

Garden, Power, and the Other:

The Cultural Politics of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden

By

Dongyang Liu

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Studies
University of Manitoba

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**GARDEN, POWER, AND THE OTHER:
THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF THE DR. SUN YAT SEN GARDEN**

BY

DONGYANG LIU

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

One of the pressing challenges of our time is our inability to address the many unsettling social and cultural differences. Setting its primary stage in Vancouver's Chinatown, this thesis narrates an intricate story of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, considered the most "authentic classical Chinese garden outside China". Evolving around the garden, the thesis unfolds the historical development of how "Chineseness" has been socially and culturally constructed in Canada, and the rich and diverse ways of seeing between the East and West.

From the contextual point of view, the first part of the thesis—"Other, Power, and the Garden"—traces the historic vicissitudes of Chinatown from its dark past to its present, and from the issue of Head Tax to the fight on Urban Renewal. Through a detailed historiography interwoven with interviews and personal memories, Part I brings the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden into life, into the arena of intercultural and intracultural politics. The themes of power struggle, cross-cultural gazing, dominance of Reason arise naturally with the flow of narration. Departing from the politics of interpretation, the second part of the thesis, "Garden, Power, and the Other", postulates the urgency to understand the power of cross-cultural gazing and mimicking. Oscillating between the age of Colonialism and the present state of Multiculturalism, the thesis leads to the murk of the mind where the Other no longer stands at arm's length, where the border between the Self and the Other, Sameness and Alterity, secretly blurs. To copy the Chinese gardens of Suzhou and to interpret the symbolism of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden forces Canadians (as well as Chinese Canadians) to come to terms with who they are, and why they want a Chinese literati garden in Vancouver.

Cutting through several disciplines, including Landscape Architecture, Architecture, City Planning, Sociology, Anthropology, Religion, and History, this thesis presents an elaborate example of *how*, in our daily lives and in times of crisis, a garden can function both as a *symbol* and as an *operator* in the interaction and mutual deconstruction of two different cultures. Thus, this thesis refrains from separating theory (the systemic discourse of culture) from practice (the discursive daily life). Based upon first hand field work and arrays of secondary texts, and through the voices of elders, community activists, architects, politicians, historians, tourists, and tour guides, this thesis produces a diffusing surface where the philosophical constructs of humanity meet the power struggle of ordinary people.

To present the story in its complexity, and to avoid any final analysis or violent simplification, the author of the thesis feels the need to adopt an unconventional way of writing. Instead of presenting one narrative or one version of history, the author tensely interweaves several layers of poetic and analytical texts. Towards the end, through recounting his personal odyssey, the author frames himself into the web of his writing. In so doing, the author hopes to seek a sense of honesty.

Preface and Acknowledgement

Browsing through Chinatown News to transcend myself from this chilly night of Winnipeg, I find Dean Leung's obituary. I interviewed Mr. Leung last summer for the story of "Urban Renewal". As one of the participants in Chinatown's politics in the '60s, Mr. Leung offered his version and vision of history—as we all have—not without incoherences. Afterwards he gave me a ride to Broadway.

Now he vanishes from us, from the controversies of the Leungs, from his nostalgia for China—a China of the past.

Death reminds us of time and of our limits. It reminds me of my first moment when I stepped out of Vancouver's Airport to face a new world; my first day of entering the classroom in UBC; my first year of Interdisciplinary Ph.D. study in the University of Manitoba; and my first round of field work in Chinatown. Those countless "firsts" engendered this cathartic thesis.

I chose the word "cathartic" purposely. With which, I must express my gratitude to numerous individuals, colleagues, friends, and teachers, for their timely advise and sheer moral support. Without them, I would never dare to dream of completing a dissertation in a second language.

First and foremost, I want to give my cordial thanks to my Ph.D. committee members in the University of Manitoba: Dr. Raymond Currie, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, who introduced me to the Weberian Sociology and the exemplary classical scholarship; Dr. Klaus Klostermaier, the only person I know that comprehends so many languages, thoughts, and classics, whose passionate devotion to knowledge and education guided me, and will guide me the rest of my life; Dr. Ellen Judd, a sinologist, an anthropologist in its true definition, through whose works and insights, my own academic pursuit wings, and it will take me the years to come to assess the profundity of her teaching; and Dr. Mario Carvalho. It is under Dr. Carvalho's seven years of intellectual stewardship, and most important of all, his friendly trust, his unremitting support that made my learning experience in Canada extremely constructive and pleasant. I hope Dr. Carvalho still remembers the first term paper I handed in, or the first draft of my Masters thesis. Here is my Ph.D. dissertation. Mario, thank you so much.

Secondly, I am in debt to the assistance, cooperation, and direct contributions from the protagonists of this thesis. Including Joe Wai, Don Vaughn, Jonathan Lau, Marry Chen, Bessie Lee, Shirley Chan, Roy Mah, Cindy Piper, Bing Thom, Sophia Leung, Jimmy Lam, James Cheng, Walter Hardwick, S.K. Lee, Ron Shon, George Wong, Michael Kemble, Faye Leung, Dean Leung, Marwyn Samuels, David Lam, Gilbert Eng, Heather, Chris, Norman, Joan, and the 52 tourists whom I interviewed.

Thirdly I must mention the help I received from the institutions: The Chinese Library in Strathcona; the B.C. Archives; UBC Asian Study Library; and the University of Manitoba for my three years of Ph.D. Fellowship.

I thus must mention the students and professors at the Faculty of Architecture in the University of Manitoba, with whom in the past few years I have discussed my idea, and received unreserved comments . They are: Dr. Rory Fonseca, Anthony Zedda, Barton Reid, the late Dr. Kent Gerecke, Darren Lenzubski, James Siemens, Anna Ringström, Jean LeMaître, Doug Shearer, Professor Carl Nelson, and Adrienne Whiteley.

At last, I dedicate this dissertation to my parents who both passed away in my absence. For their unconditional support and love to me. "To try to write love is to confront the *muck* of language:" Roland Barthes reflected, "that region of hysteria where language is both *too much* and *too little*."

Hence I halt writing, turn off the lamp, in the lukewarm quietness, listen to the pittering-pattering of the flurry, travelling from a distance, tapping my window.

Dongyang Liu

Winnipeg
March 1994

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Note on Translation

Currently there are several ways to spell a Chinese term in English: the Wade-Giles system, the Chinese *pinyin* (phonetic alphabet), Cantonese and other habitual ways of pronunciation. "Zen" (an English phonetic translation from Japanese), for instance, can be written as either "Ch'an" in the Wade-Giles system, or "Chan" in the Chinese *pinyin* system. In this thesis, the Chinese *pinyin* system is adopted and—yet to avoid confusion—with annotations on other ways of translation in []. For those terms, such as "Zen", which have already been widely accepted, they will be spelled the way they are.

Introduction: An Afterword at First

My entanglement with Vancouver's Chinatown goes back to one morning in January of 1987, a week after my arrival from China. An acquaintance of an acquaintance invited me for Dim Sum. Having no inkling of what "Dim Sum" meant, and yet having already tasted an amassing tide of homesickness, I readily accepted her offer. The weather was quite gloomy. Rain dampened the sky, turning it into a volatile surface brooding over the grayish ocean. Through the slopes of Fourth Avenue, as we drove along Kitslano Beach, came to view the snow veins of Grouse Mountain, the wiry Lion Gate bridge, the dark silva of Stanley Park, and the glinting silhouette of Downtown high-rises. Having sojourned briefly at the waterfront, we headed eastwards. Noticeably the streets at the lower downtown looked aged, but colorful. Various sign boards in Chinese stuck out from eerie gables and ornamented facades, rushing past as I felt the car jolting a bit. I was told we had arrived in Chinatown.

Within seconds I could not trust my eye. What kept flashing in the back of my mind were the cinematic images of 1930s' Shanghai, or the festivity of Canton villages I had visited before. And yet, something definitely foreign permeated Chinatown with which I did not immediately come to terms. Years later, reminiscing this first moment, I found an analogy: Chinatown excited my deep affiliation and alienness, as if being introduced to an unheard cousin or half sibling. Naturally this alienness soon became overwhelming. My inability to speak Cantonese set up a barrier between myself and them—the *Laohuaqiao* [The Old Time Overseas Chinese]. My memory of my first encounter with Chinatown remains as vivid fragments. I cannot recall which restaurant we went for brunch. But I remember there were few passersby on the street, few customers in the restaurant. What else? maybe the noise of walking on the awashed side walk; the barbecued ducks, sliced into halves, hanging behind the shop windows; the icy freshness of the lambent bamboo in a court yard; the dark sandalwood antique furniture emitting a smell of lacquer or grease; the fragrant lotus leaves of the sticky rice bundles; and the bright red blouse of the waitress who served us in Cantonese. Chinatown embraced me with its redolence and texture.

Except for a few shopping trips in the next four months, my contact with Chinatown had been rather superficial and ephemeral—I left Vancouver in the summer of 1987. For a long time, Vancouver's Chinatown faded from my sight. I would have never considered writing about it, if fate had not revealed itself in a strange way. The incident in Tiananmen Square dramatically altered my life. Instead of visiting China, a trip I had planned after gaining a Masters Degree in City Planning, I ended up in a design firm located on the southern edge of Vancouver's Chinatown. Thus my contact with the local Chinese community resumed. By then

I had already learned to speak Cantonese, broken but presentable. Aside from these external factors, something inside brought me one more step closer to the people in Chinatown.

This internal mutation arises from years of experiencing the North American society, whose multifarious facets created a mirroring effect in my mind. I am (as I often consider that those of my generation are) the involuntary product of Mao's Cultural Revolution which left a cultural vacuum and material poverty. Attending universities in the early '80s, we were caught up in the first and probably also the last wave of the modern Chinese renaissance in the post-Maoist era. At the national level, Deng's empirical pragmatic doctrine—"Praxis is the only true measure of Truth"—allowed a wide range of intellectual discussion to take place. Universities were flooded by Neo-Marxism, Sartre's Existentialism, Kantian Liberty, Piaget's Structuralism, Rousseau's Romanticism, Heidegger's Phenomenology, and the abstract words of Science and Democracy. How pervasive had these Western Enlightenment Ideals become? One can look at the large crowds of students gathered in Tiananmen Square in the summer of 1989.

Living in the West, and having watched the pain and agony of this part of the planet—which otherwise would have been omitted from a distance— where rich and poor, philanthropy and violence, heaven and hell, thrive side by side, for better or for worse, I began to find that the fulcrum of the Enlightenment Ideals were beginning to decay. For the first time, I felt assailed by the fragility of my own ego, by the unspeakable terror and joy of rebirth. Here, facing the mainstream of Canada, I realize my irreducible alterity and the urge to let that difference be recognized. Being a minority, an Other, a traveller on the open prairie, I could see myself perceive things differently. I could, for example, become sympathetic to Tibetans who are a minority within the Chinese society. As a result, the distance between myself and the *Laohauqiao* was infinitesimally shortened. I started to understand their pride in calling themselves the "Tang People", and compelling their sons and daughters to learn Chinese. Particularly now, with both my parents having passed away, with my old neighborhood disappearing under the bulldozers, with China madly transforming into a market economy, I suddenly began to understand the deep solitude and yearning of the early Chinese settlers, severed from their previous time and space continuum. They waited on this side of the Pacific to return home. Whereas in their home village, their names had day by day slipped into oblivion, faded in the yellow pedigree books.

History had conferred on each early Chinese settler an incredible story to account. Not that the Chinese Canadians were particularly extraordinary, but because of the historical conditionalities that they had endured in this young country. Yet if one opens a textbook of Canadian history, there is little said about how many Chinese laborers died in the CPR construction, and for what causes; nor is there any detailed recount of the cold racism, the anti-Chinese riots, the barring of the Chinese from access to hospitals, schools, or soup kitchens.

Having stated this, I intend neither to deny the liberty developed within Canadian society as a whole, nor to disguise the internal frictions and rivalries of the Chinese communities. What disturbs me when pondering the history of Chinatown, is the piercing tragic quality in a truly Aristotelian sense: "a man not preeminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgement" (Aristotle 1954:p.238). When the East and the West converged upon the land of the aboriginal people, for certain historical reasons, one believed in conquering the other. The malconsequences of this cultural hegemony took almost four generations of Chinese Canadians to comprehend, to come to terms, and to finally overcome. I often felt "fear, pity and stunned", when reading the family letters of the early Chinese settlers, when flipping through a thick eroded scrapbook in the B.C. Archives, which compiles cases of racism against the Chinese, or listening to a Chinese elder speak about life then on Pender Street. I feel "fear" because racism may re-emerge or never die out in our time; I feel "pity" because of the immeasurable bloodshed caused by one's ignorance of others; and I feel "stunned" to realize how insurmountable it is to approach Otherness.

If multiculturalism today advocates precisely the intra-cultural and inter-cultural dialogue in order to avoid "fear and pity", has there not been too little focus on the legacy of that historical meeting of the East and West? Is not the phenomenon of trans-cultural experience that has forged the identities and heterogeneities of the Chinese Canadians—like myself—neglected?

In the largest Chinatown in Canada, the East and West stare at each other; oscillate; blend; segregate; dissipate; co-exist; diffuse; transform..... By their endless possibilities, time has rutted a winding course, to which Paul Yee's "Salt Water City" and Kay Anderson's "Vancouver's Chinatown" ought to be so far the best documentation on the past of Chinatown. The latter primarily focuses on the changes in the mainstream Canada and the Chinese community through examining the various stages of immigration policy; Yee's historiography discloses Chinatown mostly through individual cases, but rarely gives an interpretation. After reading them, I was captivated by their compelling scholarship, breathing an unbearable lingering hollowness for days. Would not the Chinese treat the Europeans the way they had been treated if China at the turn of the century were an international superpower? Aren't the Chinese just as ethnocentric and sometimes racist as the Europeans? How much has Canada really changed in the past one hundred years in tackling this little word "race"? A tickling desire thrust me to search for an answer. And a new horizon unfolded. I was convinced that one had to weave China and Europe into a picture in order to give a fair, magnanimous historical exposition of Chinatown.

Even so, I had no inclination to write up the entire history of Vancouver's Chinatown. It exceeds my intellectual capability, and my financial ability. A smaller nexus would be preferable, where the issues of intracultural and intercultural dialogues could be raised, in the context of Chinatown, and retreat when the inquiry wears thin. Such a nexus turns out to be the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden.

Why did I choose a garden instead of another artifact? Straddling ambivalently between wilderness and humanity, for me, Garden embodies one of the most archaic pristine forms of acculturation. Every civilization finds the garden a middle ground where mankind fondles nature in a varied manner (Marcus 1991: p.26-33). Not without dispute, every garden contains the dreams of "childhood fantasy" (Pugh 1988). Where the arable land has to be used for sustenance, a garden becomes the place for the temporary indulgent to imitate, invent, and to take revenge on the cosmos. Logically, taking the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, the supposed authentic replica of the ancient Chinese literati garden as a nexus, best dramatizes the question of inter-cultural dialogue. As one will see in the forthcoming chapters, the debate on the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden spins off numerous unexpected twists.

Preliminary research dated back to 1989 and field trips were conducted mainly in 1992, and 1993. My research methodically spread in three major areas: (1) a hermeneutical reading on the formation of the Chinese literati garden that emerged within a web of culture, art, environment, and geopolitics; (2) a historical understanding of the formation of Vancouver's Chinatown as the distinctive Other in the mainstream of Canadian society; (3). the provenance of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden and its political significance in the age of the multiculturalism.

One can see why the inquiry of the Dr Sun Yat Sen Garden thence led and was linked to power, for two significant reasons. Firstly, almost every garden has been an intrinsically political act. While most people treat a garden as a place for pleasure, a place immunized from politics, it possesses the forceful potential to manifest power. It is legible in many imperial gardens that pompous landscape features exhibit wealth and regalism. It is difficult to understand how an ordinary garden may be swayed by power. However aren't all gardens in one way or another the manifestation of one or several world view? Aren't all world views, while being a cognitive map, a socio-cultural construct? Unnoticed perhaps, in its views and vistas, in its manner of framing nature, in its symbolization, garden reifies concrete historically defined relations between humans and wildness, human and human, and men and women. The irony lies in that the arrogance displayed within the imperial garden cannot compete with the subtlety of an apolitical garden in its capacity to convey power. As Abner Cohen points out, the symbols "that are politically significant are overtly nonpolitical." The less obviously political in form, "the more efficacious politically" the symbols prove to be (Cohen 1979: p.

87). Freud and C.G. Jung expound that unconsciousness speaks mostly through symbols that do not make sense at the first glimpse, because unconsciousness has been suppressed by consciousness; it speaks in an ambivalent and oblique manner. Similarly, the political symbolism of any garden could be embodied anywhere—in the design process, in the selection of site and architect, in financing, in the form and layout of the garden, in the windows towards the sky and creek, in the personification of order, truth and beauty, in the function, in the inhibitions that prevent certain people from using the garden, in the interpretation, and in who has the legitimacy to say what the garden means.

Secondly, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden situates itself in a political context. It is the presence of China—the distant Other, the shadow of the ancient literati, more mysterious, more unfathomable than the anglicized Chinatown itself, that lifts the politics of landscape into a truly cross-cultural and cross-national level. Whether it is a garden, a painting, or a film seems to matter less, as long as the artifact looks radically different. A power contest will proceed. As Virginia R. Dominguez observes: "the perception of otherness is not just one of difference but inherently one of hierarchy. Whom do we identify as Others? Not those we identify with, but those we believe inferior or superior to us, or potentially subservient or dominant. Others are significant to us, even if our rhetoric seeks to deny that significance, because it is through our construction of them precisely as significant Others that we situate ourselves" (Dominguez 1987: p.132). "Garden" then, like the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, deemed as an artifact from the non-Western cultural society, obtains a magicness. A garden as such instantaneously engenders the potential of reduction, invention, or reformation intimately eroticizing a projected Self.

Garden, Power, and the Other. By the very nature of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, it is almost impossible to shun from writing about the struggle for power evolving the Other and otherness. By "power", I specifically break down into four interrelated categories: (a). class domination (through prison, annihilation of life, etc.) —known by Marx's saying "Political power, properly so called, is merely organized power of one class for oppressing another" (Marx 1972:p.490); (b). the discipline and normalization of otherness referred to exclusively by Michel Foucault (Foucault 1965; 1973; 1977). Power in this regard infers a vast domain of informal practices in daily life of how socially accepted norms homogenize socially unacceptable behavior and values; (c). the cultural hegemony outlined by Gramsci in Prison Notebooks, delineating the attempts of the West in its colonial age of using the Eurocentric History to unify Other's histories (Gramsci 1971); (d). the cultural appropriation of an Other's life through commodification, aestheticization, and romanticization (Boon 1982; Fabian 1984; Stocking 1985; Clifford 1985; 1987; Dominguez 1987; Trinh 1987; Wade 1987; Taussig 1992; 1993; etc.).

Power	Intracultural	Intercultural
Coercive	<i>Domination</i>	<i>Hegemony</i>
Normative	<i>Homogenizing</i>	<i>Appropriating</i>

Figure 1. A matrix on the outline of power.

This schematic mapping of the all-encompassing term "power" provides a pivotal point to this thesis. For one has to acknowledge that there have been drastic changes world wide in the past few decades that render the conventional definitions of political power insufficient. I would not audaciously rule out the principal function of Marxist "class domination" in analyzing a relatively culturally homogenized society (and on that account, to study how "culture" has been built under the ruling class), nor rule out that of the Gramscian "cultural hegemony" in analyzing the dark history of the Western colonialization. The more the thesis fords into the less structured (or spontaneous) daily life, replete with thick contradictions and nuances, the more necessary it becomes to broaden the theoretical construct of power in accessing these ever convoluted intercultural and interdefined worlds. To take these constraints into consideration, this thesis deploys a moving ground of "power" as it proceeds from the early days of Vancouver's Chinatown, and early contact between China and Europe, to the contemporary and its genesis in the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden. From the coercive to the normative, from intracultural to intercultural power, the shift caters to the particularity of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden.

Obviously to depict "power" in a non-linear, non-liminal mode destabilizes "power" as "an essential such". What too has been concomitantly undermined is the logocentrism of Structuralists and the universality of Truth. Instead of searching behind "long periods, as if, beneath the shifts and changes of political events" there are "the great silent, motionless bases", instead of trying "to isolate small islands of coherence in order to describe their internal structure", the alternative view(s) of the world "would not try to suspect and reveal latent conflicts; it would study forms of division. Or again: instead of reconstituting chains of inference (as one often does in the history of the science of philosophy), instead of drawing up tables of differences (as the linguists do), it would describe systems of dispersion"(Foucault 1970: p.37). Which in Foucault's own term is "the Discursive Formation"; one that prescribes both pattern/non-pattern, continuity/discontinuity, structure/structuring/unconsciousness, and forces thematic analysis. (Admittedly I find Michel Foucault's presentist view of history

("writing of history of the present" (Foucault 1977: p.31), closest to the Nietzschean proposition, intriguingly resembling to that of the Madhyamika Buddhistic "Middle-Way"¹).

This re-introduction of contingency and discontinuity into life, dilutes what traditionally one considers as the singular voice of a thesis. Insofar as history that has not been pre-determined opens for probabilities, we shall be constantly aware of the co-existent conditionalities that bound certain discourse and enunciations of ideas. Dismantled now is the philosophical border of text versus context, event versus conditions. After carefully parrying off a chronological empirical narrative, be it single view or systematic, and a transcendental philosophical critique, this thesis aims at a transgression. In its content, I chose to weave a thick surface in and out of the formative events of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden; in its analysis, I chose to provide as much plurality and nuances as I could; in its style, I chose a mix of reportage, historiography and hermeneutical interpretation. In its narrative, there are my views of Chinatown, of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, of the history of the relationship between the East and West, based upon my personal experience and my own reading of the letters of the Jesuits, the annals of counties in ancient China, the diaries and poems of the literati, and the correspondence between Dr. Samuels and S.K. Lee; there are others' writing—that of Roy, Anderson, Yee, Joe Wai, Bing Thom, etc.; there are others' voices—that of the docents, the community activists, the Chinese elders, the key political figures, and the tourists. Nor have I simply paraphrased what they told me—since I found most participants spoke with a tone of self-centred importance, nor did I try to decipher the past as a jigsaw puzzle, as if there exists an ultimate pattern. All I am attempting here is to achieve a multi-angled storytelling—a diffusive narrative—unfolded around the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, in order to open a dialogue between the Chinese community and the mainstream of Canadian society.

Nervously holding this thesis like holding a prism, I reflect upon what I have seen, what I have heard, and learnt. I hope this fuzzy edged, interwoven narrative has done some

¹In a second century doctrine "The Middle Way", Nargarjuna, the founder of Madhyamika Buddhism discarded two, then prevailing, extremes of ideas: the Essentialist believes the world exists noumenally as a chain of being, which is pre-determined by divine force, and the Relativist denies the materiality of existence, portraying the influx of beings as traces that permute, become, transform, never stay, never stop. The world as such dissolves into a series of intangible accidents. Echoing the teaching of Buddha, Nargarjuna treats both views as limited, and therefore, must be deconstructed—to be rejected and accepted simultaneously. In his mind, the world could be figuratively described as an infinite dancing web where there is nothing behind but emptiness; where within, events and objects, names and forms, co-arise with interdependency. Being a Madhyamika Buddhist, one must learn to embrace this paradox all at once: seeing Causality and Effect are not pre-determined to each other nor can be split; whereas all views are limited—each view is of a position, the statements of "the world is existent" and "the world is non-existent" are the notions that shall be equally debunked. In practice, a Madhyamika Buddhist must not search for the finality of that Ultimate Truth behind history, nor be entrapped by the Worldly Truth. By a gesture of embrace, he or she should maintain the Middle of both ways which is the Great Wisdom of Sunyata—the philosophy of Nothingness.

justice to the designers, creators, users, and supporters of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden. I held no intention of evaluating the aesthetic quality of the project. Notwithstanding, I touched upon some arguable points. To the world of academics? I hope this "tearing down of the fences" between journalism, ethnography, interpretive history, architecture, philosophy, political science, might fill the hiatus left by the mapped disciplines. As fewer architects today are interested in understanding the problematics of city planners, and vice versa; fewer landscape architects are equipped with the knowledge of sociologists, and vice versa; few philosophers are keen on the works of ethnographers, and vice versa; fewer Chinese scholars who are good at the history of the Chinese literati garden are interested in the Marxist critique on the commodification of those classical gardens in the West, and vice versa, I am thus just a secondary artisan who builds on others' buildings. Rather than plugging into one discipline, one field, one type of knowledge, the thesis asks for a space deserted by scholars, practitioners, thinkers, and technocrats. Hasn't compartmentalization been inimical enough to dismember places like Chinatown, which, having such a unique socio-cultural history, shine with an irreducible glamour? Aimed at re-entering daily life, this thesis adopts an unconventional way of writing. By interweaving the recount of my own experience in Chinatown (in the italic form) with the historiography of that place, I am seeking a sense of honesty, to frame myself into writing, into history.

Part I: Other, Power, and the Garden

"The explanation is obvious. The Garden of Forking Paths is a picture, incomplete yet not false, of the universe such as Ts'ui Pen conceived it to be. Differing from Newton and Schopenhauer, your ancestor did not think of time as absolute and uniform. He believed in an infinite series of times, in a dizzily growing, ever spreading network of diverging, converging and parallel times. This Web of time—the strands of which approach one another, bifurcate, intersect or ignore each other through the centuries—embraces every possibility. We do not exist in most of them. In some you exist and not I, while in others I do, and you do not, and in yet others both of us exist. In this one, in which chance has favoured me, you have come to my gate. In another, you, crossing the garden, have found me dead. In yet another, I say these very same words, but am an error, a phantom."

Jorge Luis Borges, "Ficcinoes"²

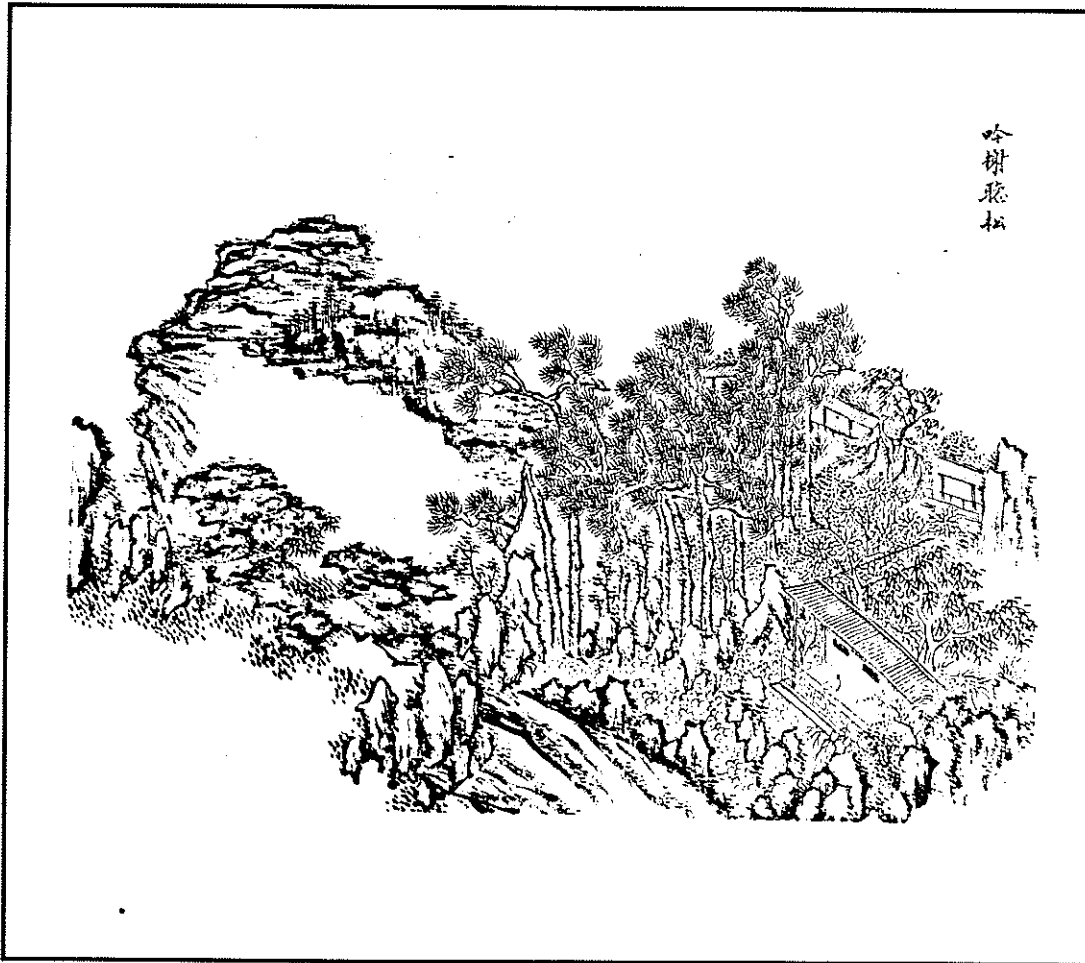


Figure 2. "Listening to the Whistling Pines in the Chnater's Gazebo"

Source: *Chen Congzhou, On Chinese Gardens, 1986*

²Borges, Jorge Luis, "The Garden of Forking Paths" in *Ficcinoes*, New York: Grove Weidenfeld, c.1962, p.100.

1

A Garden and an Antimony

Summer in Vancouver could be unexpectedly sultry when a rain stopped, temperature rose, no wind, thick humid air congealed streets. Nowhere then could be more insufferable than Chinatown, where human figures agglutinated with stalls and goods in the narrow sidewalks, cars filling in between. Under the dazzling sun, life shriveled, the inorganic grew organic. While people throng into the shade, wriggling listlessly, two and three storey buildings along the streets quivered in the heat. Aged and spent. The heavy paint on their faces began to dribble. In between buildings, in the nooks and crannies, drifted out the whiff of cream from the bakery shop, the odor of the poultry, fish, and chives, and the rank from the open ditch. The braying horns, droned hubbub of the construction sites, vender's cries in tinkling Cantonese, intercepted by turbid English words, washed Pender Street all day long, from one end to another, and back again. So soporific, they put Chinatown into a trance.

By then, on time, appeared a red, gigantic double-decker bus. Through its dark non-reflective windows the curious eyes were roving, glancing at Chinatown in the distance. The bus paraded westward down the intersection of Carrall and Pender where a two storey concrete complex of the Chinese Cultural Center prostrated. At the lower level there were the oriental boutiques, the Silk and Linen Company, and classical Chinese furniture store. Detached from its recessed entrance, "Zhonghuamen", the "China Gate", ornamented with the dragon and phoenix motifs, towered towards the sky. The sky was in an unfathomable blue now, against which the building flattened to a stark face, shrouded by a dim aureola. Unlike the adjacent settings whose combinations of Neoclassic facades and Chinese roofs invoked a sense of frippery, this building reserved the untarnished purity of the concrete finish, grey and clean. Its protruding pillars and beams adumbrated something that did not belong to the site — the wooden structured palaces and temples in China. Except that this immaculate modern construct brimmed over with its newness, uncompromising newness.

The bus stopped. A horde of seniors slowly stepped out in a line. The driver, having announced the time for departure, remained in his seat, flipping through a stack of tabloids to find something to read. The crowd clustered in front of the China Gate—posed for a snap shot, then clamorously trailed down to the courtyard of the Chinese Cultural Center.



Figure 3. Vancouver's Chinatown



Figure 4. "China Gate"
in front of the Chinese
Cultural Centre

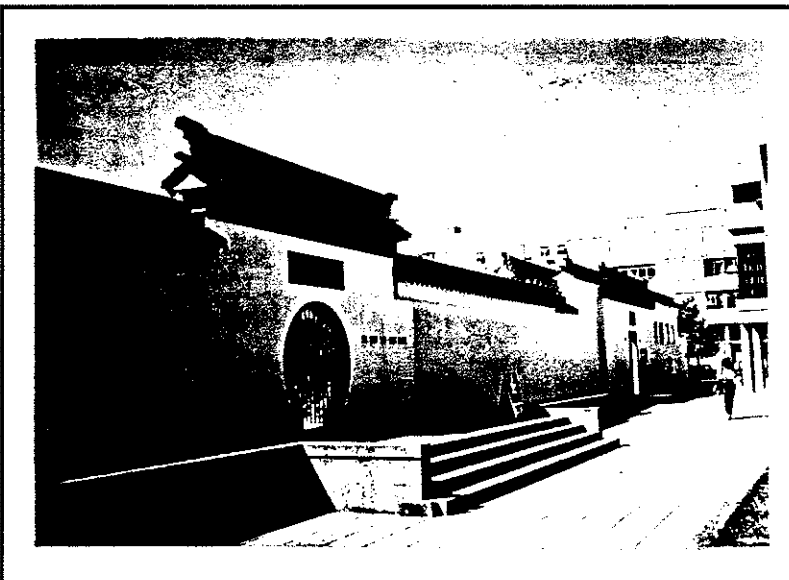


Figure 5. The entrances
to the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden



Figure 6. A view along the corridor inside the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden

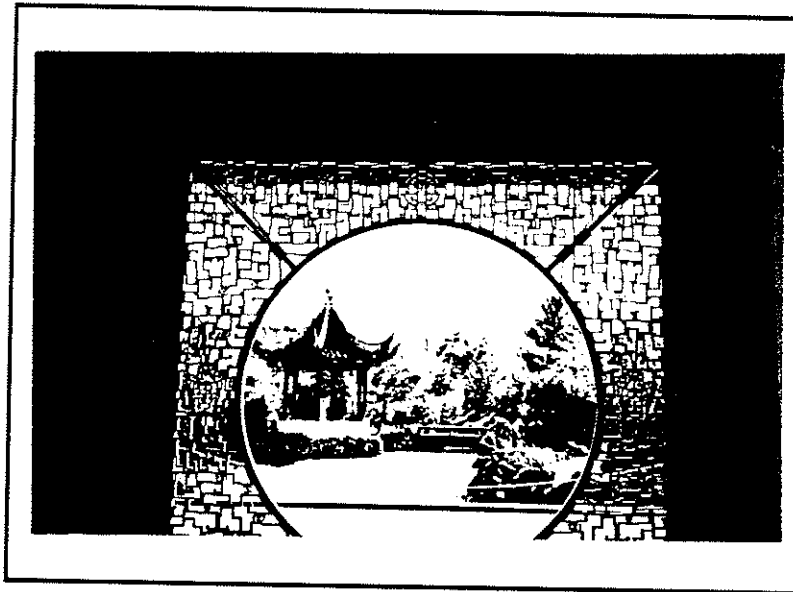


Figure 7. Looking into the Park.

Our protagonist emerged in view. It has a charming name—the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden, or the garden of "Elegance, Delicacy, and the Immortal". If one enters from the Moon Gate, one gets into the Main Garden or Park, gratis to the general public, with mostly plants, vegetation, and a large meandering pond. On a typical summer day a few Chinese seniors would be seen basking under the sun, chatting idly, staring at the golden fish in the jade colour pond. Several yards away two or three youths sit on the slope of the bamboo "hill", smoking hashish. Complacently both sides seem not to mind at all the presence of the other unless when sometimes a policeman in uniform appears. Everyone at once becomes alert and watchful. The police may disperse the tatterdemalions, leaving the old Chinese men

alone to exchange glances, remarking on the bad influences of the "unwanted" people in Chinatown.

Tourists did not enter the Moon Gate. Just as they would bypass Hastings to shop at Gastown, they went where they could pay. Behind the slim door, the frontal patio of the classical garden, walled by the burnished walls and rocks, looked cramped and yet not unfriendly. The extending eaves of the hall tucked assuredly the entrance beneath its shadow. Shadow spread unevenly on the tile paved ground, where moss grew, emitting a strangely intimate dampness. Passing the hallway, a double-sided corridor girded by water cordoned between the park and the garden compound. It allowed the compound to contain a world of its own.

No pagodas, no golden terra-cotta tiles, no red lanterns. This supposedly first full scale replica of Ming Garden (A.D. 1368 and 1644) outside China since 1492 (*The "Vancouver Sun"*, July 28, 1990) muttered a language of another kind—alien, and narcissistic. If not for the occasional presence of the pinnacles of the modern highrises of "City Gate", or for traffic noises from Pender and Keefer, one might have mistaken this garden as one of the gardens in Suzhou, a southern Chinese city known for its gardens. The entire Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden had its parts duplicated from several of the most famous gardens in Suzhou: the Double-sided Corridor from the Gentle Wave Garden Estate; the water pavilion from the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden; and the two rock formations from the Lingering Garden. The general character of the garden emulates the Master of the Fishing Nets. But the very fact of being a replica did not reduce the value of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden. The total cost of \$6 million for the 2.5 acre garden and park (including the land) attested its worth. Visitors loved it. Since its opening in 1986 (till 1992), this tiny place had received over 900,000 visitors from all over the world.

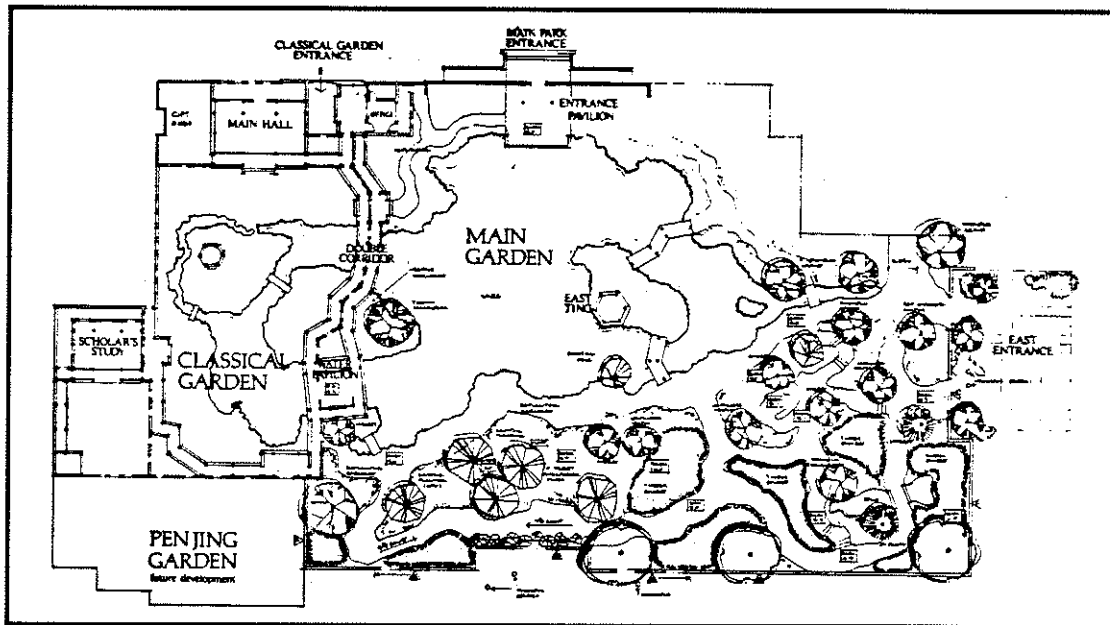
Most visitors left with full satisfaction. Some returned with their friends and families. To them, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden kindled a fire of magic, and shone as an amulet from that ancient land. Writers too found the garden glamorous. In newspapers, television programs and magazines, they had nothing but praises. One magazine lauded the garden "a mecca for Far Eastern scholars and students of garden design and a tourist showpiece unique in the Western hemisphere" (*Western Living*: September 1981, p.36).

After seeing Chinatown in its frippery costume for decades, writers discovered this unadorned garden attractive, and mysterious.

1.1. A Journal from an Architect

Venturing through this place, some profess that their lives have been irreversibly altered. An architect-writer recalls: "On first visiting this garden, I felt animated by its complexity yet the number of views and different areas and the sheer amount of detail in this

small garden overwhelmed me. I found myself moving quickly from one spot in the garden to another until coming to rest in the Scholar's Garden. The place was too busy, too much. Its meaning was lost to me. I set out then to understand this garden in its own terms. I was in part testing my conviction that understanding the meaning and order of the garden must reveal the values of culture which made it. In a sense, I was engaging in a form of cultural anthropology through design analysis" (Mooney 1991: p.14).



Map 1. The layout of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden

Perplexed by visual complexity, the architect visited the garden again and again, often early in the morning before the other visitors were present.

I [the architect] kept a journal of these visits, making notes and sketches of whatever caught my attention. reviewing these impressions later, I gradually began to 'see' the garden. I have given a few of the journal notes below so that the reader may share the flavor of this experience.

Sun Yat-Sen [Garden]

March 22

Moon Gate alcove

- large view
- topography sweeps view up to the Ting [pavilion] Scholar's Garden
- tight embrace of doorway
- bamboo rubbing on walls. Wind. Walls don't keep out natural forces —sun, wind, rain.
- enframed views, layering.
- paving — diagonals —repetition of pattern moves eyes to boundary —makes small space seem more open.

- resting places are inside pavilions under the roofs looking out on the garden.
- incredible variety of views within a small space.
- small change in position leads to great change in view.

April 12

- I was struck today also with the shifting views as one walks through the garden. The verticals which change their respective alignments are what cause this perception of shifting — columns, vertical stones, tree trunks.
- The waterfall doesn't fall, it runs in individual rivulets, a smallish flow of water. The convolutions of the stone separate it and it splashes on stone again and again. The water becomes a strong background noise to the garden — not drowning but keeping at bay the traffic noise. Right here in downtown Vancouver the air seems always cool and clean.
- How does this garden make me feel? I want to roam around the garden, to be in all the little spaces. For me the garden is a series of refuges.

May 12

- suspended ethereal quality
- Fine attention to detail, especially wood lacquer. I am aware of detail in a way in which I usually am not. Heightened awareness of place through detail?
- In the Scholar's garden the clay tile floor is soft and warm. The Prunus mume moves like a blossom tree of Vincent Van Gogh.
- Verticality breaks monotony of horizontality—zigzag tremendous intensity — compaction and movement.

This "movement" of his eyes through the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden motivated the architect to conduct a research on the classical Chinese garden. "Gradually", he continues,

I began to perceive an order to the garden. The garden is an intense experience, providing a great deal of visual stimuli in relatively small area. Each stimulus is balanced or offset by an opposing stimulus. This produces two effects. First, the original visual effect is heightened and second, the viewer is de-stimulated so that the next stimulus will be perceived anew. The relationship of rocks and plants ideally illustrates this. The rocks are often accompanied by a plant for balance. With the tall free-standing stones this is always the case. The two are a pair meant to be seen together. The juxtaposition of stone and plant emphasizes their contrasting characters, hard, rigid, permanent, versus soft, pliant, transient, growing. The intricate three-dimensional composition of the rock and plant is offset by being silhouetted against the plain, smooth, white walls. This same principle of contrasting stimuli is present in the entry sequence which leads into the garden. Moving through the first courtyard and garden entry the visitors are progressively more enclosed until, entering the main courtyard, they stand under an expanse of open sky. Similarly, the resting points of the garden are in the pavilions. Here visitors sit under a roof looking out at the open garden.

Once the opposing stimulus is recognized as a primary design principle in the classical Chinese garden, it is evident at every level and scale in the garden. In the pavilions the carved and lacquered joiner is contrasted with the plain, unadorned surfaces of door panels, floor and walls. The smooth terra-cotta pavers of the pavilions and walkways contrast with the complex patterns of the pebble paving in the courtyard. The exposed rock of the north side of the false-mountain contrasts with the lush greenery which covers the south side. The built form of

the Ting contrasts with the rock of the false-mountain on which it sits. Examples of opposing stimulus are everywhere, from the detail within a single carved screen, to the juxtaposition of the expansive, open quality of the views from the Ting with the dark, tightly enclosed views within the waterfall grotto.

The use of complimentary opposites may be conscious representation of the concept of Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang represent opposing yet complementary ch'i [Qi] or forces. Rocks, for example, are seen as hard, unmoving, powerful 'masculine' or Yang elements, while water and plants, which are flowing and receptive, are examples of the Yin element. It may be that the garden designers viewed their exercise as one of balancing Yin and Yang. The result is the creation of tension within design; strong stimuli demand our attention and then release it, only to engage it again a moment later. This juxtaposition of complementary opposites creates the fundamental character for the garden.

Throughout the garden there is a rich detail of surface patternings. The surfaces of the stone, the carved screens, the pebble paving all invite visitors' scrutiny. They find themselves examining every surface, every form, even the smooth, plain surfaces of pillars and walls. The detail is used to trigger the viewers' involvement in the garden. In the very first moment they enter the garden, a tall convoluted rock immediately confronts them, demanding their scrutiny by virtue of its exaggerated and striking form. The next moment they notice the detailed pebble paving beneath their feet. Passing into every hall they meet a new stimuli— carved and lacquered screens. At some level of consciousness the visitors notice that this place is richly detailed and begin to fix their attention on each new thing they see as they pass through the garden. The attention to detail creates a heightened awareness of the place.

Within the garden itself the views tend to be framed by a doorway or seen through a screen. The leak windows are ornate stucco screens within the walls, which are illustrative of the principle of unfolding views. Screen in the oblique, as when approaching along the covered walkway, they do not permit a view until the viewer is aligned at ninety degrees. By this device of first denying and then permitting a view, the leak window demands the visitors' attention to the view it enframes. The garden is a structure of points within a unified whole which yields a series of riveting views as visitors move through it.

In designing the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden the designers first created a tension between stimulus and release and then, by controlling the view and demanding close attention, ensured that the viewers experienced this set of visual tensions. The garden demands that visitors be aware of their surroundings in a way which transcends their normal awareness of the environment.

The fundamental character of the garden is one of polarity and tension: the natural with the built, hard with soft, dark with light, open with enclosed, vertical with horizontal, and center with periphery. The degree of ornamentation in the architecture, as well as in the twisted forms of the rocks and plants is used to trigger a heightened level of perception of surroundings. The result is an extremely complex garden. Not only is there a multitude of surface detail, points of interests and views, there are also many different 'places' within the garden. These are different locations having a strongly expressed character which is created through their materials, ornamentation, degree of enclosure, or type of view available. This garden is too complex to easily hold in the mind, but rather than simplify the garden, the designers developed a number of organizational

principles to guide people through the garden. Perhaps the strongest of these is the use of pathways mentioned earlier (the literal meaning of Dao [Tao] is both 'pathway' and 'truth'). The visitor circulates along the periphery of the garden within the covered walkway. Along the way there are major and minor resting stops, major and minor views. These create a sense of hierarchical order.....(Mooney 1991:pp.14-19).

1.2. The Cartesian Order and the Tao of Taoism

Visceral as it is, the journal unfolds a personal odyssey in an Other's garden. This architect's exposition on the aesthetics of the Chinese classical garden in general and on this garden in particular demonstrates an intellectual competence, along side a successive line of emotions. One does not have the least doubt of the genuineness of the architect's experience—who, after having immersed in the rains and winds of this garden, told, that he had found a role for "cultural anthropologist", finding, with it, a joyful relief, an order behind the chaotic scene.

But wait. Aren't there some "underlying" principles in his conclusion that happens to be problematic? Two quibbles appear: one is whether the ancient Chinese literati gardens were designed with an underlying order? and if so, what kind of order?

These questions are by no means trivial. Some Structuralists (Leach 1976: p.58) and the leading architectural theoreticians (Jencks 1978: p.193) have dissected the Chinese dwelling into the simplistic dualism of Confucian Order versus Taoist Chaos (Jencks 1978: p.193). Some influential Western scholars, such as Mircea Eliade, have boldly imposed the binary of the sacred and the profane upon the Other, believing in its cross-cultural universality:

[People] assume between their inhabited territory and the unknown indeterminate space that surrounds it. The former is the world (more precisely, our world), the cosmos; everything outside it is no longer a cosmos that a sort of 'other world', a foreign, chaotic space, peopled by ghosts, demons, 'foreigners' (who are assimilated to demons and the souls of the dead). At first sight this cleavage in space appears to be due to the opposition between an inhabited and organized — hence cosmicized — territory and the unknown space that extends beyond its frontiers; on one side there is a cosmos, on the other, a chaos. But we shall see that if every inhabited territory is a cosmos, this is precisely because it was first consecrated, because, in one way or another, it is the work of the gods or is in communication with the worlds of the gods" (Eliade 1957: p.30).

Let us suspend both questions for good reasons. Instead, let us make a worthwhile detour, to seek the truthfulness of Eliade's saying in the West itself. From a first look, the binary modality of spatial division might appear unshakeable. Doubtless there was, and is a tradition in Western architecture and landscape architecture design that injects an often hidden order underneath the compositions of buildings or gardens. Few will fail to see this

stratagem in the gardens of Versailles in France or in the Palladian villas in Italy. The deployment of geometry in making architecture persisted since the ancient Greeks and Romans.

From a second look, a subtle difference becomes discernable. Philosophically the Platonic Order is a trinity, interlocked with Goodness and Creation. In Timaeus Plato made it crisply clear that "God, therefore, wishing that all things should be good, and so far as possible nothing be imperfect, and finding the visible universe in a state not of rest but of inharmonious and disorderly motion, reduced it to order from disorder, as he judged that order was in every way better"(Plato 1961: p.40). Therefore the consecrated geometry was deployed to design the Parthenon, (and the Pantheon in ancient Rome) as a divine revelation. On the other hand, since the seventeenth century, the Cartesian Order presented a dualistic hierarchical order in which God transcends from the universe, Man is considered opposing to, and superior to Nature; Mind to Body; Rationality to Intuition (Descartes 1986). By the power of calculus, lexicology, taxonomy, or formulae, philosophers like Descartes and Bacon, pushed God to the outermost of the universe— then, representation itself represents Truth solely.

A rift is revealed. Filtered through this Cartesian mindset, language—encompassing words, poetry, painting, drama, or architecture— that once bound the animistic world, attenuated into literal sign (Foucault 1970; Derrida 1974:pp.1-94; Lefebvre 1974:pp.229-291; Eco 1984; Kristeva 1986:pp.62-73).

All this was of the greatest consequence to Western thought. Resemblance, which had for long been the fundamental category of knowledge—both the form and the content of what we know- became dissociated in an analysis based on terms of identity and difference; moreover, whether indirectly by the intermediary of measurement, or directly and, as it were, on the same footing, comparison became a function of order; and, lastly, comparison ceased to fulfil the function of revealing how the world is ordered, since it was now accomplished according to the order laid down by thought, progressing naturally from the simple to the complex. As a result, the entire *episteme* of Western culture found its fundamental arrangements modified (Foucault 1970:p.54).

And for the first time in history, Reason directly called upon God, trying to prove God's existence by mathematics. Yet the omnipresent God of the Medieval era withdrew, leaked through representation, deserted Man with "his" own intoxication of "his" own image.

Concurrently (a parallelism never simply assumes parallel lines) the sixteenth century in Western architecture became unmoored from the previous integral whole of the cosmos. Along with the abstraction of life, that of the prosperity of commerce and universalization of reproduction of surplus, urban spaces in Western Europe began to be conceived through the abstraction of language and geometry. "The towns were given written form— described graphically. Bird's-eye views and plans proliferated. And a language arose for speaking at

once of the town and of the country (or of the town in its agrarian setting), at once of the house and of the city. This language was a code of space" (Lefebvre 1974: p.269). The monumental books of Vitruvius covered everything that one needs to analyze architecture: "a complete alphabet and lexicon of spatial elements", "a grammar and a syntax", and "a style manual", but missed, as Lefebvre suggests, the "urban effect" itself—the specific, real life experience that generated the spirit of place. By then, the effacement of the "referent" of the Vitruvian analysis reduced architecture to the formal, to geometry and harmonious geometry. What ensued was the widely popularized cosmetics of urban façadeism. "Everything was facade" (Lefebvre 1974:p.273). "Expressiveness emanates from the face; dissimulation, therefore, likewise. Virtues are presumed to derive from it, and it is the subject with its rites and festivals, that can fall under the sway of the prestige thus generated" (Lefebvre 1974:p.274). A shift occurred. The Medieval settlements that responded directly to nature were replaced by the Renaissance architecture that echoed nature but simultaneously idealized it through geometrization; and then the Renaissance architecture was replaced by Mannerism that yielded the "capricious nature", a "tamed" and "invented" cosmos through fantasy. Then Baroque architecture triumphed.

³ The charm of fables awakens the mind," Descartes said. Baroque architecture is therefore characterized by active participation of the anthropomorphic members in a dynamic spatial system. Participation, however, implied that man became more conscious of his own existence, and in the long run what should have made the system secure, therefore, led to the disintegration (Norberg-Schulz, 1975: p.166).

What this crude, sketchy genealogy of Order before and after the Baroque architecture suggests is that even the seemingly universal Order cherished by the West has a history. It is rooted within the permutation of the Greco-Roman-Hebrew tradition. Was this ever fluctuating Order of the West shared by Taoists— provided that the classical Chinese gardens were built upon Taoism?³ Is *Yin* and *Yang* a Cartesian duality, in another words, permanent, polarized and hierarchical? Will chaos be necessarily tantamount to the "profane" in the ancient Chinese society?

To respond to these questions schematically, one can simply resort to common sense. (1) Seldom does a Taoist refer to *Yin* and *Yang* as diametrical poles (in the same manner as Descartes described the duality of body and mind). *Yin* and *Yang* are neither separate nor

³ There are some apparent differences between Taoism as form of religious practice and as philosophy. But I personally find it rather meaningless to separate the two when examining Taoism as a common sense/communal sense, and how it influenced the design of the literati gardens, through the "agents".

hierarchically ordered. Their contradistinction, their mutual transformation, and reciprocal embodiment at best resembles the Hegelian "dialectics". To which Te-Tao Ching teaches:

When everyone in the world knows the beautiful as beautiful, ugliness comes into being. When everyone knows the good, then the not good comes to be. The mutual production of being and non-being, the mutual completion of difficult and easy, the mutual formation of long and short, the mutual filling of high and low, the mutual harmony of tone and voice, the mutual following of front and back—These are all constants (Laozi 1989:p.54).

(2) These constants, to which Laozi referred, remain non-static. The Taoist cosmology unfolds in an intriguing process from the Tao (holism), to *Yin* and *Yang* (dialectics), to Heaven, Earth, and Human (systematics), and the whole universe (change, dynamics). The archaic form of Chinese oracle based upon I Ching (The Book of Change) symbolizes this process by first of all the *Tai Ch'i* circle "☯" for the genesis, the continuous versus discontinuous strokes for the *Yin* (--) and *Yang* (—), the two states of being, the tri-gram (e.g. "☰☷") for the Heaven, Earth, and Human and the eight directions, and the hexa-grams (e.g. "☰☷") for the entire universe. This cycle of concrete images at the same time embodies the cycle of time (hours, days, seasons), space (orientations, constellations), cosmic order (metal, wood, water, fire, earth), divinities, kinship, and inner feelings (to which one could consult the annotations compiled by the historically significant Neo-Confucian scholar Zhuxi (1130-1200) on I Ching published by the Qianlong Imperial Library). Within this cycle of changes, a Taoist inserts a *lesser Yin* and *lesser Yang* between the *greater Yin* and *greater Yang* to be an intermediate to the diametrical mechanical separation of *Yin* and *Yang*.

(3) Having prescribed an Order, or a Tao of Nature, being neither mechanically dualistic, nor fixedly hierarchical, the orthodox Taoism also differs fundamentally from the Platonic Order. Unlike the Platonic Being—an outer ring of the universe for perfection and divinity, Tao in Taoism paradoxically achieves its ubiquity by emptying into an ever lasting process of becoming, which cannot be named, cannot be spoken, cannot be pursued by knowledge. "As for the Way, the Way that can be spoken of is not the constant Way. As for names, the name that can be named is not the constant name. The Nameless is the beginning of the ten thousand things. The named is the mother of the ten thousand things" (Laozi 1989: p.53).

(4). Irrespective of how one labels Taoism, the generic division of "Sacred and Profane" in the Western perception of space is, in general, inapplicable to ancient Chinese architecture and garden design—let alone the perturbing theme of how common sense ferments in architecture making; let alone that it may well be a plethora of religions, beliefs, and practical concerns that have become embedded in the history of Chinese architecture. The

acceptance of uncertainty, and harmony of the subjective and objective worlds in Taoism naturally extends beyond the enframe of the Cartesian order.

One does not have to castigate this architect who renders Tao into a hierarchy. Are we are immune from projecting our own "order" upon Others with or without Nietzsche laughing at us?⁴ This journey of enframing Others—Taussig labels it "celestial flight"—indeed, may come out as a reaction to our deep fear of arbitrariness, to render the Other into the image of the Same may principally be "a worrying about the role of order in empowering those activities deemed 'explanatory.' And just as the figure of celestial flight serves me as a figure for the movement of 'explanation' as a curing movement deemed to transform chaos into system, then the alliance of that movement with the magic and rituals of 'primitive' societies is what I want to also bring into the dialectic of Enlightenment" (Taussig 1992: p.149).

"Anthropology was always a homesickening enterprise"(Taussig 1992: p.149), but too disturbing to dismiss, is the architect's suave equation of the literati culture first with the literati's artifacts, then with the forms and the physical materials of a copy of the literati's artifact. Was he thinking, that by studying in the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, he could access the ancient mind of the literati?

A cranking voice therein oscillates: " We know time only indirectly by what happens in it: by observing change and permanence; by marking the succession of events among stable settings; and by noting the contrast of varying rates of change." (Kubler 1962: p. 13) Autobiographies or documentations can lie (Kubler 1962). Artifacts cannot. Lured by the phantom of Newtonianism, the objectification of culture ensues:

When we scan things for traces of the shape of the past, everything about them deserves our attention. Yet this conclusion, which is self-evident once we recognize that things alone allow us to know the past, is generally ignored under the demands of specialized study. Archaeological studies and the history of science are concerned with things only as technical products, while art history has been reduced to a discussion of the meanings of things without much attention to their technical and formal organization. The task of the present generation is to construct a history of things that will do justice both to meaning and being, both to the plan and to the fullness of existence, both to the scheme and to the thing (Kubler 1962: p.126)

⁴Who said that philosophers today often proceed from "man as he is now and thinking they can reach their goal through an analysis of him. They involuntarily think of 'man' as an *aeterna veritas* [something everlastingly true], as something that remains constant in the midst of all flux, as a sure measure of things. Everything the philosopher has declared about man is, however, at bottom no more than a testimony as to the man of a very limited period of time. Lack of historical sense is the familiar failing of all philosophers; many, without being aware of it, even take the most recent manifestation of man, such as has arisen under the impress of certain religions, even certain political events, as the fixed form from which one has to start with" (Nietzsche 1878/1986: p.12).

Outside the artifact, someone sobs in the dark.

1.3. The Vanishing Pedigrees

I recall a haunting gaze. On page 173 of "China's Cultural Heritage" (Smith 1983), Richard J. Smith presents a picture of a group of eleven Qing scholars sitting within a garden. Aside from vaguely indicating that the photo is from the China Trade Museum, Milton, Massachusetts, Smith leaves the names of those patriarches and the garden unidentified. What rivets me though is this face to face experience with the literati, reduced into a flat surface of photograph, who nonetheless usually maintained their absence in textbooks. My mind boiled with puzzles when I first saw the photo: did these scholars pose for commemorating a special social gathering, their friendship, or a novel experience? What were they gazing at, towards my (or your) direction? a camera man (a man for sure, given the historical time)? Was he an American, a Chinese? Were they curious of the monstrous camera on the heavy tripod, a surprising and delightful exotic? Why had they expressed little emotion? Were they reflecting the world behind the camera, beyond the walls of the garden, where the Qing Empire rapidly collapsed?

Facing me, the enframed imageries held silent. Yet the more I gazed back, the more I discerned individualities among the eleven fossilized figures: the frowning face on the left hand on the first row; the cynical look from the farthest right at the back; the feeble, lanky body in the middle; the complacent ones whose fans were unfolded; the child-like elder squatting between two rocks..... Distinctively, they had been humans. Whatever that means. If acculturation is to be measured solely by literacy, they would have been more "acculturized" than many of us. They spent their lives in texts. Now, they have vanished, bequeathing their souls to the fans they held, the bench upon which they sat, and the diaries they scribbled.



Figure 8. The gaze of the literatis.

Source: Richard J. Smith, *China's Cultural Heritage*, 1983.

Now, writing this thesis—at the moment that I am writing, emotion ravishes me, makes me ponder how fair are we to erase them from their gardens, and to write the history of garden without writing about them? A desire wells up. It is the one that wishes to lend a voice to the dead. Subliminally my sensorium replays the visits I made. My mind relishes restlessly those corroded gates, crumbling walls, dried waterfalls... aged roof curve, those evenings when the whitish moon floated, the wind traversed the leaves of bamboo—that whispering sound. I wonder whether I ever loitered through the same path, stared at the same rock, as those eleven men did. Now and then, my life and theirs, intersect. To listen to them I open their pedigree books.

The Garden of Gentle Wave Estate

The Garden of Gentle Wave has an ungentle past. It is on a quarter of land in the suburb of Suzhou, initially owned by Qian Liu (852-932), the benign governor who promoted Buddhism

in the Wu region. The property was sold to Su Shunqin (1008-1048) in the summer of A.D. 1045. Su, a learned scholar from an aristocratic family of Sichuan, obtained his degree of Jingsi—Metropolitan Graduate, and the official title of Zhixian—the District Magistrate in Mengcheng in 1034, which lead him into a torrential bureaucratic life. Su had a complicated persona. One side of him, being too typically Confucian, cared deeply for the life and death of the ordinary people and the longevity of the Song Empire, that aligned him closely with the political reformer, Fan Zhongyan. The other side of him lacked the typical shrewdness of the bureaucrats. His uninhibited character, ultimately costing him his political career, outshone other literati. The Anecdotes of the Mid-Wu (published in the Yuan Dynasty) described Su as one who "could drink a gallon wine within a day". His father-in-law, the Palace Secretary (Shuminshi) in the Song Court, who disbelieved this story at first, had disciples and servants observe Su while he drank. The witnesses returned, testifying that Su emptied a scoop of wine with one gulp when every now and then he picked up an exciting episode in The Annals of the Han Dynasty.

The gallant Su was not afraid of speaking out. Partly countenanced by his father-in-law, Su incessantly submitted reports on the pervasive corruption, briberies to the imperial court, suggesting political reforms. Dauntingly his plans received no support, and offended many, who sought opportunities to retaliate against him. Disenchantment amassed in Su's writing. And his increasing self-doubt and dissatisfaction with politics shook his faith in Confucianism. In a long narrative poem to a Buddhist monk Mi Yan from Shandong (Yang 1985:p.227), Su recalled his previous lament of the talent of Mi Yan being confined by Buddhism, when they had met in a literati symposium, years ago. Now, Su wrote, the Buddhist withdrawal from the secular world may be a better way of life.

In the Spring of 1044 Su sold some outdated governmental letters as garbage paper for a feast after a ceremony, an act not uncommon in his days, or a peccadillo that otherwise held no significance. He was caught immediately. His opponents arrested him first and then relegated him from the court. It was while in exile that Su arrived in Suzhou. There Su found:

Traveling to the south by a small boat, I arrived at the center of Wu [Suzhou]. Staying inside the local's house, I felt suffocation since the summer was steamy hot, therefore, longing for a cooler, less crowded place. One day, passing by the prefecture school, gazing at the east, I saw a parcel of luxuriant thicket and woods, lofty mounds and wide watery expanse, which had no counterpart in the city. There was a trickling water course meandering in between the multifarious floras and delicate bamboos, with a length from the east to [west] about a hundred strides; a mulberry field, fifty by sixty Xun (1 Xun=2.4 Meters) protruded into water. At the south of a little wood bridge, there was an even vaster land, no residence adjacent, embosomed by thick woods. I asked the old locals, (if they were aware who owned the land). They replied: 'it is the pond and retreat of Sun Chenyou, the kin of the Qian Family.' Loving the humping col and the ancient

terraces, I lingered around, and purchased the property by forty thousand cashes"
(Su 1983: p.21. My translation).

Building a pavilion of "Gentle Wave" in front of the bamboos, in the outskirts of the ancient Suzhou metropolitan, Su laid the ground for one of the most famous gardens in the Chinese history. He was boating between the city and his estate by sampan. On his way he would listen to the chirp of free birds, and thought that he, too, was free from the vanity of officialdom. To those struggling in the political echelon he thumbed his nose: "Only the literati are drowning so low, not knowing that many of the ancient talents and learned ones have died due to a failure in politics. This should be called ignorance of self salvation. I, now relegated and knowing how it felt, am contented with tranquility and wildness, not competing with others, thereof understanding the causes of conflicts, satisfactorily, extending compassion to those in the past who could not be free from their ambitions. I regard myself having been saved" (Su 1983: p.22. My translation).

Contrary to his own depiction Su endured three turbulent years in Suzhou. Depression and disease assailed him when he was writing his journal. One side of his mind sought appeasement, in a poem to a Buddhist Master Guang Xi:

*I was burdened by the secular
You, obtained the dharma, were blessed
if to forget both sadness and joy
[We are] truly the enlightened (Yang 1985:p.308. My translation).*

The other side of Su wrote:

*Solitarily strolling in the Garden of Gentle Wave
Climbing up the terrace and looking far
The Autumn fades into the murky red
The sun illuminates the bamboo's green
The drunk drifts like the swallow in the wind
The poet society withers like frosty phoenix tree
Come and leave, you are in a haste
Who will accompany the feeble old man (Yang 1985: p.342. My translation).*

In paroxysm of laughter, dejection, and self proclaimed other-worldliness, Su collapsed on his damp bed. He had been cleared of the accusation in 1048, and was recruited for Huzhou Prefecture Aide. Yet he died at age 41.

Su's blood dried along the "Gentle Wave". The "Gentle Wave" was carved up by the Zhang and Gong Families..... Later, when the Mongolians built the Yuan Dynasty, the garden decayed into a Buddhist sanctuary for monks. The pavilion Su originally built was ruined, rebuilt, ruined again, rebuilt again. The one we see today was for the last time built in 1875.

The Unsuccessful Politician's Garden

Returning from the "Gentle Wave" to the centre of Suzhou, we encounter another stained locale. It was said (Zhang, et al, 1982: p.12) that the estate of the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden had been previously owned by Lu Luwang (?-881), a genius in the late Tang Dynasty. "The Annals of Wu Prefecture" composed by Fan Chenda (1126-1193), a erudite poet and historian, revealed that Lu entered officialdom for the emolument, since his family possessed scanty means. Lu failed several times in the imperial exams, having at last reached the ladder of Junzu—Commandery Deputy. On the literary side Lu was an undefeated master of Fu, the classical Chinese style of prose, well connected with the literary circle of Yan Yao, Pi Rixiu, Luo Yan, Wu Rong (famous poets).

