luo Renchang's emphasis on technocratic management of urban construction.\footnote{Modernist architecture and planning one of the main topics of the Shenzhen University architecture curriculum.} Luo Renchang attempted to bring both material and spiritual civilization into the Shenzhen plan, building a university (1983) and a state-of-the-art theater (1984) before Shenzhen had professors and art troupes. Nevertheless, it was not until the mid 1980s that urbanization became a recognized value in Shenzhen (as opposed to an administrative category that legalized industrialization.) This lack of agreement over what Shenzhen should be was compounded by the independent development of local villages (Chapter 3) and the prominence of Shekou as an export processing zone. Only after the Tian'anmen crackdown did the technocratic ways of Shenzhen emerge triumphant. Indeed, when Deng
Xiaoping came to Shenzhen in 1992, he provoked the real estate boom which led to the construction of Diwang.
5. Becoming a Shenzhener

The anthropologist grapples with conjoining official representations of Shenzhen life with conversations about and observations of the experience of becoming a Shenzhener. The complexity of her interpretive task necessitates a fictive turn and historical exegesis.

After several months in Shenzhen, I learned that "pathbreaking (chuang)" described an individual's efforts to conquer the SEZ. In practice, "pathbreaking Shenzhen" (chuang Shenzhen) referred to the accomplishment of the Shenzhen dream: legal residence, a good job, and a family.¹ This phrase marked the (re)description of Reform and Opening in the North China vocabulary of common people who left families and birthplaces to improve their standing in the world. In this sense, "pathbreaking" indicated a non-Party understanding of the subject positions that had emerged during the Deng years whereby individuals suddenly had opportunities to improve the material conditions of their families (rather than social collectives). These representations did not, however, include locals because pathbreaking was specifically an act of migration, a movement from one place to another. Chuang also implied a particular form of agency, a re-making of a hostile world. In contradistinction to Shenzheners and drifters, locals were often

¹The phrase "Shenzhen Dream" (Shenzhen meng) was often used with reference to the American Dream in a popular discussion about the similarities and differences between Euro-American immigration to the western United States and Northern Chinese immigration to Shenzhen.
characterized as the undeserving recipients of good fortune, rather than as pathbreakers who had earned their wealth.

Chuang further distinguished between Shenzheners and locals linguistically and historically, validating northern Chinese experience vis-à-vis southern Chinese experience. The Mandarin chuang implied a charging out and was most often used to refer to the experience of Northerners coming South. More specifically, the historic referent of chuang was Manchuria, located northeast of the Great Wall. During the first half of the Qing dynasty, the imperial family forbade Han migration past the Great Wall in order to preserve their homeland. However, by the 1830s, once it was clear that the Manchus would remain in Beijing, landless peasants from Shandong, Hebei and Henan began "pathbreaking the eastern gate" (chuang dongguan). These pathbreakers were able to occupy farmland in the relatively sparsely populated northeast. South China, in general, and Xin'an/Bao'an in particular, also had a history of economically motivated peasant outmigration. In Cantonese the expression lo sekai (a gathering of the world to oneself) had described the South China Diaspora and the remittances, which supported rural lives.² Northerners who could speak Cantonese

² As the Beijing economists of Chapter 2 noted Shenzhen/Bao'an was Qiaoxiang, an Overseas Chinese hometown. In fact, the Diaspora has long shaped Bao'an society in ways very different from northern experience. During land reform, for example, the administrative categories of "landlords" (dizhi), "rich peasants" (funong), "middle peasants" (zhongnong), and "poor peasants" (pinrong) were difficult to apply because a large number of the "middle peasants" were in fact the relatives of Overseas Chinese who were supported by remittances and rents.
frequently pointed to the different worldviews implied by the Mandarin *chuang* and the Cantonese *lo*, claiming that *chuang* implied world making where *lo* was simply an exersize in capital accumulation.

In the official vocabulary, "pathbreaking" was used to describe the policies of Reform and Opening themselves, as in the expression "pathbreaking the world" (*chuang shijie*). *Chuang* was, thus, also a reference to the SEZ’s economic, political, and cultural standing (usually represented vis-à-vis that of metropolitan cities). In this context of negotiation between the official State culture and local experience, "Pathbreaking" was the name of a sculpture dominating the plaza of the Shenzhen Museum. This statue represented all the courageous pathbreakers—individual, collective, and official—who had helped to make the Shenzhen SEZ both a symbol of Reform China. Designed in 1993 for the All China Open Cities Reform and Opening Successes Exhibition, the sculpture embodied a reinterpretation of the character *chuang* (a horse charging through a gate), placing the creative spirit of humanity at the threshold of a new world. Eyes fixed on the road before him, legs powerfully braced, arms flexed in anticipation, and fingers gripping the iron frame of the door that for too long isolated China from the world, the central figure of the statue fearlessly pioneered a new China.

In addition to excluding locals from Shenzhen civic identity, the emphasis on individual accomplishment rather than collective effort was important to managing the class antagonisms between Shenzheners and drifters. Like Shenzheners, drifters could claim they were pathbreaking
Shenzhen because like the American Dream, pathbreaking foregrounded individual successes as the criteria for evaluating social worth. According to the cultural logic of  
chuant Shenzhen, the successful transformation of the self into a Shenzhener (much like the rags to riches myth of becoming American) manifested the individual qualities necessary for a new age. In other words, any Chinese citizen could pathbreak Shenzhen, but not everyone would be able to become a Shenzhener. At the same time, municipal success was coded within the rhetoric of nationalism, bringing the individual Shenzhener into the larger narrative of Reform and Opening. During the 1992 Southern Tour, for example, Deng Xiaoping provided three definitions of chuang: (1) to open the national door to the world/outside; (2) to break the shackles of the traditional system, aggressively reforming and creating a new system, and; (3) to break out of the cage of leftist thought and walk the road of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" (Wang 1994). Consequently, the process of self-reinvention which defined chuang Shenzhen also signified—despite any individual recognition of conflicts between personal and State interests—commitment to the project of Reform and Opening.

This tendency to deploy the municipal subject, "Shenzhener", in order to suture individual action and national success was explicitly rendered in the second statue which occupied the museum plaza, "City Emblem." "City Emblem" commemorated the Shenzhen Economic Zone Successes Exhibition on display in the museum from October 1995
through December 1997. Also known as the "City of the Roc" (Pengcheng), this statue depicted an iron bird, its majestic wings extended for a flight of 10,000 miles, to symbolize Shenzhen. Beneath the giant bird, variously positioned on bamboo scaffolding, were smaller versions of the pathbreaking spirit: individual construction workers represented as building the platform from which the roc would soar. The placement of the two statues in the plaza of the Shenzhen Museum indicated the ideological importance of "Pathbreaking" and "City Emblem" in the official Shenzhen cultural identity. As of 1998, the museum was still the political and cultural center of the SEZ: the lot to its west was occupied by the municipal government building, while the main museum entrance fronted Shenzhen Road Central, the primary artery connecting all three districts within the SEZ. United by location, by their common designer, Zheng Jianping, and by their part in respective exhibitions celebrating the successes of Reform and Opening, "Pathbreaking" and "City Emblem" had been created explicitly to represent official Shenzhen within the larger context of national Reform and Opening. In addition to referencing Deng's definition of pathbreaking, Zheng also added that the Shenzhen Successes Exhibition celebrated the speed of urbanization in the Roc City and, thus, the contribution of all Shenzheners to the construction of both Shenzhen and Reform China. In short, chuang Shenzhen might also be read as the

3When the Successes Exhibition closed, the scaffolding holding up the Roc as well as the construction workers was removed from the plaza.
individual construction of a mianzi out of bits and pieces of the state apparatus, migrant experience, and friendship.

