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THE PERFORMANCE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION:
CHINA'S "NEW FACE" AND THE 2008 BEIJING OLYMPICS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Patrick Shaou-Whea Dodge

August 2011

Advisor: Bernadette M. Calafell

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Abstract

This dissertation explores Chinese communication practices. I focus on the performance of intercultural communication and how the "New Face" of China was performed to the world and in day-to-day intercultural communication encounters during the 2008 Olympics. I analyze the Olympic Volunteer Training Manual as performative text as well as interviewed Beijing Olympic volunteers about their encounters with international visitors. Specifically, I discuss why the Olympics were a crucial moment for China to unveil its "New Face" to the world, what the "New Face" of China entails, and the reasons why China is in need of a new image on the world stage. I argue that we need to use Chinese concepts and conceptualizations to understand the cultural context, political climate, and deeply complex historical foundations China has when we question Chinese communication practices and performances. I reconceptualize the concept of face with Performance theory to show how the presentation of "New China" and the "New Face of China" during the Olympics was a performance based on "harmony" and the Confucian values of *ren* (humanism) and *li* (ritual propriety). Furthermore, I concentrate on how the "New Face" of China and harmony were actually performed by Olympic volunteers on the ground in both public and hidden transcripts. While the Volunteer Training Manual works to performatively generate an image of New China, volunteers on the ground doing intercultural communication that they had learned during

training sessions also generated an image of China on the ground, contrary to images in the U.S. imaginary, and in day to day encounters. Although China went to great efforts to present China as a harmonious society, on the ground we see that within harmony there is difference (in communication, performance, and practice) and negotiation through the struggles of everyday life Chinese deal with. More importantly, we find new possibilities and yearnings for peaceful coexistence.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A note on Mandarin and pronunciation

A language is generated in relationships – the relationship between letters, words, and meanings. Language is a tool of communication that helps build and maintain relations. Chinese is no exception. Communication in mainland China is primarily done with the official language, “Han yu”, meaning language of the Han, the Han ethnicity comprising 90% of the population. ‘Han yu’ is known as ‘putonghua’ or the ‘common language’ used by the masses in China. ‘Han yu’ and ‘putonghua’ refer to what we call Mandarin in the US. On the mainland a simplified version of Mandarin (writing) characters is used while in Taiwan ‘traditional’ characters are still used when writing¹.

In 1958, ‘Han yu’ pinyin was adopted at the fifth session of the 1st National People’s Congress (Xinhua News Agency), pinyin being the Romanized version of Mandarin. Pinyin begins with the Standard English alphabet distributing phonetic sounds to each consonant, vowel, and combinations². When reading Chinese names, places, and words throughout this dissertation, differences in pronunciation to note are the letters c, q, and x. C represents the ‘ts’ sound, as in “cats” or “it’s”. Q represents the ‘ch’ sound as pronounced in ‘child’ or ‘chive’ and x represents the ‘sh’ sound as in ‘she’ or ‘shell’. Thus, ‘cai’, ‘qi’, and ‘xi’ are pronounced, “ts-eye”, “chee”, and “she”, respectively.

To complicate things a bit, Mandarin is a tonal language where words with the same pinyin spelling can have different pronunciations and meanings. For instance, the pinyin word ‘ma’ can represent many completely different Chinese characters by simply changing one of the four tones of the language. A search for ‘ma’ in a Mandarin-English dictionary (Lau) came back with thirteen words. ‘Mā’, with the first tone – neutral – can mean 媽 mother or 螞 dragonfly. ‘Má’, with the second tone – rising – can mean 麻 numb, 痲 leprosy, 蔴 hemp, or 蟆 toad. ‘Mǎ’, with the third tone – falling then quickly rising – can mean 馬 horse, 碼 a weight, 螞 ant, or 馮 the name of a river. ‘Mà’, with the fourth tone – falling sharply – can mean 罵 to scold. When no tone is present, ‘ma’ has a couple more meanings and grammar usages – 嗎 a question tag or 嘛 a modal particle that indicates sound reasoning. The recent rise in popularity of studying pinyin in the U.S. (among many other countries) has helped open the door into Mandarin and thus, relations and communication with China.

Introduction

The goal of this project is to understand some of the everyday communication practices in Beijing during the 2008 Olympics. More specifically, my goal is to unpack the ways China did “Chinese” in its relations with the world through the presentation of what is termed the “New Face” of China. My purpose is to make explicit how the 2008 Beijing Olympics served as a campaign designed to release the strategy: The “New Face” of China = China is a developing, modern, and “harmonious” society. Before I dive into the explication of “New Face” and “Harmony” it is necessary that I begin by explaining

my relationship with China and a general description of the Olympic context I use as example.

My relationship with China

Growing up in the U.S. English was my mother tongue, although my mother is Chinese³. My parents used both English (mostly from my American father) and Mandarin to communicate with me when young. At the age of three English became the preferred language of communication at home. The year was 1982 and my mother had lived in the U.S. for ten years. Recently, I asked her why English became our dominant language of communication and she told me a story about a “rootless orchid”. She likened the experience of growing up Chinese in America to a “flower without roots”. She asked herself, “Do I want my children to be like that... learning the ways of Chinese culture, being raised in the U.S.?” She knew that if we moved to Taiwan they would certainly call me names because my appearance reflected my multicultural and mixed heritage. People tended to be somewhat more open to difference and diversity in the U.S. at that time, in the big cities, at least. Some of my mother’s first negative experiences in the U.S. were engrained with racism in language translations between Mandarin and English. In the late 1970s in upstate New York, one of the neighborhood kids she was babysitting asked what her Chinese name was. Upon hearing her name, “Reibei”, the children were soon gleefully shouting “Rabies, rabies! What a strange name!” and running around in a frenzy. This experience was a testament to the countless hours she spent choosing a Chinese name for me that sounded neutral when pronounced in English and also the decision to focus on English as the dominant language spoken at home. It was also the

harsh reality that, although the U.S. was ‘open’ to diversity, raising mixed-heritage children would, no doubt, be a struggle. She made the choice to bring me up American while teaching all the good things about Taiwanese culture.

Outside the security of our bi-lingual home, code switching was ever present. For instance, we would switch from English to Chinese when we wanted privacy or didn’t want people around understanding our conversation. It was our way to connect – just for us – between us. However, we rarely used Chinese in any extended conversations because my Mandarin, at the time, was far from fluent. It is from these foundational fragments of Chinese culture and language that my multicultural identity has room to flourish.

Over time, my relationship with China has grown. The question began about a year leading up to my move to Beijing. I recited three basic reasons to explain my desire for China. The first reason: language. I wanted to learn Chinese, not just survival Chinese but fluent Mandarin. In 2004 my Ah-Gong, (grandfather following my mother’s lineage) passed away⁴. A door into my past had been slammed shut with his passing; a door that had I walked through, had I explored, would have led me on a seemingly clear and straight path to discovering my extended Chinese roots. I longed for conversations with Ah-Gong about his life experiences and stories growing up in Taiwan. Mandarin was the tool I needed get there. Though that door has closed, Ah-Gong has lived on in me as the roots of my reason to learn Chinese, to learn about my family history, my multicultural roots, about where I come from, and what trajectory I am on. The second reason: teach in Beijing to gain experience and perspective into being an outsider within a culture,

society, and political system different from the one I grew up with. In other words, could I (an “American orchid”) take root in Chinese soil? What would that feel like? My experiences growing up multicultural in the US were insightful for comprehending my identity but not like the insight in the experiences I read about in global perspectives from expatriates living abroad. I wanted to experience the world in China and the passion that new insight into a culture can uncover about taken for granted practices and day to day lifestyles. The third reason: an opportunity to work on my dissertation about China in China. With the (then) upcoming 2008 Olympics scheduled in Beijing it was the perfect opportunity and time to make my pilgrimage to China to commit to my relations with China, experience the everyday doings, and to find this topic.

Like many of the developmental changes taking place in China, my relations with China have continuously changed during my first couple of years here largely due to political reasons with a change of advisors, personal reasons found in love and marriage, and a nuanced dissertation topic. Nearly four years later, many things remain constant: I am still learning Chinese language & everyday practices as well as theoretical underpinnings I absorb living beside Chinese folks. I am still teaching and I am still discovering new taken-for-granted privileges I had living in the U.S. I now have stronger recognition of my relationship with China and what directions I head toward in the future. Experience here has provided me insight and understanding in learning some of the complexity in the micro practices of Chinese culture, but more importantly the complexity of my own roots. Like many of the changes in our relationship, China has been through some of its own these past few years from: trying to secure their roots in

global politics and world economics, the coming and going of the 2008 Olympics and 2010 Shanghai Expo, and managing tensions that surface in the spotlight for a nation on the rise.

The 2008 Beijing Olympics

Up until 1979 China had closed its economic and much of its social and cultural doors to the world. For the host country, through open doors, it is an influx of international visitors from all across over the globe. With a modern history plagued by civil war, colonialism, and famine, China's posturing had been based on a defensive logic with closed doors – don't ever let those atrocities of the past happen again⁵.

In 1979, Deng Xiaoping was following the economic and social effects of Chairman Mao Zedong's "Great Leap Forward" and "Cultural Revolution", hoping to counter them with economic reform by opening up China's economic sector to the global market, foreign investment, and limited private competition. Contrary to Mao, Deng believed opening economic doors to the West would help China out of its great recession. With the implementation of Deng's, "socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics", in just 30 years (1979-2009) China has displayed its economic prowess vertically jumping to the number two world economy slot (Barboza).

Similar to opening economic doors, China viewed the 2008 Beijing Olympics as a symbolic opening, the chance to open its cultural doors to the world. Held every four years the summer Olympics are an opportunity for athletes to compete for the title 'best in the world'. On a larger scale it's also a chance for countries to showcase their talents to the world. Viewing the Olympics as something other than a competition, it becomes a

performance watched for entertainment and educational purposes to learn about cultures of the world. China approached the Beijing Olympics as “a perfect occasion to fully display China’s 5000-year history and its resplendent culture and also present a grand ceremony that will gather athletes from all over the world and present diverse and brilliant cultures” (Manual 79). Correspondingly, the 2008 Olympics was the highest rated sports competition watched around the globe, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Nielsen Media Research says 4.7 billion viewers globally saw at least some of the 17 days of TV coverage last month. This audience was one-fifth larger than the 3.9 billion who watched the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Host nation China claimed more viewers than any other nation, Nielsen said Friday, logging an audience reach of 94 percent among its population of 1.3 billion. In the U.S., where NBC and several sister networks aired extensive coverage, the 2008 Olympics took the record as the most-viewed event in American television history. (Martineau)

China’s intentions were to “fully express the common aspiration of the Chinese people to jointly seek peace, development, and common progress together with the people of the world, and it will highlight the fact that the 1.3 billion people of 56 ethnic groups, along with 50 million overseas Chinese, are all most enthusiastic participants in the Beijing Olympic Games” (Manual 79-80). Layered upon entertainment and education, politically the Olympics were a chance for China to show the world its development advancements and economic achievements as well as 1.3 billion (+) Chinese around the world united by a common cause. International Olympic Committee (IOC) member Gerhard Heiberg of Norway said that in choosing Beijing for the 2008 Olympics, “the message was clear: We wanted to see the Olympic games in China. We think this will open up China” (qtd. in Michaelis). The 2008 Beijing Olympics was the first time China has hosted the Olympics.

China unveils itself to the world

China took the games as the perfect opportunity to display “China’s 5,000-year history and its resplendent culture and also present a grand ceremony that will gather athletes from all over the world and present diverse and brilliant cultures” (Manual 79). China unveiled its 2008 Olympic campaign to the world in the most expensive Olympics to date with estimates at \$16 billion (U.S.) according to Chinese sources (People's Daily Online) putting it in relatively the same cost range as the Athens Summer Olympics in 2004 (\$15 billion U.S.). Western estimates put the costs well above this figure at a costlier \$40 billion (U.S.) (Guardian; Rabinovitch). One arena of debate centers on the amount the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) spent on the Olympics. Critics argue that the money spent on sports and entertainment could have been better spent on infrastructure and improving the quality of life for Chinese living in rural geographies. China was willing to invest a record amount in hopes of making the 2008 Beijing Olympics the most memorable Olympics in an attempt to leave a lasting impression on the world watching.

In making its decision for the 2008 Olympic bid the IOC members said they must separate politics from sport. After their vote and decision placed China in the spotlight, members “freely linked the two in talking about what effect bringing the world’s largest sports spectacle might have on China’s closed and repressive society” (Michaelis). One perspective understands the unveiling of China’s ‘New Face’ to the world during the Olympics as a positive one, focused on Olympism, displaying a smile with open arms to visitors of the world, and presenting a courteous yet eager sense of wanting to be part of

global politics and international relations. From another perspective, the unveiling displayed another face, overshadowed by human rights debates that focus on China's repressive and authoritative regime, inner turmoil and 'problematic' approach to domestic problems and world political positionings. The latter perspective, read in the context of "melting pot world politics"⁶, reveals China's grasp of the model-minority myth⁷ on a global scale, ready to be a peaceful leader and peaceful player on the world stage. The later, read in the context of the political turmoil leading up to the Olympics, made the already directed spotlight on China shine even brighter on 'sore spots' like Taiwan strait relations, the backing of North Korea and Kim Jong Il, the turmoil in Xinjing and Tibet, and human rights disagreements with the Western world. The unveiling of the 'New Face' of China is embedded in political, social, and cultural sites of contestation. It reveals alternative and foundational differences in cultural values between east and west and some of the foundations from which China launched its extensive "New Face" of China, Olympic campaign. I discuss China's "New Face" in the following sections.

Finding "Face" in an Olympic facade

2008 Beijing Olympics, day 8 – August 14th, 2010. As I walked across China Agricultural University's campus I noticed the flower façade had been moved from the entrance to the side of the "Princess Building", the name students gave the female dorms. The flower arrangement read, "Welcome you to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Wrestling Venue". As I made sense of the odd sounding English by fusing the phrase with Chinese grammar, this wasn't the first time I noticed the flower façade, but rather the

first time I was drawn in by it, curious to find what was holding the display up. The face was grand, exploding full of reds, yellows, oranges, and greens, pleasing to the eye, and now placed quite a distance from the wrestling venue. At the time I had been living on campus in the “China-Israel” building and encountered the façade on my way to my apartment. I walked up to the display and made my way to the side, taking in the grandiose and exotic display of colors and arrangement. “What a spectacle!” I thought. I walked to the back of the façade, curious as to what was holding the display up. I thought that if it was one big flower pot the amount of dirt would be massive. I have encountered many marvels of Chinese engineering in my one year in Beijing, from matrices of bamboo scaffolding and open tangles of spaghetti string electric wires, to the six story bricked buildings that seemingly erected in a week. When I saw the back of that façade I saw that it was simply a high school style bleacher with individually potted flowers strategically placed on the façade to hide the molding of the structure. That’s when it hit me. Like the flower façade, China has planned and enacted a well organized façade to display its ‘New Face’ to the world – a harmonic, clean, green, environmentally-lean face, laced with flora and fauna. This face was produced by shipping in enormous amounts of flora and fauna to Beijing pre-Olympics, with regulations on when cars could drive around the city, with the shutting down of factories in and around Beijing, with the promises of no censorship and free-range to all media outlets, and with the training of Olympic volunteers. The effort was massive! This flower display was China’s façade in a flower pot, China’s ‘New Face’ set up on high school bleachers for spectators to take in.

China's "New Face"

With the attention of the world, China took the opportunity to display its "New Face". Specifically, I use "New Face" to refer to, "a new image of China with a developing economy and social progress" (Manual 81). China's "New Face" is the image they desire to present and perform for the world. The structure of China's New Face is built upon three goals: a Green Olympics, a Hi-Tech Olympics, and the People's Olympics. First, in terms of a Green Olympics, China worked to establish "strict environmentally friendly technologies and measures in order to better the capital's ecological standards to build a city better fit for all to enjoy" (Manual 80). Secondly, a Hi-Tech Olympics refers to China using the latest scientific and technological achievements. They approached this as an opportunity "to serve as a window to showcase the city's high-tech achievements and its innovative strength" (Manual 81). Third, the goal of the People's Olympics is to:

Spread modern Olympic ideas, display splendid Chinese culture, exhibit Beijing's historical and cultural heritage, and its residents' positive attitudes, advance cultural exchanges, to deepen understanding and friendship between the people of the world, promote harmonious development between mankind and nature, to promote healthy interaction between individuals and society, to foster mental and physical health. (Manual 81)

In these three goals of China's New Face we see and hear the actual (public) planning describing China's new image and its production in preparation for an unveiling. We see it in environmental and high-tech advancements as well as in "the Peoples'" practices on the ground.

The connotation in China revealing a "New Face" is in relation to struggles throughout China's modern history with the civil war between the Guoming Dan

(Taiwan's KMT party) and CCP, political struggles for independence across the Taiwan Strait, the Dalai Lama and Tibetan freedom movement, turmoil in the Xingjiang region, Uygher contestation for autonomy, as well as the responsibility of developing "green" industry to protect the environment and improving the quality of (high-tech) products China produces. With a "New Face" the goal of China's project was to rid itself of these politically sensitive and 'reputation-damaging' sore spots. In the spirit of friendly competition China could present itself as a nation with a new goal, a new purpose, and united in harmony though these politically sensitive differences. Representing itself in this manner, as a harmonious society and a society that has through difference found harmony, China approached the unveiling as the light of possibility where Chinese of the world unite to work in harmony, agreement, and accord, to host the Olympics.

Indeed, the New Face of China is based on the concept of harmony. Harmony is determined by the relations between people and the practices that take place in the workings of people and their sets of relations. In other words, people must together produce harmony. In essence, a harmonious China is united together regardless of the political, ethnic, cultural, differences and struggles for peaceful coexistence. Furthermore, in the Olympic slogan we can see the underpinnings of this harmonious relationship, this dream of peace, extended beyond China, "One World, One Dream". We also hear the presentation of the "New Face" of China in official songs of the 2008 Beijing Olympics such as, "We are ready" (for harmony?), "Welcome to Beijing" (to see how our harmony works), "You and Me" (together in har-mo-ny), "One World One, Dream" (peaceful

coexistence), and “Forever Friends”, to name a few. Besides historical struggles and current political contestations, why the need for a “New Face”?

Communication for a new image: A rationale

China’s economy has catapulted to number two in the world (Barboza 2010). As the “Yellow Peril”⁸ resurfaces in the US, what is produced by the media is not an altogether accurate depiction or representation of common day practices in China. There is a growing fear of China taking over the world, infecting the West. U.S. Reports show China as a pathological threat (remember SARS and the Avian Flu Virus?) (CNN “Human Bird Flu”; CNN “Bush Unveils”; Duffy, for example), an economic threat to U.S. interests (jobs, U.S. debt bought, quality of products made in China) (Bradsher; Lynch; Samuelson; Tahmincioglu, for example), an environmental threat (Anna; Associated Press “Pollution, Traffic Worry Inspectors”; McCarthy; Wong, for example), an internet security threat (Griffin; Vause, for example), and a military threat (Associated Press “Rumsfield Warns on Chinese Threat”; Entous; Novak; Starr, for example). We must be critical of our own sources and what the purposes are behind the news reports produced for a U.S. based audience. However, I beg the question: why all the negative focus on China? Speaking generally about Asia and the Middle-East, Edward Said suggests,

The omnipresent CNNs and Fox News Channels of this world, plus myriad numbers of evangelical and right-wing radio hosts, plus innumerable tabloids and even middlebrow journals, all of them recycling the same unverifiable fictions and vast generalizations so as to stir up “America” against the foreign devil...that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort. (xx-xxi)

As Said notes, it's not just the media outlets that produce heavily weighted reports on China. In a Department of Defense annual report to Congress titled, "Military Power of the People's Republic of China" (United States), China is positioned anti U.S. interests, "China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States and field disruptive military technologies that could over time offset traditional U.S. military advantages" (United States I). Thus, with an abundance of one-sided discourse reproducing Yellow Perilism for an American audience there is no wonder China feels it is in need of new image and public relations.

With the continual growth of international relations between China and the U.S. there will no doubt be increasing amounts of international relations and collaborations between the two countries in various contexts – business, economic, governmental, cultural, etc. With the rise in international relations and global dialogue there is rising need to understand each other, specifically our communicative practices and relationships, in order to understand cultural differences and similarities, in hopes of striving for better, future intercultural communication encounters centered in peace and peaceful coexistence.

In the same vein, during the summer of 2009 Beijing hosted a conference with the theme, "Intercultural Communication Between China and the World", China Association For Intercultural Communication's eighth biennial conference. The 2009 conference marked an important benchmark for China's intercultural communication with the world when high ranking CCP officials were in attendance (Yuxia) formally recognizing and legitimizing the important role of intercultural communication in politics. With this

move, the CCP has acknowledged the importance of intercultural communication, signaling new possibilities to build upon.

This study is justified in the sense that we need to understand what Chinese individuals are about, with new light, to show the diversity that exists in hopes of countering the overgeneralizing, objectifying, and dichotomizing effects that are reproduced in Yellow Perilist discourse. Further, attention needs to be focused on Chinese communicative and performative practices in contexts of cultural misunderstanding in China and specifically, how they work through cultural misunderstandings during intercultural encounters. Furthermore, in a power system that regulates what can be said (regulation of speech and expression), how do Chinese perform and communicate in creatively resistive ways? What are the practices on the ground? Chinese are not merely dupes fooled into the ideology of the ruling party. There is room for interpretation in what they say and what they really mean. I align with Renato Rosaldo when he says, “it is a mistake to urge social analysts to strive for a position of innocence designated by such adjectives as detached, neutral, or impartial” (p. 69). More so, I align with Madison when she tells us, “we are accountable for our research paradigms, our authority, our moral responsibility relative to representation and interpretation” (“Critical Ethnography” 14). Furthermore, I align with Calafell and Moreman when they say with heightened self-reflexivity we can be, “aware of the ways our field experiences helps researchers connect with those communities with whom they are in dialogue” (125). Thus, I situate myself in this study and interject my ‘voice’ by including my own experiences and subjective interpretations, my intercultural

communication encounters, and my performances dealing with cultural difference in Beijing. I believe that with the focus of this study being communication, performance, and cultural difference it is appropriate and would be haphazard not to include an element of self-reflexivity⁹ as a co-performer in dialogue with China.

My place in this study

Like the flower façade I feel that, at times, I am on display for Chinese to look at, taking in my ‘exotic’, foreign appearance. There is a word Chinese use to describe someone who looks different, 外国人“wai guo ren”, which literally means “outside country person”. Translated to English, it means foreigner. It’s common when I walk the streets of Beijing and hear Chinese folks refer to me as a foreigner in their conversations, “看,一个外国人”, “kan, yi ge wai guo ren”, or “look, it’s a foreigner”, while heads turn in my direction. Currently, I have lived in Beijing for over three years now and have grown accustomed to looking different from the “norm” and communicating about cultural differences (between China and the west) with locals. Chinese folks see my physical features, see that I am different from “normal” (my looks, clothing style, and even my “American swagger”), and are curious. They ask me where I am from. Some have asked if I am from Europe, Australia, and even Russia. On occasion I have met a Chinese person that tells me, “你看起来像中国人”, “ni kan qi lai xiang zhong guo ren”, or “you sort have look like you’re Chinese” and they ask where I am from. Other times Chinese folks just plain out stare. Their stares are not the malicious and hateful kind but rather their eyes communicate curiosity. In the U.S., I have met a similar stare but the U.S. stare is oftentimes accompanied by a smile or a greeting of some kind. It’s a similar

curiosity here. In Beijing, the intercultural encounters bring curious eyes with a myriad of questions that want to understand the differences.

Those persistent eyes motivated by curiosity calls into question my (foreign) body moving through Chinese space. That curiosity feels different than in U.S. It's almost an innocent curiosity. It feels different than a multiracial body moving through racially charged, dominant white spaces in the U.S. But, being different in Beijing also has its similarities to being different in America. People look at you, are curious with your appearance and want to understand you and know where you're coming from.

My first month in Beijing I started teaching an Introduction to Communication course for the University of Colorado's (UCD) Communication Department at the International College At Beijing (ICB), a college at China Agricultural University (CAU) in Beijing's Haidian district. One day I finished class, packed up my materials, and left the university library where we had class. Outside, the courtyard was dense with students leaving a finished class or heading to their next class. Classmates and friends walked together, mostly in groups of three or four. I was the only person out in that courtyard that did not look fully Chinese. As I was walking to my next class I could hear conversations around me. I didn't understand everything, just random words and phrases I had learned growing up "half-Chinese" in America and during my first week of Chinese lessons in Beijing. Through the steady stream of Chinese I heard a loud, unmistakable, "FUCK YOU!" in English that came from directly behind me about ten feet away. I cringed because it sounded as if it were directed at me. My initial reaction was to turn around to see what the commotion was about, but instead I hesitated and kept my pace.

Another “FUCK YOU!” – I kept walking. This time, concentrating on the voice, I could tell by the accent and pitch that it came from a young Chinese male, probably in his late teens, and it was, in fact, directed at me. I heard laughter and chuckles from his friends and other students in the courtyard. Interestingly, my first reaction was not fear or anger, but rather a bit of surprise then curiosity. I tried to imagine the point of view from where the expletive came from. I put myself in that young, Chinese male’s position. There in front of you is a “wai guo ren”, a 国际老师, a “guo ji lao shi” (a foreigner, an international instructor). From western music and movies a Chinese student knows that the expletive carries power. How will this “guoji laoshi” react? The “fuck you” was a challenge to my ‘foreignness’, my different body moving through their space. I kept walking. The curiosity I had seen in the stares of Chinese folks had textualized and carried over into the English language. This curiosity made its way into words and took communicative and performative form when the meaning became dependent upon my reaction and (lack of) response to the expletive. I don’t believe that the Chinese, male student and his friends wanted to offend me but rather to understand me in terms of how I performed in reaction to the power and meaning those words communicated. I doubt they knew about the intercultural training I had during my undergraduate studies, my mentors and scholars of color that had helped me understand the dominant ideology engrained into my white skin, and the inner struggle I battle with on a daily basis because of my white privilege. I didn’t turn around. I kept walking, shaken but excited about the potential of being in Beijing and the possibilities that lay ahead of me.

From this encounter, I realize that my place in China is a place of liminality. In China, the context has changed and with it so has the meaning of a moving, foreign body. My performances have the potential to signify the identity of a nation and represent a culture China regularly encounters in mass communication and mediated texts. It also has the power to disrupt stereotypes and challenge ideologies. It was then that I felt the potentials of change ruminating through my body and the power of my position and performance of intercultural communication.

Communication & cultural difference

In this dissertation I focus on how Chinese do “China”. I start from how practices are enacted in the face of cultural difference. Chinese perform culture and cultural difference through the practice of communication. Specifically, by communication I am referring to spoken and written as well as extralinguistic and non-textualized modes of communication. Furthermore, when I use cultural difference I am referring to the overlapping/intersectional cultural markers of identity difference. For the sake of this project I focus on intersections between and among nation, race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, and age. Implied in these overlapping/intersecting cultural markers of identity differences are practices, languages, beliefs, habits, customs, communicative styles, world views, ways of thinking, and perceiving the world among many others. These cultural differences reveal themselves in the material realm in that they are produced as physical objects and they can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched, and generally perceived through actual corporeal performances. In the abstract realm cultural differences are less tangible, have arguably more ‘sting’ in their communicative effects,

and speak to the centrality of invisible and taken for granted power relations and a politics of position/ality. Communication and generally, discourse, is the key that links the two realms. From a discursive grounding I am able to conceive how cultural differences are produced, understood, and negotiated in and through power relations, communication, and performative practices in Beijing. Along these lines culture becomes a site of contestation and struggle over meaning where differences and similarities are exactly what is at stake in communication and where historical, economic, contextual, socio-political, and power contexts can enable and constrain communication. Conceptualizing culture in this regard pushes this study towards critical directions with what Dream Moon has conceptualized as an “analytic that recognizes the contested and power-infused nature of "culture" within intercultural communication” (78).