Lu toiled in his puddle land until late in his life, despite deteriorating health and an unfulfilled career (Fan 1193: Chapter 21). Addicted to tea, refusing to associate with the mighty and vulgar, Lu also built his own garden in Puli of the Pine River, to which he commuted from the city by his own boat equipped with books, calligraphy brushes, tea pots and fishing rods. His aloofness, his total withdrawal from the secular world, occasionally emitted, faintly sad, in his pen-names—"The Wanderer in the Rivers and Lakes",⁵ "The Son of the Heavenly Fate", or "The Old Fisherman", on in his poems.

*Years of dallying in the rivers and lakes, drunken many times
at the old inn of Huang's, wakened without knowing the rise
of the clear moon, cast by the sprinkling shadows of flowers,
waiting to be held up (Xiao et al. 1983: p.1290. My translation).*

Like Su, Lu waited; like Su, he wasn't held up. He withered in the rage of anguish, leaving his houses and gardens behind. Upon one of those estates, in the Yuan Dynasty, upon The Great Magnanimity Temple (of Buddhism), a dynasty after, taken over by a Ming literatus, was built the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden.

Wang Xianchen, born into a family of officials in Suzhou, passed the imperial exams for the Metropolitan Graduate, and obtained the post of Yushi—the Imperial Scribe. The Annals of the Ming Dynasty (published by the Qianlong Imperial Library in 1740) sketchily mentioned Wang's political ups and downs. Having travelled to Datong to inspect the performance of the military officers, he set up foes among those he impeached for negligence of duty. Years later he paid the price. He was demoted to a County Magistrate's Assistant, and in 1504, to a Post Relay Station Assistant in the remote Canton. In the first year of the

⁵A common metaphor in classical Chinese for vagabond life.

Zhengde reign (1506-1521) Wang was granted a position of the District Magistrate close to Suzhou. Tired, battered, he retired as an "Unsuccessful Politician".

Wang took over the Buddhist monastery, built a garden compound, and named it *The Unsuccessful Politician's Garden*. The name was an apparent pun.⁶ Every literatus knew what it meant. One could hardly miss his parodist overtone on the national politics. That intention had been indirectly reported by Wang's close friend, an influential Ming poet, calligrapher, painter, Wen Zhengming (1470-1559), in an essay written in 1533 on the making of the garden (for elaboration, see Chapter 6). It goes without saying that the sentiments attached to this garden reached beyond a singular dimension of nature-loving, nor was the garden a straight political satire. Most Chinese literati seem to have had split personalities like Su Shunqin, Lu Luwang. The feelings of the literati towards the emperor—the demigod, the plebeians, the multitude whom they regarded as children, and the dysfunction of polity, churned with unspeakable incoherence and contradictions. Even within their homes, their own gardens, their lives periodically erupted with hope, despair, bitterness, and deep nostalgia.

So, walking inside the *Unsuccessful Politician's Garden*, Wen, the alter ego of Wang, composed thirty some poems writing about the sceneries, which, today, all seem revealing the coiled inner conflicts. One of them says:

*no need to reach the outermost suburb to reflect
the closest garden contains the telepathic power
flowing water, broken bridge, verdant grass
rose fence, thatcher, cocks crowing at the noon
not to pity the streets of wagons
there is a nature in the mundane
not to disappoint the ancient recluse who lived here
holding books, plowing through the texts in the Spring time (Wen 1987: 1205. My translation).*

Who is "holding books, plowing through the texts"? Wang or himself? Wen did not mention it. The classical Chinese poetry offers a resilience and elusiveness of the subject—vaguely enough so every reader can plug into the position of the speaker. This conflation of egos was probably expressive of the commonality of all the literati: their sense of being lost.

Before long Wang plowed to the end of his furrow. His death marked the turning point of the fate of his garden. Before long his profligate son lost the garden in one night of gambling. The garden, now a forlorn child, began to drift from hand to hand. It was for a while owned by Xu Taishi, a wealthy local, who also possessed the *Lingering Garden*. In 1631, a decade before

⁶ The provenance of the term is from *The Prose of Dally* by Pan An in the Jing Dynasty. Pan satirized himself as a "clumsy", "retired", "unsuccessful" politician. Note that "Zhuo" in classical Chinese can function as a pun to mean "inert", "retarded", and "abandonment".

the Manchus' invasion, the eastern wing of the garden, bleak and abandoned, was sold to an Attendant Gentleman.

In the beginning years of the Qing Dynasty the whole garden fell to a mandarin named Chen Ziling'. Before enjoying the garden, Chen was prosecuted as a criminal, and sent to northern China, where he died. The Qing court confiscated the garden, and used it as headquarters for the marines. Returned to the son of Chen Ziling in 1664, shortly, the garden once more fell to the son-in-law of Wu Sangui. Wu Sangui (1612-1678) served as a military official for the Ming Dynasty. Having refused to surrender to the peasant rebels who had overthrown the last emperor of the Ming, he surrendered to the Manchus in the north, and guided the Manchus troops back to the mainland. When the Manchus established the Qing Dynasty, Wu, as being made a meritorious general, received the honor of Military Governor of Yunnan. Relying on his power, his son-in-law seized the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden.

But the Qing court soon decided to cancel the title and power of the Military Governors. In 1673, Wu deflected the Manchus, naming himself a founder of a new dynasty. At the same time, the garden was confiscated again, relinquishing it to be a yamen—the Government Office, then, someone's residence, then an auction shop.

The garden became the headquarters of the Tai Ping Rebels in 1860; a Bannermen Forthright Service Place in 1871; the Nationalist Jiangsu Government Office in the Second World War; the Office of National Social and Educational Academy in the late 1940s; and a museum garden since 1952 under the Communist government (Chen 1983: p.99).

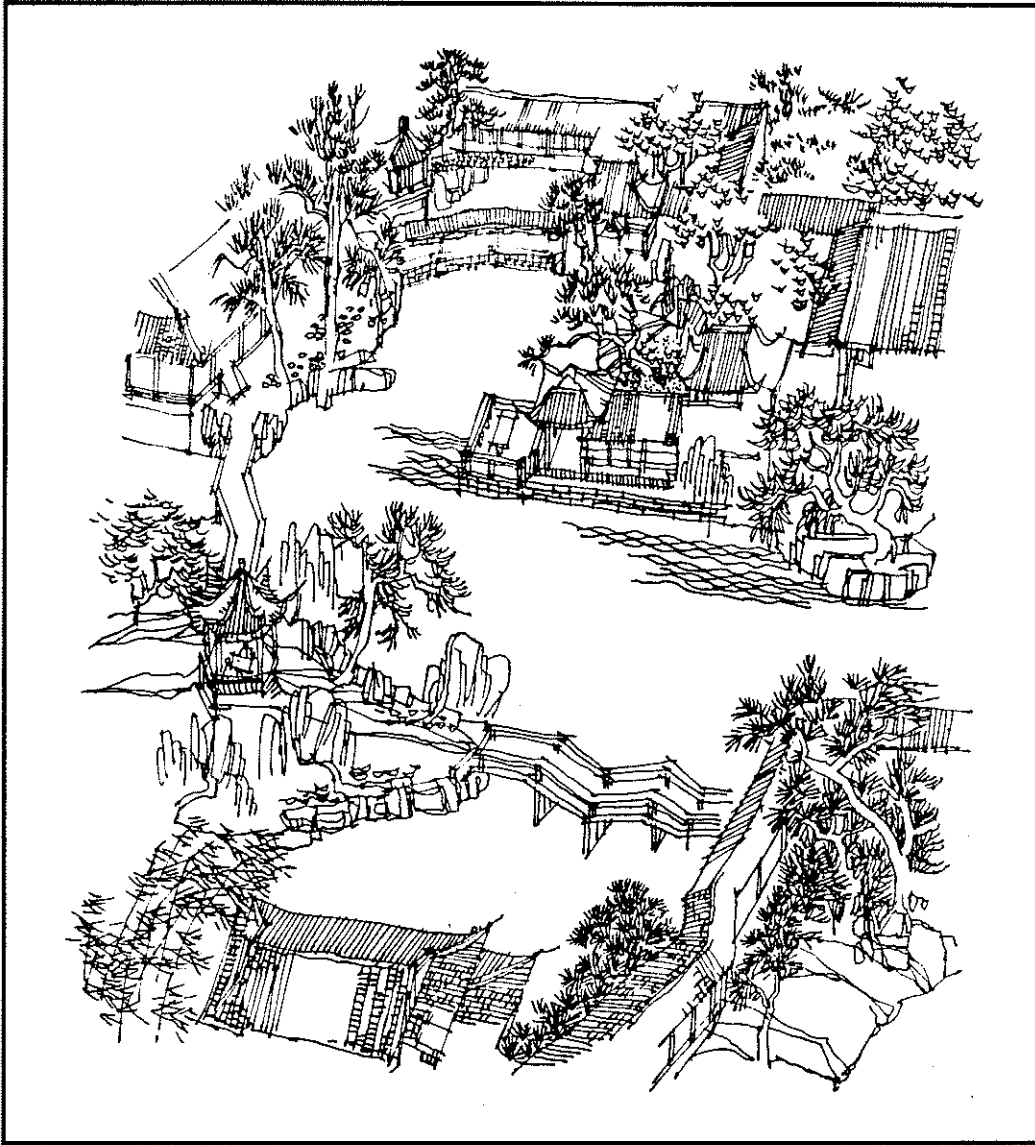


Figure 9. A corner of the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden
Illustration by D.Y.Liu

1.4. Nebulosity of Culture

Weeping, tortuous, from a distant darkness the Chinese literati gardens mumble sobbingly. Across the blanks of epitaphs, across the frames of each vignette, the eyes of the literati emerge, and submerge, with solemn looks, desperately reaching us. And we, in turn, efface their gazes, from their gardens.

What should we do? What in fairness can we write about time, their history, and their culture, without exchanging words with them?

In the murk, the dead protest. (1). The soul of each Chinese literati garden is irremovable.⁷ Be it tiny or vast, be it anonymous or well known, each Chinese literati garden blossoms in the delicate and fertile land of the Yangtze. Each teems with the imprints of past and emotions. The voluptuousness of the Lingering Garden, the animistic sonority of the Lion Grove, the tranquility of the Gentle Wave, the forlorn sadness of Shen Yuan (in Shaoxin), the joyful openness of Li Yuan (in Wuxi), the austerity of the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden. Tied to the vicissitudes of dynasties and the mesmerizing natural settings of the Yangtze delta, those gardens grew aged with distinctive persona, as subtle as the eleven elder scholars in the photograph. (2). The soul of each Chinese literati garden is irreducible. Generation after generation, each garden had been laboured upon and moulded both by different hands and numerous minds. Which chess game can be more diffusive, and more difficult than this incessant process of making? A conflated persona forges through time. The refinement of Chinese literati garden depends, as well as reflects, the thousand years of cultural cohesion that today faces its unprecedented challenges. (3). The soul of each Chinese literati garden is irreplaceable. There were countless historical incidents and crises which imprint those gardens with truly contingent "flaws". The pavilion of the Gentle waves had been redesigned and rebuilt several times; the piled rocks in the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden had been purchased or looted. Therefore whoever marvels at the aesthetical "perfectness" of the Chinese literati garden ought not to forget that they had been built, expanded, inherited, erased; or transacted, damaged, repaired; or rebuilt.

In another word, the Chinese literati gardens cannot be duplicated without altering their cultural substance.

Clearly this is not yet enough. Conclusion as such, proves to be simplistic and temerarious. What is that "cultural substance" or "cultural aura" that injects into, or attaches

⁷Which legitimizes the remark Clifford Geertz makes, when he tosses the concept of Culture and the concept of "Man": "Our ideas, our values, our acts, even our emotions, are, like our nervous system itself, cultural products—products manufactured, indeed out of tendencies, capacities, and dispositions with which we were born, but manufactured nonetheless. Chartres is made of stone and glass. But it is not just stone and glass; it is a cathedral, and not only a cathedral, but a particular cathedral built at a particular time by certain members of a particular society. To understand what it means, to perceive it for what it is, you need to know rather more than the generic properties of stone and glass and rather more than what is common to all cathedrals. You need to understand also—and, in my opinion, most critically—the specific concepts of the relations among God, man, and architecture that, since they have governed its creation, it consequently embodies. It is no different with men: they, too, every last one of them, are cultural artifacts" (Geertz 1973: p.51)

Geertz probably speaks here metaphorically of architecture to make his point on cultural particularity across. However, his statement touches upon one of the imperatives of the present plight of architecture—an issue Heidegger succinctly put: "1. Building is really dwelling. 2. Dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on the earth. 3. Building as dwelling unfolds into the buildings that cultivate growing things and the building that erects buildings" (Heidegger 1971:p.148).

to, or overlaps with, or reversely phrased, those gardens composed by "gnarled trees" and "bizarre rocks"? Borges, as I cited in the preamble of Part I, interpreted the aura of Chinese garden through one of his character:

The Garden of Forking Paths is a picture, incomplete yet not false, of the universe such as Ts'ui Pen conceived it to be. Differing from Newton and Schopenhauer, your ancestor did not think of time as absolute and uniform. He believed in an infinite series of times, in a dizzily growing, ever spreading network of diverging, converging and parallel times. This Web of time—the strands of which approach one another, bifurcate, intersect or ignore each other through the centuries—embraces every possibility. We do not exist in most of them. In some you exist and not I, while in others I do, and you do not, and in yet others both of us exist. In this one, in which chance has favoured me, you have come to my gate. In another, you, crossing the garden, have found me dead. In yet another, I say these very same words, but am an error, a phantom (Borges 1962: p.100).

Where can one draw a line, and say this side has culture and the other side does not? Or, that all those questions have been misunderstood, misinterpreted, and wrongly proposed?

One cannot escape from a reflection on the concept of culture and how to identify it: is culture a set of instrumental artifacts—pots, pegs, houses? or a set of social institutions—kinship, family, states? or a set of deep psychological behaviors? or a set of symbolical ideations—cosmology, mythology, time, space?

This would have been less disputable, if one were living in the age of the Enlightenment. Philosophers of that era steadfastly held the belief in limitless progress—what they called improvement and perfectibility—and in laws of progress. "To discover these laws they made use of what Comte was later to call the comparative method. As they used it, it implied that, human nature being fundamentally everywhere and at all times the same, all peoples travel along the same road, and by uniform stages, in their gradual but continuous advance to perfection; though some more slowly than others" (Evans-Pritchard 1962: p.24). Culture, in that period, was not the costumes or garbs one wore, but rather the naked mind of Reason.

Of course these questions would be less difficult for orthodox Marxists. Culture can be cleaved in half. Either it will be driven into superstructure, especially into ideology, which Marx took as "the ruling class ideas", "illusionary" to the masses, in essence, "nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships" (Marx 1972: p.173). Or culture can be tracked down to the "real basis of ideology", the principal contradiction of the force of production and the relations of production, to the history of labour. A common core for the two halves. A pre-empt has already been given to the "real basis". The historical materialist concept of linear modes of production favours the analyses of how labour divides,

how the technology advances, and how nature and resources are allocated. "In archaeology", unsurprisingly Hodder testifies, "as in other areas of Marxist analyses, major variation occurs in the relative importance given to the forces and relations of production. In some writings the forces of production appear to develop on their own, internally generated, leading to contradictions between the forces and relations of production" (Hodder 1986: p.61). Being twined with the concept of civilization, culture has been by and large reduced to the material manifestation of social relations.

Our plight is that we can no longer hang on to the notion of Reason, or Material as the only place where culture itinerates. As far as information is concerned, the border between total immateriality and total materiality blurs. Symbols, signs, sounds, words, texts, generate meanings by formal, phonetic differences and traces, and yet they impinge upon our eyes, our ears, our skins so physically, so overwhelmingly, like the images of the flamingos Rilke passionately evoked,

with all the subtle paints... rise above the green
grass and lightly sway on their long pink stems,
side by side, like enormous featherly blossoms,
seducing..... themselves; till, necks curling, they sink their large pale eyes into
the softness of their down,
where apple-red and jet-black lie concealed (Rilke 1982:p.67).

The concept of culture for semiologists or hermeneutists thus is akin to a flamingo dancing in a twilight zone between texts and reality. Geertz eloquently defines culture as the symbolically expressed system of ideology and religion trapped in thick signs and deep plays (Geertz 1973). In his Notes on the Balinese Cockfight, through a meticulous recording of fifty-seven matches of cockfighting in a Bali village—the amazingly presented details of the event and statistical numbers on the bets and odds to win, Geertz gives us an elaborate "reading" of the social structures of that village, of the national mythology of the heroism in cockfighting, of the psychological construct of Balinese men (in contrasting women in the background), and of the inarticulateable Balineseness. Right after this, Geertz advises: "Such an extension of the notion of a text beyond written material, and even beyond verbal, is, though metaphorical, not, of course, all that novel". But turn to the next page.

The culture of a people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist trains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong. There are enormous difficulties in such an enterprise, methodological pitfalls to make a Freudian quake, and some moral perplexities as well. Nor is it the only way that symbolic forms can be sociologically handled. Functionalism lives, and so does psychologism. But to regard such forms as 'saying something of something,' and saying it to someone, is at least to open up the possibility of an

analysis which attends to their substance rather than than reductive formulas professing to account for them (Geertz 1973:p.453).

Having painted an intriguing image for anthropology, Geertz failed to describe how and when the flamingo culture rises and flies to ideology and how it sleeps in the grass land. Which begs others to interrogate: How do common sense/sense of community/and the techniques of making—Gadamer's "Bildung" (Gadamer 1975)—sustain themselves? How does common sense reproduce systematically, discursively and subliminally (Giddens 1984:pp.5-14)? How do regularity and noise of culture interpenetrate and replicate (Bourdieu 1972)?

Thinking now grabs its own tail. A paradox. How to think of thinking which reflection partakes, how to represent culture upon which this representation relies? But aren't we, at this very moment, questioning culture itself, doing a never-to-be completed self-criticism that is simultaneously objective (non-self centered reason) and subjective, reflective and intuitive, with language and the silence negated by language? To this paradoxicality, the thirteenth century Japanese Zen Master Dogen responded:"Water birds/going and coming/their traces disappear/but they never/ forget their path". That path of unity to life, which eclipses thinking to a fuzzy logic, twined both conscious and unconscious, for a profound closeness, is also expressed in the French sociologist Bourdieu parlance "habitus":

The habitus, the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus. It follows that these practices cannot be directly deduced either from the objective conditions, defined as the instantaneous sum of the stimuli which may appear to have directly triggered them, or from the conditions which produced the durable principle of their production. These practices can be accounted for only by relating the objective structure defining the social conditions of the production of the habitus which engendered them to the conditions in which this habitus is operating, that is, to the conjecture which, short of a radical transformation, represents a particular state of the structure. In practice, it is the habitus, history turned into nature, i.e. denied as such, which accomplishes practically the relating of these two systems of relations, in and through the production of practice. The 'unconscious' is never anything other than the forgetting of history which history itself produces by incorporating the objective structures it produces in the second natures of habitus (Bourdieu 1972: p.79)

Intriguingly the two worlds meet, and echo. A more succinct version of the practical logic of Bourdieu appears in Nagarjuna's "Co-Arising Principle" (the founder of Madhyamika Buddhism). "No existents whatsoever are evident anywhere that are arisen from themselves, from another, from both, or from a non-cause" (Kalupahana 1986:p.105). "Co-arising" obviously

denies any singular causality that emphasizes the thing itself (namely self-cause, and self-nature), or another thing (namely the environmental determinism), or the function of the dual (namely dialectics), or no reason (namely nihilism and relativism).

In such a light, as Bourdieu transgresses subject/object, individual/collective, conscious/unconscious, cognitive/normative, material/ideal, fewer and fewer anthropologists are willing to delimit "culture as such". Culture that used to be so unambiguously shaped, out of this prolonged negation, is not solely an artifact, nor solely an institution, nor solely a text, nor solely an ideal, nor solely a deep thought..... With the concept of "Man", the concept of "Culture" finally, fades into murk.⁸

⁸However particular, however dynamic a "culture" really was and is, the very concept refers back to a historical discursive process within which it has been socio-politically, and indeed culturally constructed (Cottom 1989:pp.49-102). To say so does not just play a simple tautology to say one culture producing itself. This process of one culture producing itself—actually, Marx told a half truth—serves certain political purposes (of the ones who are in the position to influence), but evolves open-endedly (rather than a total replication).

A convenient example that I can think of to support the argument that "culture" indeed is "culturally constructed" is the modern Chinese concept "culture"—*Wenhua*—of how its being coined. In the classical Chinese the equivalent to *Wenhua* would be "*Wenzhijiaohua*", namely, "to use [the ancestor's] precepts to manage [the country] and to educate [the multitude]". Being cultured had meant. a. to be highly literate; b. to be a Confucian Chinese, obeying all the norms and moralities. Understandably the ancient Chinese literati who dominated the country would not consider non-Chinese as "cultured" but may consider a peasant who follow the orders and rites as "acculturized". From the dominated point of view, even today as in daily usage, *Wenhua* is particularly designated for the masters of texts and words. The ones who do not read—so to speak, my own mother who did not receive any schooling—would consider themselves as "non-cultured" and *Du Shu Ren*—the men of books, or more colloquially and plainly *Ren Zhi-er De*—whoever understands words as the "cultured".

Wenhua was translated at the end of the nineteenth century from Japanese word "Bunka", which possibly came from the German "Kultur". Regardless of what exactly "culture" had and has been defined in Germany or Japan, *Wenhua* denotes three meanings in modern Chinese: "a. the sum of the physical and spiritual wealth of the socio-historical evolution of mankind, especially the spiritual wealth such as literature, arts, education, and science, etc. b. an archaeological term, meaning the historical artifacts and heritage from the past; also the tools, instruments, and making techniques. e.g. Yanzhou culture, Longshan culture; c. the capability of mastering language and general knowledge" (Contemporary Chinese Dictionary 1983: p.1204) *Wenhua* thus was certainly a hybrid of the contemporary Western influence (e.g. the acceptance of science and material culture) and the the Confucian literati tradition, which believes that "the ones who labour by mind should dominate the ones who labour by body" (Confucius).

Not incidentally as long as the concept of culture exists, there will always be a sacrifice to achieve that sense of totality. For the concept of culture, coined within a special time, special place, and special people, maintains its order for someone, For instance, "in anthropology, the very category of the 'native' represents the critical assumption of totality, homogeneity, and unconsciousness. One basis for these assumptions is the type of society anthropologists traditionally have studied, which is tribal, relatively stable, often preliterate, and limited to simple preindustrial technology. There is no question that such societies do not provide the conditions for the highly differentiated individualism characteristic of modern Western life. However, the category of the native goes beyond this consideration in assuming that for all practical purposes these societies are monolithic. It represents a myth of a cultural identity as cultural reality. Through this category culture in general is identified with the dominant culture of a society" (Cottom 1989:p.74).

For this reason, Benjamin spoke that "cultural treasures" "owe their existence not only to the efforts of the great minds and talents who have created them, but also to the anonymous toil of their contemporaries. There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of

1.5. A U Turn.

Our train of thought bumps against a wall. Not only is a Chinese literati garden untransplantable without a loss of cultural substance, but also the substance of "literati persona" and the "literati culture" itself has to be historically defined, outlined, and deconstructed. The "literati culture" itself has probably already dissolved or is close to dissolving in China. Every now and then when the Chinese tourist bureau refurbishes those gardens, repainting them, erecting modern sculptures here and there, one will notice that the literati culture itself transforms, for better or for worse, into a tourist commodity.

Why then do we have to call the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden the "authentic" Chinese garden? How "authentically" does it belong to a literary tradition? Conversely, how can we deny the "authentic" feelings of our architect-writer who "authentically" narrated his encounter with a dubiously "authentic" Chinese garden in Vancouver?

A loop coils, points back to its own beginning. Neither can we negate the material "authenticity" of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, for its "authentic" construction materials and craftsmanship from Suzhou; nor we can negate its certain formal, spatial "authenticity" out of its imitation of the gardens in Suzhou.

Nevertheless, the loop opens. It is as simple as this— when everybody thinks the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden is a copy or an imitation of the literati gardens in Suzhou, they forget its originality, its own uniqueness. The architect who wrote the journal may be rightfully attentive to uncover that the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden may be designed with some underlining order. A learned botanist may discern how many species of plants in the garden are in fact local. A geologist may tell which rocks in the garden are foreign to the Suzhou gardens. A clever tourist may query why Canada has a garden like this.

All in all, our inquiry must turn one hundred eighty degrees. Instead of being so gullible as to deem the garden a total representation of the literati culture, or so cynical as to denigrate the garden as a sham, vis-a-vis to ourselves, we question back our own question. This U turn—a transgression of the normal route that results in either an extolling commentary or a slashing criticism— enables us suddenly to see this garden as having a soul—complicated, for sure—that is too, "irremovable", "irreducible", and "irreplaceable". Having lent the voice to the literati, we should listen more to the living: (1) why is this garden in Vancouver's Chinatown? (2) what does this garden embody that cannot be deduced from other history, other time? (3) how did this garden come into being and for whom?

barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from one owner to another" (Benjamin 1955: p.256).

A green light flashes. Our search takes us back into a strange, dark past. Our saga of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden unfolds from a rumor that circulated in the 1850s among Sze-yup [Siyi] and Sam-yup [Sanyi] counties in Canton of China. A karma haunting Vancouver's Chinatown since.

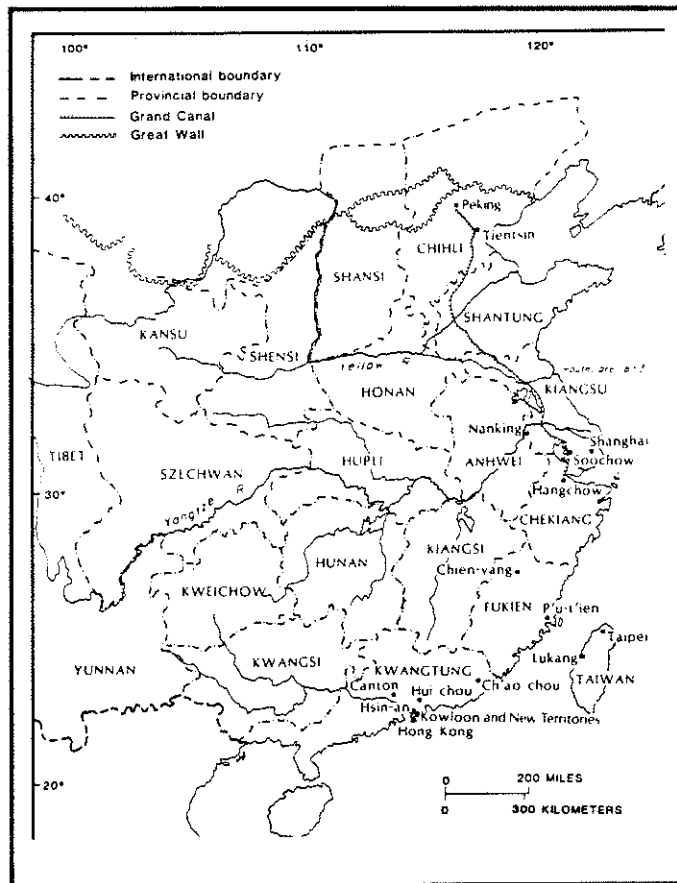
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Chinatown, Once the Haven and Hell

In the 1850s news brought back by the merchants from overseas flew with wings among the toiling peasants in Sze-yup and Sam-yup counties in Canton [Guangdong] China. It was alleged that numerous high quality gold mines had been discovered along the Pacific rim where the cities of San Francisco, Seattle, Victoria, and Vancouver were located; consequently massive numbers of laborers would be needed. The news soon turned into a gospel in the ears of the starving villagers: the New World glimmered as a paradise where even streets were paved with gold. Enticed by this fantasy, about twenty five thousand Chinese from Canton Province converged onto the American gold fields in the early 1850s(Chan 1983:p.32). The era of the Gold Rush henceforth began.

Wars and deluges catalyzed the exodus of the Cantonese. At the dawn of its most tragic era China sank deep in a melee. Having lost the First Opium War during 1840 and 1842 to the British Empire, China also lost its tariff autonomy and reluctantly lifted its trade limitations with Britain on opium, tea and textiles; defeated in the Second Opium War between 1856 and 1860, China conceded its northern border land to the Tsar and completely lost its autonomy in international trade with Britain, France, and the United States; defeated in 1894 by Japan, China conceded Taiwan and the East Liaoning peninsula as colonies; defeated in 1900 by the "Eight Nations League"—the allied troops of Britain, America, Germany, Austria, Russia, France, Italy, and Japan, China relinquished its sovereignty of most east coastal cities to the foreign forces. Internally, the conflicts between plebeians and Manchus—the poor and the rich—exacerbated, causing a series of nation wide turmoils and rebellions. The long-lasting Taiping Rebellion alone, during 1850 and 1864, cost 20 million lives. "Other uprisings erupted in the Pear River delta in 1853 and took an estimated one million lives. Fighting over land and water rights in several Pearl River counties cost 150,000 lives between 1864 and 1868" (Yee 1988: p.1). On top of these hopeless realities, Canton faced its unprecedented worsening economy. When the total population of China amounted to 430 million (Tan and Roy, 1985 : p.3) in the 1850s, Canton became the most densely populated province in China. Since mountains, swamps, and saline-alkali plains engulfed most of its territory, only ten percent of its land was arable. From generations of over-use, the agricultural land had deteriorated drastically, and worsened after several disastrous floods at the end of the nineteenth century. Thousands of farmers had been bereaved of their homes and land overnight. They also found no access to the local industries which had all been bankrupted under the competition from the cheap British goods.

The deprived—not just villagers and workers, but also merchants— were provided no other choice, except to venture abroad.



Map 2. Map of China, ca.1550-1920.
 Source: David Johnson, et al., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, 1980.

Traditionally, Chinese society disdained the "homeless" as the unfilial prodigals; Most of those in the Chinese diasporas never meant to stay overseas permanently. They thought they would return home soon after making some money or after the situation in China ameliorated. The plan quickly aborted. The nineteenth century suffering of China seemed only a first passage of the purgatory. (The two world wars separated the sons and mothers, husbands and wives indefinitely). The beloved ones left inside China struggled between life and death, and the overseas Chinese lived in desolation, as the date of return was eternally postponed. In a collection of family correspondences, dated in the early 1900s, one feels the prevailing despair.

A son grievously reported to his merchant father in Vancouver:

Dear Father, the respectable. Thank you for sending your friend to visit us last month... our land will lose about thirty per cent of the crops this year due to the flooding..... Now all of a sudden, bandits are everywhere. Without food people turned into mutiny and fight for survival. Although the government sent troops to suppress them, the rebels had gone to Lufeng area, approximately thousands of them.... the transportations both on water and surface become an ordeal... At this troubled time, we cannot predict our tomorrow, only leave that to fate. Even Beijing and Tianjing were marauded by the foreign troops... The Emperor fled westwards to Saanxi. China is lost, so the bandits appeared. No one knows when China will reinstate (Chinese Times, Vol.13. My translation).⁹

Begging for help, the son wrote again:

Dear respectable father. [I have] sent you a letter on the twelfth of this month by the Queen [ship]. The borrowing items have been inventoried.... This time, [I ask] brother Nanzi to bring you another letter since he is going to travel overseas on the second of June by the Queen [ship], I therefore add some details... Now everyone in the family is in a good condition, only in the middle of April, Yihu [the grand-son] started coughing, with medication, still had no sign of recovery. He coughed about eight times per day with blood. Watching him waning, I feel sorrow and helpless. Again on the night of the eighteenth of this month, a heavy rain fall swept our land, like the flooding a few years ago. Quite fortunately, our land is located at the upper north [of the mountain where the village is] and could have less moles. The crafts master told me that the walls surrounding our land can no longer be mended and should be demolished and rebuilt. That needs a fair amount of money... Because of flooding, we have lost all the harvest of this season.... And we still owe to uncle Ziji, who lent the life savings of Xiong Zangzu to us... Zangzu will use the money to renovate his ancestral temple soon... I am afraid we have nowhere else to borrow the money to retire the debt. Urgently, I have to write to you again, father, once you see this letter from your unfilial son, please do not send us cash, but some 2 taels of gold dust. If you give us cash, Zangzu wouldn't want it, and if we give the cash to Ziji, he would spend it immediately... Wishing you, father, peace and health. Please pay attention to the seasonal change of the weather. Your health is our entire family's happiness. Once you have some spare money, please send it back home... Your Unfilial Son, Bingpei (Chinese Times, Vol.13. My translation).¹⁰

While this "unfilial son" awaited his father's aid, thousands more Chinese crossed the Pacific Ocean. And the first group of Chinese had already made their way to British Columbia in 1858 from California. Camping in the Cariboo, or other mines that had been abandoned by the British miners, these young Chinese males in their teens or early twenties huddled in hovels, worked day and night, sifting gold from dust. With the lowest payment that a white worker would immediately have refused to take—they endured the worst

⁹Source from the English translation of the "Chinese Times" in Elizabeth Dafoe Library of the University of Manitoba. This letter was written in September 1900.

¹⁰Ibid, letter dated 1901.

possible kind of physical conditions and the threat of random death at any minute. The reason was plain: most of them, even before arriving in Canada, had already signed a contract with a compradore, agreeing to pay back the passage ticket once they worked in Canada.

Aside from this economic disadvantage, these Chinese laborers, separated by the tremendous language and cultural barriers (most of them were also illiterate in Chinese) from the mainstream of Canada, and therefore the subjects of racial discrimination, had to submit themselves to the disciplinary regulations within the Chinese community itself. Being traditional, the pioneer Chinese laborers brought their inherited customs and clan structure with them. They came from the same village and shared the same cognomen. The homogeneity and purity of consanguinity, for them, prescribed dual functions: to establish a network of mutual assistance in a strange country, and to sustain the rooted traditions in the villages and towns they were from. The early Chinese settlers in Canada were still led by the same elites that used to order them back to the Canton villages—often the wealthy ones, the renowned, or the literates. Geographically, each clan settled at different places in Canada. During the 1880s, "the Lis of Taishan were concentrated in Victoria, Savona's Ferry and Yale while the Zhous of Kaiping and Xinhui congregated at Quesnelmouth" (Tan and Roy, 1985: p.5). This self-contained social network, which arose out of the needs of survival, needs to be understood historically and culturally. This was why the Chinese laborers had to take the jobs that white workers did not want. On their shoulders there were double yokes: their white bosses, and their community leaders.

The Chinese laborers dedicated their life to their work. Without the 15,000 Chinese railway workers, the Canadian Pacific Rail would never have been built. With only half of the salaries of the ordinary white workers [CPR paid \$1.50-1.75 per day for a white laborer, \$0.80-1.00 for Chinese], the 15,000 Chinese men worked for five years between 1880 and 1885, and saved the CPR \$3 to 5 million (an astronomical figure in the 1880s). Those Chinese endured inhuman conditions.

At first, they were organized into mobile gangs of 30 workers, lorded over by a white overseer, or herder. Later, when they settled into camps, a cook, a cook's helper and a bookman were assigned to each gang. The bookman was responsible for collecting the wages from the company and paying them to the workers, and representing his gang to the employer. His most immediate contact with the railway company was the herder, Onderdonk's [the head of CPR] representative at the grass roots level. Another task of the bookman was to buy provisions for the workers at the lowest possible price. Because of salary differences, the Chinese laborers usually lived on a monotonous diet of rice and stale ground salmon while his white counterpart ate fresh meat and vegetables. The result was a growing list of scurvy victims, unable to receive medical help in the camps. No doctors or medicine were available for the workers; compradore firms knew that such services cost money and would do nothing to enhance their profits. As

long as unemployment in China was severe, human muscle was readily available (Chan 1983: p.63).

Despite their diligence that the white entrepreneurs saw as the invaluable attributes of the "living machines", the Chinese laborers were vehemently racially discriminated against. The Anglo-saxon politicians and mainstream Canada believed that the Asians, particularly the Chinese, were the yellow peril, therefore, should be eliminated from the country. The white workers considered the Chinese laborers terrible threats to their jobs and complained often that the Chinese jeopardized their own standard of living. The resentment boiled especially when the Chinese workers were occasionally hired during workers' strikes. Soon the economic conflict came to a head as a cultural attack. The white co-workers regarded "the degraded Asiatics" who "live generally in wretched hovels, dark, ill-ventilated and unwholesome, and crowded together in such numbers as must utterly preclude all ideas of comfort" as morally "decadent" (Anderson, 1991: p.37). Unfortunately the antagonism against the Chinese by their white co-workers took a violent form in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Even in 1920, the openly professed hatred against Chinese could still explode with bloodshed. The Chinese Consul in Vancouver therefore appealed to the Premier John Oliver.

Sir:

I beg to call your attention to the fact that the Chinese residents throughout the Okanagan valley are in danger of a further disturbance that may arise any time since some agitators in Kelowna called an anti-Chinese mass meeting on the 26th of September and that a Chinese house was attacked and burnt in Keremeos on the night of 27th of the same month. In view of the seriousness of the situation I would appreciate whatever step you may take for safeguarding life and property of my countrymen against a narrow-minded and highly excitable people in certain parts of your province (Chinese Times, Vol.13).¹¹

From time to time, when the Chinese laborers could not put up with the insults and discriminatory acts of the white co-worker or bosses any longer, there would also be violent reactions. In August 1880, a dynamite explosion near Yale "killed or maimed nine Chinese laborers standing on a rock directly below the charge. No warning had been given by the white herder, who claimed the Chinese had misunderstood his orders. An angry, pick-wielding group of Chinese rail hands forced the terrified herder to scramble to safety up the side of a hill"(Chan 1983:p.65). In a newspaper clip of May, 1883, a railway riot was reported:

¹¹Ibid..

Monday of last week [near Lytton] a man named J. Gray, in charge of a gang of Chinamen, numbering 28, notified the Chinese bookman that two of the number was not working as they should, and they were not wanted any more. That evening the bookman again saw Gray and told him they would do better and asked that they be tried longer. Next day when the young man acting as timekeeper went his rounds the bookman gave in the full number of men, 28, but when Foreman Gray made his report only 26 were given in. The timekeeper stated the difference, and went back to the bookman, who insisted that Gray said the two objectionable men might work again. This the Foreman stoutly denied, and the bookman then wanted credit for them for a quarter of a day up to that hour 9 a.m., and he would send them away. This Foreman refused and the bookman urged the timekeeper to enter the quarter of a day, and upon refusal the bookman grew angry and the timekeeper picked up a stone as he thought he discovered a speck of war. The Chinamen working close by grew boisterous and threatening, and it is stated the timekeeper struck the bookman with the stone" (Yee 1988:p.15).

That instigated a fight resulting in "a scatter of the belligerents and upon examination some of the Chinamen, especially, were considerably injured" (Yee 1988: p.15). Later that night, armed with bludgeons, some twenty white men raided the camps where the Chinese were sleeping, and ransacked the place mercilessly. Nine Chinese were seriously wounded, two murdered. The City of Victoria posted a \$500 reward for information on the attackers. But the case was dismissed by the judge—the reason was plain and simple: the accused were white.

On and off, besieged by violence, Chinese golden dreamers began to taste the hostility of white British Columbia. What exactly enabled them to mentally endure those ordeals is difficult to understand today. Occasionally in the tear-soaked letters, one sees the persistent faith for family re-union:"father, you are alone overseas, please always think in the long term", kindly advised the "unfilial son", Bingpei. "Unfortunately our family impoverishes so much that father had to venture [abroad], work hard, and endure the coldness of frost and the dampness of rain. This is the sin of me, your unfilial son, a sin that I will never be able to redeem. [Allow me to] bow and pray towards [the Pacific], begging heaven to descend good fortune on us so that you will save enough treasure, and sail home presently. The day our family re-unites may also be the time [my sin] is forgiven" (Chinese Times, Vol. 13. My translation).¹²

Some Chinese settlers never made it home. Their bones were buried in the dust of silence.

By the end of the 1880s the gold fields petered out and the Pacific railway was finished. Thousands of Chinese who survived mining and railway construction, left the mountains and valleys for the city. The winter of 1887 was recorded to be ferociously cold. Much harsher, however was the mood of the townsites created by the Europeans.

¹²Ibid, letter dated November 5, 1895.

2. 1. The Memory of Vancouver

History probably never takes place "as such"—demarcated, chronicled, and crystal clear. It is even less probable for historiography to remain timelessly outside time. (Someone like me, who experienced the periods of upheaval of revolutionary China, notices and knows the inexhaustibility of the act of re-writing the history of Chinese Communist Party every five years). Words play optical tricks with memory. Words dart into the eye, cling to the retina, seep into the cortex of the brain, and stay. Where the memory of the words infiltrate, they create a censor to edit the memory of life. Dialectics wins. Historiography corroborates history, deletes, selects, dumps history back into time, into memory of the mind. The mind encrusts, hallucinates the past named by names. With respect to which, Lacan has to solicit language in order to "come to terms" with the formation of unconsciousness.

This is not an esoteric theory, entertaining dull intellectuals: the history of Vancouver does not start from 1792 when Captain George Vancouver landed at the inlet. Regardless of how words circumvent words, the memory of that place goes back farther than the colonial time, so long that most native elders speak of time from the immemorial. Oral speech and the day to day life and rites sustain this sense of time and history in a different manner than texts—due to a lack of a better word, let's say, more holistically. The silvan and fertile land cradled the Nootkas in Vancouver Island, Kwakiutls, Haidas, Tsimshians, Tlingits in the Northwest, Thompsons and Okanagans, and Kootenays down in the valley. Then it was the Squamish and Lillooet tribes that occupied the site that was to become the City of Vancouver. The names of those tribes related to specific places: Tsimshian, "men or people inside the Skeena River"; Chilcotin, "inhabitants of young man's river"; Tahltan, a "basin-shaped hollow" (Ravenhill 1938: p.24). Most old Squamish villages would have names like: Kwanaken, "hollow in mountain"; Stotoi, "leaning over a cliff"; and Nkukapenatc, "canoes transformed to stone" (Hill-Tout 1978: p.30).

Mesmerizing, naturalistic. The coast Salishans' memory treasures diversified, enchanting history and time through dances, huntings, and dwellings, which colonialists equated with savagery and culturelessness. **Listen** to the Squamish cosmogony that **speaks**:

In the beginning there was water everywhere and no land at all. When this state of things had lasted for a long while, the Great Spirit determined to make land appear. Soon the tops of the mountains showed above the water and they grew and grew till their heads reached the clouds. Then he made the lakes and rivers, and after that the trees and animals. Soon after this had been done, Kalana, the first man, was made. The Great Spirit bestowed upon him three things an Indian cannot do without, viz., a wife, a chisel or adze, and a salmon trap (Hill-Tout 1978: p.20).

Told to the anthropologists at the end of the nineteenth century, through a translator, by a Squamish elder, over a hundred years old, whose life now stays in our memory, the Squamish long, long ago survived dreadful starvation, and natural calamities. They were humbled, respecting the hylozoistic nature. Their world as represented in the folklore was open to Coyotes, Ravens, Sea-Gulls, Bears, who presented themselves in human forms. One beautiful legend was about four brothers named Qais. Qais were the ancestors of the Squamish tribes, who charmed the Sun and received the prescription from the Sun (who transfigured into an Eagle) about where they could find the source of food. Qais and their people canoed to a far away place, enduring many travails, and found the village in an island occupied by Kos (spring salmon). In returning their precious present of "medicine", the chief of Kos asked four of his children, two boys and two maidens, to go into the sea, where, in water, they all transformed into salmons, and allowed themselves to be caught. When Qais finished eating the salmons, the chief carefully carried the bones back to the ocean, again where the four children transformed back into human form. The visit lasted about a year. When the time for farewell came, Qais extended their invitation to the Kos. Warmed by the sincerity, the salmon people promised to see the Squamish every year, bringing them food for the poor and wretched.

The Kos taught the Squamish to be thankful to the water and land. They also learnt to be munificent with each other. Their economy—and our modern invention—in the form of "Potlatch", was based upon giving and friendship. Potlatches were the occasions of great gatherings. They took months to prepare. "Whole tribes from long distances would be invited sometimes. Representatives from Lytton and Kamloops in the interior, and from the upper coast and Vancouver Island, were present on one occasion at Qoiqoi"(Hill-Tout 1978: p.49). People would feast for days within which they distributed an immense quantity of properties and possessions. To give the best to others, glorified the friendship. Potlatch provided a chance for people to reconcile, to make an acquaintance, and celebrate.

The Squamish people were not warriors. But wars did happen; foes did cause carnage. The epics of the Deadman's Island (where the Coal Harbour is situated today) suggest how violent the killings could be. There was one time when both the medicine men from the Northern and Southern coast native tribes camped at the site of Stanley Park. Their disputes instigated a chaotic fight between the two sides. The Northerners, famous for their prowess and strength, won the first combat. The Southerners, however by ruse and advanced equipment, raided the camps of the Northerners at night, capturing all the seniors, women, kids, and the weak in the island. "Their war-canoes circled the island like a fortification, through which drifted the sobs of the imprisoned women, the muttering of the aged men, and the wail of little children" (Johnson 1911: p.120). Days passed. The Northerners assailed more canoes of the

Southerners, meanwhile suffering heavy casualties. The Southerners at last decided that they would kill all the hostages, since their food was also exhausted— unless in exchange for the lives of the captured, the warriors in the North would die for them. The epic ended hence with a heroic act: all the Northern warriors sacrificed their lives for their beloved ones. The island soaked with their blood blossomed into a flower, whose color hangs in the coming nightfall.

Tribal wrangles took place at night, but since a day in the summer of 1792, day turned into night, night into day. On June 13, the ships of Discovery and Chatham anchored off the shore of today's Stanley Park, two cultures, coiled by contrasts, differences, analogousness, ephemerally brushed shoulders. Captain Vancouver professed no particular dislike of the Squamish as he did with some tribes, which he called "bestial". The contact was brief according to his travel log:

From point Grey we proceeded first up the eastern branch of the sound, where, about a league from its entrance, we passed to the northward of an island which nearly terminated its extent, forming a passage from ten to seven fathoms deep, not more than a cable's length in width. The island lying exactly across the channel, appeared to form a similar passage to the south of it, with a smaller island lying before it. From these islands, the channel, in width about half a mile, continued its direction about east. Here we were met by about fifty Indians, in their canoes, who conducted themselves with the greatest decorum and civility, presenting us with several fish cooked, and undressed, of the sort already mentioned as resembling smelt. These good people, finding we were inclined to make some return for their hospitality, shewed much understanding in preferring iron to copper..... A great desire was manifested by these people to imitate our action, especially in the firing of a musket, which one of them performed, though with much fear and trembling. They minutely attended to all our transactions, and examined the color of our skin with infinite curiosity. In other respects they differed little from the generality of the natives we had seen: they possessed no European commodities, or trinkets, excepting some rude ornaments apparently made from sheet copper; this circumstance, and the general tenor of their behavior gave us reason to conclude that we were the first people from a civilized country they had yet seen (Vancouver 1984: p.582).

After giving the aboriginals a bagful of coins, in the early morning breeze of the 14th of June, Vancouver sailed to the north of the inlet, he named after Sir Harry Burrard of the navy, where he observed:

[O]n the southern side, of a moderate height, and though rocky, well covered with trees of large growth, principally of the pine tribe. On the northern side, the rugged snowy barrier, whose base we had now nearly approached, rose very abruptly, and was only protected from the wash of the sea by a very narrow border of low land. By seven o'clock we had reached the N. W. point of the channel, which forms also the south point of the main branch of the sound [Howe Sound]: this also, after another particular friend, I called Point Atkinson, situated north

from point Grey [after captain George Grey in the navy], about a league distance..." (Vancouver 1984: p.583).

Had George Vancouver been aware that before the name of Point Grey, the place was called "Homolsom" in the aboriginal language, revealing the mythical power of the Sagalie Tyee (The Great Spirit), meaning "the battle ground of the West Wind" (Johnson 1911: p.79-85)? We do not know. But one by one, he meticulously documented all the traces, marks and characteristics of the islands, inlets, and landscapes into a standard grid system—the European mapping of the world, latticed by latitude and longitude. His naming sapped the strength of the Sagalie Tyee, effaced it, revised it, imposed upon it, diminished it into a functional representation of a locality. But this functional representation bore the distinctive hallmark of the West.

For the new instruments—compass, sextant, and theodite—correspond not merely to new geographical and navigational problems (the difficult matter of determining longitude, particularly on the curving surface of the planet, as opposed to the simpler matter of latitude, which European navigators can still empirically determine by ocular inspection of the African coast); they also introduce a whole new coordinate: the relations like that of triangulation. At this point, cognitive mapping in the broader sense comes to require the coordination of existential data (the empirical position of the subject) with unlined, abstract conceptions of the geographic totality (Jameson 1991: p.52).

Western intrusion later on disturbed the aboriginals deeply. The land of Vancouver was lost to the shadow. A Squamish shaman prophetically dreamt that one hundred years hence, on the site of Vancouver, "mighty lodges built close together, hundreds and thousands of them — lodges of stone and wood, and long straight trails to divide them. He saw these trails thronging with Pale-faces; he heard the sound of the white man's paddle-dip on the waters; for it is not silent like the Indian's; he saw the white man's trading posts, saw the fishing-nets....." (Johnson 1911: p.76).

Guided by the maps of the expeditors, the "pale-faces" returned during the 1790s and the 1830s for the inter-continental fur trade. The uninhibited imperial interest of market expanded to the front yard of the coastal Salishans. Then monopolized by the Hudson's Bay Company from the East of Canada, declared the land-based fur trade period during the 1830s and 1840s. It was commonly believed that, at first, fur trade benefited both the aboriginals and the Europeans, if only to count the economic returns¹³—Europeans got the fur, the aboriginals received pelts and

¹³This disquisition on the cultural impacts of the fur trade on the aboriginal cultures in B.C. goes beyond the gamut of this dissertation. There are currently quite diverse views on this issue. Some scholars have contended that from the outset, the aboriginal people had always been at a disadvantage. Others, a UBC historian, Robin Fisher for one, attempt to convince that the aboriginals had their autonomy in the early

blankets. The fur traders had limited power to re-mould their suppliers. Sometimes it was they that had to be patiently tolerant of the aboriginals, who soon picked up the art of haggling. Interracial marriage sparked occasionally; some wild species were extinguished; tribes contested with each other for monopolizing trade, forts and docks. Other than that, the early fur trade carried on cautiously.

The full-scale cultural collision and conquest occurred when Britain decided to colonize the vast territory of British Columbia. Settlers' coveting natural resources directly infringed upon aboriginals' lives. By the rationale that it was sinful to leave nature uncultivated, the colonialists took away the aboriginals' access to land, because they—the "indolent, contented, savages"—allowed land to lie idle.¹⁴ Further "according to the strict rule of international law territory occupied by a barbarous or wholly uncivilized people may be rightfully appropriated by a civilized or Christian nation" (Fisher 1977: p.104). Colonialists justified their cultural domination devoid of a tint of guilt. This self-declared supremacy, appallingly condescending, through which colonialists demonstrated less and less tolerance to cultural differences, frequently deployed violence against the aboriginals. When gold was discovered in the lower mainland of the Fraser River in 1858, the process of colonizing British Columbia expedited. Despite the fact that most of the aboriginal chiefs at last did concede their land and express their wish to be confederated, the government of B.C. determinedly drove the aboriginals from townsites into reserves. After that had been done, they replaced the aboriginal languages with English, banned the Potlatch, and imposed in its absence the Bible and the Church.

Concurrently a company of British Royal Engineers under R.C. Moody, commanded by Governor James Douglas, arrived at the Burrard Inlet to construct roads and enforce the Queen's law. Moody chose New Westminster as the capital of the new colony for its strategic prominence as a military stronghold. The crew of 150 officials and soldiers conducted the first planning job the New Westminster — built houses, churches, barracks, made maps and dug the plumbing lines. Moody returned to England afterwards, and left behind his crew members, who decided to settle in the New World with 150 acres land each in what was named Port Moody.

The primary function of Port Moody, besides fortification, was to mine resources. Unfortunately further surveys done by the British navy troops a decade later disproved the quality of gold or coal in the lower Burrard Inlet. That miraculously saved Coal Harbor or Stanley Park from becoming a mining field. Nevertheless, the land of the Squamish no longer

period of fur trading, and European culture had very minor impacts on the local culture and economy (Fisher 1977).

¹⁴ One perhaps has to examine this claim with a certain degree of sophistication: on one side, it expressed a naked greed for other people's land, and on the other side, was it not the deep-seated Cartesian view of nature, which may still be alive today?

lay quiet or idle. When the Chinese gold miners drilled holes in the mountains of the Cariboo, European settlers finished surveying the townsite, and carved up the elongated plain into private properties. John Morton, W. M. Brighthouse, and Sam Hailstone, three mustachioed British men, took the first 550 acres of lot 185, at the price of \$1.01 per acre, as their real estate, which covered the entire West End of today. Shortly, in August of 1884 William Van Horne, the general manager of the CPR, came to the west coast to select a feasible site for the Western terminus of the CPR. One year later he chose the open plains of Granville, a place Van Horne envisioned: "this eventually is destined to be a great city in Canada. We must see that it has a name that will designate its place on the map of Canada" (Morley 1961:p.85).

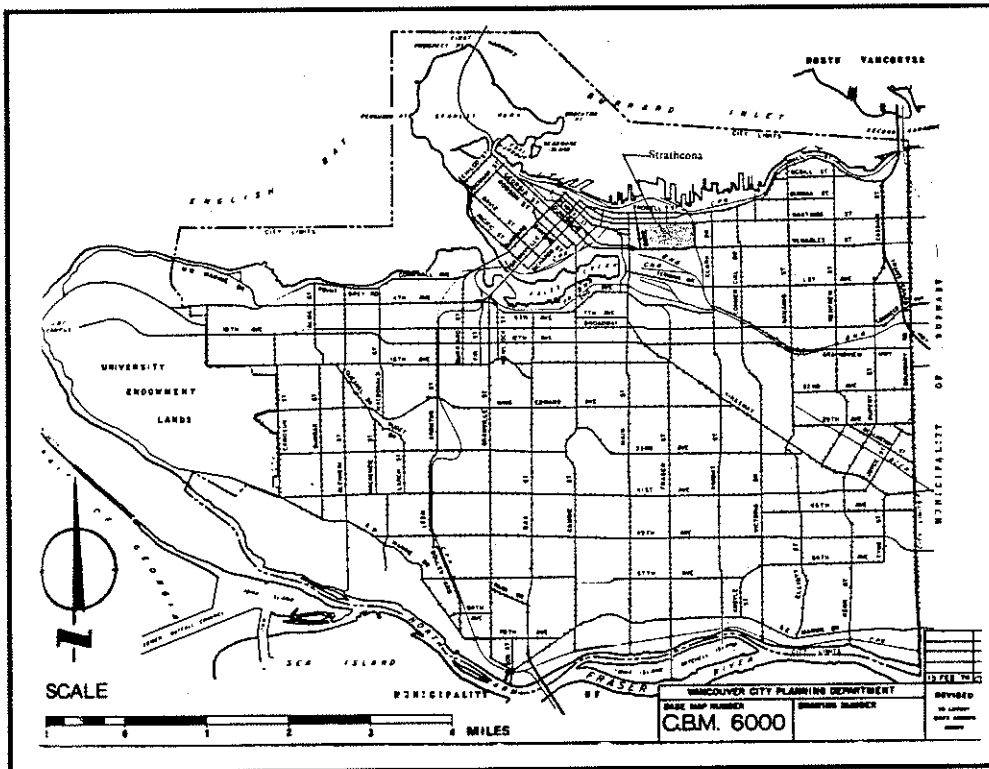
One can hardly imagine the Faustian power Van Horne possessed through money and greed. Faust dreamt under Goethe's pen tip, Van Horne juggled the real lives of thousands, and the fate of a new city, which he named after Vancouver. On May 23, 1887, the first train from Montreal comprising a baggage car, a colonist sleeper, a first-class coach, a Pullman coach and a drawing-room car, rolling on top the trans-Canada railway, built by 15,000 Chinese laborers, of which 1,500 died (Tan and Roy 1985:p.7), arrived at the depot in the waterfront. With it, an era began. Vancouver and B.C. were no longer provincial places, isolated from the rest of world. The veins of rail connected the estuary east to the prairie and later south to the United States.¹⁵ After 1887, the exportation of coal, salmon, and lumber from British Columbia jumped 100% in the 1890s, in comparison with the previous decade (MacDonald 1981: pp.31-55). An industry based upon the exportation of natural resources was emerging in an embryonic form.

The CPR constructed the first market and large houses on the bluffs overlooking Burrard Inlet. The East End used to house Vancouver's celebrities including Mayor MacLean (a Realtor), R. H. Alexander (Hastings Mill Manager), Dr. Duncan Bell-Irving, Henry Bell-Irving (head of the first fish-packing corporation), Dr. Israel Powell, and the Oppenheimer Brothers (David Oppenheimer was the second mayor of Vancouver). Vancouver madly grew bigger. It attracted no less the poor than the rich. Jews, Ukrainian peasants, Yugoslavians, Italians, and Chinese railway workers swarmed into the East End, huddling in shacks and tents, invading the environs of the capitalists.

¹⁵ Between 1883 and 1893 three transcontinental railways to the Pacific Northwest were built. "Though the construction of the Northern Pacific into Idaho and Washington in the early 1880s was to have an important influence on southeastern British Columbia, opening the Kootenays for a major mining boom in the 1890s, the greatest threat to the established economic order on the coast was presented by the Canadian Pacific Railway, the instrument of John A. MacDonald's deliberate attempt to create a transcontinental economy based on the integration of the Canadian West with the metropolitan centre of the St. Lawrence basin. The railway and tariff platforms of the Conservative Party's National policy clearly implied economic and political integration between Canada and the traditionally isolated British Columbia" (MacDonald 1981 p.36).

The rich then chose to move. Ripping off stumps, clearing the lots, the CPR erected the first luxury hotel between Georgia and Granville, at the cost of \$100,000 in 1887. In a decade, the urban centre shifted from Coal Harbour to the West End, and this growth spread rampantly to False Creek. The first suburb, Yaletown, appeared. So too did Shaughnessy Heights. A spatial stratification and segregation between the rich and poor, between the Europeans and others, emerged (Gustein 1975: p.14).

Deserted by the CPR and the urban aristocrats, the East End at the turn of the century turned into a refuge hub for the underclass and ethnic communities. Those Chinese laborers who ended up working as domestic servants, loggers, coal miners, or laundrymen founded a haven in which to congregate. Within the space bound by Burrard Inlet to the north, False Creek to the south, the Raymur-Campell ravine to the east, and a swamp around Carrall and Columbia, a clamorous city within a city stuck out from the earth. A century later, the place is still called Chinatown.



Map 3. The location of Strathcona.

2.2. Chinatown: The Haven and Hell

Chinatown formed, yet formed within a confinement of walls. Today many of us perceive Chinatown as a glorious phenomenon of the innate Chinese cultural cohesion—Chinese preferred to huddle within the same community, but forget the extreme coercions that surrounded Chinatown at the time of its birth. True, the physical and social formation of Chinatown across North American cities should be examined both historically and individually. What remains unerringly certain though, is that in the case of Vancouver, the isolation of Chinatown had much to do with the hostility of the outside world.

The theme is a complicated one. Fear, fable, and white supremacy incorrigibly forged a prison house. Chinese immigrants appeared as the visualized metaphors of the yellow peril. They flooded Canada, with a "color of the epidemics". Chinese were prohibited from living outside Chinatown. The City Council and the health officers nervously watched the unsanitary Chinatown for the next sign of plague. For instance, the "Rossland epidemic of Typhoid Fever in 1896 was ascribed to Chinese wash-houses as the principal causes."¹⁶ In another case, a report to the secretary to Royal Commission Chinese and Japanese Immigration in 1900 accounted:

The total number of Chinese deaths within the city limits, for the ten months of this year ending Oct. 31st, amounting to 32 or about one ninth of the whole City's death roll for the same period, this list numbering 2811. The certificated causes of these 32 deaths were: Tuberculosis 19, Bronchitis 1, Pneumonia 1, Cancer 1, Heart Disease 5, Rheumatism 1, Brights Disease 1. The total city death rate due to Tuberculosis for the number of months stated was 39, the Chinese proportion of this being therefore, according to above figures, 50%.¹⁷

Death was pronounced; a terra of terror; real and fictional. Pathology in an absolute authority drew a circle around the Chinese people. Again, in the name of science, pathology "testified the truth of white supremacy": statistically shown, Chinese were genetically not immune from diseases like tuberculosis. What could we—"the non-Chinese"—do, mercy or not? In a spell of mixed emotions, the medical doctors suggested in the same report on Chinese:

The responsibility attaches to the Federal Government—the fact that the Dominion Government alone assumes control of external quarantine and regulates laws allowing Chinese immigration, is sufficient to fix the responsibility for treatment and supervision after leprosy has been imported...the per capita tax on Chinese be increased if necessary, which would provide a fund sufficiently great to admit of a station being properly equipped and maintained with regular medical attendance, without entailing extra expense on the Government.¹⁸

¹⁶Source from The Health Report to the Secretary of Royal Commission of Chinese and Japanese Immigration in 1900, the B.C. Archives.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

Subsequently a series of health-by-laws was passed in the late 1890s to serve, by and large, the pragmatic needs to control leprosy and tuberculosis, which specified that "these wash-houses should not be allowed to exist within a hundred yards of any inhabited house nor, indeed, to be at all within the limits of any of our Cities. If they cannot be kept outside a City's limits, they should be restricted to such locations as to be least offensive to the public".

The public—that is, the white politicians—were much less ambiguous regarding the Chinese immigrants. In 1886, amid the mayoral competition between MacLean and Alexander, fifty or sixty Chinese under the order of Alexander, the owner of a sawmill, showed up at the voting place to champion their boss. Their appearance absolutely stunned all the white citizens and politicians on the spot. "Charlie Queen, who drove the Westminster-Gastown tallyho ... got up on a stage coach in front of Mr. Cyr's hotel on Water Street, and made a speech blaming the Hastings Mill people for sending the Chinamen up. The crowd grew hostile, started to drive the Chinamen back to the mill, the Orientals took to their heels, and the crowd took after them down the Hastings Road" (Nicole 1978: p.58) This ignominious act lasted not even an hour. Tragically, both in the symbolic gesture and actuality, the Chinese community had been banned from Vancouver's civic politics until the end of the Second World War.

Worse still was that Chinatown had been culturally painted as "the hell of heavens", a place for gambling, drug trafficking, prostitution, and bootlegging. A local newspaper defiled Chinese as "hordes of locusts" spread over all the land,

You [the Chinese] fill our streets and houses, John [derogatory name for the Chinese Canadians].

And leave no room to stand.

You work for little wages, John.

And live like pigs in stys, in filth and stench you revel, John.

Your crimes for vengeance cry, and vengeance sure is coming, John, if here you longer stay.

Be warned and pack your baskets, John.

And quickly get away (Nanaimo Free Press, 9 January 1886).

Worse was that the escalated racial discrimination gave rise to a "tour in Chinatown". Some whites set up a booth to sell tickets to the general public for loitering inside Chinatown, seeing how "sinful" the Chinese could be. The exhibition was alive even in 1918 until

Ambassador Wong had protested against the 'tour in Chinatown' exhibition on August 22nd. The mayor thus went to inspect and close down the booth on August 23rd. The Chinese community was really pleased because in the past, there were similar exhibition which were not suppressed by the authorities. The Mayor now

ordered that no such disgraceful exhibition could be carried out in future (Chinese Times, August 24, 1918).

Indeed, Chinatown was unclean and unkempt. Swarming with poor bachelors, there were opium dens, gambling clubs, and brothels; there were smuggling and illicit transactions. Chinatown was not, is not, and will never be a homogeneous place as its singular name implies. Stories of the cognomen based "Tang Wars"—fighting between clans and clubs—were not untrue. Browsing through Chinese Times published in the 1910s, one comes across news of "crimes":

February 15th, Monday, 1915 — Chan Chik had shot two of his fellow clan members to death, and then injured three more before he committed suicide. It was reported that Chan was a neurotic, however, there was the belief that the case was a consequence of "Tang Wars".

February 17th, Wednesday, 1915 — One of the minor and badly reported newspaper in Victoria had posted the news about 'Tong War' on Feb. 14th. It was stated that this kind of 'Tong War' had originated 2 month ago. There was also the saying that Wong Won Sun Society and Sz Yip Association were in deep conflict, and were ready to have an open fire conflict with each other. Finally, there was also a 'little axe organization' which was established for professional murder or revenge. However, the above reports were being derived by various associations and other newspapers. That minor or badly reputed newspaper was surly attacked by the many Chinese residents.

February 26th, Saturday, 1916 — There was a bullet shot into Kent's of Pender Street. The Canadian newspaper reported that it was a consequence of Tong War. The newspaper had already made a similar accusation previously that the fighting among 3 Chinese workers was also a consequence of Tong War.

April 9th, Friday, 1915 — 63 Chinese were arrested in 115 Pender for gambling.

May 21, 1918 — 46 gamblers (Chinese and whites) were arrested for vagrancy in the gambling clubs. They were each fined \$50. The authority asserted that while the fisheries in B.C. needed help, many Chinese spent more of their time in the gambling clubs, so it was necessary to punish any vagabonds and force them to work.

September 21st, Tuesday, 1915 — 11 Chinese were arrested for staying in the opium den. Nine were fined \$15, or one month in prison.

January 8th, Saturday, 1916 — The gambling and opium business in Chinatown was booming. The gambling clubs even put out banners to attract customers. It was reported that the atmosphere now in Chinatown could compare to the previous 'Square Cube Club'. The opium dens were securely protected from the uninvited visitors by having strong front door and back escape doors. There were also alarm systems and spies to ensure that only the right people could get in.

February 25th, Friday, 1916 — 3 Chinese were arrested in a Chinese store and charged with smoking opium. One denied that he was in the den, however, he was still fined \$20 (Chinese Times, 1915, 1916).