**Shenzhen Dreaming 1: Xiao Zhang**

Every morning, before washing her face and changing into a carefully worn dress, Xiao Zhang lies on her back, eyes closed, and swallows back her disgust. She avoids thinking about the sister who snores lightly beside her, ignores the mother who shuffles toward the bathroom, and directs her thoughts to the future. THEN they will own a large condo with three bedrooms and a kitchen, instead of renting a one room and cooking on a gas stove shoved in the corner of a small balcony. THEN each of them will go out for morning tea dressed in silk, their faces smoothed and shaped twice a week at an air-conditioned beauty parlor. THEN she will have a husband who finds her attractive for more than three years, a husband who doesn’t need a new second wife every other year, a husband who will accompany her window-shopping and sometimes buy her gold jewelry. A husband, in short, who will treat her well because, and Xiao Zhang confesses this quietly, she is a normal woman with a normal woman’s needs and desires.

However, to make this dream come true, Xiao Zhang must earn more than her current salary of 3,300 renminbi a month. Indeed, Xiao Zhang calculates that she will have to increase her salary at least five times if she is to live the life she wants. Because she does not work for

City Emblem was then fixed on a ground-level platform below that of
either the government or an enterprise, which subsidizes employee
housing, Xiao Zhang must buy a condo on the real estate market. In
addition, since she left her original work unit, she has neither medical
nor dental insurance, forcing her to pay market rates for these services.
At 1997 prices, a name-brand silk suit sells for 1,500 renminbi, and a
facial costs 150 renminbi a pop. Should she wish to entertain, a fresh
seafood dinner for ten totals a least 3,000, much more should she
encourage her guests to drink famous white wines and beer.

When Xiao Zhang looks at her mother and sister her resolve
hardens. Her mother, an elementary school graduate who worked during
the Cultural Revolution in a rural production brigade, does not speak
Cantonese and is ashamed of her rustic Mandarin. Aunt Wei wants to
contribute to the family living, but at forty-seven is already two
generations too old to find a factory job. Instead, she watches television
all day, barely speaking to the Chaozhou shopkeepers at the market.
(“They cheat outsiders,” she explains.) Xiao Zhang’s sister, Zhang Qing
completed Middle School, but like their mother has no skills except those
that are needed in agriculture. In Shenzhen, Zhang Qing works as a
hair-washer at a local beauty parlor for 700 renminbi a month. Like
Aunt Wei, Zhang Qing relies on Xiao Zhang to pay her rent and buy
groceries because her earnings are sent home to their grandparents.

“You come to our shop,” Zhang Qing addresses me.

I smile and try to remember her face, “Do I?”

Pathbreaking.
“Yes, it’s the one right across the street from the Lizhi Park Housing Development.”

Aunt Wei places a piece of chicken in my rice bowl and instructs her daughter, “Next time Mary Ann washes her hair, giver her an extra-long shoulder massage.”

Later, Xiao Zhang will apologize, “My mother has no culture.” At the time, however, we are suddenly awkward together because Xiao Zhang has invited me to dinner in order to ask a favor.

“Could you become my partner in teaching Li Yang English?”

I had first heard about Li Yang English from a nine-year old girl. Li Yang had conducted a seminar at her elementary school, hawking his language cards and tapes.

“He can speak thirty-five English words a minute,” my young friend gushed. “How many can you speak?”

I failed this challenge on two counts. First, I confessed that the last time I had been so clocked was in a high school typing class. Second, I boasted that I didn’t need to speak thirty-five English words a minute to demonstrate linguistic competence. She treated my claims with the contempt they deserved, “You’re not up to Li Yang’s standard” (ni bu ru Li Yang.)

The Li Yang system involved memorizing sentences, rather than words, and then shouting these sentences until the speaker’s mouth felt comfortable with the sounds. A wealthy friend had attended one of Li Yang’s mass classes at the main park in Shenzhen. Every morning for
two weeks, roughly 3,000 people gathered together to recite English at
the top of their lungs.

"Does it work?" I asked skeptically.

"You have to understand, Chinese people aren't like you—fearless
of making mistakes. Li Yang is teaching us to open our mouths. This is
important."

The system, however, was also designed as a multi-level marketing
business. Former students could begin teaching Li Yang English by
contacting the Guangzhou office. In addition to class fees, the teacher
earned a commission on every set of cards and tapes sold. Xiao Zhang
envisioned a role for a Chinese-speaking foreigner.

"You can lead pronunciation practice, I'll teach grammar and the
meaning of new sentences. At the beginning and end of each class, you
can correct each student as they enter and leave the classroom. During
the class, you just sit on stage."

I thank Aunt Wei for dinner and leave that small room hoping
desperately never to see any of them again. Several days later, Xiao
Zhang knocks on my door, this time accompanied by the friend of my
husband who had originally introduced us.

As I pour tea, Xiao Zhang explains how difficult it was in
Shenzhen. "Without connections, nobody will hire you. It's worse than
neidi because you have to depend on yourself. My Uncle is the only one
in Shenzhen who cares about me."

I apologize again, decline.
"But you're a woman," she protests, "You must have some feelings for another woman."

Xiao Zhang tries one last time, "This is nothing for you, only a little time. Show your face and leave. I'll give you half the profits and do all the class preparation."

She is crying and still I refuse to help (bangmang).

After they leave, I angrily remind Yang Qian to screen the people he invites over. He reminds me that he has no control over the networks of his co-workers and friends. My name card, once presented, circulates like a blank check, which may be cashed by anyone in a convergent network. For several days, I think I see Xiao Zhang at every intersection even though I no longer walk down the street where she lives, hiding my face. My husband's colleague no longer comes over for tea. I suspect he, too, has been shamed.

In retrospect, there seem to be two obvious reasons why the household residence system (hukou) was the basis of a Shenzhen mianzi. First, Bao'an county had an already extant population with rural hukou, which gave them specific land-use rights. Second, migrants holding urban hukou were eligible to enter Shenzhen hukou; migrants holding rural hukou were not. (On an excursion to Guangzhou, I once forgot my passport. At first I thought it was simply a nuisance because anyone can leave the SEZ without undergoing inspection, and foreigners can travel freely on one visa. However, as my friend explained the situation to the border guard at the second line, a group of three or four migrants began
yelling that foreigners had more rights than Chinese in China. "Ignore them," my friend hissed.) *Hukou* was part of a larger system of population management which defined who had enough credentials (*zige*) to become a Shenzhener. Due to the fact that the national education system replicated the priorities of the Chinese State, urban migrants tended to be better educated than rural migrants. As only professional and bureaucratic jobs, which both required at least a college degree provided employees with hukou; urban migrants clearly had an advantage over rural migrants in securing *hukou*. In order to promote a young population, the municipal government fixed the maximum age of *hukou* applicants at 45. In addition, implementation of *hukou* polices elaborated gendered understandings of work, the family and official society. Employment statistics from the One Percent Survey (1995), for example, suggested a pattern of men employed in *hukou* jobs and women working in marginalized or unofficial occupations. At the same time, Shenzhen had a male-first immigration policy whereby married women could apply for Shenzhen *hukou* only after their husbands had registered. By 1995, although single drifters could apply for Shenzhen *hukou*, *hukou* status was increasingly interpreted in terms of the nuclear family and household members were assigned *hukou* based on the status of the male family head (*jiazhang*).