From Intercultural to Chinese Communication harmony

The roots of the intercultural communication (IC) field are not yet out of sight. Two thousand and nine marked the 50th anniversary of the beginnings of the IC field with the publication of Edward T. Hall’s book, *The Silent Language*. Many scholars have convened on Hall as the father of the field (for example, see Condon; Dodd; Gudykunst; Klopff; Leeds-Hurwitz; Pusch; Singer) because of the nature of his use and focus on the term intercultural communication. Hall’s focus on intercultural communication originated from a need to focus on the communication between two or more different cultures in the training of U.S. State Department Foreign Service Institute (FSI) diplomats. Before heading abroad FSI trainees wanted practical knowledge about how to interact and communicate with individuals from different cultures rather than abstract and general

models about culture (Leeds-Hurwitz), information about the destination country, or the languages used there (Pusch). In addition they wanted more “education about the history, political structure, economics, and international relations with the United States, not only of the country to which the diplomat would be sent, but of the entire geographical region” (Leeds-Hurwitz 265). Hall’s research made a communicative turn when he focused on how cultures use time, space, and nonverbal communication in different culturally specific and communicative ways. Although critique (Chuang; Moon, for example) has pointed out Hall’s (and other positivist scholars’) research as essentializing/overgeneralizing (lumping all American cultures into one national culture as collectivistic or individualistic, for example) and dichotomizing (low-context culture and high-context culture, monochronic and polychronic time) it is from these roots that we have gained a foundation from which we can build upon in the IC field. In a 1995 interview, Hall states that, “he did not expect his contributions to remain static; he believed that other people would ‘stand on his shoulders’ and build on his work” (qtd. in Pusch 30). Avoiding throwing the baby (positivist research) out with the bath water (critical move in intercultural communication), Guo-Ming Chen’s words also prove insightful when he tells us, “Hall’s tradition can serve as the doorway for students to enter the room of intercultural understanding. Through this front door, students can further pursue the differences in different levels of the cultural abstraction” (as cited in Starosta & Chen 17).

With the critical ferment in intercultural studies, alternative perspectives and voices in the field have emerged. For example, Chen, Dissanayake, and Miike among

others, have taken an Asian focus or Asiancentric approach to communication studies. The ecology of the IC field has a different trajectory when we focus our gaze on Asian Communication studies. Most recently with the influence of a critical ethnic studies and the critique of whiteness, is a call for a focus from non-white perspectives. For instance, Miike (“An Anatomy of Eurocentricism”; “Beyond Eurocentrism”) calls for an Asia-centric approach that de-westernizes communication scholarship, theory, and research about Asian cultures. The idea is to understand communication from an insider’s perspective, and from a non-white, American stance, adding new insight about, from, and for Asia.

Chen has centralized the importance of culture in communication stating that, “in order to understand a person’s communication behavior or effectively communicate with a person from a different culture it is necessary to first understand the person’s culture” (1). Furthermore, Chen has called for the research of Chinese intercultural communication from a Chinese perspective, specifically focusing on a conceptualization of “harmony” (9). Conceptualizing harmony provides a framework to understand Chinese intercultural communication from a Chinese perspective with a Chinese concept. Likewise, Li discusses harmony as the “reconciling of difference” (56). In this sense difference becomes the reason for or the basis of “harmony”. Stated plainly, from a Chinese perspective, “harmony is the end rather than the means of human communication” (Chen 2). While a Western perspective may view conflict as potentially damaging to harmonious communication, a Chinese perspective views conflict as part of the process of adapting and interdependence that is necessary to achieve harmony (Chen).

For instance, in explaining Victor Turner's notion of a social drama, Madison tells us, "In social harmony, the working arrangements within a particular social unit are synchronized. When a social drama occurs, there is a schism or break in synchronization. The social unit is disturbed and the parties involved are in disagreement" ("Critical Ethnography" 156). We can hear the differences in the basis of western and Chinese conceptions of harmony. From my experience in China and communication with Chinese about what harmony looks, sounds, and feels like, I want to add some insight based on cultural differences in the ontology of harmony as the following: non-Chinese (i.e. westerners) view harmony as a state of agreement (synchrony) in which our communication is smooth, docile and non-threatening, while Chinese on the other hand, view harmony as a state of disagreement (also a kind of synchrony) in which there is an accord to communicate through differences arguing for diverse opinions. While this may be perceived as a "threatening" climate or social drama within a western frame, it is a foundational parameter which Chinese communication is based upon.

My hopes are to further the argument that harmony becomes "the core value of Chinese culture that guides Chinese communication behaviors" (Chen 2). Robert Neville, a Bostonian Confucianist has explained that we should not place harmony and strife as opposites. Rather, "harmony is a contrast of different elements, a balance or mixture and not a superimposed totality...strife is a species of harmony" (Neville 49). Furthermore, and along the same lines in Mainland China in the 1990's, "Qian Xun develops the idea of "harmony without uniformity" (*he er bu tong*); there is harmony when we have certain things which are mutually different, but which still have a way of relating to each other

meaningfully” (Solé-Farràs 17). Furthermore and taking up from Neville and Solé-Farràs, harmony is a dynamic, ever changing, and ongoing process. I have seen and heard this conception of harmony performed on the streets of Beijing. It looks and sounds like an argument (a social drama) – with volume and inflection rising, speech quickening, and gestures wildly emphasizing a point – going through the stages of Turner’s social drama, but is indeed the basis upon which harmony is performed.

Research focusing on Chinese culture and communication must avoid ethnocentric interpretations by considering what Chinese culturally value and what those cultural values are intertwined with in China’s current government-political-philosophical system, a socialist CCP driven by Marxist ideals, fueled by Maoist thought, and founded in Confucianism. Different from a western approach to communication that values harmony in the communicative process, harmony is the ultimate goal in [Chinese] communication (Chen). In his words harmony is the “most important element Chinese people use to regulate the transforming, cyclic, and never ending process of human communication” (Chen 2). Conceptualizing harmony in this manner can provide insight to the contested nature of communication and power relations in China from a Chinese perspective. In my analysis I employ a Chinese conceptualization of harmony to strengthen interpretations of Chinese communication and performative practices.

Taking up from Chen, Dissanayake, and Miike’s suggestions I specifically focus on China and Chinese practices. Taking this study and centering it in China (opposed to the US) changes the playing field of the nature of the research. For instance, intercultural communication and practices between Chinese and Americans are different from each

other and take on new meaning when they are in China instead of the US. In this case the situation and ecological playing field make a world of difference in the change of context, specifically when we consider the physical realm and corporeal relations of bodies moving through geo-political territories and spaces. Specifically, my intention is to add an aspect of how harmony is performed on/in/from/for the “New Face” of China to current Chinese Communication scholarship, the Intercultural Communication field, and Performance studies.

Reflexivity in the IRB process

In preparation for this research project, I started the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process in the winter of 2009. I take some time here to reflect on the IRB process because there is added insight to the meaning and implications of the “foreign” research body in an international context, specifically an American researcher in China. On the University of Denver’s (DU) Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website, the IRB tells us:

To conduct research that involves the use of human subjects, the University is required by Federal mandate to have an assurance of compliance for protection of human subjects. This assurance serves as the University of Denver’s agreement with the government in promising that all individuals involved in human subjects research will be treated ethically. (University of Denver)

When answering IRB questions, my responses seem to point to cultural and systematic differences as well as ethical differences in conducting research in China and the U.S. Because I am conducting international research, I am required to fill out an additional “International Research” form. Some of the additional questions range from asking about the political, social, and cultural climates in China to possible dangers that I, as well as

participants, might encounter in the research study. These questions force me to be reflexive about my positionality in China as well as reflexive in the research process. They are designed to ‘flush out’ sensitive or potentially harmful areas in my research design as well as designed to protect participants. With one question, “What are the IRB procedures in the host country?”, I realize that I have never heard about other researchers in China getting IRB approval to conduct research, either humanistic or positivistic. With this quandary in mind, I sent the Dean of the International College At Beijing an email requesting time to talk about IRB procedures in China. In our meeting, a week later, he began by asking what I meant by “IRB”. I asked about any procedures I needed to do to conduct primary research. He said there is no IRB in China. In his words, “if you’re a researcher, you do research. You don’t have to ask anyone, you just do it.” A couple of caveats that he noted were if I audio or video record interviews I should get the permission from the interviewee first. Another point he stressed was that I should avoid discussing “politically sensitive” topics in the interviews. Though he did not mention them by name, I took “politically sensitive” topics, as referring to Tiananmen, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang issues. With that our meeting was over and I started tackling the IRB application the next day.

Here, I want to share some of the actual questions and answers that I provide on the “Additional Questions for International Research” form that supplements the IRB application in order to highlight the differences between the research practices Chinese and U.S. researchers are enmeshed in.¹⁰ These questions and answers help reveal the overwhelming importance of reflexivity that is necessary when considering systematic,

cultural, and political differences in an international context and foregrounds the central role the researcher occupies in a research study. I provide some of them here:

Q: Will an IRB in the host country review the protocol? What is the process for gaining approval/permission for conducting research in this setting?

A: There is no equivalent to a U.S. IRB protocol in Beijing, China for social scientific research. In their essay entitled, “Conducting Fieldwork in China”, sociologists, Bin Liang (Oklahoma State University-Tulsa) and Hong Lu (University of Las Vegas) state it plainly when they explain,

With ethical and institutional guidelines established for collecting data in field research, criminologists [and social researchers] must now follow a proscribed research protocol to ensure principles of informed consent and confidentiality. These principles, however, are a product of Western, individualistic culture that widely assumes that human beings, as autonomous with free will, be treated with integrity and respect. (Liang and Lu 153)

Furthermore, they tell us that “researchers may be frustrated to find that no universal laws and rules exist in regulating institutional and individual behavior in China” (159). Thus, no IRB in China will review the protocol because it does not exist (for an explanation and discussion of major issues such as access, informed consent, conceptual and cultural equivalence to U.S. IRB procedures see Liang & Lu). Furthermore, there is no process for gaining approval/permission for conduction research at China Agricultural University for social scientific research.

I formally asked the Dean of the International College At Beijing at China Agricultural University, (on the record) and he informed me that if a scholar at this university wants to conduct social scientific research they simply conduct the research without any formal review of the protocol. In his words, “If you are a qualified

researcher, you just do the research”. I explained the nature of the University of Denver’s IRB protocol and the Dean said there is no IRB at China Agricultural University. He gave me verbal permission to commence with my research study. He said that he will sign any forms I may need to verify permission was, in fact, given. He did mention that if I audio or video record interview sessions I should ask the interviewees for permission. The Dean also explained that I should not ask questions that will stir up dissidence or incite rebellion in China. I have no intention of doing so and I believe my interview questions will not stir up dissidence or incite rebellion.

As an international researcher I am tied to IRB procedures in the US that are designed to protect participants and the University I am representing in my research. Here in China the protection is a little bit vague in terms of the research process. Differences become apparent in that the researcher bears the bulk of responsibility in China, while in the U.S. the IRB filters the responsibility between university and researcher. The IRB wanted to ensure that I had permission from the Chinese university to conduct my research study. IRB addressed this answer by requiring me to get a signed letter from the Dean stating that I have permission to conduct my research study. I scheduled more time with the Dean and asked him for a written letter specifically stating that I have his permission. Having never been asked to create such a document he asked that I draft up a “letter of permission” that he would sign. In another meeting the Dean printed out the letter on University letterhead, signed it, and wished me a happy research process.

Q: What is your relationship with, familiarity and/or experience in the community in which research participants will be recruited?

A: I have been an instructor for the University of Colorado Denver's International College At Beijing program at China Agricultural University for two years. I have great rapport with all levels of administration, faculty, staff, (both in China and the U.S.) and students. I am at the start of the first semester of my third year of employment here. I've also taught culture and communication courses both at the University of Denver and here at China Agricultural University. My research focuses on China and the intercultural communication between China and the U.S. Furthermore, I have published a research article (Dodge & Suter) in the journal, *Women and Language*, about Chinese matronymy (matriarchal naming practices) and the One Child Policy which has given me added insight to Chinese policy and history. I am also half Chinese. Growing up half Chinese in the U.S. has provided me with a diverse range of cultural experience, language acquisition (Mandarin Chinese), and understanding of Chinese cultural customs, traditions, values, beliefs, practices, etc. that have proved invaluable to my experiences, time, and research in China.

My first reaction was, why is IRB asking me this question? By explaining my qualifications, familiarity, and relevant experiences I have in an international context such as China, I understand this question as an assessment of some potential dangers I may create or encounter when doing this research study. In asking this question it seems that the IRB also intended to flush out potential affects and effects that may abound from

me being in this international context with Chinese participants. Looking back once more upon this question I also read it as asking about how I am invested in China and Chinese culture. What qualifies you to be in that space asking those sorts of questions, doing that kind of research? The feeling in my “gut” was similar to the one I had back in the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco answering questions about what my intentions were for travelling to China. I felt the power of authority bearing down in the question and hear a defensive posturing in the justification of my answer. In my answer I optioned to list lines from my vitae. The IRB asked this question with the best intentions of protecting me and research participants but ultimately, the issue becomes the assessment of my role in this research by a legitimized authority.

Q: What are the ethical challenges of conducting research in this country?

A: Ethical challenges of conducting this research study deal with the dynamic socio-political and cultural context of China. While China seems to be ever-changing, findings from this study must be situated in such a context, dynamic and evolving and any conclusions must reflect the dynamic socio-political and cultural context. Other specific ethical challenges of conducting research in China deal with the difference in political organization and governmental structure. For instance, cultural differences in censorship and the “freedom of speech” can be loosely translated to have different connotations from an American perspective and Chinese perspective. The ethical challenges specifically deal with acknowledging and negotiating through the tensions of perceiving Chinese laws and regulations ethnocentrically through an American lens. Growing up in the U.S. with the “freedom” of speech and now conducting research in China where the government

controls the dissemination of information may be constraining to the types of responses I receive from participants and interpretations I draw from these interviews. Furthermore, Chinese dissemination of information or propaganda strategies that advocate a pro-Chinese national sentiment may influence interviewee responses and my interpretation of them. The ethical challenges lie in situating interpretations within this dynamic context. Furthermore, the framing of follow-up and probing questions, so as not to advocate for one cultural system or governmental structure is vital. These challenges reflect the necessity to frame probing questions so as not to reflect the influence of my American cultural perspective and experiences being raised under a different world view, cultural values, and governmental structure.

The point I made in the above answer is that the ethical challenge lies in situating my interpretations within the dynamic, socio-political, and cultural differences between China and the U.S. The pressing question that comes to mind after I answered this question was: is it unethical to communicate and do “American” in China when some of my American ethics and political positionings are in contrast with some of those in China? Reflexivity is a driving concept that has positioned me this space of liminality, in between China and the U.S. in this research process. It complicates matters by adding a layer of political complexity. If I stay true to my American ethics and break Chinese ethics in the process, am I practicing unethical research? Must I stay true to one set of ethics regardless of the environment and space I engage? When in China, do I do as the Chinese, regardless of my American interests? I know that in doing research I am

performing at the borderlands in an unclear ideological tangle of American and Chinese political, social, cultural, and ethical implications. I strive to keep an open mind, be sensitive to differences in the way we do and understand things, and empathize from the mind state of our very differences. I claim no objectivity, and realize that in sharing my experiences I reveal a portion of my world view, my interpretation and my perspective, in a somewhat meta-communicative rendition of how China does Chinese practices though dialogue with me. Without reflexivity, I potentially miss the inspiration of the borderland, the perspective of being an outsider within, an insider outside of convention, and the possibilities of finding commonalities in difference.

Q: What is the current situation in the host country regarding freedom of speech, press, and interaction with researchers from American universities?

A: The research study I propose is situated in China's dynamic socio-political and cultural context. The current situation in China regarding freedom of speech, press, and interaction with researchers from American universities are all subject to monitoring and evaluation by the Chinese government. If any talk is deemed a threat to national security or deemed terrorist activity, dissidents may be reprimanded. Much international attention has been focused on China's status of freedom of speech, expression, the press, etc. leading up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics with continuing efforts. Regulations prohibit public demonstrations that have not been approved by the Chinese authorities. Violating this regulation can lead to foreigners being deported or imprisoned (for more information

refer to the Embassy of the United States, Beijing, China website:

<http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/> (Embassy of the United States).

Again, reflexivity as well as the importance of climate and environment are reoccurring themes in the last two questions. How do I, the researcher, complicate the study by doing it? What climate am I entering and how is discourse constrained by regulations of speech, press, and interaction with international researchers? My answers were what I now know to be stereotypical responses. My understanding has changed with my growing experience in China. Speech, expression, and the press are all regulated in China – yes, without a doubt, certainly, definitely – but, now I must add, not always specifically reserved for international scholars or foreigners in the English-speaking sphere. Rather, attention is concentrated on the regulation of expression, speech, and the press in the Chinese-speaking sphere. That’s not to say that a group of international scholars, walking up the steps to CCP headquarters, knocking on the front door and chanting anti-governmental slogans have nothing to fear. Rather, the defining issue at play surrounding freedom of speech, expression, and the press is “Harmony”.

Here, I have another opportunity to directly address the “situation” (what is the current “situation” in the host country regarding freedom of...?) with an example of harmony. A nuanced understanding of the situation is that foreigners and foreign media sources tend to be censored, after a news story is posted online for example, while Chinese and Chinese media are regulated before the fact so that when Chinese news stories are released they are consistent with the dominant ideology of the CCP. In

essence, the CCP has ultimate control to adjust all media that Chinese sources produce before released to the public, and suppress all media that foreign sources produce after they have been released to the public. For instance, news stories about human rights Nobel Prize winner, Liu Xiaobo¹¹, were used to demonize the West as, yet again, using Chinese “dissidents” as tools for western democracy and pressuring “Western values” (and universal human rights) upon China. Chinese newspapers, internet, and television news sources heavily regulated their releases about the award framing the west as meddling in China’s internal affairs. Alternative perspectives of Liu’s Nobel Prize award stories were accessibly from China in western based search engines (e.g. Google and Yahoo) and electronic newspapers (e.g. CNN and BBC). With the breadth and versatility of the internet, English speaking/reading Chinese were able to access western media sources and alternative perspectives adding to the one, default, CCP produced pro-China, anti-western rhetoric available. Although Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, and blogs were/are currently blocked by China’s “Great Firewall”, Chinese netizens took to their personal websites and China’s most heavily trafficked social-networking-site (Renren)¹², posting their opinions as status updates and messages.

At the time of Liu’s prize, I informally polled about 100 students that were taking a Mass Communication class with me. Roughly 30% had heard about the imprisoned Nobel Prize winner through Western e-sources (Liu had been named the winner two days prior). Students talked about their own postings as well as others that they had seen online, being removed by Chinese censors in the name of harmony. They explained there was no surprise in this action as it is the default pattern when politically sensitive topics

that deal with government reform, pro-democracy, anti-Chinese sentiment, Taiwan, Tibet, Tiananmen, Xinjiang, and the Falun Gong,¹³ among others, are posted online. While the government's actions were regulative, Chinese netizens found creative ways to break through the regulations and engage in discourse, voicing their own perspectives. In this case, the CCPs intentions were regulation and quickly expanded to reactionary censorship to control and confine discourse. How is this “harmonious” in the Chinese sense of the concept?

While the majority of my students' reactions were in support of Liu's efforts at improvement of human rights in China, an overwhelming majority felt Liu's award was negatively used as a western tool of democracy to put pressure on China to push democratic governmental reform (their wording almost identical to Chinese press releases). They had mixed feelings and memories of a previous Nobel Prize recipient who has been openly chastised in China – the Dali Lama¹⁴.

I followed by asking students why they didn't put up more resistance to the regulation of the press and speech? I asked them why they didn't want to have access to diverse and multiple perspectives, including Chinese and western ones, and make up their own minds about political issues (no doubt, leading questions). With one word – “harmony”, students began the explanation of the paradox Americans perceive in Chinese logic and values. Even though students know that they should be able to say what they want, whether voicing their opinion on “sensitive” topics or making “dangerous” reformist comments, their collective commitment to helping build a “harmonious” society trumps the desire for “free” expression and speech. In other words, for China to

live up to their full economic and political potential as superpower country, every Chinese citizen must make sacrifices for the sake of country and government. Here, harmony is the trade off. Harmony is the sacrifice, the hope of getting there.

This rallying call around harmony and stance that the CCP takes is parallel to strategies that have been used throughout history. It has been used by U.S. political leaders among others but named something else. It's been called – the need to stick together, the good of the collective, “united we stand, divided we fall” – to produce consent and legitimate ideology and political positioning. Students' comments, in our brief yet engaging conversations, reveal the complexities in Chinese censorship and regulation of discourse as well as what practicing harmony means to a people.

Going back to the IRB questions, difference in cultural values and systematic constraints of doing research are ever so clear when we pin the IRBs concerns in contrast to those of the Dean of ICB and Chinese education system. Upon further reflection and in general, IRB questions rally around political, social, cultural, and ethical implications, with the political being the type of questions that the Dean of the International College had asked that I specifically avoid in this research process. With time, the questions have been enlightening to the current challenges researchers face in other systems and structures as well as the junctures at which we place value on during the research process. Meta-research studies on the actual research and design process in international and cross-cultural contexts are limited and yet another intersection from which we can learn about communication practices and cultural difference.

Furthermore, this is a direct example from within the research process that displays just how important researcher reflexivity is. IRB questions directly address the importance of the researcher in context – the embodied space, the physical location – where my body is actually moving through Chinese (con)text. Space and territory play dynamic and pivotal roles in the political, social, cultural, and ethical realms of research. Furthermore, in this research process about China in China, the IRB process has reminded me not to resort to Yellow Perilism discourse, default objectification of the other, an objectifying gaze, or what Stuart Hall calls fetishism, “what is declared to be different, hideous, ‘primitive’, deformed, is at the same time being obsessively enjoyed and lingered over *because it is strange*” (268 original italics). My attempts to do so are from roots in China, a voice of embodiment, and personal investment in Chinese culture. Thus, by including an element of reflexivity I include my performances, laced with Chinese practices I learned growing up, as I feel the China in my body doing Chinese, and hear my mother tell me that I am now “more Chinese” than her since moving to China. The invaluable insight from the IRB process has strengthened my continued commitment to being reflexive in this research study and process.

Preview

In the following chapters of this dissertation I attempt to show how the 2008 Beijing Olympics served as a campaign designed with the strategy: The New Face of China = China is a developing, modern, and “Harmonious” society. I discuss in detail what the 2008 Beijing Olympics *Manual for Beijing Olympics Volunteers* (Manual) (referenced as “Manual” throughout) communicates and focuses on, being the official

document influencing volunteers' practices and the blueprint of China's "New Face" on the ground. I follow up by discussing intercultural encounters of Chinese Olympic volunteers during the 2008 Olympics. Moreover, in Chapter II, I begin by situating this study in the Humanities tradition. Specifically, I locate this study in a Critical Performance paradigm. I also frame my research design based on a reconceptualization of "Face" and "Harmony", introducing the Manual, volunteers I interviewed, and questions driving this research study. Chapter III consists of a textual analysis of the Manual, in which I approach it as a performative text that lays out China's strategy of performing a "New Face" based on a reconceptualized notion of "Harmony". Further, the Manual provides details about China's ideological foundation as well as how it should be implemented/practiced on the ground. Moreover, I discuss why the focus on volunteer performance is crucial for the Chinese government's purpose, read in the context of a China "becoming". In Chapter IV I follow up with interviews with Olympic volunteers, discussing interviewees' stories with international visitors, volunteer practices that worked through difference to get to understanding, how volunteers disrupted cultural differences by focusing on similarities, the importance of performing China's 'New Face' to the world, and in general some complications in the Chinese practice of "Harmony". I tie in interviewees' stories with some of my experiences during the Olympics. In doing so, I juxtapose Chapter III's textual analysis of the Manual with Chapter IV's performative-practices focus along the lines of Conquergood's ("Beyond the Text") call for a need to give both the textual and performative paradigms equal weight and understand them together to understand the world. In Chapter V, I conclude by reflecting

on the research process, methods and my experiences. I also discuss some successes and failures of the 2008 Beijing Olympics as well as provide future directions and suggestions for Chinese Communication studies, Intercultural Communication and understanding, and in general what we can learn from China's strategy in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Chapter 2: Approach and Design

Humanistic scholarship

This study is humanistic in the sense that it is subjectively based in making interpretations to understand day to day communication practices (as well as macro structured communication practices) and performances. Much of the focus is in understanding situated practices and performances in their specific contexts. Rather than finding out by standardizing and controlling an observation, I give importance to what individuals communicate about how they experience and make sense in a subjective reality from their own perspectives, standpoints, and understandings. Littlejohn and Foss tell us that “Interpreting is complicated by the fact that the object of observation – the human subject – is an active, knowing being, unlike objects in the natural world” (9). The very process of how a person describes what they experience and their creative interpretations through communication practices reveal context-specific interpretations that give insight to how they themselves perform, communicate about, and make sense of culture in those specific contexts. My desire in this project is rooted in understanding how China and Chinese individuals practice and perform those creative, yet specific interpretations, and how they communicate and make sense of (inter)cultural interactions in an Olympic environment.

From Intercultural Communication to a Critical Performance paradigm

One of the first instances in the Intercultural Communication discipline to account for the body and nonverbal communication was Edward T. Hall's chapter "Rhythm and Body Movement" in his book *Beyond Culture*. In that chapter Hall alludes to a study where he attempts to demonstrate how "whites do not move the way working-class blacks do or the way Puerto Ricans move or Mexicans or Pueblo or Navajo Indians, Chinese or Japanese", (75). To get at the way various cultural groups moved, Hall set up a camera and recorded individuals walking down the street. He viewed the movies "over and over at slow speeds", and the differences "became clear" (75). Fifteen differences in "walking behavior" were identified between whites and Pueblo Indians. Although Hall tries reducing these differences to biological factors, he stipulates that "walking behaviors" are part performance, part rhythm.

When the subjugated body knows it is being surveilled it contorts, condones, and conceals hidden transcripts. Hall describes this process as one of "covert culture" and "action chains" ("*Beyond Culture*" 153). James Scott tells us that "Every subordinate group, creates out of its ordeal, a 'hidden transcript' that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant" (xii). When bodies know they are video taped they adapt their practices, performances, and movements venerating rhythms that are acceptable by dominant standards, hiding a primal embodiment so to deflect the gaze of the dominant group in power. The "walking behaviors" captured on film may very well only be the surface of what Scott calls public transcripts that conceal hidden transcripts within the body. Along the same lines of what Scott calls hidden transcripts, de Certeau

has explained as “tactics” that are used in everyday practices, such as, “...clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things, ‘hunter’s cunning’, maneuvers, polymorphic simulations...” (xix). Furthermore, in “The Body of White Space”, Jim Perkinson captures the complexity and projects the power of this hidden transcript/tactical embodiment,

Black skin in the United States requires constant active response to one’s own bodily schema – a constant exorcism of invading powers, a continuous “tricking” of syntagmatic meaning by way of creating meaning in the paradigmatic register, deepening the pejorative surface significance of darkness into a polyphonic density of signification, a promulgation of pride, a codification of savvy, a stylization of sophistication...It fosters a one-to-one correspondence between a surface that matches its space of movement...and the deeper recesses of one’s experiences, such that the surface, in effect, dis-appears. (Perkinson 186)

Perkinson poetically “exorcizes” the embodiment of African-American resistance in an American geo-political environment to explain the face of authority and an environment charged with racism. For the oppressed there is no choice but to adapt communicative practices and performances by resistively tactful means “for show”, yet still stay within the confines of “acceptable” communication practices.

