

Introduction

The transformations in mainland China over the past two decades have given rise to more than their share of hyperbole from all sides. The statements of conservative Western free-market advocates and socialist bureaucrats, for example, coincide with jubilant claims that the People's Republic of China (PRC) has at last discovered the true path to modernity. The American media ceaselessly trot out images of fast food and technology as evidence of a victorious penetration of the "bamboo curtain." For Chinese citizens who are actually living with these changes, however, the transformation of the physical landscape, the virtual reorganization of built space to reflect a new social reality, is a constant, sometimes jarring fact of daily life. Film critic Dai Jinhua describes an urban world in which "the old cities—for example, Shanghai, which is a few hundred years old, or Beijing or Suzhou, which are thousands of years old—quietly recede into oblivion in the explosive transformation. If the spaces of old remain the milestones of individual remembrance and of regional history . . . then the prosperous, cosmopolitan, anonymous big city already truncates its enduring visible history" (Dai 1997: 146). These revised city landscapes have been produced through an uneven *mélange* of local, regional, national, and transnational influences and reveal an aesthetics and politics that overlap with the past.

This volume had its beginnings in the fall of 1995 in Beijing, when a group of anthropologists met informally to discuss the difficulties of doing fieldwork in urban settings, chaotic and transitory as they are. There, in a city that has witnessed two decades of upheaval as a result of epic reconfigurations in the economy, we sensed an urgent need to reas-

sess the tenor of everyday life. As the walled compounds of state-owned work units and single-story residences became engulfed by skyscrapers, department stores, and high-rise housing, we found our research methodologies inadequate. Entire field sites disappeared, old friends left for faraway places with better economic prospects, and inner city residents were moved by the state to suburban high-rises. How should we conduct field research with actors on the move in a constantly shifting terrain?

While the urban work unit was still important in many of our informants' lives, others were employed outside their work units in small-scale enterprises and the service industry. Migrants from all over China, often seen by urban residents as uniform emblems of rurality, had an increasingly visible presence in urban areas. As some people redecorated their apartments with crown molding, wallpaper, and hardwood flooring, others eked out a living as street peddlers and itinerant laborers at construction sites. We saw continued and growing economic inequality, which was reflected in the lived environment. Like many other researchers, we grappled with fundamental questions about the relationships between field methodology, anthropological theories of culture, and everyday experience. The ethnographies in this volume maintain this sense of the instability of spatial and social realms at the same time that they provide grounds for understanding it. This volume thus represents the collective efforts of thirteen anthropologists to examine "the urban" and urbanization processes in 1990s China.

An understanding of these changes also requires attention to larger questions raised by the economic reforms that began in 1978. With the spatial inequalities of reform measures in these last twenty years, the Chinese economy has become an ever more influential factor in the world economy. This has given rise to an increasingly visible overlap between constructions of global capitalism and the Chinese economy. The chapters in this volume illustrate that the current influx of transnational culture, capital, and people must be understood from within a cultural and economic framework more complex than the simple adoption of Euro-American neo-liberal capitalism.

Four decades ago, Lefebvre, in writing about processes of urbanization then claiming the countryside of France, conceptualized "the urban" as a "new form of sociability where town and country had been abolished" (Kofman and Lebas 1996: 14). This volume broadens the category

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of the urban to a potential that includes both imagination and practice rather than simply the notion of an urban society or social life that infiltrates nonurban landscapes and ways of life through urbanization and other means (media, stories/myths, migration). It also insists on the cultural specificity of notions of the urban: in China, the urban is particularly framed through two deeply though differently embedded discourses, these being rurality and socialism.

Mao Zedong extolled the virtues of rural life in contrast to the corruption of the city, a sentiment also expressed to varying degrees in elite Confucian ideologies, for instance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries among landowning gentry (see Wakeman 1966; Skinner 1977; Mote 1977; Murphey 1984; and Whyte and Paris 1984). Based on the experiences of the peasant-fueled Chinese revolution, Maoist theory deviated from Marxism by identifying the peasants as leaders of the revolutionary struggle rather than ignorant masses beholden to the urban proletariat.¹ Moreover, as Meisner suggests, implicit in Maoism was the association of the city “with what is foreign and reactionary and the countryside with what is truly national and revolutionary” (1982: 64). This theme—the recuperative power of the rural in nation building, prominent in nationalist ideologies elsewhere (Ferguson 1997)—shaped a critique of Western imperialism and foreign occupation of Chinese territory (cf. Meisner 1982). The importance of rural China in establishing socialism played out in development policy as the CCP set up communes and industrialized the countryside in the late 1950s.