Yet data await interpretation, and correlation to their reference, otherwise they will usurp the plenary powers of the statisticians. As much as, there was no less a myth than a truth in the eugenic profile of the Chinese immigrants whose immunity to tuberculosis had dramatically improved since the Second World War after the improvement of their

employment conditions and nutrition, these "factual crimes" within Chinatown require some sophisticated look. The elders whom I interviewed presented a different picture. Take gambling for instance. While Victorian Christians saw it as the corruptor of morals and soul, the Chinese elders believed that, for those Chinese bachelors who worked seasonally outside Chinatown as loggers and saw-mill workers, gambling (and theater) was the sole entertainment in off-seasons, since they were illiterates, and since any recreational places outside of Chinatown were forever closed to the Chinese. The issue of drugs also deserves a closer look: there were opium dens in Chinatown before and after the prohibition of opium in Canada, but there was also the times that the traditional Chinese herbal medicine practices were considered illegal simply because Western medical science could not prove them to be legitimate. Fact and fable interlocked. Rumors and news, science and police, cruised in Chinatown. An "aura" had been constructed.

Once it was established, the tarnished name of Chinatown sustained. Generalization and universalization tarred the entire Chinese community by one brush—a community epitomized by all the "crimes", one that should be effectively segregated and deliberately punished. Chinatown invoked the horror of the enclaves of gangs, mustering into dark ground, despicable for its muddy, grisly faces. Gordon (Won) Cumyow, the first Chinese born in Canada, graphically depicted:

In those days, Chinatown was more or less shoddy, there was no neon signs or anything like that. They had boardwalks, wooden sidewalks, and the street wasn't paved, just a hard surface. Mud, you know, when it rained, just plain mud. The Chinatown that I remember when I went to Chinese school after 6 or 7 o'clock at night, they boarded up windows because there were too many drunks around and they broke the windows. So they put up sheets of boards that screwed into place (British Columbia 1979: p.20).

Another old timer, Bill Abercrombie recounted:

In those days, a youngster didn't go very far from home. You stayed around your own home. Now, I was an East Ender, and I just can't remember ever going to the West End on my own initiative. I lived close to the Strathcona School, just a block or so, and I remember coming home from school when Princess Street [now East Pender] wasn't paved and there were ditches running down both sides... At low tide the eastern end of False Creek would be mud flats. And at high tide it would be filled with water, and at the far end there was a little ravine, which ran right up to Broadway and the China Creek ran through that... (British Columbia 1979:p.15).

The marking of Chinatown as an "evil" place provided a visual canker in Vancouver. A disgraceful label one can freely impute. Chinatown was hit severely by two mass armed riots. The first one erupted in early 1887. In the fall of 1886, developer John McDougall had bid \$325

an acre to clear up the West End for the CPR, a job that normally cost \$500 an acre. McDougall sublet the contract to a syndicate at \$150 an acre, meaning that McDougall would collect \$325 per acre from the city and pay only \$150 per acre to the sublessor. Also eager to make money out of nothing, this syndicate hired Chinese workers discharged from the CPR at the half wage of a white worker. The deal was done. This infuriated the union of the construction workers—"the Knights of Labor"—mostly the U.S. "White Extremists". The enmity festered as the winter drew on. On January 11, 1887, a ship load of approximately one hundred immigrants from China attempted to disembark at the waterfront. The incident instantly caused 1000 white citizens to protest in front of City hall (located at Hastings and Main). "After a few speakers had addressed the crowd, a procession was formed to go up where the Chinamen had been landed, up at McDougall's camp, and drive them out; that would be well on towards midnight". That was a chilly winter night, snow on the ground. A witness remembered:

There were many tough characters among the crowd, navys who had been working for Onderdonk, hotheaded, thoughtless, strong and tough, and many went along with the procession to try to prevent anyone from being hurt. I was not in the procession, but I was within fifty feet of the front of it when they started. The column was singing as they marched along in the semi-darkness. When the Chinamen saw all these men coming they were terrified. The crowd came up to the camp singing 'John Brown's Body', and such songs. The Chinamen poked their noses out from beneath their tents; the roasters grabbed the tents by the bottom, and upset them... The Chinamen did not stop to see, they just ran. Some went dressed, some not, some with shoes, some with bare feet. The snow was on the ground and it was cold. Perhaps, in the darkness, they did not know that the cliff, and a drop of twenty feet, lay in front of them; perhaps they had forgotten. Some may have lost their direction. The tide was in. They had no choice, and you could hear them going plump, plump, as they jumped into the salt water. Scores of them went over the cliff. McDougall was supposed to have two hundred of them up there (Nicole 1978: p.88).

Barely a month later, on February 25, 1887, another organized mob struck Chinatown. The militant white agitators summoned all the Chinese residents together:

The Chinamen in each building were permitted to select their own custodian to be left behind; no goods were damaged; there was no pilfering. One Chinaman was left in each store. The remainder, probably one hundred, assembled quietly, were loaded onto old-fashioned horse-drawn drays. They all stood crowded together on the drays, and one by one the drays and wagons moved off to New Westminister—a pretty rough ride in a springless dray over a rough road — and put on a streamer for Victoria. The same witness had heard that four Chinamen were tied together by their pigtails, and thrown into the creek at McDougall's camp. If so, I know nothing of it. I do know that some of them were tied together by their pigtails, to prevent them escaping, in Chinatown the following morning...(Nicole 1978: p.88).

Next morning, gilded by the flames from the shanties and laundry houses, the sun rose again. Two weeks later, all the Chinese sent off by the whites returned to the same camp. They painstakingly re-built their own houses, their own groceries, their own cafe and restaurants. Chinatown, the stranded ark, returned. It swelled in the next decade. The population of Chinese in Vancouver reached 14,885 in 1901 (from 4,350 in 1881), comprising 10% of the total population of Vancouver.

Then another riot swept Chinatown in 1907. This time, the assault was institutionally organized by the Asian Exclusion League, a Washington State based labour federation under the leadership of Frank Cotterill and A.E. Fowler. The League perceived all the Asian workers as the tools of the capitalists and a racial menace to the white race. They had vehemently conducted numerous violent acts to exclude the Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Indians, and Sikhs in the cities along the California coast. Beginning in August 1907, the League opened a branch in Vancouver. That summer, just when the booming Vancouver showed signs of recession, and lay-offs started, the anger against the visibly identifiable Orientals re-surfaced. In the ensuing month, the League attracted 2,000 members, who, unlike its normal constituents in California, were not miners, but professionals and merchants. "Most citizens quietly supported the League and subscribed liberally to its funds, which by 1907 had reached \$5,000" (Wynne 1966:176). The popularity of the League reflected the publicly consented view that the Oriental laborers took away the jobs of the Canadian citizens. The B.C. labour unions (and the Canadian Trade and Labour Congress) had repeatedly demanded that the government take tougher measures to stop the Oriental immigration. The Government of British Columbia passed the petition almost annually, only to be thwarted by the lieutenant-Governor or the federal government.

The fuel was set aflame by the League's public parade of anti-Orientalism. They had widely advertised the parade. On September 7, 1907, over a thousand people led by a brass band marched to City Hall, attracted approximately seven to eight thousand onlookers.

By nine o'clock in the evening, excitement and tension prevailed. A flaming effigy of Lieutenant-Governor Dunsmuir lighted the area in front of City Hall. (Dunsmuir, a coalmaster and employer of large numbers of Chinese and Japanese laborers, was unpopular because he had refused to approve the latest immigration act). Woodward and two of the clergymen addressed the crowd assembled outside City Hall. Then Fowler spoke (Wynne 1966: p.177).

Fowler was the notorious leader responsible for the raid in Bellingham on the local Hindus and Sikhs. His anti-Oriental speech stirred up the crowd. Someone began to throw stones on the windows of the Chinese stores on the street. Then the tempest of emotion poured out. Rioters smashed the properties in Chinatown and in the Japanese quarters on Powell Street.

The juridical system failed again to make any fair verdict. One man was sentenced to six months in jail. Twenty three received fines. On the other side, the Federal Government gave \$9,000 and \$26,000 respectively to the Japanese and Chinese community by way of compensations.

Incidents like these two violent attacks against Vancouver's Chinatown fortunately were not common. The belligerents in both riots were in a minority compared to the entire population of Vancouver, and most of them came from the right wing anti-Asian leagues in the United States. The chilling fact was this: some Vancouver citizens who did not participate in the riots financially supported the rioters; probably even greater numbers of citizens endorsed the riots with silence, and felt no sympathy for the victims. It was this layer of societal subterranean that fertilized the extreme form of violence and formal, institutional racist policies.

The evasive silence and informality of racial discrimination in daily life makes it futile and laborious to outline the patterns of racism in any culture, any society. Racism is something one can feel, but cannot tell. Meanwhile, in the formal, institutional actualization of racism, there are mixed motives and incoherences. The early Canadian governments were no exception. Within various periods of time, within various provinces, within various levels of governments, within various issues, the formalized racist policies fluctuated. So to speak, the issue of imposing "Head Tax"—whether or not, how much—on the Chinese settlers reflected an incongruity in the approaches of the Canadian governments.

The Municipal Government of Vancouver was perhaps the most direct adversary of the Chinese community; their by-laws indicated their determination from the outset to drive all the Chinese out. The CPR needed the Chinese laborers. So the Federal Government for a while allowed the Chinese to come in for rail constructions. When the cross-Canada rail had been done, the British North American Act, 1867 was instantly enacted, its section 95, stipulating:

In each Province the Legislature may make laws in relation to agriculture in the province and to immigration into the province, and it is hereby declared that the parliament of Canada may from time to time make laws in relation to agriculture in all or any of the province, and to immigration into any or all of the provinces; and any law of the legislature of a province relative to agriculture or to immigration shall have effect in and for the province as long as far only as it is not repugnant to any act of the parliament of Canada;

And whereas it is expedient to prevent the immigration of Chinese into British Columbia;

And whereas the provision hereinafter contained are not repugnant to any Act of the Parliament of Canada:

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advices and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, enacts as follows: —

1. The word "Chinese" in this Act shall mean and include any native of China or its dependencies, or of any islands in the Chinese seas, not born of British parents, or any person born of Chinese parents.
2. It shall be unlawful for any Chinese to come into the Province of British Columbia, or any part thereof. Any Chinese who hereafter shall come into British Columbia, shall forfeit and pay the sum of fifty dollars, to be recovered in a summary way before any justice of the peace, and in default of payment shall suffer imprisonment, with hard labour, for any period not exceeding six months. the Chinese convicted shall remain liable to the payment of the said fifty dollars, until he shall have paid the same, butwithstanding he may undergo such imprisonment (British North American Act, 1867).

Even this was not enough, Chinese, apart from the wealthy ones and the diplomats. upon entering Canada, were initially required to pay \$10 "Head Tax" in 1884. Two years later, it was raised to \$50. Determined to fight the "yellow peril", the Laurier government raised the "Head Tax" to \$100 in 1900 and to a hefty \$500 in 1903. They also required Chinese workers, the only ones among all ethnic groups, to pay an annual \$50 fee for a working licence.

To those Chinese already in Vancouver, the municipal government employed every legal action to ensure that they would never leave Chinatown, or better that they would be driven from Canada. Its by-law on June 18, 1902 regulated that Chinese could not be granted the leases covered for the following items:

- (a) Miscellaneous leases under Sub-sections (1), (2) and (3) of Section 41 of the Land Act.
 - (b) Leases of small holdings under Sub-section (4) of Section 41 of the Land Act.
 - (c) Woop pulp leases under Sub-section (5) of Section 41 of the Land Act.
 - (e) Lease for the purpose of stripping hemlock trees of bark under Section 43 of the Land act.
 - (f) Special timber licences granted under Section 50 of the Land Act.
 - (h) Coal mining leases under the "Coal Mines Act".
 - (i) Certificates of approval issued to power companies under Part IV of the "Water Clauses Consolidation Act".
 - (j)Public Works Contracts the terms of which are not prescribed by statute.
 - (k) Tunnel and drain licences under Section 58 of the Mineral Act.
 - (l) Tunnel and drain licences under Section 48 of the Placer Mining Act.
 - (m) Leases under Sections 90 to 103 of the "Placer Mining Act"
- (Chinese Times: Vol, 13).¹⁹

Practically this by-law attempted to prevent Chinese from having any kind of normal jobs outside Chinatown, from owning any business and property, and from living outside Chinatown. In the jobs with minimum pay, such as in laundry, vegetable hawking, or hotel cleaning, Chinese still had to endure brutal confinement imposed by the government and the

¹⁹Source from the English translation of the Chinese Times in Elizabeth Dafoe Library of the University of Manitoba.

union. The rest of Canadian society wished Chinese to transform into ghosts, and out of Canada. Browsing through the newspapers in the 1910s, one reads.

January, 1915

In Toronto, the Canadian Laundrymen Association had a general meeting to abolish the license of the companies that still used hand washing method. The association announced that this action was according to the constitution, not especially designed to discriminate against the Chinese. However, underneath their cover, they had the intention of chasing the Chinese out of the laundry business, because the major Chinese laundries still employed manpower instead of machine.

March 21st, Tuesday, 1916

The discriminatory issue against Chinese hotel and restaurant workers was once again brought up in the city council meeting. The mayor (McFrabie) was also anti-Chinese.

A Chinese laundryman was attacked and robbed by a few white boys.

April 14th, Friday, 1916

The issue of discrimination against East Asian hotel workers was brought up in the city council meeting [of Vancouver]. A M.P. asserted that the city council had no authority to chase out East Asian workers, and the case should be brought up to the provincial legislature meeting. However the mayor was against it. He said that the city council could establish a by-law and he added that no license should be issued to hotels which still employed East Asian workers in the next year.

November 6th, Monday, 1916

Many Chinese were being employed in various companies in Ontario. The Labour Union thus became jealous and they were against the employment of Chinese workers. A Labour and commercial meeting was held to exclude Chinese from working with the white girls. They intended to pass a by-law that guaranteed no mixed employment of whites and Chinese (Chinese Times: 1915, 1916).

It was because of these strict legal regulations and treacherous job exclusions that most Chinese residents were compelled to stay within Chinatown. Those few who managed to migrate outside Chinatown experienced segregation of another kind — the cultural stereotype that was much harder to bear, that prevailed more than governmental policies. In the olden days people called Chinese "Chinese", "John Chinamen", "Chinks" names that, figuratively, were meant to be derogatory of Chinese customs, lifestyle, and even their religion. The local newspapers, The Province and The Sun constantly remarked on the Chinese New Year ceremony as an odd ritual; the Chinese dance as "weird" as the Chinese worshipped Buddha and gods that were alien to the whites. Referring to the Chinese diet, the Province remarked that "the only one of the lower animals Vancouver's Chinese do not eat is the cat" (Province, July 23, 1910). Discovering the cultural difference between the white and the Chinese, Roger Chute, Christopher Foley and Daniel Munn concluded in their Commissioner Report of 1902 to government that:

They come from southern China ... with customs, habits and modes of life fixed and unalterable, resulting from an ancient and effete civilization. They form, on their arrival, a community within a community, separate and apart, a foreign substance within but not our body politic, with no love for our laws or institutions; a people that cannot assimilate and become an integral part of our race and nation. With their habits of overcrowding, and an utter disregard for all sanitary laws, they are living as they do without home life, schools or churches, and so nearly approaching a servile class, their effect upon the rest of the community is bad ... Upon this point there was entire unanimity (Commissioner Report 1902:p.278).²⁰

Sometimes in church, clergymen had also believed that God was on the side of a white man's country and to-preserve the purity of race was the first law of nations. "In Nanaimo, for example, the Rev. A.W. McLeod told a Baptists congregation that God intended the Anglo-Saxons to have possession of Canada and the United States." In New Westminster, the Rev. H.W. Fraser of Vancouver's First Presbyterian Church followed up his address to the Asiatic Exclusion League meeting of 7 September 1907 by declaring that God gave the North American continent to the white race to develop and use" (Roy 1989: p.231).

Once racial discrimination having been biblically justified, racism assumed its most powerful means of propaganda: it penetrated into the collective conscious of the mass. It is not just a matter that the Chinese merchants would be sued and lost their cases if they attempted to purchase property outside Chinatown, it is a matter that Chinese people were prohibited from access to Vancouver General Hospital (until 1936), Chinese kids were not allowed to go to the "white" schools, and the second and third generations of Chinese born in Vancouver had no right to vote (until 1947). Chinese were literally incarcerated within Chinatown. Worst of all, from time to time, Chinese families who resided outside Chinatown had to prepare for violence, asking for help from the Chinese consulate.²¹

Ineluctably, Chinatown provided a last retreat for those Chinese families. To them—the insiders, poor or rich—Chinatown re-created a second home in the middle of the physical and social incarceration. Whereas there were the occasions where the rights of the Chinese were promoted by white politicians, lawyers, school teachers, to the mainstream of society, Chinatown indicated a peripheral condition, a heterotopia out "there". This "alienness" of Chinatown, rooted in the specific historical development of British Columbia, transgresses any

²⁰Source from the B.C. Archives.

²¹The Chinese Times on March 24. Monday, 1919 still had news items such as: "There had been a movement to exclude Oriental residents and merchants in the Grandview and Granville Street area. However, after the protest by the Ambassador to the City Council, the movement had subsided. It was hoped that Chinese residing or working in those areas would obey the law and prevent further discrimination".

one-dimensional reasoning, as evidenced by the preceding account. The sharp categorization of "Us" (the white) and "Others"(the Chinese) was utilized as an opposition to serve not merely to instigate class conflicts, but also, to express what Gramsci called "Cultural Hegemony".²² A few authors have incisively debunked the common stigma of Chinatown as a spontaneous fruition and transplantation of Chinese culture, on the contrary, pinpointed that Chinatown was primarily created by the West (Anderson 1991; Roy 1989; Chan 1983). Such an interpretation takes the "exterior" into consideration; it relates the development of Chinatown with particular socio-political struggles in Canada. And it further modifies Marxist analysis of society, which perceives history as the product of the principal contradiction, while having little consideration to cultural, social, and ideological factors.

2.3. The Dominance of Reason

Caressing the scars of the past, evoking the perpetuating taboos of terror. A nightmare returns. The "Chinamen", crawling from their sleep, agape, run into darkness, fall into the False Creek. Silence. Hundreds and hundreds of white men, armed, excited, elated, chase behind. Silence. Followed by the images of the apathetic judge, the virile constables, the angry neighbors, the impassioned politicians and social scientists. Silence. Pain. Gooseflesh coated by the cold sweat. Heart pumps. In our temporary unforgetfulness.

Terror, no longer remote, distant, as it belonged to Other, to somewhere else. It now belongs to us. A voice inside us awakes: What will we do, when recognizing the existence of the Other, one that is neither reducible though we may have tried to assimilate, nor immediately comprehensible? Will we maintain calm? Will we guard our aggression, confine our jealousy and bitterness? Will we not unleash our frustration through violence?

Lurking in the dark, an evil face grins back.

A man likes to believe that he is the master of his own soul. But as long as he is unable to control his moods and emotions, or to be conscious of the myriad secret

²²This term appears in the Italian Communist writer Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks, the article on "Problems of Marxism". In that article, partially in note form, Gramsci had systematically reiterated some of the significant theoretical premisses of Marxism as the philosophy of praxis, which as a dialectical historical materialism has its own conditions and has to be understood historically. In the section on "Hegemony of Western Culture over the whole World Culture", he pinpointed that: "Even if one admits that other cultures have had an importance and a significance in the process of 'hierarchical' unification of world civilization (and this should certainly be admitted without question), they have had a universal value only in so far as they have become constituent elements of European culture, which is the only historically and concretely universal culture—in so far, that is, as they have contributed to the process of European thought and been assimilated by it" (Gramsci 1971: p.416).

This Eurocentrism in building up a universal history, for Gramsci, personifies the limitedness of the Hegelian intellectuals. Gramsci certainly also actually realized the domination function of intellectuals in the Western society itself. (See his article on "The Intellectuals").

ways which unconscious factors insinuate themselves into his arrangements and decisions, he is certainly not his own master (Jung 1964:p.72)

Ruminating on those final words of Carl G. Jung, we are enveloped by the terror of the end of terror: What if fear has been suspended? What if we feel we are in control but not? What will this illusion of total consciousness lead to?—a methodical elimination of the Jews by the Nazis? a scientifically justified medical correction of the homosexuals?

It is on this site that racism resumes its horrific sadistic silhouette, spins off its intoxication without being charged, or questioned. It is on this site that racism in the West had grown far beyond a primal form of ethnocentrism—the fearful reaction to otherness. For racism in the West is no longer associated with unreason, with madness, with childishness. For racism against Jews, Chinese, or Vietnamese was espoused with a rational, empirical procedure of Western science—pseudo-Darwinism, as we label it after millions of people had died under its name. On the same premise, racism, in its extreme form of eliminating life, and with subtle expression of derogatory remarks which hurt the heart but not the skin, begs for an explanation over and above the "Cultural Hegemony"—since there is hardly any society that do not see themselves as being the "chosen people" and do not write history from their own point of view.

Gramsci, who spoke of the "Cultural Hegemony", also spoke of "Social Hegemony". To add one more dimension, I would say we have to speak of the "Cogito Hegemony", that is, when tribes construct their own shamans to personify evil, battle with evil, detract evil, the West has constantly attempted to erase this animistic, bestial face from humanity, or, to project it to the Other. Devoid of such a dimension, it becomes totally incomprehensible why the Europeans themselves had practiced variegated disciplines upon their own body in form of the Napoleonean Soldier, Victorian Wife, or the Fordian Worker. Devoid of such a dimension, it is equally unthinkable to contemplate the tragedy of our history, and the stark contrast between our good intentions and our evil acts. Devoid of such a dimension, it becomes meaningless to think of the non-economical industry of torture, state apparatus, mental clinics, and the time and energy spent in suffocating those Chinese settlers in the early history of Vancouver, by excluding them from jobs and depriving their rights to vote (even the Chinese merchants who brought business fortunes to the rest of the society were also confined within Chinatown).

Terror thus exists not only in the eruption of the physical violence, but also in the orderly order of the mind, in its unyielding refusal to recognize its own terror.

A philosophical somersault has to be made. History has to be tumbled once again further back to where Reason, being sundered from pathos, eros, and ethos, was enthroned.

Unfurled the Age of Classicism. An era that perdured roughly through the sixteenth and seventeenth century in European history. In that age of discovery and representation shone the immortal names of Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Galileo Galilei (1564-1616), Johann Kepler (1571-1630), William Shakespeare (1564-1616), Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), Diego Velasquez (1599-1660), René Descartes (1596-1650), and Isaac Newton (1642-1727)— each made an indelible contribution to the development of the Western mind. Their unprecedented successes in searching and formulating the order of the external world by *mathesis* and *langue* enabled Descartes at the dawn of humanism to exclaim "I think, therefore, I am". For Descartes, body could be distilled as a mechanical corporeal entity conducted by the mind (Descartes 1986), Man (the reductional notion of mankind) lives by a sheer mechanical consciousness (Lacan 1966; Foucault 1970; Derrida 1974) He remarked:

In the first place, that there is a vast difference between mind and body, in respect that body, from its nature, is always divisible, and that mind is entirely indivisible... I remark, in the next place, that the mind does not immediately receive the impression from all the parts of the body, but only from the brain, or perhaps even from one small part of it, viz., that in which the common sense (*sensus communis*) is said to be, which as often as it is affected in the same way, gives rise to the same perception in the mind, although meanwhile the other parts of the body may be diversely disposed, as is proved by innumerable experiments, which it is unnecessary here to enumerate. I remark, besides, that the nature of body is such that none of its parts can be moved by another part a little removed from the other, which cannot likewise be moved in the same way by any one of the parts that lie between those two, although the most remote part does not act at all.... I remark, finally, that as each of the movements that are made in the part of the brain by which the mind is immediately affected, impresses it with but a single sensation, the most likely supposition is with but a single sensation, the most likely supposition in the circumstances is, that this movement causes the mind to experience, among all the sensations which it is capable of impressing upon it, that one which is the best fitted, and generally the most useful for the preservation of the human body when it is in full health" (Descartes 1986: p.140).

The Classicist image of Man consequently emerged (Foucault 1970)—Man as a rational being²³ in between nature and God. It irreversibly broke from the organic tie of nature. Unlike the Mediaeval cosmos in which the revived animism enchanted nature with spirits, the Cartesian universe was reduced to a machine: God was pushed outside the universe, and concomitantly the hierarchization of God over Man over Nature allowed Man to take charge of the matter in this world. Nature apart from Truth, in the eyes of Bacon, only dissimulated, thus needed to be "tortured". The age old analogous link between the signifier and the signified

²³Not every culture will define mankind in an essentialist manner as a rational being; rationality is not always the virtue that all people adore.

in language, in writing, in architecture, was destroyed, not by disqualifying that link, but by reducing and abstracting it into Sameness. Particularity was filtered by *mathesis* and *langue*. Being dominated Becoming, Representation of the world dominated the presence. By means of formulae and geometries, the Cartesians thought that they could decode the hidden truth of the universe once and for all (Descartes 1986), including the existence of God, who, as though at the furthest end of the chain of being, waited to be known.

The reversal from the Medieval faith into an utterly transparent mind immediately resulted in the fall of the corporeal body and the fall of unreason. After Descartes purified thoughts as the work of soul through brain, *Cogito* overrode the unthought, intellect condemned imagination and intuition into the state of delirium and illusion. Madness, that was always feared and deserted in the previous time, from the Age of Classicism, transformed into the anti-thesis of Reason. As unreason, irrational, it corrupted Truth. Similarly the corporeal body turned into a corruptor of soul. The body, which became secondary to the mind, locked Truth inside.

Taking Truth out, the Age of Classicism invented the politics of Body. Body, "object and target of power. It is easy enough to find signs of the attention then paid to the body — to the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skillful and increases its forces. The great book of Man-the-Machine was written simultaneously on two registers: the anatomico-metaphysical register, of which Descartes wrote the first pages and which the physicians and philosophers continued, and the technico-political register, which was constituted by a whole set of regulations and by empirical and calculated methods relating to the army, the school and the hospital, for controlling or correcting the operation of the body"(Foucault, p.136). Michel Foucault described this as "Bio-Power", the power imposed upon flesh and human individuals as an anatomico-metaphysical entity.

The eighteenth century Enlightenment unchained the Cartesian Man. "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chain" (Rousseau 1987: p.17). This romantic chord of humanity liberated Man from all shackles and machines. Rousseau, Kant, Voltaire, Diderot, Locke, etc., passionately expressed that by nature all humans are equal. "Assuming human nature to be a simple thing", Enlightenment idealists also saw simple solutions to social problems: "rid man's mind of a few ancient errors, purge his beliefs of the artificial complications of metaphysical 'systems' and theological dogmas, restore to his social relations something like the simplicity of the state of nature, and his natural excellence would live happily ever after."²⁴

²⁴ From James A. Boon's *Other Tribes, Other Scribes*, p. 28, where he quotes C.L.Becker's remarks on the Enlightenment.

Reason was the talisman of the Enlightenment. Although Cartesian Reason—the linear logic of Descartes continued to reign, (as one reads in Saint-Simon), the Kantian notion of Reason appeared to challenge Cartesianism—one step closer to the Freudian understanding of consciousness. Kant re-glorified intuition, putting both rationality and intuition in the same process of reasoning. He also deemed the capacity of synthesizing and pure reasoning an *a priori* of mind, something innate, built-in; therefore, induction came back to Reason (Kant 1990). Kant paved a path for The metaphysics of the Enlightenment. His pure reason bridged over the gap between Idealism and Materialism. The difference between the Kantian pure reason and the empirical reason hitherto cleaved knowledge into Science and Philosophy: "Science is partially-unified knowledge; Philosophy is completely-unified knowledge" (Spencer 1937 :p.115). The consistency between Kantian metaphysics and the later Positive Scientism stems from, underneath the difference of stances, the search for the capitalized Truth.

Either way, transcendental or empirical, Reason has dominated Western philosophy since the Classical Age. The eighteenth century philosophers were not unaware of the problems caused by the Cartesian world view—its hierarchical Dualism of Body/Mind, Culture/Nature. To transcend Dualism was the central task for the Enlightenment thinkers. But as Nietzsche lamented, the desire to find a "way out" (Kant), to build another meta-language, led the Enlightenment into a new trap.

The Enlightenment philosophers lifted Man into the air, above history, believing there existed an Ideal Man and Ideal Society, away from politics and from inequality. Despite the great difference among the theories and methods that the eighteenth century Enlightenment philosophers postulated the concept of democracy, freedom, equality, and ideal government, despite the oppositions between optimistic ideologues like Rousseau and the realistic reformers like Voltaire, Enlightenment in common called forth for the maturity of mind, the independence of Reason (Horkheimer & Adorno 1944: p.3), and the birth of Higher Man, like themselves (Kant, Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, Locke, et al.). An illusion was created: The omnipotent Higher Man standing above history could replace both Nature and God; The law of natural evolution follows the process from homogeneity to heterogeneity, simplicity to complexity; all this could be monitored by Man Himself. Thus, "the connection of the positivities with finitude, the reduplication of the empirical and the transcendental, the perpetual relation of the *cogito* to the unthought, the retreat and return to the origin, define for us man's mode of being. It is in the analysis of that mode of being, and no longer in the analysis of representation, that reflection since the nineteenth century has sought a philosophical foundation for the possibility of knowledge" (Foucault 1970: p.335).

The rise of the human sciences in the eighteenth century is therefore not fortuitous. To this purpose, the knowledge enterprise altered its engrossed interests from natural science to humanism. Putting Man as an object of study — in the sense of Man being a collective specimen, and Man being an individual body, the Enlighteners tirelessly observed Man through clinical dissection, psychological analysis, sociological categorization, biological taxonomy, and economical classification (Foucault 1965; 1970; 1973; 1977).

Health, a notion related less to the cure of disease than finding the secret of the body and prolonging life, became the centre of human science. Outside the medical field, individual and public "Health" become problematized as a socio-political issue, as a test on the subject of the Ideal Man and Ideal Society, in the later days of the French Revolution (Foucault 1965; 1970; 1973; 1977).

It was this reversal [the transcendence from the finitude of life in the eighteenth century] that served as the philosophical condition for the organization of a positive medicine; inversely, this positive medicine marked, at the empirical level, the beginning of that fundamental relation that binds modern man to his original finitude. Hence, the mental place of medicine in the over-all architecture of the human sciences: it is closer than any of them to the anthropological structure that sustains them all. Hence, too, its prestige in the concrete forms of existence: health replaces salvation, said Guardia (Foucault 1973 :p.194).

In each battle fighting against the then prevailing plagues, both real and imaginary, the authorities concerned with "Health" built up.

At the same time, the capitalistic modern states propagated by the Enlightenment came into being. Regardless of what the Enlightenment ideologues admitted, the abstract and concrete, the philosophical and the technical ideals of the Enlightenment positively integrated and reciprocally partook in the unprecedented massive process of normalization (Foucault 1965; 1970; 1973; 1977). Each new institution experimented with a modern invention of Bio-Power.

Theory and discourse tangled; metaphysics was a product and a mentor of politics. The lack of understanding of the anatomico-metaphysical Man in the Mediaeval Age caused the grisly retaliation against the body, out of fear. But the Cartesian association of Body as a subordinate to Mind changed the whole philosophy of physical torture. Punishment of criminals became calculative: the level of criminality was translated into levels of pains provided by the various ways of cutting, injuring, dismembering, executing, all in front of the eyes of public spectators. After the eighteenth century, punishment shifted more towards to

the mind. Not just because of the social reform movement,²⁵ nor simply because of the increasing humanity, according to Foucault,

[I]n fact, the shift from a criminality of blood to a criminality of fraud forms part of a whole complex mechanism, embracing the development of production, the increase of wealth, a higher juridical and moral value placed on property relations, stricter methods of surveillance, a tighter partitioning of the population, more efficient techniques of locating and obtaining information; the shift in illegal practices is correlative with an extension and a refinement of punitive practices (Foucault 1977: p.77)

Beneath the humanization of the penalties, what one finds are all those rules that authorize, or rather demand, 'leniency', as a calculated economy of the power to punish. But they also provoke a shift in the point of application of this power: it is no longer the body, with the ritual play of the excessive pains, spectacular brandings in the ritual of public execution; it is the mind or rather a play of representation in the minds of all. It is no longer the body, but soul, said Mably. And we see very clearly what he meant by this term: the correlative of a technique of power. Old 'anatomies' of punishment are abandoned. But have we really entered the age of non-corporal punishment? (Foucault 1977: p.101).

The most vivid prototype of the age of non-corporal punishment ought to be Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon (oval-shaped prison): it must have no view towards the outside, must look inwards towards the centre where the observatory tower is located; while the observer could easily study, gaze, and observe the individuals incarcerated in each individual cell, through the device of optics, the disciplined has no way to see the observer nor his next door neighbor, but only the tower; the eternal presence of the tower calls for the eternal presence of the eye of the observer, even though the observer might not be present that constantly at all. The psychological war waged by the tower towards the individual in the cell robs the individuals' privacy. It mentally forced the disciplined to internalize the rules that were first imposed upon them as the artificial (Bentham 1789/1948).

This power of gaze was connected to the studies of the Ideal Man by the Enlightenment philosophers. Bentham was not profoundly philosophical in his writing, yet he knew

²⁵The eighteenth century reforms in Europe did not aim at eliminating punishment, not at all, but demanded a different kind of punishment that suited the interests of the uprising bourgeoisie class, and the capitalists. The name to be protected used to be the sovereignty of the regime, then, was replaced by the good of the society. Penalty escalated into an art, a calculated economy, it accorded to six rules: (1) minimize the quantity of physical punishment; (2) provoke exactly the idea of pain; (3) have the most intensive effects on those who have not committed the crime (punishment for the sake of public displaying); (4) distinguish clearly crime from virtue; (5) subject to common truth (the previous juridical power had been limited thence by the rule that every defendant must be viewed as innocent and therefore could not be punished until proved to be guilty); (6) individualization of sentences (Foucault 1977: pp.94-101).

that "nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure". It was he that put those abstract metaphysical social theories into the utilitarian terms, into an architectural vocabulary. The power imposed upon the Body no longer had to be physical, nor did it have to be negative. A positive, new political anatomy was possible. First in the Napoleonic armies, the Ideal Man was translated into an Ideal Body. Out of an average man, the military began to modulate the Body into the ideal form. This had been done by the techniques of discipline that regulated the last detail of the soldier: the small moves, the small actions, the small parts of the body. The eighteenth century barracks were constructed like the Panopticon: individual soldiers had been assigned to a divided, particular space, which prevented any collective dispositions and also maximized the possible public control and surveillance to neutralize the personal spaces. Individual bodies were reduced into parts, and specialities to build a fixative association to a particular place, which could be easily identified and mapped; Individuals were classified into tiers, and the spatial taxonomy required different level of control and supervision, generate economy and wealth. With all these spatial orders, that rudimentarily also prevailed in the workshops of the capitalists, there was also a disciplinary mechanism in time. Controlling one's time-table: regulating one's regime of waking up and going to sleep; codifying of exact acts in a temporal sequence; constantly maintaining certain gesture; standardizing body language; stretching the time span of exhaustion, and so on and so forth — those were the tactics of disciplining in the micro physics of the body.

Although Panopticon as an ideal diagram represented an image of the modern prison, it effectively shadowed the spaces in our modern state. In the case of the early hospital, the school, the workshop, and more so in the Owen, Saint-Simon, or Fourier's ideal types of community or village, the image of the Panopticon was masked in the name of science, by the abstract necessity of society, with its absolute demands framed on its individuals and the observed. This is why "it [the Utopian society] received little praise; the most obvious is that the discourses to which it gave rise really acquired, except in the academic classifications, the status of sciences; but the real reason is no doubt that the power that it operates and which it augments is a direct, physical power that men exercise upon one another. An inglorious culmination had an origin that could be only grudgingly acknowledged" (Foucault 1979: p.225).

The violent side of the Enlightenment lies obviously in its own paradox of Ideal and Real: believing in human as heterogeneous (and sometimes equal), believing in democracy and social justice (as the model for the heterogeneity of society), the "enlightened" educated elite attempted to "homogenize" the rest of the society, the "uncivilized", the masses, in accordance with its own "universal" value and its definition of "Man".

2.4. Chinatown: from an Evil Place to a Social Disease

Gaze. Body. Power. Reason put all that is unreason, and all that is otherness, under surveillance and control. A relatively shorter time was required in Canada for the colonialists to install the modern state apparatus. Chinatown fell as the first prey of the "social laboratory". It would probably matter less whether it was Chinatown or Italianatown in the 1920s; the underclass urban slums would always attract the attention of the medical doctors, policemen, sociologists, and politicians, to name a few.²⁶ At one side, thanks to the enforcement of Health-By-Laws, the workers in the Chinese restaurants got their working environment improved—ventilation and light became possible; the sewers and road conditions in Chinatown were upgraded. At the other side, the vigilant eyes of the governments imported and invented for the slums a power of a modern kind.

After Chinatown had been enclosed by death for sometime, after Chinatown had been associated with enclaves of evils for years, the City of Vancouver gained more knowledge about this hellish place. In the name of science and of society, a war for public health was waged against Chinatown. Gradually a gate opened. A gate for socially normalizing and culturally assimilating the "sinful" Chinese inside the ghetto who were economically deprived, socially disadvantaged, and culturally discriminated against. More and more confident, more and more determined, the City of Vancouver progressively penetrated into Chinatown, which reflected its changing measures of discipline, respectively in the events of 1895, 1914 and 1928.

(1) As mentioned earlier, the year 1895 marked a beginning for the enforcement of a series of Health-By-Laws in Vancouver. The formalization of health inspection was a reaction to the spreading epidemics and contagious diseases. Chinatown was condemned as the origin of all the epidemics—an image of an evil place. Medical statistics furthered that impression by providing a matrix of statistics that reported that the rate of T.B. was the highest in Chinatown, and that the death rate was twice as high in Chinatown as in other districts (Chinese Times, March 28, 1919 :p.3). Prior to 1895 (sometime in 1891), in the panic of discovering two Chinese lepers in Chinatown, the city council formally designated Chinatown as a site subjected to periodic public health inspections. The ensuing legitimization of health

²⁶To ponder how pervasive the power emitted from the notion of Health, one solely needs to look at the current institutionalized control of our body, our physique and mind, at these tiers of clinic and asylum, these taboos and prescriptions on diet and love-making. This exceeding dependence on the aid of the medical profession has already naturalized. An ordinary Canadian today cannot even imagine what it will be like without it. In a way as C. E. Birch, the Secretary of Metropolitan Health Committee (of Vancouver) asked in a report entitled What of Public Health: "Have you ever tried to visualize what living would be in a city without the control and supervision exercised by Health authorities? We are rather apt to accept the present standards of sanitation and food and disease control as being the natural order of things, whereas it has only been arrived at by a process of hard work and evolution, assisted by the ever advancing front of scientific investigation and experience, developing new ideas and methods of improvement."

control particularly targeted the Chinese population. In those historically contingent events and extreme cases, such as fighting a plague, doctors and inspectors seized a special power that would "sort out every possible confusion: that of the disease, which is transmitted when bodies are mixed together; that of the evil, which is increased when fear and death overcome prohibition...The plague as a form, at once real and imaginary, of disorder had as its medical and political correlative discipline" (Foucault 1979: p.194).

Robert Marrion, then the Chief Sanitary Inspector, recalled,

At which time [1895] I was appointed by the Council to this position, (Dr. Thomas was then Acting Medical Health Officer), I found the sanitary conditions very bad, especially in that portion of the City embracing Chinatown. Immediate steps were taken to compel all parties to connect their premises to the public sewers, where such sewers were destroyed, and from that time to the present [1911] a crusade has been kept up against the old dilapidated, insanitary buildings in the residential portions of the City, which in my opinion, must be continued as long or as soon as they become old, rotten and insanitary and unfit for human inhabitation.²⁷

Health inspectors like Marrion had the power of police. According to "Health Act, 1893" in British Columbia (which wasn't put into effect until 1895), the Local Board of Health could "remove the occupants forcibly" from sub-standard housing, which had been defined by Section 36: "No person shall let, or occupy, or suffer to be occupied, as a dwelling or lodging, any room which (a) Does not contain at all times at least three hundred and eighty-four cubic feet of air space for each person occupying the same; or (b) Has not a window made to open in the manner approved by the Local Board; or (c) Has not appurtenant to it the use of a water-closet or earth-closet constructed in accordance with these regulations"(Hodgetts 1912: p.69). The Vancouver City By-Laws also authorized:"Whenever any nuisance shall be found on any premises or in any building or place within the City, the Medical Health Officer is hereby authorized, in his discretion to order the owner or occupant of such premises, building or place to abate such nuisance, and in default of the person abating such nuisance, the Medical Health Officer may cause the same to be abated summarily at the expense of such person and such person shall be guilty of an infraction of this By-Law and liable to the penalties thereof."²⁸

Side by side with the institutionalization of civic politics, the policing power of the health inspector started to penetrate the life of Chinatown. The surveillance on the diseased blended with the racism and economic discriminations.

²⁷Cited from C.E.Birch's report What of Public Health, date unknown, Source from the BC Archives.

²⁸Source from the record of Department of Health, the B.C. Archives.

In March 1900, Health and Plumbing Inspector Marrion insisted on compulsory smallpox vaccination for Chinese laundrymen. In December of the same year, the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council secured a victory over Chinese launderers when a new Sunday observance by-law required laundries to close on Sundays. Another by-law passed the same month prevented clothes being exposed to the open air for drying, a clause which operated in favour of the newer, non-Chinese steam laundries (including those of Alderman Stewart). By 1904, an attempt to 'drive Chinatown out of the trade', to use the words of the counsel for several Chinese laundrymen, council increased the annual licence fee for laundry operations from \$10 to \$50 (Anderson 1991:p.83).

(2) Chinatown turned into the most frequently visited place by the Public Health Inspectors and Aldermen in the coming decades. The founding of the Canadian Commission of Conservation (1909) symbolically and practically required a faster systemization of health control and inspection. Under Dr. Underhill (whose term lasted from 1904 until the end of 1930), the first full-time Medical Health Officer for the City of Vancouver, the target of inspection altered gradually from the prevention of epidemics to regulating sanitary conditions for the poor. The city council stepped in. The whole motive of inspection was complicated. The city council often made a clean-up campaign in Chinatown; many houses were asked to be repainted. Some aldermen toured Chinatown and identified the houses to be pulled down, and the ones to be repainted (Chinese Times, April 3, 1921: p.3). The Public Health Service team mainly checked the interiors of the houses in Chinatown. "Wherever they found disqualified and non-hygienic areas, they demanded modification within a limited time period" (Chinese Times, April 8, 1919 :p.3). In one inspection of 1919, ["there had been already 20 places found to be a dissatisfaction due to bad ventilation, poor lighting and over-lodging. The owners were asked to improve the area according to the public health regulation within 14 days, otherwise the owners would be sued" (Chinese Times, April 8, 1919 :p.3).

Not surprisingly, few of the shacks in Chinatown met the standards set up by the health act. However, improving the physical living conditions of the Chinese was not the sole purpose of health inspection. Inspectors like Robert Marrion firmly believed that no matter how restricted the code was, Chinatown could not be upgraded (as the place for the race that could not be assimilated). So, for people like him, what was the real meaning of a tougher codification for Chinatown? Unmistakably, there were other agenda as well. With few inspectors genuinely interested in improving the quality of sanitation in Chinatown, the city council and Aldermen used inspection for other intents: again, such as to limit the competitiveness of Chinese laundrymen with the non-Chinese ones, to separate Chinese school kids from the white children,²⁹ to use housing inspection as an opportunity for cracking

²⁹ Public Health was then also a parameter and excuse to separate Chinese school kids from the non-Chinese students, for the Chinese students were thought unhygienic and contagious. Only from the

down on gambling,³⁰ and to curb drug trafficking activities in Chinatown. Inspection of Chinatown sometimes came with a threat that "if the 'high class' Chinese could not stop his fellowman's illegal business, the Canadian citizens would have to act unmercifully, in case of emergency. It was a warning to all Chinese and if the drug market did not stop, Chinatown would be removed in order to save the youngsters" (Chinese Times, March 27, 1920 :p.2-3). This policing function of health inspection became prominent especially in the late 1910s and the early 1920s after gambling and drugs were illegalized. Rumor had it that Chinatown had several underground gambling and opium dens, where "Tong Wars" gangsters gathered. Under the pretext of public health, inspection became a forceful policing measure to seek out those alleged underground dark corners.³¹ In 1918 alone, there were about 1000 Chinese gamblers arrested (Chinese Times, December 14, 1918: p.2-3).

This kind of policing elicited a strong reaction from the Chinese community. In order to avoid police raids the Chinese merchant elites, the Chinese Benevolent Association [CBA], and the Chinese Consul, Mr. Yip, earnestly reminded the Chinese residents and business men to maintain cleanliness and keep their homes and groceries tidy. They constantly appealed to city council to stop the policing and to engage in civic improvements. Receiving no positive response, they even undertook improvement projects themselves. As a result, the Public Health Department, after some time, noticed that the physical condition in Chinatown improved. "Most of the residential area were clean, however, there were still some residents living too near aside for each resident in the house, in the new construction regulation" (Chinese Times, January 24, 1920: p.2).

Indeed, the control of public health in Chinatown implied something other than Health. The prejudice against the Chinese community as an alien race was rooted in the mind of many white politicians, Aldermen, medical doctors and journalists. They deemed that "the Chinese method of living is totally different to that of white people...Even when every convenience is provided, Chinese are generally dirtier than whites" (Anderson 1991: p.85). Chinese settlers were "the degraded humanity from the Orient, more beastly than human", living in "places that a hog would die in stench of" (Anderson 1991:p.84). This analogy of

1920s, the School Directors of Vancouver began to protest the school segregation policy endorsed by the anti-Asian groups (Chinese Times, December 22, 1921:p.3).

³⁰ Since gambling in unsanitary places also violated the Health Act, occasionally the police swept out the gambling joints in Chinatown. "Many gamblers were arrested, the heads were fined \$100 and the gamblers, \$10" (Chinese Times, October 23, 1918: p.3).

³¹ Vancouver Police Department often claimed an emergency such as: "Due to the constant riots in Chinatown area, the police department had sent out more policemen to inspect and maintain order in the area until that crisis was over" (Chinese Times, August 26, 1919 :p.3).

White versus Chinese equating to Healthy and Diseased even appeared in the Journal of the Institute of Town Planning of Canada, which depicted "the Chinese quarter" in Vancouver "an open sore for decades." Graphically a report delineated:

A rat scurried across the floor. Other rats could be heard fighting and squealing behind the piles of vegetables on the floor. Crouched beside a smoking, greasy stove was an old Chinaman, tearing a crab to pieces with his fingers and noisily sucking in what white meat he could extract from the shell fish. In one corner was the inevitable bunk, piled high with grimy blankets and other rags. It had not been made up and looked as if it never would be. The floor was a litter of filth and dirt of all descriptions. And this is a storehouse for a Chinese peddler! It is the place where other peddlers come to load up their carts and take their truck around the residential portions of the city! Down in the basement of a ramshackle building, with no windows, and only the one basement entrance, in murky darkness which makes it imperative to keep lights burning all the time, always smoke filled, with the walls shining with grease and heavy-coated with cob-webs, the Chinaman is the guardian of the storehouse. It is he who, with the same greasy fingers with which he tore open the odoriferous crab, counts out the cabbages and other vegetables which he hands over to the men with the carts. It is going on, day after day, less than two blocks away from the City Hall, and is only another disease-breeding places [sic] in Chinatown which are being occupied when it should long ago have been condemned as unfit for habitation. The old Chinaman sits, stoically waiting his wagon peddlers, and when they arrive the vegetables which have been stored in the dirty cellar are taken out to the homes in Vancouver. And a few blocks away is the tubercular clinic! (Ottawa, JITPC, Vol.I, No.6, October 1921 :p.15).

Planners joined the war against Chinese in the 1920s. In the eyes of Reason, the slum was exceedingly dangerous, not just to the health of the city, but to the morals of the citizens. If one adhered to the Christian efforts for social betterment, "the slums should be attacked and abolished because they are the great enemy to the home, which is the foundation stone of the State. Bad housing conditions inevitably tend to drunkenness in parents; to delinquency in children; to disorderly conduct; to wife and family desertion by men who get tired of it all; to immorality in the growing generation owing to the lack of privacy and the consequent loss of modesty" (Hodgetts 1912b: p.52). Chinatown was then not merely a place full of contagious germs of disease, it was definitely a menacing social factor.

In requesting juridical recognition of planning, the Journal of Town Planning Institute of Canada, after the Municipality of Point Grey passed its town planning bylaw on August 31, 1922, remarked that:

It is now ten years since the social organizations of Vancouver began to petition the legislature for town planning law.... to sustain civic optimism in view of the development of slum regions, which were becoming the hiding-places of all kinds of social ills, and that they found local patriotism for the "beautiful Pacific City" taking on a hollow sound that was not good for Vancouver. From the best patriots

there broke occasionally flashes of indignant satire. 'Nature', said they, 'has done everything for us and year by year we are wantonly tumbling her work into ugly ruin and squalor by bad city building. Soon we shall no longer be able to use the phrase 'Our Beautiful city', even at city council banquets'. Premier McBride promised to give the matter 'grave consideration' but the years went by and nothing was done and British Columbia, that progressive province, the home of the minimum wage for women and other advanced and beneficent legislation, remained, with Quebec, one of the two provinces in Canada without town planning law. Social organizations grew tired of begging and during ten years the cause of better buildings languished and died and one of the greatest social evils — drug traffic — has been found planting its seeds and bearing its evil fruit in the slums of Vancouver and carrying away an appalling wealth of young life into the grave of despair. In scores of cases Canadian parents have been shocked into the knowledge that their high-school trained boys and girls, born for sunshine, happiness and the joy of rueful national work, were the degraded victims of Chinese traffickers in poisonous drugs. The building inspector has been saying: 'We can do almost nothing. Our building bylaws are half a century out of date', but for a year he has been spending his private time in making better building bylaws which perhaps the city council will adopt. In nearly all cities that I was governing the structural erection of factories are up to date but the laws governing the erection of homes lamentably obsolete. If religion could turn itself to the better building of homes, where it is supposed to have its own dwelling! (Ottawa, JITPC, Vol.I, No.12, November 1922 :p.23).

Chinatown, in the eyes of planners, transformed from an evil place of epidemics into a corrupt source of social disease. And the reason for lack of improvement in that part of the town, according to planners, was "the inadequate building by-laws".

Few had questioned the unsanitary conditions and "social problems" of Chinatown from a socio-cultural and politico-economic perspective. The Chinese community was forced to paint its houses and clean up its basements, but not allowed to work outside Chinatown; Chinese were portrayed as an "inferior race" naturally not immune from contagious disease, and a disgraceful group. What the Public Health Service could suggest was to demolish those shacks (Chinese Times, June 11, 1918:p.3). What the City Council could propose was to segregate all Chinese residents into one area (Chinese Times, February 25, 1919: p.3). What the Vancouver Sun pleaded was to erase Chinatown from the map of Vancouver in order to save youth from evil (Chinese Times, March 31, 1920 :p.2).

(3) The disciplinary force surrounded Chinatown crystalized into the forms of Zoning-By-Laws in Bartholomew's Plan of Vancouver at the end of the 1920s, a major triumphant achievement of Canadian city planning. After three years of intensive preparation, the internationally famous Bartholomew Planning Firm, hired by the Planning Commission in Vancouver, submitted its "rational comprehensive plan" to the city in 1929. Bartholomew's principles of planning—those of an American pragmatist and a civil engineer—could be summarized by six items: "streets, transit, transportation (rail and water), public recreation,

zoning, and civic art" (Krueckeberg 1983 :p.293). Bartholomew epitomized the iconic spirit of American efficiency planning. With no surprise, the same was promised to Vancouver. Bartholomew was obsessed with regulations: his plan of Vancouver codified all dwelling zones—the single family housing, two-family housing, or multi-storey dwelling zones—with the specifications on the size of the front yard, back yard, side yard, building heights (and physical features of the house that would allow better access to sunlight and better ventilation). But what about Chinatown?

Chinatown could in no way meet the standards Bartholomew had set up for the middle class neighborhoods. Chinatown, in the middle of the Utopian Garden City, in the middle of the men and women dressed properly in suits and skirts, golfing in the meadows of the parks, was an obstacle on the road to modernization. Therefore Chinatown was shovelled into the partly Light Industrial and partly Heavy Industrial District. A Heavy Industrial Zone, according to the Zoning By-Law No.2074, specified "no dwelling or other building for human habitation shall be erected or used in any such district, except such as shall be necessary for exclusive accommodation of caretakers or watchmen or other persons similarly employed, unless sanctioned and approved by the Council of the City under the provisions of subsection (2) of section 16 of this by-law" (Vancouver Town Planning Commission, 1929: p.286). The existence of Chinatown, because of the birth of the first plan of Vancouver in 1929, dramatically and abruptly became illegal.³²

No more fear, no more qualms. Replacing Health Inspection, planning developed its own artful stratagem to handle this eyesore. Like a tricky psychiatrist with a mental patient, planning borrowed forces from its claimed scientific and technical objectivity and social neutrality.³³ Planning simply ignored Chinatown, ruling it out, holding it at an arm's length.

³²The problematization of Chinatown as an impermissible zone acutely exposed an innate irony in the Zoning By-Law. Zoning, being a technical regulation of sanitation standards and a means to reduce the laissez-faire land speculation, could work and only work in servicing the Capitalist society as a whole. The nature of private property ownership determined from the outset that Zoning must be employed to stabilize the homogeneity of classes and preserve property values. It never, as the planners anticipated, could embrace a form of otherness. In the case of Chinatown, Zoning was obviously used as a legal means to systematically segregate and eliminate the Chinese neighborhood. Again, as Christine Boyer critiques "Zoning experts viewed" the city "as a gigantic machine; therefore both the division of land uses into functional zones and the reduction of architectural design to regulatory controls were permissible. As the tempo of change in the machine accelerated, zoning was expected to answer all the city's malfunctions. Zoning represented the promise of scientific progress; technical efficiency experts would manipulate and manage the order of this new city. Yet facilitating the mobility of population and accelerating the pace of land changes meant that zoning produced a gap between the techniques of regulatory control and the aesthetic and social form of the American city" (Boyer 1983 : p.169).

³³"In the conquering days of Rome, when slaves were cheap they were used with no regard for their health but the days came when the depletion of the slave market brought its obvious lesson to their owners. Heretofore the ordinary business outlook upon the labour market had been that of pre-Augustinian Rome. More enlightened views are permeating the business world, as is abundantly indicated by the

The disfranchised ostracized Chinatown was presented a limited opportunity to be assimilated. While Canada barred its door completely to Chinese immigrants between 1923 and 1947, churches were built in Chinatown to convert the Chinese to Christianity, social welfare was bestowed upon the Chinese poor, missionaries went to Strathcona school. A

extensive welfare work that is becoming an adjunct to all great industrial undertakings. That town planning which is regenerative of existing congestion and obviates it for the future will give us freedom of expression in our monuments, our institutions and ourselves. The energy essential to the fulfillment of our civilization at grips with other cultures can only arise where the exercise of freedom bestows the grace of health and happiness" (Ottawa, JITPC Vol.I, No. 12, November 1922: p.3).

"Town planning is the philosophy of human relativity in the maintenance of life; it is the personal equation to existence and survival, to subsistence and ascension. Town planning is to society as mind is to matter — the pathfinder of sociological aspirations.

As a science and an art, town planning is the technique of sociology. It has far exceeded the nominal restrictions of its original nomenclature.

The background of our story recedes through all the formative circumstances of human life and back to the evolutionary haze of nebulous matter — the rifts in the veil of the future inspire a vision of cosmic consciousness. Our hope stimulates the expectancy of passing from mere self-consciousness to higher communion with the living presence of the universe, to greater illumination.

Town planning is concerned with the phenomena which upon this earth, 'itself a mere cinder from the sun', to quote Osborne, has brought about the high intellectual powers of man and their ethical evolution — we are solicitous for the conservation of that status and towards its expansion, as maybe, in the enhancement and realization of life.

Regional planning — urban and rural — determines the constructive disposition of land in use and development — genesis of production.

Planning quickens the cumulative permeation of efficiency in the community, in domestic shelter and economy, in health and amenity, in securing adequate sunlight and air, in obviating congestions and so facilitating free circulation and intercourse.

Organic planning functions through ethics, economics, and art, as indivisible manifestations of rural law — of the first law of nature — the maintenance of life.

Town planners are post-graduates seeking to shed the glow of their professional research upon the problems of human betterment, as Milton said: 'till old experience do attain, to something like prophetic strain'" (Ottawa, JITPC, Vol.1. No.6, October 1921:p.25).

There is no surprise to know that Cauchon, the Chairman of the Town Planning Commission, spelled out the above two passages, as the mission of Town Planning in Canada, at two quite different occasions. The first one was delivered in a straightforward manner in a planning convention in 1922. Within it, the fear of under class revolt, after the revolution in the Soviet Union, was undisguised (Ottawa, JITPC Vol.II, No.1, January 1923: p.4). Planning was believed of being capable of pacifying the under class and stabilizing the social order. The first editorial in the Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada in Vol. 1, No.3, 1921, noted that "the prosperity of any nation cannot rest on any other foundation than popular contentment; while discontent rules, commercial stability is out of question' and discontent must rule so long as the majority of the people have no room to live in decency and comfort. The town planner believes that decent living conditions for the workers are not only possible but absolutely imperative if revolution and disaster are to be avoided" (Ottawa, JITPC, Vol. 1, No.3, 1921: p.1).

The second message was sent to a group of Senators. To them, Noulan Cauchon's consecration of planning may serve as a metaphysical legitimizer "The most important first step in creating sound town planning policy of Canada, therefore, is to develop the science of town planning. In so far as science is ordered knowledge, as Herbert Spencer contended, we are still in the embryonic stage of the development" (Ottawa, JITPC, Vol. 1, No.3, 1921: p.1). Cauchon thought the roots of planning "are deep in the biological origin and the evolution of life." (Ottawa, JITPC, Vol.I, No.11, August, 1922: p.26) To add, Thomas Adams boasted planning as sociological plea for "scientific order in building towns and cities on the ground that better order will promote human efficiency and human welfare so also is it a powerful plea for scientific order in the practice of town planning itself" (Ottawa, JITPC, Vol.I, No.11, August, 1922:p.11) In his verbose euphoria, planning hooked up with the course of evolution. Naturalized, mystified, planning ascended to the platform of virtue and truth.

hidden menace dangled behind, threatening that the non-assimilated would be shut out by the mainstream eternally.

Albeit more lenient in form compared with the expurgatory policies and riot raiding at the turn of the century, the disciplinary function of planning through zoning and building codes began to penetrate into every corner of Chinatown. Soon those Chinese residents living in Strathcona discovered that Zoning had a significant impact on their life: banks prohibited any loans to Chinese house owners since they would not fund any renovation in an Industrial Zone. Chinatown was intentionally left to dilapidate. The horrifying economic depression and the eruption of the Second World War catalyzed the decay of Chinatown. The population in Chinatown declined and life within Chinatown grew meager. This or that kind of discrimination pushed the Chinese grocers, café owners, laundrymen, peddlers and farmers out of business, while offering no help to the unemployed Chinese (Yee 1988). Chinatown, in the memoirs of the Chinese elders,³⁴ became increasingly bleak and unkempt. Horses and cows roamed around; lots were covered with grass. People were starving.

³⁴There are over 120 cassettes of tapes which recorded the memories of the generations of Chinese living in Vancouver's Chinatown that are available in the local Chinese Library for the Strathcona community.

3

Local Resistance

A beam of sunlight swiftly broke into the lower window of the British Columbia Archives. The rain that had lasted the whole morning stopped, I closed the heavy tome of Joseph Martin's newspaper collections. A faint sigh was emitted from its hinge—as if wizened autumn leaves were being crushed, the scrapbook cried out in its senility, dry and fragile. My eyes were burnt and painful. I wasn't sure if it was because of the long hours of reading, or the chilliness of the dark history. The sun looked forever bright and tranquil. With clouds celestially moving beyond the horizon, the white sails of the small boats roamed in front of the velvet colour of Stanley Park.

A bevy of elementary school kids vivaciously romped along Kitslano beach. They were celebrating the Children's Festival.

"How lovely it is!" I marvelled. Stepping out of the Archives, standing on top of the mount where the building hid, I felt mesmerized by the beauty of Vancouver: cars shuttling over the Burrard Bridge, underneath which the rejuvenated False Creek showed no trace whatsoever of its shadowy past. Chinatown survived. This itself was a miracle. But would Chinatown be the way it is today, without the eruption of the Second World War which resulted in China and Canada being allied in the Pacific region? Without hundreds and thousands of Chinese soldiers whose blood and valor purged the ugly names dumped upon Chinese? The returning veterans were the first among Chinese Canadians to be rewarded with citizenship. They set a precedent that led, several years later and after a long appeal by the Chinese community leaders, to Chinese Canadians being awarded the right to vote in 1947. And the Federal Government officially terminated the notorious exclusion act on Chinese Immigration (effective between 1923 and 1947). Much later, in 1954, Canadian Immigration allowed Chinese family reunions; in 1956 came the complete repeal of Federal Order in Council P.C. 2215 that discriminated exclusively against Chinese immigrants.

While waiting for the bus, I noticed some graffiti on the wall, and on the newspaper box of the Globe and Mail. A legible graffito read: "Asian, Out!" Electrified, my eyes drooped. An unspeakable guilt oozed out. So too did another unspeakable memory: On a winter evening, strolling in a suburban neighborhood in Winnipeg, a car suddenly stopped, a few feet ahead of me, the window rolled down, a few pranking teens, shouting at my face: "Go back to your own country!"

What could I say? Tell those wealthy kids the terror of a professor being taken away from a classroom after a passionate speech on the freedom of press, millions of farmers starved

to death merely to test the correctness of an ideology, or one being turned into an informer on one's own father, wife, or husband?

Roy Mah, a veteran who fought for Canada in the Second World War, told me once on the phone: "We came to Canada by choice. Either to die in China or to pay the Head Tax. Back then Canada did discriminate against us. I still feel thankful to this country. That is why I do not want the Head Tax refunded".

The bus hummed, on the declivity of the bridge. Mah's words tilted from one side of my brain to the other. Outside the window, the pinnacles of "the City Gates", owned by Hong Kong billionaires, radiated with golden light. Inside the bus, the passengers were distinctively poor.....

The bus swerved into Pender Street, swerved into usual lunch hour traffic jam. Out of the sleek glossy office towers, clerks, business men and women, secretaries, packed with suits and ties, dressed in skirts, demurely strode to the street. Faces of all colors. Countless Asians.... Bypassing the bus, a sexy Mercedes left a trail of pop music. I could tell, it was a hit from a Hong Kong rock band.

The bus 22 reached its last stop at Chinatown. I joined the crowds, walking towards Main Street to meet my interpreter. Heads and shoulders brushed by me. One could tell who were the Laohuaqiao, the tourists, or the new immigrants. Weird, isn't it: why can faces reveal so much of our identity? Looking back over my shoulder, the group of senior tourists stepping out of that red double-decker bus vanished from the China Gate. The long, thin, six-foot-wide Chou's Insurance Building, supposedly the thinnest building on earth, smiled back.

An emotional tide surged up. Who said Chinese were inherently docile and submissive to domination? Who said Chinese like Roy Mah, who knew how to forgive, did not protest and fight adamantly for their rights? If one reads the Chinese Times and Chinatown News, the media run by the Chinese themselves, in the 1910s, 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, one will realize boisterousness of the community. True though, Canadian Chinese were (and are) not particularly interested in civic politics due to their heavy burden of family rearing and difficulty in English (and apathy). In all, did Canada give them a voice? Had the 1960s' Urban Renewal Program succeeded, where would this slim building be? Where would be the Chinese Cultural Centre and the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden? Underneath an eight-lane elevated freeway cutting through Carrall and Gastown?

Alternatives to history are always hard to conceive. Thank heaven, Urban Renewal did not ruin Chinatown entirely. Whatever history consigned to this quarter of urban jungle, once the "prison house", the "hell of devil", the "haven of refugees", Chinatown, having suffered through the dark times of racism, emerged with new restaurants, shops, hotels, tea houses, and theaters, and grew into the life of the Strathcona people.

One day, they were told that they had to move, or to be displaced into "modern" highrises.

3.1. Marsh Report

The amelioration of the social and political environment of Canada since the Second World War provided the Chinese communities with wider choices for living and entrepreneurship. (Civic service and social welfare systems began partially to be delivered to Chinatown). Vancouver's Chinese population doubled from 8,729 to 15,223 between 1951 and 1961.

Concurrently, the blessed heydays of planning descended upon Canada after the war. Vancouver boomed. In the first postwar decade, the entire population of Vancouver increased at a rate of 36% every year. The built area of the city kept on spreading. Elicited by this population explosion, the shortage of housing was exacerbated. In Vancouver alone, the built housing units in 1948 reached the 6,665 units per annum. Yet, it was far from mitigating the real housing crisis. The pressure of housing market lured and entailed the unprecedented governmental intervention in the process of postwar urban reconstruction. There were two intertwined rationales: the first was because North Americans believe all citizens ought to be adequately sheltered whether or not they can afford it (Wheeler 1969: p.15). Promoting this North American dream (Wright 1981), governments of the United States and Canada played affordable housing as a trump card in national politics. As early as 1935, the Dominion Housing Act of Canada authorized the Minister of Finance to provide low interest loans to local housing departments for fixed low rental housing for the low income families; the second rationale—shaded with this ideological undertone—was that politicians keenly realized the potential of housing as a stimulus for the postwar economy. "In order to maintain reasonably full employment", Mr. Mooney, Executive Director, Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, propounded, "we will require a large-scale program of public works. In addition, there will be the backlog of deferred new construction projects of both a public and a private nature, such as office buildings, new factories, railway terminals, hospitals, schools; and finally, of necessity, there must be, and there will be a large-scale housing program" (Mooney 1944: p.25). The governmental intervention in the housing market by its banking and land use policies immediately created jobs for architects and planners. To meet the gigantic demand for housing and urban development, not fortuitously, the nearly-perished avant-garde architecture and the "Congès Internationaux d' Architecture Moderne" modernist city planning found their way back.