What can Hall’s forgotten study on rhythm and body movement add to our current studies of intercultural communication and performance? Hall was working to decode the theoretical conception of body movement, rhythm, and proxemics in hopes of linking them with cultural, racial and ethnic differences. With race and ethnicity being social constructs, the patterned rhythms of individuals are not necessarily practiced along the same lines or reflect the similarity of common movements within a racial category. In actuality, there is difference among ethnic and racial rhythms, yet a cohesion in the harmonized rhythm of oppression – objectified others perform “for-show” in a resistive-

corporeal-kinesis. What this means for a study in China is that a focus on critical performances of intercultural communication may appear in accordance with what the dominant power (CCP) desires things to appear as (“New Face” of China), yet more closely reveal micro practices, hidden transcripts, or tactical resistance. Beyond the face value of performance lies space for alternative interpretations of Chinese practices and politics, for “the hidden transcript is typically expressed openly – albeit in disguised form” (Scott xii-xiii).

In more recent discussions, scholars have already made the move to centering a performance paradigm for critical intercultural communication research. In hopes of building upon their foundational and significant work, I turn to the voices of these scholars. First, John T. Warren sketches a performative/constitutive theory for critical intercultural communication that focuses on cultural difference and its actual affects on “real bodies in real contexts” (291). By theorizing difference and the ways difference marks and affects bodies through performative and constitutive practices, Warren is able to bridge critical intercultural communication and critical performance paradigms. Specifically, Warren explains that when making sense of something, we categorize and link it to what we have heard in the past. He cautions that through interpretation we simulate or generalize speech, thereby erasing its distinction and oftentimes holding it up to something else for contradiction. Warren warns that, “if our intercultural work is based on simplified interpretations of speech in an effort to name identities, patterns, and commonalities, we fail to see how in its particularity, the speech may be functioning slightly differently” (296). This point of insight paves the path for the importance of,

“how difference is constituted in minute, everyday performances” (Warren 295). Though practices of difference are tough to find because they are ephemeral, or disappear as soon as they occur (Deleuze), they leave an image (i.e. a “New Face” of China) in our mind, a lasting impression or memory. Here, I take up from Warren by turning attention to these communicative and performative practices where we can find the unique particularities that are used to produce new images. “This is important because it frames the analysis and demands greater specificity of how I/we study the various environments we might find ourselves in, indeed, a different way of seeing and talking about what we are seeing” (Warren 300). Via Warren’s theorization of critical intercultural communication through a performative/constitutive lens, the naming of China as a “harmonious society” in repetition takes up new meaning as China tries something new with good intentions, read not in opposition to the struggles of China’s past or intention of producing a structure of domination, but in particularity by considering and building upon the past in hopes of genuinely changing negative images to producing positive ones for the future. Thus, Warren provides a theorization of culture (building upon Deleuze) through difference, fused with power, and the possibilities of hope, “hope embedded in reconceiving of who we are to such a degree that in order to live as he [Deleuze] would have us live, we would be able to make more connections in much more productive and hopeful ways” (Warren 304).

Next, I turn to the work of Bernadette M. Calafell. In her book, *Latino/a Communication*, Calafell convincingly makes the argument that we need to make space for Latina/o performance and “conversations about Latina/o performance that forces

performance studies to see the importance of these communities and recognize what we can learn from them about performance” (137). With an emphasis on the personal or “the stage we call our lives”, “the space of possibility” (27) for meaning production is opened up for performances of otherwise silenced minorities. Calafell approaches popular cultural examples with a critical performative lens to make room for new interpretations, new bodies of knowledge, and new meaning through a nuanced reading of performances where the personal becomes political. My hopes are to open up a similar “space of possibility” and politicize the personal in China where oftentimes voices are silenced by the heavy hand of authority and subtle stroking of domination.

A Critical Performance paradigm

A Critical Performance paradigm and Critical Intercultural Communication paradigm are similar in the sense that they both centralize the importance of power, reflexivity, and social justice, among many other connections. Both try to include the voice of the other, subjugated knowledges, disqualified knowledges, and unheard voices in their research. Here I touch briefly upon some basic points of how a Critical Performance paradigm adds to Critical Intercultural Communication by directly addressing areas that open up possibilities for collaboration between the two.

First, a Critical Performance builds upon Critical Intercultural Communication by foregrounding the body. Performance studies focuses on the body as a site of contestation over meaning, where culture is constituted through performative practices. With this focus, the body becomes the terrain of possibility of accountability for historical oppressions that have long been forgotten. Indeed, a Critical Performance paradigm is a

struggle to bridge theory and practice, to take knowledge produced in the academy outside the walls of the institution, and locate subjugated knowledges (vernacular, local, disqualified) inside the walls of the institution, thereby securing the importance of including, in our debates, the vernacular and local, opposed to just the global and abstract or textualized readings of bodies. Conquergood (“Performing as a Moral Act”) explains this as the foregrounding of listening rather than seeing and observing. Whereas seeing and observing lead to an objectifying gaze, listening invites engagement and co-performance. In this move to listening, the importance of location is one of liminality, “The constitutive liminality of performance studies lies in its capacity to bridge segregated and differently valued knowledges, drawing together legitimated as well as subjugated modes of inquiry” (Conquergood “Performing as a Moral Act” 151). In this sense, a Critical Performance paradigm is an arena that opens up space for possibilities for theories of the body, flesh, and other subjugated knowledges.

Secondly, Critical Performance specifically critiques dominant epistemes and textuality’s scriptocentrism in a move from text to performance. If the body cannot be read it has been traditionally rendered invisible. Dwight Conquergood (“Performance Studies. Interventions and Radical Research”) reminds us, “The Performance Studies Project makes its most radical intervention, I believe, by embracing *both* written scholarship *and* creative works, papers and performances” (151). Furthermore, Performance brings an academic hybridity to the table, fusing both “analytical and artistic” ways of knowing (Conquergood “Performance Studies. Interventions and Radical Research”) that potentially has the power to unsettle the perils and pitfalls of

scientific “objectivity”. D. Soyini Madison (“Critical Ethnography”) adds that “Conquergood argues that we can no longer privilege the written text over the expressive body, because to do so is to obscure the multiple sites, practices, and interventions that are variously in the margins, on the borders, and beyond the center of writing” (167). Thus, the power of Performance is generated in the ability to engage a politics of possibility seeking new epistemologies.

Third, a Critical Performance looks at how the everyday is performed and links it to the political. For example, Judith Butler focuses on the notion that gender is constituted through a “stylized repetition of acts”. She explains that when repeated over and over the power of the “performative” constructs notions of masculinity or femininity. The power of performance or the power of “performativity” is the power to produce, through the embodiment and performance of repetition. In reading Butler, Warren adds that “we are the products of the repeated messages we have been inundated with” (294). In Madison’s words, “How the body moves about in the world, and its various mannerisms, styles, and distinctions are inherited from one generation through space and time to another and demarcated within specific identity categories” (“Critical Ethnography” 163). Our bodies embody culture and communicate identity in and through our every performance. Performativity not only constitutes meaning but does something to our world and how we perceive it. It helps to (re)shape our interpretations of reality. I hear Della Pollock add, “performative writing is not a genre or fixed form...but a way of describing what some good writing *does*” (75). Performativity can be seen, heard, and felt as communicating meaning and performing it in and through the body, whether to

reproduce or resist. Bhabha here would add that the performative can disturb, disrupt, and disavow hegemonic formations in the everyday. Likewise, Madison (“Critical Ethnography”) echoes, “Just as performativity is an internalized repetition of hegemonic stylized acts inherited from the *status quo*, it can also be an internalized repetition of subversive stylized acts inherited by contested identities” (165). Performativity becomes the “performance of possibilities” that “centers on the principles of transformation and transgression, dialogue and interrogation, as well as acceptance and imagination to build worlds that are *possible*” (Madison “Performance, Narratives, Politics of Possibility” 472). This grounding opens up possibilities in everyday performances.

Specific works have looked at the everyday as performance. For example, Elizabeth Bell’s essay on weddings and pornography as cultural performances of sex; Calafell’s essay (“Disrupting the Dichotomy”) on immigration and the changing face of the South; Shields, and Coughun’s essay on rodeo queens who subvert the patriarchy of a male dominated rodeo; and Grindstaff and West’s essay on cheerleading and the racialized reproduction of gender differences, to name a few. These recent studies are testament to the importance of looking to everyday practices from which possibilities for new knowledges abound as well as cultural performances that contest and disrupt systems of domination in everyday practice.

Furthermore, Critical Performance bridges theory and practice in foregrounding the performance as both method and theory. There is a focus in the performance, the doing, the actual focus on changing, critiquing, and then (re)presenting otherwise disqualified knowledges in creative ways through performances presented outside the

halls of the academy. Ragan Fox explains, “Performative writing is one way in which scholars, particularly marginalized academicians, may display creative control of their respective subjectivities” (6). Moreover, Bryant Alexander reminds us, “The challenge is first to understand that the study of “performance” cannot be separated from our investments in all the dimensions of that term, then to see how these stakes might be tied to larger social dynamics of desire, exchange, and human relations” (512).

Conquergood’s words prove insightful:

The performance paradigm privileges particular, participatory, dynamic, intimate, precarious, embodied experience grounded in historical process, contingency, and ideology. Another way of saying it is that the performance-centered research takes as both its subject matter and method the experiencing body situated in time, place, and history. The performance paradigm insists on face-to-face encounters instead of abstractions and reductions. (“Rethinking Ethnography” 187)

Furthermore, Frederick Corey adds, “As a society, we are still coming of age, desiring ruptures that will give voice to ethnic, cultural, geographic, religious, and sexual minorities” (332).

Madison tells us that “critical analysis is grounded in social theory, ethics is grounded in moral philosophy, and performance is both a practice and a theory” (“Critical Ethnography” 12). I frame this research project keeping in mind that a critical performance is both theory and method. Method is the ‘doing’ of the project to fulfill the requirements of research and in a similar way performance is the doing to get something done. Along these lines, critical performance becomes the theory I use and the method I “do” meaning I use a performance lens to understand everyday life (i.e. performances of hidden and public transcripts) and use performance to understand and theorize my own experiences and positionalities in place. Turning back to Conquergood I am reminded

that “the performance paradigm privileges particular, participatory, dynamic, intimate, precarious, embodied experience grounded in historical process, contingency, and ideology” (“Rethinking Ethnography” 187). It is the performers and co-performers that are involved in the doing, the actual participating, and the embodied experience of research that makes the whole process critical, not to mention the foregrounding of uncertainty, history, and ideology.

With Conquergood’s warning about a, “hegemony of textualization” (“Performance Studies. Interventions and Radical Research”) in the politics of Western knowledge production in mind, I foreground a critical performance approach in hopes of exposing and undermining textualizations hegemony. Transcripts that have been produced in this context here in China – an authoritarian, government controlled state – in the past, have been objectively described by positivist research as an ‘indirect’ style of communication. Objectivist readings fall pray to the trap of over-generalizing countries and regions of the world and void of critical discourse about the influence and manifestation of top-down, physical, political, and social power on individuals’ day to day performances. I hear Conquergood when he says,

The state of emergency under which many people live demand we pay attention to the messages that are coded and encrypted; to indirect, nonverbal, and extralinguistic modes of communication where subversive meanings and utopian yearnings can be sheltered and shielded from surveillance. (“Performance Studies. Interventions and Radical Research” 148)

By looking to the body and feeling what it says, searching for harmonic yearnings, and hearing what is communicated beyond the text in hidden transcripts, this is where we can find meaning in the performance.

The communication style I am in search of more closely aligns with what Scott calls ‘public transcripts’ and ‘hidden transcripts’. Scott in everyday contexts looks to how people resist the domination of power in their performances and practices. By public transcripts he means “a way of describing the open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate” (2). It is those communication performances that are out in the open, ordinarily practiced that all may witness. However, only focusing on the public transcript falls short of truly understanding performative practices and power relations. Of greater importance to understanding the subordinated are hidden transcripts. Hidden transcripts are found in “the discourse that takes place “offstage,” beyond direct observation by powerholders. The hidden transcript is thus derivative in the sense that it consists of those offstage speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript” (4). Scott poses the driving question we must consider, “how do we study power relations when the powerless are often obliged to adopt a strategic pose in the presence of the powerful and when the powerful may have an interest in overdramatizing their reputation and mastery?” (xii). Thus, hidden transcripts are found in words but also in how those words are performed in contortion, concealment, sarcasm, purposed strategy, creativity, and resistive tactics. Further, Scott tells us, “the notion of a hidden transcript helps us understand those rare moments of political electricity when, often for the first time in memory, the hidden transcript is spoken directly and publicly in the teeth of power” (xiii). My analysis of China’s “New Face” in the contradiction of public and hidden texts (Volunteer Manual and volunteer interviews) is an attempt to reveal insight about power relations in China in an Olympic

context. Specifically, further insight is revealed by reading the Manual through a reconceptualized notion of “Face”.

Face re-conceptualized

In the frame of my discussion I am weary of applying western perspectives to eastern phenomenon. Rather than reproduce or update notions of ‘facework’ in Chinese-American communication research that focus on face-through-conflict or face-through-identity frames, I want to re-envision a conception of “face” (what the Chinese call “*mian zi*”, 面子) by adding a twist of critical theory and splash of critical performance to intercultural communication. When read in this light, “face” becomes a historical-political means to frame interpretations of daily performances of communication and culture by focusing on the actual manifestations of the face. More specifically, this Critical Performance approach focusing on how Chinese folks performatively use ‘*mian zi*’ in communicating about and interpreting intercultural encounters during the 2008 Olympics, in one aspect, is a micro performance done daily, and on a global scale, a performance to the world during the Olympics. At the macro level, the Olympics was Beijing’s moment in history to perform the “New Face” of China to the world. On the ground, the day to day micro-practices and intercultural encounters between Chinese Olympic volunteers and international visitors was China’s opportunity to practice it. Without a nuanced understanding of face, the implications are potentially damaging and can altogether, lead to missing the whole political point of the performance.

In Ting-Toomey’s updated Face-Negotiation theory¹⁵, she defines face as (what I read to be the hidden transcript), “identity respect and other-identity consideration issues

within and beyond the actual encounter episode. Face is tied to the emotional significance and estimated calculations that we attach to our own social self-worth and the social self-worth of others” (73). Thus, face practiced in a Chinese context looks like, “pushing and defending their national pride, honor, dignity, prestige, reputation, or *face* in the public arena” (73). Moreover, Ting-Toomey refers to the practicing of face as “facework”. In her words, facework is, “the specific verbal and nonverbal behaviors that we engage in to maintain or restore face loss and to uphold and honor face” (73). She further explains facework in terms of people using either, “low-context or high-context verbal and nonverbal strategies to maintain face, to defend face, and/or to upgrade and honor someone else’s face” (77). Ting-Toomey provides limitations of current cross-cultural theorizations of facework, “the use of these methods does not allow researchers to examine the developmental process of face-negotiation” (89) and suggests future face research “via procedures such as interaction analysis or discourse analysis to understand the diverse ways in which individuals defend and maintain face, as well as whether they are proactive or reactive in managing face” (89). Here I want to complicate Ting-Toomey’s suggestion a bit by intensifying it with a performative twist, focusing on face as a power-laden practice that is politically motivated.

My reconceptualization is closer to Hu’s conceptualizations of face as “*lian*” (what I call *lian*) and “*mien-tzu*” (what I call *mian zi*). In the vernacular, *lian* simply refers to one’s physical face and *mian zi* the symbolic status or respect one is accounted for performing your physical face according to convention. According to Hu, *lian* is “the respect of the group for a man with a good moral reputation: the man who will fulfill his

obligations regardless of the hardships involved, who under all circumstances shows himself a decent human being” (45). Engrained in this definition are notions of selfless practice and the importance of presenting not just an image of sacrifice but also continually performing an embodiment of contentedness during uncomfortable times. Because “*lian* is both a social sanction for enforcing moral standards and an internalized sanction” (45), in public transcripts we can see that it becomes the performance of accepting domination or consenting to power inequalities. In this vein, face is the basis for the performance of consent in a hegemonic Chinese state. This is an important point to consider in the connection between how the New Face of China is practiced through the trope of Harmony (I discuss this process in more detail in the next chapter).

Crucial to understanding a Chinese conception of face is another interconnected conception, *mian zi*. Both *lian* and *mian zi* are translated to mean “face” in the English language, a significant drawback of language translation and textualization of these complex concepts. In my reconceptualization of face I use *lian* to refer to the performance aspect and *mian zi* to refer to the general workings of status or respect that is given to the performance of *lian*. Hu tells us that *mian zi* is “a kind of prestige that is emphasized in this country [China]: a reputation achieved through getting on in life, through success and ostentation” (45). Whereas *lian* is the performance of acceptance in trying times, the presentation and embodiment of a corporeal face, *mian zi* is the status that is achieved by graciously accepting hardships through those trying times. In a context of domination and subordination, *lian* (performing face) is the foundation from which we can understand how Chinese have created practices to deal with unequal power

relations and the payoff in *mian zi*. Indeed, the performance of *lian* is the communicative strategy from which to survive in the face of domination. In addition, *mian zi* is the status or respect received from the cunning, crafty, and creative tactics of performing face (*lian*). Hu explains, “this is prestige that is accumulated by means of personal effort or clever maneuvering” (45).

Face practices (both *lian* and *mian zi* intertwined) are a necessary strategy to ensure Chinese can coexist in a society (read power laden communication climate) where a breach of social convention may lead to violence. Furthermore, and crucial to this conception of face is the external environment, “for this kind of recognition ego is dependent at all times on his external environment” (Hu 45). In this light, a twist of critical performance opens up the possibilities for finding those personal efforts and clever maneuverings in the body as well as the environment, in new and exciting ways.

To Hu’s conceptualization, I pull from Scott’s notion of public and hidden transcripts, a framework thoroughly engaged in the discussion of power, hegemony, resistance and in general, power relations. Face as practiced in public as well as hidden behind closed doors, is heavily influenced by power relations. Looking for face as public performance or hidden practice, we can begin to approach the complexities in understanding how power relations are revealed through Chinese communicative practices, as well as relations of and commitment to a harmonious communication exchange. From this standpoint, the enactment of face is merely a mimetic production concealing other, more natural and primal embodied reactions to domination. In other words, the (re)performance of face is a necessity, a “going-through-the motions” to live

without physical violence, a kinetic enactment of civility that reproduces convention, tradition, power structures, and hegemony. In short the practice of face in China is a survival strategy. This re-conceptualization opens up space for new and alternative readings and meaning making contexts in performances of face, as well as the political purposes that oftentimes are overlooked from an outsider's, ethnocentric gaze.

“New Face” performed offstage in a harmonious taxi

My first few months in Beijing I felt culturally secluded experiencing rhythms of culture shock in my body. My body was uncomfortable in this ‘foreign’ space but I performed happiness in public, smiling at the continuous repetition of those curious eyes that would stare. In the cultural seclusion of not understanding the language you have a lot of time to think and much of that time leads you to self criticism. Why do I have to appear to be happy when I’m conflicted inside? Those months became a time to criticize my past that brought me to the position I was in. My self criticism was a connection between mind and body – you look happy but you think differently. Beginning with the reflection in the mirror I began with my insecurities about appearance, body shape, and size. Changes in diet, lifestyle, self-esteem, eating habits, and my daily routine led to me shedding 30 pounds, but I still feel big because my body isn’t Chinese. Students call me cute and say I showed my baby fat, literally one step away from pinching my cheeks. My performance of contentedness lets them know I think they are compliments as I hide my real reactions. I explain that common and acceptable Chinese aesthetics vary wildly from American aesthetics. They grin letting me know they aren’t taking advantage of my good will by saying I am ‘healthy’ not wanting me to lose face. I hear Hu’s words, “the higher

the social standing of a person the more dignity he has to maintain, and the more vulnerable this lien becomes” (47). I’m insecure because of the relationship. I’m an international teacher from America, the most respected of professions and positions. Some of my students reify Chinese aesthetics being dangerously and anorexically thin. With ribs showing and cheek bones protruding, some Chinese still feel overweight. The face saving tactic is to tell that person that they look good and that I wish I am skinny like them. This was all taking a toll on me.

Despite the stereotype of Chinese being short in the U.S., some of my Chinese students tower over me. What about Yao Ming? I think. How does height influence body-image stereotypes and my self esteem? I ask my Chinese students about that. Why do you think Americans believe Chinese are short? I now realize that by bringing attention to negative stereotypes I am causing the short students to lose face. They sit quietly looking down into their laps. The tall students understand my American cultural style of communication, my cultural insensitivity, and educate me about the height stereotype in Chinese perspectives. They explain that Northerners are usually average/tall and Southerners are usually average/short. This doesn’t help my self-esteem. In China, I still feel short. This is backed by the fact that my mother being Taiwanese means I am a Southerner. Initially, I struggled with my western facial features being different, but height, size, and shape were now salient issues.

From youth, my appearance was always an issue being “half and half”, not quite fitting in with the white or Chinese groups in the U.S. I feel a similar insecurity brewing up from all the stares I get walking through the streets of Beijing, riding the subway, and

sitting at a red light in a taxi. Perform happiness, I think. Don't let your insecurity and frustration show – present the confidence you see in American faces. I take my time riding in taxis as an opportunity to practice Chinese and more importantly, learn about the identity some Chinese ascribe to me. I can remember countless times a taxi driver would eyeball me in his rear-view mirror, “which country are you from?” (roughly meaning: what are you?). This is the standard opening question. I shout back, “guess!” as the cabbie takes another look and says Russia, Europe, or Xinjiang, a province in the west of China, with each guess losing more and more face. I press on, not privy to the cultural convention I am breaking – and fueling another stereotype – the “oblivious American”. Keep on guessing until you're right I say - Germany, Greece, Spain, the Middle East, Korea? After their face has been completely demolished by guessing the wrong country over ten times, I tell them I'm “hun xue”, mixed blood, half Chinese and half American. Some face is regained with the complexity in the answer. Now the cabbie has to be careful not to cause me to lose face. He follows with, “Is your mother or father Chinese?” I tell him my mother is Chinese, covertly setting up the political move that foregrounds the next question he asks, “Which part of China is your mother from?” I say Taiwan. At this point in the conversation I am met with differing reactions from different cabbies, each revealing insight to their own personal politics. This one cabbie walks me through the public and hidden transcript in his thought-process: “but you say you are Chinese...yes, that's right, you ARE Chinese. Your mother is from the province of Taiwan so you're half Chinese”. The hidden transcript in his performance shouts out at me, “Taiwan is separate from China! Next, comes the clean up and public transcript. Recite

what you have heard on the news; recite the government's mantra - "One China, two systems." I stay at the same level and simultaneously perform the public transcript by not saying a word and my hidden transcript through eye contact in the mirror, a grin, and several quick head nods. I believe the cabbie understands as he says, "Your Chinese is good". I think I understand him, regardless of which level he is communicating at, translated as: your silence is right (public transcript) and/or your nonverbal performance is good (hidden transcript).

As my Chinese has improved so has the depth of my conversation with cabbies. This conversation happened a few years ago. I missed the greater meaning hidden in the transcript. The levels of communication that are performed here on a day to day basis with cab drivers has sprung me to another insight – my half blood, half Chinese heritage, mixed with bad language skills and not understanding the hidden transcript or secondary meaning in the level of connotation = this is a foreigner in my cab aka not Chinese. More recently, I went through the motions with a cabbie and the insight reveals that being half blood, half Chinese with decent language skills, understanding the secondary meaning, the hidden transcript = I am Chinese regardless of my mixed blood and mixed heritage. Here language and understanding the hidden meanings can equal authenticity. Authenticity is not just based on appearance, blood, or nationality. In China, it's based on communication and the performance of culture.

In the most recent conversation I had with a cab driver I tell him I am engaged to my Chinese fiancée. In my best Chinese I ask him if he considers me to be Chinese. He already knows that I am "mixed blood". He asks what my nationality is. I tell him

American but my mother has told me to stay in China as long as possible because the economic recession is making it hard to find work at home. He gleefully shouts, “Your wife is Chinese and you plan on staying in China for the long term. You’re Chinese! You should change your nationality to Chinese!” At this point he looks in his rear view mirror to see what my eyes are saying, probably testing my ability to code hidden into public transcript. His stare of curious eyes tells me he wants the hidden transcript. I make direct eye contact, giving him the public transcript. “Yes, that is the next step”, as I conceal my inner-feelings of having no intentions of ever changing my American nationality.

Manual for Beijing Olympic Volunteers

At play in the intercultural communication encounters is an ever-present pressure from the CCP. In the back of my mind and Chinese minds is: what will the government think about what I just said? What is within the confines of acceptable speech and what can I say and get away with? In the context of communication during the Olympics, the Olympic Volunteer Training Manual is a good place to search for the contents of the public transcript. The Manual represents the public stance or strategy on Beijing and the Olympics. The “Manual for Beijing Olympic Volunteers” is part of the Series of Beijing Olympiad Training Brochures organized by the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad and edited by the Beijing Olympic Games Volunteer Work Coordination Group. It is a 169 page document, consisting of 7 chapters (Chapter 1 – Volunteers and Volunteering; Chapter 2 – Olympic Movement and Olympic Volunteers; Chapter 3 – The Beijing Olympic Games and the Olympic Volunteering;

Chapter 4 – Organizing and Administration of Olympic Volunteering; Chapter 5 – Volunteer Positions and Requirements; Chapter 6 – Volunteering Skills; Chapter 7 – Olympic Cities) (Manual). I refer to the English translated version of the Manual. I approach the Manual as what Scott calls a public transcript or the public performance of the dominant discourse and ideology China enacted in gearing up for and engaging in the 2008 Olympics.

In the next chapter of this dissertation I analyze the Manual in detail, focusing on the Manual as a representative document of Chinese political discourse in the public transcript. I bring special attention to Chapter 6, section I, the “Basics of Decorum”. This section specifically focuses on rules, graceful posture, manners that communicate, and taboo terms, a section drafted from which Olympic volunteers should model their behavior, performance, practice, and communication upon.

The questions

Fundamental questions I address are: What is the “New Face” China desired to present, perform, practice, and communicate to the world during the 2008 Beijing Olympics? In addition, how was the “New Face” of China performed and practiced by volunteers in day to day encounters with international visitors during the Olympics? In general, what were some Chinese public and hidden transcripts during the Olympics? In asking these questions my hopes are to theoretically address Conquergood’s call to both textual and performance readings to understand the world, culture, and communication. My general goal is to produce a nuanced understanding and example of a reconceptualized notion of face as practiced in China. To do so I focus on China’s driving

rhetoric in the Manual's public transcript, as well as volunteer experiences with international visitors during the Olympics. First in Chapter III, with a loose guiding framework of "public transcript" and a reconceptualized notion of face, I hone in on the Manual as the performance of Beijing's blueprint for unveiling China's "New Face" during the Olympics. Specifically, the Manual uses the trope of "Harmony" in performing China's "New Face", which I discuss in detail in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, I ask: when presenting the "New Face", how did volunteers do "harmony" and practice harmony in intercultural encounters? Additionally, what are some hidden transcripts volunteers enacted and performed when communicating with international visitors in their intercultural communication encounters? How was the "New Face" of China and harmony actually performed by Olympic volunteers on the ground in both public and hidden transcripts?

Research approach

When preparing to design how I would ask Olympics volunteers about their experiences and intercultural encounters I thought about my own experiences during the Olympics. Volunteer stations and tents were set up all around Beijing, even beyond the fifth ring road¹⁶. At most of these stations there were young Chinese men and women. From my informal conversations with Olympic volunteers at various stations (Appendix A is a picture of a "typical" volunteer station) I found that most were university students with near fluent to fluent English conversational skills. Since English is now the mandatory second language taught in primary and secondary schools around China, the

English speaking population in Beijing is on the rise. Some of the volunteers I encountered had been learning English from as early as kindergarten.

Recruitment policies

I used English when interviewing fifteen Chinese individuals who were volunteers for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Interviews lasted from forty to seventy five minutes. Sometimes when an interviewee could not express a concept in English they used Chinese Mandarin to explain or describe the concept. We also used an electronic dictionary during interviews to help translate Chinese terms without equivalent English translations.