In terms of contextualizing urbanity in relation to socialism, 1990s China presents a situation in which the dynamics between West and East, capitalism and socialism, are not easily categorized. Scholars of urbanization such as David Harvey have focused their analyses on global capitalism—a force characterized by an international division of labor, flexible production controlled by the transnational corporation, revolutions in communications and other technologies, and a shifting of national capital—said to be in the process of completely reshaping local cultural practices from labor and consumption to experiences of time and space (Harvey 1989; Lipietz 1986; Pred and Watts 1992; Jameson 1984). More recently, Asia’s emergence as an increasingly important sphere of global capitalism has necessitated a rethinking of the historical and geographic specificity of this dynamic (Frank 1997). Ong, for in-

stance, has described the discourse on Asian capitalism as “a paradigm change in capitalism as the West knows it. . . . Chinese modernities are new imaginaries and regimes of domination decentering Western hegemony in the global arena” (1997a: 359). While these processes are visible in contemporary China, the material and social dimensions of capitalism and foreign consumer cultures are built within the cultural structures already established by Chinese socialism. This is true for both the state and ordinary individuals.

The material in this book provides us with a means of going beyond privileging capital as the sole organizing principle of analysis. Chinese landscapes present us with a different intellectual and political history of notions of city and country, and of the role of the state in allocating, designing, and distributing space. In a place where land, bodies, and buildings have only recently been reframed as commodities, the Chinese urban is just as importantly constituted by discourses of socialism, rurality, civilization, gender, ethnicity, class, space and others. And, as ideological and material reconceptions of culture and cities in China are put into place by planners, developers, marketers, and state governing bodies, we believe anthropological critiques should be increasingly important in contextualizing such urban revisions (cf. Ellin 1996; Low 1996).

One outcome of the volume is that contributors present multiple readings about culture in contemporary China. For example, the chapters on the development of new markets and industries such as multilevel marketing, rock music, and the university graduate labor market illuminate the cultural construction of the socialist market within the context of global capitalism. Such disparate realms as a fashion-modeling competition, maternity practices in the hospital, sex tourism, and marriage introduction agencies are examined by other contributors, highlighting the intersections of consumer culture, gender, and the body in a network of socialist institutions and market forces. Themes of morality, place, and the symbolic meaning of space are explored through research on new social geographies of health care and medicinal consumption, the shifting social position of railway workers, and the destruction of Beijing’s largest migrant neighborhood. Other contributors consider the nature of the urban as cosmopolitan, a subject approached via studies of cultural production among minority youth, the distinction of the rural and the

urban through television programming, and the cultural construction of urban “face” and anonymity.

Urbanization and the Chinese Socialist City Chinese cities and their inhabitants were radically reconstructed after the revolution of 1949 through a blend of Soviet and Chinese Marxist ideology and praxis. As was the case in the development strategies of other socialist countries, Chinese urbanization was initially assessed in terms of cost-benefit analysis (Naughton 1995: 62). The Chinese Communist Party still sought to promote urban industrialization, but as inexpensively as possible since its large cities had been devastated by the Japanese occupation and the civil war with the Nationalists (Kirkby 1985). State goals to transform cities from consumer (*xiaofei*) to producer (*shengchan*) status, and to reduce economic disparities between city and countryside, affected industrialization efforts and mobility policies. The policy became one of “industrialization without much urbanization” (K. W. Chan 1992: 57; Naughton 1995). As Kwok notes, industrialization in many developing countries has been concentrated in large cities and has been associated with high levels of urban economic and population growth (1992: 66). With Chinese socialist goals of wealth distribution and social equity, however, the links between industrialization and urbanization took a quite different form. Postrevolutionary urban policy addressed several concerns: cost, rural-urban leveling, national security, and a wariness of large cities.

The CCP was not opposed to large cities themselves, but rather to their associations with foreign imperialism and capitalism (Meisner 1982; Pannell 1992). Party authorities considered cities to be wasteful centers of consumption that demanded huge capital expenditures on infrastructure, public transport, electricity, and social services. For these reasons, urban development strategies focused less on the industrialized Northeast and coastal regions (the treaty port cities) and more on creating smaller, less costly urban centers in inland regions closer to the supply of resources (Lewis 1971; Pannell 1992: 21–25; Johnson 1995: 191).

