Growth and Development of Hong Kong

I. Colony and colonialism (Professor David Faure)

II. International city and identity

A Shanghai experience

- Ge Yuanxu, Huyou zaji (miscellaneous notes on the travels of Shanghai)
- Zhou Xingyi, Yuhuang riji (dairy behind a frail curtain)
- Leo Lee: Shanghai Modern

B Hong Kong experience

---Chen Huixun, Xianggang zaji (miscellaneous notes on Hong Kong)

C Harbin experience

---James H Carter, Creating a Chinese Harbin
Yuan Zuzhi’s Preface: At the end of the Daoguang period (1820-1850), five ports were opened for commerce, and China and foreign countries started to trade with each other. Shanghai therefore becomes a spectacular scene. Recently, more and more steam ships arrive. From the outer sea to the Yangzi River, everywhere can be reached. As for people who arrive at Shanghai, they include the 18 provinces from within China, and 24 countries from the outer ocean. Ah! How prosperous! Never since the birth of human beings has there been a place as perfect as this. In the past, it was said that there were four towns that were the most prosperous under the heaven: Zhuxian, Foshan, Hankou, and Jingde. Since the rise of Hong Kong, the four towns have dwindled away. Since the rise of Shanghai, Hong Kong has also dwindled away. [1]

The Shanghai Municipal Council [gongbuju] introduces gradual improvement on the road. It lines the two sides of the road with stone bars that are a bit higher than the road. Under the stone bars are small holes through which the rainwater can be led down to the duct, so that the road is ready for use soon after the rain…. The method [of road building] is to break the old soil into loose pad. On it is paved rabbles or broken tiles of seven to eight inches thick. Young workers are ordered to break them into still finer pieces with hammers, and then add a layer of fine sand. The road roller is then pushed over the sand-surface. A road with the surface as flat as a grinding stone is therefore formed. [2]


Thirteenth Day (August 3rd, 1884). Shanghai people like to visit the Jing’an Monastery by post-chaise, accompanied by courtesans. Day before the foreign Sunday, between the Hours of Shen and You (3-7pm), visitors are even numerous. In the moonlit evenings of hot summer, some may even go at the Hours of Hai and Zi (9pm-1am) and leave at the Hours of Chou and Yin (1-3am). In that place there is but a Shen Garden, with only one building and two chambers, and very few flowers and trees. No bamboo, tree, pond, stone, long corridor, or private room is available for decoration, and therefore there is hardly anything that can please the heart. Still, between and after the Hours of Shen and You (3-7pm), visitors arrive with dashing post-chaises. They sit along the corridor, drink from a pot of tea and watch men and women mixing with each other, arriving and leaving, rubbing shoulders and crossing arms, and going up and down. The sky begins to turn dark before their seats are warm. One after another they are aboard their post-chaises, and, with rumbling wheels, all of sudden they scatter like birds and beasts. So leave the visiting crowd. Let it be asked: what fun is there for such a visit! ……

My servant Zhang Sheng loves to visit the Bund on foot, passing every dockyard and watching steam ships arriving and anchoring. He keeps talking about what he sees and can think of nothing more pleasant. He visit the Bund everyday and never gets tired of it. His silliness is hundred times that of the visitors of the Jing’an Monastery. So different are the hobbies of the people. How can the situation of the people under the heaven be easily understood! How Laughable!


[4] Leo Lee, *Shanghai Modern*
were they regarded, as so "foreignized" [yanghua] as to become slaves to foreigners [yangnu]. From their works I draw the obvious conclusion that their sense of Chinese identity was never in question in spite of the Western colonial presence in Shanghai. …

- …Had Levenson been able to read more about Schnitzler in China, he would have realized that almost all the important works by this Viennese writer were either translated or introduced in the journals edited by Shi Zhecun….Schitzler’s plays were mostly translated by Zhao Boyan. How did this tiny segment of the Chinese intelligentsia succeed in translating such a wealth of Western literature in such a short period? The easy answer is that there was obviously a demand from the urban reading public, no matter how small compared to the Chinese population as a whole.

- …if cosmopolitanism means an abiding curiosity in “looking out” - locating oneself as a cultural mediator at the intersection between China and other parts of the world - then Shanghai in the 1930s was the cosmopolitan city par excellence, which had earned from Western tourists the popular epithet of the “Paris of the Orient”. Despite the “Orientalist” implications, the epithet nevertheless served to underscore Shanghai's international significance and to connect it in the Western popular imagination to the other metropolises in Europe and America. In Asia, Shanghai replaced Tokyo (damaged by an earthquake in 1923) as the center of a network of cities linked together by ship routes for purposes of marketing, transportation, and tourism.