Furthermore, I use pseudonyms to protect interviewees' identities. All interviewees are in their twenties and college students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. I based this largely on China's Olympic volunteer recruitment policies, "volunteers for the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be mainly recruited in the Beijing area with college students as the main resource" (Manual 113), and "born prior to (but including) June 30, 1990" (115). Searching for Olympic volunteers I made general announcements in the classes I was teaching (overall about 150 students). I asked for actual volunteers or recommendations for volunteers that students knew. IRB had asked why I chose this method of recruitment for participants. The answer lies in the system of Chinese relations being based on the concept, "guanxi". Guanxi is translated as "relations" or "relationships" in English. The cultural logic is that the closer the connection or stronger the relation with a person, the greater the possibility for honest and open communication. In other words, the stronger our guanxi meant the greater the

chance that our communication would be at the level of hidden transcripts (the offstage practices) versus public transcripts (the onstage performances). I searched for volunteers using guanxi and the snowball method from the initial connections I made.

The recruitment and selection procedure of volunteering included: “applying, review of application materials, interview, position assignment, background check and the sending offer” (Manual 117). Interviewees told me that they went through a two step competitive process for the volunteer position. The first was a test comprised of questions about the history of the Olympics based on information in the Manual, and also included English language proficiency questions. The second part of the interview process was a face to face interview.

Twelve of my participants are female, three are male. All but one describes themselves as average socio-economic status, the other describing their socio-economic status as above average. Participants are from all over China with four being from Beijing and one raised part time in Beijing and part time in Tokyo, three from Hebei, and the rest from Chongqing, Gansu, Guizhou, Hei Long Jiang, Shandong, Shanxi, and Zhejiang, respectively. All interviewees are Han ethnicity.

I conducted interviews in March, April, and September of 2010. Interviews took place in conference rooms at the campus I work at and I audio recorded the interviews. Interviewees did not sign consent forms but rather gave verbal consent to take part in the interview and have it audio recorded. IRB had asked why I wanted to obtain consent in this way. The reasoning in my decision is that I want to ensure that in no way will the safety of participants be jeopardized. If at any point in time the Chinese government

thinks something someone says is deemed a threat to national security (loosely defined, including anti-governmental discourse) they can access what we consider “private” information and data such as materials locked in my filing cabinet at home, electronic files on my computer, or my emails online. With verbal consent I am able to avoid any material connection on paper between this study and participants’ identities. The most important responsibility I have is to protect their identities and make sure that in no way can the Chinese government reprimand or harm them, physically or mentally, for participating in my research study and sharing their experiences and opinions. After interviewees read and verbally consented to the explanation on the informed consent form, I asked them to fill in some basic demographic information (optional – no one declined) about themselves that included ethnic background, gender, age, nationality, socio-economic status, and which province(s) they grew up in. Once they finished filling out this form we began the interviews.

The scope of questions I asked range from how they define culture and cultural difference, strategies they were taught and actually used when communicating with international visitors, and their opinions about some successes and failures of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Specifically, I asked about where volunteers worked during the Olympics, such as in an Olympic venue or stadium, at a volunteer station at a subway stop, in a volunteer station on the street, or if they were a city or urban volunteer. I followed up by asking about what some of the duties and responsibilities they were assigned to and if there was a way they were trained to communicate with visitors, looking for responses about both Chinese and international visitors. Next, I wanted to

hear about the actual intercultural encounters they experienced and cultural differences they encountered in their volunteering assignments. I asked about misunderstandings in their communication and strategies they used to get to understanding with international visitors. I was curious to finding out about how cultural differences of the person they communicated with influenced their performances of the “New Face” of China as well as if cultural similarities affected these practices. I concluded the interviews by asking what volunteers had learned about communication, culture, and cultural difference from their volunteering experiences. I found it interesting that many of the interviewees were grateful to take part in the interview with me because they felt that it was a good way for them to revisit their Olympic volunteering experience as well as debrief their encounters and help them understand and make sense of them. In the next chapter I discuss the Manual in hopes of learning about how volunteers were trained, China’s public transcript, and how they planned on showing their “New Face” to the world during the 2008 Olympic Games.

Chapter 3: Manual for Beijing Olympic Volunteers

Hosting the Olympics

On February 1st, 2000, Liu Qi, president of the “China Committee to Apply for Hosting the 2008 Olympic Games”, gave six reasons why Beijing wanted to host the Olympics. Liu states:

To promote world peace; To fulfill the desires of Chinese people with strong support from the government; To speed up environment construction and promote development of economics; To facilitate development of sports in China and improve popularity of Olympics; To take the opportunity and present a new Beijing to the world. (Manual 74)

These six reasons are important because they put a face to China’s vested interest. In July, 2001 the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced Beijing as the host of the 2008 Summer Olympics. Among the competitor cities on the short list (Toronto, Paris, Istanbul, and Osaka) Beijing won the rights to host. Eight years prior, in 1993 Beijing was heart broken to have lost the bid for the 2000 Olympics to Sydney by just two votes (Michaelis). Through much campaigning and speculation surrounding human rights issues, Beijing was successful in their 2008 bid. Beijing approached the Olympics as an opportunity for China to unveil a “New Beijing” and in general, China’s ‘New Face’ to the world as modern, green, and economically developing yet, still a traditional-cultural nation that was ready to step into the spotlight on the world stage, opening it’s doors to visitors and the world media in addition to sharing it’s vast history, culture, and

traditions with the (western) world. Furthermore, Chinese sports minister Weimen Yuan approached the Olympics as China's opportunity to improve "social, economic and sport benefits and, not least, progress in human rights cause...In the next stage of our national development, we will continue to open ourselves wider to the outside world and carry out more reforms" (Yuan as cited in Michaelis 2001).

Volunteers' "Dedication of Love"

The first chapter of the Manual sets the tone for volunteers of the 2008 Beijing Olympic campaign with a dedication to love. Volunteers are deemed "messengers of love" who spread love providing volunteer services. Furthermore, the word "volunteer" has origins that date back to the Latin word "valo" or "velle", meaning "hope, determination, or willingness" (Manual 4-5). China has different meanings for the concept of volunteer. For example, in Hong Kong "yi gong" refers to workers on duty, and in Taiwan "zhi gong" are workers of will (Manual 4). Stated plainly, "volunteer work has become a symbol of civilization and social progress" (Manual 4). In the west we think of volunteers as providing a service not for personal gains but to genuinely help others in the name of charity. The Chinese conception is similar, "The Volunteer Association of China puts forward this definition: People who are willing to provide services or assistance to society or to others, not for material gains, but from a sense of conscience, faith and responsibility" (Manual 4). In the presentation of a "New Face" of China, the outward, straightforward appearance and performance is connected to western values, while still centered around the maintenance of Chinese cultural values and harmony.

Furthermore, “Volunteers, as bridges of fraternity, will present a mirror of Beijing – warm-hearted and friendly” (Manual 138). The logic is that volunteers, in the name of love, love of country, and love of the China, are to be a symbol, representing China’s civilization and social progress (see Appendix D). Love is quickly connected to the nature of volunteering in the name of doing good deeds and putting oneself at the service of others not for monetary gain from a sense of faith or conscience, but rather for the love to serve their country. When volunteers love China a more harmonious society is possible. The spirit of volunteering has deep roots in traditional Chinese culture, “The spirit of volunteering in China is composed of a profound humanitarianism and the pursuit of social harmony, which are actually twin brothers in Chinese traditional culture. They can be expressed in two words, benevolence and love” (Manual 19). Further, the Manual describes three basic features of voluntary service:

- (1) They are actions for others freely given. Voluntary service is provided by individuals out of loving hands...
- (2) They are contributions that are not-money-rewarding. People give their time, skills, resources and kindness to provide assistance to their neighbors, communities and society, without expectation of receiving payment.
- (3) They are initiated by caring hearts. People help others to create a better society.
- (5)

Embedded within these three features of volunteering is an underlying theme of face. Volunteers are to accept the bad in hopes of the good – a necessary component of presenting harmony (synchrony in disagreement) on the “New Face” of China through any inner-turmoil. Furthermore, within the Manual, voluntary services are set up to work in tandem with the development of Chinese society as well as the “improving of peace and development in our country” (5). With love as the foundational component the public transcript alludes to a possibility of harmony. It also alludes “a great deal toward the

individual and social development” (11). In short, the social mission of “volunteerism” is described as:

When volunteers work for the public interest, they not only work for the public interest, they not only contribute themselves, but they also establish an active interaction with society. They stimulate people’s sense of duty to society. When they demonstrate a spirit of humanism and service, they also help reduce responsibilities of the government, solve social problems, and they are in fact changing society” (6-7).

In essence, volunteers are given the responsibility to work in the best interests of the public (i.e. harmony) to help the government spread messages of change (e.g. spread China’s “New Face” – acceptance of hardship while performing happiness – and harmony – synchrony and complacency in disagreement – through China and to the world during the Olympics). By repeating the themes of love and harmony throughout the first chapter of the Manual, the public transcript performatively works to (re)produce the pulse of volunteers in the “New Face” of China through sheer repetition.

By producing meaning in this way the Manual sets itself up as a public transcript, an exhibition of sorts, displaying love and harmony rhythmically to engage in what Stuart Hall calls the “poetics of exhibiting: the practice of producing meaning through the internal ordering and conjugation of the separate but related components of an exhibition” (168). Hall explains that any exhibition is a creation of meaning. Their display alludes to their symbolic power “namely the way in which it constructs and persuades through delineating a path through meaning” (183). ‘Reading’ the Manual as an exhibition we see that certain tactics and tropes are used to produce an image of China’s “New Face” through the prescribed practices of volunteers. They are to spread the message of love through performances of harmony. With intentional purpose, this

campaign of sorts is not innocent because it works to produce the “New Face” of China with sweat from and, on the backs of, it’s volunteers. The Manual thus serves as a basic public transcript for the operations of the mechanism of a strategic performance.

Beijing Olympic volunteers: Cultural ambassadors of China

In the public transcript the mission of the volunteers is based upon what is termed “volunteering spirit”, which consists of the following attributes, “contribution, friendship, mutual assistance and progress, and parallels the Olympic spirit” (Manual 101). With the embodiment of the volunteering spirit, “Volunteers are cultural ambassadors. They learn about foreign cultures while serving the athletes and visitors, and help them know about good traditions and customs in China, so more foreign friends will come to know China and fall in love with her.” (Manual 102). Furthermore,

Volunteers are messengers of China, exhibiting all the aspects of China. They help promote friendly communications, facilitate mutual understandings, and deepen friendship. Volunteers share the culture of the host country to the world, and turn the Olympics – a sport games, into a fascinating and enjoyable cultural exchange event. (Manual 102)

When discussing the actual practices and performances or operations and mechanisms that collectively make up China’s “New Face” it also helps to consider Conquergood’s conception of “mimesis-poesis-kinesis, performance as imitation, construction, dynamism” (“Beyond the Text” 31). Though Conquergood conceives of this process in a positive and empowering light, it can also be used to explain the workings of “New Face” and harmony. First, “New Face” and harmony go through the motions of mimicry. These kinds of performances are surface readings in the public transcript. They can be seen and heard in the imitations, impersonation, and theatrics that volunteers learn from the

Manual and perform in the daily operations leading up to and during the Olympics. Next, they take on deeper meaning in poesis. Here they are poetic. “New Face” and “harmony do something and are not merely spectacles to observe. They take on meaning by adding rhythm, aesthetic, and stimulation, and the performance becomes picturesque, pleasing, or ideal for audiences. Finally, they make the move to change meanings in a kinesis, and change the general image or what China is all about. Stereotypes are shattered, new experience is taken in, and new knowledges about what China is all about are formed.

Structuring harmony: Olympism and China’s New Face

I take a pause here at Section III of Chapter 1, “The Beauty of Harmony – Voluntary Service in China” (Manual 18) because it is vital to note that the wording is not “volunteer” service in China but *voluntary* service in China. When connected to the word harmony it brings new meaning to the voluntary service. I see the picture being painted: the beauty of harmony in China is in *voluntarily* performing the “New” harmonious face of China. The purpose of the volunteer in the public transcript becomes clear – volunteers are agents of China’s campaign to show their “New Face” as a harmonious and beautiful society. This is traced back to the Confucian value of benevolence and love. This idea of love and harmony has been instilled in Chinese culture since the time of ancient philosophies and the public transcript displays a mastery to detail.

Consider the following question and answer: “What is a harmonious society? It is one of democracy and ruled by law; a society of fairness and justice, honesty and friendship, full of vigor and energy; and a society of security and order where humanity

and nature peacefully live together” (Manual 103). Upon this idealist conception of harmony (and I would argue not altogether achievable with the current governmental regulations in place) Chapter 2, Section II about Olympic origins are highlighted and there is a focus on the importance of Olympism, “a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will, and mind” (Manual 39). This definition is articulated to build parallel ideals of harmony within a balanced whole, combining both body and mind. In a sense it is a metaphor for the connection to what harmony looks like in terms of Chinese bodies performing a “New Face” both in body (performance) and mind (ideology). This idea makes itself clear through direct connection, “The central idea of Olympism is the harmonious development of man, and it tries to reach the goal through sports” (Manual 40). Similarly, China as a society desired the same central goal as Olympic origins. The Olympics were the perfect opportunity for China to present this processed, better yet refined, “New Face” to the world. Linking to Olympism ideals and foregrounding the importance of harmony, China is able to produce powerful connections adding the authority of IOC recognition and legitimation. With the Olympics as the official unveiling of the “New Face”, China constructs the image with a Chinese concept (harmony) through this sporting event. Furthermore, “it [the Olympics] let sports serve for the harmonious development of humanity so as to establish a society of harmony where men are respected and contribute to world peace” (Manual 40). Again and in conjunction with Olympism, Chinese harmony is connected to Olympic ideals through the use of sport. So much controversy was generated in the buildup to the kick-off of the Olympics and the fact that: the underlying notions of the Olympics are peace,

through the means of harmony. With Chinese current political positionings and stance (arguably oppressive) on human rights, western critiques pointed to the irony in the offstage performances of the hidden transcripts and the Olympics being held in Beijing.

Indeed, the public transcript labors to strengthen the synchrony, “The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity” (Manual 40). Again, this is quite revealing in how it coincides practically parallel to China’s project of a “New Face” and harmonious society, changing by developing, and modernizing. More so, “the goal of the Olympic Movement is to educate those practiced in accordance with Olympism and its values, to contribute to building a peaceful and better world” (Manual 40-41). What are highlighted here in the Olympic Movement are the connections to a “greater good” and the call to improve relations in the world we share. The same call is made in the public transcript, “The Olympic Movement tries to promote peace through sports which builds up mutual understanding among nations and peoples” (Manual 41). This is exactly China’s goal with the Olympic campaign as the beginning, defining moment that builds understanding on a global scale that China has changed in some way, that it is performing change through the exhibition of a “New Face”. The essence of China’s “New Face” campaign is further combined simultaneously with the Olympic spirit. Thus,

The Olympic spirit emphasizes friendship, solidarity and mutual understanding, because in this way people can get rid of their prejudices, and fight against any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise. In this way, people can understand other nations and people as world citizens, can learn how to respect other people; can treat others and themselves with an objective and fair attitude; can learn the good things from other cultures with a humble heart, and can grow and mature so as to

promote international communications advocated by the Olympic movement.
(Manual 41)

Conquergood says that we have a moral responsibility when engaging with other peoples and cultures. Rather than speaking about them we must listen to and engage with, in order to take part in dialogic performance (“Performing as a Moral Act” 10). By doing so, we hold up our moral center and know that we are ethically grounded. Here, if we really listen to what the public transcript is telling us we hear competing purposes, denotations and connotations. When we decode the public transcript there is a mastery of articulation at play. On the one hand and at the level of denotation, the Manual is saying: let us proceed into the future with an open mind not riddled by political rhetoric or laced with Yellow Perilism. There is an offering to the Western audience. China is performing a willingness to work for peaceful coexistence, are you? On the other hand and at the level of connotation, we hear another message. By taking part in the Olympics we are taking part in the witnessing of China’s performance of a “New Face” that has been built upon a Chinese cultural conception of harmony. The message is that China has formulated a grandiose display, opened its doors, and invited the world to marvel in its changes. The purpose is ambiguous or better yet, elusive, in the sense that it is has been subjectively produced. Thus, the interpretation is determined by the position of the co-communicator. More so, Chinese individuals are also watching this performance as it unfolds before their eyes in China, on television, on the public streets, and taking part in the co-performance, the interaction in China with the world. They are told:

The greatness of “taking part” is that all the participants grow with strong character, a sincere attitude, a spirit of dedication and willingness to achieve Olympic character, a sincere attitude, a spirit of dedication and willingness to

achieve Olympic ideals, all of which are much meaningful than grades and medals. (Manual 43)

By taking part in the Olympics, participants in China and from all over the world (remember that this was the most widely watched Olympics in history) are expected to “grow” with China, with China as a country itself growing up on a world stage and showing the progression of this growth in the performance of the “New Face” of China being a harmonious one. By co-participating, volunteers and spectators alike, we are accepting the invitation and must be wary of what is at “Face” value. Thus, China’s “New Face” begs the question: Is this just a performance for the world to see or is this display sincere, this gesture with the best of intentions?

To summarize how the public transcript operates, the Manual works by first structuring harmony parallel to Olympism. Secondly, it creates an ambiguous and evasive partial truth by using power (authority – Chinese government, OIC; legitimation – institutional publication, traditional – Chinese historical conception of harmony). Finally, the politics involved that work in and through the relations of power-knowledge to produce change (Foucault 27). With the third (politics of power-knowledge), the public transcript speaks for a people, represents a people in a certain way, and creates an image or knowledge about a people, although they may feel otherwise. Thus, with power, the Manual is not innocently reflecting reality. Furthermore, we can (loosely) see the processes of mimesis-poesis-kinesis revealed in the campaign. When volunteers and others read the Manual they are in a relationship with the text – being pulled in a direction, always with political purpose behind a creation and construction that seems innocent.

With mimicry, poetics, and movement there is always a direction, though not always unified, although in synchrony, but never always in agreement.

Manual as performative text

I approach the “Manual for Beijing Olympic Volunteers” as a performative text that uses a Chinese communication style, a style of government ideology and politics, and the practice of Chinese culture. It is performative in the sense that it ‘does’ in the very words it uses to tell volunteers how to think, behave, communicate, and perform during daily encounters in the Olympics. It does so through repetition. Throughout the manual the words “New” and “Harmony” are consistently used. I understand this repetition in the sense that Butler uses it to explain how ideas are constituted. Whereas Butler focuses on the notion that gender is constituted through a “stylized repetition of acts” I extend this notion to how the “New Face” of China is constituted. Butler explains that when repeated over and over the power of the “performative” constructs notions of masculinity or femininity. The power of performance or the power of “performativity” is the power to produce in this case, through the embodiment and performance of repetition, the “New Face” of China.

Furthermore, in this analysis I take a performative approach to the Manual as public transcript and a notion of face reconceptualized, when examining how the “New Face” of China is presented in the Manual. My intentions are set in examining some of the poetics and politics at play in the printing of the public transcript. With a critical and somewhat skeptical eye, the manual is simply a propaganda tool used by the CCP as the means to guide China through a moment in history when the world is focused on Chinese

practices, both at macro and micro levels. In this vein the manual is simply a document reproducing state interests and goes-through-the-motions as a “how-to” – think, communicate, practice, and perform – kind of ideological public transcript. More nuanced readings, with a reconceptualized notion of face can reveal deeper contested meanings in the Manual and furthermore, complex practices and interaction between and among Chinese and the concept of harmony.

Specifically, I draw from Scott in interpreting the volunteer Manual as, “public transcript as a respectable performance” (45). Along the lines of Scott’s analysis, a system of domination¹⁷ is not reproduced by its own workings. It takes “continuous efforts at reinforcement, maintenance, and adjustment” (45). What this means is that each practice of power by the dominant is a “symbolic gesture of domination that serves to manifest and reinforce a hierarchal order” (Scott 45). The public transcript serves to maintain (through performative power) a system of domination or more clearly, the power of the CCP. The remainder of Chapter III is organized three-fold. First, I begin with a general discussion of the Manual’s performance, focusing on the workings of a strategic and ideological performance or the core of the campaign that China used during the Olympics. The Manual serves as the blueprint of China’s intentions to present the Beijing Olympics as an example of the success of Chinese development, modernization, and peaceful coexistence with the world. The focus of the public transcript is the volunteer, as collective enactors and (re)producers of harmonic relations of power. The public transcript was the opportunity to show the level of sophistication in which their system operates. Scott’s words are insightful when he tells us, “they are quite capable of

tactically manipulating appearances for their own ends or using a show of servility to wall off a world beyond direct power relations where sharply divergent views may prevail” (44).

Secondly, Scott outlines five political workings of the public transcript: affirmation, concealment, euphemization and stigmatization, and the appearance of unanimity. I find it useful to loosely use them in explaining the general components of the public transcript. I use this framework in conjunction with the conception of harmony to show the structuring and organization of how China does Chinese in presenting the “New Face” of China. Finally, I turn to specific examples in the Manual and discuss some of their implications in this sort of “reading”.

Affirmation

Scott tells us that, “some events are planned essentially as discursive affirmations of a particular pattern of domination” (46). The case is made for a grand and ceremonious festivity such as the Olympics. The “New Face” of China is performed via volunteer Manual, as a harmonious face. The “New Face” as proposition is declared true by the very method of Manual. Affirmation in this sense is also a confirmation or assertion that harmony in China is true and exists. The public display of text works like carving in stone. It is a public transcript backed with the legitimacy of one of China’s top universities (China Renmin University Press) and authority of the CCP.

Concealment

In hosting the Olympics China agreed to allow public displays of protest and demonstrations. Regulations called for an application process with the government for a

permit, thereby arrangements could be made to ensure they were peaceful. I want to draw attention to one fact in this process that the CCP glazed over: these public displays of protest and demonstration were escorted to “designated” protest areas, usually tens of miles away from the desired audiences, locales, and out of the general gaze of the media.

I open with this example to introduce Scott’s important addition that, “by controlling the public stage, the dominant can create an appearance that approximates what, ideally, they would want subordinates to see” (50). Although the “New Face” of China was on display during the Olympics for all to witness, controlling the environment, positions, and players was vital to its successful implementation. From this perspective, then, the Manual and arguably “New Face” of China were deceptive tools to hide the real and more pressing issues that China wanted to avoid engaging in.

Additionally, we should think of concealment as a face saving strategy used by the Chinese government to conceal power relations. For instance, the political configuration, regulations, and laws in China give most power to the government. However, the government is a “People’s Republic of China” where we could argue that collectively, the people are the true powerholders although fragmented, covert, and resistive. The government recognizes this fact and accepts it in the name of harmony “just so long as they are still given “credit” for running things” (Scott 52). In this context we see the practices that conceal any threats to national (and I add governmental) security. Furthermore, the power of the people can “be exercised only behind a veil of proprieties” (Scott 52) that continues to maintain the government’s official power. Thus, with concealment the government is still able to control the public transcript.

Euphemisms

Euphemization makes itself apparent in the Manual's explanation of the "Basics of Decorum" section (147). Scott defines euphemisms as, "the self-interested tailoring of descriptions and appearances by dominant powerholders – is not confined to language. It may be seen in gestures, architecture, ritual actions, public ceremonies, any other actions in which the powerful may portray their domination as they wish" (54). Specifically, the Manual details eight rules volunteers should maintain in order to "provide good service and effectively manage different situations" (Manual 147). They include fine image, appropriate attitude, respect others, kind acceptance, respect, privacy, being honest, appropriate relationships, and ladies first. Moreover, "To provide excellent services for the 2008 Olympic Games, volunteers have to maintain good appearance and etiquette as well as possess specific knowledge of decorum so as to practice good manners" (Manual 147). By producing the performance parameters volunteers must abide by, the tailored image of an "appropriate" volunteer obscures the possibilities of presenting an unwanted, ugly "New Face" of China. Furthermore, I hear Scott tell us that, "Rules of etiquette represent, after all, a kind of grammar of social intercourse, imposed by the guardians of taste and decorum, which allows its users to safely navigate the shoals of strangers – especially powerful strangers" (47). The use of euphemisms in the public transcript works by camouflaging the "old face" of China by treatment of "antiseptic" to decontaminate it from any remnants of the undesirable.

The appearance of unanimity

Scott tells us that, “most ruling groups take great pains to foster a public image of cohesion and shared belief” (55). Most crucial to the public text is China’s performance of the “New Face” based on the cohesion of a harmonized society. It is with the appearance of unanimity that we see harmony being used hand in hand with a traditional conception (Hu) of face. It is the underlying source of connection, consent, agreement, and acceptance that the Manual bases its performance upon. In addition, the symmetry between Olympism and harmony serves to further the unanimity that the “New Face” of China is just and built upon respectable elements. “Disagreements, informal discussions, off-guard commentary are kept to a minimum and, whenever possible, sequestered out of sight” (Scott 55). This is the directness we see and hear in the Manual, the opening connection made between love, benevolence, and harmony to the volunteer. All elements work in unison to produce the image of a unified, harmonious China.

Next, I turn to focusing on other specific practices that the Manual uses to campaign for a harmonized, “New Face” of China. In the charming playfulness of these tactics lies the performative power to persuade the world.

“Smiling Beijing” Campaign – The “New Face” of Harmony

The Manual tells us that Harmony is the work of a society of people and it is everyone’s responsibility. Harmony symbolizes change, development, working with the world, and in the end peaceful coexistence. This Manual, in a sense, tries to rewrite China. It is an attempt to reconstitute the meaning and image of China. The most direct performance of harmony in the public transcript is the “Smiling Beijing Campaign”. On

August 8th, 2006 “Beijing Volunteer Association united 25 news and media agencies who are under Communist Party Central Committee and located in Beijing, and co-issued the “Initiative of Smiling Beijing” (Manual 99). The Smiling Beijing campaign “calls all the citizens of Beijing to smile to express their compassions, to spread civilization, to build a society of harmony and to promote the concepts of “People’s Olympics” and “socialist harmonious society”” (Manual 99). This initiative trained volunteers to perform happiness with “a smile”. Furthermore, the smile is the basis of embodied harmony. This practice of a smile performs happiness, in conjunction with acceptance of current relations of power and systems of control. To the world there is a presentation of contentedness, the “New Face” of China is in harmony with a smile on their face (See Appendix B).

“One World, One Dream”

I now turn attention to the Beijing Olympic theme slogan (See Appendix C),

One World One Dream expresses the common values of the Olympic Spirits – solidarity, friendship, progress, harmony, participation and realization of the dream. It expressed a common wish of the whole world to seek a better future under the calling of Olympic spirits. Though we have different races, languages and skin color, we share a fascination and joy in the Olympics; pursue the same ideal of peace; belong to the same world and cherish the same hopes and dreams. (Manual 82)

The same ideal of peace is complicated by different priorities to different cultural values. For instance, Americans value choice and liberties not openly or commonly made available in China (e.g. regulated speech, human rights). The public transcript unambiguously communicates the centrality of the Chinese conception of harmony, “One World, One Dream deeply expresses core concepts of the Beijing Olympics, i.e. the value

of harmony conceived in the concept of “People’s Olympics”, which is the soul of the 3 concepts aforesaid” (Manual 82). The transcript is unmistakable, “To build a society of harmony and realize harmonious development are our dreams and goals” (Manual 82). If Chinese accept the ideals engrained in the public transcript, the dream they are consenting to is the system of power relations in place. The slogan works in tandem with the public transcript. It is the catch-phrase China would love to have on the tip of everyone’s tongue in the lead up to, during, and after the Olympics. “It also states a firm belief – the great nation with five thousand years of civilization and further modernization is dedicating herself to promote peace and development, to build a society of harmony and to bring more happiness to her people” (Manual 83). Once again, the slogan is built upon the Chinese historical concept of harmony and attached to the New Face of China.

On controlling the body and performance

There is a specific section in the manual that shows volunteers how to posture when sitting, standing, and walking. Pictures are presented next to things to do and “avoid” in order to display ‘appropriate’ performance. This is important because it reads like a “how-to communicate” Manual and “how-to guide” to performing the “New Face” of China. Considering the west, the Chinese prototype orients to a western style of communication in an act of embracing international visitors in China during the Olympics and a foundational move based on the principle of harmony and face. Furthermore, the Manual details graceful posture as, “expressions of good manners and sublimity...An elegant sitting posture presents calmness, seriousness and serenity” (149).