Overall, a primary focus on rapid heavy industrial production, at the expense of developing consumer services and city infrastructure, guided the Party’s policies of urbanization after 1949 (Chan 1992; Johnson 1992). The discontinuation of traditional handicrafts and rural factories, which

used scarce raw materials and labor, and the channeling of most rural labor into agriculture (97 percent of the rural labor force in 1965) created an agricultural surplus that was transferred to the urban industrial sector (Kwok 1992: 68). At the same time, the state worked to control urban growth and population movement into urban areas by implementing the household registration system (*hukou*) in the late 1950s. For the most part, the system effectively restricted individual mobility, excepting the mass rural movement into the cities during the Great Leap Forward (1958–60) and the urban outflow of youth to the countryside during the decade of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76). The *hukou* instituted a binary legal and inherited distinction between peasants and nonpeasants (Cohen 1994: 158). Historically, those born into agricultural families (the majority of the population) have had great difficulty converting to non-agricultural status and have been denied perquisites given to those in the urban, state-supported sector (Potter 1983; Kipnis 1997).

Despite the CCP's goal to reduce rural-urban social and economic inequality, the nonpeasant *hukou* marked the difference between who would or would not receive guaranteed employment, education, medical insurance, household grain allocations, and other subsidies, creating a broad two-tiered system of privilege. Although the urban economy was composed of state-owned, collective, and independent sectors that provided a variable range of benefits, in general urbanites as a group received the greatest share of any resource distribution in Maoist China (cf. Whyte and Parish 1984; Lü and Perry 1997). The state-owned work units (*danwei*) further maintained the *hukou* system as the main way to control and distribute privileges and necessities, especially housing. The multi-functional *danwei*, often resembling a walled miniature city, became an integral part of the dramatically reorganized socialist urban landscape (Gaubatz 1995: 30). Residents lived, worked, and socialized within the work unit space. Through the urban *danwei*, the state controlled urban society and also mobilized residents into political participation (Lu and Perry 1997: 8; Li 1993). Both the *hukou* and the *danwei* systems were particular socialist institutions that minimized the movement of Chinese citizens.

Especially after the Cultural Revolution, boundaries marking cities and their surrounding countryside were transformed into inflexible lines of control that were difficult for individuals to cross without extensive

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documentation (Whyte and Parish 1984: 26). State mobility restrictions also held in check the development of the kinds of large migrant settlements that surrounded metropolises and infused city centers in many Southeast Asian countries (Kirkby 1985; Guldin 1992a). The result of the hukou system was that the city was the preferred place to live and became a steadfast destination of desire for rural dwellers and exiled urbanites. With fairly strict regulation of movement and little state investment in urbanization, large cities experienced almost no growth from the mid-1960s through the late 1970s, retaining their compact physical forms and definitive edges between city limits and countryside. Indeed, Naughton comments that before economic reforms the city centers of Guangzhou, Tianjin, and Shanghai possessed an almost museumlike quality, where building facades remained unchanged since the 1930s (1995: 70).

Urbanization Compared The process of urban development in China also can be compared productively with that in other countries and regions. Unlike many Latin American countries, which have experienced high levels of urban growth and rural-urban migration since the 1930s (de Oliveira and Roberts 1996: 254), China's urbanization trajectory has been discontinuous. For instance, during the 1960s and 1970s China experienced what may be called underurbanization, as planning policies advocated a containment of urban growth and rural-urban migration (Chen and Parish 1996: 64). A super concentration of population in large metropolitan centers has characterized urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean, such that three-quarters of the populations live in urban areas. In contrast, in places such as sub-Saharan Africa, India, Indonesia, and China, two-thirds or more of the population still live in rural areas (Gugler 1996: 2). The high rates of urbanization in Latin American cities have been intimately linked with the restructuring of state and society, as was the case for many Asian countries. In post-Mao China, rapid in-migration of ruralites and other people without access to what are considered urban rights has sharpened existing inequalities and engendered a hierarchy of citizenship. Thus, cities have become arenas for the making of new kinds of citizens. Solinger describes this condition at the end of the century as a "contest over citizenship" between a socialist state in transition and a complex, mobile population that is deeply altering the structure of urban society (1999: 3).

Urbanization patterns in reform-era China remain distinct from those in Western industrialized countries. Far from withering under the sweep of city-based urbanization, small towns, primarily through the development of nonstate township enterprises, have contributed to rural-based urbanization (Lefebvre 1996; Guldin 1997: 62). China's prominent anthropologist Fei Xiaotong has noted that the release of surplus labor after rural decollectivization in 1978, which cities couldn't absorb, led a portion of this labor force to migrate and participate in the growth of small rural towns (1992). These towns have become critical nodes in national development processes whose goal has been to keep people in the countryside but not necessarily working the land (Lin 1997). As Dirlik and Zhang note, "one sees that the industrial penetration of the rural also gives rise to a post-urban, decentralized and place-based mode of development that promises to narrow rural-urban disparity and to rebuild rural communities in the market environment" (1997: 6).