- Hong Kong as the “Other” of Shanghai Chang’s complicated response, gathered from her essays and stories, seems to be that whereas the Hong Kong of her time (circa 1940) was unabashedly colonial, Shanghai was not, or at least not exactly, because Hong Kong did not have Shanghai’s “cultivation” [hanyang], a word that originally referred to the cultured sophistication of a person who has the elegant appearance of self-restraint. …Hong Kong is too blatant, too vulgar and flamboyant in its Western imitation, hence producing cultural kitsch. Hong Kong is also, in Chang’s description, too eager to “prostitute” itself to the desires of its colonial master. Thus, the city presents itself, purposely, as the object of a Western Orientalist
gaze by materializing what existed only on the colonist's fantasies.

- **Nostalgia: Shanghai as the “Other” of Hong Kong** In the midst of this mad race toward economic development, however, a curious cultural phenomenon was observable: while Hong Kong left Shanghai far behind, the new metropolis has not forgotten about the old; in fact, one could discern an increasing nostalgia for old Shanghai perpetuated largely by the mass media


**<B> Hong Kong experience**

**Chen Huixun, *Xianggang zaji (miscellaneous notes on Hong Kong)* (1894) [5]**

- **Political Institutions** Governor Robinson served the country and the people with his genuine heart and practical effort. To enhance education, he had the Central College established in Central and employed Mr. Shi An as teacher. To benefit the community, he had the market established and supervised by inspectors from the Urban Council. As for the postal service, it was originally meant for the delivery of documents between Hong Kong and the home country, now a Postal Office is set up and delivers messages for the merchants. The commercial well being is greatly enhanced.

- **Chinese and Western hospitals** The country cares about the people like it cares about its wounds. No tiny details are left unnoticed in matters concerning people's life and death.

- **Underground water and sewage pipes** The construction of water-pipe is a grand undertaking. The determination and hard work of the British officials cannot be appreciated unless one sees with his own eyes….Now that roads and pipes are thoroughly renovated, Hong Kong can be regarded as a clean land in the East and is no less spectacular than London.

Harbin experience

James H Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin*[*]

- Harbin was the by-product of Russian Chinese Eastern Railway and was known as a “Manchurian Paris”. [p. 11]

- A “dual city” not unlike Shanghai: Daoli, Nangang and Xiangfang being Russian and European settlement, whereas Daowai and Fujiadian being the Chinese-administered polity. [pp. 21-22]

- Deng Jiemin, a graduate from Nankai College in Tianjin, studied in Japan and became an ardent nationalist thanks to the influence of Li Dazhao. In 1918, Deng founded the Donghua School in Harbin and actively preached nationalism. [pp. 31-64]

- In October 1920, Zhang Zuolin consolidated his power in Northeast China and created the Special Administrative Region of the Eastern Provinces. Russian influence diminished while Japan actively strengthened its presence in the Northeast. Britain, France and US joined hand to curb Japanese expansion by proposing to put the Chinese Eastern Railway under international management. It further fueled Chinese nationalism. [pp. 94-98]


- In 1923, Zhu Qinglan was appointed as the Chief Executive of the Special Administrative Region of the Eastern Provinces. He launched the construction project for Jile Monastery. The official opening of the Monastery took place on 28th September 1924 and the monastery became the first major building in Harbin that was distinctively Chinese in terms of architecture and culture. [pp. 136-141]

- The Harbin Third Secondary School was also built in 1923 and deliberately adopted the Chinese architecture style. [pp. 141-144]

- In 1928, the Confucian Temple was officially opened. [pp. 147-153]

- The “119 Incident” : on 9th November 1928, driven by strong nationalist feeling, Chinese students and citizens launched a large-scale protest against Japanese plan to construct more
railways in Manchuria and Mongolia. The protestors clashed with the police. Dozens of protestors were injured [pp. 171-179]

- Nationalism has been the futile attempt to draw impermeable and permanent boundaries onto landscapes that defy the effort. Just as the PRC authorities were unable to control the discourse about Harbin's past, the nationalists of the 1920s were unable to control the nationality of their city even during their lifetimes. But in studying these attempts, we learn much about **how people seek to define themselves and their world.** [p. 195]