A good sitting posture is described in detail. Along the bulleted points is a sketch of a young woman performing a sitting posture. I provide the actual image and advice points and things to avoid that the Manual specifically stipulates in terms of good sitting, standing, and walking postures in Appendices D, E, and F, respectively. The specificity of sitting, standing, and walking postures work to regulate what is/is not appropriate. These are what Foucault calls, technologies of the body that work to construct appropriateness and thus define the standard upon which deviant or unwanted performances should look like. They are designed as prototypes of what should be performed and what a harmonious volunteer should practice to be harmonious. By suggesting appropriate body movements and performances the Manual conceals (and reveals) undesired practices that may deter from the image of a “New Face” of China that is in harmony. Practices specifically paint the picture and orchestrate the composition that the CCP has constructed.

Indeed, we can see the body being regulated in the public transcript. The public transcript is visualized in the picture using images to repeat the textualized message. “Hiding feet under the seat or hooking the chair with one foot” (Manual 149) in performance is labeled “low-class and boorish” (149). “Separating the two legs and stretching them out” is considered “rough” (149). “Crossing the legs in a 4 shape, with two hands catching the upper leg, shaking foot top” (149) is considered “cocky and impolite” (149). Finally, “Sitting while moving back and forth, continually changing positions from left to right” is considered “underbred” (149-150). These four “things to avoid” are euphemisms that show us what the CCP is trying to avoid in terms of the

constitution of a “New Face”. With slight of word and augmentation of language, it works to sanitize the demands of domination and mask the real meaning of – we do not want our “New Face” to look like something else – to: this is considered inappropriate in modern social convention.

Appendices E and F are further examples of my argument. Pay specific attention to the “postures to avoid” points. These are direct manifestations in the public transcripts performative power to regulate their image and maintain body movement through posturing. In other words, they are another means through which the public transcript works to master the body and control it as it is performing the “New Face” on the world stage. Foucault tells us, “One needs to study what kind of body the current society needs” (58). In other words, China was (and still is) showing the western world what kind of body it exactly needs to develop at the rapid rate it is: a disciplined, controlled body that smiles in harmony, together through hardship and in unison regardless of diverse struggles. Much of this disciplining power reverberates back to cultural values originating from Confucian philosophy in harmony. The body of the volunteer is well trained and equipped through the public transcript to perform the “New Face” that is so desired by the Chinese government.

One world, many dreams

With a critical reading of what “harmony” means in China’s current context, critical scholars might call for the conceptualization of harmony as a repressive idea – a tool of hegemony used to legitimize the power of the governing CCP by consent of the people. Taking this reading as a system of domination I want to challenge us in new ways

to consider reading this public transcript in terms of a Chinese conception of harmony in China. This puts us closer to considering meta-critical and meta-communicative readings. Specifically, I direct our focus onto the political purposes of what these sorts of critical readings add to scholarship when they, in actuality, are pulling us back toward dichotomizing, bipolar classifications of east versus west, us versus them, right versus wrong. In other words, with a meta-critical reading of the purposes behind those ethnocentric readings (of harmony) we see a reverting of Chinese politics (i.e. Harmony and the “New Face” of China) to binaries of right versus wrong or western styles versus eastern styles, our values versus their values, communism/socialism vs. democracy/capitalism, etc. This binary opposition logic merely reproduces already conceived notions of difference that may be insightful, but overall are damaging and harmful to ever fully understanding the complexity of Chinese culture and their relationship with other cultures. If we were to read harmony as a genuine attempt at improving China and the lives of Chinese, it is a project of grandiose proportions.

Harmony, a tool of domination much like hegemony, works through consent. That is to say that the concept of harmony works by (re)producing consent to the systems of domination in place. Harmony as a politically charged term is laced with power and signifies relations of power that operate to legitimize its authority. “It is not difference that presupposes opposition but opposition that presupposes difference, and far from resolving difference by tracking it back to a foundation, opposition betrays and distorts it” (as cited in Warren 295; Deleuze 51). Deleuze’s insights caution a pause in this critique of the Chinese public transcript. Though we may track difference between how

we conceive harmony (in the west and east), that does not necessarily mean they should be put in opposition to each other. This is the problematic and its real effects in the world is that difference has been expanded to opposition, which may explain a recent resurgence of Yellow Peril discourse and fear of China in U.S. media and government productions. The logic follows: China is different, politically, culturally, ethically, etc. – and thus, in opposition to us in the west (U.S) – thus, they are a dangerous threat to peaceful coexistence with a rule by authority. Rather, with harmony built up as a symbolic conception of survival (for average, everyday, Chinese in an oppressive society) and the defining concept upon which Chinese communicative practices are performed, the Chinese conception of harmony does not equal opposition (to US practices and political interests). Opposition is not the intention of a Chinese conception of harmony. Instead, read in difference (or as opposed to opposition) harmony is the strategy to peacefully coexist (in China, in the world) with difference (via consent) and does not seek to reduce our differences to (violent) opposition. The operation becomes a public transcript that advocates working in unison, together, in alignment, in accord with actual differences in day to day practices. In other words, difference is not the problem and should be approached as an opportunity to understand what makes culture and culturally resistive practices unique, rather than reducing conceptualizations to binaries that are pitted against one another. This opens up the potentials of what a harmonious society is envisioned as from competing perspectives and how it is actually performed, to complicate seemingly mundane practices of intercultural and international communication. In short, and taking a page from Foucault's conception of discursive

regimes of truth (“Power/Knowledge), what one sees as hegemony (madness) could be seen as harmony (civilization) from another cultural worldview. Thus, I am proposing that we (the U.S., the world) engage in more productive communication with China by first listening to what China has to say about “Harmony” in China for what it is worth, what it means to the CCP, and what it means to Chinese who practice it in their daily functions of life. Once we begin to listen (Conquergood “Performing as a Moral Act”) we hear differences at governmental and everyday levels. Once we begin to listen, we can engage in the questioning, critiques, and conversations. Rather than starting from critique we need to start by listening. Rather than replacing one part of a binary construction with another, I have shown (in the Manual) the workings of a harmonic strategy as it is used in China and supplement it by showing how difference and resistance to authority are in fact part of that harmony. What we view as hegemony is in fact harmony in terms of the order of things done in China. In the west, what we view as ideology and hegemony can be commonly understood as a Chinese harmonious society. While harmony can lead to oppressive conditions, it also paves the way for new understandings not based in negative interpretation. In this reconceptualization of harmony we can also turn to and focus on the positive and productive points. All too often and (I argue) in the world of the “critical scholar”, what the Chinese conceptually understand as “harmony” is translated as an operation of hegemony. In a real and peaceful world, harmony is possibility, a chance for new communication practices in everyday life, cutting through repressive systems of domination because the people “doing” harmony during the Olympics in practice are also learning from their very performances of harmony.

I close this chapter by suggesting that while this Manual could be taken as the (re)production of a system of domination, I want to emphasize that it is also an invitation, a dialogic performance. I return back to Conquergood's explanation of the promise, "This performative stance struggles to bring together different voices, world views, value systems, and beliefs so that they can have a conversation with one another" ("Performing as a Moral Act" 9). Further, "it is intensely committed to keeping the dialogue between performer and text open and ongoing" (Conquergood "Performing as a Moral Act" 9). The intention in "reading" the Manual not just as hegemonic reinforcement of unequal power relations but also as a dialogic performance, is not to close communication in hopes of understanding then solving a problem and determining right from wrong. With this grounding my hopes are to keep the dialogue alive and use differences as the catalyst of meaningful intercultural communication encounters where the focus is on making connections with our differences, in hopes of peaceful coexistence. Further, a dialogic performative aim is to "bring self and other together so that they can question, debate, and challenge one another" (Conquergood "Performing as a Moral Act" 9). The manual should be taken as an invitation to just that – a catalyst for communication. Furthermore, Conquergood adds that a dialogic stance "is situated between competing ideologies. It brings self and other together even while it holds them apart" (Conquergood "Performing as a Moral Act" 9). Madison tells us that "The dialogic performative is charged by a desire for a generative and embodied reciprocity, sometimes with pleasure and sometimes with pain" ("Dialogic Performative" 320). China's unveiling of a "New Face" of harmony should be taken as an honest and open attempt to bring us together, situated

between competing ideologies where we can begin the dialogue about China's new and rising importance in global relations, politics, and economics. It should be understood, where "the honesty of dialogic criticism lies in two voices that can speak simultaneously and interactively. Like good conversation, the event is a cooperative enterprise between two voices, neither of which succumbs to monologue" (Conquergood "Performing as a Moral Act" 10). We must be cautious of prejudicial and negatively critical or simplistic judgments that close the conversation or set the limits before we enter dialogue often spoiled by the inflection of Yellow Perilism and generalizing discourse on Chinese politics. The Olympics was (and is still) an opportunity from which we can engage in healthy dialogue that provides possibilities for more voices.

Chapter 4: Volunteer Interviews

In this chapter, I discuss interviews with volunteers from the 2008 Beijing Olympics and their understanding of the complicated workings of practicing, representing and performing a “New China”. I begin the next section with a grounding in my responsibility to volunteers I interviewed. Next, I discuss the understanding of a “New China” by following with a loose framing of Confucianism and its usage in current times in hopes of showing where much of the foundation of harmony and the New China are located. Using the term “New China” here rather than the “New Face” of China, I give weight to volunteers’ actual words and descriptions. By giving them voice, I hope to engage in the process of listening to what they have to say about harmony and New China. I also spend a considerable amount of time on conversational partners’ insights about New China, the dominant theme that emerged in interviews. I use this space to provide descriptions in their own words to add flesh and blood (Lugones) to this textual representation of our conversations. Furthermore, I locate harmony as the building block concept upon which the New China theme is built. I spend a considerable amount of time discussing harmony. Throughout our discussions of New China and harmony, conversational partners repeatedly emphasized the use of nonverbal communication practices and the importance of their performances as volunteers. I give voice to and discuss these concepts as well. Finally, I end this chapter with a discussion of specific

examples volunteers experienced with international visitors to show how communicative practices were used to performatively produce the New Face of China and harmony. I include some of their intercultural experiences to show harmony and New China on the ground and in daily practice.

Responsibility to conversational partners

I had the pleasure of meeting with fifteen volunteers from the 2008 Beijing Olympics. In general the volunteers were excited to have the chance to share their experiences. I found their energy to be uplifting and was excited to have had the chance to speak with them. They felt that the interview was an opportunity to revisit their Olympic volunteering as well as help debrief or bring added meaning to their volunteer experiences. Interviews were “semi-structured” or “focused” (Rubin & Rubin 5) on volunteers’ Olympic experiences and guided by specific questions. They were also “cultural” in the sense that I asked “about shared understandings, taken-for-granted rules of behavior and standards of value, and mutual expectations” (Rubin & Rubin 6). Furthermore, I loosely framed interviews by what Rubin and Rubin call the “River-and-Channel-Model” with the sequencing of questions “based on the chain of the follow-ups, each building on the previous one, all tied together by your interest in a single theme” (160).

To interviews I brought the understanding of Olympic volunteers as “conversational partners” (Rubin & Rubin 10) because they are not objects, but rather partners who are sharing their stories and representations of their actual experiences. This relies heavily on my ethical responsibility to listen so that I can hear the meaning of what

is being said, maybe even more so with English not being conversational partners' native language. My responsibility further rests on the notion that "researchers and conversational partners share the task of maintaining the flow of dialogue..." (Rubin & Rubin 11). Because I did interviews beginning one year and six months after the Olympics, some of the interviewees expressed that they did not have the opportunity to keep up with practicing their English on a daily basis and apologized in advance. When there was a concept that they did not know how to express in English they used Chinese to explain the concept to me. If I was not able to translate, we used an electronic dictionary to find the meaning, similar to what I do in my daily practices in communication with Beijing locals. Conversational partners also said their memories had been a little bit fuzzy but they in fact were able to give me detailed insight nevertheless, because with the Olympics were memories that would stay with them for a lifetime.

I listened to conversational partners' *narratives* or specifically what happened, outcomes from their perspectives, and stages in the overall social process (Rubin & Rubin 24). In addition, I listened for *stories* that communicated "a moral, a broad message, or a set of core beliefs" (25) based around the Olympics. I understand that there is overlap between the two (narratives and stories) in the sense that Rubin and Rubin explain, "Some stories start out as narratives and then become refined or altered to more poignantly communicate the underlying point" (25). Thus, my focus here is on a combination of both stories and narratives that conversational partners shared. Furthermore, I engaged conversational partners by asking main questions, probes, and follow up questions (Rubin & Rubin). My intention was not to find good stories but

rather to put myself in a position of vulnerability where conversational partners could challenge my own culture while I was asking about theirs (Conquergood “Performing as a Moral Act”).

Before I began interviews I paid attention to the words of D. Soyini Madison, “Being mindful of rapport throughout the interview is essential in helping to create for the participant the feeling of being respected and of being genuinely heard” (“Critical Ethnography” 31). I worked on building rapport with interviewees by asking questions about their studies. I added rapport by sharing with them my general story of what I do in Beijing, how I came to Beijing, and my general situation of being half Chinese and having a Chinese fiancée. In order to further build rapport here, most of this pre-interview communication was in Chinese. When I was not able to express myself in Chinese I used English and an electronic dictionary to help translate. This pre-interview “small-talk” helped build an informal context for conversational partners and myself as well as gave us a sense of connection between our backgrounds and interests beyond experiences in the Olympics. After the interview when the tape recorder was switched off, conversational partners were deeply interested in my story of being a foreigner, living in Beijing, and having a Chinese fiancée. They followed up by asking about where I had learned Chinese, how long I have been in Beijing, and what my plans are for the future. Furthermore, I approached the interviews with a “positive naïvness” in the sense of, “acknowledging that you do not know and that you must rely with humility on others and trust upon the knowledge of knowers” (Madison “Critical Ethnography” 32). To help understand some of the foundations of conversational partners’ knowledge and help

situate their stories/narratives, I next turn to a discussion of Confucianism and further frame my interpretation of harmony and the New China.

Confucianism, harmony and dialogic performance

Chinese Communication studies have moved to Confucianism as the roots of explanation for the harmony practiced in contemporary Chinese society. Harmony, a Confucian value, is “something to be cherished” (D. Bell 9). Bell tells us that there is a return to Confucianism, a revival of “New Confucianism” in Chinese politics and daily life which is crucial to understanding how China does Chinese. A New Confucianism, in essence, is the foundations of a new and changing China where “exemplary persons value harmony but not conformity; petty persons value conformity but not harmony” (Confucius, as cited in D. Bell 14). Much of New Confucianism is built up around the idea of harmony. The CCP and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao first outlined the goal “to build a harmonious society” (Solé-Farràs 19) in the CCP’s 2005 “Master Plan”. Solé-Farràs explains that, “It is under the leadership of Hu [Jintao], who in 2005 formulated what is know as the “theory of three harmonies” (heping, hejie, hexie), that some key terms of clear Confucian connotations are incorporated into the official ideological discourse” (19). The next year (2006) “a whole chapter is devoted to vigorously developing social undertakings and building a harmonious society” (Solé-Farràs 19). Solé-Farràs tells us that it is not the first time Confucianism is used in ideological and political discourse, but rather the first time it plays such a heavy responsibility. Derrick Bell adds that the harmony that is strived for is:

A kind of harmony in diversity: a harmonious community where different kinds of people contribute to making society into a harmonious whole. The aim isn’t to eliminate difference, but rather to educate people so that different roles and

perspectives contribute to making a harmonious whole, similar to an elaborate dish with distinctive flavors. (110)

This is contrary to critical and western readings of what a harmonious society might symbolize: “a code word for conformity and loyalty to the state” (D. Bell 110).

New Confucianism plays a central role in Chinese culture, ethics, philosophy, government, and daily practices. “In it’s long journey down the centuries, Confucianism has created a cosmos-vision for the Chinese and has been a fundamental element in the representation of “China” for the rest of the world” (Solé-Farràs 14). Furthermore, Yum explains,

Confucianism is a philosophy of human nature which considers proper human relationships as the basis of society. In studying human nature and motivation, Confucianism sets forth four principles from which right conduct arises: *jen* (humanism), *i* (faithfulness), *li* (propriety or etiquette), and *chi* (wisdom or a liberal education). (377)

Ren, or humanism, (I refer to what Yum calls “jen” with the pinyin spelling, “ren” here after) almost single handedly presents the core of Confucianism when translated from Chinese to English. Yum tells us, “Of the four principles of Confucianism (*jen*, *i*, *li*, *chi*) *jen*, humanism, is the cardinal principle. In understanding East Asian patterns of communication it is vital to understand *li*, propriety, or proper etiquette and ritual behavior” (“Confucianism” 15-16). Taking up from Yum, I place focus on a combination of *ren* (humanism) and *li* (propriety) when considering my interviews with volunteers. The concept of *ren* is “warm feelings” in relations. *Li* is propriety, etiquette, or ritual. *Li*, in its original conception referred to rites of sacrifice but in a New Confucian understanding has “expanded over time to a much broader concept and norm that govern polite behavior” (Yum “Confucianism” 16). Specifically, *ren* is the embodied notion of

Confucian humanism that we find through the performance of *li*. Furthermore, “The actual practice or embodiment of *jen* in our daily lives is closely related to the concept of reciprocity” (Yum “Impact of Confucianism” 377), a component of *li*. When a, New Confucian humanism (*ren*) is practiced we find an ethic of reciprocity or what is known as the “Golden Rule” being stressed in the performance of harmony. In Confucius’ *Analects* student, Tsze-kung asks Confucius “Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one’s life? The Master said, is not Reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others” (Legge “Confucian Analects” 33). A New Confucian humanism coupled with Chinese propriety, reciprocity, and embodiment are strikingly similar to the lines of a performance approach to communication, specifically in terms of the moralistic stance, responsibility, and reciprocity the researcher is accountable for. We can find connection in Conquergood’s belief that “all performance has ethical dimensions, but have found that moral issues of performance are more transparent when the performer attempts to engage ethnic and intercultural texts, particularly those texts outside the cannon and derived from fieldwork research” (“Performing as a Moral Act” 2). I find further connection in Confucian based ethics when D. Bell (2008) explains that “Confucianism in particular is an action-based ethics: one learns by participating in different rituals and fulfilling different responsibilities in different roles...” (152). In other words, a Chinese New Confucian humanism is practiced in daily life through the repetitive rituals of *li*, (aka propriety, ritual, and etiquette) and take a moral stance in the performances volunteers choose to engage.

Furthermore, *li* (propriety) and *ren* (humanism) are stressed in New Confucianism in family ethics or filial piety, “A key aspect of learning by doing process is filial piety, caring for elderly parents: as Confucius puts it, “Filial and fraternal responsibility is the root of humanity and compassion” (D. Bell 152). The utmost respect is given to parent and elders especially in your family and close relations.

Starting from the moral ordering of the individual person and the family, an important goal of Confucianism is to bring order to the state and thereby to spread peace throughout the world. The ideal goal is a harmonious political order of global peace (D. Bell 26)

Respect for parents and elders are done through ritual, repetition, and etiquette. This is how New Confucianism is to be practiced at the core in family relations and should carry over at macro levels such as the state and in governmental practices and policy. The goal is not only a harmonious Chinese socialist society but also a harmonious global relationship with the world.

This Chinese New Confucian conceptual grounding of harmony has been misinterpreted by the west as an ideological tool of conformity and hegemony. For instance, D. Bell sums up the western translation of a Chinese “harmonious society”, “Their [China’s] idea of the “harmonious society” seems to be a code word for conformity and loyalty to the state” (110). Rather, D. Bell suggests, “We should promote the ultimate ideal of “harmony in diversity”, teach the kind of empathy that promotes harmonious relationships, and emphasize that critical thinking is best carried out in ways that don’t undermine affective ties” (112). Again, I want to emphasize the strong correlation between a “harmony in diversity” and the Chinese conception of a

harmonious society with Conquergood's call for performance as a moral act and dialogic performance. Thus,

This performative stance struggles to bring together different voices, world views, value systems, and beliefs so that they can have a conversation with one another. The aim of dialogic performance is to bring self and other together so that they can question, debate, and challenge one another. It is a kind of performance that resists conclusions, it is intensely committed to keeping the dialogue between performer and text open and ongoing. Dialogic understanding does not end with empathy. There is always enough appreciation for difference so that the text can interrogate, rather than dissolve, into the performer. That is why I have charted this performative stance at the center of the moral map. More than a definite position, the dialogical stance is situated in the space *between* competing ideologies. It brings self and others together even while it holds them apart. It is more like a hyphen than a period. ("Performing as a Moral Act" 9)

In the following sections I give voice to conversational partners' interpretations of a New China and harmony. Grounded in a dialogic performance stance and between the competing ideologies of a Chinese New Confucian humanism (*ren* and *li*, harmony performed in ritual and etiquette) and western conceptions of harmony as social equality, democracy, and human rights, my attempt is to further the conversation by bringing us together even while we are apart.

The New China

The "New Face" of China is grounded in a New Confucian ethical philosophy. Offset with the *Manual* as public transcript and strategic preparation for the performance of China's "New Face", I turn directly to volunteers' reflections of the larger theme of the unveiling and performance of New China during the Olympics. Jenny, a twenty-four year old female who grew up in Gansu province, specifically pinpoints change and development as components that make China "new",

By the Olympic Games, people all over the world know China, they know Chinese culture. Some of them came to China and they can see the development

of China. Because China is a developing country, everyday has some changes so they came to our country and see it, while China is a developing country. (Jenny)

Because China has closed its doors for so long, the Olympic Games was a time for visitors from all over the world to experience China's "newness", its development and modernization first-hand. Jane, a twenty-one year old female from Hebei province, echoes Jenny's sentiment about the success in letting the world know about New China:

I think the biggest success is to let the world know the New China. And, I think many foreigners think China is very poor and ancient before the Olympic Games. They don't have so much of a chance to know about China. But after the Olympic Games people will see Beijing is very modern. (Jane)

The importance and success of the Olympics for Jane is in showing China as different from the past. This shows in her articulation that offsets "poor" and "ancient" against "New" and "modern", tropes found in the west. Jenny and Jane believe the success of the Olympics is that the world now knows more about the New China as it was shown through Olympic performance and spectacle. New China, though different, is similar to the west as it modernizes and develops.

As Olympic volunteers, these two conversational partners identify themselves as part of a larger project and performance of New China. To add context and insight to Jenny and Jane's descriptions of the modernizing and developmental change China is going through, it helps to consider China's modern history with the west. "Following the "century of humiliation" at the hands of foreign powers (ca. mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries), China's leaders drew up Legalist ideas to strengthen the state and build its capacity to protect itself from foreign interference and internal chaos" (D. Bell 21). Laced with historical pain, China used the Olympics as an opportunity to

“harmonize”¹⁸ historical relations with the west in the unveiling of the “New China”, one in which China is powerful and ready to show the world that they have changed particularly by way of modernization and development. Plainly, during the Olympics, China was ready to share Chinese culture and a new outlook for the future with the world (similar to the lines of western development). This is the success that volunteers speak of and share in their pride of a successful Beijing Olympics campaign. China was able to successfully practice a harmonious China and Olympics Games through the performance of China as a harmonious society. This sentiment, echoed by Henry, a twenty two year old male who grew up in Shanxi and Beijing provinces, tells us more of the same about New China: “The success was more people love the Chinese people and Chinese culture and know that China is different, has many differences from 60 years ago and from 100 years ago. It is a big difference” (Henry). China is no longer simply a de-facto Communist country (as it was 60 years ago with the birth of the CCP) pitted against western interests, aligned with the Cold War enemy. Along the lines of what Henry is alluding to is that China has opened its doors to the west, to capitalism, the global economic market, and changing values. Beth, a twenty one year old female who grew up in Beijing and Tokyo reiterates the same concept,

I think the most successful, of course, is to let most of, more and more people, and especially the whole world, know about Beijing and especially China. Yeah, they know more about it. I think that is the most successful part of the Beijing Olympics (Beth).

Beth’s understanding of what “we know more about” is that China has changed. The idea is that from the Olympics the world has seen New China is not the old “orientalized” stereotype of an ancient and distant land with mysterious people who are different, closed

off from, and opposed to western influence. From the Olympics we have also seen that China is not the hegemon we have built it up to be with Yellow Perilism. There is a bit of transparency in New China's mission to reframe understandings of what China symbolizes. The new image of New China presented in the Olympics challenges the Chinese Yellow Peril stapled to the western imaginary. Based on this new performance in the Olympics, we find in volunteers' understandings a new articulation, a re-presentation of China as harmonious country that is anti authoritarian rule, at the same time a harmonious (in the Chinese conception) socialist country, and not the threat the west has historically built China up to be.

Beth followed up her insight about China's success by telling me that New China should move into the future, not just be content with it's unveiling during the Olympics:

Chinese persons are getting more and more rich, richer and richer. They can go out and travel to other countries but some of them just don't or just have not considered going out of China. The people who go out of China and the people you know are something like Chinatown, like something about Chinese living there. Sometimes they just act strange or just act not normal. It can't represent the whole of Chinese people. People go there and they look at Chinese, oh this is Chinese. So, I hope more and more Chinese people can go outside of China and let people know more about Chinese. And, I think when I read about the news I know that there are quite a lot of Chinese people who already went out and are staying in other countries. (Beth)

Beth's hopes of carrying on the Olympic unveiling of New China to the world echoes the ideal of a harmonious Chinese society not just within China but also expanding to a harmonious relationship with the world. This should not be read as an imperialistic mission. On the contrary, harmony is the New Confucian value seen in the relationships between people in China but also hoped for in China's relations with the world. In essence, New China is based upon the hope of breaking old stereotypes and disrupting

Yellow Peril discourse by showing it is a harmonious society through the practices and performances of Chinese in China. Carol, a twenty one year old female from Hebei province, adds insight to Beth's hopes of breaking old Chinese stereotypes,

We want to show the real China but it's not maybe before they show China on the newspapers or TV programs. Maybe, we should let them know China during it. Maybe, they should know China by the Olympic Games. They come to China and they can learn China better, about us by themselves (Carol).

Carol tells us that visitors who came to China during the Olympics learned about China from their own experience. She alludes to an embodied knowledge about China, or the new space of China being "practiced place" (de Certeau 117). That is to say, people may know something by watching television or from mediated sources but actually embody the new understanding and knowledge, by being in China. She hopes that visitors experience and understand the New China by directly embodying Chinese space. Carol's yearning is in lines with the Confucian value of *ren* (humanism) and an action based ethics, where "one learns by participating in different rituals and fulfilling different responsibilities in different roles..." (D. Bell 152). Carol's understanding is that to learn about "real" China, the New China (the one not represented in the media), we need to be here to experience it, to take in a sort of body knowledge, and engage in the actual practices or embodiment of Chinese life (and I argue *ren*, humanism) in China.