The industrialization of small rural centers is not unique to China. Scholars stress the similarity of the urbanization of China's countryside to processes occurring in Asian countries such as Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, and Japan (Costa et al. 1989; Jinnai 1995; Kim and Choe 1997; Seabrook 1996). In these countries, the majority of industry is concentrated not in urban centers but in hinterlands serviced by cities (Naughton 1995: 83). A new process of settlement termed *desakota* may be distinctive to Asian regions; it is "a form neither urban nor rural, but a blending of the two wherein a dense web of transactions ties large urban cores to their surrounding regions" (Guldin 1997: 62).

And yet, *desakota* formations in China do not always reduce rural-urban differences. As the ethnographies in this volume suggest, communities in this market environment are not rebuilding on a level playing field, but along historically and culturally specific axes of urbanity and rurality. For example, the coastal cities have regained their preliberation status as dynamic centers in the forefront of economic growth. Deng era policies have continued to promote the development and investment in these areas, resulting in irregular patterns of wealth accumulation. Southern and seaboard provinces attract far more foreign investment than the Northwest. Moreover, each province is internally marked by highly variable patterns of wealth and poverty.

Chinese Cities in the 1980s and 1990s In the quest for a fresh national economic identity, Chinese leaders in the early 1980s endorsed the creation of special economic zones (SEZs) in southern China, hitching their development image to that of the economically successful “Asian Tigers” (Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong). Several of these zones have developed into booming industrial and commercial cities that represent modernity and progress to Chinese citizens and to the world. With economic reform, these special economic zones have reshaped older models of cities as largely manufacturing bases to centers of commerce, services, consumption, and recreation. The decentralization of taxation authority and control of foreign funds has favored large coastal cities and their surrounding regions (Chen and Parish 1996: 67). For instance, after more than a decade of concentrated foreign-funded development and heightened focus by state officials, Shanghai has regained its pre-1949 cosmopolitan reputation. Chinese authorities have relaxed strictures on population mobility, which has created movements of between 70 and 100 million people throughout the country and has accelerated urban economic and population growth (Solinger 1995, 1999). Although cities and special economic zones have attracted substantial in-migration, China’s small towns also have drawn large numbers of migrants. This has been spurred by state policies of rural urbanization and industrialization. Such large-scale mobility has profoundly changed rural and urban social space and is reshaping the future of China’s cities and rural regions.

In sum, urbanization, large-scale migration, extensive township and village development, and the increasing presence of transnational cultural forms in China have ruptured boundaries and altered former physical and social distinctions between city and country. This volume emphasizes the fluidity of rural, urban, and global forces and offers a mosaic of anthropological perspectives on contemporary Chinese urbanity.

The book is arranged in four parts: “Xia Hai: Ethnographies of Work and Leisure”; “Gender, Bodies, and Consumer Culture”; “Negotiating Urban Spaces”; and “Expressions of Urbanity and the Urban.”

Part One: Xia Hai: Ethnographies of Work and Leisure *Xia hai*, literally “entering the sea,” is the popular term given to participation in China’s

market economy. In the mid-1980s, most urbanites still viewed the petty merchants of street stalls with more contempt than envy. Yet by the early 1990s many people were feeling pressured to—and sometimes exhilarated by—taking the plunge. Opportunities seemed to lie just at the surface. As the century closed, another wave of changes occurred with the massive layoffs of state-industry workers, and the ocean looked choppy, more dangerous. Unemployment and underemployment are potentially the most serious threats to Chinese market socialism. The chapters in part one speak to changes in Chinese cultural-economic relations and to new regimes of difference produced by the emerging Chinese market.

The chapters deal with the creation of new markets and industries—an understudied area that foregrounds the constructed nature of economic reforms and thus of personal experiences of the market. In analyzing different representations of the market in China (here the network, the labor market, and the social market for Chinese rock and roll music), we take the market to be a cultural product as well as a form of cultural production. All three authors posit an intimate relationship between a Chinese socialist market and the urban, but one that remains unequal and local nonetheless. Jeffery and Efir's chapters outline how the parameters of various markets are drawn through extant cultural categories and an urbanity that is spatially associated with the foreign. Hoffman traces the channeling of the nation's most desirable labor pool—college graduates—into urban labor markets.