The theories and philosophies of modernist architecture are manifold,³⁵ and deserve an elaborate inquiry elsewhere. The optimistic modernist vision of the city and the rapid development of postwar capitalism swept the globe with the fever of "urban renewal" movement. Major Western cities experienced radical physical reformation within the postwar period. To most local governments "Urban Renewal" meant an opportunity to upgrade the rundown urban infrastructure and expedite the pace of urbanization. While suburbia, which twisted and reduced the principles of Howard's "Garden City", madly expanded in the urban periphery, inner cities became the target of "Urban Renewal". Vancouver was no exception; a

³⁵The term "Modernism" etymologically and semiologically evades any unified definition. First of all, the word "modern", derived from "modernus", was introduced to mark the alteration of epochs. It "was used for the first time in the late 5th century in order to distinguish the present, which had become officially Christian, from the Roman and pagan past"(Habermas 1981: p.3). And in the late sixteenth century, it demarked the "now" (the Age of Classicism) from the Medieval and ancient times. (Williams 1989:p.48); "Modernity", a mentality of being modern, being relevant to the present, according to Habermas, had a history older than the Renaissance (Habermas 1981:p.4). Yet "Modernity" since the eighteenth century Enlightenment radically reduced into utter "nowness"—the overt conscious attempt to transcend time and history, as that has been analyzed in the last chapter. The notorious benchmark of "modernity" of the "modern" kind is its open contempt of tradition and past, and its devaluation of the "signified"—the sacred and the religious. The eighteenth century writers, thinkers, artists, architects, poets, in their various ways of liberation of expression and signification, (mostly done with Reason) engulfed the difference between form and meaning. In the field of architecture, one could capture such a divorce in the writings of Piranesi (1760) and Durrand (1801) (Tafari 1978). "Modernism" as an art movement surged up in the following century in the works of Flaubert, Dickens, Joyce, Baudelaire, DeWilde, Hölderlin, Gauguin, Monet, Rimbaud, Proust, Kafka, etc.. A long list of Realists, Symbolists, Expressionists, Impressionists, Cubists, Dadaists. "Modernism" in architecture specifically refers to the avant-garde revolution in the Western architecture at the turn of the century, founded by figures in the German school of Bauhaus, the Russian Constructivism, and later the American Functionalism.

The remedies that Modernist architecture and planning (the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM)) offered to urban problems were purely architectural and tyrannical. The typical one would have to be Corbusier's La Ville Radieuse that exemplifies best the reductional and functional attitudes to urban life. Circling around four functions — housing, work, recreation and traffic, the Corbusian city had no respect to tradition and culture, nor intention to rehabilitate the postwar cities. On the contrary, it seized the aftermath of the war, the ruins and destructions, as a chance for a mechanistic future in which cities could be zoned into a homely defined order: the center of the city would be the skyscrapers for industrialists, scientists, and artists; all the residents would be concentrated in a square zone, with standard housing that has as much open space as possible; then all the people should travel to the industrial zone to work through highways. Of course, reality could never provide Corbusier with a contextless, cultureless blank site to fulfill his dream. Even in the most Corbusian city that had ever been built on earth—one is Chandigarh in India and the other Brasilia in Brazil—the will towards the total control of urban life has been severely compromised by their users.(Holston 1989; Hall 1988).

Nevertheless, the Corbusian city left its pieces everywhere in our modern city, with no exceptions in Canada.

Modernism in art, architecture, and city planning reveals the end its own rooted self-contradictions. Ideologically, modernists assigned themselves the spokesmen of the public art, of the egalitarian politics, meanwhile trampled upon the rights of the public; they were "educating" the mass to be an artistically cultivated expert to resist capitalism, meanwhile transformed the populace into consumers (Crow 1987: p.2) In their understanding of city, the CIAM "called for the assertion of collective action and collective rights over private interests both in ordering the city and in managing the forces of industrial development. They proclaimed a new machine era in which the potential benefits of the Industrial Revolution would be extended to all classes and in which the city would be as orderly as an industrial assemblage." (Holston 1989 :p.41)

plan to "modernize" the city was incrementally formulated in the 1950s. Its key obstacle was Chinatown. Showing little interest concerning the lives of the local residents, and with a narrow concept of community,³⁶ this plan carried on the spirit of the 1929 Plan of Vancouver. More potently, "Urban Renewal"³⁷ did not stop at zoning or regulating. Planners began to dream of a Corbusian City, a vision of a concrete jungle that would inexorably erase Chinatown.

The idea of Urban Renewal was first debated by a circle of academics. Leonard Charles Marsh (1906-1982), the director of the School of Social Work in UBC, and the research adviser to the sub-committee of the National Advisory Committee on Reconstruction, was the most imposing figure among them. Marsh had obtained his degree in Economics from England. At the age of twenty four, he arrived in Canada to take on the directorship of the interdisciplinary social-science program at McGill (1930-1941). From the early 1940s he worked and taught at the University of British Columbia. Marsh's intellectual standpoint on urban problems had understandably been framed by his time. At his time McGill University just opened the first Canadian planning school under John Bland and Harold Spence-Sales, and most of cutting-edge urban theories were still based upon the Chicago School of Urban Sociology, founded by Park, Burgess, and Wirth. Most of the Canadian urban sociologists were engaged in either empirical works or reductionist behavioral science.³⁸ Marsh himself straddled the same dichotomy. One side of his brain understood that housing "cannot be regarded as an isolated or departmentalized field, but only as a basic part of the modern social environment, and also as a product of all the social forces at work" (Marsh 1944: p.11). The other side thought the solutions of housing problems were simple: "To begin with", he said, "housing supply is fundamentally a function of the distribution of income. The inadequate accommodation, the slum areas, the second hand housing of every one of our large cities, shows what happens to great groups of unskilled and semi-skilled wage earners whose incomes are not large enough to support rentals of \$20 a month or more" (Marsh 1944: p.11).

³⁶Although Durkheim, et al, had made elaborate studies on the impacts of urbanism upon the traditional, organic life of community, the sociological understanding of urban communities prior to the 1940s, 1950s had been predominantly reductionist, like that of the Chicago School of Sociology. Planners and architects in Canada (Ralph Walker 1944, Lecture XIV, "The Need for Community Life", for instance) often took Community as synonym of Neighborhood, and did not realize the whole cultural, ideological sentiments attached to the word community. In the "Urban Renewal" project in Vancouver, this narrow mindedness throttled the project's success from the outset.

³⁷The first experiment of Urban Renewal in postwar Canada started in the Regent Park North of Toronto in 1948. Initially Urban Renewal attracted the attention of more zealous social scientists and reformers than of politicians.

³⁸Chicago School of Sociology never bridged the abyss created by its very faith on the Positive Sciences. Take Wirth for instance. As much as there is a genuine creativity in his scholarly genealogy of the Jewish "Ghetto", which emitted an inexhaustible richness,, the same Wirth also strenuously sought for reductional indicators in his Urbanism as a Way of Life—size, density, and heterogeneity—to portray the complex phenomenon of urbanism.

Marsh spent his life applying his economic determinism to housing problems. He insisted that, if social services and civic utilities were extended to the inner city residents, financially, it would be much cheaper to replace the urban slums than to maintain them. Having made an elaborate cost-benefit analysis for the City of Vancouver, Marsh pointed out that the City received \$150,000 annually from Strathcona (the residential area of Chinatown), yet spent, with all the countable items, \$298,000 on the same area. The conclusion was too obvious to miss, Marsh firmly believed that it was about time for governments to take action with "Urban Renewal".

At the end of the 1940s, Marsh drafted a report, a prototype for the later Urban Renewal Program—Rebuilding a Neighborhood, a survey study of the Strathcona area. The apologetic Marsh foreworded that report by explaining Strathcona was not "just" a slum:

The Strathcona district, as it is convenient to call it, is not "just a slum"; it has good features and good people, possibilities of reclamation as a sound and flourishing neighborhood. But by any modern standard, its housing is deplorable, its state of deterioration a menace. And because of its location, in relation to False Creek, to traffic routes and industrial areas, it is one of the critical areas for the whole future of town planning in Vancouver.

.....
The clearance of slum areas, however, is important in its own right. It attacks intolerable conditions and unnecessary misery and corruption, and it attacks them at their core. Slum clearance is also the key to the conquest of blight. In fact, the problems of modern cities are such that urban rehabilitation rather than 'slum clearance' is much more adequate description of the task (Marsh 1950: p.iii).

The report was divided into two parts. Part I listed a lengthy inventory of information about Strathcona:

There are four kinds of housing: (a). single houses, with great variety in size, use and adequacy, usually one of every four of them had boarders or sub-tenants; (b). rooming houses: converted houses; its number is about ninety out of the thousand units. (c). apartments, unsanitary and overcrowding, (d). cabins, originally for coolie laborers.....

The present population [1948] in the Strathcona area is 7000-7500, about 1400 families, 12 per cent are large families [extensive families], 10 per cent broke families [single parent households]. Among the local residents, there are 37 per cent Continental European origins- Scandinavian, Italian, Polish, Ukrainian. 30 per cent of British North American origin, 28 per cent Chinese.....

The Median income [1947] for tenant families in the district is \$1620. The range of income is from \$1225 to \$2000. The representative incomes for sub-tenant and lodging families is \$1580, range from \$1200 to \$1980; that for Chinese families is \$1575, range from \$1200 to \$2100, and that for Negro families is \$1375, range from \$1050 to \$1790, which are all noticeable lower income families.....

The present affordable rent for those families should be no more than 20 per cent of their income, and the decent accommodation costs at \$25-\$27, therefore, families with \$1200 to \$1500 would have difficulties to pay the decent rent.

They are currently paying \$21 per month for single house, \$20 for apartment, \$17 in rooming houses or cabins.....(Marsh 1950)

The list trailed long. But all the data painted only one picture: the people living in Strathcona were suffering; vacant land hilled with grasses that "is dangerous to children"; there were no yards or front lawns in this neighbourhood, only vegetable gardens; kids played on the streets, "unafraid of traffic"; inside those houses, physical defects were spotted everywhere from bedroom roofs to kitchen sinks. Having not let the residents speak, and not having spoken to the residents, Marsh, forgetting his opening declaration that Strathcona housed "good people", lamented that "Vancouver was one of the first Canadian cities to set up a Town Planning Commission, in 1928, but much of the damage of unregulated growth and speculative 'developments' was done long before this date" (Marsh 1950: p.1).

Struggling to cope with such a legacy, even the best zoning regulations would not suffice. Negative restrictions of various kinds on individual pieces of real estate will not produce goodlooking and livable communities, unless there is a sound basic pattern of location to start with. Only positive measures will build up a planned city; and these include coordinated reconstruction where the disorder is worst, a clear-cut program for eliminating 'non-conforming' and undesirable uses, and carefully related development of all community facilities (most of which are publicly provided) (Marsh 1950: p.1).

Planning, again, as an omnipotent solution, was wielded. Marsh believed that the general public need to be enlightened about planning the city as a whole in order to understand effects of the unplanned housing. Meanwhile, Marsh urged that the government stop subsidizing the inner city right away, instead, spend money on Urban Renewal.

Bad housing and poverty are, of course, closely interrelated; but it is too often forgotten that social assistance — of which today there is a great variety — cannot be constructive or lasting if it is given in an environment which drains away morale and self-respect. The direct costs of slum living are borne by the residents — in cramped homes, overburdened housekeeping, handicapped schooling, family tensions, poor health, disease, accidents, and delinquency, policing, etc. — which are today growing more familiar — but the fact that many of the services are counteracted and wasted (Marsh 1950 :p.ix).

The realistic exit—not to be called "slum clearance" but "Urban Renewal", for Marsh, was to build the massive scale, low-rental housing that transformed all the residents from home owners to tenants of high rises so that the city could provide more efficient, economical services.

After the rationale had been laid down as such, in Part II of the report, Marsh proposed a four stage scheme for "rehabilitating" Chinatown. Analogous to the Corbusian model, concentrated on "zones", Marsh' plans as follows: (1) rezoning the entire Strathcona from

Heavy Industrial District into Multiple Dwelling District; (2) moving all the 7,000 residents into high rises with three types of suite forms; (3) all the 1,640 single men would be shovelled into 2 hostels; (4) all the existing stores in the site, about 30 of them, would be relocated into a shopping center. The first phase of this project would take up the existing open space [McLean Park] that was owned by the city, and involve no demolition and displacement. Incrementally phase four would alter the entire face of Strathcona. In terms of land acquisition, according to the National Housing Act, Marsh estimated that the Dominion Government would have to reimburse the city for one-half of its excess costs, amounting to \$2,587,500 for the total cost of land, the city had to pay only \$1,200,000. In terms of the \$15,000,000 construction cost, the city would be able to get a joint Dominion-Provincial Loan on a 75-25 ratio with 3% average interest rate. Figuring out all these budgetary problems, Marsh was convinced that the municipal government would be willing to operate his grandiose modernist blueprint for Strathcona—which, in the near future, would be full of "open spaces", "fresh air", and no more "poverty and social crimes".

The Marsh Report paved a theoretical path to renew Strathcona. Ironically it received little attention from the politicians in the 1950s, partially due to the lack of funding, partially because of the inertia of Canadian bureaucrats who lagged behind their counterparts in the United States and Britain for a decade. Already there were a few social critics (Jane Jacobs for one) who argued that the eradication of urban inner cities in London, Chicago and Boston, under the Modernist vision of the CIAM created a devastating social impact. Canada was beginning to repeat the same mistakes. Through the era of Sutton-Brown³⁹ and the

³⁹The institutionalization of planning in Vancouver had its basis in the British Columbia Municipal Act and the Town Planning Act of 1925. Vancouver's Town Planning Commission was formed in 1926 in accordance with a by-law that specified its constituents. It included: "One Alderman chosen by the City Council, One School Trustee nominated by the Vancouver School Board, One Parks Commissioner nominated by the Vancouver Parks Board, nine members, including the Chairman, appointed by the City Council and two members appointed by the Commission itself" (Pendakur 1972:p.7). The Commission's jurisdiction covered issues of: "(1) new development plans or amendments to existing development plans; (2) proposed zoning by-laws or amendments to existing by-laws; (3) development permits involving a conditional use; (4) matters relating to Vancouver's planning and development which in the Commission's opinion merits action by the Council; (5) matters referred to the Commission by resolution of Council" (Pendakur 1972:p.8).

The postwar urban growth fertilized a number of agencies that had to do with civic construction. Institutions of planning emerged under this condition. The Department of City Planning first claimed its independence as one of the governmental organizations. Then the Technical Planning Board was created as an advisory body to the City Council on practical and administrative matters related to planning. The Technical Planning Board performed all the functions that the Planning Commission used to do in the old days. It recruited all the powerful technocrats of the City into one body: "Two City Commissioners, one City Engineer, one Corporation Counsel, Director of Finance, Supervisor of Property and Insurance, Director of Planning, Director of Permits and Licenses, one Building Inspector, one Medical Health Officer, Director of Social/Community Development, Superintendent of Schools, Superintendent of Parks. Ideally this expansion of planning camps offered a chance for the Planning Commission to liberate itself from technical matters and pay more attention to the strategic, long term and community needs. This was not

dominance of the Technical Planning Board, the wind of Urban Renewal whirled above the inner city of Vancouver. First it wiped out the East Indian—Sikh community in the blocks of Fourth Avenue and Burrard Street (in the early 1950s). Then it swerved towards Chinatown, although East Hastings was probably in much worse physical shape. In February of 1956, the Planning Department received funds from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation; In March, 1958, a revision of the Marsh Report, the Vancouver Redevelopment Study was approved by the City Council.

This audacious twenty-year plan methodically divided the residential area of Chinatown into three stages (The commercial Chinatown remained intact since it had then the highest retail sales in Vancouver). In actuality Project No.1 started in 1961 and ended in 1967. Project No.1. accomplished the land clearance of block 83 (A-2, bounded by Keefer and Georgia Streets and Hawks and Heatly Avenues) to make way for a new site for the MacLean Park, and block 86 (area of A-3, immediately north of MacLean Park) for public housing, with the possibility of some private development, which was to be the first "housing bank" to accommodate the displaced. Project No.1 also finished the construction of the low-rental, high density public housing on the east side of Campbell (the Raymur Park complex — area A-1). Project No.2 started in February of 1965, and continued with similar operations on three other parcels of land. Project No.3 would presumably "renew" Strathcona completely.

The entire Urban Renewal scheme was single-handedly invented by the techno-bureaucrats who did not have the vaguest sense of what Chinatown meant to its residents. As

happening. The Planning Commission decayed into a red tape bureaucratic parasite, a niche where mayors and Aldermen placed their political followers and disciples" (Pendakur 1972:p.9).

The dilated planning institutions for this reason made no significant improvement in the quality of planning work, but further complicated the whole procedure. The real decision makers behind the Planning Department and the Planning Technical Board remained the same coterie of bureaucrats who shared the same educational and practical background. These were the British made experts—at the time, Canada had not been able to produce its own planning graduates. The first director of the Planning Department, the most influential commissioner in the 1950s and 1960s, Gerald Sutton-Brown, for one, was imported from Liverpool in 1952. He had then ranked as the number two planner in England. Mr. Sutton-Brown, and his peers, immigrated to Canada. They were all too typical the children of technocracy and utilitarian planning. Holding no profound ideologies on any urban issues, Mr. Brown and his colleagues treated social conflict as a technical matter and community participation as meaning citizens "can always express themselves during the next election" (Pendakur 1972:p.13). With Sutton-Brown and his comrades taking over the key roles in the field of planning, the wind of Urban Renewal blew towards Vancouver. Sutton-Brown saw Urban Renewal as a meaning of getting cheap federal dollars to improve the urban infrastructure. (This is why one cannot arbitrarily conclude that the entire Urban Renewal movement in the 1960s was propelled by sheer hatred against the Chinese whereas one also does not exclude the intentions of few Aldermen in the City Council of Vancouver who were indeed hard core racists). As if the only hope for the future city was represented by the towers and highways in England, the Brown style of city planning sprouted because the postwar civic polity provided it with a breeding ground. The major decision making related to urban development fell into the hands of the **technocrat-bureaucrats**. Economic growth, fast transportation, technical solution, as the three fold goals, prevailed, especially in the '60s, in the field of city planning. The techno-bureaucratization of planning found its actualization in the ideal of Urban Renewal.

indicated by a survey done by the Chinese community in the late '60s, the Chinese population steadily increased from one-third to half of the total population in Strathcona and more Chinese families began to own their houses—89% of the property owners and 74% of the tenants in Strathcona were Chinese. Since the City by-laws in the postwar years allowed the Chinese to freely settle anywhere in Vancouver, most of the wealthy, and educated professional Chinese families had moved out of Chinatown into traditionally white neighbourhoods. Those who stayed in Chinatown, preferred Strathcona as home for its propinquity to the commercial area of Chinatown and for its strong sense of community. The "Olden Time Chinese", *Laohuaqiao*, predominantly working class male, and families of poor immigrants, speaking little English, endured the hard times of the 1930s, and forged a close bond among themselves. Strathcona, to them, was a harbor and "nest". From day one, planners and bureaucrats had utterly neglected this sentimental appeal of Strathcona.....



Figure 10. Houses in Strathcona that survived from the "Urban Renewal".



Figure 11. The highrise of Project No.2.

3.2. Under the Siege of Urban Renewal

Jonathan Lau, the director of the Strathcona Community Centre, must have waited for a while, when my Cantonese interpreter and I stepped into his office, Lau anxiously stood up and led us outside. Born in Thailand, educated in Taipei and Toronto, Lau started a career as a social worker in Strathcona at the end of the 1960s. Fate tied him to this place. Hence he never moved. Having told me the story of Urban Renewal a year before and knowing about my arrival this year, Lau promised to introduce Mary Chan and Bessie Lee, the key community activists, to me. We walked silently along the edge of the Strathcona School, a building that had witnessed the vicissitudes of Chinatown. It was quieter on this side of the Main Street. A

whiff of incense sneaked out of a temple across the road. A few grannies were plucking peas in their front yards. Above their decrepit bodies, a string of colorful clothes flagged in the wind.

In one of those yards, we found Mary Chan's home. Then Bessie Lee's. Lau left us alone. Here I was, inside Bessie's spacious living room. At my right, was Mary Chan, wearing thick glasses and a long dress with rich floral patterns, exuberant with joy and laughter. Loud and perky. By any means I could not relate Mary with her age of eighty years. Across the room was Bessie Lee, in her early sixties, apparently exhausted after a long day of taking care of her husband, Mr. Lee, who nodded to us gently from a wheel chair. Attached to it, the infusion tubes coiled around a rod, connected to Mr. Lee's wrist. He could not speak.

My presence seemed to be creating a ripple with the elders. The parakeet in the cage also twittered excitedly. Bessie came back with a tray of deserts and a tea pot. They knew I came for the story of Urban Renewal. Even Mr. Lee, insisted on staying with us, to be a witness to that event. A story re-told. By those who did not know how to read, or read hermeneutically. Uncannily, staring at Mr. Lee's chiseled face, and absorbed eyes, I saw what hermeneutics can never unravel: Life, that space of being full and murky.

Most residents at the beginning had no conception of what Urban Renewal was all about. When planners dressed in suits and ties first presented their blue print in April of 1958, some residents naively supported the plan. Having looked at the beautiful renderings, listened to the eloquent speeches, the uninformed residents mistook Urban Renewal as merely a plan to replace the run-down rooming houses on Campbell Street. No sooner had they voted "yes" than they realized that it was the entire Strathcona area that had been subjected to the "Renewal" and they, the house owners, would become the future tenants of high rises.

Fear that the white government may expunge Strathcona again, as part of a racist conspiracy, shrouded Chinatown. Walter Chan and Mary Chan and a few other families yelled for help. The Chans were some of those who contributed significantly to the foiling of the Urban Renewal. Walter, an educated man, a former school teacher in Singapore, unfortunately spoke no English. Mary understood English but spoke little. Mary grew up in large extended family of 31 members. She was sent back to Canton at age eight. Wrestling with the hardship of life there, and with the war, Mary grew into a strong person. The unusual circumstances consigned to this woman with a family of eight, a chance to assume the leadership role that men usually took. Mary had the honest and unconstrained characteristics of the working class Chinese people: she was always loud and vocal; she was always defending the weak and unafraid of the mighty. This is the woman that donated her salary to the Chinese armies to purchase an airplane to fight the Japanese invaders, that on behalf of Chinese women made their case for citizenship to the parliament at the end of the 1940s. With her help countless new Chinese immigrants, particularly women, found jobs in

Chinatown. And she defended their rights of equality of work. By contrast Walter had been known for his charisma of being subtle and calm. People in Chinatown respected and loved the Chans, looking up to them as the back-bone of the community. When the Chans and a few other families took the issue of Urban Renewal to the Chinese Benevolent Association—the CBA, then the largest Chinese community organization, and connected to all the clubs and clans—the leaders of the CBA began to realize the seriousness of the matter.

Officially representing the entire Chinese community for decades, the CBA by and large was under the control, understandably, given the traditional political structure in Chinatown, of the wealthy merchants and professionals. This does not devalue the contributions of the CBA to the Chinese community. Eminent individuals, as the head of the CBA, Wong Foon Sien, devoted their lives to serve the Chinese community. Nonetheless most of the leaders in the CBA no longer lived in Strathcona, and their views on Chinatown, inevitably, reflected their emotional distance from the lower income Chinese families. Speaking for the interests of the business class, the CBA at first espoused the idea of Urban Renewal, seeing in it an opportunity to update Chinatown (mainly, the commercial part) into an international tourist place. Key CBA members—Foon Sien, George Wong, Dean Leung, and Faye Leung—all at one time serving on the Standing Committee for the City Council, supported Urban Renewal. They, too, underestimated the threat to the future of Chinatown.

The CBA responded to the plea from the residents in Strathcona by setting up the Chinatown Property Owners and Tenants Association [CPOTA] whose main purpose was to deter neighbourhood demolition. About three hundred local residents joined the CPOTA. In order to hire a lawyer for CPOTA Mary Chan and her ten year old daughter Shirley went door to door, asking people for donations. That money hired a Chinese lawyer, Harry Fan.

On April 21 of 1958, the City Council held its first public hearing. Harry Fan, on behalf of the CPOTA stated their stance: they supported renewal of the row houses, but not the demolition of the neighbourhood. Foon Sien told the City Council that he became increasingly worried about the potential negative impacts of such "urban renewal" on Chinatown as a whole. The Council addressed their concern by advising that the 1957 study on Chinatown was merely "preliminary", and would need more exploration. The delegates from the CPOTA heaved a sigh of relief, and left the City Hall with hope.

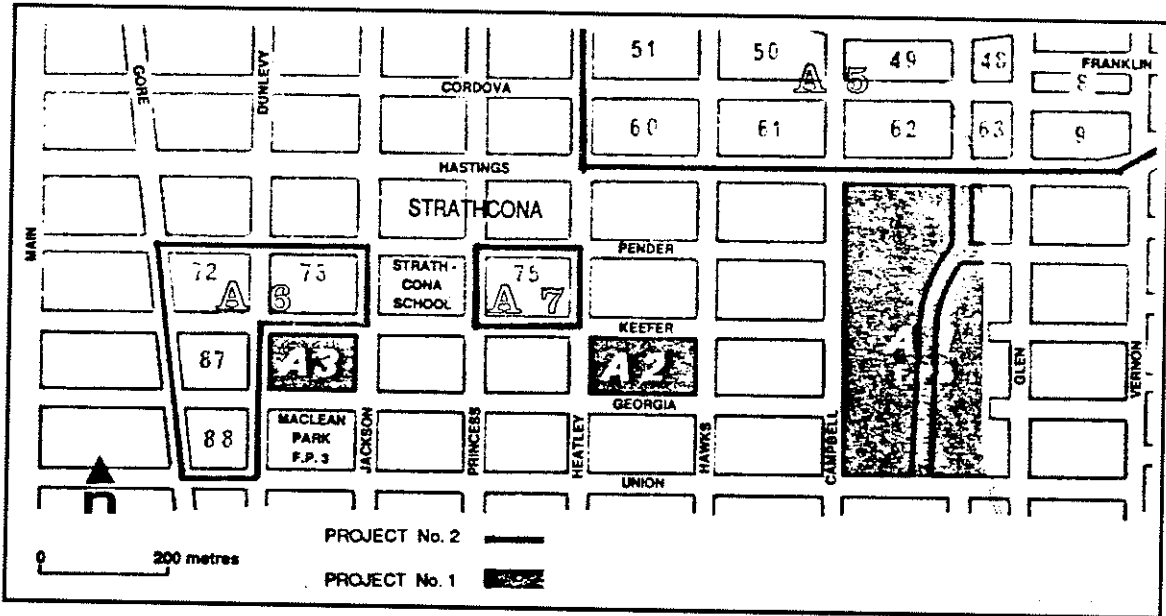
Eight days later Mayor Tom Alsbury and his Aldermen rezoned the 90 acres of land from commercial and industrial use to residential and froze the properties within Strathcona. (The property value of the housing stock immediately dropped). Two years later they decided to proceed with Project No.1.

The residents and the delegates of the CPOTA felt insulted and betrayed. Fifty Chinese showed up at City Hall on an October meeting in 1960, presenting an impassioned brief:

We want to point out the danger to the Chinese Community and the probable disastrous social and economic effects of failing to take every conceivable care to ensure its wellbeing... Chinese are under a disability as to property ownership and social acceptance generally. Only limited numbers of skilled jobs and white collar positions are available. The disruption of this group could lead to widespread disaster and a very real social problem... The Chinese population of the City is almost entirely concentrated within Area "A" and there is in Vancouver an estimated 14,000 Chinese people... Any disruption of Chinatown and a material outflow of Chinese population to another area inevitably means the destruction of the Chinese merchants. Directly affected by the operations now contemplated by the City of Vancouver are 176 businesses... There are now also 68 fraternal associations... four Chinese language schools... six churches... The expropriation and clearing planned by the City will be a great disruptive force socially..... [Stability] is not provided by rented accommodation, no matter how good... The private development contemplated would only be available to large investors and [where] private ownership is permitted, there is no guarantee it will be given to [dislocated] Chinese. It is fair to say that all the Chinese whose property will be expropriated are extraordinarily apprehensive as to the price they may receive for their property... The City, by setting aside this area for redevelopment and marketing it practically as a slum have made properties in the area at the present time almost unsalable. This has also been reflected in a lowering of assessments which are sometimes used by expert valuers as evidence of the value of property. It is pointed out that this all works to the advantage of the City of Vancouver... Vancouver's Chinatown has been an asset, it is submitted, and is some place different for Occidentals to go and spend a pleasant evening. Inroads upon the economic life of the Chinese community will have a serious effect upon this and instead of becoming a showplace as in (say) San Francisco, the area will decline (Anderson 1991: p.194)

The brief sent a sophisticated message to City Hall: the CPOTA suggested that Urban Renewal would jeopardize the interests of the Vancouverites as much as the people in Chinatown, insofar as the commercial part of Chinatown would lose its tourist attraction. The City turned a deaf ear to this emotional plea, and passed the final resolution for Project No.1 in February 1961. To show its force, the City further voted to spend \$23,000 to prepare a proposal for Project No.2.

No.2.



Map 4. The "Urban Renewal" Project No.1 and No.2.
Source: City of Vancouver, *Redevelopment Under Section 23*, 1963.

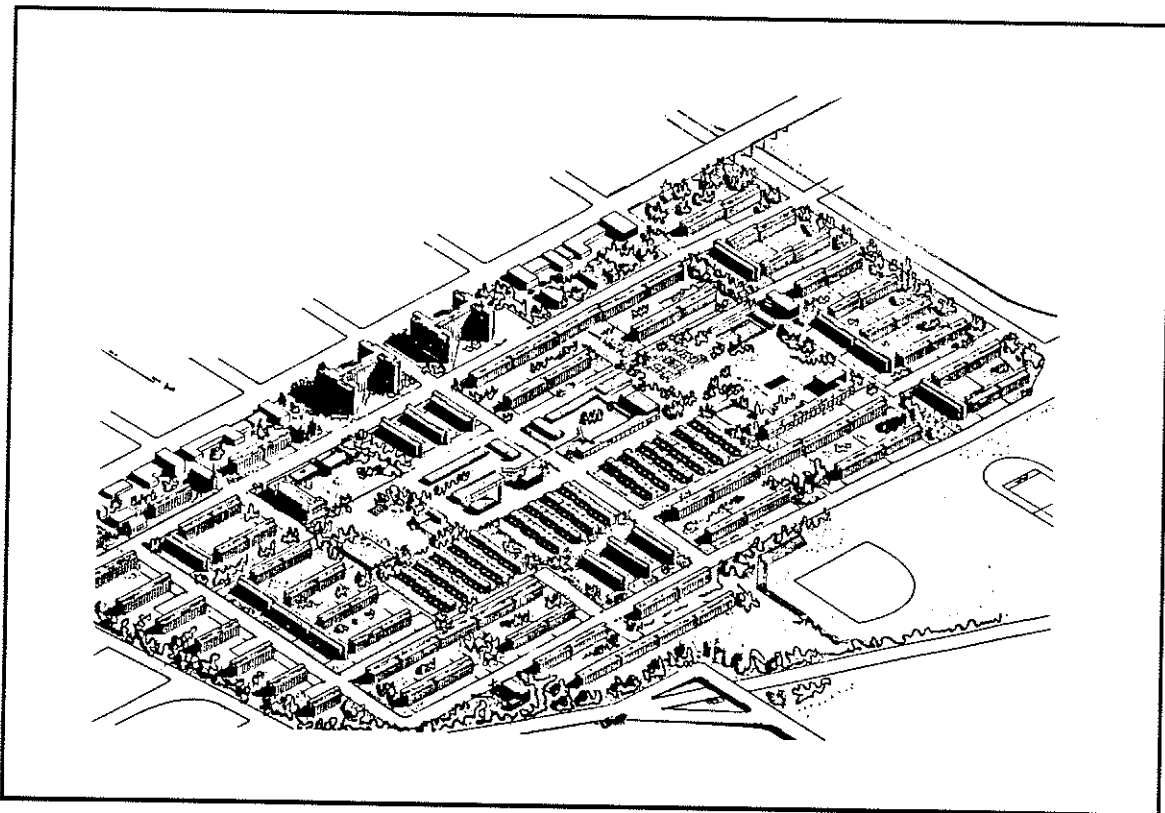


Figure 12. What a "Modernized" Strathcona would be, if the "Urban Renewal" had succeeded.
Source: City of Vancouver, *Redevelopment Under Section 23*, 1963.

Amidst a wave of rage and protest, Project No.1 commenced in 1961. It cleaned up 28 acres of land, and displaced about 1,600 people. Each displaced house owner was compensated \$5,000 and moved to low rental public apartments.

The first sign of estrangement came from those families who were displaced into suburbs. The complete social and physical isolation from the rest of the Chinese community caused extreme anxiety among those families. Few managed to move back to Strathcona. Their neighbours then saw the real impact of Project No.1. Their faith in Urban Renewal collapsed.

Within the Chinese community itself, the discontent of the residents was taken out on the CBA. It was thought that under the new directorship of Mah F. Sing, (co-Chairmen Quan H. Wong and Dean Leung), the leaders of CBA did not work hard enough against "Urban Renewal"—as long as the City left the commercial part of Chinatown intact, the CBA only suggested that the city slow down its pace of urban renewal. A difference between the represented and the representatives appeared. The upper-class Chinese thought it might be appropriate for low income groups to live in the towers, only felt that the compensation was not high enough, while the people being displaced thought Strathcona was their home. Foon Sien, seeing the conflict of views, firmly believed that the uprooting of Chinese families from this area would be tantamount to the destruction of the Chinese way of life.

However divisive the Chinese community became, the answer that Harry Fan gave the City Council on Project No.2 was a decisive "No". Fan protested:

1. Project Number 2 is designed to build apartment blocks right next to the Chinatown business district. The completion of such a project would cut off any future expansion of Chinatown and strangle the Chinese business activities. The nature of this project restricts the commercial development of the Chinese Community.....

2. The apartment dwellings are ideal for people who are single or have small families. As the Chinese, with their tradition of the large family system, prefer to bring up their children in a household where members of several different generations live together, they will find it compulsory to make their homes elsewhere. Thus a completion of the aforementioned project would destroy the social structure of the Chinese community.....

3. Should the families be forced to move away from China-Valley and the four Chinese schools in Chinatown, the opportunity to attend the Chinese schools will be denied to the members of the younger generation. The young people will grow up without an adequate knowledge of their own language and culture. Such a knowledge is now being made available through the four Chinese schools to one thousand Chinese children.....

4. There are sixty-eight Chinese Fraternal Associations in Chinatown; some of these Associations are for the education of the Chinese community, some for fellowship and mutual aid, some for charity, and some for the preservation and introduction of Chinese culture in Vancouver, an important cultural center of Canada. These Associations are the foundation of the Chinese community. The wiping out of China-Valley would lead to a dissolution of the said Associations and uproot the Chinese community.....

7. The Association opposes the project from a purely architectural and aesthetic point of view. If the project should be carried out, some apartments, most modern in design, will be erected among the old houses with coal bins and wood piles. During the next twenty years, the area will be a conglomeration of beauty and shambles.....

8. The Association suggested that the hole of Project "A" in the China-Valley should be cut down to one hold..... (City of Vancouver, 1963 :p.91-94).

In January 1963 the City Council held a public hearing on the issue of slum clearance. Once more, Foon Sien spoke eloquently for Chinatown's determined opposition to the \$17 million second phase. The two parties ran into a deadlock. In a spell of anger, Foon threw to the City Council his written resignation from the mayor's consultative committee on redevelopment, which said:

Since the Mayor's Consultative Committee on the Re-development recommended to you the adoption of stage 2 of the redevelopment program, I wish to publicly disassociate myself from this recommendation. As a member of this committee, I fear its adoption would lead to the destruction of five more blocks in China Valley and the displacement of more Chinese residents. 'Gaining the whole world while losing one's own soul' is not a healthy setting. I may say that the sufferings and agonies endured by the displaced cannot be compensated even though Vancouver's East End may, in the minds and thoughts of you city fathers, be paved with silver and gold and enhanced by towering multiple dwellings piercing into the azure skies. For the human element is absolutely neglected. The poor and those in the low-income bracket will, according to planning, soon be driven from their homes by legal confiscation.

Experience taught us that forced evacuation of Japanese Canadians from Vancouver's 'Little Tokyo' created much hardship and suffering. Now 21 years later, the authorities intend to disperse the Chinese similarly. To me it is discrimination of the kinkiest kind.

Moreover, the planners have in their design the cruel idea of ending Pender St. at Gore Ave. and build a wall or some kind of obstacle to keep the redeveloped area apart. In so doing a wall will go up just like the one now dividing East and West Berlin, only the Chinatown one will be erected to isolate commercial Chinatown from the residential area. Without the purchasing background, commercial Chinatown will wither, and residential Chinatown will follow into oblivion. The entire 40 blocks that comprise Chinatown are fated to be destroyed within 20 years.

Personally I value the love and the respect of my people. So it is with regret that I formally tender by resignation as a member of the Mayor's Consultative Committee on Redevelopment. (Signed) Foon Sien (Chinatown News, Feb. 18, 1963. :p.26).

Looking for a compromise gesture — yet still adhering to the idea of urban renewal as the only outlet for Chinatown and a progressive Vancouver, Mayor Rathie replied that he

would invite some Chinese organizations to submit their own plans on part of the Project No. 2. Local Chinese architects Gilbert Eng, Herman Wong, and possibly Gordon Yuen whose thesis at UBC had dealt with the redevelopment issue were solicited. Chinese realtors and developers like Mrs. Faye Leung herself applauded: "We're pleased to see the mayor take this view. We have made submission in the past, but no action was ever taken" (Chinatown News, Feb. 3, 1963 :p.28-29). She, for sure, had every reason to approve. At the end, it was her husband Dean Leung and Eng under Harry James Agencies Ltd. that were on tender call for submitting design proposals.

In April 1963 the Leungs presented the city with their "Oriental Cities" scheme, calling "for converting the block north of MacLean Park into a Chinese village complete with 72 oriental type of houses and rock gardens" (Chinatown News, May 18, 1963). The rival plan, prepared by Gilbert Eng, emphasized no "Oriental" themes but a straight solution on rehabilitation. (The difference between Leungs' proposal and the Eng's should not be exaggerated into an ideological conflict.) Eng, a UBC architectural graduate, prescribed a "modern" architecture solution because he thought the residents would prefer it. The two sides contested in front of the City Council. The "Oriental City" idea was emotionally attacked as building "a wall around ourselves [Chinese]". One businessman criticized: "We don't want to be like the Stanley Park Zoo with buses going through our backyards" (Anderson 1990 :p.197). However, the council, friendly with the Leungs, selected the "Oriental City".

Ironically, the federal government rejected the Leungs' proposal, considering "that the Chinese style houses did not correspond with previously agreed upon redevelopment for the whole area" (Chinatown News, July 3, 1964 :p.18). Some city officials in addition warned the council that the "Oriental City", "if approved, would break dozens of existing city building and development bylaws" (Chinatown News, July 3, 1964 :p.18).

Intertwined with these pros and cons regarding the idea of "Oriental City" proposal, there were various intentions: the Chinese developers and the City Council treated the Chinese architectural style as a talisman for tourism; the Federal government and the civic technocrats objected to the scheme, not because of its commodification of Chinese culture, but because of its possible transgression of the existing zoning and building code, which could slow the pace of urban renewal. One notices that the discussion on "Chineseness" in this debate only scratched the surface, years later, it popped out to be a quintessential argument. What had been pursued then were merely the economic gains and political agenda that overrode the community's needs and its perceptions of home.

The weakness of élite leadership was exposed at this stage of the political contest. The hard-line City Council drove a wedge between the Chinese themselves. Despite Foon Sien's dedication, the alienated CBA was losing the trust of the anxious residents. When the

donated money run out, the lawyer himself refused to go to court anymore. Ultimately Project No.2 went ahead.

The bulldozers brazenly rolled into Chinatown. With tears and anger, the local residents resisted till the last moment. Fred Soon, one of the many displaced, recalled:

I had a house in the 600 block Pender Street. City Hall wanted the land, and at meetings at the Chinese Benevolent Association, one of the questions I asked was, "how is the City Hall going to pay us for the house and land if we are going to be vacated?" City Hall people said, 'Oh, you'll be well paid, you don't have to worry," so I didn't pursue it much further. But that was the kind of blanket promise you can hardly rely on, as I found out later.

The government just ran over us and didn't respect our right to speak up [but] I made representation to the City Hall. They sent a negotiator, who came to my house 3 or 4 times. Every time, he offered me maybe \$300 or \$400 more than the price they offered before. When they tried to expropriate me in 1965, they pinned the notification on my door. They didn't even have the courtesy to see me and hand it to me personally. They merely nailed it on the door. They said there was nothing I could do about it, my house was under the expropriation law, but I could always talk with the negotiator.

Negotiation? What a farce! The land was earmarked for expropriation, so the market value was very low. What I needed was replacement value, not market value. My first lawyer advised me to go into arbitration. I didn't want to go into arbitration, because once you agree to arbitration, you can't go any further. And I was still left with a dilemma that I couldn't solve. I wanted replacement value for my house, and that's all.

I had hoped to prevent them from demolishing the house. I had every intention of doing that. But then my wife saw that all the houses—left and right of us were going down, hammers and bulldozers all buzzing around, and she was almost going crazy. Finally, I found a house approximately the same size. Immediately, I went to the City Hall and gave them the proposition: "Will you pay for that house?" They shook their heads. We bought the house anyway — borrowing money privately. When we moved, we didn't give the first house to the city, we just left it, and I had every intention of guarding it. One day, during 1967, 18 months after we moved, the bulldozer came around and demolished the house. Previous to the demolishing, I engaged a second lawyer, and I told him that I was not agreed with the way the city was giving me remuneration for my house, that I would rather keep it because I would like to go on living in the Strathcona area.

In 1968, I discharged that lawyer and engaged another. A short time later, he told me: "Your case is finished. I represented you at the courthouse, and the city had their own representative, and they kept on saying they could pay you \$6,600, and so I accepted it on behalf of you." I certainly did not agree. I paid him a retaining fee, I paid the interim charge for his appearance in court, and I discharged him. So now I had used up 3 lawyers and I couldn't afford a fourth one. So I thought I had better apply myself as a lawyer, and I made quite a noise at City Hall.

The city had no right to initiate that program of urban renewal. It should come from the people, from the grass roots. And they didn't treat the inhabitants as people. They had no housing rehabilitation program that suited the people. Their main purpose was to get them out and get their land. They should realize that people come first. If they say 'urban renewal', they should renew the house. But what they wanted to do was really paradoxical: they wanted to destroy the house (British Columbia 1979: p.176).

Another resident Ramon Benedetti recounted:

One Chinese man, he got \$5,200 for his house and his 25-foot lot. Now this man's home meant a hell of a lot to him, and he was an elderly man that had no place to go. Where are you going when you're 50? Who's going to give you a mortgage, huh? But at that time, you know what they did? They bulldozed your place down and then you went to court for a settlement.

I remembered the first meeting we had, and I say, "All right, arise! You people, arise! To arms, it's time! These guys are bulldozers. They're rolling over us, you know."

I've got to take a deep breath — those city planners, they were all up there, sitting up there, as smug as bugs in a rug up there. And who are us lowly people to complain, to stand up against these sneaking, conniving, sidwinding, backstabbing claim-jumpers? How do you fight these people? Where do you start? So you got up and you said something, and that was it. And then the next guy stood up: "Sorry, you've already said your piece." You never got a chance. And you didn't get any answers out of them, I mean, this is the feeling of frustration that I had. I felt so helpless (British Columbia 1979: p.176).

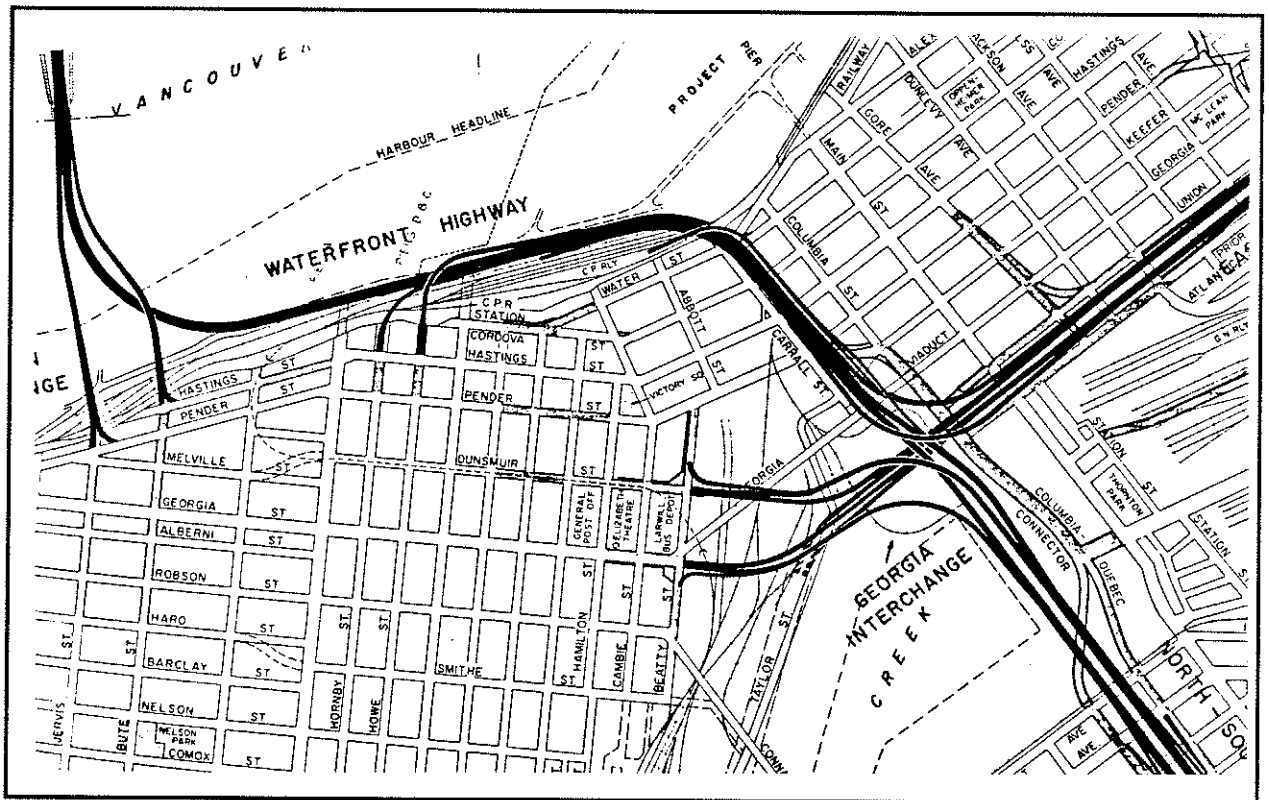
The spirit of community at the moment of crisis was rapidly forged. Residents— Mary Chan, Sue Lum, and Mrs. Mah on East Pender— themselves organized neighbourhood block representatives. Only those representatives would talk to the people from City Hall. And no one would sell their house first. Every one yet claimed if their next door sold, they would. Unanimously the representatives declined any offer from the City. That block of neighbourhood survived Urban Renewal.

Project No.2 devoured Area A-6 — blocks 87 and 88. It cleared up another 29 acres land for industrial lots, private and public housing and a school recreation site, and displaced 1,730 people. The MacLean Park complex was built as part of Project No.2.

3.3. The Fight of the Freeway

Hardly had the turbulence of the Project No.2 lessened, when more disastrous news struck Chinatown. The City Council voted in favor of building a freeway network whose south-north artery line would cut right through the heart of Chinatown. In 1964 the Federal Government agreed to share the cost of road construction and services in Urban Renewal projects across Canada. The City Council of Vancouver was overjoyed by this news; they thought they could use

Federal Government funding to enhance Vancouver's infrastructure, in order to spur a business boom (Gustein 1975 :p.154). Under the pretext of Urban Renewal, in 1965 the City Council adopted the ambitious blueprint for a third crossing at the Waterfront, connected to a crisscross freeway system which ran through Carrall Street.



Map 5. The proposed freeway cutting through Carrall Street.
Source: City of Vancouver, *Vancouver Transportation Study*, 1968.

In October 1966, PBQ&D, Inc. an engineering firm from San Francisco, and Erikson-Massey Architects of Vancouver, were hired to carry on a marathon of technical studies for the freeway project. The American transportation specialists obviously took this project as one of the many similar kinds they had done in the United States. They had no qualms about putting the highway through Chinatown. The architects, who later said they were uneasy about the proposal and joined to foil the proposal, deferred to the American engineers. The Architectural Subconsultants raked their brains to come up with some solutions to "harmonize" the proposed highway structure with the existing urban fabrics.

Numerous solutions to urban freeway structures in other cities have shown that such uses as parking structures, shopping arcades, warehousing, major multi-storey structures, and gardens or park space are compatible with freeway structures. These solutions adequately demonstrate that the approach to this problem must be comprehensive rather than piecemeal, and conceptual rather than remedial, in

order to achieve an integrated and vital urban fabric. The freeway is then only one of many tools required in shaping and reshaping the cityscape (City of Vancouver 1968 :p.48).

One finds it hard to believe an eight lane freeway could be functionally and visually integrated into Chinatown. The City, however, cared little about this self-contradiction. On June 1 of 1967, the council unanimously passed a move to proceed with the monstrous freeway.

The news thundered above Chinatown. Not just the local Chinese residents in Strathcona, but the entire Chinese community in Vancouver—including the Chinese merchants and various organizations in Chinatown—were infuriated by the council's decision. Had the freeway been built, Chinatown would be ineluctably "circumvented", and business would have withered. Who, thus, in the whole Chinese community would espouse the freeway? In the middle of June 1967 the CBA⁴⁰ demanded that City Council provide a full explanation for its decision. It turned out that some aldermen, Harry Rankin for instance, acknowledged they had not been well enough informed by the consultants. Pressure mounted from the Chinese community. Aldermen asked Mayor Campbell to postpone the \$212,000 freeway study until a full scale public hearing (Chinatown News, June 18, 1967). The tenacious Campbell at first stuck with his decision. His logic was: we had done so much technical research, the project must go ahead. He tried to comfort the Chinese merchants with the suggestion that they may have arcade shops constructed underneath the freeway. Yet none of the merchants was impressed. The mayor and the council in the end voted for a wide ranging public hearing.

Facing a crisis, all the factions in Chinatown united. In July of 1967 the Anti-freeway Committee led by Dean Leung, Foon Sien, Charlie Lee, Victor Louie, Tommy Mah and Lawyer Jack Lee—all the power players in CBA—was formed. The committee drafted its first brief to the city council, outlining the unwanted impact of the freeway particularly on Chinatown as a tourist place.

The expressway through Carrall St. would in effect become a Chinatown wall", said the brief, "cutting the Oriental quarters off from the downtown Vancouver. This would completely suffocate the business life of Chinatown and cause serious dislocation to the economy of the community. It would destroy this area as one of the outstanding tourist attractions of our city and would displace hundreds from their places of employment a human factor which the city can ill afford to ignore. The Chinese Canadian community favours a freeway running all the way to Clark Drive, thus skirting the urban renewal project which would be the residential section of Chinatown (Chinatown News, July 3, 1967).

City Council under Campbell staunchly defended the idea of the freeway. In the following week, City Council resumed its meeting on searching for an alternative route for the freeway through

⁴⁰ Dean Leung pointed out that the expressway would completely suffocate the business life of Vancouver's Chinatown.

Gore Street. Out of the technical difficulty of alignment with the proposed waterfront freeway, this proposal was immediately discarded.

Around this time, the media, local organizations, people concerned about community, liberal minded politicians, and academics from UBC converged into a strong anti-freeway voice. At a public meeting called by the B.C. Community Planning Association, Robert Williams, MLA for Vancouver East, charged the City of having "never consulted the Chinese community" on such an important decision which determined the future of Chinatown. He cited incidents to back up his charge: "Urban renewal of the area of Main, heavily populated by Chinese Canadians; sanctioning a truck route through Pender Street, the heart of Chinatown; voting to have the freeway through Carrall Street" (Chinatown News, Nov. 3, 1967 :p.30). Williams condemned the city for spending \$70,000 on a mathematical model "which was supposed to be used on freeway routes. But this model was never used to test the range of alternatives" (Chinatown News, Nov.3, 1967 :p.30). Professors from UBC also stood up for the Chinese community. Peter Oberlander, Setty Pendakur, and Robert Collier from the School of Planning, Paul Tennet from Political Science, Walter Hardwick from Geography, Bud Wood and Andrew Gruft from Architecture, Ed Higbee, visiting professor from Rhode Island, spoke loud. In an interview by the Vancouver Sun, Dr. Hardwick directly attacked the top-down planning approach:

[The City Council and the Vancouver Town Planning Commission] were the only two bodies in which the public could become involved in what questions were asked about the freeway's location. But, because a number of basic assumptions had been made without prior council approval, the location of the Chinatown route as recommended by the consultants had been virtually predetermined by the narrow terms of reference. The Council have been duped—it has been had—by its officials. They thought they were voting for only a small item, and they have in fact given their approval to a whole system arbitrarily decided upon by officials. And now the City was committed to building the other links in the system to the Chinatown freeway, because without them the Chinatown section would be a waste of taxpayers' money (Vancouver Sun, October 19, 1967).

Mayor Tom Campbell did not give up. On the one side he slashed Alderman Rankin for "playing politics with the Chinese community" and in the meantime he hastily hosted a luncheon at the Wayen to appease the Chinese business leaders, including lawyer Jack Lee, Richard Mar, Quon H. Wong, Tommy Mah, Harry Con, Chak Lui, Lam Fong, Foon Sien, Ping Mah, Charlie Lee, Bob Lee, Victor Louie, Dean Leung and Wong Ywon Wail. Wong Foon Sien spoke bluntly. He told the Mayor that "it is said the Indians sold Manhattan Island for a bottle of whisky, but as unofficial mayor of Chinatown, the sinecure bestowed upon me by the public, I must, despite the warm hospitality and the lunch, fight for the preservation of Chinatown if its existence is threatened" (Chinatown News, Nov.3, 1967 :p.31). The unpopular Campbell had to announce there was to be a public hearing on November 23rd.

On the evening of Thursday, 23rd November, 1967, the City Council chamber and two committee rooms were packed with people. Three hundred seated inside, another two hundred waited outside. Hostility brewed in the air. Faces were tense. Campbell opened the hearing by stating the purpose of the meeting and the importance of the freeway. "His remarks were greeted with derision and angry noises, which grew in intensity when he announced that the consultants and staff would have 45 minutes in which to present the background information, and that after the experts had spoken, each delegation would be given five minutes to make its comments. There would be a coffee break and everyone was invited"(Pendakur 1972:p.68). Henry Quinby, the technical consultant from San Francisco, got the first chance to present. The city's director of traffic, Vaughn-Birch got the second. This dull and lengthy, jargonistic planning report apparently avoided the real matter of concern to the audience, it went on and on about alternatives and technicalities. It seemed any minute this public hearing would be doomed to become another bureaucratic showcase. Dr.Hardwick interrupted in the middle of Quinby's speech:"Your Worship, is not Mr. Quinby talking about a freeway alternative which has already been rejected by the council? We came here to talk about the Carrall Street Freeway Alignment through Chinatown and let us get on with it." Just when the mayor tried to pacify Hardwick, Alderman Broome yelled out:" Throw him out, he is a trouble maker!"

The insulting remark incensed the audience. Over the next few hours, questions, interruptions, demands and expressions of dissatisfactions poured out. The mayor called for a break. The meeting resumed at ten o'clock. It was only then that community organizations were allowed to present their opinions. Jack Lee on behalf of the Chinese anti-freeway committee restated the significance of preserving Chinatown as a tourist place. He cited all the civic and professional organizations in Vancouver that supported his cause and spoke against this route. "If the city council should chose to ignore public opinion and try to bull-doze its way over city wide objection", warned Lee, "it should expect a fight on its hands" (Chinatown News, Nov. 18, 1967 :p.16). As the meeting went on, Campbell announced there would be another public hearing on the 7th of December, in the auditorium of the Eric Hamber Secondary School.

On December 7, 1967, the second public hearing attracted more than 800 people. There were 27 briefs, from 25 civic organizations and individuals, many of them were professional architects and city planners. The briefs were presented in emotion and rare solidarity. Speaker after speaker implored Mayor Tom Campbell and his council to further study the overall transportation system for Vancouver before any final decision was made. As a climax, the chairman of the City's Planning Commission, Peter Oberlander, publicly announced his resignation from the Commission because he said he could no longer tolerate the Commission's support of the freeway project. He thought that "too many authorities appear to have given priority to transportation instead of overall city and regional planning. The overall plan must

come first, and transportation fitted into it, not the other way around" (Chinatown News, Dec. 18, 1967 :p.45). On the same subject the brief from the CBA added: "We want our transportation system to be adapted to our environment rather than the environment adapted itself to a transportation system" (Chinatown News, Dec. 18, 1967 :p.45). Jack Lee made the point straight forward : "What is more disturbing, we were never consulted even after we voiced our opposition to the Carrall Street alignment" (Chinatown News, Dec. 18, 1967 :p.45). Vancouver East MLA Robert Williams, a professional planner, criticized that "the lack of public involvement in the freeway decisions has placed the whole process on weak foundations... The real world is out there in the neighborhoods, not in the quiet precincts of city hall" (Chinatown News, Dec. 18, 1967 :p.46). Focusing still on the property of Chinatown as the future Canadian heritage, Professor Walter Hardwick questioned the simple economic formula of cost-benefit analysis. "What about old town and Chinatown as part of our cultural traditions?", he challenged, "What about our tourist potential, based as it is in part upon our well developed physical and cultural amenities? Are these to be served well? I think not" (Chinatown News, Dec. 18, 1967 :p.46).

At the eleventh hour the voice of the Chinese community spread effectively through the Vancouver Sun and Province—the two newspapers that used to take racist stances depicting Chinese Canadians. Both, in the spate of the sixties' Liberal movements, now began to support the Chinese community. The Province came out with a full page feature interviews with Foon Sien, Dean and Faye Leung, and Jack Lee; The Vancouver Sun believed that city council "has no alternative but to re-think the whole subject of freeway from the top down — beginning with what urban freeways are supposed to do, for whom, by whom, and with what. There has been enough hiring of expensive veterans to prove the stoutness of council hobby-horse" (Chinatown News, Dec. 18, 1967 :p.47). At last, the citizen "rebels" in Vancouver's Chinatown alarmed the government in Ottawa. Bert Kennedy, from the Community Planning Association of Canada, urged Vancouver's City Council to listen to the community's voice and plan for them "an urban environment with facilities of cultural and recreational renown" (Chinatown News, Dec. 18, 1967 :p.47).

Under pressure from the citizens of Vancouver, and 48 civic, religious and professional organizations, Chinatown was saved from the trample of the freeway. In early January 1968 City Council re-opened the discussion on the Carrall Street Freeway proposal by eight versus two. The majority of Council, including the mayor, voted for a temporary rescinding of the proposal. When the news came to Chinatown the Chinese community was jubilant. It was the first significant breaking point in the history of Chinatown and in the history of Vancouver's urban politics that a community succeeded in resisting the top-down bureaucratic system. Wong

Foon Sien, a long time leader of CBA, witnessing the change, foresaw progress to come, in which Chinatown would become an important social and cultural part of Canada.

3.4. SPOTA

Wong's prediction was already fulfilling itself. His personal maturity in civic politics, a self-made bilingual spokesman and politician for the Chinese community, gave evidence to the emergence of the new Chinese generations. Having undergone decades of suffering, soul-searching, the second and third generations of Chinese Canadians finally converged into the mainstream of Canadian society with success in every field—becoming university graduates, medical doctors, lawyers, realtors, designers, politicians, and artists. The dismantling of social barriers profoundly influenced the young Chinese Canadians thought. Growing up in the 1960s and 1970s, the time that the entire world—from France, the United States, to China—was in the spin of cultural revolutions, they started to relate their struggles inside Chinatown with the social movements concomitantly happening in their classrooms, work places, and in the world outside Canada.

The mainstream Canadian outside Chinatown gradually came to understand the Chinese community more than ever before. Thanks to Multiculturalism—token or not, the boundary of Chinatown no longer stood for social separation. The voice inside Chinatown had been heard clearly, at last.

Once the external coercive forces bordering on Chinatown were lifted, the heterogeneity of Chinatown itself surfaced. In fact, the Chinese community in Vancouver was never a homogeneous group, regardless of how others perceived it. There were the Chinese who lived in Chinatown, and those who did not, Chinese who came from poor villages of southern Mainland China, and the ones from the merchant families in Hong Kong, or Taiwan, those who spoke Taishanese, and those who spoke Kejianese. Mitigation of social tensions between Chinese and non-Chinese Canadians immediately made those divisions visible. Chinatown, by the end of the 1960s, stratified and clustered into various interests groups: fans of Trudeau, the Chinese NDP, the Taiwan Nationalist Party, the Chinese Communist Party, or the non-partisans from the merchant class to the professionals. This internal political diversification emerged after the victory over the Freeway project.

What divided Chinese Canadians was the issue that who represents the Chinese community. The dissatisfaction with the performance of the CBA in fighting the freeway project and particularly in fighting against the two phases of Urban Renewal increased. At this point, in September 1967, the preliminary report Urban Renewal Project No. 3 was submitted to City Council. In October 1968 the City submitted the report to the senior governments for approval. The plan was thorough—it proposed a complete rebuilding of the

fifteen remaining blocks with a number of 'super-block' public housing projects and other complexes, which were expected to affect about 3,000 people, most of them "Chinese".⁴¹ Angry residents in Strathcona this time had no trust in both the City Council and the CBA, and in December 1968, they set up an organization themselves—the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association (SPOTA).

SPOTA came out of the sixties' social change. It had its grass roots in the Chinese community and the help of professional politicians. Behind it were Penny Steward, Margaret Mitchell (Community Worker of Neighbourhood Services Association, former Vancouver East MP), Michael Harcourt (UBC Law School student, now the Premier of B.C.), and Darline Marzari (from Vancouver Social Planning Council, now the Minister of Municipal Affairs of B.C.). The Chinese community had been "tired of waiting for the bulldozer", said a SPOTA brief to the City Council, "Instead, we are prepared to begin a program for rehabilitation of the existing structures providing the Federal Government is willing to utilize the money available for mass demolition and convert this money to ready grants and loans for our homeowners"(SPOTA Brief, May 16, 1969).⁴²

The first meeting of SPOTA took place at Gibbs Boys Club on December 14, 1968. Over 175 people showed up for the meeting as a result of the advertisement in the local Chinese newspaper and the door-to-door notices distributed by Walter Chan, Mary Chan, Sue Lum, Yuen, Mrs.Lee, and Mrs.Luk. Most of those who attended the meeting were either tenants or property owners in Strathcona. Walter Chan—Mary's husband—was in charge of the meeting. This quiet yet tenacious former school teacher of Chinese stood out to be a soul in times of crisis for that group of ordinary Chinese people. Walter explained to the audience the imbroglio of the "Urban Renewal", and asked those who wanted to stay in Strathcona to join SPOTA, telling the City Council that "we do not want to be disturbed and moved."⁴³ After extending his gratitude to Margaret Mitchell and Michael Harcourt, Walter went straight to the point:"These people can help us but only us [sic.], ourselves can fight to remain in this area and for a better price for our houses."⁴⁴ Walter's speech had an effect. In the same meeting fourteen people agreed to act on the executive committees and draft a detailed brief for City Council. Harry Con, Walter Chan and Mrs. Sue Lum become the co-chairs of SPOTA.

Harry Con and Sue Lum both owned large properties in Strathcona (and both lived in that neighborhood), both in the first place did not want to be nominated for SPOTA. Like most

⁴¹ in 1967, the proportion of the area that was of Chinese origin was over 70 per cent, while 78 per cent of the families in Strathcona were classified as 'Asiatic' in 1966.

⁴²From SPOTA minutes, in the B.C. Archives.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

Chinese, they had not wanted to be leaders in civic politics, and aside from that they were occupied with work. Reading Sue Lum's mind, Mary Chan wittingly made an innuendo: "look out who will lose the most if Strathcona is to be bulldozed". Sue Lum blushed, and accepted the nomination. In Con's case, he refused the nomination for other reasons. He had just lost in a campaign for the School Board of Vancouver. Yet his political interest was somewhere higher than Strathcona. The dilemma was that the Chans spoke little English. The members of SPOTA felt they needed two leaders, one who could summon up the Chinese community, which the Chans could do, the other who could handle the external affairs in English. More so they thought this spokes-person had to be a man, as far the City (and the community) was concerned, they would not take women seriously. No one else in Strathcona would be more ideal than Harry Con for this role—he who was a merchant, speaking fluent English, educated, and eager to be involved in politics. Lilian Lee (Bessie Lee's sister-in-law) nominated Harry Con for these qualities. Con hesitated, until in a preliminary meeting of SPOTA, the wavering Con stepped into the hallway.

With leaders elected, SPOTA mustered another public meeting at Pender YWCA on January 19, 1969. The next day they asked the CBA to officially recognize the legitimacy of SPOTA. On January 27, a petition with over 600 signatures was sent to all three levels of government. On March 3, the executives first met City Council to discuss their brief; on March 8, SPOTA's executives and the block representatives demanded Herb Capozzi and Evan Wolfe from the Provincial Legislature agree to a survey of the residents' opinions on "Urban Renewal". The survey results came out on May 16. Out of a total 500 questionnaires distributed, 375 were returned. Among these 375 families, 371 households stated that they did not want "Urban Renewal" at all. Instead they wanted to stay in Strathcona and were willing to renovate their houses. This quantitative survey gave SPOTA a hard data. To mount more pressure on City Council, SPOTA lobbied Chinese communities across Canada. On June 1, Harry Con and the delegates from other Chinatowns gathered in Ottawa, requesting Robert Andras, the Minister of Housing, to re-consider the "Urban Renewal" program.

Ottawa was stunned. Federal Government now began to pay attention to the outcry of the people in Strathcona. "After a July, 1969, banquet in his honor staged by SPOTA, Andras [the new Minister of Housing in Canada] made a major policy speech attacking the conventional wisdom of urban renewal, then bluntly informed City Council that Strathcona residents must be involved in any planning for the area" (MacLean's, January 24, 1971: p.25). The stratagem of going after the support of the Federal Government proved to be effective when Vancouver City Council approved in principle SPOTA's "Housing Rehabilitation Proposal" on July 17. On August 6, Dan Campbell, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, accompanied by Herb Capozzi, visited Chinatown. He agreed: (a) to withhold urban renewal funding to the City and

experiment with rehabilitation; (b) to lift the freeze on Strathcona properties; (c) to assist rehabilitation with a provincial share of funding; and (d) to enable necessary expropriation to get fair compensation. On September 5, Dan Campbell telegraphed Vancouver's City Council, stressing that a three-level-government working committee on Strathcona rehabilitation should include SPOTA. As a result, Harry Con, Shirley Chan, Bessie Lee representing SPOTA on October 1, strode into City Hall, and met with Maurice Egan (Director of Social Planning), Parkinson (Financial Director), Max Cross (Assistant Director of City Planning) from the City, E. Brown (Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs), Jack Williams (Director of Housing) from the Province, King Gagnong (Area Manger), and Bob Classen (Regional manager) from CMHC.