Considering the New China, John, a twenty three year old Chinese male from Chongqing in Sichuan province, tells us:

Another, I think, we have this kind of ability to deal with big things, big activities, or big meetings. That means our society is on our right way, or rapid way to develop to a higher, upgraded level. We have found these kinds of direction and we are on the way to develop our country and during our Olympics Games we found some achievement. That is evidence that we are on the right way to developing our society. (John)

For John, the Olympics were a glimpse into the future to see how China deals with big things, big in terms of increasing population, big in terms of development, and big in terms of increasing responsibility to people in China and on the global stage. How China dealt with these big things was crucial to creating a harmonious environment for China during the Olympics. John believes it was a success during the Olympics. He adds that from the Olympic Games, China was able to find achievement. I followed up by asking him about what he meant by “achievement”. John’s response: “I think people always think one country to hold, hosting the Olympic Games, is mainly for showing, to show how strong the country is/country was. I can’t refuse this kind of reason” (John). John’s explanation is telling in terms of New China’s purpose for the Olympic Games as a chance to perform its strength. This stems from pride and patriotism but also from historical factors of modern history and western oppression in the “century of humiliation”. Again, D. Bell’s words are insightful when he tells us “Following the “century of humiliation” at the hands of foreign powers (ca. mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries), China’s leaders drew up Legalist ideas to strengthen the state and build its capacity to protect itself from foreign interference and internal chaos” (D. Bell 21). Furthermore, John strengthened his stance by telling us, “It’s true that we hold these Olympic Games to show our strength, our development, our attunement” (John). Adding to development, John explained that New China has strength (stemming from China’s rise in the world economy) and attunement in terms of the possibility of bringing New China and the world together in harmony. In short, John sums up markers of New China’s successes in terms of the world knowing more about China’s: deepening

(economic) reform, opening to the outside world, having more foreign friends, people know how Chinese people are living (I would add: in the city), teaching Chinese civilization (history, tradition), Chinese people's characteristics, Chinese economic levels, and daily life. Thus,

I think most of the successful, the successful is we have the first, according to Chinese peoples we have to, how to say this? We have to do some, we have been directed by our chairman, how do you say, select deepening the reform, opening to the outside world. We have more company with foreign people, foreign friends and the word. They know what China is like and how the people are living. And, some other things, maybe some other things - the culture, you mentioned the culture, the Chinese civilization and Chinese peoples, their characteristics, the economic levels, and the life and some other kind of things. People know and people get other information about us. That is one successful. (John)

Performing New China, performing harmony

For Ron, a twenty two year old male born in Heilongjiang province and grew up in Zhejiang province, New China's unveiling was a performance during the Opening Ceremony of the Olympics:

Obviously we are very proud of it as Chinese. The ceremony is so spectacular, so exciting. It showed the culture of the traditional China. I think in that day they showed the culture of China and they, you know, the performers, come from different classes of society. Some of them are university students, some of them are maybe performers. They're just working on that aspect. And, some others are maybe farmers and the army. So, I think the celebration is the festival for all the Chinese, not just for a little part for them to celebrate. It is very different. I think maybe in some other aspects, the Chinese culture is different from the foreign cultures. (Ron)

Ron's feeling is similar to other volunteers' in the sense that the Olympics brought together China in a grand performance that displayed the diversity of traditional Chinese culture, from students to farmers, army soldiers to performers. For China, the Beijing Olympics Opening Ceremony was a celebration of its diversity, tradition, and culture; it

was the enactment of a harmonious society. The performance was a festivity of harmonious display for the world yet also Chinese to audience. Sara, a twenty two year old female from Hei Longjiang province, shares her role as an Olympic performer: “I’m an actress...in the closing ceremony” (Sara). In Sara’s perspective, the Closing Ceremony, “it’s actually just like a big party. All of the actresses and actors were in the Nest [Bird’s Nest – National Stadium] and we just went around the circle and danced” (Sara). In her performance, a harmonious society is like a big party. Further, Sara describes the persistence and dedication that went into her performance. She describes the Chinese spirit:

I think it was a big success. I think many people think like that. Just, we brought so many people together. It’s like a party of this globe. And, in those Games I think as an actress, I learned how to persist and carry on, and persist and do something. Yeah, and I see how hard it is so I can understand it is doing *jiu shi lai zhi bu yi*. It’s hard to finish but we still finished it. And, I think it’s just the spirit of China, the Chinese. (Sara)

The spirit of New China is one of persistence, to carry on in ritualistic fashion to perform the face of a new China. As a performer, Sara has the responsibility of representing New China. Her explanation of the Chinese spirit, to persist through hardship is the spirit of the Chinese, is the fuel that drives the performance of the face of New China. It is dedication through hardship and persistence without complaint, a harmony rather than hegemony. It is an enactment of *lian* for *mianzi* in the name of China, the performance of *face* for *status*. There is choice in Sara’s persistence, rather than subordination, as she further explains her dedication to performance and New China:

I think I’m just one of the party. I only want to do something. I didn’t want something for myself. I just think it’s very difficult, because maybe, we can just have this chance. Maybe, once it’s over we don’t have this chance anymore. So, I

just want to do something like this to take part in this and do something for our country (Sara).

Indeed, Sara's desire to be a part of the performance of a harmonious society is not coerced. It is desired and organized by the government. Performances also happened on the ground in day-to-day encounters with international visitors. Gina, a twenty two year old female from Guizhou province, describes her performance of body language,

Because if you are not from a country where English is the first language, for example Japanese, their voice about pronunciation, sometimes I cannot understand. And, in that situation we try to communicate so we use some body language. They asked for, like where is the washroom? (Gina).

Gina explained that it was important to be polite in how she performed body language in all situations, even with something trivial like directions to the bathroom. She told me, when volunteers were polite, visitors would reciprocate. Moreover, Ron details performance and gestures as the way to get to understanding, "But, you know the communication is not only used by the language. There are so many gestures and the appearance and many other things, maybe non-language communication" (Ron). I asked Ron about how he would get to understanding with Olympic visitors using "non-language" communication. He told me about visitors he had met from Malaysia, or even from other parts of China (he mentioned Yunnan and Guizhou) where other dialects are used. When communicating with them he would creatively "write or draw some pictures at best" (Ron). Furthermore, Ron went into more detail about the performance involved to get to understanding:

At first, we have time to accompany to the situation. It needs time. At first, we may even use gestures and draw pictures. He asked me, "where is the restroom?" You know in the National Stadium the signals are very abstract. It may be difficult to ask that, to draw the signals for that...After some time we could communicate with each other more frequently (Ron)

Here, the performance of gestures becomes a universal language of sorts. When English is not an option, body language and the performance of intercultural communication in daily encounters and practices is the means to understanding. Ron followed with the importance of style in terms of the extralinguistic, hidden connotation of communication:

I think there were many differences. First, I think the way we speak is very different. We Chinese maybe, maybe you don't understand Chinese, but we Chinese usually don't speak directly, don't speak frankly. We may have some connotations, connotations in speaking. So, we may say it this way but we will indicate another way and we can understand each other. I think it's a way of communication, a good way. But, maybe in English speaking countries they may speak directly, speak what they thought and think. (Ron)

It is in the extralinguistic modes of communication or cultural styles of communication that Ron begins to speak about the hidden transcript. We find it at the level of connotation, where Chinese "indicate another way" and still are able to understand each other. Here in the interview, I felt a bit of distance he created by indirectly labeling me an outsider from an English speaking country when he said, "you don't understand Chinese". In my moment of vulnerability, I asked Ron about times when he could not understand what someone from an English speaking country was saying would he get upset. Ron agreed, "Yeah, but I still find some possible reasons. Because two people come from different cultural backgrounds so there are many things you want to know about each other, also some talking habits" (Ron). I agreed with him that this is the good part: learning new things about other people. He chuckled, "first of all it will improve my English. And, then I think there are so many friends. I can make so many friends and it lets me know something about their lives" (Ron). The difference in our styles of communication is apparent in this small exchange. While I focused on the learning aspect

of meeting new people, Ron foregrounded the Confucian value of *ren*, humanism, and the value of creating harmonious relations by making friends and learning about their lives.

In daily practices and encounters with international visitors Mary, a twenty four year old female from Shandong province, talks about her performance:

When you are in front of VIP, you know family members [the Olympic Committee] there are certain ways you should stand and ask. Like, I shouldn't stand, like I should do this but stand like this [standing up and showing me – not directly facing me], about 45 degree angle. It is most convenient for them to call for you and you will, um, how to say it, other people come to him and you will not be impolite to other people. (Mary)

Mary performed the “appropriate” standing posture she had learned during Olympic training. In our dialogue, she enacted the splitting image of the standing posture detailed in the Volunteer Training Manual (see Appendix E). She explained that it was crucial that she perform her etiquette politely. I asked her why she stood off to the side at a forty-five degree angle. She explained that, “it is most convenient for them to call for you and you will, uh, how to say it? Other people come to him and you will not be impolite to other people” (Mary). In her performance, I find direct connection with the Confucian value *li*, etiquette, and the Volunteer Training Manual, “One who has manner is one who respects others” (Confucius qtd. in Manual 150). Mary’s understandings and performance of graceful posture (a year and a half after the Olympics) is testament to the power of Olympic training and the Manual and public transcript’s staying power, “A graceful standing posture indicates a person’s good manners and gentle style. The basic requirements are: standing still, stretching out the body, presenting an attractive outline

and showing a positive spirit” (Manual 150). Furthermore, Mary showed me other postures she learned,

Posture, like when they do this you can do this [showing me a bow]. Here, hands bent [at waist]. And walk [showing me a composed walk]. Not shaking and then, not like this [shaking, uncomposed walk]. You should do this just walking along [upright, composed]” (Mary).

Again, Mary performed the posture pictured in the Manual (151) (Appendix F). I hear Confucian values in her performance, “If there is no learning of rules of propriety, no character is established” (Confucius qtd. in Manual 151). What we may interpret as conformity and social control, is also the building of moral character based on Confucian values. What Foucault calls technologies of the body, is complicated by a Confucian interpretation as the respect one gives to others because that is what they expect in return (Confucius’ Golden Rule). Here, Mary performs *li* as etiquette, or as harmony in the sense of bringing difference together in ritualized ways. Ames and Rosemont (1998) tell us that, “*li* are those meaning-invested roles, relationships, and institutions which facilitate communication, and which foster a sense of community... They are a social grammar that provides each member with a defined place and status within the family, community, and polity” (51). Furthermore, *li* is what “makes rituals profoundly different from law or rule is that each person needs to personalize them” (Yum “Confucianism” 19). Mary had personalized her posture as she eagerly showed me how she performed *li* during the Olympics.

Furthermore, the performance of “*li* was of central importance in assuring a harmonious society” (Hagen 372), also in the smiles shown in the harmony of the face of New China. Jenny describes the importance of a smile, “Be polite and you must smile. If

someone told you, not in English, and you don't know what he is saying, you just smile" (Jenny). To face and harmony, Gina adds that a smile can help the process of compensation, important to keeping a harmonious state:

Maybe, I will say I can't give you a hat but I will try to compensate, if I can do something to compensate you. In communication, I think a smile is very similar. A smile. Yeah. Sometimes, if you know some visitors cannot speak English. They don't understand what you are saying. But, when you smile to them they will say you are kind to them. (Gina)

For Gina, with a smile there is the performance of harmony even without a common spoken language. Furthermore, she directly links a smile to harmony (*he xie*). She explains,

I mean if you individually, I mean if you're always a person who always smiles, the influence is very small. But for all the volunteers in the gym, if they all smile and they say welcome, come to the gym, they say thank you, bye bye, have a good night, when they are all like that, the atmosphere is very, how should I say, *he xie* [harmony]. They feel that they are warmly welcomed. (Gina)

Gina highlights the collective and performative power of a smile. Here, a smile enacts "*li* as a complex concept whose scope included ceremonial "rites" and norms of appropriate behavior as well as an attitude that makes certain actions sacred. *Li* are pragmatic devices that gesture at ideals – but not fixed or determinate ones" (Hagen 373). While a smile was encouraged in volunteer training, it points to the ideals of the "Smiling Beijing Campaign" (Manual 99) in *li* and the norm and appropriate behavior of New China. Mary echoes the same understanding and traces the cultural logic that through cultural differences and in a smile we can perform and achieve harmony.

When it is positive you can't recognize that because it makes me happy and you think it should be like this and you can't recognize it is cultural difference. But, the negative will make you feel a little bit more impressive. You should feel why, why is it like this? I think it is all okay if you are just being polite and nice and smiling. They will understand finally. (Mary)

Here in the trying moments of negative exchanges where cultural difference leads to misunderstanding, Mary talks about another interpretation of *li*, “*Li* was at the same time seen as conformity to an established or external code of behavior regulating every moment, glance, word” (Hagen 374). Likewise, for Carol, “A smile is the most important thing to volunteers. In the Olympics they will take photos of every volunteers’ smile and then print them in the magazine. So, a smile says hello and smile, smile, smile, all the time” (Carol). While the performance of *li* is an inner ideal of Confucianism, the power of performativity is in the repetition of “smile, smile, smile, all the time”. In other words “They *do* something; they perform...It is *presenting* oneself as exemplary” (Hagen 398, original italics). On the notion of *li* as conformity, it is an active conformity. Volunteers choose performances in conformity with harmony or as Hagen explains, “There is mutual shaping that goes on between the specific content of *li* and the people who perform it as they actively seek to maintain an appropriate conformity to evolving norms and negotiate their “way” through the flux of circumstance” (400). By actively choosing to perform *li* volunteers have agency. Here, I want to bring back my discussion to the agency volunteers have in performing New China in terms of how they describe some of the negative aspects of New China and the Olympics.

The hidden transcript and surface performance of New China

Although all volunteers are confident about the successful presentation of New China during the Olympics, there are areas they explain as failures, and say need to be improved. We can find traces of the hidden transcript in their words. Coded in the English language Chinese perspectives and narratives are off the radar, out of the

panoptic gaze of Chinese censors. In general, I was surprised about the ease of volunteers' willingness to share their insights (oftentimes critical) about political situations and problematic government politics. In my experiences, these political topics have been kept out of the realm of public discourse especially when the talk becomes critical of Chinese policy or government. For instance, Betty, a twenty one year old female from Beijing, tells us about New China presenting a surface performance of New China during the Olympics:

I think on the surface, Chinese did well, the Chinese government did well. But as a local person I know a lot of hidden problems in China. Such as, almost all the buildings were covered in new color. But inside these buildings, inside the buildings it is very poor. So, I think this is a failure. The government decided to build a new China but why do you have this inside? Why do you have this kind of inside? Just cover the surface? (Betty)

Betty's insight is similar to the experience I had walking across campus and questioning the flower façade I saw at the Olympic wrestling venue. Although at face value visitors viewed New China as beautiful, when we turn our gaze to a deeper level we may very rightly find other purpose in New China's performance to conceal everyday problems. During the Olympics, I remember in the few months leading up to the September eight two thousand and eight Opening Ceremony, the city literally took on new color with old buildings being painted overnight so that the surface appearance of old buildings looked new. From this frame, New China is simply revised with a layer of "new paint". In other words, New China covered up "old China" in "ban-aid" fashion. On the surface, everything appears to be nice but once we go into the buildings we see that there are problems of quality. Along the same lines, Betty is skeptical of the presentation of New China and China's "New Face"-lift because its nature is temporary:

One day they will go back to like before. I think at that time [during the Olympics] the government made the *weidi ren*, other province people, go back to their home towns. The environment in that time was great, not crowded. And, they did good – no cars, no problems, no violence and everything is okay. People were polite. But China, in the future or in the daily life, except the local people and other province people are Chinese, but you make them go back to their home town. I think it is hiding the problem in this way. (Betty)

China was preoccupied, arguably obsessed with the gaze of the world focused on Beijing for the 2008 Olympics. This resulted in covering up problems of daily life to perform the “perfect image” to the world during the Olympics. Turning back a page to my discussion of James Scott’s explanation of public transcript as performance he explains, “By controlling the public stage, the dominant can create an appearance that approximates what, ideally, they would want subordinates to see” (50). Although the “New Face” of China was on display during the Olympics for all to witness, controlling the environment, positions, and players was vital to its successful implementation. From this perspective, the presentation of New China during the Olympics were deceptive tools to hide the real and more pressing issues that China wanted to avoid engaging in. Here we need to question the production of the “New Face” of China. If we find in New China the presentation of a hidden problem and that its performance stealthily conceals the “real” Beijing that Chinese know, what will happen in the future once the watch of the world is shifted somewhere else?

Ron, the twenty two year old male born in Heilongjiang province who grew up in Zhejian province, echoes the same sentiment when telling me about the appearance of the “Bird’s Nest” (National Stadium):

I think the problem is the design of the National Stadium. In appearance it may be very spectacular, it a very spectacular National Stadium. But, if you stand in it

you may find the stairs are very confusing. You may come from the ground floor to the third floor, but you cannot come to the second floor. (Ron)

From Ron's narrative, we hear that the face presented takes precedence over the function.

It is the same in terms of displaying an image, the face of New China instead of its function. Likewise, Jane details her feelings of China's New Face and its temporary performance:

I think during the Olympic Games, Beijing's atmosphere is different from, different from...other times. I think during the Olympic Games people always smile, always look happy. But, after the Olympic Games I think everyone is very tired of it and they will "*hui fu*" [go back to normal]. (Jane)

I followed up by asking Jane why everyone was tired of creating the atmosphere of the Olympic Games, always smiling and looking happy. She told me, "I don't know. Maybe, it's that the people think the Olympic Games are very important and everyone will show their best to the world" (Jane). The unnaturalness of her happiness shows the nature of the performance as an act of facade. It is a self serving move to give the image of New China strength. Betty furthermore problematizes China's New Face,

It is the problem. So, just like the government did something like painting the buildings, or sent other province people home, I think education is very important. And, I think maybe someday our generation is the main power of the government. So, I hope in that day the government will not be like this government. So, they won't do some of these surface things. (Betty)

Building off the idea that government was creating an environment, sterilizing it in the sense that they wanted to clean up the amount of people and types of people in the city, Betty hopes that the future will improve. She knows that with time the power will shift and her generation, an educated generation, will be in charge and hopes that the

government will not try to fix real, everyday problems by surface moves. Here she adds her thoughts about the New China campaign as a bureaucratic move. Thus,

Some places cannot solve the critical problems in China. If you visit China in some detailed ways you can see a lot of problems in China. The government, I think, is “guan liao” [bureaucracy]. They just do something, not serving the people, just do something for their seat, for their money, for their power. (Betty)

Betty brings back the problem to bureaucracy and the economic factor as the driving force behind the performance involved during the Olympics. Her insight is an offstage performance, out of earshot of the government. In public spaces and in front of governmental figures, this kind of criticism might be interpreted as anti-government and calling for reform. Her critical insight is not one of a kind. Even my students who talk with me seem to be more open and critical of the CCP when we use English.

I find this juxtaposition of China’s “New Face”-lift fascinating considering my current conversations with a visiting American professor of Communication experiencing the opposite. He tells me that his first impression of Beijing was that the buildings look old and run down. On the surface they are dirty and could use a new layer of paint. However, once inside, the buildings’ interiors he finds them quite modern and their quality not accurately represented by the façade of the old and decrepit exterior, granted it is now two years after the Olympics.

Teresa, a twenty four year old female from Hebei province, takes another perspective when talking about the future. She adds insight that details the importance of face and showing the “New Face” of China to the world similar to the public transcript. However, her biggest fear is that China did not succeed during the Olympics and the Olympics are a failure.

What I'm most afraid of is that several years later, because our work is not very good, Chinese cannot show the face, face the world, be face to face with the world's people. Because, I think this feeling is ours, all the volunteers and managers' feeling is this, I think because we have the team concept. We are very afraid the Olympics are a bad one because it is related to our country, our nation. It is our face to the world. This is the typical culture in China. (Teresa)

When Theresa says this is “typical” culture I found myself nodding my head in agreement. What she means by typical is what I have come to understanding in terms of Chinese New Confucianism, namely *ren* (humanism) and *li*, propriety (ritual, etiquette). Typical Chinese culture is the practice of *ren* through the performance of *li* (in practice, ritual, etiquette). More specifically, face (*lian* and *mian zi*) gain importance here because face is the actual concept that is performed to enact *ren* and *li*. It is the practice of humanistic ritual and the embodiment of etiquette. Thus, face is very important in the eyes of those you are performing for (the powerful, those with status, and also Olympics guests in this case). In other words, whether you are having dinner with your boss, hosting a guest over for dinner, engaging with a professor, or performing for a guest during the Olympics, the idea is the same: it is very important that you maintain face by practicing and performing respect and etiquette so that your guest feels welcome, entertained, and comfortable. If a guest is not comfortable or happy then Chinese practice is to do everything in your power to accommodate guests to maintain face (the guest's *mian zi* and your own *lian*). Connecting back to Gina's insight, she fears that she cannot gracefully perform face if the Olympics are, in fact, considered a failure. To further example this point, Gina explains the connection between face and recognition – *lian* and *mian zi* – being very important in the conception of a New China during the Olympics:

The face is very important. So, I don't know for some other countries what they think about it. When they travel for a long distance and come to China and watch

for, see the, cheer for their own countries, if their athletes will fail, how will they feel about it? ... Well I think that sometimes it's not uh, you can't judge a person simply by the results. You know the person is also very important whether he has tried his best. You know the different individuals, they have a different environment. Sometimes it's not very "you di de", advantageous for him or for her. (Gina)

I refer back to Hu's words for insight when he tells us, *lian* is "the respect of the group for a man with a good moral reputation: the man who will fulfill his obligations regardless of the hardships involved, who under all circumstances shows himself a decent human being" (45). From a Chinese conceptualization of face, Olympic athletes were performing under notions of selfless practice. The importance is in presenting not just an image of sacrifice but also continually performing an embodiment of contentedness during loss, because "lien is both a social sanction for enforcing moral standards and an internalized sanction" (Hu 45). Furthermore, *mian zi* is "a kind of prestige that is emphasized in this country [China]: a reputation achieved through getting on in life, through success and ostentation" (Hu 45). Whereas *lian* is the performance of acceptance in trying times, the communicative strategy from which to carry on in the face of hardship or loss, *mian zi* is the status or respect received from the creative tactic of performing face (*lian*) during the hardship of losing. In another example, Gina tells us about the responsibility in the idea of face and her performance:

Sometimes we will have to turn down some of the people's requests, and sometimes you need to use some techniques. Not just a simplistic no, I cannot do that. Maybe, at that time I did not perform very well because at last he felt very disappointed. And, when he leaves this gym I think that when he goes back to his own country and when he thinks about this, how will he think about the Chinese? So, I think about that and maybe the next time I will try better. (Gina)

Likewise, Mary links face and Confucian values in terms of, *li*, or etiquette in front of others to respect for elders. In this sense, the performance of face is constrained by *li* or by respect for elders:

Chinese culture, you know we have a five thousand year history and it includes a lot of things. Some things like you should be polite and take care of the old, from the young, and you should be nice and forgive people when they do something wrong, I think is good. But, there is also something that is not right. You know westerners they always, they will, in front of a lot of people, they will like, they will introduce their wives and they will show their loving. Chinese people will not, will not in front of older people older than 30. When a couple comes out they will never show their lovings. They will greet each other just like friends. If they do not say they are a couple you can't tell they are. (Mary)

Etiquette becomes a form of respect to elders. It (*li*) is the ritual practice or self disciplining mechanism of not showing “lovings” in front of people you have to respect. Thus, etiquette and ritual practices of *li* become the responsibility of volunteers.

Similar to discourse in the public transcript of the Volunteer Training Manual, Ron explains that volunteers are Chinese cultural ambassadors. It is their responsibility:

At that time, we, Chinese encountered many foreigners so they may be ambassadors to the Chinese culture. Maybe, they are shocked by modern China. Very different from what they imagined. But, I think you may have had the same experience, the same feeling. (Ron)

For Ron, being a cultural ambassador means maintaining the “New Face” of China through performances with visitors in hopes of harmony on the ground. It means carrying on with *li* to perform *ren* and harmony for the greater good of representing New China. I next turn to the concept of harmony.

Harmony

Henry explains his understanding of harmony:

In that word is “he”. “He ping” means peaceful and “he” means harmony. I think harmony is the, is Chinese people to believe in their, in our culture. We made

some things. If two people can, uh, believe each other or give each other convenience, maybe the things will, everyone will be happy and not fight for something. (Henry)

Here Harmony is a peaceful coexistence that takes the effort of more than one person or party. It is giving the other convenience and being happy with the sacrifices in times of peace. This is in lines with the Chinese characters *he* (together, union, peace) and *xie* (harmony). Together, *he xie* means together in harmony or peace (harmonious). Harmony and a harmonious society in relations at the family and social levels, as well as with the world is a driving concept behind New China. Harmony is combined with an almost obsessive desire to present a face to the world that is accepted by everyone. China wants the world to like them, to be together in peace with them. They are proud of what they have accomplished in this new period of development – a modernization in the development of a harmonious project to build a New China that is a growing presence and leader in the world. Carol provides a Chinese idiom to capture what she means by harmony: “*Zhong zhi cheng chang. Qi xin xi li*. It means we must get together to defend the nature or any difficult things. Solve the problems when we meet them. We must come together” (Carol). This conception of harmony is similar to what Li discusses in terms of harmony as the “reconciling of difference” (56). In this sense, Carol’s comment about getting together to defend “difficult things” and “solve problems when we meet them” (Carol) becomes the reason for or the basis of coming together in peace for “harmony”.

Further, Teresa links harmony to the Confucian value of *ren* (humanism): “Confucius, I think is the most typical in Chinese culture and they have Confucian colleges in the USA. It’s just a culture, *yi jia wen hua*. This theory is about communion,

community” (Teresa). “*Yi jia wen hua*” is the idea of coming together or sharing the same culture and cultural values for the good of the collective. In practice, it is the coming together in difference that builds a harmonious society. Furthermore, Betty details how China’s New Face was a performance of a harmonious society, “In that time, everything is okay. Everything is great. Yeah, the international community sees China – wow, China’s great. It’s already become a developed country” (Betty). To Betty, the success of a harmonious society is not only within China but also expands out to the international community. New China’s success of a harmonious society is also dependent upon the performance and the world’s reaction to and acceptance of it, the togetherness and communal feelings of association. It is the “everything is great” in which everyone is working together, including the international visitors.

After the Olympics, the project of building a harmonious society has lived on in Beijing and China. In my neighborhood in Beijing there are propaganda signs that remind local Beijing folks of the mission and that it is through individual effort that we can together achieve harmony. I have included a couple of the harmony propaganda signs about a half mile from my home in Beijing in Appendices G and H. In the last chapter, I discussed the Olympic Volunteer Training Manual in detail. Next, I talk about the actual training volunteers took part in and bring my discussion back to *li*, to show how ritual and etiquette were actually taught in the months leading up to the Olympics and performance of New China and a harmonious society. Through *li*, ritualized etiquette, volunteers were able to perform humanism, *ren*, to build a harmonious society. I turn to

volunteers' insights about the training they went through, or how and when they learned *li*.

Volunteer training

Gina explains the Training process:

One month in advance we had to be trained by the Olympic organizations. We had to be divided into different groups. Each group was trained with different *jinan*, techniques. They told me there are some differences between the western people and the eastern people, some *jihui* [opportunities]. How should I say it? The other people don't like to listen. For example, there were some disabled people, and you cannot treat them very different from the old generation or they will be very sensitive. Therefore, they trained us and we did some exercises, um, rehearsals. (Gina)

It is interesting to hear Gina describe her experience during Olympic volunteer training. Her description of the Olympic volunteer training is similar to intercultural training. She described the foundation of their communication with international visitors as being one of cultural sensitivity, not just with international visitors but also disabled Chinese and folks in different generations. In a sense the performance of New China is the performance of intercultural communication. On the one hand there is a dimension of mimesis in training, the learning of how to move, how to communicate, and how to perform when in an intercultural encounter. On the other hand there seems to be a right and wrong way to deal with cultural difference with cultural sensitivity and responsibility in the intercultural exchange being taught in the similar to goals in intercultural training.