While much has been written about the disempowerment of the nation-state in the face of increasingly flexible and mobile capital, in China we see a process of negotiation between the state and new kinds of economic actors (Anagnost 1997). The state and the market are sometimes mutually constitutive, as in Hoffman's chapter, where labor markets turn out to be neither naturalized nor autonomous but a process through which different agents (university employment counselors, employers in state and other institutions, and college graduates) act as interlocutors and constituents of both the state and the market. In other instances, these categories are more ambiguous, more explicitly oppositional, and less state initiated, as in Jeffery and Efir's chapters. In both of these cases, new markets (direct sales and rock music, respec-

tively) sprang up at some distance from the gaze of the state through the efforts of individuals who identified themselves as bearers of indigenized transnational culture. However, neither were wholly independent of the state but were established through the efforts of local and national-level officials.

The equivocal and contradictory position of the state, where officials increasingly find themselves representing the interests of capital, is ironic at the very least given that the nature of relations between labor and capital has been one of the founding moral narratives of the entire socialist era. Hoffman and Jeffery's chapters posit employer-worker relations as a critical moment of struggle over basic values of appropriate personal sacrifice and just rewards, talent, and professionalism.

Hoffman details the transition from the state bureaucratic distribution of labor to a labor distribution process shaped by market forces, in this instance a particular labor market that valorizes certain kinds of urban labor while stigmatizing others. Her study of students, employment officers, and employers at institutions of higher education, themselves strictly urban phenomena, focuses attention on the construction of desirable labor—that is, highly educated urban male intellectuals rather than less educated, female, out of work factory hands or agricultural workers. Jeffery's study, on the other hand, shows an entire industry pathologized by the state. It is the tension around the relationship between direct sales distributors and their companies, which the state is ultimately unable to mediate due to the spatial and social structure of network marketing, that eventually destroyed the industry in 1998. Efirid notes that practices viewed by some as outside or even counter to the interests of the state (in this case the creation of a consumer base for Chinese rock music) are not necessarily outside the interests of the market.

Efirid's chapter on the development of the Chinese rock music (*yaogun*) market and Jeffery's on the Chinese direct sales industry also contribute analyses of the indigenization of foreign market practices, narratives, and capital. Efirid recounts the processes by which *yaogun*—a phenomenon that takes place largely within urban spaces—mediated between locally defined notions of art and commodification, foreign cachet and local authenticity, and state intervention and private initia-

tives. Jeffery describes how the promise offered by foreign and cosmopolitan marketing practices, techniques, and skills extends to all-around personal transformation.

The chapters each address the issue of market identities, or new forms of subjectivity that come into being through market discourses, and their relationship to the urban. It is through the practicing and hopeful bodies of university graduates, would-be multilevel marketers, and rock musicians that particular ways of dressing, talking, walking, and other forms of self-expression become authorized at the same time as they devalue older or alternative modes. Ultimately, the contradictions between socialist and market era values are experienced most saliently in terms of identity.

Part Two: Gender, Bodies, and Consumer Culture Part two brings together several overlapping themes to consider experiences of the urban: consumer culture, bodies, and representations of gender. Economic reforms in China have brought the Chinese citizen into increasingly close contact with transnational capitalist goods, ideas, and practices, inundating the Chinese landscape with a consumerism that refigures relationships and self-identities from the ground up. The four chapters in this section provide localized ethnographic analyses about the ways in which commodified ideals, narratives, and practices move around the world via human bodies, technologies, and capital (see Appadurai 1990; Featherstone 1990; King 1997; and Ong and Nonini 1997).

Yet, in considering the growth of a consumer culture, scholars of mainland China must remain attentive to the continuities and breaks with the pre-economic reform era. Indeed, thirty years of anticonsumption, antibourgeois, socialist education have been eroded but continue to shape the present. The 1990s brought about a flood of state-sanctioned and transnationally produced valorizations of consumption. “What comes into being,” writes Mayfair Yang, “is a culture of desiring, consuming individuals yearning to be fulfilled” (1997: 303). Changing conceptions and experiences of the body and gender emphasize the individual as a project of self-identity and self-presentation; nevertheless, this project is mediated by state and national agendas (Bourdieu 1977; Turner 1994). These chapters highlight important institutional and social contexts as China seeks to enlarge its presence on the international political and

cultural scene, maintain political and social stability, and promote economic development.