A turning point occurred. Despite the crises in the rehabilitation program,⁴⁵ SPOTA succeeded in portraying a community achieving self empowerment within a liberalizing Canada. Several prominent actors emerged from this political vortex. The first one was Ron Basford, the successor of Paul Hellyer, and Robert Andras, (The Minister of Housing). Basford played the key role at the federal level of government giving SPOTA the needed support. Perhaps Basford was too anxious to show his loyalty to the Chinese community for he had once defeated the first Chinese MP Doug Jung and by the 1970s, he relied on the Chinese community support for the up-coming election. The second was Walter Hardwick. This UBC geography professor had finally made his way into City Council in 1968, together with Art Philips and Michael Harcourt. This group of reformers democratized to a certain extent the old boys' club of the City Council. The third was Darline Marzari, who then, with a Masters Degree in Social Work from the University of Toronto, got recruited by Maurice Egan into the Social Planning Council. Originally the Social Planning Council was established by Sutton-Brown as an informant on social activism. Maurice Egan, a one-time social worker and Alderman in Ottawa, in his term of directorship, substantiated the power of the Social Planning Council by hiring several intriguing people—one of which was Marzari. Marzari knew well the Saul Alinsky literature on community movement. In fighting Urban Renewal, Marzari became an asset to the Chinese community. Under her tutelage, Shirley Chan matured.

Shirley (now the director of Housing and Property Department in Vancouver), this fifth actor, was twenty years old in 1971. Enrolled as an English major student at Simon Fraser University, her language skill proved to be an effective weapon for the Chinese community to make itself heard by the rest of Canada. Shirley, like her mother, charged at the frontier. She appeared in all kinds of news media, from newspaper report to television interviews. Her

⁴⁵Scarcely had SWC [the Strathcona Working Committee] taken charge of the issue of rehabilitation, the stubborn City Council single-handedly hired the consultants Birmingham and Wood without any consultation with the community. This breach of trust enraged the representatives from SPOTA. The two sides spent the entire 1970 fighting over decision making rights in the Strathcona rehabilitation process .

cutting intellect and uninhibited speech made her widely known. MacLean's in the January issue of 1971 described her thus: "In Strathcona, Shirley Chan beat back the bulldozers; and scared the Hell out of City Hall":

In Canadian cities the Chinese voice has seldom been raised. The Chinese are a family-focused people who have responded to intolerance and worse with —God knows— an estimable restraint. It's curious, then, that the most politically effective community-action group in Vancouver is Chinese. Curious, too, in a culture that has looked to its elders for wisdom and to its men for leadership, that the founder was a 21-year-old girl.....

All over Canada and the U.S. Chinese communities have been broken up by our peacetime panzer, the bulldozer. Fewer than 20 cohesive Chinatowns' remain; once there were 1,000. SPOTA's struggle to preserve a 20-block residential part of Vancouver's Chinatown, and members' determination to rehabilitate their homes rather than be packed into public housing, will change the face of Vancouver and, conceivably, Halifax and Montreal and Moose Jaw. For the federal government, which pays the biggest share of redevelopment bills, has a two-million-dollar commitment to the preservation of Strathcona.

These people have had a hell of a lot of influence on my view of urban renewal," says the minister responsible for housing, Robert Andras. "They have faced the breaking up and the stamping out of a lifestyle. You can put up much prettier buildings, but where do the people go? The Strathcona situation proves that people do count and can be heard (MacLean's, Jan 24, 1971 :p.24).

People do count and can be heard. The people in Strathcona unfalteringly defended their homes in the last phase of "Urban Renewal". It was they that made the federal government re-evaluate the social and cultural effects of massive demolition of inner cities that was inspired by the dream of the Modernist City; it was they that pressed the paternalistic and subtly racist,⁴⁶ bureaucratic Vancouver's City Council to reform themselves. Times changed.

⁴⁶Mayor Tom Campbell himself never accepted this charge. "These charges of racial discrimination are just not a fact," he protested, "we are prepared to spend \$10 million to save Chinatown by putting the approaches underground [meaning that once he had suggested to put the freeway through the underground of Chinatown]" (Chinatown News, June 3, 1969).

Part II. Garden, Power, and the Other

Translatability is an essential quality of certain works, which is not to say that it is essential they be translated; it means rather that a specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in its translatability. It is plausible that no translation, however good it may be, can have any significance as regards the original. Yet, by virtue of its translatability the original is closely connected with the translation; in fact, this connection is all the closer since it is no longer important to the original.

*Walter Benjamin, Illuminations*⁴⁷

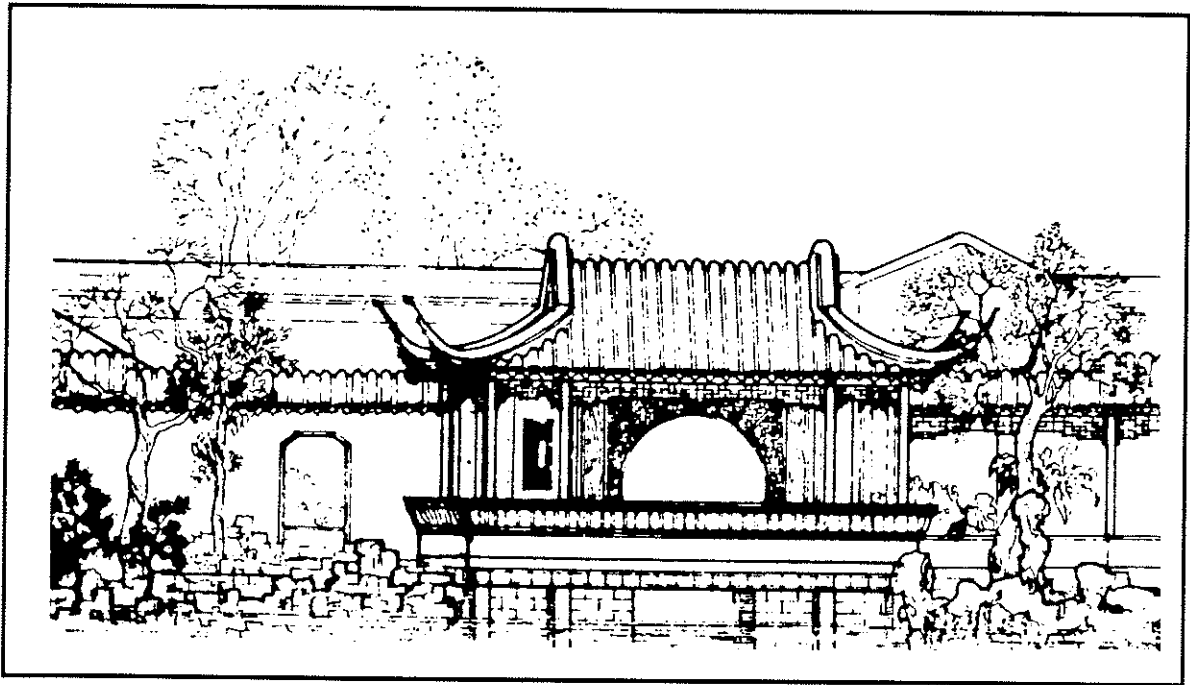


Figure 13. The Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden in Vancouver

Source: Maggie Keswick, et al., *The Art and Architecture of the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden*, 1990.

⁴⁷Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator" in *Illuminations*, edited and with an Introduction by Hannah Arendt, New York: Schocken Books, c.1968, p.71.

4.

The Story of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden

A fit of coughing burst out. Conversation halted. Mr. Lee was shaking spasmodically. Bessie withdrew from us, apologetically, carrying her husband to the bedroom. Realizing the inconvenience, shortly the rest of us excused ourselves and left.

There was a thicket of densely planted, wildly growing roses in the tiny front yard of Lee's home. Untamed. Earthy. Once we descended from the limestone steps, looking up, we saw Bessie waving her hand from the window. That paleness of her face, I thought, buoyant above the leaves and petals, exuded an un-named fragrance: so ordinary that I recalled my own mother—her sacrifice of being a Chinese woman, of her sleeping in a rainy morning, while I was sending a paper boat into the rain.....

Heat subdued. The top of that Chinese Catholic church drew out an elongated shadow, revolving, as Pender Street was sinking into a valley of blue. At the corner of Main Street, the old man from Nanjing who was selling straw made animal figurines was gone. Inexplicably I found myself drawn to the location of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden. For what? To share with the tour guides this incredible story of SPOTA? To preach to the tourists that the physical existence of the garden testified the blossoming decade of Multiculturalism?

Multiculturalism. What a word! Without the political welter and bloodshed in Quebec, would mercy be given to the aboriginal people, and others, including Chinese Canadians ? 48

⁴⁸Demographically the proportion of British and French Canadians by 1970 had respectively dropped from 57% and 31% of the total population in 1901 to 45% and 29%. It is more apparent in the western provinces where Asiatic and aboriginal Canadians lived. This re-structuring of the ethnic components, this re-configuration of urban societies, reflected and implied the re-structuring of the Canadian culture as a whole. Echoing to the surge of Nationalism in the global context, Canada had its turbulent Quebec independence movement. The death of Maurice Duplessis, the Quiet Revolution of Jean Lesage, elicited separatist terrorism. Violence and confrontations compelled Ottawa to set up its Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in 1963 whose initial objective was to acknowledge the rights of the Quebec people in maintaining their own language, education, and works. An expected spin-off as the Biculturalism was the Hawthorn-Tremblay report (1966, 1967) that extended concerns to the aboriginal cultures. Multiculturalism was hence engendered. The Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism was formally inaugurated in 1973 to advocate a much broader and much more plurally defined Multiculturalism. Composed of more than 100 representatives of various ethnic groups, the Multiculturalism Directorate, within the Department of the Secretary of State, launched the inter ethnic communication programs within Canadians. It "initiated and developed studies and research, including studies of the non-official languages and of attitudes towards Multiculturalism and a series of histories of ethnic groups; assisted the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association to develop as a full-fledged learned society with two regular publications; sponsored activities in the performing and the visual arts; assisted in programs aimed at retention of non-official languages, and gave grants for a vast array of other projects"(Burnet 1987:p.69). Thanks to the Multiculturalism program, the construction of Vancouver's Chinese Cultural Center became possible.

The garden was closed. Hesitantly I knocked at the black door—no answer; I knocked again, the tap penetrated the hard wood, travelling into the courtyard, and bouncing back to this short passage, where I stood.

Memory flooded back, to an alley of Chinatown.

The idea of having a decent cultural centre fermented for years in the Chinese community. What stymied the actualization of the project was mainly the political friction between the rival forces in Chinatown. The early '70s presented the Chinese community in Vancouver with a phase of transition and uncertainty. The crevice that parted the existing leadership of the CBA and the uprising local community activists (speaking for new immigrants, working class families, property owners, etc.) widened into a vast gulf. Community activists took over the leadership of the CBA in the battles of Urban Renewal and Freeway. The CBA may well represent the Chinese living outside Chinatown and the Chinese mercants. However, it had lost its fulcrum in Strathcona. The decades of discrimination and oppression of the top-down bureaucracy produced a troop of spokespersons like Mary Chan, Shirley Chan, Harry Con, Jonathan Lau, and Bessie Lee. SPOTA enabled them to carry on with their own lives. Surrounding them, gradually matured a circle of university students, mostly second and third generation Chinese Canadians.

During 1970 and 1971, an English professor from Berkeley visited and taught at UBC: Ron Tanaka, whose specialty was promoting Asian-American activism. "Tanaka argued that the assimilation had promoted the dominance of Anglo-Canada, where whites preferred to see Asians as powerless and had encouraged them to leave their communities. The resultant confusion of values, lack of appreciation of their history, and rejection of their own community had paralyzed Asian-Canadians"(Yee 1983: p.39). To deal with the identity crisis Tanaka formed the "Wakayama Group", a fellowship for the Asian youths. The condition of being a visitor made Tanaka realize his limited participation in concrete issues. Tanaka left, leaving his thoughts brewing in Chinatown.

A group of youngsters, now in their forties—Shirley Chan, Bing Thom, Joe Wai, Andy Joe, Victor Lee, Harry Fan, to name a few—shared similar experiences in their daily encounter with racism and cultural assimilation. Enthusiastic and optimistic, they turned their noble and lofty heads to the social mobilization movement inside China under Maoism. Few, indeed, outside China, understood the profundity as well as the devastation of the Cultural Revolution—weren't the leading intellectuals in the French and American universities rallying for Maoism? Curiosity and hope brought some of these youths across the Pacific, knocking on the door of China. Shirley Chan, after her graduation from SFU, got a prestigious position in Ottawa working for the first national multi-cultural policy. If she wanted, she probably could carry on climbing the bureaucratic ladder. Instead, Shirley chose to go to China, to search for

her ancestral roots, and pay her homage to the sacred sites of revolution. (*Many years later, in her office at the City Square, Shirley told me she was not impressed*). Bing Thom, another one, currently a famous architect, then a student of the University of California at Berkeley (UC Berkeley was known for its cradling of liberal ideas) trekked along the same "red" lines on the map of China.

Bing came from a family differing in every way from Shirley's. Protective parents and the enclosed Chinatown provided the latter a niche, and not too often did she have to stroll outside False Creek. The blissful childhood surfaces every now and then when Shirley speaks: she has little inhibition or qualm on commenting on anything, with absolute incision and trenchancy. Bing by contrast is introverted—witty, sharp, cautious. Bing's grandfather had joined the revolution to overthrow the Qing Dynasty. He was also the first one in Vancouver who cut his pony tail to indicate a break from the emperor. The Thoms, however, had a brutal time in Canada. During his life, Bing's grandfather wished his son to be accepted by the mainstream. His son, Bing's father, speaking better English than Chinese, received an university degree from UBC. When the 1930s Depression hit Vancouver, and racism became extreme, he left for Hong Kong. There, he found he could no longer be a Chinese. He felt torn between two alien cultures. Reluctantly Bing's father returned to Vancouver, and shortly afterwards, unhappily passed away.

For those lost souls, this is not an atypical story. Only through understanding this dark past, will one appreciate why Chinatown attracts Chinese. Facing the long, dreadful walls of isolation, Chinatown kindled a fire in the heart of Chinese immigrants. Being able to walk the same path everyday in Pender and Main, to the older generations of Chinese Canadians, was a comfort to their faith—"suffering is temporary".

Chinatown in the 1970s gathered many Shirleys and Bings. This group of idealistic, and to a degree, adorable youths, edified by Tanaka, regularly gathered in a cramped room on Pender Street, engaging in lofty conversations. To have a cultural center of their own, for all the Chinese people in Vancouver, seemed too much a dream.

One event paved a way to the dream. It occurred not too long after the episode of the Urban Renewal; City Council daringly approved the construction of the biggest fire hall of Vancouver in the middle of the Strathcona area. Chinese people having experienced so much nonsense had become skillful in counterattacking. The farce ended with City Council apologizing and rescinding the plan. Intrigued, the Chinese community asked: why should they not build a community centre on the site of the intended fire hall? There were two motives behind this decision: (a) to provide a place for community activity in order to foster a stronger community; and (b) to defy the bureaucracy of City Hall. They calculated that the overall cost, in 1972, would amount to \$6.7 million. In January 1973, the founding Chinese

Cultural Centre Board of Directors was formed; it consisted of twenty two adamant community activists: aside from Roy Mah, the honorable veteran, who was older, the directors of the CCC, Bing Thom, Joe Wai, Shirley Chan, Wongs—were all young and spunky. The proceedings of the CCC got serious. The initial optional site, through several rounds of discussion, was vetoed for several practical reasons. Turning their eyes to the West Pender, the board of directors were interested in the large chunk of land in False Greek—the guttural spot which could have been underneath the pillars of the freeway. In so doing, the Chinese community unequivocally signalled to the City that they had to give up the plan to ruin Chinatown.

The bold request put City Council off balance. The City promised further debate. Such a hesitation, at this time, immediately incurred harsh words from the newspapers, accusing the City Council of never redeeming its racist past. Under public pressure, in January of 1973, City Council gave its principal approval to the construction of the CCC at False Creek, on 40 acres of land owned by B.C. Hydro, CP Rail's real estate arm, and Marathon Realty. Three years later the "penitent" City Council bestowed the 2.5 acre parcel at the intersection of Pender and Carrall as a gift to the Chinese community with a token rent of \$1 per acre per year.

The overwhelming success gained the CCC a soaring reputation in the Chinese community, and quite expectedly, also the envy and antagonism of some members of the CBA. Time ripened for another cycle of power redistribution. The transmission of power from a well established organization to a new body of political representatives rarely proceeds smoothly. The action of building the Chinese Cultural Centre offended, or perceivably challenged, the legitimate authority of the CBA. Interestingly enough—being Chinese means being suggestive, I suppose, the facial frictions between the CCC and the CBA seldom invoked the word "power". Yet there was another factor. That factor, in the 1970s, was the politically correct way of representation, namely, the correct political inclination.

The CBA had been akin, or sympathetic to the Nationalist Party in Taiwan—the KMT (i.e. KwokMingTung, [Kuomintang]). Which was an open secret. Who would not? It was the KMT, founded by the Cantonese medical doctor Sun Yat Sen, popular among the overseas Chinese, that overthrew the last dynasty. The KMT officially represented China for decades until the United Nations sided with Beijing in the 1970s. Rightfully the KMT had been quite influential in Chinatown.

With major Western countries including Canada building diplomatic ties with mainland China, the Taiwan regime was ousted from the UN. Abandoned, exasperated, the KMT anxiously sought every possible way to boycott Beijing. One of which was to tighten its grips on the overseas Chinese communities. It was alleged that the KMT seized the CBA in Vancouver as its national headquarters in Canada to re-gain political control of the estimated 120,000 Canadian Chinese (Vancouver Sun, September 10, November 21, December 8, 1977); The

allegation detailed that the KMT funded the CBA from their banks in the United States, and the CBA recruited young Chinese Canadians to go to Taiwan every summer for anti-communism indoctrination. Those charges, true or not, enclouded Chinatown.

4.1. The Chinese Cultural Centre

The tension between the CCC and the CBA mounted to an acme at the time Dr. S. Wah Leung presided over the CCC. Leung realized he was surrounded by enormous financial problems and hostility. A rumor wildly spread, accusing the newly formed CCC of being infiltrated by the ultra-leftists, the sympathizers of Beijing. (The November 5, 1977 editorial of The New Republic, for instance, accused the CCC of "acting as the vanguard for the Maoist Communists, and [being] most actively hoodwinking funds for a building.") Bear in mind, the politically correct way of representing the Chinese communities in Canada was and still is neutrality and independence, connecting to neither the KMT in Taiwan nor the Communist Party in mainland China.

History again resorts to itself, resorts to common sense developed through time. As much as one cannot define whether and why the CCC was "Red", one cannot arbitrarily portray the CBA simply as the mouthpiece of the KMT. The local news media seemed having overtly simplified the power contest in Chinatown, rendering the CCC and the CBA two diametrically opposing camps of ideologies. A glimpse at the educational profiles of Strathcona (given the fact that in the 1970s the majority of Chinese population in Vancouver was concentrated in Strathcona) reveals that one third of the adult residents in Strathcona had less than grade five education and about half of the community had never reached grade eight. Thus, it is not realistic to think that most people in Chinatown had ever read the Communist Manifesto or Sun Yat Sen's Nationalist doctrine.

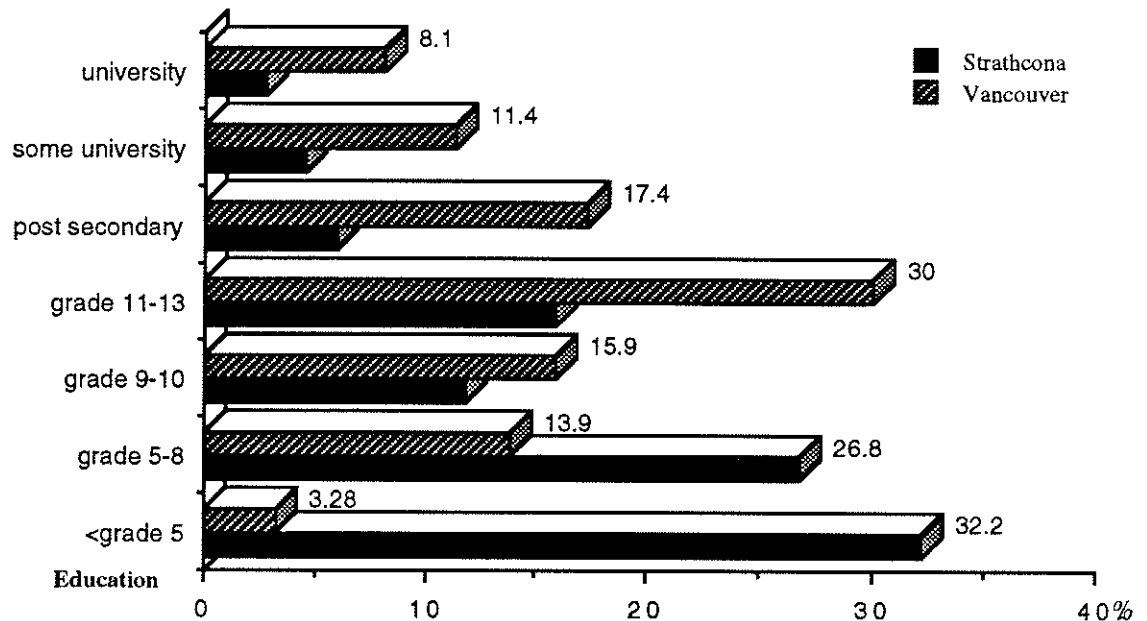


Figure 14. The comparison of the educational level between the residents (5,670) in Strathcona (tract 057) with that of the general public of Greater Vancouver (831,195) in 1976.

Source: Minister of Supply & Service, *Census of Canada 1976—Vancouver: Population and Housing Characteristics, 1978*.

Most people in Chinatown never were, are not, and never will be ideologues. Their involvement in politics, if not whimsical, for better or for worse, is directly related to their day-to-day life interests. The dictum that the KMT held large memberships in the overseas Chinese community must be understood historically. So did the name "Communism". The word had a miasma of meanings excepting Marxism. It invoked a chain of negative associations for those who left China before the Second World War, for those merchants and mandarins, (which the majority of the CBA directors were), who fled from mainland to Hong Kong or Taiwan and to Canada. Communism implied the fear and terror of revolution. The little word "Red" packed magic power. To associate the CCC with "Red" would cut off the CCC from its roots.

The opposition between the CCC and the CBA escalated to the level of senior governments. Having had longer relations with the CBA, the Province, would only fund the CBA's national congress. B.C. Provincial Secretary Grace McCarthy while praising the CBA as "the community workers", also expressed her concerns. She reassured the CBA leaders that "here in B.C., here in Canada, we will not be frightened. We will not be intimidated and we will not be harassed by those like the people outside" (*Vancouver Sun*: Dec. 8, 1977). Jumping into this melee of politics, a Kingsway Liberal MP publicly defended the CBA as a "record clean" organization. These remarks in an interview with the *Toronto Sun* were understood as an

attack on the CCC. Then The New Republic, a local Chinese language newspaper, closely associated with KMT, began to circulate tainted stories about the heads of the CCC.

The weight tilted to the CCC. Their priority was to cleanse their reputation. In retrospect, S.Wah Leung was probably the best candidate for this unpleasant duty. Born in Jiangmeng, a city in Canton, S.Wah Leung (1918-1989) came to Canada with his father, who as a pastor, was admitted by Immigration Canada with little hassle. The Confucian and Christian education molded Leung into a gentleman: he was modest, quiet, mild, prudent, intelligent, motivated and diligent. Having lived a splendid life, Leung had won numerous laurels and awards as a student, a Doctor, a leader, a community servant, and as a citizen. His fruitful academic achievements, which eventually culminated in the first Deanship of the Faculty of Dentistry in UBC, earned him an undisputable reputation among the Chinese people. Chinese always admire and trust the educated ones. Leung's reputation led him to be elected to the chair of the national Leungs' Association and the CBA for years. (Sophia Leung—S. Wah Leung's wife—was also an energetic community worker. The Leungs, with their wealth, could easily live a luxurious and comfortable life, but both chose to work for the Chinese community). The fame and noble characteristics of Leung, which the Chinese look up to, proved to be an invaluable quality in unifying Chinatown. In 1975 S.Wah Leung, persuaded by a few CCC members, "who refused to take 'no' for an answer", joined the Board. "Of course", Leung professed in his memoir,

Apart from being overwhelmed by their enthusiasm, I had already been very impressed by the many community activities and projects undertaken by the Center and especially, by the large number of energetic young people involved. Nevertheless, I had some concern over being personally committed, since there were rumors afloat that the Centre was being controlled and used by a group of 'ultra-leftists' to advance their cause and to promote their political ideals. However, after some discreet inquiries and personal investigations I became convinced that there was no basis for these allegations, and that the activities of the center were entirely non-political in nature and were designed only to promote and advance the understanding and appreciation of Chinese and Chinese-Canadian culture (Leung 19483: p.19).

Against the odds, and hoping to gain wider public support, the CCC sent out its ultimatum, saying that it would sue The New Republic, the Toronto Sun, and the Kingsway MP on the charge of "aspersion" of the CCC. One step ahead, the CCC alleged it was the CBA that was really patronized by the KMT; it was the CBA that no longer served the Chinese community, it was the CBA that for the past seven years (since 1971) held no free elections for the twenty seats that were supposed to be open for competition. (Out of a total of 61 directors in

the CBA, 41 were appointed by Vancouver's Chinese organizations and other 20 should have been elected by the CBA members).

The tips given out by the CCC instantaneously aroused the interest of the local news media. Scrutiny and suspicion poured upon the CBA. One by one discreet stories were divulged and enlarged. Reality fused with fiction. The Vancouver Sun gossiped:" In 1970, the KMT formed two secret groups: the 'enemy-dealing team' aimed at suppressing suspected Communist sympathizers, and an 'overseas affairs team' specializing in infiltration of existing Chinese organizations to consolidate KMT power" (Vancouver Sun: September 10, 1977). The name of the CBA became poisonous. Its government supporters cowered nervously. The Toronto Sun apologized and admitted their reports on the CCC as being "irresponsible".

Having won the first bout, the Board members of the CCC, quoted a Chinese adage that "family scandals shall not be revealed to the outsider", and announced they would drop legal action against the CBA. "To further demonstrate its good will the Board issued an open invitation to members of this small clique [the CBA] to join the Cultural Centre and work together for the benefit of the whole community" (Leung 1983: p.19).

For Chinese, nothing could be worse than losing face. The heads of the CBA steadfastly rejected Leung's offer. Circumventing the outgrowing power of the CCC, in February of 1977 the CBA set up its own Chinese-Canadian Activity Centre Society, to defy the CCC. The defiance obviously exceeded the CCC's tolerance. The enraged CCC head over heels formulated a committee to democratize the CBA, and took the CBA to the B.C. Supreme Court, on account of its breach of democratic election process. The court ruled the directors of the CBA have to be elected democratically— a ruling naturally boosting CCC's credibility. Victor Lee, a UBC engineering researcher and one of the founding directors of the CCC, headed the CDCBA, and launched a massive campaign against his key opponent, Jack Lee (the Lawyer for the CBA in fighting against the Urban Renewal Program). Again, news media had a big impact: it painted Lee as a servant of the KMT in spite of his firm denial. The result of the election became all too apparent long before the vote. Victor Lee gained a sweeping victory on October 29, 1978. Symbolically and politically the CCC claimed Chinatown.

These two years of contending strengthened the CCC. Over seventy Chinese families and clan associations in Vancouver began to espouse it. Its membership exceeded 5000. By the second half of 1976, the donated fund for the CCC complex reached above \$500,000. Through the timely help of Art Lee, MP for Vancouver East, the CCC obtained a \$1.5 million Urban Demonstration Project Grant from the Federal Government for building a park adjacent to the centre.

The dream came true. The financial assistance brought the CCC complex one more step closer to realization. The Building and Planning Committee of the CCC, consisting of

Chairman Bing Thom, Allan Cheng, Danny Chow, Jeffrey Hoy, Lewis Wong, and Joe Wai, was asked by the Board of the CCC to sponsor an architectural design competition for selecting the best solution.

Enticed by the nature of this competition, Bing Thom and Joe Wai both withdrew from the Building and Planning Committee in order to be part of it. The jury for the competition was finalized without them. It included: S.Wah Leung, the Committee Chairman; Dr. H. Y. Hsieh, the Director of the National Gallery in Ottawa; Architect and Professor G. De Rosa, from the University of Manitoba; Architect and Professor W.W. Wood from UBC; and Architect, R. J. Thom. The jury emphatically specified that they were not interested in fully developed projects, but wanted conceptual schemes that could demonstrate "the greatest sensitivity and understanding of the philosophical, social and physical needs of the Sponsor as set out in the Program within the strict constraints of budget and phasing." The space program required 32,363 square feet of indoor space for hotel convention facilities....movable partitions between major activity spaces..... classrooms, exhibition areas and theater spaces" and 110,628 square feet of commercial, theater/performing arts, sports and recreation space. Besides all this, it required the inclusion of a 1.6 acre garden space.

This competition fascinated its participants precisely for asking for the "Symbol of the Chinese Community". The theme of vernacular architecture flooded the 1970s' in the heat of the Postmodernist Architecture. "Chineseness" and architecture. The jury wanted merely a visual "symbol" of Chineseness. A gate opened. Personal exegesis on "Chineseness" variegated. Bored by Dragons and Pagodas, the architects joining the competition invented new metaphors. Out of the fifty submissions in total, some treated the CCC complex as a gigantic commercial poster—with huge wings of the flying roof; Some (Arthur Erickson for example) sculpted it into an abstract version of Egyptian temple. Or in the case of Patrick Lau (a graduate from the University of Manitoba, now an architect in Hong Kong) his building was Modernistic inside out. The most "traditionalist" entry (in the outlook of the building) among all came from Joe Wai and Beinhaker Associates: the entire CCC complex had the genre of the Summer Palace. Downs and Archambault Architects adhered more to a "Middle Way": their building had been a visual abstraction of the elements in the Classical Chinese architecture. To sum up, Canadian architects in the 1970s were swayed by the reductionist understanding of architecture, unduly taking facade as totality.

The first prize was a surprise. The winner, James Cheng, had not yet received a professional license. Having just graduated from the architectural school of Harvard, Cheng's first project was to involve a design competition for a firm in San Francisco. The firm abused him: they did not bother to put his name in the entry. The indignant Cheng thereafter split from his first employer, and deflected north to Vancouver. Sometimes he taught at UBC or

worked part-time for Romses Kwan associates. Kwan hired Cheng for the CCC design competition. Their deal was: Cheng used the name of the firm to submit his design proposal, with Cheng's name going before Kwan's; if they won, the prize money would be halved.

The deal was sealed. The young James Cheng sneaked into his crowded attic to proceed to design. In those dark nights of Vancouver, Cheng must have had his sleepless times, waiting for dawn. The question of what was Chineseness in architecture baffled him during his student years. But never more so on the eve of competition. Cheng undeniably was a fast thinker. Smart, as he always is. He did not pursue the same train of thought as other architects did. His mind focused more to the sequences and relations within the classical Chinese architecture—axes, gates, courtyards, and layers of spaces—rather than the proportion of the facade. His design concept of the CCC was directly influenced by his analysis of the Forbidden City:

[T]he general layout [of his entry] follows the North-South axial approach of the Imperial Palace in Peking [Beijing], where the design philosophy solely oriented on the impact of the sensibility of the participant, in progression of spaces flowing from scale to scale. The center axis is based upon the whole block frontage on Pender St. in order to maintain the symmetry for the whole site, whereas the enclosed Chinese gardens and the interplay of 'solids' and 'voids' form a significant integral part of the whole concept. It is the objective of the architects that no particular strong architectural form other than the refinement of details is necessary. Chinese aesthetics in general are based upon ideas of symmetry, human scale and rhythmic alterations of solids and voids. Dignity and harmony, rather than excitement and diversity, have been the values held by the Chinese through the ages (AIBC Forum, April/May 1978:p.9).

His concept, too, had significant pores and flaws in its reading of Chinese architecture. Not to mention which region's "Chinese" architecture should be considered as the most authentic prototype, the forms and spatial pattern of the Forbidden City itself exemplified so much the extremes in the classical Chinese architecture that they can hardly be re-applied. Its pomp and powerful centrality served the ideological identity of the imperial. Secondly, as whoever is familiar with the history of Classical Chinese Architecture will tell, the spatial sequence and division (of courtyards) within the Forbidden City implied a set of political and religious meanings above any aesthetic effect. Each courtyard opened to certain ranks of courtiers. Each roof pattern, column, color scheme revealed the level of significance of that building. Taking away the sociological knowledge of the mythical, religious, normative, hierarchical functions of the Forbidden City, taking away the spatial organizational principles from a context, the Forbidden City merely exists. This is not tantamount to saying that architects cannot duplicate any form, proportion, or spatial sequence of the Forbidden City. Nor does this suggest the artistic perfection of the Forbidden City cannot be learnt. The

crucial question is: to what extent and for what purpose, does a Chinese Cultural Centre in Vancouver need the centrality of the Forbidden City? Realistically as well, without the vast open frontage, the axis of the CCC complex can barely be perceived from a distance; the Forbidden City discloses itself through layers of spaces and gradually unfolded themes; this can never be true for the CCC owing to its limited size. Fatally, the symmetrical centrality of the Forbidden City contradicts the informality of Chinese garden design. Thus embedded in the beginning, the design of the CCC presented the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden with a potential difficulty.

At any rate, Cheng's interpretation of Chineseness in architecture was one step advanced from superficial façadism. Cheng deserved the \$10,000 prize for his design par excellence. Legally he could not get the commission. So he and Kwan split the money. The firm took over the project and signed the contract in April of 1978. In the summer of 1979, the first phase of the CCC complex began.

4.2. The Genesis of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden

The design competition of the CCC left an enticing suspense. The scene of a garden tucked behind the compound charmed everybody's imagination. Chinese traditionally perceived a house not to be called a home without a garden. The jury stretched this notion; they required each entry to consider the potential site and configuration of a garden. Most local architects, Chinese or not, in the 1970s, had limited knowledge of classical Chinese garden-making. Lack of information, lack of experience, lack of appreciation, left the Classical Chinese Landscape Architecture a hiatus in the professional education. Joe Wai and Michael Kemble, (another UBC graduate from Architecture, then the planner responsible to the project of the CCC), first ventured to mainland China. That calendar marked: August, 1978, the politically and economically reforming China having barely opened to the West. No swarming tourists here and there as today. Wai and Kemble browsed the gardens in Suzhou within a week.

Wai felt mesmerized. Who would not, in front of those engrossing gardens, the gems of the Chinese literati circle? More so because he was a designer. The craftsmanship, the delicacy and intricacy of space, the fragmentary, bustling rockeries, trees, compelled Wai's admiration.

Wai had immigrated to Vancouver at the age of 12. Thereafter he spent most of his time in the West. He got his degree from UBC, worked in London on social housing projects, and moved back to Vancouver. The trip to China had a far reaching impact on Wai's life.

Chewing over this first encounter to China, Wai's eyes lit up. A few years ago, in his office in Mainland Street, after other architects went home, sitting across a long table, I was listening to Wai describe his spiritual journey.

Surrounding us were an ancient map of Suzhou, a copy of the script of Zhang Ji's poem on the Chime of the "Chilly Mountain Temple", and a small portrait of the former Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, of whom Wai spoke highly.

We did not chat about politics. Emphatically Wai repeated that he was not interested in politics but only in the art of garden making. Looking at this dedicated architect and respected teacher, I reserved most of my questions. I felt I had no right to impose on him.

Now, across the surface of the paper, my words decant to you, as Wai's words decanted to me. There is the gap.

In 1978, "in the West, the notion of a Chinese classical garden is at best unfamiliar. The Japanese garden with its intense clarity of trowelled sand and highly defined elements of singular rock and singular flower had found its way into North America, particularly after the Second World War. But what is a Chinese garden?" (Keswick et al. 1990: p.47). The hasty tarry in Suzhou absolutely convinced Wai of need to introduce the classical Chinese garden to the West.

The mission—unbearable—sounded also impossible. Wai returned to Canada without any substantial plan. Duly, Wai's ambition received whole-hearted support from another Chinese garden maniac.

Dr. Marwyn Samuels, a Geography professor at UBC, and an expert on Chinese culture, was then working in "The Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee" with Joe Wai. Currently teaching Cultural Geography at Syracuse University, Dr. Samuels deserves the title *Zhongguotong*, "Master of Chinese Society". Born into a Jewish family in New York, he received his doctoral degree from the State University of Washington. Dr. Samuels professed that his love of Chinese art and Chinese history goes back to his childhood. Talented and assiduous, Samuels was somehow able to read in classical Chinese of the Annals of the Ming Dynasty before he was able to speak Mandarin. His forte lay in the socio-cultural impacts of the Grand Canal—initially built in Sui Dynasty (A.D. 581-618) to transport exotic goods from the south to the northern Capital. Once he published a book called The Coast of China, in which, I was told, his remarks on the sovereignty dispute of the Xisha Archipelagoes, a territory claimed by several countries, seemed to agree with what the Beijing government wanted to hear. Hear-say aside, Samuels' personal connection to the Chinese academic

circles⁴⁹ and the central government⁵⁰ of China definitely goes back to the Mao era. He managed as early as 1973 to visit Professor Hou Renzhi, the most respected historical geographer in Beijing University, when Hou was still under house-arrest.

In the late 1970s Samuels travelled back and forth between Beijing and Washington D.C. to foster economic trade between the two superpowers. The fulfillment of Joe Wai's ambition was owed to the *Guanxi*— "back door connections" that Samuels had with China.

China meanwhile, in the spate of economic reform, anxiously sought ways to export to the West. The ancient literati garden ended up being one of those cultural exotica. The first move was made by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, which struck a deal with the Chinese to duplicate a portion of a famous classical Chinese literati garden ("Master of the Fishingnet") on the third floor of the museum, entitled the "Aster Court". (*I had heard of Aster Court Garden when I was a university student in Shanghai, because one of the key design advisors, Professor Chen Chongzhou, was teaching me the history of Classical Chinese garden making*). Samuels, who spoke fluent Chinese and possessed knowledge of the Suzhou regional history and culture, had been invited to New York as a consultant by Wen Fang, a premier North American authority on Asian art (at Princeton University) who at that time worked for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Through working with Wen Fang on the project of the "Aster Court", Samuels became acquainted with government officials in Suzhou Municipality and Jiangsu Province.

Guanxi is power. No one in a country like China can negate the social significance of this massive, visible, invisible informal web of nepotism that more often than not overrides the formal system. Being well connected, Samuels was thus formally appointed by the City Council as the adviser for the Chinese Garden Advisory Committee (that consisted of Thomas Mah, Joe Wai and Bing Thom) in March, 1980. By then, since the conception of the garden idea, two years had already passed. The Aster Court in New York was close to completion, and the whole crew of Chinese craftsmen and architects one by one flew back to China.

The newly formed Chinese Garden Advisory Committee wanted to get some of those Chinese delegates in New York to Vancouver before they were all gone. Promptly they interviewed twelve Landscape Architecture and Architecture firms for the design team. James Cheng, Bing Thom, and Joe Wai were on the candidates lists. Cheng by 1980 had already obtained his architect license; Thom was gaining wider recognition in the profession after working with Erickson. Thom expressed little interest in copying a classical Chinese garden as opposed to building a "Huaqiao Garden" (an open park for the local Chinese); Wai earnestly

⁴⁹Such as Professor Hou Renzhi at Beijing University, Professor Wu Liangyong at Qinghua University, Chen Zhangxiang at the Academy of Urban Planning and design.

⁵⁰Including Li Peng, the present Prime Minister, Zhao Zhiyang, the former Prime Minister.

wanted this commission, as well. The garden had been an omen in Wai's life, how could he give it up? The selection process must have been quite thorny to the the Chinese Garden Advisory Committee. At the end Wai was chosen—maybe they thought they owed too much to him?

The choice stirred some controversy. Nonetheless in the last week of May, 1980, Wai and his landscape architect partner, Don Vaughan officially received the job.

As soon as the designers were chosen, Samuels flew to New York at his own expense to knock on the door of Wen Fang, investigating the proper procedures of doing business with China. Samuels' personal visit from a thousand miles away must have touched Fang. He quickly introduced Samuels to the City of Suzhou and the cadres in the Suzhou Garden Administration (SGA). Samuels, on behalf of Vancouver sincerely requested some of the delegates of the SGA (then still in New York) to detour to Vancouver on their way home, to discuss the possibility of having a Chinese garden in Vancouver. He got the approval from China.

A delegation of five from the SGA stopped in Vancouver in June of 1980. The five delegates received guest honors from the local Chinese community. Sophia Leung and S.Wah Leung hosted them with vernacular Wu viands and their local dialect (since Sophia came from the Tai Lake region and speaks the Wu dialect). The SGA delegates were deeply impressed by the hospitality and the good will of Chinatown.

4.3. The Design of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden

The short sojourn of the Chinese delegates proved to be timely and productive. Two leading designers, Zhou Buosun and Wang Zhuxin, taking the advantage of being on the site, worked cooperatively with the Canadian team. A conceptual plan emerged. After exchanging constructive critiques and comments, all in courtesy, the five Chinese headed home. Shortly in October, they mailed a set of preliminary drawings to Vancouver for technical check up and approval.

Because Chinese architects were not familiar with the concept of zoning and building codes, this preliminary plan had to be modified by the Canadian side accordingly. So to speak, the obvious concern from the Canadian side was the proper design of the Ting [pavilion] atop the "false mountain". The Canadian side was concerned that the height of the Ting and the rugged path might have violated the safety regulation. The Chinese side considered both the height and the steep steps were essential to the spirit of the entire garden. Without them, the garden would have no soul. The compromise, as one can see now, was to build the Ting while surrounding it with a rope, preventing visitors' access.

The proposal from China made one site-specific revision that displayed thoughtfulness. They tucked the classical garden portion at the side of Carrall Street, for two

reasons: one was that Carrall had less traffic noise than Pender and Quebec Street; and secondly, the garden now faced the park from the East, a location from which morning sun and gentle south winds would prevail.

The difference between garden and park originated from The Park and Recreation Regulation in Vancouver, which requires that all the public parks be opened to the general public, free of charge. Anticipating there would be expensive maintenance costs for the garden, the Canadian side had to divide the overall garden into two componential spaces: a relatively open, large park free of charge and a smaller, compact, semi-enclosed "classical" garden which requires admission fees to subsidize the maintenance work; both under the same title: the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden.

To meet this onerous requirement the Chinese architects proposed to use the "Double-sided Corridor" [Shuang-Lang] from the Gentle Wave garden Estate (in Suzhou) in order to segregate the park and the classical garden but not destroy the integrity of the garden as a whole. A strolling corridor often had only "one-side", i.e., it had one walkway system. Strollers, along those zigzag, naturally shaped corridors, through the frames of the pillars and the eaves, or the leak windows on the wall, would enjoy the beauty of scenery and immerse themselves into the cosmos. The Gentle Wave Garden Estate creatively had a "Double-sided" corridor, which has two walkways divided by a wall in the middle, whereas the leak windows on the other hand allow the strollers walking on either side to feel both the sense of separation and togetherness.

A "Corridor" or "Double-sided Corridor", framed views in the garden, and threading through fragments and bushes, acted as part and vehicle for the philosophical and aesthetical intervention into nature from the perspective of the literati. Here, in the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, it was transplanted to cordon off the unpaid visitors from the paid ones.

This garden, to repeat, was a simulacrum. Its original counterparts are, as Joe Wai acknowledged in his book: the Water Pavilion from the Unsuccessful Politician's Garden [Zuo-Zheng-Yuan]; two of the rock formations in the Lingering Garden [Li-Yuan]. "The size and the general character of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Classical Garden was inspired by relatively small but exquisite garden in Suzhou — the Garden of the Master of the Fishing Nets, where a central water body is surrounded and enhanced by several pavilions, varying in size and purpose. The two principal pavilions -the Main Reception Hall and the Scholar's Study - are derived from similar pavilions in that garden" (Keswick et al. 1990: p.50).

But the design of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden falls short, or at least, lacks consideration, of some the basic principles of the classical Chinese garden making (to continue our discussion in Chapter 1) (1). The prime principle in classical Chinese garden-making (if we can extrapolate from The Craft of Gardens of Ji Cheng (Ji 1634/1988)—the Master of Literati Garden), is the

appropriation and fitting of the design to the land. "Skill in landscape design is shown in the ability to 'follow' and 'borrow from' the existing scenery and lie of the land, and artistry is shown in the feeling of suitability created. This is even further beyond the powers of mere workmen, as well as beyond the control of the landowner. The owner must obtain the services of the right person, and not throw his money away" (Ji 1988:p.39). To elaborate the notion of fitting, Ji exemplified, "to borrow from the scenery means that although the interior of a garden is distinct from what lies outside it, as long as there is a good view you need not be concerned whether this is close by or far away, whether clear mountains raise their beauty in the distance or a purple-walled temple rise into the sky nearby" (Ji 1988:p.40).

(2). The notion of "naturalness". The ancient Chinese garden makers well understood that their gardens were not a mechanical duplication of nature nor a simplistic mimicry. With all the resemblances to the wildness and the beauty of the spontaneous mountains and streams, it is the obligation of the skillful garden makers to perform their flawless execution on the site to respond creatively and meticulously to the given. Naturalness demands a high degree of human intelligence to articulate or hide certain parts of the natural environment, thereby delivering the soul to the site. Ji Cheng himself illustrated this point by a personal experience. Requested by a landowner, he was to design a garden on a mountain side. "I could see", he wrote,

[T]hat the contours of the property rose very high; as one tracked the stream to its source, it led deep into the hillside. Tall trees reached to touch the heavens, while twisting branches brushed the earth. 'To make a garden here,' I said, 'one should not only pile up rocks to emphasize the height, but excavate the earth to increase the depth, with their roots curled around sheer rocks just as in a painting. Following the course of the stream we should construct pavilions and terraces, whose reflections will be scattered on the surface on the pond, with winding gullies and flying galleries leading on from them, so that people will be taken beyond anything they could have imagined (Ji 1988:P.35).

(3). The third critical principle in literati garden making ought to be the mood of "implicitness". Being Chinese often means being suggestive. Being suggestive means gesticulation, hints, flowingness, open-endedness, fragmentation, or circularity. Like a Tai Ch'i [Tai Ji] master softly directed the force of one's own towards the other and the universe, the Chinese garden makers designed their gardens by smooth and sophisticated layers of flowing space. This principle determines how one selects the site, how one organizes spatial sequence, how one hides the source and the end of the water, or the vistas of pavilions and towers near the bamboo forest. Ji again expounded:

Generally, in the construction of gardens, whether in the countryside or on the outskirts of a city, a secluded location is the best.....Inner-city sites are not intrinsically suitable for gardens; if you construct a garden there, it must be in a place as secluded and out of the way as possible, so that although it may be close to vulgar surroundings the gate can be shut to keep out the hubbub. Long, winding paths should lead the way into the garden, and the battlements of the city-wall should be just visible in the distance above bamboos and trees. A winding moat should be dug around the edges of the garden, with rainbow bridges stretching over it from rustic gates (Ji 1988:p.46).

Not to take the last point too literally, what Ji suggested is how a garden responds to a urban setting in its seclusion with its fitting to the site and the land. Wafted in his poetic writing, Chinese garden making truly assumes a form of art which **has** and **has no** rules to adhere to. Like everything else in the Chinese tradition, evasive and enchanting, systematic and mystical, garden making encompassed a soul searching process.

Evaluated under these design principles, certain weaknesses of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden can be identified. Structurally the design of the CCC complex, (done by Kwan's firm), pierced the garden with an arrow of central axis (for all that is imperceptible along Pender Street), and forced the garden to respond. The existing moon gate, as a result of that, having to answer from the frontal facade, sacrificed an important feature of the Chinese garden making—its implicitness. The CCC complex and the Dr. Sun Yat Sen garden now live as two engraved ironies. The former, undeserving of the glory of the Forbidden City, flamboyantly claimed it in an awkward manner; the latter that should turn away from this mistake, carried it on. As James Cheng himself put it, the disjointedness between the CCC complex and the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden reflected the disharmony inside the Chinese community.

Another subtle but fatal act was the planting of trees in the classical garden. The landscape architect, Don Vaughan thought it would be good for each turning point in the paths in the garden to possess a focal point. He designed all the foci with spruces. This arrangement of landscapes put an end, both philosophically and architecturally, to the void-effect created in most literati gardens. An uncertainty, a nothingness, an impermanence flowing through courtyards, an obsession of the literati. If one observes carefully, trees or rocks in most literati gardens were placed slightly off the foci points. That slightness has been missed in the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden.

Finally, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden fails the paramount criterion of a classical Chinese garden, the notion of "environmentally fitting": the garden cannot endure Vancouver's local climate.

Even so—despite of what has been said, the overall design of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, particularly the classical portion, has succeeded in duplicating the compositional and aesthetical beauties of the gardens in Suzhou. A garden of this size—small and with a limited

space—has to develop more intense and static themes. By providing the golden-fish pond, the Tings, and the scholar courtyard, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden can hold its visitors for hours, sepcially those who understand Chinese gardens. The double corridor highlights a spark of wisdom.

The first phase of planning and design was wrapped up in the beginning of 1981. When the Spring came, the first official delegation from the Canadian side, composed of Joe Wai, Don Vaughan, Marwyn Samuels, and Park Board representative Steven Cripps, left for Suzhou for contract negotiations. Let's also not forget to mention how the Chinese were apt at entertaining their honorable guests—feasts and sightseeing, all the serious decisions had been made at the dining table. At the end a Memorandum was signed by both sides, recording four points on design:

1. The Canadian side expresses its satisfaction with the preliminary design put forward by Suzhou Classical Garden Construction Company [also named as "SGA"] in October 1980, and agrees to take it as the basis for the technical design of the project.
 2. The Chinese side will submit the sufficient preliminary design of the construction of Suzhou Garden [meaning the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden] (general plan, architectural plan, architectural elevation, plan, and section drawings) to the Canadian side no later than July 15, 1981. The Canadian side agrees to give the appraisal of the plan no later than August 15, 1981.
 3. Joe Wai and Don Vaughan agree to provide detailed working drawings according to Vancouver code to the Chinese side no later than August 15, 1981.
 - 4.Suzhou Classical Garden Construction Company will provide its detailed working drawings to Joe Wai and Don Vaughan no later than October 15, 1981.
- Of Budget
- (1)The Canadian side hopes that Suzhou Classical Garden Construction Company will submit the detailed budget of the whole project no later than July 15, 1981.
 - (2)The final contract will be signed no later than January 12, 1982.⁵¹

The trip—a "celestial flight into Otherness"—probably gave the most joyful thrill to Don Vaughan among the four. This landscape architectural graduate from Oregon was enthralled by the Chinese dexterous play of *Yin* and *Yang* in garden design, their devised counterbalance between the hard material, such as buildings, rocks, walls, and the soft and invisible entities, such as plants, pond, or light and air. *Yin* and *Yang* , perceived as a harmony of the built and the natural environment, through this view, filter into dialectics, into a universal design principle that could be used in landscaping Downtown Vancouver.

This time, Wai, made a leap in his understanding of the fineness of the literati garden. "Creativity", Wai pondered, "is a Western concept in architecture. But ancient Chinese were not afraid of taking a precedence and refined it [garden] proper for a new site"(Vancouver Sun,

⁵¹File on "the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden" in the B.C. Archives.

October 17, 1985). More convinced than ever before, Wai thought that "the impact of this project [the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden] will take some time for people to realize",

You have to understand that this is not Chinese architecture as the West has come to see it.....

The Ming dynasty was considered the last glorious period of the Han culture. In general terms, in the long line of Chinese gardens the Ming gardens differ from the later types of gardens in that the later gardens tried to make the decoration aspects dominant. They became rococo. That's why today you see a mockery of Chinese architecture, the Grauman Chinese Theater school of architecture, because that is the kind of architecture Westerners first saw when they came to China. But the Ming architecture was simpler, with classical lines. We are going back three or four centuries to find this form (Vancouver Sun, October 17, 1985).

In less than a week, the delegates returned to Vancouver. On May of 1981 Michael Harcourt, then the mayor of Vancouver, confirmed the "Memorandum". In July of 1981 the SGA first released their budgetary proposal to the Canadian side, including: (1) Construction Material and Crafting: \$993,440 [in Canadian dollars]; (2) Shipping of the Material inside China: \$280,000; (3) Installation of the Material in Canada: \$1,209,170; (4) Design Service Fee: \$91,000. The total that the Chinese side demanded was \$2,573,610. However, considering \$0.5 million for accommodation of the artisans and craftsmen who would come to Vancouver, and the \$0.4 million of shipping across the Pacific Ocean and customs tax, altogether, the Canadian side had to look for approximately \$4 million cash! (If one counted the construction cost of the park and the previous payment on the land, the total cost of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden was to be \$6 million).

4.4. The Marathon of Fund Raising and Contract Negotiation

Four million dollars was an astronomical figure for the Chinese community. Where would this money possibly come from? At this critical point one eminent individual personally committed \$1 million to the garden project, as a base to challenge the sincerity of the three levels of governments.

This individual is now the twenty-fifth Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, Dr. David See-Chai Lam. Lam has been a "celebrity" among the Chinese Canadians, well known for his philanthropy. Similar to the personal background of Dr. S. Wah Leung, David Lam grew up in a missionary family and obtained a doctoral degree in Economics at Temple University. It is unclear whether Lam was ever engaged in the field of economics academically, yet doubtless, Lam is a successful investor. He has all the charisma and admirable qualities that most Hong Kong new immigrants want: he is wealthy, famous, a devoted Christian, and a Chinese arts connoisseur. Canada never declines immigrants of such

sorts, whose presence means jobs for the locals. Lam and his wife were persuaded to move to Vancouver in 1967. Soon after that, Lam's language skills, degree, financial strength, and personal commitment to the Chinese Canadians thrust him into his current position—the highest official rank that a Chinese Canadian ever reached—under the emblem of the Queen.

According to Lam himself, his infatuation with horticulture and garden making developed long before he came to Canada. In 1978, for the first time, he visited those exquisitely crafted literati gardens in Suzhou. He was conquered by their irresistible beauty. During that trip, which was at the same time that Joe Wai and Michael Kemble arrived in Suzhou, Lam overheard that someone from Vancouver was interested in introducing the literati gardens to Canada. According to Lam, he was excited by this and he asked his assistant to contact the people from Vancouver.

Flying back, Lam discovered the CCC was in charge of the garden project, still in an embryonic form. Cautiously, as an investor should be, Lam told the Director of the Chinese Garden Advisory Committee, Mr. Mah, that he would be willing to commit \$1 million to challenge the three levels of governments.

Four years elapsed, and, when Michael Harcourt gave approval to the project in the summer of 1981, Mah remembered Lam's promise. Mah contacted Lam, requesting the \$1 million. Lam replied that his \$1 million donation would have to be the last \$1 million, meaning, unless the Chinese Garden Advisory Committee could collect enough funds from the governments or through other means, he would not release his money, in case the project aborted on drafting boards.

The Chinese side at first only vaguely knew of the financial trouble of the project. The exchange of ideas and technical information between the two sides was carried on. In July of 1981 the anxious SGA sent their construction timetable to Vancouver; In October, Joe Wai and Don Vaughan mailed the twelve sheets of technical detail drawings to Suzhou. The ongoing business, for the people in the Advisory Committee, allowed for more time for fund raising. Still yet to come, the \$4 million floated somewhere in the dark. Lam's \$1 million would not materialize unless the other \$3 million miraculously appeared. But without Lam's \$1 million, few would want to commit their own money. It seemed that the project could abort at any minute.

To expedite the pace of fund raising, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society was formed to replace the temporary advisory committee. Thomas Mah, a banker for the Bank of Montreal, presided; Henry Chung, Professor W.W. Wood, and Susan Fane were the three vice-presidents; The board members included B. Beiser, Ann Cherniasky, Zachery Clark, John Dodds, Bill Gibsons, Julia Lee Knudsen, David Lam, Esmond Lando, Art Lee, Sophia Leung, Doris Manning, Terry McGee, Dale O'Toole, Margaret Pitts, Paul Sabatino, Carmencita Samuels (Mrs.

Samuels), Mel Scott, and Joe Whitehead. With one glimpse, one could tell the majority of the board members were non-Chinese, and proportionally, were women. Most of them came from well established families in Vancouver, who were persuaded, or volunteered to join the Society for their genuine love of Chinese arts. That helped sometimes. Willingly they would use their personal ties and influence for fund raising. Ann Cherniasky and her husband Peter Cherniasky, for one, ashamed of the racist past of the Canadian government, treated their work in the Society as an opportunity to extend their friendship to the Chinese community. Mr. Cherniasky once presided over the B.C. Sugar Company, and had key friends in banking and financing. When it was needed, the Cherniaskys would spare no effort to assist the Society in contacting the executives in the corporations.

Unfortunately, the 1980s were a bad time for fund raising. The economic recession across Canada pushed the interest rate to 20%. Banks became extremely cautious, construction was all put on hold. Who would readily donate? This gloomy situation forced the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society to re-think the feasibility of the project. In January of 1982 Mah reluctantly wrote a letter to Suzhou, asking for a postponement of the project until no later than July, 1982. Meanwhile Harcourt wrote to the mayor of Suzhou, informing them that Dr. Samuels would be in China in late April, representing the Canadian side to discuss further arrangement.

Possibly Harcourt did not want to upset either the people in Suzhou or in Vancouver. Besides, it was not the City's money at any rate. The City permitted the release of \$700,000 leftover from the federal Urban Demonstration Program Fund⁵² to construct the public park (finished in the fall of 1983). It goes without saying that the bank deposit for the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society dropped to zero. At this extremely critical moment President Mah hastily resigned, under the pretext that he was newly appointed by the Bank of Montreal to open a branch in Beijing. No sooner had he announced his resignation than Dr. S. Wah Leung and the CCC appointed one of its board members, Mr. S.K. Lee, to carry on the leadership, for S. Wah Leung felt it was necessary that the president of the Society should be Chinese.

As a gentleman of gentlemen, S.K. Lee possesses the classical traits of Chinese. His values and personality probably appear far more Confucian, more Chinese than the average citizen of China. This first son of a grocery store owner spent his childhood in Malaysia in the Second World War. When the war ended, S.K. Lee turned thirty. Because of his age, his marriage and kids, Lee abandoned his dream of being a medical doctor, and went to London to pursue a law degree. In 1951 Lee gloriously returned to Singapore where he became an attorney and a judge. After his retirement in 1977, he and his family moved to Vancouver. From then

⁵²Total a \$1.5 million fund; \$800,000 had already been spent to purchase the additional land adjacent to that donated by the City.

onward S.K. Lee worked closely with S. Wah Leung in the CCC. The two became fast friends. Logically, when the position of presidency in the Society became vacant, Leung appointed Lee.

When Lee stepped into Mah's position, Samuels, the envoy, again took off in April 1982. On his way to China, he heard the news that the Socreds had regained power in B.C.—a news which otherwise had no importance except, this time, it implied a possible funding to the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden. Long since requested by the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society, and because of her friendship with S.K.Lee, Grace McCarthy promised to give financial support to the garden if her party won. It is not exactly clear why— there might have been one thousand motives behind her generosity, if one retraces the tenuous relation McCarthy had with the Chinese Community. One reason was too evident to be missed. The provincial government wanted the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden to be one of the tourist spots in the upcoming EXPO in 1986.

Without EXPO 1986, would the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden be possible?

This external, if not contingent, factor, determined the absolute fate of the garden. In her letter of April 24, 1982, McCarthy offered \$1.3 million to the Society on the condition that the garden was to be built before April 1986.

No one was more thrilled than Samuels, who, when he heard this news in Beijing, wrote immediately to S.K.Lee: "we heard that the Socreds won a 'sweeping victory'. I assume therefore that they will honor their pledge of \$1.3 million including \$300,000 cash before 31 May 1982." :

The Jiangsu authorities received our telex with the news that we can go ahead with contracts for the garden. They are, of course, much relieved! At the same time they are also very anxious to move ahead quickly —insisting on their \$200,000 deposit immediately. I am holding them at bay for now with the excuse that I cannot deal with this matter until after I finish dealing with my students here in China. Therefore, they know that I will be in Nanjing on 24-27 May, and have requested an 'urgent' meeting at that time. I cannot refuse them— though I may still be able to put off a serious contract discussion until 13 June (when my students leave China and when I have to return to Nanjing University).

All of this is to say that it is essential that (1) you send me formal Society authorization to invite the Jiangsu delegation to Vancouver at some specific date in order to (a) conclude contracts and (b) convey their \$200,000 deposit. You can accomplish this in the next meeting of the Executive Committee and send me instructions by telex..... (2) As final contract arrangements require notification of City Council and the City government, including Parks Board, you and Joe Wai et al. will have to make appropriate liaison with city officials immediately. To put it mildly, it will be a disaster if the city legal department and finance department should prevent conclusion of the contracts with Jiangsu now. You can inform City Council and the Society that the Jiangsu authorities already knew about the decision of the Socreds government, long before I did that the Socreds regained power, and informed me that now we have \$1.3 million plus Lam's \$1 million, we should be in a position to sign off the contracts. If I have to tell them that even with this, the City and/or Society would refuse to sign contracts at some near

date — they will conclude that the project is off — or at least that all prior arrangement are off. Therefore, we cannot afford any hitches now.....⁵³

Suddenly, a possibility to resolve the dilemma. More relieved were the Chinese: the sub-contractors in Suzhou and Nanjing, who had already invested much labour in preparing the construction material, were extremely anxious. The longer they waited, the more devaluated their fees became. Usually Chinese prefer not to express anger openly to the outsiders. But this was a multi-million dollar deal. The sub-contractors kept on urging the Jiangsu Provincial government to pay their cost, the Jiangsu government, through the leading architects, and the decision makers whom Samuels had already befriended, kept on urging Samuels to sign the contract. Samuels himself was trapped: he knew he was powerless in the situation, for one, and the Society needed another \$1.7 million to fill the gap.

Recounting those distressed days, in a letter in last Autumn, Dr.Samuels wrote to me:

As I was in China for long periods in 1983-1985, my role in these events [negotiation] was peripheral. Instead, I worked to help sustain support for the project in China and to keep the original terms of the contract with China in place—despite inflationary pressures and the fact that the growth of a traditional architectural export industry by 1983 demanded the allocation of limited manpower and other resources elsewhere. Since you asked about the emotions of the SGA in the negotiation process, I should note that, during the later stages of the project, I saw my function mainly as 'keeping everything in place' so that when the money was raised, we could immediately launch into construction. This sometimes required special efforts to prevent or diminish tensions between the two sides. For example, having earlier convinced the Jiangsu authorities that the project would come on stream by late 1983, with my assurances Suzhou began preparations of materials (most of which required at least six-month lead time). You can imagine the 'disappointment' of Nanjing and Suzhou when in 1983 Vancouver was still not ready to issue the final order to proceed. as most of the materials were prepared or well underway, and as Nanjing and Suzhou had already paid the sub-contractors, they stood to lose a lot of money, not to mention credibility. At the same time, an Australian group came seeing much the same material and craftsmen for a commercial project there. They also asked me to help them. In effect, Nanjing-Suzhou was confronted with an opportunity to recoup (and make a substantial profit on) their investment in the materials. Suffice it to say here that the subsequent negotiations were tough, required an extraordinary degree of mutual trust, and finally proved successful, if also painful to me and to several key players in China—the details of which were never reported to Vancouver and remain so to this day.

To be sure, these negotiations were also accompanied by much good humour. For example, during one very tough negotiating sessions held in an isolated pavilion inside the "Garden of the Humble Administrator" [or "The Unsuccessful Politician's Garden"] in Suzhou, a group of tourists who were ostensibly lost in their travels through the garden happened to stumble into the room. Much to our

⁵³Source from the file of "Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden" in the B.C. Archives.

amazement they were a group of young Chinese-Canadians from Vancouver (with T-Shirts ablaze with symbols of Canada and Vancouver's Chinatown). When they learned who we were, they proceeded to tell us how excited they were about the garden. My Chinese colleagues were much impressed by the enthusiasm of these young people. They also thought that I had pre-arranged this "accidental" visit as a clever ploy to demonstrate the support of the people of Vancouver and in particular, young Chinese-Canadians. I protested (perhaps too much) that I had nothing to do with this "accident", but that obviously Shangdi [God] was on my side, and they—Suzhou—should stay with me on this.⁵⁴

The artful Samuels responded in a particularly Chinese way. Calm and sinuous. He avoided any direct official contacts until July of 1982, when he had to act. Samuels met the Representative of the International Economic-Technical Cooperation Corp. of Jiangsu Province. The running-out of time worked to Samuels' advantage. The two sides signed off a Summary, an informal contract, urgently demanded the Canadian side to pay \$300,000 no later than October of 1984 as a safe deposit to cover the expenses from the Chinese side.

The demand was not met on time. The \$1.3 million from B.C.'s Provincial government took ages to get the Society. A year flowed by in tensions and silence after the violation of the Summary. A few in the Society, utterly fed up with bureaucracy, insisted on Joe Wai re-designing the garden in order to reduce the size and cost. Joe Wai and S.K.Lee steadfastly refused. Watching this project growing as their own child, they did want the best for the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden.

Six years had passed since the idea of the garden had been initially conceived in 1978. Six years—a foam in the history of Chinatown; a torrent in Joe Wai's life.

Aiming at that \$1.7 million, S.K. Lee, in his own words, became a "grant beggar". The retired judge, the erudite scholar, travelled between office towers in Downtown Vancouver, from company to company, bank to bank. Pleas, rejections, pleas again, rejections again. Until Lee literally solicited everybody he could reach. The results were not encouraging.

Increasingly the frustrated members of the Society would squabble with each other. Grudges and worries mounted atop S.K.Lee, and exceeded his mental bearing capacity—Lee was already in his senior years. Afflicted with by neurasthenia, night turned into sleepless torture for Lee.

One day, in June of 1983, the Society finally received the \$300,000 cheque from the Socreds government. Once the check was deposited in the bank, Samuels flew to China again.