We can hear the similarity of training experience in Teresa's account:

I took part in a series of training. What I remember now is just some *li* [ritual, etiquette]. Do you understand? It tells you how to treat other people, the foreigners. How you behave and how you say something. There were a lot of people who came to see the wrestling games so to become a volunteer, the trainer told us we cannot, when people ask questions, we cannot say no I don't know. We cannot say this. So we had to say, wait a moment. I need some help to ask

someone else. So, I should search for some other people to help me answer this question. (Teresa)

Teresa was taught that the proper etiquette or ritual was to be polite. There is direct connection between the learning of etiquette and the performance of New China that is desired. In the same vein the training of etiquette and the performance of New China are connected to intercultural situations. The volunteers are taught the performance of intercultural communication. The “appropriate” performance is in the politeness or etiquette, the ritual propriety that is similar in intercultural training and cultural sensitivity. Teresa follows up,

I only remember the trainer is very, his movement or gesture is very *deqi* [appropriate], very just right. Yes, he does this perfectly. The details, I didn’t remember the detail. And, he told us to be polite with the visitors. Never say some negative words to them. In general, you must, we stand for the Chinese people and the visitors that come to our venue – what they think about us, they think about the Chinese – so we must be friendly and helpful. (Teresa)

Teresa’s impression of the trainer’s performance of *li* is that it is the model performance of what she should be imitating. It is “just right” because it is the enactment of *ren*, humanism in the performance of his movements and the politeness and the positivity in his words. Like intercultural training there is a strong humanistic grounding in not being discriminatory in your thinking or actions and treating people as human beings and finding similarity through cultural difference. This is similar to Confucius, when he says, “The superior man in everything considers righteousness to be essential. He performs it according to the rules of propriety (*li*). He brings it forth in humility. He completes it with sincerity. This is indeed a superior man” (Legge XV 17 33). There seems to be a responsibility of cultural sensitivity. This is shown in their open mindedness of

representing China and the Chinese people. It is the etiquette of being friendly and helpful. Furthermore, Jenny talks about her training in terms of the exams she passed. Once accepted, she was trained how to communicate with visitors from different countries and even how to perform *li*, ritual via walking and sitting:

There were a lot of students that wanted to be the volunteer. So, our school had the exam, just like some Olympic knowledge, some Olympics history. How many Olympic Games have been held in the world? And, the first Olympics Games were held by where? We, a lot of us took about two, two exams. When we passed the exam we can get an interview which will give us an interview and ask us some questions and talk to us in English. If we pass this we can be an Olympic volunteer. Before we start work, you said training. Yeah, our school help a lot of training, just like, how can I say it? The communication is different. For example, how to communicate with different people from different countries or different cultures. How to walk, how to sit. Something like that. (Jenny)

To get to the point of training, potential volunteers took part in a very competitive process. The idea is that almost every Chinese university level student wanted to be an Olympic volunteer and represent their country. For Mary, training is also a cooperative process. Thus,

In the beginning we got trained in the form of lectures. You know the teachers, they gave us lectures and told us what should be done and what should not. Also, they used some, you know, what had happened in the other Olympic Games, what they did and what should be done. And, the second is that we taught ourselves in a team, 13 or 14 people together. We talked about a certain topic and gave our opinions. And, the third was just about one month before the Olympic Games in the stadium. The director, our director, held a certain affair and all the appointments came together. (Mary)

Learning together in synchrony, in harmony, Mary's experience displays the importance of working with other volunteers to feel harmony. With her volunteer team of thirteen or fourteen others, it is crucial that they learn from each other and congeal into a harmonious entity. Moreover, Gina talks about the training techniques she learned. When

asked about some of the training techniques she learned she described a different strategy for harmony, another kind of *li*:

When they ask you questions. Some of the people, it is their first time to come to China and they will be very curious to know something. Try to avoid some sensitive questions, like some political questions. And also, especially for people from the middle east. They are Muslim, yeah, and they have very different beliefs. And, sometimes we cannot understand, so try to avoid some behaviors. And, don't ask them, you can't do this? Respect, think is very important. (Gina)

Gina was trained to avoid politically sensitive topics and behaviors. Harmony is achieved by avoiding political contrast that may rile up political debate. This kind of framing is the sense of not wanting to bring attention to the undesirable aspects in terms of China's political front.

John tells us about basic training. He breaks it down into three sections. First,

Because the athletes are from different countries they have different accents, absolutely, and different ways of communicating so we must learn the basic words. So, we have special trainers like the local peoples to teach us the basic some basic phrases and basic language to communicate. That's section one. (John)

The first step in volunteer training is learning some basic components of intercultural communication and some of the basic ways to communicate with cultural sensitivity. Similar to traditional notions of intercultural training, volunteers were taught that they must be sensitive to different cultural backgrounds that international visitors bring. They were taught that there is a right and wrong way to communicate with international visitors and their acceptance of cultural difference is vital to the success of the Olympics. Further, John told me that volunteers were taught that the world is full of diversity and different countries and regions of the world have different religions, customs, and beliefs. His line of reasoning was similar to the Volunteer Manual in that they should "accept the

differences of foreign friends, admitting those differences, being strict on themselves but lenient with others” (Manual 148). Specifically, John told me they were taught to avoid some general taboos. Among the ones he mentioned I found some in the Volunteer Manual, “pointing at others...westerns may be offended if you touch their personal belongings...some elderly Western people may be offended if you attempt to assist them without their request to do so” (Manual 153-154). More general intercultural rules dealt with fine image, appropriate attitude, respecting others, kind acceptance of diversity, respecting privacy, being honest, having appropriate relationships, and ladies first (Manual 147-148). It is from a basic intercultural training that the next two steps are grounded upon. Next, John told me:

Section two is some mimic work. We have our, we call it our restroom. That’s the WC. Our basement and in this we have to do some preparations about the work, not only the equipment. We must count the equipments and put them in order. And we have to create some ways to relax ourselves. Maybe, draw some large pictures to sign our names, and to attach our pictures of, during the games, and maybe to memorize, try to memorize our smiling and in our pictures to make our atmosphere relaxing. That’s mimic work. And, during the mimic work we also have some tests. If I come to my duties and there are some, have some, there are some test directed by our managers and he will or she will ask another people, outside our school to come to our school to make trouble and how you can settle it down and handle it. (John)

Like Conquergood’s (“Beyond the Text”) explanation of mimesis, John explains the training process as mimicry – do as you have seen, imitate what you have been shown.

Next,

Section three is, I think is most tough because I think that section is, we have not, we did not have some training. It is totally work and stand on our duties. You just stay along. Maybe if you are a dock keeper you just stay along and nobody comes here and you must concentrate yourself. Maybe sometimes you feel dry and tired. (John)

This third section where John breaks down his training process is a combination of poesis and kinesis. These three steps that he explains have been described by Conquergood as the mimesis-poesis-kinesis process.

The contours of this new analytic emphasis on process over product can be seen in the shifting meanings of the key word *performance* as it has emerged with increasing prominence in cultural studies. This semantic genealogy can be summarized as the movement from performance as *mimesis* to *poesis* to *kinesis*, performance as imitation, construction, dynamism. (Conquergood “Beyond the Text” 31)

First there is the mimetics of the process, knowing what is appropriate *li*, appropriate etiquette and performance and imitating and practicing it to the point of perfection. Next, is the poetics of the process in that it is an art form. This is where the imitation is attached to the mission of New China, a mission of *ren*, humanism and harmony. Here, *ren* and *li* work in poetic tandem to mark the performance with meaning for the greater good of China. While the mimesis stage is simply a going-through-the-motions, in poesis significance is added to the doing. Finally, in the third stage, the kinesis during the Olympics when the world is watching, the mimicry and meaning now work for change – one toward the New China. As Madison tells us, “Just as performance is more than simply mimetic, so it is also more than the poetic...Kinesis is the point at which reflection and meaning now evoke intervention and change” (“Critical Ethnography” 170). John follows up on the implications of his training,

Surely because in the Olympic Games all the process and procedures are directed by the Olympic Committees and they have some detailed rules and detailed principles after all and they are divided in different parts. You meet the different peoples you know what you should do and you meet other people and you know can choose how to talk with them. Basically we have been taught to talk with people first politely and then smiling. That is the basic skills you should have. And secondly, you should try to be hospitable to solve their problems. But firstly, you should know what they want and you know their needs then you can help

them. Especially, to deal to talk with some audiences because different audiences have different needs. (John)

What John explains here is the dynamism of his training in terms of evoking different performances when meeting different people. The common denominator is intercultural training and mimesis-poesis-kinesis in terms of being polite, smiling, and hospitality. These play off the Confucian values of *li*, propriety, ritual, and etiquette, and *ren*, humanism. He further tells us that smiling and being polite are basic principles of how a volunteer should behave and do during the games. To further expand on my discussion of *li* it is important that I turn to another important concept in Confucianism, filial piety and the core of relations in China.

Filial piety

When discussing the Olympics with conversational partners and their experiences and practices during volunteer training many of them reverted back to Confucius and the importance of family relations. Confucius explains that in order to practice *ren*, humanism through *li*, ritual and etiquette, one must first begin with the daily practices and social relations closest to home, parents, then work your way out to looser relations at the state and international levels. I was interested in the historical and traditional groundings of volunteers' narratives. Many of them shared with me their own groundings and stories about their practice of filial piety. In *The Analects*, Confucius explains the importance of filial piety,

A youth, when at home, should be filial, and, abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good. When he has time and opportunity, after the performance of these things, he should employ them in polite studies. (Legge VI 9)

Teresa explains her understanding of filial piety,

In Confucius' thoughts, Chinese people are more stressing the family relations because when someone grows to 18 years old we didn't leave home. Maybe, in the USA they have to be independent to work and money for college. In China we usually are not like this, do this. When the parents get old, the son and daughter may stay with them and look after them. This is in Confucius thought more emphasizing the family relationship. When friends and someone have trouble we must help. It is what Chinese call *yi qi* [together]. (Teresa)

The emphasis of the practices of daily life in China is togetherness, specifically with family relations. In the cycle of life, parents raise children and know that it is the child's duty to take care of them when they get old. It is the same when close friends are in trouble. Ritual and humaneness are central forces driving social relations and a harmonious society. However, there are negative aspects to conventional practices of filial piety. Mary considers the other side of filial piety, the parents who do not have to give respect to children in such open and direct rituals or practices. She sees the way filial piety is practiced through *li* (propriety, ritual) in China as a constraint on communication:

It's [love] not something bad. It's good, so why can't you tell. In my family, my mother will always kiss me before I go to bed. But most of my friends and their parents don't do this. The first time I heard this I asked why. They love you right? The parents always love their children. In the case about why they don't say I love you, why don't they let you know? They always say you did this wrong or that wrong. You should do this, you should do that but they never say I trust you, I love you, I am sure you can do this. They are always negative, why not positive?" (Mary)

I have experienced this constrained kind of practice in term of not performing love or affection in public or even in private with family members, especially between parents and children in their teens. My fiancée is Chinese and last Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) we went to visit her parents. From Hunan, when we were leaving Spring Festival to go home to Beijing, I asked, "don't you want to hug your mother, kiss her goodbye?" My

fiancée replied, “we don’t hug”. I her asked why not? That was when I realized my own western cultural orientation and convention, my American cultural teachings to hug when we say goodbye or kiss when dislocating from someone we love. These cultural enactments of affection and different performances of love are not always translatable to Chinese. Although many Chinese do not hug or kiss their parents, many in fact, do. Rather than simply reduce this cultural difference to ritual it would be insightful to consider structural systems that constrain or enable those performances. For instance, Mary follows up the critique of Chinese convention and values of *li* and explains that this lack of public affection may be modesty yet also a constraint of patriarchy, with traditions of sexist rituals among the norm:

Being modest, it’s the culture. You know in the long history of China people always do this. They will call, in the poorest areas before the foundation of China, People’s Republic of China, they will call their wife a *zuo jing* just like she is stupid, and not smart but she’s not really like this. It is just a call. And, if other people praise your children they will say oh, they are so nice, they did something great. The parents will say they are not good. They always say something like, just the bad things. So, they have too much modesty. (Mary)

To practice *ren*, humaneness is also to practice modesty. Confucius said, “The superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions” (Legge XIV 29, 31). On the one hand, a husband will belittle a wife or children in front of other people to perform the face of “modesty”. On the other hand, it is an opportunity for another to break the negative description the husband gave by saying he is wrong and complimenting the wife or children. It is an unspoken engagement where when you hear someone belittle themselves or their family, the ritual procedure is to deny the negative remark and reaffirm their value, worth, and achievements. In most of these situations, it is the

patriarch who receives *mian zi*, status, for these ritual performances. Furthermore, Mary provides another context from which we can critique this convention of patriarchy with the idea of a “son of a duck”:

When I respect, when I mention your children I will say they are so nice, so great. In China it means *gu fu gu chen zi*. It means the father, the parents are great so that the children are great. So, it is great respect to your family. And, when to yourself, I should say this is my wife, it's my *zuo jing*, is not a good one and *chuan zi*. In a direct translation it is “son of ducks”. You know in China the tiger means great, the king; and the duck means, not a good one. So, the son of a tiger means it is a great person and the “son of a duck” means it is not very good in a different aspect. So, people regard other people's children as the son of a tiger and their own children as the son of a duck. (Mary)

When talking with other Chinese folks they gave me insight into this “son of a duck” phenomenon. In their understanding the idea is: My child is innocent and good. I like my child and am proud of her/him but I am should be modest. It is not considered bad because it is a move toward modesty through ritual – it is an opening to invite others to compliment your child, to reaffirm that you have done a good job raising your children and they reflect the qualities of a tiger. When I show my surprise at such a negative put down, my Chinese friends tells me that calling your child a “son of a duck” is not always meant literally and in a bad connotation, but rather it is a ritualistic connotation where, in fact, the parents are fishing for or seeking confirmation that their child has been raised well. It is the tie that binds self worth and value to others positive ascriptions of your family. When I call my child a “son of a duck” I am fishing for compliments. Labeling a child the “son of a duck”, though negative, is quickly and blatantly denied by friends or relatives so that they can make positive affirmations and ascribe positive confirmation to your child and your child rearing ability as parents by fashion of performative ritual.

Ron builds upon and sums up this idea by explaining it as an indirect style or performance in communication when you are with your family and in a family dynamic:

In Chinese maybe it is very much face to family. Americans I think are maybe more independent... Maybe it is hard to share attitudes with family. At which we will make it so that how we talk is very different. It's indirect but we still express what we feel. The westerners can't experience it. For the foreigners it may be difficult. So, it may be hard to learn Chinese. (Ron)

Though calling someone you love a "son of a duck" is a direct insult in an American context, the hidden transcript in China can imply a subtle, yet direct move to include family members in the reifying act of generating confidence through affirmative ascriptions from sources other than parents. The performative power is located in the practices and engagement between parents and family members and the repetition that follows.

Examples of Intercultural Communication – More hidden transcript

Gina shared with me an intercultural encounter with a Spanish Greco-Roman wrestler during her time volunteering in the Olympics:

Well, there is a Spanish athlete. After the campaign, he won and he liked the hat of the volunteers. So, he asked me to uh, simply to give a gift to him. I explained to him I cannot do this because the organization didn't allow us to give any gifts to the athletes. Then he took out his *yingbufu* [jersey], you know his clothes for the campaign. You know it is very precious for us and he said I can send money and his clothes as exchange. I also said I'm very sorry. Some people are very strange. He said, wow, this is a very precious gift. I just want your hat. So, why don't you, so he, he cannot understand. And, he was so surprised. I said I'm sorry. I don't know how to explain it to him, I'm sorry. I have to obey the rules of our organization. So he asked me for it many times and also he wanted to ask my manager for a hat. At last he still didn't succeed. (Gina)

To get to understanding, Gina told me that when they didn't understand each other she tried to use body language to get to understanding, "Like sorry I can't do this [while

shaking her hands no]. And even though I have to reject him, I also smiled to him. But, at last he is angry” (Gina). In this instance Gina’s *li*, or etiquette and ritual practice of rules was directly challenged by the Spanish wrestler. She explained that the wrestler’s communication style was similar to his style on the mat, aggressive, direct and forceful but somewhat poetic like an artistic dance. She persisted in denying the Spanish wrestler her volunteer hat and ended up calling over her supervisor. The supervisor confirmed that they were not allowed to give away pieces of their uniform.

In another of her experiences, Gina shows how politics and harmony are intertwined in the performance of New China when communicating with an American visitor. I provide details of her narrative here. Gina told me when an American (man) visited the Olympics and talked with her he asked her if she ever visited Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Gina had not. The American told her that there are pictures of two heroes hanging on the wall. The first is of Nelson Mandela. I asked her who the second was. She told me:

The other is the Dalai Lama. The picture of the Dalai Lama with Bush, they shook hands. So, he asked me, we are very curious to know why your Chinese government thinks that the Dalai Lama is *fan dong zhe* [a revolutionary], not a hero. We think that he is very brave. And, this is a very sensitive question. (Gina)

Gina thought that this was a hard question to answer because she was just a student and not a government official representing the government’s views. The nature of the politics involved in the American’s questions was directed toward one of the main topic areas the CCP had trained volunteers to avoid during Olympic training – the sensitive issue of Tibet and the Dalai Lama. The American was persistent about getting an answer as Gina explains:

But, he was very curious to know and asked me a serious question. I thought for awhile and I said, what I told him, in fact, I think is a cultural difference because you know, in China there is only one government, like only one, the *Gong Chan Dang* [CCP]. So, we have different social regulations. The system is different. You will regard the two, *gong he dang*, *min zhu dang* [majority and minority parties in the US], in the campaign they will give a public speech and they will debate each other and if you want the winners and the other will, for four years later or eight years later, they will campaign again in the US. But, it's not the same in China. And, you know in Tibet they have a very, a different belief, about the religious. They believe in the *Fo* [Buddha] and it's not easy for a Chinese government, one government, to supervise such a vast land with different ethnicities, you know 56 ethnicities. It's not easy for them. So, maybe in the western, the newspapers or the broadcasts, they have their views. They've got their views. They think that it's not fair for the Dalai Lama. He does not have the power to, uh. But, as for the Chinese people they think, you know we, in Chinese culture, we like for one government to uh, we will, uh we are accustomed to be supervised by one government. We will feel very strange if there were two [parties], and they debate and they argue like the campaign. For the long-term story, for China in the long history, it's seldom like that. (Gina)

Gina explained to me that at that time, her English was very bad and she had tried hard to explain the sensitivity and complexity in the issue. Her answer to the American is grounded in discourses of cultural difference and political difference as to why China and the U.S. view the Dalai Lama in opposing lights. I have heard Chinese critiques of America's stance on Tibet begin with a single question: "Would the U.S. just give up the state of Hawaii or maybe California because they want to be autonomous?" Arguments have veered from talk of human rights to ones over territorial dispute and autonomy issues where Tibet separating from China would open the door for Taiwan and Xinjiang. Gina explains,

It is very hard to explain to him because I don't want to have *pian jian* [a partial opinion] or the wrong idea about the, my country, my government. So, you know it was very hard to answer his question. And I asked him, you think well, you mean that well. We believe that, he explained for himself: we believe in Jesus, you believe in the government. You believe one government and the government for the long time, something like that. Yes, well, I see, maybe it's that when you see the picture in Independence Hall, they, maybe for their country, their people,

they will appreciate some of the characters from the Dalai Lama. For this, it could mean he is great but it does not mean that he is a hero in China. (Gina)

Whereas in the U.S. a partial opinion is valued and welcomed, in a harmonious Chinese state dealing with issues of government policy and interests, partial and “dissenting” opinions are silenced, sometimes due to self-monitoring. Is this silence forced by the state or a clear choice on Gina’s part? It is interesting that Gina had attempted to answer the American’s question despite her training that told her to avoid political topics, however she tried for neutrality and an unbiased opinion. It is the camouflage and cover of the realm of English from which politically sensitive topics in China can be masked, hidden, and at the very least, make their way into dialogue and discussion.

The hidden transcript, increasingly present in Chinese practices and performances (predominantly in the realm of the internet)¹⁹, are not so subtle when outside the gaze of the panoptic power of the CCP in the realm of English or the internet. What Gina’s conversation with one American shows us is that although the Chinese government brings a united front in terms of political stance, there is still room for voicing opinion and bias that may stray from the dominant discourse of the CCP. That is the nature of a Chinese conception of harmony – a differing of opinions and world views that are held together by this performance of New China. Not everyone will agree with the government’s stance or actions involving Tibet but they are nevertheless brought together by a sense of *ren* and *li*, humanism and propriety. Although separate (in views, beliefs, ideas, politics), the performance and practice of Chinese values bring them together to form the basis of a harmonious society. Where America values human rights and the freedom of speech (and sides with the Dalai Lama and Tibet) Chinese (opposed to

Tibetan autonomy) tend to focus their values in different areas. This complicates the project of New China as a harmonious society when viewed from a western perspective and as a political project. We can find this cultural difference of perspective in John's insights when talking about cultural differences between China and the west:

I think it's some value. It's maybe it's a kind of value. I think, how to explain it? Maybe, Chinese people maybe, will show their preference to some thing. And, they think some kind of things are essential or important for him for his family and they will put their energies there. So, different people have different insight about different things. I think this is a big difference. (John)

John speaks of the values in China differing from other cultures because of people's needs that are essential to life. With family relations driving daily practices in China, family needs strongly influence Chinese values and perspectives. Specifically, with China still developing and modernizing, the standards of welfare in China still need improvement:

Mainly one thing, mainly foreign peoples, they think absolutely their country is a developed country because they have advanced economics. So, they think they will have a very high standard of welfare so they didn't worry about they lack of money to live or to do something else. But, in China many people, there are many people. The first thing is population. There are many populations so they must struggle for their life. So, their thinking, their different way of life will come back to their ways in the different place. Maybe foreign people think in this circumstance maybe, they will think they have to do more protection of our environment, that kind of thing, but some Chinese people didn't notice this important. Some have, but they didn't notice because they didn't have this, more energy to think about this kind of problem. We must think of what can I eat tomorrow, this kind of thing, so this is a big difference. Because, people in different conditions, different living standards we think about different things what is important to him, what is essential to his life. (John)

John's testimony is about cultural values being influenced by living conditions. From his perspective, some Chinese are not conscious of western values of human rights and free speech because they are focused on immediate problems influencing their daily lives, like

sustenance, getting food on the table, or where the next meal is coming from. If our focus is located in winning political debates we lose sight of the potentials and possibilities of a world living in peaceful coexistence. I close this chapter with words that captures the *ren*, humanism that New China offers and the potentials and possibilities that if we listen we just might be able to find connection in similarities from which to build upon, “All countries and all the peoples, we have to make the compromise of some values of the thinking to make efforts to create a beautiful or proud civilization, our humans” (John). John gives us something that we can together strive for.

Chapter 5: Concluding Remarks

What I have tried to present in this dissertation is a nuanced reading of the Chinese conception of face through the trope of harmony in the context surrounding the Olympics. Face or *lian and mian zi*, help conceptualize the underpinnings of China's performance during the Olympics and a survival strategy that is practiced on a daily basis in the face of authority, power relations, and domination. Where a western critical perspective sees hegemony (Chinese consent to CCP domination) I use the Confucian values of *ren* (humanism) and *li* (ritual propriety) to historically, culturally, and ontologically ground this consent giving Chinese agency in hopes of translating western hegemony as the possibility of harmony. All too often in the world of the "critical scholar" what the Chinese conceptually understand as "harmony" translates as an operation of hegemony. From a Chinese worldview, harmony (coexistence with difference) creates the space of possibility, a chance for new and resistive communication practices in everyday life that cut through repressive systems of domination because the people "doing" harmony in everyday life enact the possibility in the repetition of their very performances. When focusing on Chinese communication practices I find Scott's theorization of public and hidden transcripts at work during the Olympics. With a Chinese conceptualization of face laced with harmony and the Confucian values of *ren* and *li*, a reading of public and hidden transcripts show the campaign China uses and

communicates through the Volunteer Training Manual (public transcript) as well as in the day to day intercultural encounters volunteers perform (outside the gaze of dominant power) with international visitors (hidden transcript). I suggest that the west enact a dialogic performative and approach intercultural communication with China as co-performer rather than simply a political/economic/military adversary in hopes of peaceful communication exchanges in the future. This requires that we in the west listen to what China is saying through performances of the “New China” from a nuanced understanding of Chinese worldview and context, all the while hoping to counter negatively ethnocentric translations of Chinese communication practices that simply reduce China and Chinese to ideological agents of the CCP. I am not calling for the simple replacement of a critical western perspective with a Chinese perspective of harmony but rather I call for the opening up of possibilities in future conversations and perspectives that include Chinese historical, cultural, and ontological conceptualizations with the hope for understanding China in a situated context. In the remainder of this conclusion I revisit the key points I argue for throughout this dissertation.

Reflexivity and political purpose

In chapter one I explain my relationship with China and my investment in this project. Growing up in a Chinese American home in the U.S., I was left wanting more connection to Chinese culture, an actual embodied knowledge that is learned by living in Chinese space with Chinese folks, listening to what they have to say and communicating with them on their terms. Stated plainly, my journey to Beijing started in search of Chinese culture, ideology, and communication practices. I planned to immerse myself,

better yet lose myself, in China in hopes of un-learning/un-doing American culture or at the very least complicating my notions and understanding of culture by questioning my own American, taken for granted knowledge. In order to do so I situated myself in China (from September, 2007), learning Chinese (language) and practices, lifestyle, and a Chinese communication style in order to survive. I listened to and let myself be consumed by the everyday taken for granted knowledge and Chinese logic that daily communication practices are based in. In other words, I approached moving to China as a learning possibility that could open up my worldview and an opportunity to learn a new perspective of my embodiment in Chinese space, my own communication style and practices, as well as differences and similarities to how Chinese communicate and perform on a daily basis. Specifically, I was in search of body knowledge and the understanding that comes from standing-under a culture, political system, structure, and ideology. Basically, I wanted my Chinese American body to feel uncomfortable when grappling with the struggles of understanding a new subjectivity, the kind of body knowledge one must engage and listen for when in a power laden, politically charged, and foreign cultural context.

In chapter one, I discuss why the Olympics were the crucial moment for China to unveil its “New Face” to the world, what the New Face of China entails, and the reasons why China is in need of a new image on the world stage. With Yellow Perilism back in full swing, especially in U.S. media and news we have new concern over what China is all about and their goals for the future. Like Ono and Jiao argue, “The longstanding historical image of Chinese and later of Chinese Americans as “yellow peril” in the

United States continues to exist and has recurred (dependably yet episodically) over time” (407). Many of the differing values between China and the west have been cause for alarm in the U.S. imaginary and build upon a growing fear of China as a threat to western and American hegemony. Thus, we see sore spots like the environment, economy, internet, military, and human rights issues among others, as points of contention between value systems and hegemonic structures.

Finally, in chapter one I describe the importance of reflexivity on the part of researcher when doing research, especially in international contexts. I use the IRB process and specific questions they asked me in doing international research for insight. The nature of the specific questions they asked me made it clear that reflexivity is a crucial factor in international research and research in general. Furthermore, the IRB’s questions show cultural differences between Chinese and American procedures when conducting research. Whereas the IRB ask direct and political questions, the Dean at my college had asked that I avoid these same topics. During the past three and a half years of this research process I found on more than numerous occasions that I occupy a place of liminality, between Chinese and American values, ethics, and purposes. The tight rope that I walk is one of cultural sensitivity and at times total loss of one culture for the other. These moments are arguably the most painful yet the most insightful to my own subjectivity and embodiment as well as performance of intercultural communication. It is in these moments where I am closest to losing myself that I gain the most in terms of my commitment and responsibility to the Chinese co-performers I engage with. When I traveled home to the U.S. my family and friends have told me that I am “so Chinese”. My

mother says I am now “even-more Chinese” than she is. Her ascription is testament to the changes I have gone through a reflection of the level of embodiment I have achieved in the past three and a half years. To this I add with immersion in Chinese culture and daily practices with the purpose of truly listening as a co-performer, transformation is possible.

Bridging Performance Studies, Chinese Communication Studies, and Intercultural Communication Studies

In chapter two I argue that we need to use Chinese concepts and conceptualizations to understand the cultural context, political climate, and deeply complex historical foundations China has when we question Chinese communication practices and performances. I make the move to Chinese Communication studies and situate my research within these conversations because with Chinese conceptualizations we can better understand the context that Chinese communication practices are engrained in. Further, Chinese scholars doing Intercultural Communication research focus on the communication between and among cultures, the intercultural communication between China and the world, and all the while doing so with a Chinese foundation and conceptualization of Chinese concepts. Therefore, I link the two and situate this study in these conversations. In addition to Chinese Communication Studies heavily intersecting with the Intercultural field, I complicate matters by bringing in a Critical Performance Approach to account for the body and how culture is created through performativity. I make the case that Confucian values, *ren* and *li*, drive the performance while the intercultural communication concept of face reconceptualized can help materialize or corporealize the performance and practice. Rather than outcast one field of study for

another I situate this project in an attempt to align all three in hopes of collaboration, specifically bringing a Critical Performance approach to Intercultural Communication (building off scholars like Calafell and Warren) and Chinese Communication Studies. I call for more critical performance work in the future that brings with it Chinese conceptualizations to build upon our understanding of Chinese culture and intercultural communication. I attempt to bring the three fields together in hopes of challenging scholars to open up the possibilities of: knowledge - textual and body; culture - Chinese and American and; academic lines of research - Chinese Communication Studies, Intercultural Communication Studies, and Performance Studies.