Girlfriends constantly reminded me: Shenzhen was no place for a woman. "Woman," of course referred to an educated, profession, a female intellectual. For Northerners who had pathbroke Shenzhen in order to improve their standard of living, the gendering of Shenzhen's
free market employment first startled, then outraged. Most had expected that it would be easier for men to find jobs, but few had thought that they would be forced into secretarial or clerical work. After all, it was not as if they lacked credentials (zige). Where hukou located an individual within either the rural or urban system, zige indexed an individual’s movement through the state apparatus. An individual acquired zige post by post, a funcionarial pilgrimage, spiraling toward the center even as one’s guanxi continued to grow like vines over a trellis, to use Andrew Nathan’s metaphor. College graduates, many female urban migrants had held engineering posts and professorships in neidi. Some had been employed by government bureaus, still others had managed offices. The fenpei system, which Yuan Geng targeted as one of the reasons for the low quality of Chinese society had enabled women to assume public roles as communists rather than as wives and mothers.

Tani Barlow (1992) has traced the genealogy of funu from “kinswoman” during the late Qing through its emergence as transcendent “woman” under the CCP. According to Barlow, in late imperial discourses “funu acts a frame of differential jia [family] relation, not as a transcendent category (1992:256).” On this reading, acting within the boundaries of ethical and practical kin relations makes a person recognizably female. Funu made the leap to universal category as part of the urban nationalist movement in the early twentieth century. Chinese men and women described themselves in opposition to Manchus and foreign imperialists rather than within the jia. These new stories had two effects. (1) The allowed women to shift loyalty from husband or
father to the nation without requiring that they abandon the prior object of loyalty and (2) the juxtaposition of Chinese and Western sources produced the category of universal womanhood. Funu was reappropriated by the CCP in its rural work as part of the politicization of the family. In this sense, funu became a part of the language of state, like worker (gongren), youth (qingnian), and proletariat (wuchan jieji). Consequently, throughout the collectivist era women—like other parts of the state—were deployed by the state apparatus in order to create a socialist society.

Since Reform, however, state enforced integration of women into society has shifted its emphasis from a goal of social equality (which had been interpreted as “same as the men”) to one of appropriate social roles (which allowed for hierarchical gender difference). This has effected a re-domestication of professional women. The Shenzhen One Percent Survey, for example, interviewed 25,434 people of an official population of approximately 2.54 million. At the time, the illegal population was estimated to be between 5000,000 and one million. Of the official population sample, 13,005 were men and 12,429 were women, although women actually outnumbered men in the SEZ. Interestingly, except for the age bracket most closely identified with temporary labor—ages fifteen through twenty-four, where women outnumbered men by almost two to one (4,648 women to 2,457 men)—the official, that is, legal, population was male. Employment statistics suggest the same pattern of men occupying permanent jobs and women in temporary, marginalized, or unofficial occupations. Of 16,803 employed interviewees, again, city
officials counted more men than women: 9,359 to 77,444. The distribution of employment confirmed the masculinization of permanent jobs: in government there were 556 men and 106 women; in management 1,404 men and 659 women; and in business, 1,284 men and 857 women. Only in service jobs did the number of female employees exceed that of males, by 1,529 to 905. Moreover, of the 4,539 unemployed interviewees, 1,812 were housewives. The others were schoolchildren, the retired, or those looking for work.

What then might be a suitable job for a woman? In practice, the dependence of women on husbands for hukou meant that the role of "good wife and mother" (xianqi liangmu) suddenly had a relevance which had been downplayed during the Maoist era. The re-domestification of women in Shenzhen was underscored in the bas-relief "Shenzheners," a central image in Shenzhen Economic Zone Successes Exhibition on display in the museum from October 1995 through December 1997. The image organized the people of Shenzhen into four lines of citizens marching toward the future. The first line consisted of two men, a cadre and a planner studying a blueprint together. In the second line were three construction workers. The third rank was made up of an intellectual, a policeman, and a fireman, all males. The fourth rank—more of a clump than a line—included a fisherman, a Hakka farm woman, a woman in high heels, a female pole-vaulter, an old man, a female temporary worker, an elementary schoolgirl, and a male and female college student. In sum, citizens who had not been integrated into the first three ranks marched in the fourth. When examining this
image, it is worth recalling how the construction industry was coded as a transformation of the military under Reform and Opening. Given this metaphoric lineage, the construction workers had two meanings. On the one hand, the men represented the working class traditionally represented by the party. On the other hand, the could have been read as construction-soldiers, or construction-scouts. This amounted to an indirect reference to Shan'ganning, which would have been recognized by "Old Shenzheners."

This reading can be supported by tracing the transformations which placed construction workers—male temporary workers—in the second rank and factory workers—female temporary workers—in the fourth. In China, as in the West, the military continued to be one of the primary models of citizenship. During National holidays, an individual’s relation to the state was represented by his or her familial relationship to a PLA soldier, who in turn was portrayed as the filial son of the father-State. This imagery subtended the link between Shan'ganning and Shenzhen which the construction soldiers embodied. In contrast, female temporary workers were portrayed as former rural people who had come to Shenzhen to improve themselves, making money and seeing the world before marriage. Thus, the bas-relief "Shenzheners" underlined this martial understanding of nationalism by placing a Hakka farm woman and a female temporary worker together in the fourth rank. And yet, a further tension subverted the unity of soldier-construction worker, just as it destabilized the gender unity of high-heeled woman and temporary worker. This tension was the absence of legal residence.
These differences were most visible in the demographic profiles of the SEZs and coastal cities, largely where the marketing of labor and resulting migration had been most pervasive. For example, areas with heavy industry (a male labor market) attracted more males than females, while areas with light industries (a female labor market) attracted more female migrants. Thus, the concentration of light industries and service industries in Beijing, Shanghai, and the Pearl River Delta meant a correspondingly high concentration of female immigration in these areas (Li 1996). At the same time, however, unlike Beijing and Shanghai, the Pearl River Delta had been primarily rural, excepting Guangzhou. Hence, the cadres who were transferred to Shenzhen to begin the work constructing the SEZ came from already established cities. In the early 1980s, administrative cadres came primarily from Guangzhou and the cities that had administered Bao'an County before Reform, while engineering cadres came from the technical universities (especially Qinghua and Tongji Universities). After Tian'anmen and the rise of Shenzhen as an economic power, urban residents began to arrive from other cities, especially Beijing.