By this time the exhausted Chinese agreed to concede \$500,000 to show their faith in the project. Becoming more skillful in international trading, they requested a bank statement and guarantee letter from the B.C. government and/or the City of Vancouver. Samuels of course

⁵⁴A letter written by Dr.Samuels on October 29, 1993, to me.

understood what the Chinese were worried about. He could complain to the people in the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden Society:

It would be thoroughly devastating here should I tell them that the City refuses such. If our own city government will not guarantee their own project, the conclusion here would be obvious. Therefore, I have proposed to the Chinese side that we give them copies of letters from the Government of B.C., City of Vancouver, Lam and/or others to prove our financial capacity. In other words, they would get the same thing as our City Council wants from us —proof of ability to pay.....

As I have said before, sooner rather than later, if the City wants credit for this project, they will have to assume some responsibility, meaning liability as well as credit. So far they are getting a free ride. And I, for one, am already tired of that. So Big Deal — the City has put up some land (most of which was purchased with federal dollars for the project) — and has had the temerity to 'loan' us dollars from funds designated by the federal government — when and where is the City of Vancouver going to put its money where its mouth has been?! If they don't want the risk — so be it— let us begin to negotiate with the provincial government to move the classical garden to their property — on to B.C. Place — they at least have come up with \$1.3 million promise. Perhaps someone should mention this to our wonderful City Council.⁵⁵

Albeit grudgingly, Samuels strove diligently for some sort of agreement. His years of experience in dealing with Chinese politicians told him that the deal would be better-off for Canada, if signed in Vancouver. He explained:

As you may know, the system here [in China] functions by *Dan Wei* — usually translated as 'work unit'. The critical element here is that, while hierarchically structured, each *Dan Wei* operates independently and has no authority over another *Dan Wei*. Our project involves several such— though mainly depends upon the Jiangsu Traditional Garden Construction Corporation in Nanjing. However, as the project involves foreign affairs, certain decisions must be made by the foreign affairs bureau of (1) the Capital Construction Commission of Jiangsu Province — the Provincial Government Bureau most immediately concerned with the Traditional Garden Construction Corp., (2) the Import-Export Corporation of China - Jiangsu Branch, and (3) the Foreign Ministry of (A) Jiangsu Province and (B) the PRC— i.e., national level. Hence, for example, regarding the invitation— once the specific individuals are identified and I write a formal invitation, the letter of invitation must be submitted to each of the above mentioned foreign affairs departments, each of whom must approve of same in sequence before they can obtain passports. The individuals and invitation must also pass the master of party secretaries in each unit. Under normal circumstances, this process can take between 3 to 6 months!! (Of course ours is not a 'normal' circumstance, but it is complicated by the fact that some of the people involved have never before left China).

Thus, Samuels suggested:

⁵⁵A letter written by Dr.Samuels on June 26, 1983. Source from the file of "The DR.Sun Yat Sen Garden", in the B.C. Archives.

It is to our benefit that we bring them to Vancouver to finalize costs. If we send a delegation to Nanjing to do this, the Chinese will be on home base with an army of negotiators, assistants, etc. and the discussions could go on for weeks. If they are in Vancouver, they will have to make decisions on the spot making it much easier for our side. I can assure you — after years of experience with their system — that this is the case!!" Following this point, the Canadian side should issue invitations to the key decision makers. "Decisions are always— that's always— made by a committee of no less than 3 people [in China]. If the Jiangsu Government sent only one representative — say from the governor's office— that individual could not on his or her own make any decisions without the agreement of two colleagues of equivalent rank, i.e., head of a bureau/department. China is a nation of Threes — even at the very top! Even during the Cultural Revolution it was a nation of 3 plus 1.⁵⁶

One has to admire Samuels' acumen in penetrating the Chinese daily life. His knowledge of China even went so deep as to know how to avoid the low quality services and the high prices of the Chinese airline. Delicately plotted, the persuaded Chinese leaders let go a delegation of eight— a team having its absolute irreducibility: (1) Wang Chubing, the former mayor of one of the municipalities in Jiangsu, ceremonial hero of the People's Liberation Army, then the Chairman of the Jiangsu Capital Construction Commission. The leader of the delegation; (2) Wu Zongjun, the Secretary of the Jiangsu Capital Construction Commission, managerial director, administrating of the landscape construction of China; (3) Gu Naishan, Interpreter of the Jiangsu Capital Construction Commission; (4) Lu Chichun, Director of the Jiangsu Branch of the Landscape Architectural Company of China; (5) Liu Lutang, Deputy director of the Jiangsu Branch of the Landscape Architectural Company of China; (6) Liu Yanfu, Director of the Suzhou Classical Garden Administration [SGA]; (7) Chen Yaoyuan, Engineer of the Suzhou Classical Garden Administration; (8) Wang Zuxin, Engineer of the Suzhou Classical Garden Administration.

The timing too was calculated by Samuels. Part of the travelling expenses would be paid by the B.C. government who wanted to twin up with Jiangsu province as a "Sister Province". The Jiangsu delegates would use the free flights to Vancouver, and then go to the United States for an unrelated trading deal. On September 14, 1984, the long awaited guests from China arrived in Vancouver. Diplomatically the Chinese side announced they would concede \$500,000 from the fees they required in 1981 as a gesture of friendship. The contract was signed.

Before too long, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden Society delivered the first payment of \$300,000 to Suzhou. The SGA, receiving the cash, happily continued their collection and

⁵⁶A letter written by Dr.Samuels on June 4, 1983. Source from the file of "The Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden", the B.C. Archives.

prefabrication of the construction material. Yet, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden Society was still \$1 million short.

Personally S.K.Lee felt burnt out. He donated both the Si En Ting ("The Pavilion of Gratitude") for commemorating his parents and the "Four Season" leak windows in the classical garden for commemorating his brother-in-law, his best friend, and classmate, who had just passed away. Seeing his health deteriorating, Lee resigned from the Presidency of the Society, and left for China.

Meantime the number of seats of the board members of the Society for the term of 1984-1985 was expanded to 28. J.Ernest Richardson, Roy Mah, Frances Andras, Andrea Eng, Sarah McAlpie, and a few others joined the whirlpool. The Society itself sailed into troubled water.

In a long distance call from New York, Dr.Samuels tried to explain the nuances to me: The garden stranded in the antagonism between the NDP mayor, Michael Harcourt and the Socreds B.C. Government. Joe Wai had been known for his New Democratic Party political stance and his closeness to Harcourt (who helped Chinatown in the late 1960s). Some of the board members in the Society were hard-core Socreds. The latter seemed less interested in creating a literati garden in Chinatown than building a museum symbolizing the good terms of the Socreds government with Beijing.

Irrespective of what Samuels said, whoever was to replace S.K Lee had to sprint in the year of 1984. Ronald Shon, one of the younger trustees in the Society, was finally selected. Shon came from an extremely wealthy family, originally from Japan, that owned the Cathedral Building on Georgia Street. In 1984 Shon was overseeing the construction of the Cathedral Building, and devoted part of his time to the Society. Nominated primarily for his energetic working style and for his ties in the financial world, to everyone's surprise, Shon accepted the leadership. He took the "grant beggar's" bowl to the major cooperations he knew. A few, such as B.C.Tel, actually pledged large donations. The massive campaign under Shon shortened the \$1 million gap by \$500,000 in a few months, then it stagnated in its limit. The City of Vancouver at last bestowed \$300,000 to the project, leaving the last \$200,000 an impossibility. By then the SGA already manufactured everything. What could they do with the materials awaiting to be shipped? Being informed of the impasse of the fund raising, the SGA conceded the \$200,000 as another favour to the Canadians.⁵⁷



⁵⁷Under Dr.Samuels' arrangement, the Chinese side received free lumber from the B.C. government as compensation.

4.5. The Completion of the Garden

The real construction work commenced in January, 1985. A team of fifty two artisans, craftsmen, technical experts headed by Liu Yanfu, the director of the SGA, was billeted at the Denman Inn, where the Society received a discount. Each of these artisans possessed a specialty: the masons, the heavy timber carpenters, the finishing carpenters, the tilers, the paving tilers, the painters and carvers and the false mountain rockery artisan..... To one's amazement, the traditional techniques of garden making had even survived through the Cultural Revolution.

In the early spring the Chinese artisans worked from eight o'clock in the morning till four thirty in the afternoon; in the summer time, they preferred working from six thirty till seven, and taking a long lunch break with a nap. Their dextrous hands magically transformed the site.

The beauty of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden owes much to the manual work of those artisans. The good or bad quality of a Chinese garden, besides design, also depends on the meticulous handling of construction details and the elegance in detail. There are twenty some types of buildings, hundreds of non-repeated forms of gates, windows, balustrades, and countless paving patterns and building techniques. It may be possible to design beforehand those architectural components on the drafting board. But the non-structural elements can hardly be drawn and therefore must be improvised on site. Rock-piling is a good example. The ancient Chinese literati were extremely particular on what kind of rocks were to be used for a false mountain, or displayed as a thematic artifact. Rocks were carefully studied, detailed, and categorized in accordance to their origin, color, texture, and shape. The best ones were those plucked and dredged from the basin of Tai Lake near Wu Xi, famous for their firm, glossy quality and "shapes as 'deep hollows', 'eyeholes', 'twists', and 'strange grooves'"(Ji 1634/1988: p.113). Formally one finds no absolutely fixed rules in rock arrangement. However a master of rock piling would see the flaws in the novice ones. Ji Cheng once explained:

If a single rock is set upright in the center as the 'chief stone' and two more rocks, known as 'split peaks', are inserted on each side, the single one will stand in solitary magnificence and the lesser ones will act as supporters; they will seem to be arranged in order of rank and will give the impression of waiting on command. Although you should generally avoid putting the 'chief stone' in the exact center, this can be done if it seems right. Although it may be better on balance not to make use of 'split peaks', if they are used, they must be used in a decisive way. Too symmetrical an arrangement will look like the center flanked by two vases on an altar, and a confused arrangement will look like the instruments of torture, the 'hill of knives' or 'tree of swords'. Such peaks will lack the splendor of the Five Ancients on Mount Lu (Ji 1988: p.106).

Again, we are led back to the notion of "naturalness". The scenery of the Five Ancients on Mountain Lu referred to the five natural peaks in Mountain Lu of Jiangxi Province. The five peaks cluster asymmetrically but balance like five ancient sages immersed in a deep conversation. Nature, in the eyes of Chinese literati, organizes in such a way that the spontaneity of individual elements co-exists with the articulation of the whole. Ji tossed around this paradox of unity versus diversity.

Little has ever been written on the art of garden making after Ji—the Chinese literati and garden makers transmitted this body of knowledge more in doing, in master-disciple relationship, than in writing, theorizing, and dissection. My understanding of this matter owes much to my father's teaching, who himself was an artisan. With an overt simplicity, my father believed a "good" artist or artisan to be the one who could "best" coordinate eye, mind, heart, and hand. That indeed speaks of intuitive judgement, intellect, passion, and refinement of techniques.

Most artisans, like my father, unable to read Ji Cheng's analysis, learnt those principles by practice, physical labouring, and their life long apprenticeship under their forefathers and masters. From that aspect, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden had been fortunate to have those intuitive, skillful artisans, to exemplify the excellence and trademark of Chinese garden making. (One could thus compare the contrasting quality between the public park and the classical garden portion).

Bit by bit, the garden approached the date of completion. Its name—Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, autographed by Madame Sun in 1981—was waiting to be engraved on its wall. The garden commemorated Dr. Sun Yat Sen (1866-1925) who had visited Vancouver twice in the early 1910s, and stayed at the hotel that used to sit on this site. To name the garden after Dr. Sun, epitomized the politics in Chinatown. It had its own twist: instead of commemorating someone else, the garden calls forth a common, the least problematic figure in the contemporary history of China, a name that could be accepted by mainlanders, Taiwanese, Hong Kong people, or overseas Chinese. Dr. Sun founded the Nationalist Party and the first republic after overturning the last dynasty. Dr. Sun was the one who promoted the unification of Nationalists and Communists in China. His early demise allowed him to avoid witnessing the brutal killings between the Communists and the Nationalists, and left an ambiguity in his political stance. The Taiwan government hitherto respected Dr. Sun as the "Forefather of China" whereas the mainland Chinese government, who allied with Sun's wife, claimed also to be the loyal disciples of Dr. Sun. Being such a magic name, Sun's name appeared millions of times in the newspaper in China, as an emblem, propagating the ideal of a unified China. For the same reason Sun's name has been popularly used in Chinatowns across Canada to symbolize an unified Chinese community.

By naming the garden after Dr.Sun, the Society unexpectedly created for itself some small trouble. A group of pro-Taiwan activists, in the middle of the construction, requested to erect a statue of Dr.Sun inside the garden. This seemed so logical, and legitimate. The Society reluctantly accepted the "unexpected offer". Once they learnt that there was an anti-mainland slogan engraved at the base of the statue, the Society firmly rejected the proposal, arguing that the garden would not be appropriated by political interests. *(When I heard of this episode of naming from a key member of the Society, short and brief, my pen almost dropped from my hand. Quickly, I scribbled on my note book: Sign? — To be, or not to be).*

This political dispute delayed nothing. The garden, garnering so much attention from the Vancouverites, was completed in the Spring of 1986. Festivity again prevailed on Pender Street on April 15, 1986. Despite the pouring rain, a large crowd of Chinese and Canadians, community members and politicians, designers and workers, joyfully gathered to unveil the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden. After all the frustrations, after all the shakes and shifts of power forces in Chinatown, after all the bargaining between the Chinese and Canadian side, the garden, soaking in the curtain of rain, dazzled with its beauty.

Behind the whitish walls, the anxiety, sweat, and labor were washed away, with it—eight years of history.

Canadian society quickly acknowledged the significant contributions of Joe Wai and Don Vaughan. In 1989 this project was honored with the national landscape architecture design award. Public broadcasts, newspaper reports, magazines, travel guides, and politicians generously lauded the garden as "a magnificent symbol of friendship between the people of China and Vancouver", to cite Michael Harcourt (The Vancouver Sun: April 5, 1986). Bill Vander Zalm treated this garden as a treasure in Chinatown, an enticing tourist attraction.

"Who else?", as I withdrew my hands from the black door of the garden, I wondered, besides Wai, Vaughan, Lieutenant Governor Lam. How about the effort and passion of S.K.Lee, Ann Cherniasky, Roland Shon, Sophia Leung, Samuels, Mr.Wang from SGA, the fifty artisans from China, and many others? How about the people of SPOTA, in the CCC, in the CBA, in the family and clan associations in Chinatown, whose work paved a road for this garden? How about Jonathan Lau, Margaret Mitchell, Hardwick, and those who lent the Chinese community a helping hand in the critical moments? How about Dock Yip, and his generation of Chinese that fought hard against racism and racist policies against Chinese?

The garden receded into the glowing sunset. Reticence. My memory of Chinatown blurred, and convoluted.

5

The Incarnation of the Simulacrum

The long due Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, having emerged from a welter of politics, alighted on the edge of Chinatown, its grace lavishly pleasing the eyes of the onlookers. It looks "like Walt Disney's Fantasyland," a journalist intuitively commented:

[T]he garden gives the impression with the sheer profusion of black-tiled roof peaks, gables and upswept pagoda corners that can be glimpsed through windows in the walls or over the parapets. The parapets themselves are topped off with the same black-tiled roofs, thus heightening the impression of jumbled density inside. For once, the Western reaction to something Chinese is accurate.

Changing the topic, he continued,

If anything, there is much more inside these walls than meets the eye, as those of us who have anxiously awaited the opening of the Suzhou Classical garden within Dr.Sun Yat Sen Park will see for ourselves later this month, when it finally opens, almost three years behind schedule. For a Chinese garden contains much more than plants. It is a statement about how the works of man and nature would meet in an ideal world. This garden, and the gardens in the Chinese garden city of Suzhou, on which it is modelled are meant to symbolize 'the ten thousand things' of the Daoist [Taoist] universe (Western Living, May 1986: p.30)

These "ten-thousand things" of the Taoist universe bewildered the tens of thousands first time visitors. One of them, another journalist poetically recounted:

As I ambled around the Dr.Sun Yat Sen garden in Chinatown, looking for a view to draw, I asked myself:'What is this place? What does it mean?' I looked around, trying to decipher the complex, quaintly miniature landscape of tangled foliage, twisted trees and rocky grotesquerie enclosed by white walls and tiled roofs reminiscent of ancient China. It defied explanation. 'Everything here has a place and meaning,' a guide had told me when I entered the garden. Her words, an enigmatic echo, followed me like footsteps over the little bridges, along the angled corridors and inside the carved pavilions(Vancouver Sun, February 1, 1992).

Considering the difficulties one faces in understanding the "Taoist universe", the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden Society arranges regular guided tours four or five times per day. The interlocutory approach, consisting of tour interpretation between the guides and the tourists, proves to be a determined success. The garden steadily attracts re-visits. The total number of visitors noticeably increases annually. Since its opening, the garden has received close to a million visitors, from the ordinary people to celebrities: students from Halifax, the former

president of Singapore, the current British Governor in Hong Kong, Prime Ministers and Premiers of Canada. Notably, Vancouverites, and the local Chinese rarely patronize the garden. Vancouverites knowing the name of the garden, "couldn't say for certain exactly where it is or what we might see if we actually go there"(Vancouver Sun, April 13, 1991). The potential Chinese users, (seniors in particular), prefer lingering inside the park to paying the fees for the garden.

Demographically, two major types of patrons⁵⁸ visit the garden: the tourists from California, "where a Chinese garden—especially the only full-size one outside China and the first to be constructed in more than 500 years—is something seen as being worth a special trip"(Vancouver Sun, April 13, 1991); and the tourists from the Western European countries, particularly from Britain, France and Germany. "For the moment this is the only living classical Chinese garden outside of the People's Republic of China. Others may appear in American cities if China continues to give the best of itself to the world. It will remain a single honor—and a tribute to Vancouver's climate and topography that the first overseas Chinese garden was built on ground that for more than a century has been home to Chinese-Canadians and was named after Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who is regarded as the father of modern China"(Beautiful British Columbia, Fall 1989).

With its reputation rising overseas, the garden has become one of the most crowded tourist spots in Vancouver. Year after year the Society hosts its celebration party in the Middle

⁵⁸ The Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society had never traced the sources of tourists, at least prior to the summer of 1993. Yet the tour guides have acquired by and large the general knowledge of the origins of the tourists they have entertained. With the assistance of four staff members from the Society, I had conducted 52 direct personal interviews on August 24, 1992, one of the typical days in the tourist peak season. The interview questionnaire covers three parts: (1) the general questions about the visitor's impression and evaluation of this garden; (2) the visitor's perception of nature and garden, and his or her knowledge of Chinese culture; (3) the visitor's personal profile. The results of such a survey are of limited academic use due to the extremely small sample size among an extremely vast, highly mobile tourist population. The results, however, are quite revealing, and confirming of the observations of the tour guides. Among 52 interviewed, about 54% were male, 46% female; the scope of age ranged from 20 to 73 years old, and the average age was approximately 47; 56% of the respondents were currently employed or self-employed as professionals, 44% of the total were either retired, house wives, or non-professional workers; over 65% of this group were people whose family annual income before tax deduction exceeded \$60,000 a year; and all of them were literate: 13% had finished only high school, 50% had obtained bachelor degrees, 37% had received graduate education. About 71% of the respondents said that at the time of the interview, it was their first visit to the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, and 73% of the respondents came with friends, families or companions. Canadians (Vancouverites or not) comprised 40% of the 52 visitors; Americans, and mostly Californians, took up 33% of the total; the rest came from England, France, and Germany. Thus not surprisingly, about 67% of the respondents claimed that their own cultural heritage was European. Among those polled, 46% identified themselves as Protestants, whereas 40% having no religion or at least no institutionalized Western religion.

About 35% of the respondents said they were introduced to this garden by the people who had visited the garden before; 28.8% said they knew about this garden by reading a travel book; 13.5% knew it from newspaper articles and advertisements; surprisingly only 1.9% knew this garden through Television program; 21% claimed other sources such as organized tour lines.

Autumn Day with the red lanterns frequently being raised in the courtyard; the NDP holds their meetings in the Maple Hall; the Tai Ch'i class rehearses martial arts in front of the Scholar's Studies, soothed by the morning breeze, or film studios set up their cameras along the angled corridors for a new episode of a television series. Days pass by smoothly.

Our story-telling of the garden would have nearly ended here, or would have glided into a prolix recording of daily events, had not, one day, one event in remote China, disrupted the routines inside the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden.

Two months after the June Fourth massacre in the Tiananmen Square in 1989, Nelson Woo, a thirty year old structural engineer, and another two hundred Vancouverites, mostly Chinese-Canadians, students and business people alike, organized the "Vancouver Society in Support of the Democratic Movement". At the time when Brian Mulroney's federal cabinet approved the first Canadian governmental loan to Beijing, the blood on the Tiananmen Square had not yet dried. The \$100 million loan came with a condition: China had to buy telephone cables and switching equipment from Northern Telecom Canada Ltd. and Canada Wire and Cable Ltd., Obviously these two large corporations were assured substantial profits. However, the deal enraged the "Vancouver Society in Support of Democratic Movement", and citizens who were shamed by the "unconscionable act" of the federal government. They quickly sent a 2,000-name petition to Ottawa, expressing that "whatever benefit that we might get from this deal would indeed be full of tears and blood of the Chinese people"(Province, August 17, 1989).

This may sound unrelated to the garden. For a while, the public spirit was high. The "Vancouver Society in Support of Democratic Movement" launched a series of forums, symposiums, and exhibitions, to denounce the Chinese government for its blatant trampling on humanity. With heart and soul, they replicated the statue of the Goddess of Democracy, a modified version of the Statue of Liberty, sculpted in the peak of the student demonstration and crushed in the night of the massacre.

Where would they put this replica? They wanted to place it inside the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden.

The garden Society must have been flustered by this request and immediately demurred. The debate of the two sides was reported by the Province on August 17, 1989:

While petitions, paintings and people are being used in three new Vancouver projects supporting democracy in China, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Classical Garden is refusing to become home to a replica of the Goddess of Democracy. The Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society has rejected a proposal to provide space for the symbol of China's pro-democracy movement, claiming it would be too political and would conflict with the museum status of the garden at Keefer and Carrall.

Andrea Eng, president of the society's board of trustees, said Wednesday: "The garden is not interested in becoming part of a political forum."

But supporters of the plan to erect the replica of the Goddess of democracy at a cost of almost \$30,000 say the garden society does not want to damage its relationship with the Chinese government, which was instrumental in building the garden. Duan Jin, the consul-general of the People's Republic of China, is listed as one of its patrons.

.....
In a letter to the society, the garden society's board of trustees rejected the proposal because the statue is "not in keeping with the cultural and historical aspects of a museum (Province, August 17, 1989).

The rejected Goddess settled on the campus of UBC . Nonetheless, the debate made two revelations explicit. Firstly, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, as new as it was in 1989, had already taken root in Vancouver, and was accepted as the focal point of Chinatown. The frequent happenings inside the garden naturalized and publicized the garden as a visually identifiable political symbol. Secondly, "the museum status" had been conferred upon the garden as the garden Society wished. It was clear that by claiming "museum status" for the garden, the Society can avoid heavy taxation, and gain some funding from the government. It was clear, too, that by claiming the "museum status", the Society could avoid offending either the mainland Chinese government (who presented the CCC the China Gate after the EXPO), or other political players in Chinatown.

A clever move.

5.1. The Function of a Museum

This political bubble burst in no time. Beijing recovered from the international sanctions and denouncements. I remember reading the Province in the summer of 1989 and beginning to be enticed by the political maze in Chinatown. It became the distinctive mark in the inception of my field work.

The statement of "keeping the cultural and historical aspects of a museum" was the trigger. It drove me to museum anthropology. The primary result of that period of research, as seen in Chapter 1, enabled me to debunk the simplistic equation of "culture" and "artifacts", and come to terms with the "irremovability", "irrevocability", and "irreplaceability" of the literati garden. To preserve Chinese culture in a museum in Canada, if stripped of its political shielding effect, of course, cancels itself automatically. The irony of our time is that not even the gardens in China could preserve the literati culture. But this is one side of the coin: (1) what then can a museum preserve? (2) and, what then are the functions of a museum of Other's artifacts?

The first question leads us to Adorno's essay on "Valéry Proust Museum" (Adorno 1967:pp.175-185):

The German word, "museal" ["museumlike"], has unpleasant overtones. It describes objects to which the observer no longer has a vital relationship and which are in the process of dying. They owe their preservation more to historical respect than to the needs of the present. Museums are like the family sepulchres of works of art. They testify to the neutralization of culture. Art treasures are hoarded in them, and their market values leaves no room for the pleasure of looking at them. Nevertheless, that pleasure is dependent on the existence of museums. Anyone who does not have his collection (and the great private collections are becoming rare) can, for the most part, become familiar with painting and sculpture only in museums. When discontent with museums is strong enough to provoke the attempt to exhibit paintings in their original surroundings or in ones similar, in baroque or rococo castles, for instance, the result is even more distressing than when the works are wrenched from their original surroundings and then brought together (Adorno 1967:p.175).

Incisively Adorno outlined a gloomy dichotomy, insofar as the whole Western culture keeps on perishing, in which the arts partake, and which neither the idealistic subjectivation of Proust nor the nostalgic returning to being in itself (that "objective thereness") of Valéry could sustain. For Valéry, a poet and disciple of Mallarmé, the museum, acting so repulsively as a flea-market replete with discordant and dead objects, bastardized his sacred art. Proust, the novelist, the aesthete of the pre-Flaubert era, who awoke precociously, mocked Valéry for his naivety, by diametrically contending (within the all too familiar framework of Dualism) that a museum provides the indispensable setting for modern art, where art, differentiated from sham, from kitsch, could be appreciated by connoisseurs and experts. The "aura" for which Valéry yearned, was irreversibly gone for Proust. Conversely the "aura" Proust dreamed of, looked to be eternally delayed.

Distinctively the definition of "art" differs in the two genius' minds. Valéry failed to grapple the quintessential spirit of **modernism** that depended on and demanded a radicalized individual consciousness (and self-consciousness). No less narcissistic, Proust underestimated the penetration of commodification into the general condition of human consciousness upon which art relies.

[Proust forgot] to take full account of the fact that even in the very moment of its conception the work confronts its author and its audience as something objective, something which makes demands in terms of its own inner structure and its own logic. Like artists' lives, their works appear 'free' only when seen from the outside. The work is neither a reflection of the soul nor the embodiment of a Platonic Idea. It is not pure Being but rather a 'forced field' between subject and object. The objective necessity of which Valéry speaks is realized only through the act of subjective spontaneity which Proust makes the sole repository of all meaning and happiness (Adorno 1967: p.184).

The museums will not be shut, nor would it even be desirable to shut them. The natural-history collections of the spirit have actually transformed works of art

into the hieroglyphics of history and brought them a new content while the old one shrivelled up. No conception of pure art, borrowed from the past and yet inadequate to it, can be offered to offset this fact. No one knew this better than Valéry, who broke off his reflections because of it. Yet museums certainly emphatically demand something of the observer, just as every work of art does. For the flaneur, in whose shadow Proust walked, is also a thing of the past, and it is no longer possible to stroll through museums letting oneself be delighted here and there. The only relation to art that can be sanctioned in a reality that stands under the constant threat of catastrophe is one that treats works of art with the same deadly seriousness that characterizes the world today. The evil Valéry diagnoses can be avoided only by one who leaves his naïveté outside along his cane and his umbrella, who knows exactly what he wants, picks out two or three paintings, and concentrates on them as fixedly as if they really were idols. Some museums are helpful in this respect. (Adorno 1967: p.185).

Kindly enough. One has to be startled—at least I was— by Adorno's generosity to "some museums", given his pessimism towards the general public and the culture that became a "cultural industry" under Capitalist and Nazi States, in the name of Enlightenment (Adorno 1944:120-167).

Outside every museum, Capitalism has already won, with or without Marx's foretelling the estrangement of society in the deluge of abstract signs and commodities.

Marx already denounced the obscenity of the commodity, which is linked to the principle of its equivalence, to the abject principle of free circulation. The obscenity of the commodity derives from the fact that it is abstract, formal and light in comparison with the weight, opacity and substance of the object. The commodity is legible, as opposed to the object, which never quite reveals its secret, and it manifests its visible essence—its price. It is the locus of transcription of all possible objects: through it, objects communicate—the merchant form is the first great medium of the modern world. But the message which the objects deliver is radically simplified, is always the same—their exchange value. And so, deep down the message has already ceased to exist, it is the medium which imposes itself in its pure circulation (Baudrillard 1987: p.23).

All too familiar, tapping on our brain, herein, the post-modernists propagate the heart-throbbing message of the "ecstasy of communication", literally, by turning reality into illusion, illusion into reality. To have museum or not, in this light, has become a trivial point. What does it matter, if the cultural artifacts from the past, from the ordinary, from the Other are to be placed inside or outside a museum? For, we are drifting lightly in a floating universe.

In the floating universe of postmodernists, meaning becomes meaningless; arbitrariness becomes meaningful, precisely within the recess of "unconsciousness". It seems the more we know what we mean, the more we suppress our unconsciousness, and we lie; the more we mumble, the more metaphoric we become. How can I then represent this "liberated" universe to you—in a sub-text form— without giving it too much coherence and loathsome materiality?

Therefore, I must mumble, I must use the Freudian trick.

De Saussure not fortuitously in our time dis-covered that a sign refers to an unity of a sound-image and a concept, respectively the "signifier" and "signified". The "Western (and modern) sign" does not have to refer to the "referent". in alphabetical languages, sign cancels out "reality". or worse. object becomes sign, sign becomes signifier, signifier refers to signifier. reality, a web of representation.⁵⁹

Being post-modern, we read Freud, anti-Freudians, Lacan, anti-Lacanian, Derrida, anti-Derrideans, or more provocatively Nietzsche, and nobody. Reading is futile, reading is zero degree, reading circles, from the arbitrariness of signs, to the signs of the arbitrary. Depending on one's taken stance, the meaning of the same text could be endlessly pursued. denotation, i.e. the intended signified of a signifier, according to Hjelmslev, destabilizes under the reader's scrutiny. Text is an esplanade of the interlocution of the author and the reader, where the author's intentions have been charged by the reader's various ways of reading. Connotation blends viscosly with denotation. Exteriority intrinsically warps around interiority of, text. signification absorbs the socio-cultural context into its womb, levitates it by transforming "reality" into a glossy surface of perceived texts.

Communication via and as sign involves the sender, the receiver, the message, the code, the contact, and the context (Jakobson's inventory⁶⁰) complicates signification into a multi-level process, author's voice, together with the "meta-language", is out.

Hesitating to continue this barrage, this spin of terror/bliss in the melting pot of words, I have a point to make. (To those who want to obtain the secret map of Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, and Marxism, I suggest Jameson's "The Prison-House of Language" (Jameson 1972)).

⁵⁹This discovery of the arbitrariness of sign as within its self-referentiality sends a quake to those who never doubt the immediacy of language, of its power to represent, to those who profess their faith deeply upon the metaphysical Truth of the words. Not fortuitous after Saussure, there prevailed in the twentieth century his offspring—Linguistics (that focuses upon the diachrony of language) and Semantics (that focuses upon the use and meaning of language in context) (Jameson 1972), Formalism and Structuralism thrived in tandem with the realm of sign, while leaving the analysis of the "referent" obsolete. Because of this rejection/neglect/or somewhat a denial of the texture of the world, Western alphabetical language, after Saussure, Wittgenstein, Freud, Lacan, or Derrida, no longer retains the same rock bed of the represented. Language falls from grace into a circuitous efforts traversing sign to sign, surface to surface, trace to trace—that Derrida will name. Signification becomes a "differance" wherein the signifier "differs", "defers", and defies the ultimate Signified (the meta-interpretation).

⁶⁰From the six categories provided by Jakobson, "Thus an emphasis on the **addressor** himself yields an 'expressive' or 'emotive' type of language, while one on the **addressee** may be thought of as a kind of vocative or imperative (the 'connotative' function). An orientation towards the **context** involves a referential or denotative emphasis, while that on the **contact** or channel of communication Jakobson characterizes, following Malinowski, as a 'phatic' enunciation..... the 'metalanguage' function of language will be that which stresses the **code** used..... while 'the set (Einstellung) toward the **message** as such, focus on the message for its own sake, is the poetic function of language" (Jameson 1972: p.203).

The fragmentation of cultural artifacts within museum, causing the furious debate between Valéry and Proust, flip-flopped by Adorno and postmodernism, connects to the general living conditionality of the West, outside of the museum. Madly liquifying language, and with it, meaning, culture, society, human relations, puts a dazzling paradox on the notion of preservation. We cannot preserve "culture" in the way it was nor within museums: because "culture" itself is nebulous, with no totality and completeness. Nor does "culture" die inside the museum: like a sponge first being dipped into a red water and then a blue one, an artifact will alter its meaning inside a museum through the different sender, receiver, media, space, and code.

Thus the "culture" with the artifacts being preserved inside the museum, neither dies, nor continues to live the way it was, but transforms.

Having said so, I must immediately add two significant modifications: (1). A sponge in reality can never be absolutely "dry", "empty", nor "immaterial", I do not believe that any cultural artifact in the process of being abstracted into sign, into commodity, into form, offers no resistance (no residue), which might vary in degrees. (a point any Marxist may make); (2). Logically, contrary to Baudrillard's celestial flight to ecstasy, although the disconnected signifier, signified, sign, object, culture has endless possibilities for re-association, this re-association is **anything but free**.

Particularly at the macro-level, the museum culture developed in the metropolises of the First World encircles few possibilities. (a). **cultural artifacts being aestheticized**, transformed into formalistic art pieces; (b). **cultural artifacts being "salvaged"** by historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, philanthropists. It "will recall early 20th-century anthropology, the 'salvage ethnography' of Franz Boas' generation—A.L.Kroeber and his Berkeley colleagues recording the languages and lore of 'disappearing' California Indians, or Bronislaw Malinowski suggesting the authentic Trobriand Island culture (save in his texts) was not long for this earth. In academic anthropology 'the salvage paradigm' has an old-fashioned ring" (Clifford 1987: 121); (c). **cultural artifacts being collected, categorized, priced, traded, and commodified**; The dealers rank from professional pothunters, middle class suburban woman, to the Rockefeller Foundation.

Encased, museum culture acutely is embroiled in the socio-political and economical conditionalities outside museum (Stocking 1985; Wade 1985; Crimp 1983; Taussig 1992; Clifford 1985; 1987; Dominguez 1987; Trinh 1987).

5.2. The Function of Museum of Other's Artifacts

Imminently power moves in. After being introduced by the connoisseur, the art critic, the dealer, the philanthropist, the historian, the flaneur, one still faces the face of the

otherness. So much so, our museums collect the objects from the past, or from the Aborigines, African tribes, or ancient Indians. Under the roof, through the glassy case, our gazes meet the Other. Have we ever asked how those artifacts themselves alighted in our museum? **appropriated** (from Latin, *proprius*, meaning "for the early", "to make one's own") by money? expropriated by pillage? or received as gifts? Were the previous owners or worshippers of the artifacts aware that their sacredness would be displayed?

More than this, more than the power of coercion, which we can dig into and gasp at the blood stained histories of colonialism and thieveries, more than the unabashed trading and selling other's history and culture without being knee-jerking, there circulates a power of another kind— how can we mentally "make other's artifacts our own"?

The most legitimate anthropological reason for the West to collect Other's artifacts was the "salvage" paradigm.

Our dominant temporal sense is historical, assumed to be linear and nonrepeatable. There is no going back, no return, at least in the realm of the real. Endless imaginary redemptions (religious, pastoral, retro/nostalgic) are produced; archives, museums and collections preserve (construct) an authentic past; a selective domain of value is maintained—all in a present relentlessly careening forward.....Put schematically, in the global vision of 19th-century evolutionism, societies were ordered in linear sequence (the standard progression from savage to barbarian to civilized, with various, now arcane, complications). In the 20th-century, relativist anthropology—our current "common sense"—emerged, and human differences were redistributed as separate, functioning "cultures". The most "primitive" or "tribal" groups (the bottom rungs of the evolutionary ladder) could then be given a special, ambiguous temporal status: call it the "ethnographic present"(Clifford 1987:p.122).

So, what are we salvaging? "Other's time", "Our Time", "Other's myth", or "Our History" (Boon 1982; Fabian 1984)? From "savageness" (a term that not too long ago categorized "bush men and bush women") to "the ones being salvaged", what has the Other exactly undergone that escapes from Western Ego? While our museum is "salvaging" an(other) tribal culture in our museum, the octopus of the international market has already gone ahead.

Suffice it to say, our Ego cannot be defined by itself devoid of other and otherness. The great synthesizer of Western moral philosophy and structuralist psychology, Habermas says:

The identity of the ego signifies the competence of a speaking and acting subject to satisfy certain consistency requirements. A provisional formulation by Erikson runs as follows:"The feeling of ego identity is the accumulated confidence that corresponding to the unity and continuity which one has in the eyes of others, there is an ability to sustain an inner unity and continuity." Naturally ego identity is dependent on certain cognitive presuppositions; but it is not a determination of the epistemic ego. It consists rather in a competence that is formed in social interactions. Identity is produced through socialization, that is,

through the fact that the growing child first of all integrates itself into a specific social system by appropriating symbolic generalities; it is later secured and developed through individuation, that is, precisely through a growing independence in relation to social systems (Habermas 1976:p.74).

But, "Socialization" involves power, constant and concrete power relations in the process of cognition. To quote Virginia R. Dominguez again, the Other (and the quality of otherness) "has been perceived not just one of difference but inherently one of hierarchy. Whom do we identify as other? Not those we identify with, but those we believe inferior or superior to us, or potentially subservient or dominant. Others are significant to us, even though our rhetoric seeks to deny that significance, because it is through our construction of them precisely as significant others that we situate ourselves" (Dominguez 1987:p.132). Not without reservation, I think such a polarization of the Other had been genuine in the history of Colonialism, Capitalism, and the Enlightenment. Silently, the Other enters the light of the museum.

[Other's artifacts] have been diversely recontextualized, used as 'cultural' or 'human' evidence in the exhibition halls (or basements) of certain museums, made to stand for 'artistic' beauty and creativity in others. They gain 'value' in our vaults or the walls of bourgeois living rooms, are made and judged according to shifting criteria of authenticity, are brought from the Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg to hang beside a canvas of Joan Miró in New York. Where do these objects belong?

Thus James Clifford asks:

I have been suggesting that they 'belong' nowhere, having been torn from their social contexts of production and reception, given value in systems of meaning whose primary function is to confirm the knowledge and taste of a possessive Western subjectivity (Clifford 1985: p.244).

I could not agree more. But caution again. I cannot agree to use the term "Western subjectivity" without prudence. I cannot see why the resistance from the Eastern artifacts will not penetrate, or impact upon the Western Ego, or within your mind, or my mind, or an other's mind. The Dualistic split of "good and evil" has to be "deep", and "universal". Surely, "Chineseness" in Vancouver has undergone a strange development of being appropriated from "evil" to "good", and the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden aestheticized, or commodified. However, (a). to some, the tourists in particular, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden stands as a gorgeous art work; (b). to some, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden sitting like its corner shop that sells souvenirs, is a tourist attraction; whoever pays the fee, gets the view; (c). to the architects who designed the garden, to the devoted Dr. Samuels, the members of the garden Society, and the architect-writer I quote extensively in the beginning of this thesis, this garden represents the best of the Chinese view of nature, of heaven and earth, of beauty, and of inner self; (d). for the B.C.

government, this garden probably functions more or less as a political symbol, a graven gesture between them and China, between them and Chinatown; (e). to the drug dealers in Hastings, this garden provides a niche at night; (f). to the senior Chinese who exercise Tai Chi, this garden offers a unique recreation, repose setting; (g). to the younger generation of Chinese Canadians, this garden opens a door for their roots searching.....

Therefore the power relation between the West and East, the Self and the Other, in the jade-pond of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden melts into a mash.

Our "post-modern" (I mean, time as now) emotive disquisition upon the otherness and Other gets embogged in a state of confusion. We battle with our own mind, with all the political correctness and our own choices, or we do not give a damn.

Besides, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden is more than an artifact within a museum: it sets up a stage where tourists can be wrapped in a *déjà vue*. The tour guides keep inculcating that the garden is the most authentic Chinese garden outside China. The polite adults accept this inculcation. Children keep asking when, exactly, this garden was built—whether it was 1886 or 1986.

Besides, with the physique of a Chinese garden, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden resists "making sense". A questionnaire survey⁶¹ I did on August 24, 1992 shows that among 52 respondents, sixty-five percent said they liked the garden because of its architectural beauty; sixty four percent said, because of the craftsmanship and the landscaping of the garden; fifty four percent said, because of the richness of meaning. Fifty two out of the fifty two respondents I had surveyed said that a garden should have trees, plants, floral beds, ponds, vegetables and perhaps animals. The majority of the 52 respondents were surprised that this garden was "that" small and had no tea house for picnics. The respondents in general were highly impressed by the views along the corridor and the design of the courtyard. This tenacious emphasis on the visual quality, which may have had something to do with the Western typologies of garden,⁶² led thirty seven percent of the respondents to find the Dr. Sun Yat Sen

⁶¹Most interviews did carry on extensively at an inter-personal level. Knowing that I came from mainland China, one couple from London—the husband teaching Physics at a university, excitedly introduced me to the friends and students from China they knew in London; Another artist couple from Paris tried to teach me how to perform meditation; a few doctoral students eagerly discussed with me their interpretation of Buddhist and Taoist environmental ethics.....

⁶²Psychologically it seems indicative of a strong propensity in the Westerners to define garden by the single dimension of visuality. If this statement needs modification—and I concede that it is bold and pompous, at least, the Saussurian avert that a linguistic sign merely signifies a representational notion of the object (being referred) deserves a supplement, namely, that representational abstraction of the referent is in no way universal. An etymological retracking (Erp-Houtepen 1986:pp.227-231) will tell that the Western notion of "garden" roots in "gardinum" (in Vulgar Latin) which implies "enclosure", or "geard" (in Old English) which suggests "fence" and "enclosure". Yet historically befriended with "yard", "town", "farm", "court", "paradise", "villa", the stereotypical synthesis of the Western notion of a "garden" has little in common with the notion of "garden" in the Chinese context.

Garden culturally "exotic" and twenty five percent to describe the garden as formally "chaotic".

Those interpretations only scratch the surface of the Chinese literati garden, not to mention the literati culture. Painstakingly, the architect-writer, I quote extensively at the beginning of the thesis, concluded:

Gardens are sometimes regarded as places of aesthetic experience or repose where the use of the intellect is superseded by the emotions. The characteristic of the Chinese classical garden suggest that it was designed not as a mindless place but rather a place to actively engage in contemplation of the human/nature relationship. The entire design of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden denotes an animistic fascination with ch'i and a belief in the necessity of contemplating this life force. The magnificent thought and effort which the Chinese expended in the creation of their gardens implies that it was both their compunction and delight to do so (Mooney 1991:p.21)

Despite his last effort, this "philosophizing" on Chinese garden gives it too much of a Western interpretation. A Chinese garden was neither a philosophical abstraction of nature, nor a subliminal artifact, nor a symbolic drama of culture, nor.....

The Western Eye is confused by the "chaotic" scenes of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden. It makes the tour interpretations so intriguing. Following the tourists and tour guides edifying each other down through the zigzag corridor, the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, a cultural simulacrum re-incarnates.

5.3. A Tour in the Garden

Let's repeat the first episode of this thesis: imagine you were one of the seniors who stepped out of the double-decker bus, you ambled through the open space behind the CCC, paid the \$3.5 admission fee, and entered the hallway of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden. You arrived at the Maple Hall, where others and yourself huddled on a long claret colored bench. Two ushers entered, carrying a tall, wooden framed, double-sided embroidery art work, a picture of one hundred flickering butterflies. The crowd was excited. People were amazed by the superb craftsmanship. A sixtyish woman in the middle of the crowd, caressing the varnished frame, in a pure English accent, explained how the embroidery was made, and its source— a new gift from Suzhou to the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden. You then realized that this was the tour guide. Pausing for a minute, the tour guide raised her voice, demurely announcing that the three o'clock tour was about to begin. "Suzhou is the sister city of Vancouver," she emphatically pronounced the word "sister",

Therefore we have the first authentic Chinese garden outside China. [pointing to the ground paving of the Main Hall] This is the Main Hall, or Maple Hall, paved by these terra cotta plates. This building symbolizes the friendship between China and Canada. From here to the outside, lies the threshold, which is an accent when people are walking in and out. It is always discouraged in China to put your foot on the threshold. You always step further. When we are inside, we can close the door like this [demonstrating] as the Chinese scholars did at night. Doors are either concave or convex, the reflection of Yin and Yang. The doors fit in beautifully that excludes the darkness and evil spirit. As you see on the door, there are charm patterns of bats and butterflies.

[Stepping outside, pointing to the tiles of the roof] The bat is an august omen in Chinese culture. It sounds the same as the word 'Luck'. These planks [Sign Boards] on the hall, one says 'good luck easterly', and the other says, Gosh, I forgot. If you look up at the tiles, these tiles come out of the imperial kiln. When this garden soaks in the heavy rain, this garden tends to be more beautiful. Because the rain comes down from the roof like a waterfall, from the curve of the tiles right to the bottom row. Do you see the little point at the bottom of the tiles? the water will drip from there, and drip like a curtain. Now if you take a close look at those tiles, do you see the shape of a butterfly? in the centre is the scribed word "longevity".

Look now at the patios. As you go around, you will find they are all different. But they all blend in beautifully because they have the same colors of stones [referring to the pavings]. The pavings are stuffed stones and the little white ones here are the broken cups. Nice way of recycling! So I will suggest you to pave your yard by yourself. Look at the ginkgo tree. These leaves coming out of the branch, in a beautiful fan shape, turn to gold and orange color in the fall. Ginkgo remains the oldest species of trees in the world, that dates back to the Ice Age. It has a marvellous characteristics. When its leaves shut, they shut within twenty four hours.

Now, turn around. You look at these beautiful rocks. They, as I said of everything here came from China, came from the Tai Lake, very near to Suzhou. And they are limestones. Soft. The shapes and holes in the rock have been caused by water currents. They have been picked and simply cemented together as an island on top of which we have this lovely house, or a gazebo, they [the Chinese] call it Ting. A Ting captures the heavenly cloud, opens three hundred and sixty degrees so that the master of the manor, when he sits there, could look down and make sure, knowing what is the hanky-panky down on the garden below.

They [the Chinese] think that maybe their ancestors could come down and visit. So they build little cave behind the Ting for the ancestral souls to rest before they are going to where they come from. We have a cave too. You could see it at the corner. Behind the Ting we have another rock formation which we call false mountain. Water flows down. To the Chinese that is the flow of life.

About the color of the water— some people come here and say 'oh, that is dirty.' Think about it, it is a color of jade. The pond has a clay bottom, and keeps this color by a special algae, because the Chinese are very much concerned with details. In this way it makes enough to see the reflections of the buildings and rocks, which gives you a desirable effect, especially on a sunny day. We have the gold fishes here.

[Walking down the double corridor] The next thing I want to point out is these lovely rocks. They look to visitors like petrified woods. Similar to bamboo shoots. So we call them stone shots. I want you to come down over, standing here and look, point out as we are going around, the rocks are humorous and interesting, depending upon the light, shade and your imagination. You can conceive anything you want. Look, this is a man's face here with eyes and nose.

This garden copies no particular garden in Suzhou. But one or two characteristics here are the same throughout Chinese gardens. First is that the Chinese garden always has a high white wall around. The second common element is this leak window. When you come to the courtyard, you probably did not look out above the eye level. You see cloud, rock and building little bit from the window and this tells the visitors in the courtyard there is something else beyond the courtyard, remaining to be explored. There are no two windows alike throughout the garden. The interesting part of that, when they [the Chinese craftsmen] made them they had to make a wooden frame first, and poured the plaster in, molded into these lovely shapes. As you can see there, they are elegant and beautiful.

Are you familiar with viewing the white-weeping-willow-contemplate? [Staring at the willow in the park] It tells a story about a rich man who wanted his daughter to marry somebody he choose, but she ran away with her lover. They went over a bridge underneath the moon gate where both transformed into two weeping willow trees waiting for a sampan to get away. This is the symbolism of the willow tree. This garden has not been specially designed for that purpose.

Here, as we come down the corridor, you might ask why the corridor has to be a zigzag path. The Chinese believe the devil can only run along a straight line, so he cannot get very far in the zigzag path. Upon the roof of Ting, see those little points? Moving down? That is why the evil spirits cannot climb up the roof. On the left side of the Ting, you see some interesting rocks, one resembles a fossil of a dog; and the other one next to it, I never thought about it until one day a child said to me, it looks like a big hippopotamus.

As far as I am concerned, this is the prettiest part of the garden. If you look down into this patio area. You will see in between those four petal-flower shapes. A bat. Same to the end of the tiles on the roof. Here we have banana trees. You know, the Chinese invented paper. But the poor students could not afford to buy the paper, so they would tear the banana leaves, dry them under the sun and use them as parchment paper. Bamboo is known for durability and eternity. And bamboo used to be made into fire crackers. Before gun powder was invented, the Chinese people would take a branch and smack it, and the noise it makes is what we associated with that of the Chinese fire cracker. Look through this leak window. You see into another window, out, and into another one. This gives the feeling of more space than there really is. So take a look.

Water flows beneath here into the park beyond. One can think about the Yin ad Yang philosophy here. The reason we say East meets West is because everything here is from China, and constructed by the artists from China. The rocks over there are whitish. Apparently they come from the Tai. And the yellows rocks along the edge are from Mexico. Here we have a lovely moongate, a female one. This one here is the male. You look there upon the Ting over the park. You see it's six-sided? That is a Male Ting. We have the female one in the garden.

At this corner [the turn of the Double-Corridor] you could see three types of roofs: the flat roof on the Chinese Maple Pavilion; the lovely flying roof of the Ting, and the soft curve of the water pavilion. You have three types of the roofs and eight types of doors. Couple of them have a lintel over top, and the traditional moon gate. And that is south gate. South gate in China has the most important function. In the olden days because only the domestic and living quarters would be on the side of the south gate. They would open the gate, come here and socialize. There is nothing behind there at the moment. We hope eventually to put in a conservatory, which needs another million dollars, because we have been donated twenty valuable 'Bonsai' plants by a Chinese doctor in Hong Kong. Now in China, they call these 'Penjing' not 'Bonsai'. They have infections because of the air factor. The agricultural department wouldn't let them in. Now they have been held at Vendusen Garden, cost taxpayers \$44 thousand a year until we get money to build a place here, which will be a lovely new attraction.

[Strolling into the West compound]. Now we are in the place called the Scholar's Study. We have the wind tunnel going around the sides of the building. It has been done deliberately because it has circulated the atmosphere, conducive for learning. It is a very private part in the garden. If the student or the scholar wants to play the music instrument, they will walk out there. The windows frame come from the inspiration by three plants: pine, bamboo, and winter plumb. They are called the "Three Friends of the Winter".

The garden here appears as a static dry garden. No water here as opposed to be out there. The various plants blossom in the spring. Students will take the Mongo tree leaf as a book mark, for learning. The swastika pattern on the window symbolizes Buddhism. When Buddhism started, it traveled from Malaysia to China, to Japan. This is why we have it here, because it is a good luck symbol. That brings us to the end of my tour. I have to do a sales pitch here. When you go out, you go to the shop, you see a very very lovely book, called In the Chinese Garden. And it is this garden, not any other garden. Its text and plates provide a description of the design of this garden. The book comprises six authors' writings, including Joe Wai's, the designer of the garden. If you take a look at— I am sure you will be caught by it, you want to buy it, it is \$16.00 including tax. A wonderful souvenir for family and friends if you are from out of town.

So go to the garden, take photographs, take as long as you like. And so long!"⁶³

Finished? The forty minutes interpretive tour finished? Your train of thought that was flitting through a flood of images, related or not, suddenly jolted, hit the curb of consciousness..... The burst of hand claps took you back from your trance. Someone behind you whispered, of how fortunate he felt that he did not waste a trip. But time clicked in your mind. You looked at your watch, realizing that the driver in the bus may have complained, you decided to leave. Oh, one last thing, the subconscious was telling you that the next time you visit this garden may not be in the near future, before departure, you better take photos of the garden. Photos are wonderful, small and compact; in a photo resides your memory and your

⁶³ Partially transcribed from a three o'clock tour on August 20, 1992.

experience that need to be recorded. When you turned around, everyone else had left, even the tour guide, unnoticed, except the rocks and pond in the garden, fiercely, they reflected back the light of the sinking sun, of your camera, and your gaze.....

5.4. Invention of the Other, Invention of the Self

Let alone the apparent commercial promotions in this tour, what do we learn from the tour guide? do we glean her confidence and uneasiness (maybe due to my presence?)? She, like our shaman, head poised towards heaven, hands gesticulating, threaded every bead of information scattered and remote: (1) **She had to lift common sense into a philosophical diagram.** So the concept of "Yin" and "Yang" that might have been applied by the Chinese garden makers subconsciously in the spatial arrangement, allocation of materials, will crystalize enough into a meta-cultural logic, linking the paving pattern to the roof shape. Incrementally or drastically the element inside this garden was called forth, chanted upon, and turned into symbol, even the weeping willow, tangentially, related to a love story. (2) **She mis-read, purposely or not.** For example, Buddhism did not disseminate to China via Malaysia. (3) **She occasionally began to invent, and the audience instantly accepted her creativity.** She "discovered" the resemblance of the face of George Bush or Queen Elizabeth with the rockeries. Defying all the "denotations" of rock piling, she made us laugh.

Do not take me wrong, thinking I am diminishing the importance of the works of this particular tour guide. Exactly the opposite, in my eyes, she is a genius; she blended facts, history, personal experiences, hearsay, and the speculations on the psychology of the tourists wonderfully into one. She interpreted, over-interpreted, mis-interpreted, invented, threw that invention back into the audience, back into interpretation, into history. Dexterously, she poured her ego into mine, into others', into Chinese culture, Chinese tradition, Western culture and Western history.

A new culture came into life (Wagner 1975; Hobsbawm 1983).

Invention perpetuates not only through the things we 'learn,' like language and good manners, but also the regularities of our perception, like colour and sound, and time and space themselves. Since the collective and conventional only makes sense in relation to the individual and idiosyncratic, and vice versa, collective contexts can only be retained and recognized as such by being continually drawn through the meshes of the individual and the particular, and the individual and particular characteristics of the world can only be retained and recognized as such by being drawn through the meshes of the conventional. Order and disorder, known and unknown, conventional regularity and the incident that defies regularity, are tightly and innately interdependent. We cannot act but that we invent each through the other (Wagner 1975: p.51).

"Invention of the Other", "Invention of the Self", side by side, amid thousands of similar, routine tours, mould the lives of tour guides and the tourists through the venue of Chinese garden and Chineseness.

There is no remuneration for the tour guide. Yet the garden magnetizes a group of enthusiastic volunteers. The docents come from all walks of life, from the former Chairman of the B.C. Solicitor and Attorney Association to a former English teacher of Shanghai Institute of Technology, from a UBC summer student to a former graduate of philosophy, from high school kids to a former denizen of the 1930s' colonial Shanghai, from housewives to an amateur collector of Chinese art.....

The tour guides contribute enormously to the enjoyment of the tourist. Reciprocally the docents feel themselves being enriched, being drawn to Chinese culture. Aiming at delivering an excellent interpretation, most docents avariciously garner knowledge of the classical Chinese garden from books, magazines, lectures. Some of them had the advantage of visiting the gardens in Suzhou. Those who did not, had witnessed the construction process of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden. These experiences, shared every now and then in their tours, instantly stimulates the interest of the tourists, granting the tour guides an intimate authority. Their story-telling gives the tour guides also opportunities to share their emotions. As much as the garden depends upon the interpretation of the docents, the docents acknowledge that working in the garden helps them to build patience, heuristic skills of communication, and self-confidence.

Tourists repay the tour guides with thankful applause, and extremely positive comments. The garden Society receives stacks of letters commending on the work of the tour guides and the splendid beauty of the garden (with occasional complaints about the absence of washrooms, places for picnics, or restaurants). A few even claim that visiting the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden is a life transforming experience. One letter from a Chinese reporter says:

The accomplishment of the garden has its profound meaning: it does not just bridge over the gap between the East and West, but also serves the purpose of root search for the younger generations of the overseas Chinese. Everyone who has been to the garden, if being asked, apart from exclamations of praise, will answer differently. A young white male commented that the history books in Canada only mentioned the Chinese coolie as the railway construction worker, but never mentioned that the Chinese were able to build such an elegant, meaningful garden. Indeed, most parks in Vancouver are located either along the ocean, the lake, or along the forest, people go there for picnic, sports, and sunbathing, but this classical Chinese garden appears like an "astute middle aged man". It is a place where people want to sit, and taste the tea or contemplate.⁶⁴

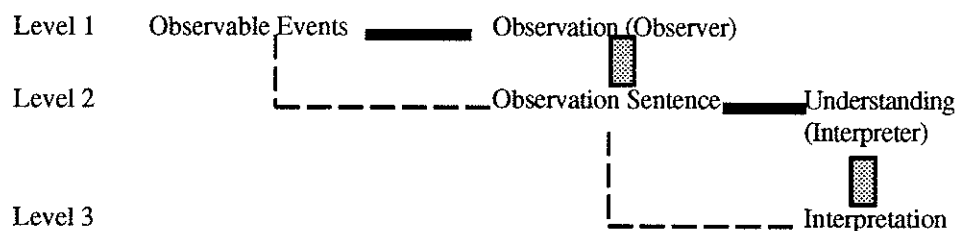
⁶⁴This is a report broadcast by Radio Canada International in its Mandarin Chinese program in early October of 1983. My translation.

We have to call this the real life situation (Habermas calls it the "communicative act") where subjects (agents) negotiate and create "culture".⁶⁵

Precisely through the contextualization of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, the tourists are forced away from the Western notion of garden. New meanings emerge, are being discussed, transacted, and internalized; another level of intersubjective relationship being formed.

Meanwhile, our tour guide stumble over a moral pitfall. Her conversation with the audience, on the one hand, trans-(re)-lated the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden to the West, "inventing" with great joy and confidence, while on the other hand, it revealed an equivocation when referring to the history of China. After all, it was the Other's norm, the Other's culture, the Other's intersubjectivity that she stepped upon.

⁶⁵In a simple diagram Habermas depicts how in "real life" communication, where meaning flows from the event observer (a speaker now) to an interpreter (or listener), there co-exist three different relationships:



- a. Epistemic relations
- b. Representation
- c. Expression of intention

a. Epistemic relations between experiential acts and their objects. In this sense, the act of understanding relates to the symbolic expression (here of the observation sentence), as does the act of observation to the events observed.

b. Relations of representing an aspect of reality in a propositional sentence. In this sense, the interpretation represents the semantic content (here of the observation sentence), as the observation sentence in turn represents certain events.

c. relations of expressing intentional acts. In this sense, the understanding (here of the observation sentence) is expressed in the propositional content of the interpretation, just as the observation is expressed in the propositional content of the observation sentence (Habermas 1976: p.10)

In this diagram, Habermas categorizes the modes of communication into a. the Cognitive (stating the real, stating truth); b. the Interactive (about appropriateness, interpersonal relation); c. the Expressive (speaker's intent, and norm). The domains of reality respectively range from "The" world of external nature, "Our" world of society, "My" world of internal nature, plus one more, language.

Unravelling communication as such, Habermas seems to have been primarily interested in how to reach a public consensus through the process of open communication. Taking over history from the hands of Historical Materialists, Habermas re-writes it by stretching "communicative action" into both the realm of "infrastructure" and "superstructure". A natural corollary of this is his passionate calling for the evolution of society, through, as he calls, a "non-self centred intersubjectivity".

Where is the line between "innovation" and "invasion" in the "intercultural" dialogue?

The issue of power arises again, in the thousand tours within the Dr. Sun Yat Sen garden. How does one "appropriate" this garden in the Canadian context, in a way that can eschew both overt commodification, and imposition upon the "native point of view" of the Chinese literati garden? Although one may feel having an inherent right to negotiate with one's own society—be critical of it, be innovative of it, how much can we invent Other's culture without violating Other's rights of refusal to "be invented" ? Isn't this process of "inventing the Other" immediately calling forth power? Isn't "appropriation of the Other" asking a responsible moral ethical judgement?

5.5. The Politics of Invention

One evening in the summer of 1992, about a week after my visit with Bessie Lee and Mary Chan, I attended a seminar organized by the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society—about thirty of us crowded into the Maple Hall. I had been asked to deliver a short presentation on "Understanding the Ming Dynasty Garden Genre from a Historical Perspective". The short speech sprawled out into a long one. I guess I was too enthusiastic to focus. Instead of speaking of the Chinese garden, I lengthily discoursed on the formation of Chinese thought. The darkness of night descended. A few candles were lit. In the flickering light, I saw someone yawning. I stopped, and asked if anybody had any questions or comments. As soon as I finished the sentence, one docent—in her late sixties—raised her hand, asking me whether the rocks in the Chinese literati gardens were real or fake. Having consulted a Chinese geologist—she emphatically articulated the phrase "a Chinese geologist", she was convinced that the rocks, with holes and grotesque shapes, could have only been made through artifice.

Before I had a chance to speak, several other docents immediately expressed dissent. One said that the rocks in the Suzhou gardens were formed by natural erosion; another supplied a further technical detail, saying that the rocks might have been first collected from the water basin, manually chiselled, and then re-sunk into the Tai Lake, letting the torrent smooth the surface. Apparently we had three versions of how the rocks were formed: fully natural, fully artificial, or half natural, half artificial. This kind of discrepancy of opinion is understandable, if one is lacking first hand knowledge, or even with first hand knowledge. I myself, ignorant of this archaeological puzzle, had nothing to offer except the promise that I would check out some literature for them. But my voice was drowned out by the tit-for-tat altercations among the docents. The one who had provoked the discussion insisted on the truth of her own reason. The leading opponent, however, regarded it as non-sense. I was caught in

the middle, trying to appease both. At last, the questioner turned her face to me, and interrogated: "Isn't it true, that this is my garden, and I can interpret it whatever way I want?"

In a second, her opinion aroused another wave of dissent. This time all turned to me, asking me to decide how the "grotesque" rocks were formed. Being put on the spot again, I must have felt, and expressed my embarrassment somehow. The director of the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society, who had a major in museum management, and not in Chinese gardens, stood up for me. Proposed by her, we all walked out to the courtyards, where the director suggested that I give a tour to the tour guides.

On that very night, nonplussed, I checked out two classical writings on garden design with respect of rock selection. The Craft of Gardens elaborates that the rocks from the edge of the water beside Dongting Hill in Suzhou Prefecture are the best for rockpiling.

They [the rocks] are naturally firm and glossy, and contain in them such shapes as 'deep hollows', 'eyeholes', 'twists', and 'strange grooves'. They are of various colors: white, greyish-black, and blackish-grey. The striations of the rock formation run crisscross over them or swirl around them, rising and falling. There are pits and hollows all over the surface of the stone. These are formed by the attacks of wind and waves, and are known as 'bullet holes'. When tapped the rocks give out a faint sound. The workmen who gather these rocks take their mallets and drills and go into the deep water, select a rock of an interesting shape and chisel it away, then bind it with a thick rope and suspend it from a large boat; then they arrange a wooden framework and hoist the rock up out of the water. These rocks are valued for their size and height, and are particularly suitable for setting up individually before a gallery or hall, or for placing below a lofty pine-tree or strange shaped plant. If formed into artificial mountains or set about through a park or among scattered pavilions, they make a particularly fine spectacle. They have been collected for a very long time, from ancient times until the present (the 17th century of China), so they are nowadays not easy to come by (Ji 1988: p.113).

Another classic, Records on Leisure Goods supplements this view:

The most expensive rocks are those naturally formed at the basin of Tai Lake--- they are hollowed by the waves and torrents through time; However, those limestones in the mountain can also be forged to a similar appearance as the natural ones, they will look natural and elegant for years. In fact most rock pilings in the Suzhou area are made of those forged rocks (Wen 1984: p.112).

Quite clearly it appears very logical that four or five hundred years ago, the garden owners in Suzhou were conversant with the difference of the market value between a naturally formed rock and a forged one, and willing to pay a ludicrous amount for a delicate rock. Thus all the versions the docents provided were equally true and mutually complementary. Why could they not come to terms? I was advised later, that these two docents held contrasting opinions

on the current Chinese government after the events in Tiananmen Square. The two differed on all sorts of issues—their debate on rocks was simply one of many episodes.

6

The Doubles of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden

The emotional cry—"I can interpret whichever way I want" made me hear the frustration of a Self, facing an opaque Other. Within an abrupt intolerable silence, my eyes met hers. "What should I say?" I asked myself, "how can I dare to tell her that she cannot interpret in whatever way she wants?" A white shadow clouded her gaze, I saw myself being torn between two worlds, two languages, both of them outside and inside me. The clouded gaze forced me to realize I was wearing glasses, and so was she—don't we all?⁶⁶

When asked, and seeing through a lens, most tourists described that a garden ought to have trees, plants, floral beds, ponds, vegetables or animals. This generic notion of garden, seemingly universal, indicate a Western trait. The densely divided spaces and explosive vistas in the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden irritated the Western eye, puzzled it, and made it unable to focus. The garden was "seen" as "chaotic" and "exotic".

Should we lightheartedly dismiss the tourists' perceptions as superficial or nonsensical? Should we not see the gap that separates the East from the West, that causes a Chinese to consider the garden as a Western copy, a Westerner think it as too "Chinese" to be understood? The impressions, the self doubts, the supposed "Taoist universe", the confused inventions of the tour guides—they all can no longer be trivialized. Emotions fetishized the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, its shadowy being (a simulacrum), invoked the phantom of culture. Culture, which abducts us in our perception and is abducted by us, reifies.

Thus the Kew floated into my world.

After giving a generic definition of garden, tourists generally preferred to exemplify the "archetypal garden" within their own cultural context. "You know, a garden for me should look like the Kew." Few added. "Why the Kew?" I pursued, knowing the Kew was an imperial retreat of the Prince of Wales and later a botanical garden known for its vast collections of exotic species. "Well, the Kew is a place where you can rest, enjoy the views, have a tea party, or picnic, besides you can always go to the arboretum or herbarium." Seeing my blank face, they added, "The Kew, like this garden [the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden], looks exotic. It has a Chinese pagoda!"