Gottschang's chapter explores the position of urban hospitals as representations of modernity and bioscience as well as changing regimes of sexuality and feminine body management. Women are subject to contradictory messages about their bodies and those of their children. In a Beijing hospital, Gottschang analyzes the effect of state birth control policies that place the burden of producing healthy citizens upon women and their bodies. At the same time, however, images of sexually attractive mothers used to promote infant formula products and breast-feeding play on new mothers' concerns with regaining their prepregnancy shapes. In the convergence of motherhood and consumerism in the hospital, self-identity is being reorganized in a way that moves beyond the earlier, socialist model of womanhood, a model that emphasized the strong, asexual woman, to one that also embraces a slim body image and sexual attractiveness.

The chapters in this section also highlight an increased commodification of culture and tradition, concentrated in women's bodies and framed within regional, national, and international interests. Clark describes the production of marriage introduction agency videos that show off young women in Shenzhen to foreign men in which traditional femininity was the most desired quality. Brownell discusses the evaluation of traditional oriental beauty in the context of a mainland "supermodel" contest held by a transnational modeling agency to choose the next Chinese model for international competition. And Hyde illustrates the construction of an ethnic minority "culture" marked as rural, feminine, and sexual.

Clark, Brownell, and Hyde also offer analyses of flows of narrative, imagery, and practice circulated via the media, migrant workers, tourists, athletes, models, and others between countryside and city. Brownell posits the urban as a site for the production of an elite cosmopolitan culture that draws country people to the city with visions of an urbane lifestyle and even an "imagined cosmopolitanism" (Schein, this volume). These imagined lifestyles are part of the promotion of a "misrecognition" of growing social and economic inequality by urban cultural producers such as modeling agencies, media, and other urban institutions (Bour-

dieu and Passeron 1990: 4–5, 12–15, 177–78). These are also the bodies that represent the nation in international competitions. As such, they shape and are shaped by both a national Chinese identity and the idea of Beijing as the civilizing center in a country fraught with increasingly powerful urban centers. In the bodies of young, female fashion models—who are “made, not born”—we see clearly the production of a concept of feminine beauty that must answer at once to nationalist, culturalist, and transnational market interests. Clark presents a view of Shenzhen, the bustling special economic zone in the South that draws in large numbers of migrant and other workers every year. Her research centers explicitly on young women who move to the city in search of work, adventure, and love—and whose expectations are often dampened by the state’s refusal to provide them with legal permanent residency. The borders of the city still represent real barriers to nonresidents—and yet the state is willing to lift national bureaucratic barriers to assist the same women in entering into transnational marriages with Japanese or Singaporean men. Clark’s work among marriage introduction agencies shows how these women, still in the process of becoming urbanites, construct themselves as traditional Chinese women in order to appeal to men in other Asian countries. The very female bodies that are unwanted in Shenzhen become transformed into marketable commodities for relatively wealthy foreign men.

Hyde gives an example of an urban site that is developing a marketing niche for itself. In this case, the southwestern city of Jinghong is perceived by the rest of China as an ethnically other, tropical rural paradise brimming with sexually exotic young maidens. At the same time, it operates as an emblem of the urban within the region because of its highly developed prostitution and gambling industries. This city has become a space where migrant women of all ethnicities make a living off rich male tourists by masquerading as eroticized Tai girls and a place where male Han tourists come to fulfill their fantasies of the high life, gambling, and alluring women. Minority Tai, majority Han, and other ethnic groups in Jinghong, argues Hyde, are engaged in a highly disputed process of creating a commodified culture of Tai ethnicity by exploiting and refashioning Tai traditional culture. Together the chapters present diverse ways in which the Chinese female body is being packaged in relation to the growing consumer market, as well as how women are engaged in presentation of a certain bodily self for their own social and economic success.

Part Three: Negotiating Urban Spaces Post-Mao economic reforms have fostered dramatic changes in the relationships between space, time, state, and society. Following Massey's suggestion (1994) that places are never static or empty concepts but reflective of gendered and unequal power relations, the chapters in part three address space, place, and the urban as contested social processes. The transformation of state-society relations and the partial withdrawal of the state from domestic and social life have given rise to increasingly diverse kinds of leisure and personal space. The authors in these chapters suggest that this reshaping of space has been accompanied by changing relationships between the urban, modern, rural, national, and transnational. As new policies displace the planned structures of the socialist order, individuals such as railway workers, migrant laborers, and even ordinary consumers must locate themselves in new markets with vastly different social geographies. The readying of the Chinese population for participation in global capitalism has taken place through a state-initiated civilizing process aimed at re-making subjectivities into those appropriate for a disciplined, efficient work force (Anagnost 1997).