Shenzhen Dreaming 2: Dongmei

“What kind of chicken (prostitute) dresses like I do?” Dongmei asks, still scandalized that while waiting for her husband, she was propositioned by a black Mercedes. She is wearing a lemon green Versace and Italian stilettos.
We are taking a break from rehearsals of Zero Sun Moon's production of "Hope." Dongmei plays the Sales Ambassador, an androgynous multi-level marketing con-artist. Like much else in my life here, my role, Mrs. Moneysack trades on the shock value of Chinese-speaking red hair. Together, we form two-thirds of Zero Sun Moon. The third, Yang Qian will perform the Clone. At the moment, he and the director are discussing music.

She deftly lights a cigarette and inhales, "Just imagine, he offered less than I spend on an evening's entertainment." Dongmei pauses before observing, "Mary, you asked me how Shenzhen is different from Beijing? These people are country bumpkins."

Thirty-five years old, Dongmei is beautiful. Twenty years ago, she first auditioned for a Northwest theater troupe, failing three times before successfully auditioning into a military arts troupe. Her new status lifted her out of Gansu and delivered her to Beijing. The first time we met, she explained that she had been typecast from day one.

"I was always the crying girl. The star would take the sage and some idiot relative would trail in, sniffling and wailing. Maybe her uncle had died. Maybe her boyfriend had run off to find work in the city. Maybe she had discovered a secret about the star. But it was always one line: boo hoo hoo." Dongmei shook her head ruefully and I laughed.

"You think it was easy being allowed to cry? I was the youngest one in the troupe and everyone treated me horribly." She shrugged off the memory with charming chuzpa. "I helped everyone backstage. I carried props, untangled wires, listened to their troubles. When we
finally landed a television soap opera contract, they filmed me crying. I thought I would become the crying auntie and then the crying grandma.”

Instead, she married into the Beijing da yuanzi, the highest ranking military complex in the country. Her new husband asked her to quit working and she did, leaving the arts troupe in order to become a good wife and mother. Three years after her son was born, Dongmei divorced her husband because, “I was suffocating. When I came to Shenzhen, I wanted to make a new life.”

Although her husband received custody of the child, Dongmei left the capital with extensive connections. Those connections became the basis of a small advertising agency that grew into a multi-million renminbi business. She met her current husband through mutual acquaintances. Old Wang, a former cadre from Daqing owns a construction company worth several hundred million renminbi.

I sip some water and smile sympathetically, “Maybe it’s the henna."

“Everyone in Shanghai is dying their hair,” she protests. “Old Wang said it looked cheap. I think it makes me look hip.”

I suddenly realize how intrepid Dongmei is. Her formidable command of the art of relationships (how many people have deployed their ex-spouse’s connections in order to start a business?) has not made her livelihood any less precarious. I have watched her defer to Old Wang, listened to her cajole a recalcitrant business partner, even observed her flirt with a potential client. She moves from man to man with deceptive ease, almost erasing telltale signs of unwomanly ambition. Most women
bosses (laoban) who I have met and interviewed, dressed conservatively: business suits and pumps. Most wives do not publicly participate in their husband's business to the extent Dongmei does; although she does not sign contracts, she does negotiate them. Few down shots of white wine (106 proof) with such panache. Fewer still would slum with an experimental theater troupe, accepting the lead role in a play that had only tacit approval from the District Ministry of Propaganda.

Dongmei abruptly changes the topic.

"Has Yang Qian contacted the newspapers?"

I nod "yes."

"Good. This kind of play, we'll only succeed if the judges aren't too surprised. Have you invited any out for dinner?"

I shake my head "no," mentioning that another company from the district was hosting a banquet tonight.

"Yang Qian's interesting," she comments and lights another cigarette.

In some sense, Dongmei has taken us—Yang Qian and myself—on. She and Lao Wang have offered useful critiques of our banquet style ("Yang Qian should propose more toasts, Mary should take more care of her appearance,") picked up the check at important banquets ("The artistic director should always be seen paying the bill, get the money from us before we enter the restaurant,") and introduced us to friends who "have enough money in their slush funds for three troupes."
She once started a small dance troupe, which performed at various
nightclubs. The dancers came from neidi conservatories, but quickly
dispersed once they had working permits in Shenzhen.

“Most of them became second wives (gei bao le),” Dongmei
complained. “Everything in Shenzhen pays more than art.”

Nevertheless, she still dreams of running a “culture company.”

“We can become the most important theater troupe in
Guangdong,” she says, summarizing global cultural production in a
simple algorithm, “If we can conquer Shenzhen, we can conquer
Guangdong. After all, China looks to Shenzhen, the world looks to
China.”

The director signals break is over. Dongmei stubs out her cigarette
and takes her place on stage. The Sales Ambassador gestures
vigorously, challenging the audience, “You think there’s a reason for
everything a person does? I’m hungry, so I eat. I’m thirsty, so I drink.
Do you really think its that easy? That people have reasons, naturally?
Use the intelligence that brought you to Eternal Gold. I’ll give you a hint.
Think about those corrupt bureaucrats and greedy politicians. Why does
their greed know no limits? Why do they keep taking and devouring,
taking and hoarding, world without end? It’s not about nature. They do
it because they can. In other words, there are people who don’t need
reasons to do something, they just do it. Like the rest of us over-eat and
get drunk; we do it because we can (O’Donnell 1998).”
The cultural expectation that a "Shenzhener" should exist is historically constituted, deriving not only from the administrative structure put in place during the Mao era, but also from the spatial organization and imaginaries of pre-Liberation China. Prasenjit Duara (1995) reminds us that people living in the area now identified as the People's Republic of China have historically imagined themselves as belonging to local, regional and pan-Chinese communities; when these identities have become politicized they have resembled nationalism. In addition to those communities imagined through participation in the Guandi and Tianhou cults, territorial identities based on the Emperor, regional polities, and local lineages emerged and receded from the Chinese landscape. In contradistinction to the territorial imaginaries shaping imperial cartography, Duara argues, "What is novel about modern nationalism is not political self-consciousness, but the world system of nation-states (1996:39)." Central to the nation-state system is the subordination of all territorial based identities to that formed by internationally recognized and maintained boundaries. What is therefore at stake in discussions of Chinese identity in the present is manifold and points, on the one hand to the forced integration of China into the world capitalist system and, on the other, to domestic accommodations to and use of "tradition."

"China" has structured differently Western and Chinese understandings of the world, Chinese polities (the PRC, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and Singapore), as well as the internal organization of these polities with respect to tradition. Allen Chun's (1996) discussion of
how the Nationalist government promulgated Chinese culture in order to legitimate itself as a state, should remind us that the Communist government legitimated itself with the promise of overturning tradition and thereby creating a modern state. These debates over the "real" China occurred in the context of the Cold War. Hegemonic in the United nations, the United States used its power to install the discredited Nationalist regime in Taiwan in the UN Security Council and block PRC membership in the international organization. Mainland China was relegated to the Soviet bloc, while Taiwan was integrated into the Western Pacific Defence Perimeter—Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines—to "contain" communist expansion. Indeed, the first instance of the Cold War heating up occurred in Korea when the USA, in partnership with Taiwan, began roughly twenty years of overt (Korea, Vietnam) and covert hostilities (Tibet) with the PRC.