This rebus like conversation foreboded an omen. Excited by the existence of a Chinese pagoda in the Kew, I was given a door to the labyrinth: the history of the interpenetration of

⁶⁶"No man ever looks at the world with pristine eyes. He sees it edited by a definite set of customs and institutions and ways of thinking. Even in his philosophical probings he cannot go behind these stereotypes; his very concept of true and the false will still have reference to his particular traditional customs" (Benedict 1934: p.2).

the East and West, beneath the detritus of Colonialism, where the doubles of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden hibernate.

6.1. The Shadow of the Kew Garden

The Kew was a quiet small village, bordered by the Thames, near London. Prior to the Prince of Wales, Frederick Louis (1707-1751) had built his royal gardens there. Born in Hanover, Germany, the eldest son of King George II (who ruled England from 1727 to 1760), the Prince was accessioned to England in the late 1720s. Logically he should have been the next king. But the eighteenth century British monarch, already embattled by the Enlightenment and the Whigs, faced family crisis as well. George II was never on good terms with George I, the Prince of Wales never got along with George II. In 1735 the Prince unwisely publicized the secret life of the King and Queen. The book enraged the King. George II at once reduced the prince's allowance, and blocked his access to the throne. The fight led to a parliamentary debate. Not surprisingly, the Prince of Wales suffered a crushing defeat.

Watching helplessly his political career drain, the unhappy Prince withdrew more and more to his retreat in the Kew. With each defeat in the court, the Kew was more transformed from a countryside to a gala exhibition, a showcase for his "good tastes" (Rorschach 1991). His passion for art fluctuated from the French Rococo to English "Palladian architecture and design" (Roschach 1991: p.239). Influenced by the Earl of Bute who was knowledgeable in botany, the Prince became interested in exotic plants. In eighteenth century Europe, Botany epitomized the acme of knowledge. Consequentially the Prince developed the Kew as a botanical garden decorated with some Romanesque architecture.

Frederick Louis died in 1751, middle aged. His demise ended the confrontation with his father. In 1760 George II died, the son of Frederick Louis succeeded to the throne in the same year. Through this series of power transitions, the Kew fortunately gained more importance in the royal family under the supervision of Frederick's widow, Lord Bute, and the newly crowned George III. William Kent and Sir William Chambers, the best known garden designers, continued the transformation of the Kew. In 1772, when the Princess Dowager died, George III replaced Lord Bute with Sir Joseph Banks as his horticultural expert. The latter had been sailing together with Captain Cook in 1768. With his enormous knowledge of plants, his appointment marked the inception of the Kew as the earliest prototype of the modern park, a place of recreation and education (Bingham 1975). Although the Kew had its ups and downs in the following century, in the able hands of William Aiton, William Townsend Aiton, and Sir William Hooker, the Kew expanded from 12 acres to 250 acres. After the completion of the Great Palm House in the middle of the nineteenth century, the royal gardens opened to the public.

6.2. The Englishness of the English Garden

The emblematic significance of the Kew in the history of Western garden making had doubtlessly something to do with its regal filiation. Its prosperity and vast collections of exotic plants relied on inexhaustible royal funds. The other two key factors which made the Kew a modern garden, were its advanced personification of nature—a change from the Romantic to the Scientific view of nature, and the expression of English national identity in landscape form.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, eighteenth century Europe was a laboratory of socio-economical, techno-political, and cultural-ideological revolutions. Relatively speaking, the political reform in England was carried out in a smooth process. With its Whigs and its Tories, its monarchy and its parliament, its advanced industrial technology and its constitution, England did not follow in the footsteps of France; it parried off radical actions. The enlightenment also took a safe middle way in England. It compromised a great deal with nationalism, neoclassicism, romanticism, and moralism. This gross medley of ideas and ideals, however contradictory and discursive, lent a strong voice of "Englishness" to painting, architecture and garden design—which the Kew consummately exemplified.

The rise of an "English" consciousness of a new social order justified itself in the new interpretation of nature. This connection of society and nature was prominently expressed in the discourses of the British "Big Three", i.e. Shaftesbury, Pope, and Addison. Regardless of how we assess their originality, today, we can hardly deny their profound social and cultural influence on the modern history of England. Through their writings, a new philosophical understanding of nature came about. Spectator No.565 by Joseph Addison, a condensed note of the author's contemplation of a starry night, typically represents this new view of nature.

In the second place, he [God] is omniscient as well as omnipresent. His omniscience indeed necessarily and naturally flows from his omnipresence. He cannot but be conscious of every motion that arises in the whole material world, which he thus essentially pervades; and of every thought that is stirring in the intellectual world, to every part of which he is thus intimately united. Several moralists have considered the creation as the temple of God, which he has built with his own hands, and which is filled with presence. Others have considered infinite space as the receptacle or rather the habitation of the Almighty: but the noblest and most exalted way of considering this infinite space is that of Sir Isaac Newton, who calls it the *sensorium* of the Godhead. Brutes and men have their *sensoria*, or little *sensoriums*, by which they apprehend the presence, and perceive the actions, of a few objects that lie contiguous to them. Their knowledge and observation turn within a very narrow circle. But as God Almighty cannot but perceive and know every thing in which he resides, infinite space gives room to infinite knowledge, and is, as it were, an organ to omniscience. Were the soul separate from the body, and with one glance of thought should start beyond the bounds of creation, should it for millions of years continue to progress through infinite space with the same activity, it would still find itself

within the embrace of the Godhead. Whilst we are in the body he is not less present with us because he is concealed from us. 'O that I knew where I might find him!' says Job, 'Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he does work, but I cannot see him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.' In short, reason as well as revelation assures us, that he cannot be absent from us, notwithstanding he is undiscovered by us (Addison 1892: p.220).

Bear in mind that it was scarcely a century earlier that Descartes had revised the order of the cosmos. God (in Of God: that He Exists) hitherto had been depicted as an non-corporeal, omniscient, almighty, perfect Being, extraneous to our universe. Descartes and his contemporaries could not believe in a God entrapped in our imperfectness. A hierarchy was established, according to which, by a rank of perfection, Divinity was rated above "Man", "Man" above nature (and woman), Mind above body, Reason above intuition. This hierarchy, in turn, was used to reinforce itself. The very ability of the mind to reason was used as proof to the existence of God, who "exists: for though the idea of substance be in my mind owing to this, that I myself am a substance, I should not, however, have the idea of an infinite substance, seeing I am a finite being, unless it were given me by some substance in reality infinite" (Descartes 1986: p.104). Tautologically Descartes succeeded in convincing himself and others that God shall not be accountable for our errors, caused by our imperfect perception.

It is within this philosophical framework—the fall of imagination, body, and nature—that Addison strove for another possible revision. In a single paragraph Addison deconstructed the Cartesian universe. He broke away from Descartes precisely when he re-attributed omnipresence to God. By one move he re-instated the faith of Job, brought the mystical quality back into the beauty of the starry night. Yet we err greatly if we think that Addison had alluded to the pagan magic, to the supernatural power of divinities. Clearly expressed, he identified no locality for the temple of creation. Notice how Addison quotes his country fellowman Isaac Newton, notice also how elated Addison becomes when referring to God as Godhead. There, strangely in line with Cartesianism, Addison deconstructs God into a more abstract, more scientifically rendered, universal blueprint, a revelation of our modern spirituality.

Nature was saved. Wait. Nature was saved in a manicured form. While the French continued to harvest their totally geometrical, perfect shapes, amusingly trimmed and controlled trees in their Baroque gardens, the eighteenth century English Romanticists re-discovered "nature", together with "sensibility", frowned upon by Descartes. The cosmological revision effected by Addison and by and large completed by Shaftesbury, Pope, Leibniz, and Rousseau, produced in European history the genre of the "picturesque" or "pastoral landscape".

In literature, we hear Alexander Pope speaking "If we would copy Nature, it may be useful to take this consideration along with us, that the pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden age. So that we are not to describe our shepherds as shepherds at this day really are, but they may be conceiv'd then to have been"(Pope 1987: p.153). Obviously Pope's Golden Age was the age of the ancient Greeks and Romans. In the same redolent nostalgia Shaftesbury returned to the Platonic tradition, sought the order of nature for its own sake. He "scorns the scientist who seeks some simple but marvelous formula by which to use Nature for his own ends. Our ultimate aim must not be power over Nature, but communion with Nature—a communion which makes it possible for the power of Nature to work in and through us" (Grean 1967: p.50).

Of course, this yearning for "nature" had not been without bubbles and noises—otherwise, we cannot understand why the introduction of Chinese "naturalness" caused so much curiosity and division. Typically the eighteenth century English personification of nature contained and expressed numerous inconsistencies. First of all, "precisely in the period of accelerated enclosure (roughly 1750-1815), there fell the dramatic aesthetic and cultural discovery of the countryside on the part of middle class" (Bermingham 1986: p.10) The eyes of the middle class paradoxically shifted to "wildness" when nature had been unprecedentedly raped; secondly, accompanying the thematic appreciation of "irregularity" as an essence of nature, true rustic scenes had entered the temple of high art. But the eighteenth century English landscape painting (from the generation of Thomas Gainsborough) left an open question: Whose panegyrics is this? That of the peasants? Or that of the condescending bourgeoisie, to inscribe their sense of nature loving, and family life style as a socially universal value imposed upon nature and the underclass? The development of English landscape painting in the second half of the eighteenth century further politicized the tastes of landscape painting. As most peasants worked in the field, the bourgeoisie were arguing whether the panoramic view or the private view of the landscape best represent the "universal truth" (Barrell 1990).

Plights and contradictions, nothing deterred the search for English garden. Quite the opposite, they brought layers and layers of social values into the "Englishness" of garden design. Over against the French Baroque garden, English garden-making in the beginning of the eighteenth century teemed with anti-French sentiment. Architecturally the "Englishness" of the English garden was duplicating or re-interpreting the ancient Greek, Roman, and Renaissance buildings. Pope put it bluntly: "Learn hence for Ancient Rules a just Esteem, To copy Nature is to copy them." In other words, "we, the English", like the ancients, set up a new model of "virtue", "manner", "liberty" through a new way of loving nature.

A two-way operation was undertaken at the same time. As the moralists Shaftesbury and Pope decoded Homer and normalized social manner, the Italian architect Andrea

Palladio's works (1508-1580) were subjected to intensive study. Among many contributions to late Renaissance architecture, Palladio's master pieces demonstrated a visual and experiential quality of striking simplicity, intelligibility, and organic harmony of order. A combination of Platonic universality, and Alberti's architectonic pragmatism, Palladio excelled in his scenography, theatrically weaving spatial layers and elements in a façade into an architectural symphony—the duly proper metaphor that highlights the beauty of Renaissance architecture. In Palladian architecture, everything had been choreographed: frontal stairs, the patterns of windows, the form of columns, remained not as individual pieces, but corresponded to one another in outlining the central theme. This "naturalness" of the Palladian architecture over against the French "ideational nature" in Baroque, attracted eighteenth century English designers for reasons about which we can only speculate: wealthy English lords made their pilgrimage to Italy in search of the Roman architecture, and somehow ran into the villas designed by Palladio, standing monumentally. Rather than pursuing the writings of Alberti, the lords of England turned into acolytes of Palladio, whose illustrations of classical architecture and order were down to earth and easy to read. "1725 was the decisive year. In that year there appeared in London two extremely important works, the first volume of Colin Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* and the first instalment of Giacomo Leoni's English edition of Palladio's *Quattro libri dell' architettura* (Wittkower 1974: p.178). The knowledge of the classical was disseminated quickly among the learned ones. The historically well-known advocates of Neo-Palladianism included Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington, who went to Italy to study Andrea Palladio's architecture spurred by Campbell's book. The Earl of Burlington also patronized Robert Castell to write The Villas of the Ancients Illustrated.

Soon after 1720 Burlington's leading position was firmly established. He rallied a group of young architects, supported them, helped to train them and made sure they were given commissions. In addition, the new truth was disseminated by means of a vast architectural literature, an off-shoot of which was the pocket-size book which contained the basic tenets of the style in brief tabulations: 'Made easy for the meanest capacity', as is often stated on the title-pages of these books. The phenomenon has no parallel in the history of architecture. These vulgarizations had an important function; they helped to transform into a truly national idiom an imported classical style which, at first, was the concern of a sophisticated coterie. Shaftesbury's prophecy and Burlington's dream had come to life in at least one important sector of the visual arts (Wittkower 1974: p.182).

The moralist discourse on virtue, of being "harmonious" with oneself and social norm, flowed out in the English version of Neo-Palladian architectural style. While the Italians only applied the system of order to the aristocratic buildings, eighteenth century English Palladian beauty was incorporated in the building code even of the dwellings of farmers and

laborers. Socio-cultural normalization thus went hand in hand with architecture, with dress codes, gestures, and the configurations of family portraits in nature.

How thorough it is.



Figure 15. Thomas Gainsborough, "Mr. and Mrs. Robert Andrews", ca.1748-1749.
Source: Ann Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology*, 1986.

For garden making there was one more hallmark: the notion of "liberty", philosophically expounded by Locke. "Liberty" of humanity now led to the "liberty" of form. "The revolution brought about in the mode of gardening, with literature serving as a major catalyst for epoch-making changes, can be palpably grasped by using the French garden as a foil against which to set off its English counterpart" (Müllenbrock 1988: p.99). The prominent features of the gardens at that age "are a meandering stream and a profusion of plants which allows all flowers to bloom in their individual beauty without being penned into regular borders and partees" (Müllenbrock 1988: p.99).

William Kent, discovered that if "one leaps over the fence, entire nature will be a garden". And then the pastoral dream of Pope came true.⁶⁷

Close to the Gates a spacious Garden lies,
From Storms defended and inclement Skies;
Four Acres was the' allotted Space of Ground,
Fences with a green Enclosure all around.
Tall thriving Trees confers the fruitful Mold;
The red'ning Apple ripens here to Gold.

.....

This tho' the Gardens leads its Streams around,

⁶⁷His translation of The Gardens of Alcinous, from Homer's "Odyssey".

Visits each Plant, and waters all the Ground;
 While that in Pipes beneath the Palace flows,
 And thence its Current on the Town bestows;
 To various Use their various Stream they bring,
 The People one, and one supplies the King (Pope 1987: p.59).

Joyful and blessed, after all, one should not confuse this hymn to "English nature" with real nature. Real nature, out there, with its *chthonic* forces, to devour us in violence, had been kept away from the eighteenth century English garden. The Dionysian darkness and unpleasantness of "Mother Earth" were kept at bay. "The result, the 'natural' garden, is not extracted from nature (as is so clear from Walpole's comment) but is constructed meaning given by culture to nature as if nature had given meaning to culture in the first place"(Pugh 1988: p.56). The naturalness of a garden, tactically, was contrived through a disguise of artificiality, of the evidence of human touch on the land. Yet the whole purpose of such flawlessness of execution was concerned much less with respect for nature than with the pleasure for the Eye. When Kent, the leading landscape architect of his time, promoted the "leap over the fence", he was not calling for a humbling of humanity. Rather, he was considering an expansion of Garden into Nature, a total claim on the land, and exploiting "its origin in the myth of the Golden Age" (Pugh 1988: p.56).⁶⁸

⁶⁸Such an invasion of nature was political. By strewing Neo-Palladian buildings into the wilderness, by copying Roman ruins and Arcadia, the Western eye was no longer satisfied to stay on top of nature, but wanted to be in it. "When you walk out at the hall Door", reported John Macclary in 1750 to his Madame of the scenes in Rousham, a picturesque garden par excellence by Kent, "you come into a Large parteeer, the middle of which is a Large Bowlinggreen, with a Gravel Walk all round it, and one each side is a fine large Green Tarrice Walk, at the end of which is tow open groves, backt with two Natural Hilloks planted with Scotch Firrs, and two Minervas upon Terms stands before them, and in the middle stands a Lion devouring a Horse, upon a very Large pedestal.....through the middle of the meadow runs a great High Road, which goes from several Cities, there you see Carriers Wagons, Gentlemen's Equipages, Women riding, Men walking, and sometimes twenty Droves of Cattle go by in a Day, then you see Hayford Bridge (which carries the Great Road over the River Charvill) which is a fine Stone Bridge Six Hundred feet Long, and Thirty Broad, with a parripet Wall on each side, finely coped, and is supported by ten Spacious Arches, here you see water comes gliding through the Arches, and all the pretty natural turnings and widenings of the River, and Turn about you see a good old house uninhabited, on each side of which is a Wing newly built, and on each wing, is two niches, wherein stands fewer fine figures. A Dancing Fawn, a Bacchanal, A Venus and An Apollo....." (Pugh 1988:p.46).

Apollo stands on the peak, Venus hides in the valley down below. The views into nature had been artfully devised in the English picturesque. In that final gaze to the valley, an up-coming age of mass consumer culture of nature, of culture itself, was foreboded. The loiterer of the garden transforms into Baudelaire's *Flâneur*, the landscape transforms into a crowd, a closed book of the Sphinx. " In important respects, the *flâneur* grew out of the pastoralist. Both attempted to privatise social space by arguing that passive and aloof observation was adequate for a knowledge of social reality, rhapsodizing their view of life.....The *flâneur* is the prototype of the employee of the 'entertainment industry' (advertising, journals, sex magazines with the maxim 'you can look but you'd better not touch') as well as the loiterer in the shopping mall who buys to escape the pressures of social life. All have an appropriate place in an enterprise culture, trading on imaginary gratification as a substitute for social reality" (Pugh 1990: p.159).

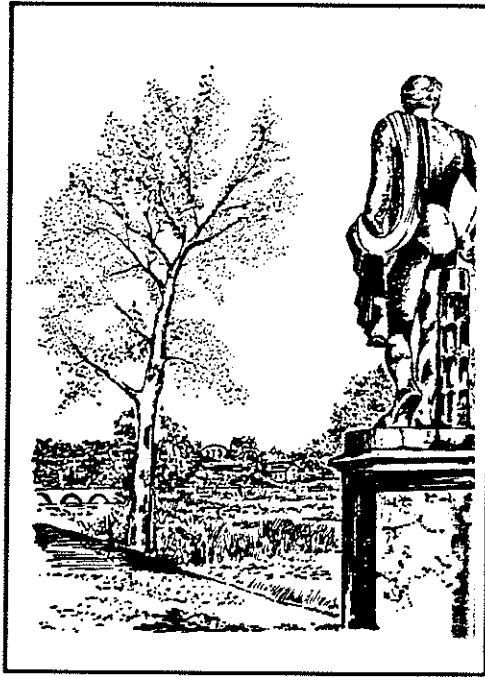


Figure 16. Apollo, gazing into the picturesque Rousham.
 Source: Simon Pugh, *Garden, Nature, Language*, 1988.

6.3.. Chinoiserie

Closely related to this spectacular socio-cultural drama of the eighteenth century English garden, the Kew appeared. The mishap of his political life did not debar the Prince of Wales from being a connoisseur of art and architecture. The Prince found a psychological outlet for his unhappiness in his extravagant collections. Suffice it to say, he was well connected. He was acquainted with both the Earl of Burlington (who went to Italy to copy Palladio's buildings) and William Kent (who "jumped over the fence" of the English garden)—a coterie of Neo-Palladians. In 1732 the Prince purchased "Carlton House in Pall Mall from Burlington's mother, and remodelled the old red-brick house in Palladian style. William Kent, who had been appointed Architect to the Prince in 1732, also laid out new gardens for Carlton House" (Rorschach 1991:p.242). What does this mean? It means the Prince was a patron of the antiquity and wanted to show his English subjects his good manners and noble tastes.

The Kew was feverishly filled with Neo-classical artifacts. In one twist, it had something else—an octagonal, two storey high structure, designed by Joseph Goupy in the 1740s, decorated with bustling ornaments. It was what the Prince called "the House of Confucius", a building that looks more like a rococo toy.

Why had the Prince of Wales commissioned someone to erect a pavilion for Confucius in the middle of his retreat? What was the blueprint for this building, since the West then

possessed hardly any information on Chinese architecture? How had this first architectural mimicry been perceived socially in England? These puzzles hovered in my mind for days.

I was captivated by the mystery of the first contact between the East and West.

The first contact between China and Europe had taken place long before the eighteenth century. A Chinese *bei*, engraved monument, excavated in the city of Xian in 1625 records that the virtuous Nestorian "Olopên from the country of Syria" arrived in Xian in 635 (Rowbotham 1966: p.7). The silk road, Genghis Khan who drove straight into Crimea in the thirteenth century, the explorers and navigators dispatched by the emperors, the Chinese pilgrims, the princesses sent out by the court to marry the kings of other countries—all these formal and informal cultural, political, and trading activities connected the geographically self centered "Central Kingdom" with the outside world. Remotely the Europeans knew about China through paintings, porcelain, and travelogues. Their impressions of China were closer to the celestial images of Marco Polo than to reality, until in 1515 the Portuguese landed in China: the age of discovery and Enlightenment had arrived. Knowing about "Cathay" was found to be necessary. (Later we may come to terms with the expansion of the knowledge regarding the East and its intimate relation to colonialism, imperialism and capitalism) Interest in China (and other regions of the world) grew among the learned. Chinese culture and Chinese goods became popular objects desirable to be possessed. The French word "Chinoiserie", which was coined at that time, denoted a fashion among the aristocrats on the continent of collecting Chinese art for entertainment or experimenting with the possibility of combining Chinese crafts with Baroque and Rococo styles.

The first carefully considered and widely read statement to this effect was Leibniz's Preface to his *Novissima Sinica*, first published in 1697 and enlarged in 1699, in which the great philosopher advocated a universal religion derived from the natural theory of Confucianism. Small wonder that the philosophies of the Enlightenment embraced wholeheartedly this alternative to Christianity. Confucius' moral philosophy, based upon reason and tolerance, would be—it was argued—a better foundation for our daily life than a revealed religion with its fanaticism and intolerance (Wittkower 1974:p.185)

Leibniz was not alone in praising Confucius. A century later Voltaire in La Philosophie de L'histoire (Voltaire 1765/1969), a philosophy of world histories, devoted a passionate chapter to Chinese civilization and to Confucius. Emphasizing that China had its own unique history, unique language, and unique ways of chronicle writings, Voltaire portrayed ancient China as a place of sobriety, free from superstitions and as having a much longer history than Europe.

Leur religion était simple, sage, auguste, libre de toute superstition et de toute barbarie, quand nous n'avions pas même encore des Teutatès, à qui des druides

sacrifiaient les enfants de nos ancêtres dans de grandes mannes d'osier. Les empereurs chinois affraient eux-mêmes au Dieu de l'univers, au *Chang-ti*, au *Tien*, au principe de toutes choses, les prémices des récoltes deux fois l'année; et de quelles récoltes encore? de ce qu'ils acaient semé de leurs propres mains. Cette coutume s'est soutenue pendant quarante siècles, au milieu même des révolutions et des plus horribles calamités (Voltaire 1969: p.155).

This romantic depiction of the remote China illuminates a political undertone of Voltaire's re-interpretation of world history. Being in the avant garde of challenging established Christianity, while at the same time not-conforming to the atheistic evolutionary idea of mankind, Voltaire literally invented a China to support his belief. Not without difficulty though—for most Jesuits went to China in the hope of finding some evidences of Christian revelation, their writings must have documented the rituals and temples that idols would present. This seemed to give him few qualms. Voltaire's romanticized Confucianism was reduced to a moral philosophy based upon the assumption that humans were intrinsically good, and that only unreason would corrupt them. Thus, Confucius was transfigured into a model man, a timely enlightener of eighteenth century Europe, one who possessed wisdom, self control, reason, and knowledge. Voltaire's "China" derived from a critical moment in French history, before the eve of a long lasting revolution. Today we may take Voltaire's second hand reading of the Jesuits' writing lightheartedly, this was not the case in the eighteenth century Europe.

China for a time riveted the attention of the Europeans during the second half of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century (together with India and Japan). The Jesuits, working for the Portuguese and Spaniards, piloted this far reaching cultural expedition prior to the fall of Cathay. A few Jesuits successfully penetrated into the imperial court: Matteo Ricci (Italian) arrived in China (in 1582) late in the Ming Dynasty and died in 1615; Adam Schall von Bell (German) arrived in China in 1622 and became the Head of the Astronomical Bureau, the first Westerner to translate Chinese time into the Western solar calendar, and the personal mentor of Emperor Shunzhi; Ferdinand Verbiest (Belgian) the tutor of Emperor, man of science and literature, arrived in China in 1659, and died in 1688; Mathew Ripa, a painter, returned to Europe in 1723 after almost thirteen years of living in China; Castiglione, Attiret, Benoit, each stayed at the imperial Palace during the Qianlong reign.

Jesuits who made their way into the court, aside from being theologians, philosophers, readers in the Chinese classics, were either excellent painters, craftsmen, designers, astronomers, astrologers, or mathematicians. Normally it was impossible for the vassals and the multitudes to see the emperor, the empresses, or their palaces. By offering their Western scientific and artistic skills, the Jesuits obtained the privilege of entering the royal life behind the reddened walls. For instance, when a Chinese general, Wu Shangui, rebelled in Yunan, in the eleventh hour, it was Verbiest that repaired the cannons designed by Schall. Verbiest's

talent gained Emperor Kangxi's trust and allowed him to move freely within the imperial palace.

The West began to direct its gaze at China. Writings on Chinese architecture or cities successively appeared. Niehoff's book was published 1669; Fischer von Erlach's 1721; Père Du Halde's in 1735. In 1723 Matteo Ripa (1682-1746) returned to Europe. Ripa brought back with his drawings of the thirty-six views of the newly built imperial palaces and gardens on the outskirts of Peking [today's Beijing]. English aristocratic circle instantly became interested. Ripa was well received in London by Burlington. The historical meeting led to the House of Confucius in the Kew.

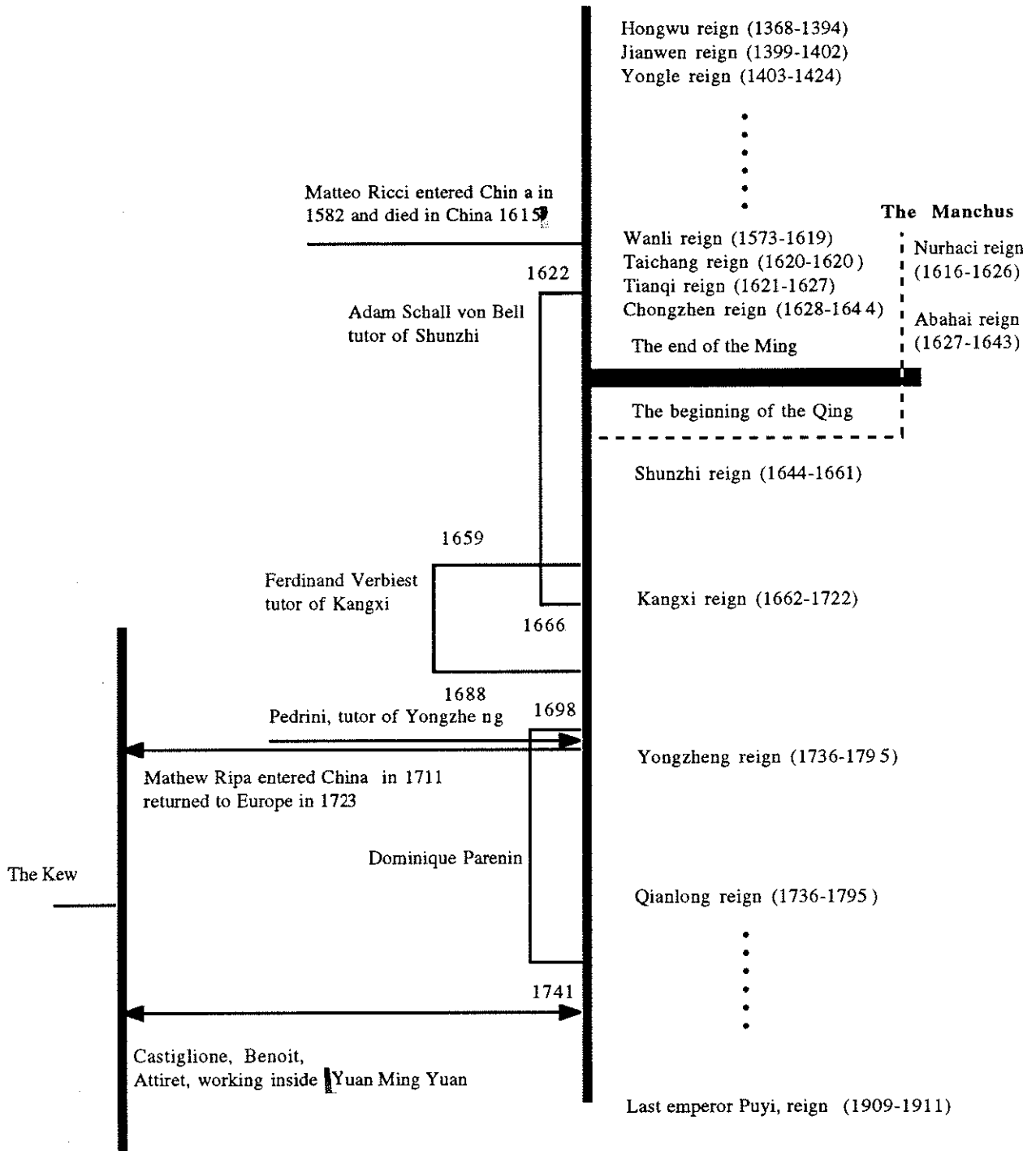


Table 1. The Jesuits who acted as bridges between Europe and the Chinese court.
Illustration by D.Y.Liu

The visually striking Chinese imperial gardens testified, if anything, that the organic irregularity of the garden was not solely an English invention, nor a patent of the ancient Romans. Does then to "leap over the fence" or to "copy nature is to copy the ancients", also have to include learning from the Chinese?

Further information about the imperial gardens was sent back to Europe by Pére Attiret in 1743 (whose letter was translated into English). The letter contained a detailed account of the grandeur of the palaces and gardens:

The Palace is, at least, as big as Dijon; which City I chuse to name to you, because you are so well acquainted with it. This Palace consists of a great Number of different Building; detach'd from one another, but disposed with a great deal of Symmetry and Beauty. They are separated from one another by vast Courts, Plantations of Trees, and Flower-gardens. The principal Front of all these Buildings shines with Gilding, Varnish-work, and Paintings, and the Inside is furnish'd and adorn's with all the most beautiful and valuable Things that could be got in China, the Indies, and even from Europe.

As for the Pleasure-houses, they are really charming. They stand in a vast Compass of Ground. They have raised Hills, from 20 to 60 Foot high; which form a great Number of little Valleys between them. The Bottoms of these Valleys are water'd with clear Streams; which run on till they join together, and form larger Pieces of Water and Lakes. The pass these Streams, Lakes, and Rivers, in beautiful and magnificent Boats..... They go from one of the Valleys to another, not by formal strait Walks as in Europe; but by various Turnings and Windings, adorn'd on the Sides with little Pavilions and charming Grottos: and each of these Valleys is diversify'd from all the rest, both by their manner of laying out on the ground, and in the Structure and Disposition of its buildings.

All the Risings and Hills are sprinkled with Trees; and particularly with Flowering-trees, which are here very common. The Sides of the Canals, or lesser Streams, are not faced, (as they are with us,) with smooth Stone, and in a strait line; but look rude and rustic, with different Pieces of Rock, some of which jut out, and others recede inwards; and are placed with so much Art, that you would take it to be the Work of Nature.....

On your Entrance into each Valley, you see its Buildings before you. All the Front is a Colonnade, with Windows between Pillars. The Wood-work is gilded, painted, and varnish'd. The Roofs too are cover'd with varnish'd Tiles of different Colours: Red, Yellow, Blue, Green, and Purple: which by their proper mixture, and their manner of placing them, form an agreeable Variety of Compartments and Designs.....The Inside of the Apartments answers perfectly to their Magnificence without. Beside their being very well disposed, the Furniture and Ornaments are very rich, and of an exquisite Taste. In the Courts, and Passages, you see Vases of Brass, Porcelain, and Marble, fill'd with Flowers: and before some of these Houses, instead of naked Statues, they have several their Hieroglyphical Figures of Animals, and Urns with Perfumes burning in them, placed upon Pedestals of Marble.

Briefly describing how the eunuchs lived in the palace, Pére Attiret proceeded to elaborate the beauty of the bridges and rocks in the compound. Then he synthesized:

But in their Pleasure-houses, they rather chuse [in comparison with the main halls] a beautiful Disorder, and a wandering as far as possible from all the Rules of Art. They go entirely on this Principle, 'That what they are to represent there is a natural and wild View of the Country; a rural Retirement, and not a Palace form'd according to all the Rules of Art.' Agreeably to which, I have not yet observ'd any Two of the little Palaces in all the grand Inclosure, which are alike,

tho' some of them are placed at such considerable Distances from one another..... This whole Inclosure is called *Yuen-ming Yuen* [Yuan Ming Yuan, or Garden of Total Clarity], the Garden of Gardens; or The Garden, by way of Eminence. It is not the only one that belongs to the Emperor; he has Three others, of the same kind: but none of them so large, or so beautiful, as this. In one of these lives the Emperor's Grandfather, *Cang-hy* [Kangxi, or K'ang-hsi]; and is called *Tchuamg tchun yuen* [Chang Chun Yuan] or The Garden of perpetual Spring. The Pleasure-places of the Princes and Grandees are in Little, what those of the Emperor are in Great.

Perhaps you will ask me, 'Why all this long Description? Should not I rather have drawn Plans of this magnificent Place, and sent them to you?' To have done that, would have taken me up at least Three Years; without touching upon any thing else: whereas I have not a Moment to spare; and am forced to borrow the Time in which I now write to you, from my Hours of Rest (Attiret 1982: p.46).

Poor Attiret had just entered the giddy scenes of Yuan Ming Yuan. Imagine, too, the responses of his friends, the recipients of that letter in the middle of eighteenth century France. Would they believe what they had been told about the sceneries and sumptuousness of the imperial palace that, according to the writer, were all beyond the reach of the power of drawing or language? Although one may suspend belief for one letter like this, would one not be persuaded or convinced, if hundreds and thousands of scrolls of painting smuggled out, purchased, or sent out from China, all conveyed a similar depiction of their gardens and wilderness?

The novelty of Chinese art consequently caused an upsurge among the wealthy to collect it. Louis XIV's chateaux were stuffed with Japanese and Chinese objects, porcelains, lacquers, textiles, goldworks, and drawings from the Emperor of China. Naturally it is hard to see why the Prince of Wales should be immune to this fad. Due to a lack of evidence, we cannot tell what exactly Father Matteo Ripa taught Burlington or William Kent. The Prince of Wales, certainly, had a taste for chinoiserie, even more than Louis XIV. For he was no longer satisfied with merely collecting Chinese objects in the Kew, he wanted to build a House of Confucius, monumentalizing the virtues about which Voltaire later theorized in order to monumentalize himself. He "was said to have had his summer house 'painted to illustrate the history of Confucius'. He also employed William Kent to lay out the garden at Kew. The spread of new ideas on landscape gardening went hand-in-hand with the passion for 'Exoticks', and the old geometrical gardens were being gradually swept away—formality was replaced by the interest of landscape, lakes and noble trees" (Bingham 1975: p.5).

The House of Confucius left not a trace on its site. But another chinoiserie building, a pagoda completed in 1762 (by the Princess Dowager of Wales), still stands in the Kew. The pagoda embodies one of the most sacred structures in a Buddhist monastery. It originated from the Stupa in ancient India—a tumulus for preserving Buddha's relics. In China, the pagoda

was transformed into various forms, with various architectural techniques and materials, with a vertical tower to preserve Buddhistic sutras, niches with Buddha statues, and eminent Buddhist monks' relics. A pagoda was located in the centre of temple complex or on the central axis. During Song Dynasty, it was moved to the back of the monastery. Irrespective of these variations and evolutions of forms and spaces, the pagoda remains the most powerful symbol in the Buddhist monastery, with its layers of meanings in its number of storeys and types. To the English designers in the eighteenth century, of course, a pagoda was no more than a toy to decorate their garden.

The large amount of publications on the Chinese architecture in the middle of the eighteenth century made this play with Chinese "toy" easy to handle. The release of New Designs for Chinese Temples, Chinese and Gothic Architecture properly ornamented by William Halfpenny (alias Michael Hoare), Chinese architecture, Civil and Ornamental, adapted to this Climate by Paul Decker, to give a few examples, transformed Chinese architecture into a style menu or a pattern book to fit the popular demand of the wealthy. It did so by blindly or consciously reducing the rich cultural, religious connotations of the Chinese garden and Chinese architecture into docile visual ornaments. This codification of the culture of "the Other" took place side by side with the codification of one's own. The excessive regulations of dress, food, manner, as a prevalent social phenomenon in the eighteenth century England, entrapped the Chinese architecture in the same net. The net, whether it was language, print, or numbers, tightened at once—on the line of thought of Descartes, and Newton—dividing and sub-dividing the objects of the study.

Two philosophical and moral problems remained: (1) Chinese Gardens or Chinese Architecture may, like their counterparts in the West, have types according to their functions or ownerships,⁶⁹ but are radically different, as they have no drastic contrasts or shifts in their design philosophy. The influence of cosmology in design pre-determined the impossibility of a mechanical categorization, also given the fact that the authors of England had no inkling of the nuances of Chinese regional culture and architecture; (2) Chinese Garden and Chinese Architecture cannot, by any means, be reduced into sheer patterns or styles. Their symbolic functions resist codification.

The authors who divided Chinese architecture into idiomatic parts seemed not to mind this at all. Right from the outset, their condescending attitudes of Chinese culture stymied the

⁶⁹For example, Chinese Gardens, depending on their ownership, could be schematically categorized as: (1) Imperial Gardens and Landscapes, the ones served to the royal families and emperors for their leisure and pleasure; (2) Private Owned Gardens, those built by literati, merchants, or mandarins, they often were within the housing compound; (3) Landscapes of Temples and Monasteries, that had religious purposes; (4) Open Public Landscape, which was accessible to the plebeians.

sincerity of their learning from the Chinese. Chambers, the most influential architect among those who entertained Chinoiserie, the designer of the pagoda in the Kew, declared openly on the forefront of his Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils:" Though I am publishing a work of Chinese Architecture, let it not be suspected that my intention is to promote a taste so much inferior to the antique, and so much unfit for our climate"(Chambers 1968: ii). Apologetically, Chambers gave his condescending reasons to write about Chinese architecture.

[T]he architecture of one of the most extraordinary nations in the universe cannot be a matter of indifference to a true lover of the arts, and an architect should by no means be ignorant of so singular a stile of building: at the least the knowledge is curious, and on particular occasions may likewise be useful; as he may sometimes be obliged to make Chinese compositions, and at others it may be judicious in him to do so. For though, generally speaking, Chinese architecture does not suit European purposes; yet in extensive parks and gardens, where a great variety of scenes are required, or in immense palaces, containing a numerous series of apartments, I do not see the impropriety of finishing some of the inferior ones in the Chinese taste. Variety is always delightful; and novelty, attended with nothing inconsistent or disagreeable, sometimes takes place of beauty. History informs us that Adrian, who was himself an architect, at a time when the Grecian architecture was in the highest esteem among the Romans, erected in his Villa, at Tivoli, certain buildings after the manner of the Egyptians and of other nations. The buildings of the Chinese are neither remarkable for magnitude or richness of materials: yet there is a singularity in their manner, a justness in their proportion, a simplicity, and sometimes even beauty, in their form, which recommend them to our notice. I look upon them as toys in architecture: and as toys are sometimes, on account of their oddity, prettyness, or neatness of workmanship, admitted into the cabinets of the curious, so may Chinese buildings be sometimes allowed a place among compositions of a nobler kind (Chambers 1968: ii).

Indeed, we should not view Chamber's attitude too critically. *(Although reading these lines , my thoughts stagnate in between the blank spaces, I am pondering, as I am explaining to you now, how much we have changed in the past two hundred years).* The historical conditions under which the first contact of China and the West took place induced ethnocentrism. Voltaire himself, who admired the Chinese highly, also believed that there was "a sort of 'built-in' racial inability in the Chinese to go beyond a certain point" (Voltaire 1969: p.295). Repeatedly Chambers states that he considered Chinese "as great, or wise" people, but "only in comparison with the nations that surround them; and have no intention to place them in competition either with the ancients, or with the moderns of this part of the world"(Chambers 1968:p.i).

Aligned with Chambers, Addison believed that the principle of naturalness was used by both the Ancients and the Chinese.

Writers who have given us an account of China, tell us the inhabitants of that country laugh at the plantations of Europeans, which are laid out by the rule of line; because, they say, any one may place trees in equal rows and uniform figures. They choose rather to show a genius in works of this nature, and therefore always conceal the art by which they express the particular beauty of a plantation that strikes the imagination at first sight, without discovering what it is that makes so agreeable an effect.⁷⁰

Therefore learning from nature should include, to Addison, the learning from the Chinese. This generosity and equanimity by no means derived from humility. They were based upon a vision of a Great Britain within which the power of trade brought the world together under the effigy of the King. Addison said,

[The King should be proud of seeing] so many private men, who in his time would have been the vassals of some powerful baron, negotiating like princes for greater sums of money than were formerly to be met with in the royal treasury! Trade, without enlarging the British territories, has given us a kind of additional empire: it has multiplied the number of the rich, made our land estates infinitely more valuable than they were formerly, and added to them the accession of other estates as valuable as the lands themselves" (Addison 1892: p.148).

So be it, Addison shouted, if this Great Britain does not have the fruit that China or the Philippines has, import them, if this Great Britain does not have the fine pottery, let us not hesitate to decorate "our rooms" with Chinese pyramids and Japanese workmanship (Addison 1892: p.148).

This ethnocentric departure of Addison, Chambers and their contemporaries inexorably pre-destined the eighteenth century encounter with the East to become a bizarre form of heroism. It is heroic, for the price of understanding the mysterious China was enormous—it cost the lives of generations of Jesuits, sinologists, and scholars. They spent their lives for undeniable values (as much as Chambers' writing on Chinese architecture still has sparkles here and there). It is tragic, or if one prefers, curiously bizarre that the tightened net of the European tabulation through words and pictures has holes everywhere. The objects of codification emptied in front of the Western Eye. Staring at the drawings of Chambers long enough, one will catch an estranged visual effect: with shades and shadows Chambers rendered, every picture and every elevation supposedly more real than the Chinese way of representation which was non-perspective, and turned into three dimensional entities with no soul, no substance, no longer "Chinese". They are distinctively Western, with forms simplified, hardened, with interiors being penetrated by light. In the case of pagoda, the niches have gone, the doors turn into wide-open apertures. "Properly" Chambers called them "toys". The

⁷⁰Indirectly cited from Hugh Honour's *Chinoiserie*, London: Hugh Honour, c.1961, p.146.

possession of "toys", or the domestication of others via the domestication of symbols, professed plainly by Addison's own words, already heralded an age of Western commodification of everything, including the most sacred, from others' societies. The garden is one of them.

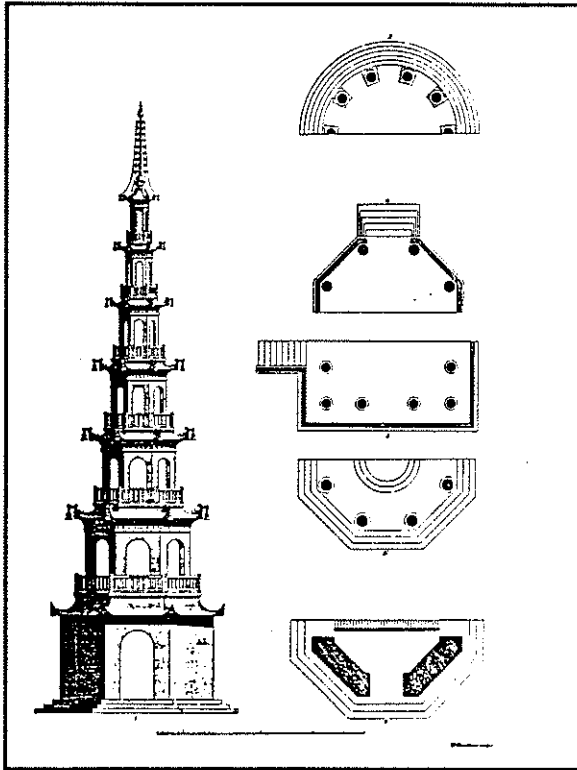


Figure 17. Chambers' Illustration of Pagoda



Figure 18. Chambers' Illustration of Chinese people

Source: William Chambers, *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furnitue, Dresses, Machines and Utensils*, 1757.

The bending, mutilating and forcing of Chinese architecture through the Western grids of knowledge did not escape from controversies. The novelty of chinoiserie incurred a vehement attack from the hard core "English" British intellectuals. Internal political differences played a modest part in this dispute. Their ego being hurt, Shaftesbury and Pope believed firmly that it was only the Greeks that founded their art and science on Nature, whereas what the Egyptians or "barbarians of any kind" may have achieved so was pure luck. "Whatever flourished or was raised to any degree of correctness or real perfection in the kind was by means of Greece alone, ardin the hand of that sole pilot, most civilized, and accomplished nation"(Shaftesbury 1963: p,241). Out of this mentality,

Shaftesbury felt no need to justify with Chinese precedents his admiration of wild nature 'where neither Art, nor the Conceit or Caprice of Man has spol'd genuine order by breaking upon primitive state'. He even enthused—in so far as

an Augustian philosopher could enthuse—on 'the verdure of the Filed.....the rude rocks, the mossy caverns..... and broken Falls of Water', which were soon to form the essential features of the landscape park (Honour 1961: p.145).

Soon after the middle of the eighteenth century, the debate on the connection between Chinese garden and "naturalness" stopped. With the British conquest on China and the fall of Cathay, few British intellectuals would be even interested to continue the discussion. Chambers' own book on the Chinese architecture and garden earned himself more trouble than applause. For whatever reason, he compromised at the end of the eighteenth century by publishing A Treatise on the Decorative Part of Civil Architecture in which he entirely espouses the opinions of Shaftesbury and Pope. The Classical won over the Chinese in the rising Great Britain. The trend of Chinoiserie flagged. The Kew that initiated the trend now was changed into a Garden of Science. Along with the expansion of knowledge of both nature and culture, the condescending patronage of Chinese culture—even just that—became illegitimate, and was replaced by violence. For the lovers of Chinese art and garden in Europe, the first heyday, had passed.

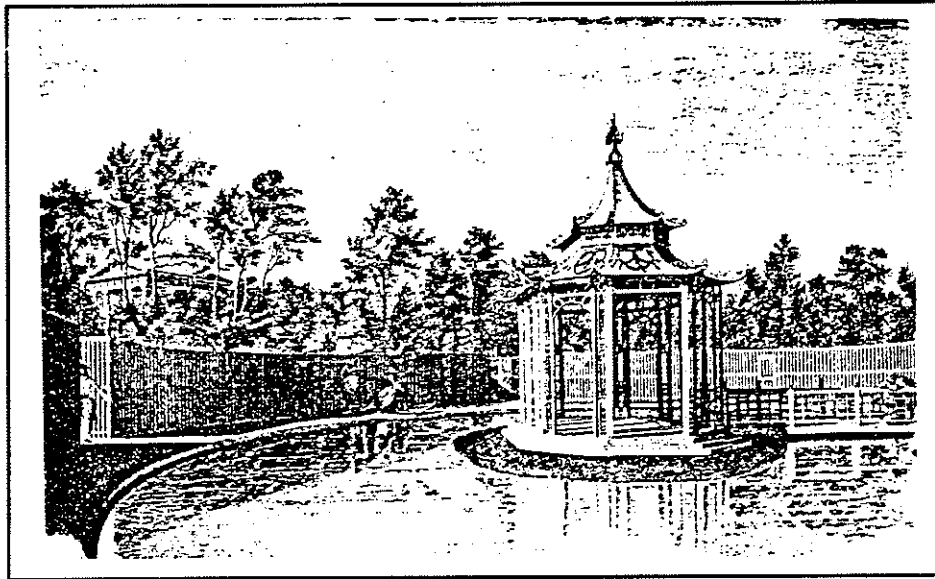


Figure 19. The House of Confucius.

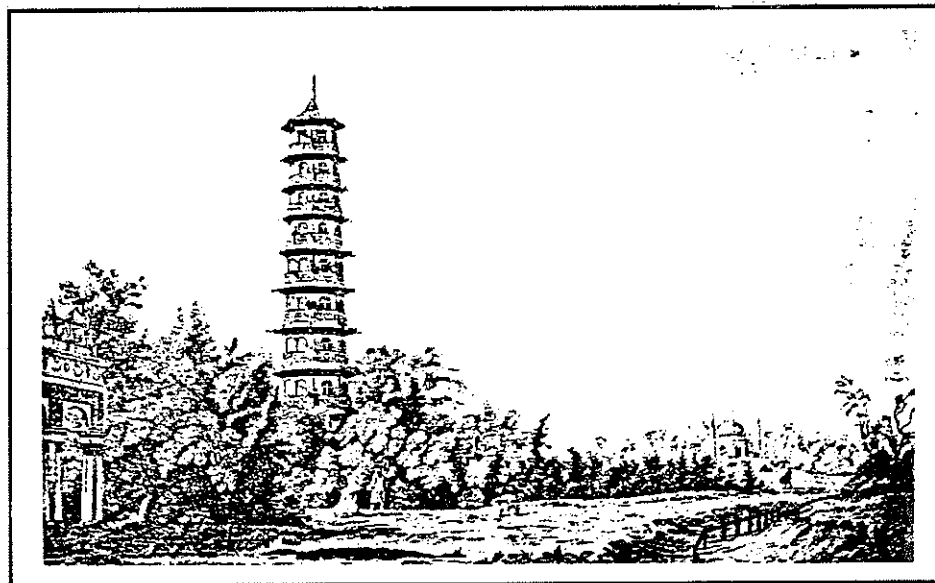


Figure 20. The Pagoda in the Kew.

Source: Madeleine Bingham, *The Making of Kew*, 1975.

6.4. The Censure on the Foreign Gaze

In retrospect, the heyday had its haze. China was anything but a passive entity, total, readily to be viewed in one comprehensive glance. The difficulty for the foreign gaze⁷¹

⁷¹Robert Fortune, a British botanist who made his trip to China in the middle of the nineteenth century, described Chinese as "a bunch of jugglers". Dauntingly Fortune admitted he was unable to penetrate the Chinese society: "We [the Europeans] were in the position of little children who gaze with admiration and wonder at a penny peep-show in a fair or market-place at home.—We looked with magnifying eyes on

to penetrate Chinese society reached climax, if account of the power of the Kangxi reign. In the early years of the eighteenth century, the Chinese Empire reinvigorated before the Opium Wars. The emperor and his court enjoyed absolute autonomy over what was to be seen by the foreigners and what was not to be seen.

The forefathers of the Qing Dynasty, as they appear in history books, had been no less boorishly arrogant than Addison or Pope. Once the Jesuits showed a print of a streetscape of a European city in the court: Emperor Kangxi, looking at the thick walls and high buildings (four or five stories), sympathetically lamented: "Undoubtedly, this Europe must be a very small and pitiful Country; since the Inhabitants cannot find Ground enough to spread out their Towns, but are obliged to live up thus in the Air." (Attiret 1982:p.36) Read also The Emperor's Edict to the Dutch Governor-General on October 16, 1656 when the Dutch sought the trade with China.

We consider your country, Captain Moor, Maatziiker of Holland", wrote Emperor Shunzhi, "to be distantly located on Our western border, separated from Us by remote and dangerous oceans. Since ancient times your country has never embraced Chinese culture. Nevertheless, from afar you know and long for Our virtue and civilization. You, therefore, selected tributary ambassadors, Peter de Goyer and Jacob de Keyzer, and others, to come to Our court and respectively to present tribute from a distance of more than ten thousand *li*. You have shown loyalty and justice. For this reason we indeed praise you very much.....Concerning your petition for entering and leaving (China) for your convenience in paying Us homage and presenting tribute and for the exchange of goods: Although this will circulate money and commodities which would be to the profit of our merchants and people, we are afraid that the distance is so great and the winds and waves so dangerous, that it will be very toilsome to the tribute-bearers who travel in boats and carts and suffer the hardship of long journeying. Therefore, if the times for tribute-presentation be too frequent and the number of tribute-bearers required too grate, they will command our sympathy. Therefore, we order that your country should present tribute every eight years, that officers and servants should not be more than 100 men, only twenty of whom shall be allowed to go to the imperial Capital (Fu 1966: p.20)

Isn't it all apparent that Emperor Shunzhi treated the Dutch as the red haired "barbarians"? Isn't it true that the Son of Heaven of the Central Kingdom considered Europe an uncivilized place? Isn't "trade", the term suggested little equity in Addison's mind, also falling into the category of "tribute" in Emperor Shunzhi's mind? The emperor thought the Dutch was worshipping his civilized court.

every thing Chinese; and fancied, for the time at least, that what we saw was certainly real. But the same children who look with wonder upon the scenes of Trafalgar and Waterloo, when the curtain falls, and their penny-worth of sights has passed by, find that, instead of being amongst those striking scenes which have just passed in review before their eyes, they are only, after all, in the market-place of their native town. So it is with "Children of a larger growth." This mystery served the purpose of the Chinese so long as it lasted; and although we perhaps did not give them credit for all to which they pretended, at least we gave them much more than really deserved" (Fortune 1847:p.4).

Shunzhi granted the Dutch traders his mercy. According to the annals of the Qing, the Dutch ambassadors obediently followed the rules of the court. In return, they were allowed the privilege of "kow-towing" to the emperor within the innermost court of the Great Within. As a result of the "mercy" of the emperor, the observant Dutch traveller, John Nieuhoff, got a peek of the Imperial compound:

All the Edifices, which are so many, are most richly adorned with gilt Galleries, Balconies, and carved Imagery, to the admiration of all that ever saw them; each dwelling having a large Pent-house so that you may walk dry in all weather.....All the Roofs of the Buildings are covered with yellow glazed Pantiles which shine, when the sun reflects, brighter than Gold; which has made some believe and report, that the Roof of this Royal Palace was covered with Pure Gold (Honour 1961: p.20).

Viewing, views, and to be viewed, each step unveiled in a Chinese way!

Through those plotted routes and doorways, the imperial compound unfurled to the Western Eye a shining surface or a corner of riotous details, dropping glinting hints on that which was absent. Unlike the Acropolis that stands haughtily between the sky and the earth or Renaissance Florence that praises the triumph of Man (in a male form), the ancient Chinese cities were submitting to the Tao of the cosmos, to the changes and uncertainties generated by the counterbalance of *Yin* and *Yang*. They were designed according to Feng Shui (Wind and Water)—the geomancy based upon the I Ching. There is no exception for the Forbidden City. Its architectural form, its orientation and roof colour were simultaneously symbolic and functional: they symbolize the cosmos into a holographic monad, yet they respond directly to the local climate of Beijing. So accustomed to order, geometry and proportion, the Western Eye, suddenly disoriented, lost its grip on interpretation. Nieuhoff was stunned by the spectacular Goldenness of the Royal Roof color, meanwhile was unaware that "yellow" corresponded to number "5" in the centre of the Chinese mystical nine square grid based on the I Ching's numerological system. "Yellow" was the noblest color among all, representing "Earth" and the regalia.

Or sometimes the Western Eye inadvertently failed to "see" China. Attiret complained that nothing deserved to be seen in his near two thousand miles journey to Peking: "not even any Monuments, or Buildings, except some Temples for their Idols; and those built of Wood, and but one Story high: the chief Value and Beauty of which seem'd to consist in some bad Paintings and very indifferent Varnish-works. Indeed any one that is just come from seeing the Buildings in France and Italy, is apt to have but little Taste, or Attention, for whatever he may meet in the other Parts of the World"(Attiret 1982: p.5). Most Chinese dwellings for centuries retained a modest greyness. In a way similar to grasses rooted in soil, the rocks piling

up to a mountain, the villages or courtyard housing grew out of the land, forging a strong collective identity, leaving each individual building to vary in a delicate nuance. The unvarnished color of those buildings may be a result of a war, famine, or frugality; however, the codification of a color scheme in the Qing Dynasty sanctioned flamboyant colours for the houses of ordinary people.

Three major factors contributed to the difficulties which the missionaries faced in late imperial China. (1). The Jesuits often faced strong resistance from the indigenous religions, and the competition and antagonism to foreign religions. Adam Schall himself was attacked by both the Mohammedans and the Buddhists inside the Astronomical Bureau. After Shunzhi's death, Schall lost the emperor's protection. Immediately he faced a charge that used to be his merits. The anti-Western opponents in the Qing Court accused Schall of being a heretic demagogue:

The Westerner, T'ang Jo-wang [Schall's Chinese name], was a posthumous follower of Jesus who had been the ringleader of the treacherous bandits of the Kingdom of Judea (Ju-te-ya). In the Ming Dynasty he came to Peking secretly and not as a tribute-bearer for his own country. The heretical courtier, Hsü Kuang-ch'i, coveted the foreigner's curios and recommended him to the Court, instead of enforcing the prohibition against navigation (that foreigners might not enter China). Thereafter T'ang Jo-wang posed as a calender-maker in order to carry on the propagation of heresy. His conspiracy is well established by the fact that he ordered an official, Li Tsu-pai, to write a heretical book, entitled the T'ien-hsüeh Ch'aun-kai saying that inhabitants of the ten thousand countries both in the East and in the West were descendents of the heretics (i.e., the Jews), that one of them had become (the ancient) Emperor Fu-hsi (of China) in the middle Kingdom, and that both the Six Classics and the Four Books (of China) are only commentaries on the heretic (Jewish) scripture! Does not Li Tsu-pai openly betray his own country in following the doctrines of another country? The guilt of the author who writes such a heretical book should never be pardoned (Fu 1966: p.35).

Schall endured unbearable torture in prison. Although being pardoned, Schall's frail health came to a quick end. Three month later, in August, 1666, he died in the mission house. However, his death merely marked a beginning for the sharp split among the Jesuits themselves, and between the Jesuits and the Papal Court in Rome.

(2). Inevitably the Jesuits had to allow their Chinese converts to practice the Chinese ritual of ancestor worship in China. One way to do so, for the early missionaries, was to re-write world history, as the accusation on Schall said, putting the Chinese progenitors into Genesis. The contextualization of Christianity offended not only Chinese Confucians, but also some Jesuits who took the controversy back to Rome (Rowbotham 1966:pp.132-175).

Emperor Kangxi handled this matter diplomatically. On his six trips from Peking to Jiangnan [The Southern region of the Yangtze] at the end of the seventeenth century and during

the early eighteenth century, he allocated time specially to meet the missionaries on his way. For instance, In 1684, the Emperor summoned the two Jesuit fathers Valat and Gabiani to an audience while he was in Nanking [Nanjing].

He received them 'sitting cross-legged on his throne in the Tartar fashion,' and asked them their names and ages, how long they had been in China, whether they had studied any philosophy or not, and if they could name a new star that had recently appeared. They were given a glass of wine that had been made for the Emperor by Jesuit fathers in Peking, which they drank kneeling in his presence, and presents of cloth and gold. The missionaries showed the Emperor a crucifix, in which he expressed polite interest (Spence 1966: p.135).

The genial emperor certainly expected to impress the Jesuits with his image of being a benign King to be known to the Europeans. On the other hand, the emperor increasingly became concerned with the foreign penetration.

On the fourth Southern Tour in 1703 the Emperor came across many groups of missionaries whose existence he had not suspected, and was extremely angry, both because he feared that some political activity was brewing, and because they had been moving around the country at will (luan-luan-li, mao-mao-li). The senior missionary, Grimaldi, could only placate him by agreeing to catalog all Jesuit personnel and possessions, and standing guaranty for the missionaries of other orders (Spence 1966: p.138).

(3) Judging from the letter of P re Attiret, the control of the missionaries had been significantly tightened three decades later. The journey to the capital, in the memory of Attiret, invoked an unpleasant experience.

We came hither by the Command, or rather by the Permission of the Emperor. An Officer was assign'd to conduct us; and they made us believe, that he would defray our Expences: but the latter was only in Words, for in Effect the Expence was almost wholly out of our own Pockets. Half of the Way we came by Water; and both ate, and lodg'd in our Boats: and what seem's odd enough to us, was; that, by the Rules of Good-breeding received among them, we were not allow'd ever to go ashore, or even to look out of the Windows of the Cover's-boats to observe the Faces of the Country, as we passed along. we made the latter Part of our Journey in a fort of Cage, which that were pleas'd to call a Litter. In this too we were shut up, all Day long; and at Night, carried into our Inns; (and very wretched Inns they are!) and this we got to Peking; with our curiosity quite unsatisfy'd, and with seeing but very little more of the Country, than if one had been shut up all the while in one's own Chamber (Attiret 1982:p.4).

Such a hard-line policy of the Qing court, logically, was to match with the bigotry of Rome.⁷² It also had something to do with Emperor Yongzhen's familial strife. Shortly after

⁷²"In March, 1715, the Holy See issued a decree forbidding: (1) the use of the terms of T'ien and Shang Ti for God; (2) the use of the Ching T'ien tablets (3)sacrifices to Confucius; (4) other ceremonies in the

Yongzheng's crowning, his eighth brother, Yun Ssu, plotted a mutiny to overthrow him, in which a Jesuit, Juan Morao was allegedly involved. The mutiny received stern suppression. Father Morao was executed in Turkestan on August 18, 1726. With it, the Manchu emperor professed a clear rejection of Catholicism. On May 28, 1727, on the occasion of celebrating Buddha's birthday, Yongzheng admonished his people:

However, Heaven (nature) creates the ten thousand things by the interactions of Yin and Yang and the five elements. Therefore, we say that the ten thousand things originated in heaven. Heaven is the Almighty God (Chu-tsai). From ancient times down to the present, have you heard of anyone who does not worship Heaven? Or of any religion which does not respect Heaven? Are there any differences between our worship of Heaven and the idea of the worship of Heaven of the Western religion? If they say that God the Creator, for the sake of saving the people, transformed himself into a human being on this Earth, they lie wantonly. They use the name of Heaven to seduce and enchant our foolish people into following their religion. This must be the heresy of the European religion! In Our opinion it may mean simply that at first when the Western religion was being founded, the people respected their founder as reverently as they worshipped Heaven. But to say that the founder of their religion himself was the Lord of Heaven is unreasonable nonsense...

China has her Chinese religion, just as Europe has a European religion. The European religion does not need to be practiced in China; similarly how can European countries practice Chinese religion? For instance, take the case of the sons of Sunu, Wu-er-ch'en and the others, ignorant and lawless fellows, who betray their ancestors and violate the code of the Court, and are even willing to die for their religion without repentance. Is this not abnormal? European theology which claims that the Lord of heaven was himself transformed into a man is particularly ridiculous, it is unnecessary for him to transform himself into a human being. To say that the believers in the religion of the Lord of Heaven will themselves become transfigured into the likeness of the Lord of heaven, is the most unreasonable nonsense(Fu 1966: p.156)!

A dialogic (indeed, for different reasons) cross-cultural exchange ran into a deadlock. Having indicated that China would not spread its religion in Europe, Emperor Shunzhi, through his own biting satires, decided to close the door to missionaries. Inasmuch as the Western Eye cast its gaze upon the dawning China, China ebbed into its own dream.

When Robert Fortune, an appointed "Botanical Collector to the Horticultural Society of London", stepped into Dr. Chang's garden in Ningbo in 1843—shortly after the First Opium War, the door of China, before Emperor Yongzheng was able to close it, had been pried wide-open by the guns of English troops. Fortune himself heard of the exquisite beauty of the mandarin gardens at Amoy, from the "English troops, during the war" (Fortune 1847:p.92).

Confucian temples; (5) sacrifices to ancestor; (6) oblations offered before the ancestral tablets, before the body of a deceased person, or at the grave side; (7) the possession of tablets bearing the legend, 'Seat of the Soul of X....'"(Rowbotham 1966:p.165).

Already too late, the first contact between the East and West had been derailed. The haze of China darkened.

Had he been sensitive to the Chinese "soul", Fortune would have been the first Westerner to "discover" the Chinese literati garden and to introduce it to the West. Fortune, a learned scientist, an explorer, however, concerned himself more with horticultural knowledge and the "yellow colour camellia". Thinking that "the Chinese were in that half-civilised state" compared with Europe (Fortune 1847:p.5), inside Dr. Chang's house, inside an "authentic literati garden", his eyes fluttered on the dynamic form:

This old gentleman has the different parts of his house joined together by rude-looking caverns, and what at first sight appears to be a subterraneous passage, leading from room to room, through which the visitor passes to the garden which lies behind the house. The small courts, of which a glimpse is caught in passing through, are fitted up with this rockwork; dwarf trees are planted here and there in various places, and creepers hang down naturally and gracefully until their ends touch the little ponds of water which are always placed in front of the rockwork. These small places being passed, we are again led through passages like those already noticed, when the garden, with its dwarf trees, vases, rockwork, ornamental windows, and beautiful flowering shrubs, is suddenly opened to the view (Fortune 1847/1979: p.99).

6.5. The Chinese Garden

Why has the Chinese garden always caught the Western Eye off-guard? Is it because of its miniature delicacy, its indeterminate focal point, or its layered space? Or it is because the "deep", "incomprehensible" "Nature" in Taoism, Confucianism, and I will add, Buddhism, are radically different from that of the Greco-Roman-Judeo world views?

The Chinese garden developed along its own course. The word "Garden" in the classical Chinese synchronically offers at least seven references: (1) *Yuán*, 園 as for garden; (2) *Yuàn*, 苑 garden with exotic plants and animals; (3) *Yòu*, 囿 enclosed land with animals; (4) *Pu*, 圃 garden planted with vegetables or flowers; (5) *Tíng*, 庭 the space between the main hall and the gate; (6) *Yuàn*, 院 as for a walled courtyard with walls; (7) *Yē*, 野 dwelling in wildness (Chen 1980: p.109). Amid them "Yòu" 囿 and "Pu" 圃, inscribed on the ancient relics, are the archaic nouns having at least three thousand years history for the prototypic meaning of garden. The Kangxi Dictionary (published in 1717) dissected the hieroglyphic character "Yòu" 囿, into its radicals: the word consists of the "Presence" enclosed by a square. The noun "Presence" 宀 originated from the ancient Chinese observation of the solar eclipse, it was called a "Presence" whenever an eclipse happened. Altogether the enclosed "Presence" (the presence of exotic animals) in composing the noun "Yòu" graphically recorded the earliest function of garden in China—that "Yòu" as a place fenced artificially, where the

emperors or the dukes, during the seasonal breaks in farming enjoyed hunting; "Pu", coined possibly around the same time or later, visually outlines an enclosed farm land where in the centre stands the symbol of a male householder. The contradistinction of "Yòu" and "Pu"—that between an enclosed hunting site and an enclosed farming land—loosely, suggests a demarcation of the transformation of ancient China from a hunting to an agricultural society. With certitude, we are assured that the increasing time for leisure available to the worthies and the wealthy led the art of garden-making to depart from the necessity of productivity. Understandably the royal families played a major role in developing the art of garden making. The first Emperor of China who unified the entire country, Qin Shi Huang (reigned 221-206 B.C.), ordered people to build besides the Great Wall a number of extravagant imperial palaces and gardens. Till the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D.9), garden making was popular among the aristocrats and the wealthy. With the development of the imperial gardens to their pompous extravaganza of "Yuàn" 苑, namely, a palace teeming with exotic flowers and fowls, the art of garden making had become widely accepted by the literati, an educated elite officialdom, and the religious sectors such as Taoist and Buddhist monks. "Yuán"—the term for garden used up to the modern time—appeared approximately at this time.