The socialist era was marked by a politicization of domestic, social, and public space through periodic mass campaigns, social movements, and rituals (cf. Anagnost 1997; Brownell 1995; and Rofel 1999). A temporality based on a continuum between a bitter past, a present of deprivation, and a sunny socialist future privileged the future over the present and in the process minimized consumption to increase production (Croll 1994; Rofel 1999). While the opportunities for economic reform have spread unequally across the Chinese landscape, creating hierarchies of investment along axes of hinterland and coast, and Northwest and South, the idea of the nation has become one of multiple times and spaces (cf. Anagnost 1997).

As Verdery has noted for Romania during a similar transformative period, the time-space of a socialist economy was a poor match for the accelerated time-space of post-Fordist global accumulation and production, which is characterized by "just in time" inventories, increasing turnover time, and capital circulation (1996: 34–36). Key features of socialist economies, such as cumbersome bureaucratic planning and distribution and centralized control over the production process, may have had more resonance with the economics of Fordism than with the "nim-

bleness” of capital attributed to practices of flexible accumulation (ibid.). In the process of moving from plan to market in China, space itself has become commodified. Capitalist practices produce particular kinds of space, yet already inscribed in such space are memories and practices of a socialist era that continue to inform the new.

For example, as the socialist medical system moves toward a profit system, place has gained new significance in the social geographies of health care. Chen describes how access to health care and meanings of health have shifted from more communal and affordable practices, even in forms such as meditation and breathing (*qigong*) or folk dancing (*yangge*), to new practices that speak to an individual consumer who interacts directly with the pharmaceutical market. In her analysis of contemporary modes of healing and medicine consumption, Chen notes how processes of decentralization, greater access to technology in rural areas, and new drug markets have called into question the urban as the privileged site of medical care. She points out that as people bypass hospitals and clinics in their quest for health and the good life, their roles are no longer defined as patients but as consumers or clients who have a certain autonomy from some aspects of the hospital-based medical system. However, as individuals become the focus of marketing ploys by drugstores and pharmaceutical firms, wealth and access to new medicines critically alter the social relations of medicine in rural and urban contexts.

According to Junghans, the spatialization of time during the socialist period immobilized Chinese citizens through the household registration system and fixed specific places in a national developmental hierarchy. Through the narratives of railway workers, she addresses changing geographies of distinction engendered by mobility and market opportunities. In the movement from plan to market, formerly prized railway jobs and places have lost status as a different set of cultural values comes to shape individual positions and self-worth. Railway lines and workers now defined through qualities such as old/young, educated/uneducated, inside/outside, and backward/progressive, are ranked in a hierarchy of modernity and exchange value. Workers tied to unprofitable places within a particular railway station and to lines now seen as less desirable are linked symbolically with the planning era of stasis and centralization, while those on the faster, lucrative, more easterly, and more heavily traveled

lines represent the dynamism of the market era. Junghans emphasizes that the current spatialization of the social landscape should be linked to its legacy if we are to understand people's experiences of place and space.

Zhang's portrayal of a migrant community on the outskirts of Beijing offers a clear example of the relationship between space, power, and representation in a challenge over place. Zhang addresses the symbolic and disputed meanings of space as it becomes marked as criminal, unsafe, and private. The migrant entrepreneurs of Zhejiangcun, in the process of building businesses and residences, created a self-governing community perceived by local authorities and Beijing residents as a threat to social order. Part of the socially marginalized "floating population," the entrepreneurs' success pushed the limits of state tolerance for economic and social autonomy as tensions between migrants, local citizens, police, and municipal authorities escalated. The need to enact state legitimacy led to the destruction by authorities of the migrant homes and businesses and their expulsion from the city. As Zhang's analysis highlights, changing state-society relations demand new forms of political resolution that rely upon spatial codes of order.

Collectively, the chapters in part three demonstrate how, even as individual, social, and physical locations shift under market reform, new practices have emerged to counter dislocation and create a sense of belonging.

Part Four: Expressions of the Urban In the final section, the authors explore some of the ways in which urbanity has been characterized—in scholarly or popular opinion as well as in transnational settings or specific mainland sites. They suggest that historically embedded meanings of the urban continue to have powerful effects on everyday lives and on the ways those lives are represented. The authors urge us to pay attention to the agency of individuals and crowds whether it is the contemporary renegotiation of Chinese urban/rural distinction, as in Schein and Bal-
lew's chapters, or Western social science theories of Chinese rurality and urban anonymity, as in Hertz's chapter.