In Shenzhen, this doubling of statist and popular territorial organization was manifest in two questions with very different meanings. The first, "Where is your hukou?" asked one's interlocutor to locate herself in the administrative apparatus of the state. The second, "Where is your laojia (hometown)," asked the same interlocutor to root herself within a territorialized family history. Laojia, I was told, referred to the residence of an individual's great grandfather.4 In addition, laojia was

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4 Bryna Goodman (1995) has studied the role of native place sentiment to the formation of Shanghai from 1843 until 1937. She notes that, "The concept of native place was a critical component of personal identity in traditional China, and geographic origin was generally the first matter of inquiry among strangers, the first characteristic recorded about a person
masculine. Once married, a woman’s *laojia* allegiance shifted to her husband’s hometown. Indeed the Chinese was quite specific. A woman married into *jiage* a family, a man took a bride (*qu*). Yet migration undermined traditional *laojia* theory and practice in Shenzhen. It was striking that advocates of great grandfather *laojia* were predominantly older and rural. Given the fact that in Shenzhen, “*laojia*” had two potential referents: a migrant’s hometown and a local’s Bao’an hometown, most Shenzheners answered the question, “Where is your hometown?” by naming the place where they were born and raised. As migrants, Shenzheners and drifters had a clear sense of *laojia* and *hukou*, tending to discuss hometown and Shenzhen in oppositional terms. *Laojia* was a place of warm human emotions and belonging, while Shenzhen was cold and alienating. At the same time, hometowns were everyday more backward and poor than Shenzhen, which offered resolute migrants an opportunity to pathbreak.

In contrast to migrants who used territory to structure imaginatively the difference between hometown and Shenzhen *hukou*, the Bao’an resident’s *laojia* was precisely the territory under erasure. Consequently locals deployed temporal distinctions in order to organize imaginatively this difference, regularly noting that where they lived was not where they were born. Unlike Shenzheners and drifters who defined Shenzhen as a site of pronounced individualism, locals observed changes in the quality of communal life, claiming that “outsiders” (*waidiren*) were

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(after name and pseudonyms), and the first fact to be ascertained
indifferent to Shenzhen society precisely because Bao'an wasn't their hometown. In this reading, the inability of Shenzheners, let alone drifters to accept the SEZ as *laojia* caused the deterioration of social life all residents had to endure.

A friend frequently mentioned that the people renting her second floor apartment did not dispose of garbage properly. Aunt Wu interpreted this disregard for public hygiene not only as evidence of a "lack of culture," but also as proof of a fundamental lack of respect for Shenzhen.

"Outsiders," she fumed, "only come here to make money. Look," she pointed to leaking plastic bags of garbage, "They never did that at home. Who would dare pollute their Aunt's steps? Here, anything goes."

She suddenly glanced around and whispered, "All the prostitutes are outsiders. Guangdong girls still have a sense of shame because they have to go home."

Ironically, one of the attractions that Shenzhen held for migrants was the possibility of a new, spacious single-family condominium. Throughout the 1980s, work units promised employees housing in order to entice them to leave what were considered more stable situations in *neidi*, while throughout the 1990s, Shenzhen housing remained significantly cheaper per square meter than Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. These condominiums were part of large residential

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5 During a brief real-estate slump, the link between property-owning, *hukou*, and nuclear family life had been embodied in real estate.
developments and range in size from sixty to over one hundred square meters. In addition, interior decoration represented one of the major industries in Shenzhen. New owners bought bathroom fixtures (including toilets and bathtubs), all light outlets, even new doors in addition to wall coverings, new floors, and hanging ceilings. In 1996 and 1997, decorators estimated that new homeowners spent at least 20,000 renminbi on their new space, but must spent much more. Nevertheless, in an environment where the private home symbolized and embodied the Shenzhen dream, the most desired homes were the free-standing, luxury “villas,” the smallest of which were two stories tall with over two hundred square meters of family space.

Villas, often designed by Hong Kong and Singapore firms, manifested both the growing atomization of Shenzheners as well as the understanding that private homes were the reward for their efforts of immigrating. Despite complaints that the structure of Shenzhen life alienated individuals from a larger community, Shenzheners, whose one child had a private bedroom, repeatedly spoke of the need for even more private space. Unlike residential areas where green space was communal, villas often boasted private lawns behind iron gates. This was, of course, a double gating because the community itself was walled with security guards on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a

development plans, which granted hukou based on the size of a condo. For example, a condominium of 75 to 99 square meters came with three hukou, while those over 100 square meters came with four. The fact that some real estate developers had access to hukou bespeaks the dependence of the market on relations with the government.
week. In the main, however, it was ex-patriots working for foreign companies who lived in Shenzhen villas, rather than native pathbreakers. In Shekou, the oil companies installed their employees in the two largest villa communities, while the Jingbi Garden (about ten minutes from the Luohu border) catered to foreign investors who used Shenzhen as a base for Mainland investments. In both cases, however, the villas were bought or rented by companies and used by employees on a temporary basis, further distancing villa dwellers from Shenzhen society.

**Shenzhen Dreaming 3: Wang Fei**

In the summer of 1998, Longfei and her husband, Li Jiang decide to have a child. Long Fei is a lecturer at Shenzhen Polytechnic, Li Jiang is an architect. The first time Long Fei was pregnant she had an abortion because the fetus had not been registered. In order to receive subsidized pre-natal care as well as a hospitalized birth, a married couple must first register their intention to have a child at the security bureau responsible for their hukou. The security bureau issues a form which confirms that the couple is childless. Only then will the hospital admit the woman as a patient. The final step in securing a hukou for the unborn is sterilization of one of the parents.

"The Chinese one-child policy is strict," Long Fei lamented.

This evening Yang Qian and I have joined them for dinner. A Sichuan native, Li Jiang is a fabulous cook. In contrast, Long Fei remains indifferent to flavor, seeing no reason to exert herself over hot
oil. She once explained: “People from Dalian care about fashion. We are some of the best dressed people in the country. But nobody will spend two hours de-veining lettuce leaves. Only Sichuan people and Guangdong people are that crazy.”

We sit in front of the electric fan, drinking jasmine tea. A year ago they bought the condominium on the open market. It is 76 square meters: two bedrooms, a large sala, eating area, and kitchen. Unlike many of their neighbors they have used ceramic tiles rather than wood for the floor.

“That Ceramic doesn’t rot in this humidity,” Li Jiang said practically.

“Ay,” Long Fei signs when I ask why she decided to have a child before completing her Master’s in Business Administration. “Old Chinese people (Zhongguo laoren) all want to hug their grandson. Especially my parents-in-law. China is still really feudal. You know the expression ‘emphasize men, de-emphasize women’ (zhongnan qingnu)?”

“That’s only one more year.”

“Anyway, I don’t really like business. I just needed another degree to qualify for subsidized housing (fuli fang).”

Long Fei has a degree in ocean port design from one of the best engineering universities in the country, but in Shenzhen, port design—highly visible work for the Shenzhen plan—is open only to male Party members. Her training, however, allowed her to moonlight as a draftswoman. In order to buy the house, both Long Fei and Li Jiang moonlighted for five years. They met in 1992, married in 1993, and each worked the equivalent of two and a half jobs until 1998, when they paid
cash for the condo. The house is furnished simply. They have not
installed a hanging ceiling or glass partitions between the kitchen and
eating area, nor have they bought an Italian leather sofa, a sign of
cultured taste that year. Instead, they furnished simply (white rattan
from the Philippines) and spent the rest of their money on electronics (a
computer, a video disk player, a cd stereo).