"Nature" (or *Ziran* 自然) within the various forms of Chinese thoughts, in time, ramifies, converges, or multiplies. The formation of the notions of "nature" and the "natural" directly affected garden design. Confucianism and Taoism, over against other ideals and undercurrents, transformed into diverse sects of philosophical and religious practices. In the Han Dynasty, orthodox Confucianism, having absorbed Taoist cosmology with its belief in *Yin* and *Yang*, was first consecrated into a religion, which persisted in the dynasties to come as a set of normative social principles. The internal warfare following the Han Dynasty in Wei and Jin, nourished Taoism into another prominent religion with its hierarchies of deities, anthropocentric theologies, and Alchemy. This mystification of Tao into something supernatural powerfully invigorated the Chinese worship of nature. Shielded by this escapism from reality, war, and suffering, the literati and monks emulated the reclusive life style of the Taoists and the naturalists. Chinese garden making, was elevated from the flamboyant imperial exhibitionist tastes, to a much more naturalistic and humble art, aimed primarily at the "realness" of representation of nature. At the extreme, the retired literati politicians, instead of living in their urban compound, would move into mountains and wilderness. The poetic images of the most renowned Jin poet, Tao Yuanming, said it all:

Being a child never tainted by mendacity, in nature [we all] love mountain;
 Being trapped by the artificial nets, [I] spent my thirty years.....
 [Now] ploughing in the wilderness of the south, [I] humbly returned to the land;

Ten acres homestead, with eight or nine thatches;
 Elm and willow shadowing the back eaves, Plum and peach trees arrayed in front
 of the hall way.....
 The yards have no dirt, the houses are full of space;
 [I] have been so long in the cage of the artificial, now I reunite with nature.(My
 translation)

In images of nature and returning to nature, garden—a simplistic yardful of plants and rocks, gently echoed the form of nature "out there". What had been emphasized in this Taoist ideal of "paradise" was mostly the notion of "presence of nature", i.e., how to return to the embrace of natural forces of the cosmos, as advocated by Zhuang Zi, in which an aesthetic transcendence could be achieved by separating the mind from worldly matters: seclusion in the wildness. The withdrawal from urban life popularized the villas and resorts and gardens in the country. Suzhou by then also had its first recorded private scholar garden.

Garden, in its widely applied meaning of the literati garden, as an oasis within the urban context, which gave the meditative function an unprecedented significance, had much to do with Zen Buddhist recognition of nature and its dissemination in Jiangnan (the southern region of the Yangtze River). With the Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy in the Song and Ming Dynasty, arose the possibility of integrating Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism with the re-humanization of the long lost tradition of classical Confucianism and Taoism. Zen Buddhism began to be popularized in Jiangnan, making the region a hub of the Buddhist monks and the literati. Zen challenged traditional Chinese thoughts which emphasized dialectics and hierarchies. Obviously the non-Dualistic (and differing-from-philosophies) stance of Zen, in its affirmation of totality, and of that "pointing to the heart" immediacy, revolutionized the traditional way of painting, and artistic representation in general. It sent a quake through the artistic circles of Wu since the thirteenth century. The oeuvre of Zheng Xie (1234-1300), Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322), and Wu Zhen (1280-1354) had shown the signs of the intellectual crystallization of Zen in the Chinese arts. Rapidly replacing the Song genre of the objective representation, both the Yuan and Ming paintings of the southern masters celebrated the unlimited freedom of subjective expression (Loehr 1980) which, as an influence of Zen Buddhism, prevailed in the Wu school of painters (including Shen Zhou (1427-1509), Wen Zhengming (1470-1559), Qiu Ying (?-1552), and Tang Yin (1470-1523).

The Wu school of painters refused to separate representation from presentation, conceptual thinking from action, which inevitably validated both simplicity and spontaneity. Falseness and grotesqueness had also been assigned new values: falseness being used as a parodist counter notion to Truth, the grotesque as a means of shock in Zen. By this rationale, Zen paintings were radically anti-aesthetic, mocking, flaunting, and breaking the rules of the

convention of composition—of balance and harmony, and drawing techniques particularly in the works of later monk masters, Shi Tao (or Tao Ji) (1638?-1720) and Zhu Dai (1626-1705).

In landscape architecture, Buddhism revolutionized the entire tradition of literati garden making. Today's Suzhou has the finest masterpieces. Browsing through the key journals and diaries written throughout Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties, one can easily grasp some functional changes in the literati gardens, coinciding with the dissemination of Zen Buddhism among the Wu literati. Some parts of the garden had begun to be designated for Zen meditation. New places like "Bodhi Field", "One Vehicle Tower", "Four Zen Cosmos", "Five Dharma Building" (Chen et al. 1983: p.189) came into existence. And if the garden itself was located within a Buddhist temple (some of the best preserved literati gardens belonged to the monks), that garden was definitely used for Zen practices. And most of the gardens of this time were designed, built and owned by monks.

The impact of Buddhism on literati garden design extends far beyond its religious themes. The influence of Zen on garden design was more in its iconoclastic principles of re-thinking, and of representing nature and humanity in design. Primarily, the literati no longer sought for a "realness" and "total representation of nature" as previously in the Jin Dynasty. Since "nature" developed into a "mind-set" of nothingness, bridging over subjectivity and objectivity, the power of the Zen way of enlightenment could arise anywhere, in its absolute minimalism. This shift towards to "nothingness"—much more elaborated in the Japanese Dry-Land Garden—caused the Chinese literati to also shift away from artifacts into "spaces", into voids created by walls, corridors, and plants. The surface of the water, that ephemeral quality of light reflection, the zigzag walkways meandering into the courtyard, exploded with the feeling of uncertainty, fragmentation, and yet had intimate quietness.

Thus, diagrammatically, to exaggerate a bit, the typology of the Chinese literati garden differs from the French Baroque garden that created a "perfect nature", from the English Neo-Palladian garden that sought a "manicured nature", or even from the Japanese Dry-Land garden that played mainly with symbolic nature.⁷³ The best examples of Song and

⁷³The metaphorical function of garden has been purified to its extreme in the Japanese Zen Buddhist garden such as for example in Ryoan-ji, where rocks were placed on top of the flat white sand surfaces, plotted with ripples to mimic the element of water. This dualistic contradistinction and balance between rock and sand, mountains and water, shifts radically to the extreme in a representational landscape and in its symbolization of the oriental ideal of creation. "Mount Sumeru and the Buddhist cosmos, the mythical Isles of the Blest, Chinese ideas surrounding the concept of yang and yin (opposing positive and negative forces), the tortoise and the crane (traditional symbols of long life and good fortune), and simple mathematical combinations of seven, five, and three. But in most cases these elements are no more than names or expedient explanations tacked on to the garden features in later times, and they by no means always fit the essential forms of gardens themselves. For instance, the seven-five-three compositional idea is often called in to explain the Shinju-an garden, and an elaborate tale of a tigress protecting her young from a demon is used to give narrative meaning to the Ryoan-ji garden, when in fact neither of this explanation is entirely apt" (Hayakawa 1973: p.95).

Ming literati gardens succeeded in fusing the presentation of nature with the representation of nature, practicality (use) with aesthetics (art) and spirituality (meaning), and the bodily experience (touching) with an abstraction (conception) all at once.⁷⁴

6.6. The Maddening Dreamscape

Will this comely and calm philosophical summary suffice though, to explain the "uneasiness" of Robert Fortune's gaze? It seems not. Fortune was not an obsessive philosopher, his eyes would not habitually penetrate "deep" into the woods. There was something else that baffled him.

At the dawn of June 24th, 1843, waking up in his boat, Fortune disguised himself with Chinese cloth, and then sneaked into the crowds of Suzhou.

None of the loiterers on the bridge appeared to pay the slightest attention to me, by which I concluded that I must be very much like one of themselves. How surprised they would have been had it been whispered to them that an Englishman was standing amongst them.

The city of Soo-chow-foo [the Prefecture of Suzhou], in its general features, is much the same as the other cities in the north, but is evidently the seat of luxury and wealth, and has none of those signs of dilapidation and decay which one sees in such towns as Ning-po. A noble canal, as wide as the river Thames at Richmond, runs parallel with the city walls, and acts as a moat as well as for commercial purposes. here, as at Cading and Ta-tsong-tseu, a large number of invalided junks are moored, and doubtless make excellent Chinese dwelling-houses, particularly to a people so fond of living on the water. This same canal is carried through arches into the city, where it ramifies in all directions, sometimes narrow and dirty, and at other places expanding into lakes of considerable beauty; thus enabling the inhabitants to convey their merchandise to their houses from the most distant parts of the country. Junks and boats of all sizes are plying on this wide and beautiful canal, and the whole place has a cheerful and flourishing aspect, which one does not often see in the other towns in China, if we except Canton and Shanghae[Shanghai] (Fortune 1847:p.250).

⁷⁴The key to this fusion of bodily experience and mental procession relies upon the manner how one combines the "real" and "literary" use of real nature, namely, the physical materiality of rocks, plants and water to represent nature as a whole in an analogous form. The Garden Master in the history of China, Ji Cheng explained this principle clearly in the preface of *The Crafts of the Gardens*: "As a young man I was known as a painter. I was by nature interested in seeking out the unusual; since I derived most pleasure from the brushes of Guan Tong and Jing Hao, I paid homage to their style in all my work. I travelled between the region of Beijing in the north and the old land of Zhu in the south, and in middle-age returned to my home region Wu, where I decided to settle at Zhenjiang. Zhenjiang is surrounded by the most beautiful scenery, and people in the area who cared about such things collected rocks, and arrange those with interesting shapes among bamboos and trees to make artificial mountains. One day I happened on some of these, and burst out laughing at them. When somebody asked me what I was laughing at, I answered, 'it has been said that art imitates life, but why do you not imitate the appearance of real mountains, instead of those heaps of fist-shape stones which country people put up to welcome the God of Spring?' 'Could you do any better yourself?' they asked, so I arranged some rocks into the shape of a cliff; everyone who saw it exclaimed, 'What a magnificent mountain!' and word of it spread far and near (Ji 1988: p.35).



Figure 21. Shen Zhou, "Hengtang". From a Ming album of Ten Views of Suzhou.
Source: Max Loehr, *The Great Painters of China*, 1980.

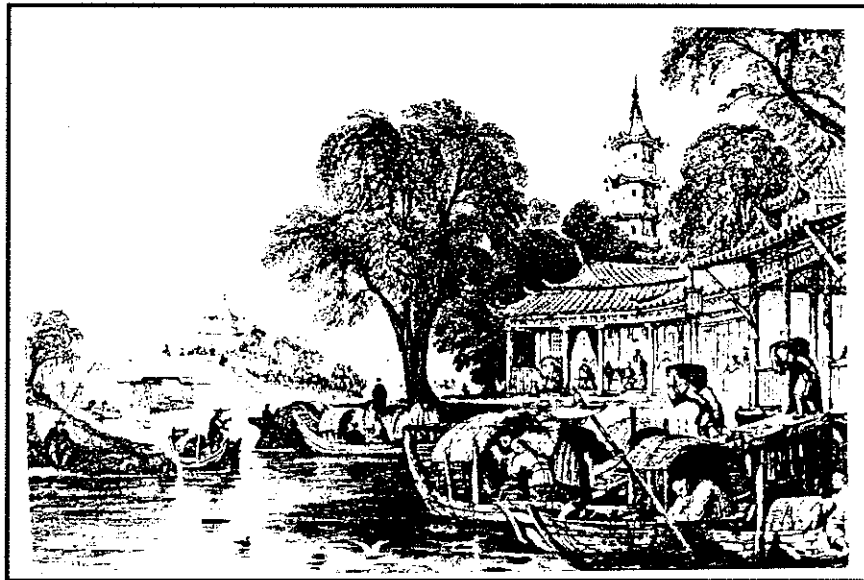


Figure 22. A Westerner's painting of Jiangnan in the Qing Dynasty.
Source: Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers*, 1990.

Reincarnating into his body, into his words, into his eyes hid beneath his hat, you and I caught the flickering glamour of Suzhou with the flourishing Capitalism⁷⁵ that perdured through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, upon the ruins of the ancient Wu Kingdom.⁷⁶

⁷⁵The entire Suzhou Prefecture once held a population of 1.03 million in the early period of Han (206 BC --AD 8) (Fan 1193: chapter 1) and consisted of 26 counties. After a population decrease to 160,000 in the

Eastern Han (25-220) due to the incessant turmoil of wars, Suzhou Prefecture increased its population again in the prosperous Tang Dynasty (618-907) to 630,000 people. Suzhou also became one of the wealthiest cities in China, contributing 1.5 million *Guan* in taxes to the Tang Court. With the collapse of the Tang Dynasty, China once more fell into the abyss of war. Both Suzhou and Hangzhou areas fortunately came under the control of a competent governor, Qian Liu, whose moderate, protective and pacifist policy towards the local economy induced a period of booming agricultural production. Being close to both Tai Lake, the Yangtze River and the Grand Canal, Suzhou Prefecture occupied a strategical position in the Chinese national economy, as the main base for the food supply of the Tang Court, even more so in the Song and Ming Dynasties. Along with Songjiang, Changzhou, Hangzhou, Jiaying, and Huzhou and the other six prefectures concentrated on the Yangtze Delta, the Suzhou region produced ninety percent of the rice and grains for China. Even at the turn of the 16th century, Suzhou prefecture still submitted annually 2.5 million *dan* (1 *dan*=100 *l*.) of grains, or 10 percent of the entire production of China.

Besides farming and fishery, Suzhou was also renowned for its silk industry and exotic goods. Such prolific land nurtured the densest networks of villages, markets, towns, counties, and cities in the history of ancient Chinese civilization. The farming villages in Suzhou prefecture were composed typically of less than 100 households. A market, emerging historically as a prominent place of exchange of agricultural goods, crafts, tools, salt, etc, was a special type of settlement consisting normally of 100 to 300 households. Towns were sheltering 1000 to 10,000 households. These towns, since the Ming Dynasty, had gradually become specialized in one key economy, such as tool making, weaving, or salt industry. Suzhou Prefecture administered 74 markets, towns, and cities in the Zhengde reign (1506-1521). These 74 towns and settlements were connected by channels and rivers, within a distance of 12 to 36 *Li* (1 *Li*=0.5 *Km*.).

Throughout the Ming Dynasty, the Wu and Yue regions that cover Suzhou, Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuxi, Hangzhou, and other cities, forming a chain along the south-east costal line, had embarked towards a profound economic restructuring. Take Suzhou for instance. In the late Ming and early Qing, the local economy was no longer mainly based on rice production and fishery. Rather, it centred on the family based textile industry. The import of cotton from India, the renovation of the textile machines in the Song Dynasty, in addition, the Ming Court Single Whip Tax in 1368, which allowed the farmers in Suzhou Prefecture to pay their taxes in cloth as substitute for grains (Fan 1990: p.136), triggered a boom in the textile industry. Suzhou had always been a centre for silk industry, as can be seen from the inventory of the Suzhou Tributes in the Tang Dynasty. This transformation from rice to cloth production took place within a time span of several decades, and was completed during the early period of Qing Dynasty. According to the exchange value in the Kangxi reign (1662-1722), an ordinary housewife in Suzhou could weave 1 bolt of cloth per day, which would give the housewife a net benefit of 1.1 *cash* which was twice the wage of a male farmer; in other words, her half month working income as a weaver would be tantamount to the value of crops produced from 1 *Mo* (1 *Mo*=0.1647 acre) land within a season (Fan 1990: p.147). Such a highly profitable textile industry crushed the previous agricultural economical structure in all respects. Residents, farmers or not, with or without direct access to cotton production, all of a sudden, became involved in the textile business.

⁷⁶Wu was the ancient name for the Suzhou region. Tai Bo and Zhong Yong were two sons of one of the Zhou Emperors who ruled central China between the 11th century BC and the 2nd century BC. The Wu Kingdom reached its first pinnacle of civilization around the 5th century BC, under the reign of King Fu Cai, a powerful and valiant despot who expanded the Wu Kingdom to its surrounding countries. But prosperity did not last. Wu was overthrown by Yue (the current Zhejiang province) twenty two years later (473 B.C.). Fu Cai took his own life, while fleeing on a western mountain trail outside Suzhou. The city, since Wu, never became a national capital again; with its moderate climate and bountiful natural resources, it always remained an ancient metropolis, thriving with commerce and cultures. It was praised by the ancient Chinese poets as one of the two "paradise-cities on earth" (the other is Hangzhou).

Embellished by each dynasty, the present day Suzhou still records physically the traces of its glorious past. The original city structure built under Fu Cai's reign and rebuilt in Song Dynasty is still noticeable. The first plan and construction of Suzhou was undertaken through the supervision of Wu Zixu, the Zai Xiang (an modern equivalent of the Premier) of the Wu Kingdom (under the domination of Fu Cai and his father). The city form complies with the rules of Feng Shui (Geomancy): its was based on a configuration of the square, an image of earth, with the periphery of 47 *Li*; 8 road gates to symbolize the eight directions of the heaven, and 8 water gates to imitate the eight hexa-grams of the earth. Each orientation has a particular name and meaning, corresponding to I Ching's numerology, constellation,

Pivoted by the textile industry, Suzhou whirled into the vertigo of a metropolis. Craft shops, stalls of tools, stone or wooden bridges, boats with wine jars, cloth guilds, trading clubs, dyeing mills, tea houses, bannermen's offices, "yamen", theaters, markets, temples, sanctuaries, brothels, were scattered in this celestial city. The signs of commerce spread from the corner of small villages to the houses of guilds. "Thronged crowds, at all bridges; men with white cloth, women with yellow flowers, arrive at the local markets" (Fan 1990: p.155). The hosts of the guilds flatteringly solicited the San-xi and Saan-xi merchants who arrived with thousands taels of gold. Along the narrow alleys and wide canals, we came across exhausted travellers from the north, peasants from the rice field, soldiers, constables, scoundrels, peddlers, prostitutes, monks, mill workers, craftsmen, intermingled with painters, calligraphers, poets, writers, merchants, mandarins, and courtiers.

The tea-houses were full, carousels were part of daily public life. The uproarious laughter of finger-guessing games, amorous ballad singing in Suzhou dialect, overrode the rumbling noise of the winch inside the dyeing mills. Adjacent to the dyeing mill—the new space in China for the new kind of economy and productivity, transforming human flesh into abstract silver and gold, and behind the walls, private banquets went on, inside the private gardens. "The renowned literati, the poets and painters, the chess masters and musicians, have visited this 'pine-garden'. The host exhibited lanterns every night for a feast within which his own family-owned opera troop, male and female singers, performed respectively" (Fan 1990: p.37).

Symbolizing leisure, taste, wealth, and fame, the garden in late imperial China escaped from the "noble nature-loving" of the literati. Gardens were no longer the precious endorsements of Lu Luwang or Su Shunqin. Suzhou alone, during the Qing Dynasty, could pride itself of over 170 famous gardens (Zhang et al., 1982: p.3). Garden making became a faddish social event,⁷⁷ Even the poor people, "unable to afford to pile a rock mountain could erect one rock [in the house], to deposit the passion" as Li Yu (1611-1680) suggested, "(Li 1936: p.243).

and the temporal order. (The five-element system defines the south direction as "fire", the east as "wood", the north as "water", the west as "gold", and the centre as "earth".) For instance, the south eastern direction represents the time of "Si", that is also the time of the Snake, therefore that gate was named "Snake Gate"; on the other hand, the gate in the upper west direction was named "Cang", the direction towards "Heaven" and the Greater Yang in the formation of Feng Shui.

If the allocation and labelling of artifact did not denote orientation, they took cues from history. The gate towards the north, to the Qi Kingdom was named after the princess of Qi, whose father's defeat led to her unwilling and tragic marriage to her enemy King, Fu Cai. She, according to local myth, cried incessantly for home. Her wealthy husband then commanded to build a tower on top of the West gate, to allow her look at her country from a distance. The gate was given her home country's name.

⁷⁷A retired scholar, Qi Biaojia [or Ch'i Piao-chia] called his craving for garden making an "addiction". In the beginning Qi only planned to build a small garden near Shaoxing. Every now and then when his friends visited the site, they suggested he could pave a path here, erect a pavilion there. Qi felt inspired. He would go to the site in the morning and return home at dusk. "The chill of the winter or the heat of the summer, the labour and sweat, did not bother [me]", Qi wrote, "travelling by a small boat, I disregarded wind or rain. Groping for the gold near my bed, knowing about the shortage of money, I

Whatever this meant—commodification of the literati arts, or the social transmission of knowledge and the societal order through architecture—gardens in Suzhou arose as an important nexus. Like the Greek *agora* or the Roman *forum*, they functioned as a social gathering place, albeit in an introvert fashion.

Robert Fortune travelled to Suzhou particularly for valuable plants. He found that

the number of nursery garden in this city had been exaggerated by my Chinese friends at Shanghai, but nevertheless there were several of considerable extent, out of which I was able to procure some new and valuable plants. Among these I may notice in passing a white Glycine, a fine new double yellow rose, and a Gardenia with large white blossoms, like a Camellia. These plants are now in England [in the Kew], and will soon be met with every garden in the country. The Soo-chow nurseries abounded in dwarf trees, many of which were very curious and old, two properties to which the Chinese attach far greater importance than we do in England (Fortune 1847: p.260)

Here, Fortune expresses what bothered the English: Why were in the eyes of "Chinamen", these "gnarled trees" beautiful? Earlier, inside Dr.Chang's garden, he observed with same curiosity, how the Chinese gardeners treated a "dwarf tree":

might have a slight regret. But once it came down to purchase a rock and prepare materials, I never felt that there they were enough. Hence, from two years ago, my savings were drained out. And I was sick, recovered, and was sick again. This is the addiction of garden making (Chen et al, 1983:p.260. My translation).

Partly Qi was trying to impress his friends. His behavior of over spending fueled a debate among his kin on the issue of frugality versus profligacy. Qi shrugged it off. For him, "[his] garden was a social centre from which he reached out far and wide. Thus, when he saw that his guests—who arrived by boat at the Moonlit-Water Walkway---were drenched (presumable from the surf), Qi imagined that they looked 'as though they had come (all the way) in from the Liu-ch'iu Islands (Okinawa); and when Qi finally came around to describing his study (in the Lan-k'o Mountain House) far in the interior of the garden, he scarcely mentioned studying. What impressed him was that from there, high up on the mountain, he could, 'when tired, lean back and look out in all directions, spotting guests approaching'. He understood that his garden, with its unusual rocks and peony displays, and its expansive scenic views that were stunning in every season, would attract a steady flow of prominent, gifted, and wealthy men---visits, incidentally, that he carefully tracked in his diary" (Smith 1992: p.66).

Clearly, "with panoramic views and a multitude of buildings", Qi's garden departed from its predecessors: the Taoist or Buddhist principles of spatial organization would philosophically never allow the panoramic view to be built. Views of a garden as a whole must come from imagination. Whereas in Qi's garden, views were associated with visual pleasure. Qi himself highlighted the "finest spots" in his garden with the finest rocks with prices no others would like (or want) to offer. He then boasted that his garden was the most grandiose in his hometown, attracting high personages and drawing praises from the visitors. While garden making become a fad, the trend of forgery arose to meet the avaricious market demand. "Limestones in the mountains" were chiselled into "an appearance similar to the natural ones, looking natural and elegant after years" (Wen b.1622: p.112). Less interested in the artistic appreciation of natural beauty, the local merchants and the affluent citizens began collecting the strange rocks by following the paintings that had depicted rocks in famous gardens. About this phenomenon, Ji Cheng lamented: "Nowadays people simply choose rocks from illustrations; what does the ignorant multitude know of the beauty of Huangshan"(Ji 1988: p.112)?

Qi Biao committed suicide at age 44 in 1645 when the Manchus attacked Zhejiang.

Stunted varieties were generally chosen, particularly if they had the side branches opposite or regular, for much depends upon this; a one-sided dwarf tree is of no value in the eyes of the Chinese. the main stem was then in most cases twisted in a zigzag form, which process checked the flow of the sap, and at the same time encouraged the production of side branches at those parts of the stem where they were most desired..... Nature generally struggles against this treatment for a while, until her powers seem in a great measure exhausted, when she quietly yields to the power of art (Fortune 1847:p.97)

Continuing his account of his loitering in Suzhou, Fortune made another discovery:

The ladies here are considered by the Chinese to be the most beautiful in the country, and, judging from the specimens which I had opportunity of seeing, they certainly deserve their high character. Their dresses are of the richest material, made in a style at once graceful and elegant; and the only faults I could find with them were their small deformed feet, and the mode they have of painting or whitening their faces with a kind of powder made for this purpose. But what seemed faults in my eyes are beauties in those of a Chinaman, and hence the prevalence of these customs (Fortune 1847:p.261).

Women—Bonded Feet; Nature—Dwarf Trees. For once, Robert Fortune was extremely perceptive of Chinese society. Naturalness, indeed, in the late imperial China, had vanished from the literati gardens, and (I agree with Fortune) vanished from social life. As the rocks and trees inside the Dr.Chang's garden became "strange", "bizarre", "ugly", "sleazy", and "slender", sickness became in the eyes of the beholders beauty and elegance.

Fortune stopped short. A few days later he returned to Shanghai, went for a hot steam bath in a public Bath House, where "the Chinamen seen in this imperfect light, with their brown skins and long tails, sporting amongst the water, render the scene a most ludicrous one to an Englishman" (Fortune 1847:p.263).

But you and I were left behind in Suzhou, wandering into a trance. "A great proportion of the northern Chinese seem to be in a sleepy or dream state, from which it is difficult to awake them" (Fortune 1847:p.5). Within the dream, metonymies and metaphors drifted across the muddy surface of the Grand Canal. Dwarf trees, bonded feet, chained with the souls of the literati.

Nothing could be more deranging than this nightmare. In it, the highly educated literati, as well as every single Chinese, appeared to resemble the dwarf trees and deformed feet. One generation after another. A karma perpetuated. The pain produced pleasure. The torture routinized into a game. The oppressor and the oppressed amalgamated into one. Old dynasties did fall, open-minded emperors did exist, wars and rebels did happen, but a new dynasty would come, corruption would re-occur, and people would continue to die,

Here, language loses its power. Words cannot describe the direct knowledge of violence. Neither do they speak of an agony of the deformed lives of the eunuchs, the Confucians, and the emperors (and women in all social strata).

The edifice of the Chinese empire was built as such: the demigod emperor monopolized the theocratic, judicial, and military power, and this hierarchy of emperor, and subjects self-perpetuated as an insurmountable code. Literati were those men (by theory, any man) who had passed some tiers of the obscure imperial exams, then reached officialdom to serve the imperial court. Unlike a caste, the literati were mobile in their official ranks, depending on their educational degrees and political connections. Unlike a class also, the literati ranged from the poor to the extremely wealthy. To many, becoming a scholar might be the only way to obtain a government job and get the attached emolument.

Yet along with the emperor and literati, ancient China also nurtured an informal power niche behind the walls of the forbidden city. Around the emperor, there derived the royal families: consorts, concubines, families of consorts, uncles, brothers, and sons, and nephews of the emperor. There was no dynasty that was not caught up in this intricate, spider-web of nepotism, consecrated by blood and kinship. Parasitically attached to the royal-family octopus, throve another type of politicians: the eunuchs who practically functioned servants and secretaries to the emperor. Thus, the emperor, the literati, the royal family, and the eunuchs constituted the power base of the imperial court.

Constant rivalries between the eunuchs, and the literati erupted. The literati especially despised the unlearned castrated men, not seeing that they too were victims—treating them as arch-enemies of the Confucian ideals. Max Weber succinctly put it:

There remained only one major and permanent enemy of the literati: sultanism and the eunuch-system which supported it. The influence of the harem was therefore viewed with profound suspicion by the Confucians. Without insight into this struggle, Chinese history is most difficult to understand.

The constant struggle of the literati and sultanism, which lasted for two millennia, began under Shi-Hwang-Ti. It continued under all the dynasties, for of course energetic rulers continually sought to shake off their bonds to the cultured status group of the literati with the aid of the eunuchs and plebeian parvenus. Numerous literati who took a stand against this form of absolutism had to give their lives in order to maintain their status group in power. But in the long run and again and again the literati won out. Every drought, inundation, eclipse of the sun, defeat in arms, and every generally threatening event at once placed power in the hand of the literati. For such events were considered the result of a breach of tradition and a desertion of the classic way of life, which the literati guarded and which was represented by the censors and the 'Hanlin Academy'. In all such cases 'free discussion' was granted, the advice of the throne was asked, and the result was always the cessation of the unclassical form of government, execution or banishment of the eunuchs, a retraction of conduct to the classical schemata, in short, adjustments to the demands of the literati.

The harem system was of considerable danger because of the way in which succession to the throne was ordered. The emperors who were not of age were under the tutelage of women; at times, this petticoat government had come to be the very rule. The last Empress-Dowager, Tsu hsi, tried to rule with the aid of eunuchs. We will not discuss at this point the roles which Taoists and Buddhists have played in these struggles, which run through all of Chinese history — why and how far they have been natural coalitionists, specially of the eunuchs, and how far they have been coalitionists by constellation (Weber 1946: p.443).

This competition for power that runs through the entire history of imperial China is soaked with blood. Due to the totalitarian polity, power contest has to be conducted with ruses, trickeries, cunning cruelty, for it amounted to a life and death struggle. The emperor himself in most cases took advantage of these internal conflicts, strategically offsetting the forces who potentially menaced his monopoly. As this exasperating game went on, often until the end of the dynasty, with a hedonistic emperor preferring less and less to be responsible, the duties of administration either fell to the literati or the eunuchs. Once the duties did fall to the eunuchs, the literati would be living in a veritable hell.

On the other hand, we have to see the point of view of the eunuchs, the emperors, and the millions and millions of ordinary Chinese people. The terror of a totalitarian system was as much physical as it was mental. Norm, in the past thousand years of Chinese history, looms like a gallows, and in its extreme, secretly flirts with abnormality and perversion.

The polity controlled by Eunuch appeared with the first feudal dynasty in China. It held China in its grip from the Mid-Tang to the Qing Dynasty. More so at the bizarre ending of the empire. There is no single reason to explain why. The terror of death also invaded every emperor's dream. When Hongwu, the first Ming emperor, was enthroned in 1368, this one time poor farmer and Buddhist monk and leader of the peasant rebellion, out of a fear to be overthrown, wrote down clearly in the constitution that eunuchs were to be barred from politics. Emperor Hongwu also barred his sons from visiting the imperial capital without his permission so as to prevent possible coups. Further he abolished the position of the Chengxiang (Prime Minister) in Spring 1380. On the pretext that the Chengxiang, Hu Weiyong, had plotted a coup d'état, the emperor ordered his execution and that of thirty thousand others associated with him.

One should realize that Emperor Hongwu was not the most notorious dictator in the history of China. He was often praised as an able man, whose "Single Whip Tax", alleviating the burdens of the farmers, allowed China to become prosperous.

But Emperor Hongwu's nightmare came true immediately after his death: one of his sons from the outer provinces overthrew his grandson's court and crowned himself; the new emperor, breaching all the edicts Hongwu had made, began to re-use eunuchs in politics.

The violation of Hongwu's will, by the newly-crowned Yongle, had consequences. His manner of ascension incurred open contempt from the literati. As non-supported emperor, Yongle involuntarily re-instated order with the assistance of the eunuchs—a disastrous move for the literati. From the end of the fifteenth century onwards, the imperial court turned into a hell for the literati,⁷⁸ and the situation worsened in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁷⁹

The extreme political repression seeped into every corner of the literati's lives. Naturally we now understand why the literati sought for relief for their loss of power in their gardens. Recall the name of Wang Jingzi, the one who built the "Unsuccessful Politician's Garden". He bitterly complained:

Pan Yue of the Jin Dynasty failed in officialdom, therefore he built a house, planted trees, watered his garden, and sold vegetables. He called himself an 'unsuccessful politician'. Forty years have elapsed since my first entering into officialdom. All my peers have reached either the level of Shangsu or any other high rank. I retired as a District Magistrate. My political skill is truly worse than that of Pan Yue. My garden will announce [my lack of success] (Wen 1987: p.1277).

To comfort Wang, with no less bitterness, Wang's friend, Wen Zhengming responded in May of 1534:

Of course, Mister, you differ from Pan Yue. You received the diploma of Metropolitan Graduate with honorable marks, reached the position of the Imperial Scribe, adhered to and sacrificed for righteousness. Before long you had been purged, with ups and downs, hence retired. How could those filthy selfish speculators be compared with yourself? Despite his self-claimed "reclusive" life, Pan Yue was a wicked snob, a worshipper of the mighty, who incurred misfortune by flattering the wrong ones. In his life, even in retirement, Pan Yue never appreciated the joy of reclusion. Not alone in the past—how many ancient reputed worthies and excellent scholars had, like Pan Yue, ensnared in officialdom, not been able to transcend?! [By contrast] you withdrew from politics in your good middle age, and enjoyed "building a house, planting trees, watering the garden, selling vegetables" for twenty some years. The happiness you obtained cannot be contested by the ancient virtuous and sages, not to mention Pan Yue. [I understand] your analogy with Pan Yue to express the sense of

⁷⁸For instance, in 1518, when the emperor wanted to travel south again, 15 high ranking bureaucrats prostrated in front of the Forbidden City, begging the emperor to change his decision. Zhengde punished all of them by forcing them to kneel on the square for 5 days with heavy stone shambles: all of them died (Huai 1988).

⁷⁹For instance, when Xiaozhong passed away (1505), the crown prince was only 15 years old. He (Wuzhong) was under the absolute control of his chief eunuch, Liu Jin, for eight years. The new emperor himself had not been present at the court for 20 years, while all administration was conducted by the eunuchs. At the end, Liu Jin plotted a coup to overthrow the court, wanting his nephew to be the emperor. Liu Jin was founded and executed. Meanwhile the emperor became intoxicated with lascivious sex, orgies, alchemy, collecting women and artifacts.

unfulfillment. But Pan Yue's craving was for fame not the reclusive life. By all means, within the notoriety of officialdom, after which many are chasing, lies danger and catastrophe, destined by the Creator. One may be famous for a time. Sooner or later, misfortune will descend. To look at these losses, these years as a vagabond, what do you prefer? [We are born] into life, life will direct us. I, myself, through a different path, returned home in the same way as you did, having only a small parcel of land to build a [small garden] upon which to perch my ambitious dream..... (Wen 1987: p.1277).

In reality, the literati' dreams never perched, never settled, never made peace with the Ego. On the surface the befuddled revelry of the merchants and the aristocrats was carried on with profusion. The son of Wang Jingzi could lose "The Unsuccessful Politician's Garden" at a gambling table overnight. Behind the glossy gates, madness bred, poured into the contained landscape in literati' homes, into the grotesque rock, stubborn pine, gnarled winter plum, and enduring bamboo. The bitterness of Wen's cathartic words was nothing if compared with the depressions of the literati who surrounded him. One of his best friends, Tan Yin, a remarkable painter of his time, went for seclusion to the Taohua Temple; His own great grandson Wen Zhenghen, who was a renowned theoretician of garden making, committed suicide in 1645 when the troops of the Manchus raided Suzhou.

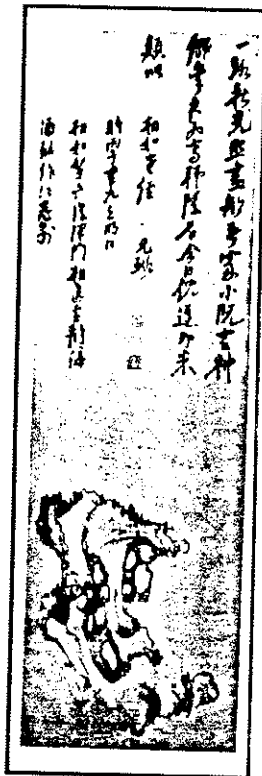


Figure 23. Ni Yuanlu, "Rare and Unusual Rock".

A Ming scholar painter's praise of grotesqueness. In the poem, Ni compared himself with Mi Fu in the Song Dynasty, claiming to be a fanatic "pendant" worshipping the "reclusive rock".

Source: Torao Miyagawa, *A History of the Art of China: Chinese Painting*, 1983.

Fatalism that wedged in the "bad-faith" of the literati finally turned into the form of fiction, in magnum opus of Chinese tragedy, Cao Xueqin's A Dream of the Red Mansions. In the novel, the Jia family moves to high heaven when one of the daughters is selected as the emperor's concubine, and is precipitated into hell when the empress dies. In real life, Cao's own family rose and fell with his grandfather's political career at the Qing court.

In one of the opening chapters, Jia Baoyu, the leading character, the "precious jade" of the family, could enjoy walking into the newly built Grand View Garden, talking about "naturalness".

With that he led the party into one of the cottages. It was quite free of ostentation, having papered windows and a wooden couch. Secretly pleased, he [Baoyu's father, Jia Zheng] glanced at his son and asked, "Well, what do you think of this place?" The secretaries nudged the boy to induce him to express approval. But ignoring them he answered, "It can't compare it with 'Where the Phoenix Alights.'" "Ignorant dolt!" Jia Zheng [or Chia Cheng] sighed. "All you care for are red pavilions and painted beams. With your perverse taste for luxury, how can you appreciate the natural beauty of such a quiet retreat? This comes of neglecting your studies." "Yes Sir," replied Baoyu promptly, "But the ancients were always using the term 'natural.' I wonder what they really meant by it?" (Yang et al. 1978: p.235).

Close to the end of the novel (which was completed by Gao Er, after Cao, who had spent his whole life on the book, had died of poverty and illness in 1763), Jia Baoyu, too, having lost his lover Daiyu, his sister, and witnessed many more perish, walked into the Grand View Garden again. The garden was locked, about to be confiscated, after the raid of the imperial guards.

When Baoyu stepped into the Garden, it struck him as a scene of desolation. The plants were withering, and the paint was flaking off the lodges in various places. In the distance, however, he saw a clump of bamboo which was still luxuriant. After a second's thought he said, "Since moving out of the Garden because of my illness, I've been living in the back and haven't been allowed to come here for months. How quickly the place has run wild! Look, the only green things left are those bamboos. Isn't that Bamboo Lodge?" (Yang et al. 1978:p.400).

In 1791, Gao Er published A Dream of the Red Mansions. As to the fate of Baoyu: the writer made him become a Buddhist monk, and return to the immortal heaven, where Baoyu was supposed to be a useless rock. Gao Er gives us those last words to ponder:

A tale of grief is told,
Fantasy most melancholy.
Since all live in a dream.
Why laugh at others' folly? (Yang et al. 1978:p.586).

6.7. The Emperors' Pleasure Garden

In China, in that tumbling red mansion, the world was everywhere reversed, not excluding the emperors. "They, from the highest mandarin down to the meanest beggar, are filled with the most conceited notions of their own importance and power; and fancy that no people however civilised, and no country however powerful, are for one moment to be compared with them" (Fortune 1847:p.3). As the literati retreated into their contorted dream, the Emperors wanted to withdraw from the Forbidden City, from the enslaving grandeur, a display that they had put up in front of their people.

Inside Yuan Ming Yuan—the garden of Total Clarity⁸⁰—in the suburb of Beijing, Kangxi, Yongzheng, Qianlong, artificially re-created not only China, but the universe. The centre of the imperial pleasure garden was formed a nine square grid for water expanses to symbolize the eternal unity of China. Hundreds of houses were built in accordance with Emperor Kangxi's favorite sceneries seen on his six tours to Jiangnan. It was recorded that Yuan Ming Yuan had one hundred and fifty themes in total for its architecture design: the exotic peonies and bamboos; the Ten Scenes along the bank of the West Lake in Hangzhou; a representation of mythological paradise for the immortals, and so forth. Those jumbles of buildings and pseudo-natural landscapes brought together the replicas of temples, monasteries, palaces, farmers' dwellings, water depots, libraries, galleries, theaters, restaurants, tea-houses, religious icons, mythical grottos—a gala of copies of copies.

(The Prince of Wales did not know, or care, that his House of Confucius was already a copy of a copy of a copy. It copied the ideas and visual representations of the supposedly Chinese garden via the missionaries, whose accounts were mostly based upon Yuan Ming Yuan, that itself was a copy of the literati gardens in the southern part of China).

Among those copies of copies, what the Emperor Kangxi, his son and his grandson desired to imitate were the literati gardens. "The Lion Grove", "Garden of Reflection", "Orchid Pavilion", "Winding Path and Windy Lotus Pond", to list a few. Why were the

⁸⁰"Yuan Ming Yuan" actually had two adjacent garden compounds: Attiret got that right. One was "Chang Chun Yuan" (the Eternal Spring Garden), the other "Wan Chun Yuan" (The Garden of Ten Thousands Springs). In total the three imperial gardens covered about 347 hectares in the northwest of Peking. There was a private garden before on the site and it was bestowed by the Emperor Kangxi to his son, who was later the Emperor Yongzheng. In 1709 Kangxi invested to build Yuan Ming Yuan as his retreat. After Emperor Yongzheng was enthroned, he expanded the garden to a larger palace. His son, Emperor Qianlong, the one who was ruling China when P re Attiret wrote his letter to France, ordered to construct the other two garden compounds at the east side of Yuan Ming Yuan. This entire process of construction of Yuan Ming Yuan took about sixty years. With all the gold the Emperors had, and with all the power, Yuan Ming Yuan, raised from a completely flat earth. Ponds, lakes, rivers, cascades occupied approximately one half of Yuan Ming Yuan; the widest part of the lake was more than 600 meters. In between those vast or narrow water scenes, about one third of the entire landscape consisted of "false mountains", piles of exotic rocks, islands, dykes, and islets. All these mountains and lakes were man-made.

emperors obsessed with the literati gardens? Did they thoroughly understand the philosophies of literati gardens, given the fact that all the Manchu emperors, not being Hans, learnt the Chinese classics from their tender years on? Emperor Kangxi, the sagacious one, admired Hongwu of the Ming Dynasty, promoted Confucianism to become legitimate institutional belief system. Did he purposely copy the gardens of the Confucian literati of Jiangnan to placate the distrust and hostility of the educated Hans as he did in his six tours to the south?

Little we know, will tell of these political motives as much as the emperors' escapism from the court. Yuan Ming Yuan offered the alienated emperor pleasure through more alienation. Hundreds and thousands of eunuchs, the men who sacrificed their manhood for the Emperor, lived and served as the actors in this set up stage of the hedonistic world. They were allocated roles as merchants, peddlers, or thieves. The emperor and the empresses would walk within those one-to-one scale replicas of Jiangnan cities within Yuan Ming Yuan, while all the servants acted as if the town was operating in a normal life.

The days of festivals were especially noteworthy, as reported by P re Attiret:

Doubtless you have read of the famous Feast in China, call'd The Feast of the Lanthorns. It is always celebrated on the 15th Day of the first Month. There is no Chinese so poor, but that upon this Day he lights up his Lanthorn. They have of them of all sorts of Figures, Sizes, and Prices. On that Day, all China is illuminated: but the finest Illuminations of all are in the Emperor's Palaces; and particularly in these Pleasure-grounds, which I have been describing to you. There is not a Chamber, Hall, or Portico, in them, which has not several of these Lanthorns hanging from the Ceilings. There are several upon all the Rivulets, Rivers, and Lakes; made in the Shapes of little Boats, which the Waters carry backward and forward. There are some upon all the Hills and Bridges, and almost upon all the Trees. There are wrought mighty prettily, in the Shapes of different Fishes, Birds, and Beasts; Vases, Fruits, Flowers; and Boats of different Sorts and Sizes(Attiret 1982: p.34).

The pomp of Yuan Ming Yuan impressed the Jesuit. And soberly, Attiret realized

There is but one Man here; and that is the Emperor. All Pleasures are made for him alone. This charming Place is scarce ever seen by any body but himself, his Women, and his Eunuchs. The Princes, and other chief Men of the Country, are rarely admitted any further than the Audience-Chambers (Attiret 1982: p.48).

The emperor kept on dreaming, while outside his pleasure gardens the country crumbled to pieces.

One day Qianlong [or Ch'ien Lung] was looking through a book of foreign pictures when his eye fell upon an engraving depicting a large fountain in the gardens of a

French château. He asked Castiglione about it and, when the latter explained its nature and use, the emperor determined to have one like it. The next question was: Who should construct the fountain? None of the Jesuit missionaries have ever had any experience in the making of fountains. Finally the choice fell on father Benoit who set to work to make plans and models. These delighted the emperor, as had his other mechanical toys. Then someone suggested that the *shui fa*, as the Chinese called the fountains, should be put in a suitable setting. This decided Qianlong to build a foreign palace, a Versailles in miniature, within the vast enclosure of the Yuan Ming Yuan. In consequence a piece of ground in the eastern part of the palace, called the Ch'ang Ch'un Yuan, was allotted and father Castiglione was appointed architect (Rowbotham 1966: p.187).

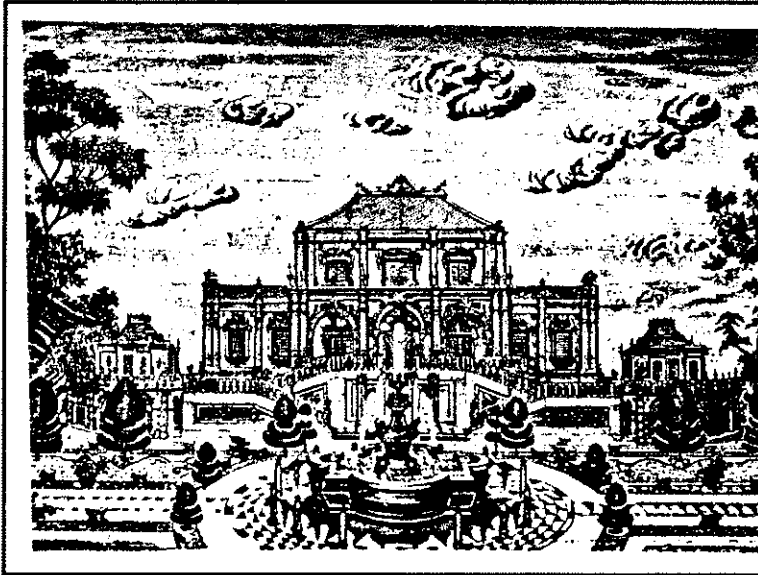


Figure 24. The Baroque Architecture in Yuan Ming Yuan.
Source: A.H. Rowbotham, *Missionary and Mandarin*, 1966.



Figure 25. A portrait of Emperor Yongzheng with wig.
Source: Jonathan Spence, *Emperor of China*, 1974.

Chinoiserie thus found its perfect counterpart in the imperial court. One hundred and sixty years after the two quintessential icons of the Western Modernity—a clock, and a prism—had been brought to China by Matteo Ricci (in 1582), Western Time and Space now splashed, with the fountain, in the corner of Yuan Ming Yuan. It may have been a capricious decision from the emperor's point of view. After all, the Baroque architecture marked down the Other in the Chinese imperial blueprint of the universe.

In one of these court portraits, Emperor Yongzheng is seen dressed as the King of France. The wig on his head molded him into a perfect clown, almost unwittingly funny. His impassioned face skewed from us—the viewer—looking aside. A face, we know, was a secret hybrid of Manchu and Han blood; a face that was not his father's first choice; a face sneering arrogantly at the messenger of the Pope; a face amused by Attiret's craftsmanship.

The opaque face, by its unfathomable flatness, foretold the contemporary history, its painful and endless struggles to receive the overarching Western Other and Otherness. Modernity jabbed the Chinese dream. Underneath the wig, the identities of Manchus, Hans, and Europeans melted, confusingly, interpenetrating.

6.8. The Fate of the First Western Garden in China

On the 6th of May, 1846, Robert Fortune returned to London with numerous exotic plants he had collected in China. Presenting them to the Horticultural Society, Fortune felt a relief—he had salvaged the most "luxuriant and beautiful" flowers that otherwise "ever grew on the graves of the Chinese, near the ramparts of Shanghae" (Fortune 1847:p.406). Certainly, the Kew became a new home for some of those Chinese plants. By then, the Kew had already been transformed into a garden of Science. The fever of Chinoiserie had left few trace.

Fourteen years after Robert Fortune's home coming, on September 21, 1860, the French and English Allies defeated the Qing Army in the last battle of the Second Opium War. Emperor Xianfeng and his courtiers fled to Rerhe. The allied troops drove towards the northwest of Beijing. After looting it, on October 6, the French and English Allies set Yuan Ming Yuan ablaze. The conflagration lasted for three days. By the end of October 9, 1860, Yuan Ming Yuan had withered into ashes.

One of the most sumptuous pleasure palaces of the Chinese emperors vanished in smoke. The only thing that survived the fire were a few stone columns from its Baroque architecture—the first Western garden in China.

7

A Prelude to Intercultural Dialogue

The first bout of inter-cultural dialogue between China and the West perished in the ruins of Yuan Ming Yuan. Concurrent with the ravage tens of thousands of Chinese refugees drifted west to North America where the aboriginal people had settled since the time "immemorial", where the Europeans, inspired by their own dream of new life began to confederate. Through a twist of fate East and West met again starkly, eye-brow to eye-brow, on the periphery of Chinatown. The legacies of cultural stereotypes, that had lost real significance in a China shaken by wars and revolutions, followed the Chinese immigrants like an oppressive nightmare.

The icy face of racism in Canada finally thawed in the winds of Multiculturalism. During the past three decades an astounding transformation of Canadian national political geography took place. More so in the 1990s. Social change emblazons certain differences—not all though, for example, that of ethnicity rather than sexuality—an abrupt glorification. This is why I contend that the Western "discovery" of the literati garden in the late 1970s has so much more to do with the socio-political conditions of the West itself than that of China, save for some truthfulness in the fact that China opened its door after Mao's demise. This is a time what Other's cultures symbolize the hope of redeeming the history of Euro-centrism, One hundred years after Robert Fortune's first visit to a scholar's home in Ningbo, the beauty and delicacy of literati gardens captured the attention of Western writers. Literature on this theme rapidly proliferated since the 1980s (Chen 1984; Chen & Yu 1986; Clement & Clement 1988; Cooper 1977; Engel 1986; Ip 1989; Jencks 1978; Johnston 1983; Keswick 1978, 1988 and 1990; Moore et al. 1988; Morris 1983; Rambach 1987; Smith 1992; Stein 1990; Stuart 1990; Yang 1982). After the construction of Aster Court in New York, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden in Vancouver, China, with the assistance of the West, has developed the export of the literati garden into a multi-million dollar industry. The crude irony translates into a marvelous equation: the West philosophizes the imported gardens while China commodifies them.

The search for the "Englishness" in the English garden induced the eighteenth century romanticists to introduce the "Chinese garden" to Europe. Unfortunately, this cross-cultural imitation in the eighteenth century's Enlightenment and globalization of Capitalism and Imperialism perverted into cultural domination. Now, Multiculturalism brings the "Chinese garden" to Canada. To what degree, are the socio-cultural conditions of the two occasions different? To what degree, has this second contact, in the post-colonial age, in comparison with the first one, inverted its polarized notion of "good and evil" otherness?

From my point of view, based on my report on the tours inside the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden, I must honestly say, such a Dualism of otherness softens into a discursive psychological complex. Love, arrogance, projection, understanding, bitterness, personal political agenda, one's own moral judgement, admiration, imagination, are packed into these short forty minutes of interpretation of an Other's garden in Canada.

Stranded, this thesis drowns in the swampy mind-field.

But before closing the inquiry, since it has no end, I want to raise a final question: where can we discover our psychological power to deal with the Other? and how can we guard that creative/destructive force, not to unleash it through domination and violence?

From my point of view, nothing could be more explicit, straightforward, and cunning, than to check our emotive energy in our copies of otherness, for within the process of copying, otherness can no longer be dealt with at arm's length—it seeps in, head-on, to sameness, for a copy requires a necessary recognition of what is out there to copy, and what we want to copy.

The ability to copy, (and interculturally, to appropriate others' culture into one's own), has history. Walter Benjamin, in his short essay On the Mimetic Faculty, traces mimesis as an innate and learnt human capacity (Benjamin 1978: p.333). "Nature creates similarities", asserted Benjamin. Therefore, we mimic, we search for sympathetic sameness within all. To support his proposition, Benjamin suggested, from learning to dance to the onomatopoeic beauty of language, mimesis produces similarities among different things. His argument is echoed distantly by Aristotle, who strove to reinstate the proper relation between poetry and philosophy.

It is clear that the general origin of poetry was due to two causes, each of them part of human nature. Imitation is natural to man from childhood, one of his advantages over the lower animals being this, that he is the most imitative creature in the world, and learns at first by imitation. And it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation. The truth of this second point is shown by experience: though the objects themselves may be painful to see, we delight to view the most realistic representations of them in art the forms for example of the lowest animals and of dead bodies. The explanation is to be found in a further fact: to be learning something is the greatest of pleasures not only to the philosopher but also to the rest of mankind, however small their capacity for it; the reason of the delight in seeing the picture is that one is at the same time learning—gathering the meaning of things, e.g. that the man there is so-and-so; for if one has not seen the thing before, one's pleasure will not be in picture as an imitation of it, but will be due to the execution or coloring or some similar cause. Imitation, then, being natural to us—also the sense of harmony and rhythm, the meters being obviously species of rhythms—it was through their original aptitude, and by a series of improvements or the most part gradual on their first efforts, that they created poetry out of their improvisations (Aristotle 1954: p.227).

The Aristotelian exposition shed light on the "cathartic" function of mimesis. The power of cure is probably what inspired Freud's work on Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious (Freud 1960).⁸¹ Freud saw that jokes, psychologically, can generate pleasure from its play with "non-sense", and get away from the censure of reason⁸² while socially jokes defy socio-cultural taboos. Similarly comic⁸³ formations take their pleasure from the expenditure of "ideational mimetics". In both cases, Freud analyzed how mimesis could be a release or discharge of mental repression, against our ego or super ego. Irrespective of how we might detest the Freudian "deep" structure of thought, the valuable contribution of the Freudian interpretation of jokes and unconsciousness lies, structurally, at its connection of the psychological discharge in mimesis to the formations of society, individuality, and self.

In addition, Freud noticed that mimesis, as in caricature, parody and travesty, produces a redolent difference when it is charged by aggressiveness towards the imitated. **Caricature** exaggerates parts for the whole, adds and subtracts the imitated at the will of the imitator, who feels control, superiority, and manipulation of self over others; **parody** desacralizes the original by overrepetition, disobeying by overobeying; **travesty** distorts, abuses the copied. It is fair to say that mimesis, that is supposed to manifest the will to be other, in those situations manifests the desire of alterity, of being different, of being oneself.

⁸¹ This book fructified further atop the Freudian theory of dream interpretation. In the studies on dreams, Freud built upon an argument of his own that every dream is a product of wishful thinking. And the "wish", hibernating "underneath" consciousness, reveals one's own repressed unconsciousness formed primarily by one's childhood experience. The formation of each dream, caught up in between the relations (more often than not, conflicts) of id, Ego, and Superego, robs materials from the fresh day experience and processes the materials for the purpose of manifestation of unconsciousness. The "dream-work" (signifier(s)) and the "latent dream content" (the Freudian ultimate Signified) thus are wrestling in various kinds of relationships. One of them, according to Freud, is the work of condensation, "Dreams are brief, meagre and laconic in comparison with the range and wealth of the dream-thoughts." (Freud 1953:p.183) That "condensation is brought about by omission: that is, that the dream is not a faithful translation or a point-for-point projection of the faithful translation or a point-for-point projection of the dream-thoughts, but a highly incomplete and fragmentary version of them." (Freud 1953:p.186); Another type of relationship between dream thought and dream work is "displacement" by which the construction of the dream work itself decentres from the important element of the dream content. Travelling in a chain of derivative images or words or thoughts, the displaced dream works still resists, represses, the surge of unconsciousness. (The concepts of "condensation" and "displacement" find their counterparts via Lacan's analysis in "metaphor" and "metonymy" in linguistic expression.) These two types or characteristics of the relationship of dream-work (form) and dream-thought (content) allowed Freud to extrapolate a working structure to frame the practice of jokes in daily life. An analogy is made, then taken literally: jokes, like dreams, or as day-dreams, have been formed by either condensation of multiple meanings and words into one, or by displacement that plays with absurdity and non-sense.

⁸² Watching a child playing with words, one will see, wrote Freud, "This play probably obeys one of the instincts which compel children to practise their capacities. In repetition of what is similar, a rediscovery of what is familiar, similarity of sound, etc., and which are to be explained as unsuspected economies in physical expenditure" (Freud 1960: p.178).

⁸³ The parallels between the joke, the comic, and humor are: defined by Freud, "the pleasure in jokes has seemed to us to arise from an economy in expenditure upon inhibition, the pleasure in the comic from an economy in expenditure upon ideation (upon cathexis) and the pleasure in humor from an economy in expenditure upon feeling. (Freud 1960:p.302).

The coin of mimesis now shows two distinct yet inseparable facets. It is a "nature" in and with "nurture"; it spins around the act of copying the "other", but that copying can relate to alterity as much as to sameness. Capable of both all at once, "mimesis plays this trick of dancing between the very same and the very different. An impossible but necessary, indeed an everyday affair, mimesis registers both sameness and difference, of being like, and of being Other" (Taussig 1993:p.129). Thus one is ill-advised to halve mimesis. **The desire and the act to imitate between one culture and the other, of culture from nature, therefrom, can hardly be treated solely as an innocent, primitive instinct, nor an independent result of history.** Walter Benjamin, who briefly affirmed that mimesis produces similarity, insisted that mimesis has "a history, however, in both the phylogenetic and the ontogenetic sense"(Benjamin 1978: p.333).

The history (of the development) and the faculty of mimesis mingle in the act of mimesis, reciprocally naturalizing each other—as history (of a culture) and the perception of history as such through the acts of mimesis. The closest analogy to this paradox is the topological image painted by Escher, in which, one hand emerges from the surface of the paper drawing the other identical hand that reciprocally draws the hand that is drawing. To study cultural mimesis therefore entails fresh interest in this paradoxicality of coping. As illuminated by Michael Taussig's work (1980;1987;1992;1993), mimesis has to be understood as "a faculty, it is also a history, and just as histories enter into the functioning of the mimetic faculty, so the mimetic faculty enters into those histories. No understanding of mimesis is worthwhile if it lacks the mobility to traverse this two-way street, especially pertinent to which is Euro-American colonialism, the felt relation of the civilizing process to savagery, to aping" (Taussig 1993: p.xiv).

Taussig's own work traverses the two ends of mimesis— that of being a faculty and a historical socio-cultural construct. Focused on the contacts between the Euro-American colonialists and the Latin American natives, his latest book **Mimesis and Alterity** explores the various forms of cultural mimesis in the alterations of magic, customs, rituals of healing, gifts, art forms of the aboriginal people since the first contact with the Euro-American colonialists, who arrived searching for the "good" and "bad savages". Those alterations, telling the internalization of the presence of the West, being by no means one-sided, acted upon the Western gaze. Similar to (on the other side very different from) the intercultural exchange between China and Europe, the gaze between the aboriginals and the colonialists oscillates, penetrates into, and bounces back. Charged by the relations between the Euro-Americans and the Cuna people, between the Cunas and the Panamanians, between the Cuna men and women, mimesis of the Cuna and the Euro-Americans brings forth a poignant thesis: the culture of ours (the "modern"), one that invents all the advanced technologies of imitation (i.e. camera and phonograph), one that copies other's form flawlessly, fails to copy the soul of the copied,

whereas the "primitive" Cuna people, dwelling in an animistic cosmos, who copy without the aid of sophisticated devices, have or had stunning power to inveigle the soul of the copied. Copying: soul searching. The ones who see no "soul" in the copied lose themselves in the process of copying, which acutely delineates our surrender to the flooding images and fragments of copies in our post-modern age. Reality converts to fictivity.

The fine line that demarcates the Western copying (forgive my bold generalization), the Cuna people's copying, or remember, the Manchu Emperor's copying, from one another, draws tenuously in the middle of self and other. Thanks to the Freudian exploration of jokes, one can construct a wide spectrum of cultural mimesis. Let's take three slices from the spectrum: (1) In the case of the Manchu Emperors having copied the Western garden in Yuan Ming Yuan, the process of mimesis has probably the lowest psychological energy. (Truly we have a smattering of what the emperors had gone through in their minds). Self and other have not yet sharply conflicted with each other. On the eve of the colonial age, the Manchu emperors had not yet constructed a "realistic" threat to the European superpowers. Ethnocentrism failed to perceive the strength of otherness, which was denoted by the condescending gesture of the Emperor Shunzhi to the Dutch diplomats. (2) Another type of cultural mimesis, in an extreme, internalizes the perceived threats of the presence of the other. According to Taussig's account, the Cuna people, in the history of meeting the Euro-American colonialists, have developed variegated rituals to counter-attack the "evil" presences of the West. Local belief entertained a notion that by portraying evil one could protect oneself from it. Again, in extreme cases, a shaman would chant in front of figurines, carved with caricature Western features, in order to perform an exorcism. This Cuna Figurine ritual summoned the power of mimesis as a defense mechanism to protect self identity. (3) The opposite pole of the above extreme is the syndrome of the "Lotus Eater", presented elegantly in the Odyssey by Homer. In an episode when a group of explorers, their ship wrecked, drifted to an island where they found that their predecessors had claimed the land. Those predecessors only ate lotus seeds, and whoever ate the lotus seeds would not return home. They instantly became obsessed with the beauty of others.

It seems all those types of cultural mimesis co-exist in our time, while blurring one into the another. The melting pot of the "global village" radically destabilizes alterity. Our culture copies others' culture, and others' culture copies ours, or copies our copies of theirs. (One has to doubt if a pristine form of nature and culture, of self and other ever existed). For instance, in the 1970s Western writers were fascinated with the similarities between ancient Chinese philosophy and Quantum Physics (Capra 1973). Now this revelation has been translated into Chinese, and as a result Chinese writers start to renew, through the Western Eye, their "own" interest in their traditional thought that had been for centuries an essential

core of classical education, and had lost its acme in the modern time. On this winding path of copying, mimesis deconstructs both the copied (the "original") and the copier (the imitator that gets transformed).

This multiple cross-cultural copying appears naturally more frequent in Canada than in any other society. In this regard Canada is not a country without heritage, but having heritages that sometimes confuse and conflict. From the confederation of Canada until the present, this young country experienced the painful ordeals of soul searching. Various motifs and types of cross-cultural learning had been tested out: cultural assimilation, cultural segregation, cultural integration. And now, cultural diversification.

With the ghost of the Manchu emperor still hovering around, the hostility of the Cuna ritual emerging here and there in crisis situation, the "Lotus Eater" seems dramatically to claim a victory over the '90s. In the light of "difference", the Chinese literati gardens are introduced as the Neo-Romantic paradise, an Eden of the other. Our reading of the history of the literati garden, tells that there was always the shadow of the history in the heart of garden. The Chinese literati garden, like all places in remote China, wove through thickets of life and death struggles. The literature on Chinese garden, so far, has failed to address this side of the picture.

Therefore, a switch in perspective is urgently needed, for anyone, to engage in any cross-cultural learning and imitation. The respect for the other's alterity actualizes only when we are consciously aware of our gaze, see the limits of that gaze, and delimit that gaze. We are impelled to ask what we want to perceive, also how the perceived others feel to be portrayed— Geertz calls this "thick description". After all, the re-creation of other in one's own world implicates the choices and the rights of alterity. Insofar as we allow the mainstream culture of ours to be perceived with diversity, heterogeneity, would we, too, in turn, respect the differences among the aboriginal communities, Chinese communities, and others? Imitation by itself is not a sin, nor a curse. The crucial question is why we copy, what we copy, and how we justify our copy. Multiculturalism will be a myth, if we seize other's form and surrender our own soul. The historical condition which brings about the first contact between aboriginals and colonialists, between Chinese and Europeans, between Chinese immigrants and the rest of Canadians, unfortunately, provides a slim base beyond ethnocentrism and racism: will we today utilize this potential for a mutual learning based upon respect?

The Dr. Sun Yat Sen classical Chinese Garden has been built, there is no point in dismantling it. The imminent task remains, rather, how to use it, how to explain it in the Canadian cultural and political context, and to demystify its meta-narrative of being "authentically Chinese". I hope this thesis has successfully narrated the rich events in and around the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, in and around Vancouver's Chinatown.

Indeed, the making of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden unseals the passage towards diffused memories, not one or two but many. I am one of these countless wanderers loitering within the dusty fragments of past, seeking soul along with modernity. Caught in between the East and West, that is where I stand.

From my stance, this thesis, covered so many characters, so many loops of ideas and ideals, flips backward and forward from eighteenth century Europe/China to twentieth century Canada—I know—far too swiftly. I wish at the end that one point has come across clearly: I have fulfilled my promise at the beginning to bring the socio-historical conditions that usually are considered as the extraneous knowledge of design back into sight, into the connection of Garden and Power. A garden, from where I stand, is not just a physical entity. The Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden tangles within coils of emotions, and feelings: Society, Religion, Ideology, these abstract concepts reify within cultural forms as models "of", and "for" life (Geertz 1973). What could be more cultural than a garden—a garden of the literati—at the interface of humanity and nature, to potently absorb the heat of various power relations? Paradoxically, too, from where I stand, a garden exceeds (or attempts to exceed) the reach of power; it would be a sorrow if one were misled to thinking that the making of the Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden evolves around one thing, and that is politics. A garden after all retains its material autonomy. The Dr.Sun Yat Sen Garden provides an oasis in the bustling Chinatown.

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