In the early twentieth century, Chinese urban intellectuals came to see the countryside and its vast peasant population as a primary reason for China's failure to achieve modernity. After the 1949 revolution, however, the oppositions of rural/traditional/backward and urban/modern/cos-

mopolitan were explicitly contested by the Maoist vision of the restorative potential of peasant labor. In the 1990s, perceptions that rural China was preventing the entire nation from modernizing re-emerged in state and popular rhetoric. Indeed, changes in migration and urbanization brought about by market reforms and China's continuing integration with the global economy have led to increasingly complex interpretations of the relationships between rurality, urbanity, and modernity. One way of understanding how these interpretations are produced is through specific ethnographic cases such as those in this section: Ballew discusses how Shanghai rural factory workers and urban television producers negotiate cosmopolitanism and the representation of rurality; Hertz challenges theories of anonymity and individualization as they apply on crowded Shanghai streets; and Schein details the production of Miao ethnicity through young people's experimentation with rural/minority/urban distinctions in village courting and other rituals and practices.

In Ballew's chapter, we see how Shanghai television producers drew upon cultural assumptions about rural tastes in their work to create a new rural television channel in the early 1990s. Ironically, these very assumptions subverted their project. On a production shoot meant to use the voices of authentic, enthusiastic rural viewers, suburban Shanghai residents contested TV producers' beliefs about rural viewing preferences. Rural Channel producers found their audience surprisingly uninterested in the programming, such as traditional Chinese opera, that was supposed to be appealing to them. This exemplifies how urbanites, planners, and state authorities misrepresented the rural "other" as culturally unsophisticated and frozen in time. Nevertheless, Ballew shows that as urban media producers continue to produce programming that fits their vision of the rural television audience, the audience itself also insists its interests be represented.

Shanghai ruralites' rejection of popular stereotypes is echoed in different ways among members of the Miao ethnic minority group in Schein's chapter. Here the rural/traditional/backward framework is further complicated by the Miao's minority status. As with other minority groups in China, the Miao are valorized by the state as exemplars of tradition. Miao young people, though, experiment with their ethnicity to reposition themselves within the Chinese social structure. In rural Guizhou, Miao youth gain relative proximity to the urban through the

selective creation and consumption of courting and marriage practices—some coded as traditional, others as cosmopolitan. This cultural reworking enables Miao young people to take charge of an identity neither burdened by a weighty traditional past nor engulfed by a dominant Han culture. Schein's chapter also underscores the point, as does Ballew's, that accessing the urban is conceived not as moving physically to cities but as appropriating and often reworking goods, ideas, and trends associated with urbanity and urban life. Together these chapters demonstrate the need to go beyond representations of the urban as one pole of rural-urban dualism (cf. Certeau 1984; Shields 1996).

Ellen Hertz, on the other hand, examines urban society on its own terms through an analysis of the cultural construction of anonymity or "facelessness." In discussing moments of urban anonymity, such as crowd behavior, Hertz offers an alternative to what has been described as the relational construction of Chinese personhood, represented by the concept of "face." *Face* refers to one's social status in the eyes of others, which can be accumulated, lost, or given to another and is said to be a key principal guiding relations between Chinese people, rural or urban. Its corollary, facelessness, here expressed through phenomena of "fevers" such as stock market participation, occurs in those moments when individuals willingly abandon the particularistic identities that define their relations with others to a collective, anonymous experience. Interestingly, it is the way people conduct themselves in the context of a fever (*re*), such as making big money on the stock market, that provides a means of gaining individual distinction within the group. Hertz questions the characterization of anonymity in Western societies as a naturalized, unmarked feature of modern urban life. She concludes that in the Chinese urban context, anonymity is embedded within a diverse range of cultural meanings and practices that illuminate the relationship between the collectivity and the individual.

Together these chapters compel us to examine anew popular cultural and scholarly categories such as urbanity and anonymity, all the while remaining attentive to their specific histories and to the diverse ways these categories are lived through individual practice.

It is our hope that the volume expands what historically has been an emphasis on rurality within the anthropology of China. The thirteen essays here offer localized insights about the imagined and practiced

urban in China. In the ethnographic particularities of each case, the instability of categories and distinctions about the urban and urbanization are brought to light. At the same time, these essays insist upon the salience of the past in China's present moment.

Note

- 1 Yet see Cohen on elite invention of the "peasantry" (*nongmin*) as a new cultural category depicted in negative images and considered lacking in leadership ability. Cohen suggests that the term *nongmin* (versus *nongfu*, "farmer") first came about through a deepening of the rural-urban cultural divide and the rise of an urban-based intelligentsia in the early part of the twentieth century. This image was adopted by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to implement its own political agenda (1994: 157–58).