“What are you going to do with the extra condo?” I ask. Until that
day, I had not realized how many of my friends were engaged in state-
sponsored real estate investing. It is called “one family, two systems,” a
pun on the “one country, two systems” policy toward Hong Kong. Either
the husband or wife works in the government in order to qualify for
subsidized housing. The other works in the free market, earning a good
salary. With their savings, they buy a condo, while they are given
another through the government. Long Fei laughs, “Li Jiang’s parents
want to move to Shenzhen and be with their son and grandchild. I’ll be
eating de-veined lettuce five days a week.”

She grimaces: “My younger sister wants to come, too. She’s only
making 700 renminbi a month.”

I nod. 700 renminbi is a good salary in neidi, it’s probably one-
fourth of what she could make in a similar job in Shenzhen.

“My parents think it will be more comfortable here than in Dalian,
but only in the winter.”

She confides: “Li Jiang and I don’t know what to do. We can’t tell
anyone not to come, but we don’t want both families living together. One
of them will probably move in with us.”
Suddenly Long Fei grins, “But, we don’t have to decide until next year, when I am assigned housing. Until then, they will take turns visiting because our parents drive each other crazy.”

Regional differences assume monstrous proportions in Shenzhen, come to define a person through the longing for hukou and laojia to be the same, the longing to have both legal right to and sentiment for the SEZ rather than find oneself always elsewhere. Who does not assume that Chaozhou people wantonly disregard the one-child policy in order to have two sons? Daughters “black hukou” must accept fate.

Both Long Fei and Li Jiang’s parents are educated, doctors and architects respectively. Both sets of parents speak Mandarin. But how to live in one house with two native languages (Dalian and Sichuan) and different tastes in tea, food, and clothing? The day to day habits through which families are constructed are assumed to have a common background, laojia. A common language, a common heritage, a common understanding of what it means to be husband and wife, daughter, son-in-law, cousin. In Shenzhen, the family becomes unhinged and “Chinese” culture becomes unstable; the breach separating hukou and laojia is reproduced in the mundane routines of everyday life, forcing individuals to create a family despite institutional and cultural difference. Long Fei can not ignore the de-veining of lettuce, is not allowed to forget that good wives de-vein lettuce, remains silent as she swallows dinner.

In the end, it seemed the children who were promised and destined to become “real” Shenzheners with families and homes and lives and
memories that shaped and were shaped by the SEZ, rather than merely caught up in the restructuring of the state apparatus. Or at least, this is what I was told over dinner with friends. Despite their common Shenzhen *hukou*, Long Fei and Li Jiang still consider themselves to be from Dalian and Sichuan, respectively. I ask about the child.

"We'll raise him here," Long Fei concedes. "It's cheaper to raise a child in *neidi*, that's why so many parents send their children back home. It's also easier. My parents are doctors and their friends would have made sure I had good treatment in the hospital."

She sighs and then smiles wryly, "But we came to Shenzhen because after all it's the best place in China."
6. Afterward

The anthropologist reviews a bit of what she hoped to achieve in past pages and realizes it is only an opportunity for asking other questions. She acknowledges the limits of her work, promising to pursue other lines of inquiry that this one opened.

In Shenzhen Reform seemed an incomplete process, potentially a means to regain China's rightful place in the world, possibly an improvement over collectivization, but nevertheless continually unfinished and unsatisfactory. The buildings were never tall enough, the profits merely a means to more profits, and even those migrants with hukou kept anticipating that real Shenzheners might only appear in another generation. Haphazard but interrelated ventures—building an international city and becoming a Shenzhener—defined that process. On the one hand, the central leadership responded to globalization by promoting the establishment of a new kind of city in China. Political-economic hybrids, these areas (the so-called "special economic zones" and "open cities") emerged as sites for the differential integration of the Chinese economy into the world system. Indeed, it was Shenzhen's institutional and cultural differences from neidi and other sites of Reform that haunted and provoked attempts to define "pathbreaking," one of the characteristics of becoming a Shenzhener. On the other hand, despite a state monopoly over urban planning, diverse ways of recognizing and manipulating the state apparatus emerged as differently situated individuals attempted to use the state in order to pursue diverse
Shenzhen dreams. I was most struck by the gendering of this process, the re-definition of the family within the context of Reform, as well as the figure of children as potentially the real and intended residents of Shenzhen.

In each of the chapters of this dissertation, I have attempted to track how ongoing changes in the relationship between the state and its client-citizens have been recognized, experienced, and manipulated in Shenzhen during the Deng years (1978-1997). Here the Chinese points to the double-bind latent in the construction of Shenzhen, alluding to the precariousness of Reform. Where I have written a history of changes (retrospectively affirming the inevitability of Reform), the Shenzhen newspapers spoke of perpetual adjusting (tiaozheng). That, after all, was the purpose of an experimental zone: to establish a place where reform policies could be refined before promulgating them throughout the country. Given the extreme politicization of daily life that had characterized Maoist collectivization, any adjustment of the state apparatus would have material consequences for citizen-clients, ranging from housing and education to kinds and quality of food available for purchase. At the same time, by limiting the scope of Reform to “special economic zones” the Chinese leadership not only indicated a willingness to reverse the process (most dramatically illustrated by the Tian’anmen crackdown, but staged daily in anti-corruption movements which removed former political favorites from power), it also demonstrated an inclination to legislate economic inequality.
Given this ambiguity, how could citizen-clients know what forms of behavior and action would be rewarded, tolerated, or punished?

How could Shenzheners confirm that their sudden wealth would not be appropriated by the state? Or that they would not be arrested for economic crimes?

More crudely, how could they safely jump on and off this gravy train?

(Friends educated during the Maoist years consistently reminded me, “You never know when there will be another movement (yundong).”

They said: “Why is corruption so prevalent? Because everyone is afraid that the policies will suddenly change, and then where will they be? The only chance is to make as much money as quickly as possible.”

They agreed: “In China, nothing is really yours. Everything, ultimately, belongs to the state. That’s why we need good leaders.”)

I have argued that mianzi provided useful insight into the political, economic, and cultural infrastructure which differentially embedded individuals in the state apparatus, generating recognizable hierarchy and power. An individual mianzi was doubly constituted through guanxi, and zige. Guanxi included both personal and professional relationships, while zige provided a map of an individual passage through the state apparatus which began before conception (prenatal hukou paperwork), took shape at each level of education, and was developed through assignments within the state apparatus. I traced how interlocutors strategically read each other’s mianzi, defining strategic recognition as the ability to judge relative degrees of freedom within relationships that
were variously mediated by the state apparatus. The goal of strategic recognition was pragmatic: to pre-empt social breaches which might escalate into winner-take-all political drama. On this reading of contemporary Shenzhen, I identified bureaucratic hierarchy as the privileged site of ethical behavior, focusing on how the state apparatus shaped the norms and enabled abuses of ethical patronage in Shenzhen, providing an ethos of daily life as always already a response to the state. Thus, for example, a common Shenzhener criticism of locals and drifters was that (unlike responsible Shenzheners) locals and drifters had too many children. "Too many" here defined with respect to the one-child policy. What kind of parent, Shenzheners asked, gave birth to a child who was ineligible for hukou and therefore by definition lived outside the institutions which predicated social possibility? Please note the polysemy of parental love and responsibility. In addition to affection for the child, parental love was recognized and performed as giving one's child a secure place in the state apparatus.

Analysis of strategic recognition in Shenzhen thus has a double focus: the changing structure of the Chinese state within a world system and the concomitant production of legal residents. In Chapter 1, I began my discussion of strategic recognition through an analysis of the unraveling of the protocols linking state and society which had characterized Maoist China. In order to relate this discussion to global processes, I pointed to how colonial and Cold War legacies shaped the over-determination of statist Chineseness. On the one hand, modernization in China began during the Qing dynasty as a defensive
response to colonialism. On the other hand, the success of the Chinese Revolution corresponded with the rise of United States hegemony, placing the newly established People's Republic of China beyond the "bamboo curtain." A popular Shenzhen saying illustrates the proliferation of these historically informed, cultural predicaments:

If you want to see 2,000 years of Chinese history, please go to Xi'an. If you want to see 1,000 years of Chinese history, please go to Beijing. If you want to see 100 years of Chinese history, please go to Shanghai. If you want to see 10 years of Chinese history.

Xi'an was, of course, the first capital of a Chinese empire. Likewise, Beijing has been the capital of successive Chinese governments since the Ming Dynasty. In each case, "Chinese" identity was thought to be generated through reference to a relatively independent polity. However, by 1898, the area located south of the Shenzhen river, Hong Kong and the New Territories had been colonized by the British Empire, making South China politically "not China." Suddenly the polity could no longer represent everything that happened within China. Comprador capitalism produced treaty ports (like Shanghai and Hong Kong) where fortunes could be made by mediating the transfer of Chinese wealth to the colonial powers. The Chinese revolutions—both Nationalist and Communist—attempted to redistribute this wealth more equitably. However, the establishment of the PRC again placed China in an antagonistic position with the West, this time in the form of the anti-Communist United States. To sum up: in approximately 150 years, there appeared a variety of Chinas which could no longer be explained
solely by reference to dynastic cycles. In addition to semi-feudal and semi-colonized China, there appeared Red China and Our China, socialist China (rural and urban) and capitalist China. What’s more, in Western ethnography of China, rural Hong Kong and Taiwan were presented as living examples of traditional Chinese culture even though historically northern China and Jiangnan China had exemplified Chinese culture.

The primary Mainland border in these Cold War reconfigurations of colonial occupation, Shenzhen was also the chosen site for economic integration of the PRC into global capitalism by way of its neighbor, Hong Kong. Within the implementation of Reform and Opening, the border that had once separated China from Hong Kong (and by extension the US dominated world system) became the precondition for capitalist expansion into the Mainland. This paradox placed in question both the value of the Chinese revolution and Chinese identity. Consequently, I have suggested that Shenzhen emerged through constant re-negotiation of “Chinese” political economy, history, and culture. Here, it is important to recall the changing relationship between the state and Chinese history expressed in the opening saying where it is assumed that Chinese history might be understood through visits to prototypical cities. The foundational cities were capital cities, while after the Opium War, mercantile cities emerged as representative of Chinese cities. In other words (and in keeping with the argument made by Ci Jiwei), until colonialism there was a sense that Chinese history was singular, with its point of origin—its center—at the capital. Colonialism ruptures this
cultural certainty as the Treaty Ports mediated between the crumbling apparatus of the Qing Dynasty and the expansion of European colonialism.

In Chapter 2, by focusing on the architectural transition from Guomao (World Trade) to Diwang (Earth King) I analyzed how these contradictions informed the Shenzhen built environment, identifying five themes: modernization, globalization, temporalization, spatialization, and institutionalization of Reform China. I will take up each of these themes briefly.

First, the fact of Shenzhen simultaneously represented a continuation of and a rupture with the Maoist project of modernizing China. On the one hand, Deng Xiaoping accepted the goals of modernization to be the military and economic strengthening of the country. Indeed, Reform and Opening was justified in these terms. On the other hand, unlike Mao Zedong who advocated isolated and egalitarian development, Deng instituted a project of legislated cooperation internationally and economic inequality domestically. The extent of the rupture between Maoist and Dengist ideology might be summarized through a simple observation. During the Nationalist era, one of the provocations for communist-led strikes in Shanghai had been on-site factory dormitories. The Maoist response had been work units which provided workers with housing in addition to jobs. Roughly sixty years later, Shenzhen instituted the factory dormitory system to manage migrant labor and, by the mid 1990s, had been the first city in Mainland China to dismantle guaranteed housing.
Second, the Shenzhen built environment manifests a new understanding of globalization. Under Mao, architecture had had taken its cue from Stalinist projects and buildings had been functional, serving the collective economy. In contrast, both Guomao and Diwang were built to stimulate consumption rather than promote production. The earlier of the two buildings, Guomao staged consumption as a three-story shopping mall which had been modeled on state of the art malls in Hong Kong. Perhaps unlike its Hong Kong counterparts, Guomao nevertheless incorporated a statist interpretation of architecture. In addition to housing representatives from national, regional, and municipal level state-owned industries, Guomao also demonstrated that the PRC had the capability to erect technically advanced skyscrapers. Be that as it may, by the time Diwang exploded on the Shenzhen horizon, the statist goals of Reform had been erased from the actual form of the building, transformed by the capitalization of the procedures for building permits and post Tian'anmen disillusionment. Not only was Diwang built by a Hong Kong company, it rented space to companies rather than assigned space based on work unit ranking. The transition from Guomao to Diwang might thus be understood as a revision of the role of the state as regulating the market rather than constituting the market.

In addition, the passage from Guomao to Diwang introduced both a new temporalization and a new spatialization of modernity in the People's Republic. Temporally, the construction of Shenzhen was predicated on the paradox accelerating synchronicity. In the SEZ, modernization was simultaneously always faster and increasingly more
inclusive than the projects that came before because the velocity of construction may be accelerated by completing all aspects of the project (ranging from laying roads to mixing concrete for the foundation) at the same time. These contradictory impulses generate “Shenzhen speed”: a quantum leap from one state of being to the next. Spatially, the Shenzhen built environment confirms the alienation of China from capitalist centers. Despite the replication of architectural and urban planning from Hong Kong, Japan, and the United States, the Shenzhen economy remained primarily based on export-oriented manufacturing. Called a “museum of world architecture,” the urban design of Shenzhen mimics a world city that does not exist except as disillusioned fantasy: This is what China should have been if only socialism had not derailed capitalist development.

The fifth theme that emerges from an analysis of the Shenzhen built environment is the necessary un-making of rural China in the construction of a global Chinese city. In Shenzhen the rural had two contradictory referents: rural neidi and rural Bao’an, the administrative predecessor to the SEZ. During the Maoist years, the establishment of a system of legal residence, hukou, administratively segregated the PRC into rural and urban areas, exploiting agriculture in order to finance industry. This segregation also produced different subject positions. Land-use rights notwithstanding, rural residents had little access to education, medical care, and technical training, all of which were located in urban areas. However, under Chinese law, any state expropriation of rural land (as occurred when Bao’an County became Shenzhen
Municipality) entitled rural residents to compensation. Bao’an peasants were therefore able to use compensations monies to invest in industry, bootstrapping villages into the global economy. At the same time, rural-urban segregation continued to prepare rural and urban residents for different careers. Accordingly, urban migrants to Shenzhen entered production as professionals, earning salaries which enabled consumption, while rural migrants entered production as factory and construction workers, their wages the only means for bringing *neidi* families into a money economy.

In Chapter 3, I provided a more detailed examination of the Shenzhen trans-valuation of the rural as a marker of Chinese identity and increasing identification of the interests of the state with urban capitalism. Through a brief history of the Sino-British border, I trace how the construction of Shenzhen erased rural Bao’an from official accounts of regional history. The erasure of rural Bao’an from official accounts of Shenzhen affected several transformations of Party ideology. First, the rural—both historic Bao’an and contemporary *neidi*—symbolized national poverty that both Maoist collectivization and Dengist Reform were to overcome in the creation of a stronger, wealthier China. The double meaning of the rural in official Shenzhen narratives staged the explicit promises of Reform. To wit: Bao’an County (once a poor, rural area) had become the Shenzhen Municipality (one of the richest cities in the country). Likewise, Bao’an peasants had become wealthy urban residents. In other words, historic Bao’an represented the contemporary rural, while contemporary Shenzhen represented the
future promised to still destitute peasants. Second, the persistence of rural poverty both justified Reform and explained distrust of the Party as a result of ill-advised economic policies rather than political movements. On this reading, neidi—once theorized as a product of comprador capitalism—was now posited to be the cause of China's poverty and lack of great power status.

The final effect of the trans-valuation of the rural was to problematize the statist account of PRC history and how that history created Chinese citizens. On the one hand, liberation had promised to liberate the Chinese people from the poverty that was caused by feudalism. In short, Liberation negated traditional China, replacing the Central Kingdom with a new nation state, the People's Republic. On the other hand, Reform endeavored to liberate Chinese people from the poverty caused by the organization of the state apparatus of the PRC, replacing the planned economy with a market economy. What kind of Chinese identity remained after this process? Traditional China had been surpassed, New China proven inadequate, and Reform China was not even a poor imitation of Hong Kong across the border. The contingent meanings of rural and urban once again shifted. In this trans-valuation, the urban—always defined as a "modern, global city"—emerged as a sign of both the modern and an alternative to domestic uncertainties.

In Chapter 4, I examined two competing versions of the new urban, Shekou and Shenzhen, arguing that the political organization of urbanization in the SEZs would set the standard for new relationships
between the state apparatus and client-citizens. The first impulse took shape in the Shekou Industrial Zone. Led by Yuan Geng, in Shekou the leadership implemented a policy of "big society, little government." Specifically, Yuan Geng used economic liberalization to justify extensive re-structuring of the state apparatus, including recruitment of cadres based on merit, the de-linking of position in a work-unit from bureaucratic ranking, and inaugurating elections within the apparatus of the Industrial Zone. These changes exploded during the "Shekou Tempest," when thought-workers from Beijing came to Shekou to speak with youths. The Shekou youths directly and publicly challenged the thought-workers, calling for a re-evaluation of patriotism in terms of individual accomplishment (rather than self-sacrifice for the party-state) as well as public acknowledgement of the appalling work conditions in Shekou. The event came to crisis when the Shekou leadership supported the youths' right to disagree with Party leadership.

Retrospectively called a prelude to Tian'anmen, the issues raised by the Shekou Tempest were countered by the administrative methods developed in Shenzhen. In contrast to the Shekou leadership, the Shenzhen leadership relied on its monopoly over land-use in order to enforce and maintain hegemonic control over the direction and profits of Reform. This monopoly was insured through a double movement. On the one hand, the Shenzhen Municipal Government brought all land under its control through the Master Plan. By limiting land-use to that which was zoned in the Master Plan, the Shenzhen leadership instituted a legal process of *pizhun* (approval). On the other hand, the leadership
encouraged the design and construction of postmodern skyscrapers, gaining the allegiance of the technocratic elite. Architects came to Shenzhen in order to design bigger, taller, and more beautiful buildings. The result? The shift from Shekou to Shenzhen as logic of Reform entailed a shift from an emphasis on social reform through economic liberalization to an emphasis on administratively maintaining the political status quo.

I brought these different threads together in Chapter 5 where I looked at how individual women recognized the state in these various processes and constructed their lives accordingly. Through the pathbreaking (chuang) stories of three women, I examined how hukou had shaped social differences between Northerners and Southerners, men and women, as well as rural and urban residents. I traced how these differences had produced the ideal “Shenzhener” as a male, urban cadre from North China with other subject positions fixed with respect to this figure—the ethical subject position within Shenzhen society. Thus, Shenzheners were leaders and technocrats in the state apparatus, with rural migrants working in factories and construction sites. In addition, the gendering of hukou meant that women’s status followed that of her husband. Suddenly conjugal relations, parenthood, and even sibling relations were being renegotiated with respect to the state apparatus, specifically the presence or absence of the husband/father’s Shenzhen hukou. This familial embeddedness in the state apparatus directly linked individuals to the state and constituted the infrastructure of mianzi—the social site for recognizing, manipulating, and avoiding the state.
Despite a kind of logical coherence to my argument, its meaning and value (like mianzi) is not self-evident. I conclude by asking: What kinds of questions does my account of strategic recognition provoke?

I have argued that in Shenzhen, the fact of legal residence more often than not determined social possibility, including access to education, employment, and medical care. What’s more, interlocutors searched for these traces of the state apparatus in each other’s mianzi by questions about family background and experience, formulating appropriate responses based on what they “saw.”

(Of course, no one had to answer these questions and as a consequence, vagueness was also a much-cultivated social art.

“Where are you going?” — “Downtown.”

“Who are you meeting?” — “Friends.”

“What do your parents do?” — “They’re retired...”)

As a working hypothesis of how individuals are always constituted through specific links and position within the state apparatus, mianzi points to a tentative formulation of what might be called “quotidian globalization.” By quotidian globalization, I refer to the ways in which national and international borders are recognized, manipulated, subverted, and enforced in the institutions of every day life. In Shenzhen, these institutions include the distribution of social goods based on hukou and zige, with ethical patronage a means of diverting resources. In the discipline of ethnography, these institutions include relative freedom to conduct research in China and the ideological justification of “world knowledge” despite corresponding limits on the
access of Chinese scholars to the United States. In practice, we meet up with these borders whenever we attempt to negotiate the borders constituting the mianzi of our interlocutor—applying for a tongxingzheng or a visa, investing or issuing zoning permits, all of these practices entail hierarchically structured encounters within the nation state system.

In future work, I would like to study institutions where these borders structure the political-economic contest and cultural mise-en-scène of every day life. In particular, I am interested in theorizing globalization through the continued and indeed necessary specificity of urban forms (like Shenzhen) despite globalization. Accordingly, I would pay closer attention to the course of academic study legitimating careers that are variously connected to the production of urban space as a cultural form such as architecture, accounting, and leadership. I would trace the circulation of architectural forms from city to city, focusing on the institutionalization of a “world style.” I would also pay more attention to the varieties of commodities implicated in the creation of quotidian globalization: music, fashion, advertising, and, ultimately, the circulation of garbage, a study which remains to be completed.
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