Specifically, I have shown that in order to understand Chinese communication practices during the Olympics we must first understand face from a Chinese conceptualization. In Chinese, face can mean both *lian* and *mian zi*. In my reconceptualization of face I use *lian* to refer to the performance/performative aspect and *mian zi* to refer to the general workings of the status or respect that is given to those that perform *lian*. Whereas *lian* is the performance of acceptance in trying times and the presentation and embodiment of a corporeal face, *mian zi* is the status that is achieved by graciously accepting hardships through those trying times. In a context of domination and subordination, *lian* (performing face) is the foundation from which we can understand how Chinese have adapted resistive performative practices in creative ways to deal with unequal power relations that constrain communication. The payoff is *mian zi* (status, respect, and prestige from performing *lian*). Indeed, the performance of *lian* is a communicative strategy from which to survive in the face of domination. In addition,

mian zi is the status or respect received from the cunning, craft, and creative tactics of performing face (*lian*).

My intentions are to conceptualize face in a manner that brings us back to the actual physical face or *lian* in terms of how it is performed and communicated. Face becomes a cultural performance or presentation of an image. That image is shown on the world stage as well as in daily encounters in terms of persistence through the struggles of everyday life. I make the argument that face is the strategic performance that is used for survival in order to communicate in a society where expression and speech are regulated. By performing face there is status to be gained. With this reconceptualization, face gains added historical and political meaning in the daily performances of communication and culture with a focus on the actual manifestations and corporeal representations of the face. Specifically, by focusing on how Chinese folks performatively use *lian* and *mian zi* in communication helps situate how communication is complicated in the daily communication encounters during the Olympics and how China was presenting their New Face to the world during the Olympics. Without a nuanced understanding of face, the performance leads us to political implications – to communicate New China as a harmonious society, and the day to day implications – survival in a system where discourse and bodies are regulated.

For more insight to a reconceptualization of face, I pull from Scott's notion of public and hidden transcripts, a framework thoroughly engaged in the discussion of power, hegemony, and resistance. Face as practiced in public as well as hidden behind closed doors, is heavily influenced by power relations. Looking for face as public

performance or hidden practice, we can begin to approach the complexities in understanding how power relations are revealed through Chinese communicative practices, as well as relations of and commitment to a harmonious communication exchange. From this standpoint, the enactment of face is merely a mimetic production concealing other, more natural and primal embodied reactions to domination. In other words, the (re)performance of face is a necessity, a “going-through-the motions” to live without physical violence, a kinetic enactment of civility that reproduces convention, tradition, power structures, and hegemony-harmony. In short the practice of face in China is a survival strategy. This re-conceptualization opens up space for new and alternative readings and meaning making contexts in performances of face, as well as the political purposes that oftentimes are overlooked from an outsider’s, ethnocentric or Sinophobic gaze.

Furthermore, I want to bring our discussion back to the actual *lian* or physical face in terms of how it is performed and communicated, and the struggles it presents when surviving and gaining status. I find Hu’s notion of face as *lian* and *mian zi* is closer to my reconceptualization and feel that the most recent conceptualizations of face and facework in Intercultural Communication are lacking performative and constitutive elements that can reveal further insight to Chinese communication practices.

Furthermore, my hopes in reconceptualizing face are one way of framing my approach to answering the questions I address in this dissertation. With a performative twist added to the notion of face we can bring a new light to the “New Face” China desired to present, perform, practice, and communicate to the world during the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Through performance is also a new interpretation of how the “New Face” of China was performed and practiced by volunteers in day to day encounters with international visitors during the Olympics. In short, with a performative aspect complicating the workings of face, I am able to uncover new angles for understanding face and communication practices Chinese enacted during the Olympics.

I make the case that face practices (*lian* and *mian zi* intertwined) are a necessary strategy to ensure Chinese can coexist in a society (society is read as a power laden communication climate) where a breach of social convention may lead to violence. In this light, critical performance helps open up the possibilities for finding those personal efforts and clever maneuverings in the body as well as the environment, in new and exciting ways. Future research should move in this direction where changing Chinese subjectivities are performed and practiced in cleverly resistive ways in the face of authority.

Harmony in a Performative text

In chapter three I focus on how the Manual works as a performative text to present the public transcript that Beijing and generally, China are in harmony or a harmonious society. I make the argument that like face, we must understand harmony with a Chinese conceptualization and contextualization. Whereas the west may think of harmony as synchrony in the non-argumentative sense where communication is non-threatening or free of conflict, a Chinese approach to harmony views it as a different kind of synchrony where difference comes together, sometimes in opposition, and can communicate what we in the west might sometimes view as a hostile communication

climate. This sets up the context where through difference Chinese can come together in synchrony for presenting the New China. All the while, peace is the goal. Ono and Jiao have made suggestions along similar lines without the Chinese conceptualization, “Rather than repeating the widely accepted “socialist-thus-oppressive” and “capitalist-thus-democratic refrain, we suggest that if real democracy is to thrive, nations and scholars must create an open, peaceful social and discursive environment in which disagreements exist rather than seek a world without differences” (409). Likewise, harmony from a Chinese conception strives to bring difference together in hopes of synchrony, although there may be dissention from one another. A western conception of harmony on the other hand is void of conflict or dissention. The key difference is that the Chinese conceptualization of hegemony-harmony opens up possibilities for new and interesting resistive communication practices in the realm of regulation that we may not expect to hear about in Sinophobic western representations of China. The key similarity is that in both conceptualizations of harmony the end goal is peace. It is in the means and communication practices where we find dissention. Thus, in this project I hope to make it clear that China and the U.S. have similarity in our differences and can work together if we understand each other and truly listen to our differences to find similarity. When listening to what China has to say we must not forget about the landscape – the specific context, cultural, and historical groundings – China is speaking with/from. In a sense, this is employing the Chinese conception of harmony, bringing difference together with the possibility that we can build upon to further our intercultural and international communication in hopes of peaceful coexistence in the future.

In chapter three I also discuss how harmony was linked to Olympism ideals in the Manual. I loosely frame my analysis with Scott's notion of the public transcript as performance to show a couple of different interpretations when reading the Manual through a western critical lens or Chinese Confucian lens. In one vein there is a critical western deconstruction and in another a specific call for harmony in the world. In either sense (or both) we can make the argument that the public transcript or Manual is a performative text. The Manual is working to constitute an image of China through its repetition and stylized presentation. Specifically, I address the question: what was the Chinese public transcript during the Olympics? My goal in mind was taking up Conquergood's ("Beyond the Text") call to theoretically address both textual and performance readings to understand the world, culture, and communication. With a loose guiding framework of "public transcript" and a reconceptualized notion of face, I make the conclusion that the Manual is a performative text of Beijing's blueprint for unveiling China's "New Face" during the Olympics. I show specific aspects of the performance through a western lens: affirmation, concealment, euphemization and stigmatization, and the appearance of unanimity (Scott). I also do so through the Chinese Confucian lens of harmony, *ren* and *li*. I find it useful to loosely use both to show the contrast of the general components of the public transcript from western and Chinese perspectives. I also use this fused framework in conjunction with the conception of harmony to show the structuring and organization of how China does Chinese in presenting the "New Face" of China.

The final question I wish to address is in showing the contrasting effect of the presentation of China's New Face during the Olympics and specifically the Manual as public transcript. There is no doubt the Manual has political purpose – it shows China as a harmonious society. However, what are the intentions of doing so? One reading can be to oppress its people and show a fake image of China. Can it be something else? I argue that while the public transcript as performance works to reproduce the power of the government it also works as an attempt to change China's image in the world's imagination. This I argue is in response to and retribution for the Yellow Perilist and Sinophobic image China takes up in the west's imaginary. A simple search in the daily news will find fear being manufactured in terms of China as a rising economic, global power, militarily, environmentally, in terms of commodities, internet censorship, and human rights. For China, a New Face means combating negative western representations.

Surface performances, hidden transcripts, ren, and li

In Chapter four, I address the question: When presenting the “New Face”, how did volunteers do “harmony” and practice harmony in intercultural encounters? Additionally, I look for are some hidden transcripts that volunteers enacted and performed when communicating with international visitors in their intercultural communication encounters. I concentrate on how the “New Face” of China and harmony were actually performed by Olympic volunteers on the ground in both public and hidden transcripts. To address these focal points I loosely frame my discussion with the Confucian values of humanism *ren*, and ritual propriety *li*, to highlight the fact that volunteers have agency in choosing to represent China and perform in the manner they

did. While the Volunteer Training Manual works to performatively generate an image of New China, volunteers on the ground doing intercultural communication that they had learned during training sessions also generated an image of China on the ground, contrary to images in the U.S. imaginary, and in day to day encounters. The point I want to make is that although the CCP went to great efforts to present China as a harmonious society, on the ground we see that within harmony there is difference (in communication, performance, and practice) and negotiation through the struggles of everyday life Chinese deal with.

To show this negotiation I focus my attention on a combination of *ren* (humanism) and *li* (ritual propriety) when considering my interviews with volunteers. I frame the concept of *ren* as “humaneness” or humanism in relations. *Li* is ritual propriety, or the practice of etiquette. Combined, *ren and li* work as the foundations for the norms and rituals that govern polite behavior. In practice, *ren* is the embodied notion of Confucian humanism that we find through the performance of *li*. China performed a New Face to the world during the Olympics. This was their opportunity to present the New China while the world was watching. Before the Olympics took place, the New Face was textualized with the Volunteer Training Manual as representation and strategic planning. During the Olympics the New Face/New China was practiced in daily intercultural communication encounters between volunteers and international visitors. The goal was New China = a harmonious society, modern and developing and it took the effort of all of China. The main trope we hear working in the Manual is a harmony based in the Confucian values of humanism and ritual propriety aligned with Olympism ideals.

Further, in daily communication exchanges during the Olympics this was enacted through the communication and performance exchanges with international visitors based on the training manual and intercultural training sessions. In the Chinese conception of harmony there is still difference. Those differences coming together to represent the New China are in effect China performing a harmonious society. In synchrony there is room for divergence and volunteers told me about failures of the Olympics with the surface performance covering up actual conditions and issues on the ground.

A hegemonic harmony or harmonious hegemony?

I show how the New Face of China is constituted in performative fashion because of the repetition or the daily doing of it during the Olympics. I argue that this is a nuanced understanding of face, how face is performed or how China is showing a face to the world. This is what I term the New Face of China, what we will see more in the future as China expands its role in the growth of globalized relations and economic involvement. We can critique the performance of China's New Face as the reproduction of a hegemonic structure in China. However, we can also argue that it is not hegemony but rather a nuanced understanding of harmony, a Chinese conception of harmony where there is struggle and difference in the negotiation of coming together, in the synchrony of the performance of China as a united, congealed society. With this reading a harmonious New China is one that is performed and importantly triggered by Confucian values of *ren* or humanism, backed by another Confucian value, *li* or ritual propriety, etiquette, and politeness. We can further find the ritual practice of a New Face of China and subsequently the New China circulating at the family level, and in the core of Chinese

family values in filial piety – respect for parents. From the family core the importance of *ren* and *li* expand out to other relations and indeed at larger macro levels.

Possibilities of the internet in New China

Within my discussion of reflexivity there is one arena that I would like to further address here. It deals with censorship and regulation of speech and expression in China. In chapter one I briefly talk about my experience in the classroom when the Liu Xiaobo news (winning a Nobel Peace Prize) dropped in China and my informal polling of Chinese students in my Mass Communication class. In class I had accessed news articles from western media sources that were online (one from CNN and another distributed by the Associated Press) and made the point that these sources were uncensored and that any student or Chinese citizen with internet access could read them. Here, I would like to further touch upon the internet, censorship, and expression.

In terms of communication practices and government constraints to freedom of expression in China, the internet has quickly become center stage of the battleground where resistive tactics are bullets of communication that are widely dispersed on a daily basis. For example, *Renren*, the Chinese equivalent to Facebook is one such space where we see the hidden transcript being performed and a resistance point in the face of power. *Renren* (and generally, the internet) provides the possibilities of unregulated/uncensored (albeit sometimes temporarily) communication for any Chinese person with internet access. Though regulations are in place (with China's "Great Firewall" and censorship of anything anti-China) we find that there are still spaces on the internet for resistance.

There is still possibility for standing up to the CCP and the regulation of expression in China. Most recently, Ai Weiwei, a Chinese artist and activist has become the subject of debate. His wife believed that he was contained by the government for his open criticism of all things bad in China including government policy, corruption, and rights violations that cast the CCP in a negative light. Ai Weiwei's "controversial" (to government censors) art expression received much attention from netizens in China. His piece "*Cao Ni Ma*" (Grass Mud Horse) was "harmonized" by Chinese censors because it was deemed pornography and bad taste (Appendices J and K). The subtlety of Weiwei's piece is in the clever play on words. *Cao Ni Ma* is a coded challenge (F*** your mother) to the Chinese government. Chinese netizens have rallied around the Grass Mud Horse in the battle over internet censorship in China. This is just one of many in the powerfully dynamic examples of the hidden transcript standing up defiantly to Chinese internet censors. Similar to Ai Weiwei, netizens have used the internet to point out examples where the government is can improve their practices. For example, (in Appendix L) government meetings in different countries around the world show the active engagement of politicians sometimes in heated engagements. In the bottom right corner we see complacency in the contrast of fighting in eight countries with sleeping Chinese politicians during a CCP meeting. The irony being pointing out is the complacency and "harmony" of China's one party system. There is no room for heated engagement because with one dominant party and thus ideology, we have harmony, or what one netizen calls "laziness" on the part of the Chinese government. With the internet as example of the expanding medium of communication and connection to the world and

other systems of politics, culture, and communication, the possibilities in the internet is a realm that can push the limits of regulation and censorship of speech and expression in New China. The hidden transcripts meaning, when face to face with authority, is coded, masked, and camouflaged. We see it in uncensored savvy and irony sliding past censors communicating the popular counter-culture sentiment.

Future directions and ongoing conversations

For the benefit of understanding our relationship and future intercultural communication with China, we need to understand Chinese practices in China with Chinese conceptualizations. Face and harmony are a start. Further is the connection of face and harmony to *ren* and *li*, Confucians values of humanism and ritual propriety where etiquette and practice give reason to why people perform New China with a smile. In addition, I make the call for continued engagement with Chinese in daily life to see how the New Face of China is reproduced or changes in the near future in communication practices and performances on the ground. Furthermore, we need to engage more research that uses Performance as theory and method to get at how communication practices and performances are used in creatively resistive ways to survive in a society that has openly accepted regulations of speech and expression. Along similar lines, we have to consider the growing role the internet plays as the realm of possibility where manifestations of resistance and performance defy and confront regulations of speech and expression indicative of the complexity of Chinese citizenry/netizenry challenging the parameters of Chinese communication.

The point I want to leave you with is that China is not all bad (or good). There are bad and negative things to how China does things, but there are also good and positive things going on here. In order to understand the complexities of this culture and communication practices we must consider what they mean to Chinese citizens and how they communicate before we simply adapt a critical western perspective to analyze and then react to what we think is going on. We must avoid the spectators gaze from the outside and be from within to understand. We can do so by translating the centrality of cultural conceptions such as harmony and face in order to make sense of why Chinese communicate and perform in the ways that they do.

What we hear is not always the same as what is being said. If we actively listen to China we create the possibility for new insight. To bring us back to the pressing issue of this dissertation about Chinese culture and communication, performances and practices during the Olympics, there are many ways in which China and the west differ. Cultural values are one battleground or dialogic platform and China has made big strides to consider theirs. That is China's "Great Leap Forward". To provide reciprocity we must make the same effort and consider ours. This is our responsibility. With a Chinese conception of harmony the goal is not world domination or to replace the U.S. as world superpower, rather the goal is harmonious relations with the world.

We do not have to take New China's call for harmony at face value. I argue that we must be critical of it. One way to approach China's call is as the push for Chinese hegemony. However, if we take it as a serious call for harmony and peaceful coexistence on a world level we do not have to take it as the call for replacing western values with

Chinese values or cultural practices. In this light there are possibilities of new and exciting challenges and future dialogue. It is another chance to have real conversations about China's New "Great Leap Forward" and future relationships between China and the west.

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Appendix A

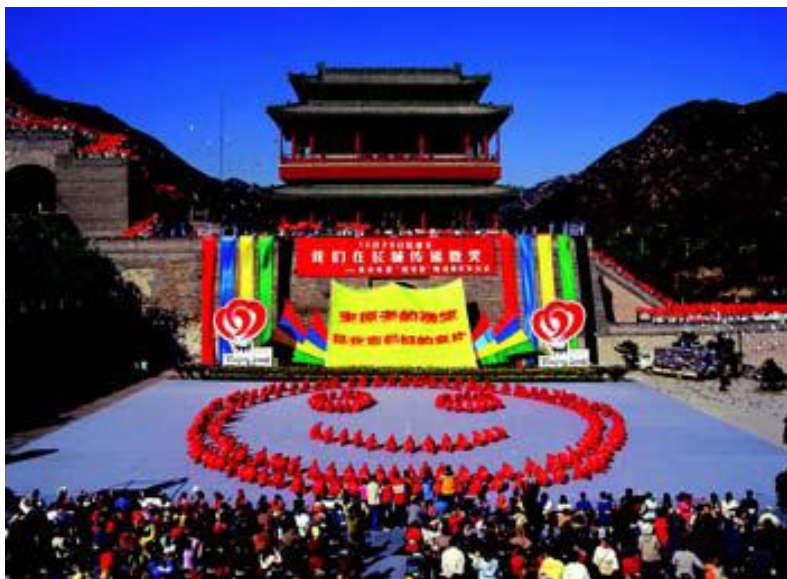


Conceptual Design of an Olympic Volunteer station.



Volunteer Station – 4th ring road, northwest Beijing

Appendix B



October 29, 2006. “We smile at the Great Wall press ceremony of the test of “Smiling Circles”. Juyongguan Great Wall. (Manual 2008 99)



“Smiling Beijing Campaign”. Retrieved 31 Jan. 2011 from:

http://www.ebeijing.gov.cn/Home_of_EV/EVNews/t915411.htm

Appendix C



(“One World, One Dream” Olympic Slogan, Manual 2008 83)

Appendix D



August 17, 2008 Bird's Nest Volunteers, uniform including one water each.



August 17, 2008. Other side of the Bird's Nest during volunteer shift change.

Appendix E

II. Graceful Posture

1. Sitting

An elegant sitting posture presents calmness, seriousness and serenity. It is an important statement of one's manners.

A good sitting posture should be:

- Walk in light and leisurely steps to the seat. Sit from the left side quietly and steadily. The left foot and right foot should be placed naturally. A lady should slightly hold her skirt under her thighs when sitting.
- Sit with a straight back and push chests forward. Lean the upper body slightly with center of gravity uprightly down. Smile with two eyes looking forward. Slightly close the lips and hold the chin a little inward.
- Hold the two knees together or slightly separated. Depending on the situation, one can lean to one side.
- Two feet should be placed evenly, with both hands naturally placed on the knees or the chair arms. Generally do not place one leg on another.
- Draw the right foot backward first, then stand up and steadily leave the seat.

Avoid:

- Hiding feet under the seat or hooking the chair with one foot. (Low-class and boorish)

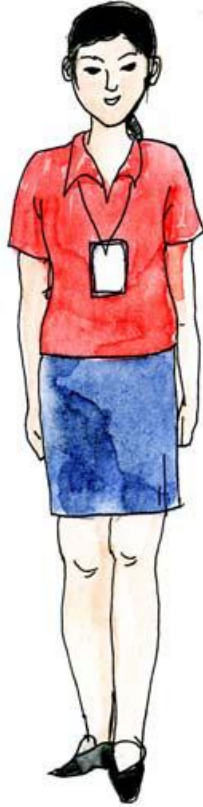
- Separating the two legs and stretching them out. (Rough)
- Crossing the legs in a “4” shape, with two hands catching the upper leg, shaking foot top. (Cocky and impolite)



- Sitting while moving back and forth, continually changing positions from left to right. (Underbred)
- Sitting or standing up violently and making loud noises.

*(Manual 2008 149)

Appendix F



2. Standing

A graceful standing posture indicates a person's good manners and gentle style. The basic requirements are: standing still, stretching out the body, presenting an attractive outline and showing a positive spirit.

A good standing posture should be:

- Even shoulders, straight neck, slightly hold the chin inward; stand with both eyes looking forward, smiling brightly.
- Stand still, push chest forward, draw the abdomen inward, and slightly hold the hips up.

- Stand with two arms naturally down and fingers naturally drooping; two hands can be crossed in front of the body, usually right hand covering left hand with elbows a little bowed outward. When necessary, a man might place his one hand or both hands behind his back.

- Two legs should stand straight with knees relaxed and thighs held up slightly; the center of gravity should be placed on the front foot.

- Stand with two feet separated; distance between the feet should be the same as the shoulder; one foot might withdraw a small pace with the upper part holding still.

- Women's feet should be placed in the shape of "V" ; hold knees and heels together and lift the center of gravity as high as possible.

Avoid:

- Shaking any part of the body. (Careless)

- Putting two hands in pockets. (Frivolous or restrained; if necessary, can put one hand in front pocket.)

- Standing with two arms crossed. (Positive, defensive)

- Standing with two arms or one arm akimbo. (Offensive)

- Standing with two legs crossed (Too easygoing).

*(Manual 2008 150)

Appendix G

3. Walking Posture

In public places, walking postures are the most noticeable body language. They are also the best expressions of one's grace and vigor.

A good walking posture should be:

- Steady steps, natural paces with rhythms. Woman's skirt will move with footsteps.
- Slightly forward center of gravity.
- Hold upper torso still, raise head and level the chin with the ground. Look forward with a bright smile.
- Walk with two hands gently swinging with 10~15-degree angle between the arms and the body.
- Step equally, with one or a half foot distance between the two feet.
- Top of the foot can be slightly outward, but tops and heels should be parallel.
- Use waist when walking, hold the waist tight.
- Step up and down with straight upper part and light and steady steps. Generally do not put one hand on the handrail.



Avoid:

- Shaking of body. (Frivolous)
- Walking with two hands crossed on the back, palms up. (Stiff)
- Taking steps too large or too small. (Strained)

*(Manual 2008 151)

Appendix H



August, 2010. Harmony billboard across the street from my apartment complex. Datun Lu, Beijing, China.

Appendix I



August, 2010. The togetherness and unity in harmony. Down the street from my apartment complex. Datun Lu, Beijing, China.

Appendix J



Ai Weiwei's semi-nude picture holding a "Grass Mud Horse" (*Cao Ni Ma*) is considered pornography and quickly "harmonized" or censored by the CCP's internet censors. Retrieved April 16, 2011 from: <http://www.56minus1.com>

金玉米,谁也不知道明天会长出什么来?

金玉米忽然出现在公众的视线中,是2003年,那一年,他戴着一个黄色安全帽,开办了自己的网站“单位”,用一种非常复杂的角度,去记录中国的变化。

2004年春 摄影:陈冠中小图:王冠中

号称是“带着社会主义理想”建立的“单位”(www.danwei.org),向老外们传播来自中国的奇闻轶事,在国内也有很大影响,许多国内的媒体人,都在他的网站浏览过,他们说其内容既有趣,又很刺激自己的胃口。

同时金玉米也拍摄一些外国人在变化中的北京和上海的生活,做出纪录片,也进行网上播客,一期关于南非黑人在北京大闹的纪录片,还在海外获奖,片子制作成本,为零。

“大学过,做过工,当过兵,当过家,他敢写敢拍,敢想敢写,敢言,文艺青年有经济十足。

金玉米是海南人,英文名Jerry Goldson,金玉米是个“混世”的怪人,也是文艺。

1971年出生的他,还经历过特殊时期政策,总是笑嘻嘻的表情,其实有许多我们无法理解的沧桑,像他这样,在故土之外,异国他乡,究竟有什么意义,有什么意义,值得的,这很现实,在许多人看来,是冒险,也是浪费生命。

而金玉米却享受这样的生活,“人如果超越自己,最先突破的,就是突破他人去接受,或是做正常的事情,事情不会变得很理想,但总,却也总只停在那某个点,这个高度,去拍那些记录片的时候,也经常会被别人笑,但是,我从不在乎,谁敢要,胆要大!生活才能有变化。”

他1986年来到中国后,就停留在了北京,到今天,他已经在北京生活了14年,除了得到很多外国人的称赞,英文刊物《北京现场》的执行总编,凤凰卫视网络公司的创意总监,《乐》杂志(现在叫博奇)的总编,外商广告公司的合伙人……在媒体圈和文艺圈中混迹多年,早就混得七窍玲珑,一转身,恐怕自己都不认,那个刚来北京的时候的自己。

有许多改变,却不得不变,金玉米看起来已经不像个外国人,虽然他的五官轮廓都保留着,但说他是谁,都很难说,都跟谁穿一种打扮,那熟悉的中式的休闲,节俭,许多和金玉米打过交道的人,都说,他基本上没有像外国人长相的中国人,在媒体面前,说那些办好的单位,他像谁?能用这样的语言来形容,“我们是

用外国人中比较友好的角度来看中国的一些变化,我们记录的更多的是一种积极的状态,无论是中国还是世界,都需要我们这样一个交流的平台,让更多的人了解中国。

当然,这样的看法,和他那总是带着异样的感觉,像谁谁谁配在一起,就好像某些超现实主义小说中的情节,这外在,解释又清楚。

“这个世界变化的很快,人们总是说要改变自己,去适应新的生活,有句话,说和快来自内心的声音,有句话,是每两推着你改变,三年前,如果有人说,华尔街是个危险的地方,准备你吧!十九年前,说中国是世界上发展最舒适的舒服的国家,又有谁会相信?大家会不知道不是些什么,那到这个,我们只能不断去改变,“金玉米这样说的时候,还是笑嘻嘻的,眼神却很值得玩味。

摩拜骑士,为什么会选择在中国做自己的事业?

金玉米:因为我比较喜欢这里的感受,这是个变化速度很快又很慢的地方。

摩拜骑士,做摩拜,你眼中的事业究竟是什么?有什么目标,来衡量自己是否成功?

金玉米:单位网站是不赚钱的,但是很好的自我宣传,成功过这网站,不是让自己很开心的。

摩拜骑士,超越自己的突破,究竟是怎样改变,还是自己什么角度改变?

金玉米:是环境推动,但是要看自己有没有能力去接受改变。

摩拜骑士,你怎样看待骑士这个概念,财富与骑士的关系又是什么?

金玉米:骑士是一种生活的力量,首先,骑士要有控制自己生活的力量,财富当然不是骑士的绝对标准,但是,一个仅仅只是拥有财富和骑士的人,也是不行的,也是不行的。

摩拜骑士,你觉得,人要有怎样的素质或者世界观,才能不断去超越自己?

金玉米:超越他人是困难的,勇敢去做你想做的事儿。

Ai Weiwei's testimony accompanying *Cao Ni Ma*

Appendix K

***Cao Ni Ma* (Grass Mud Horse) Translation (text with Ai Weiwei's controversial art expression)**

The Party has limitless tests for people [to endure]: on the internet you're "Green Dam'ed", in education you're swindled, in news reports you're deceived, the milk is poisoned, [if you] lose your job you might as well die, public buses are exploding, land is being stolen, houses are being demolished, children are being sold, miners are being buried, young girls are being raped, and whatever's left gets "Public Safetyed", "chengguan'd", "Joint Defensed", "Public Securityed", "stabilized", or "mental health'd".

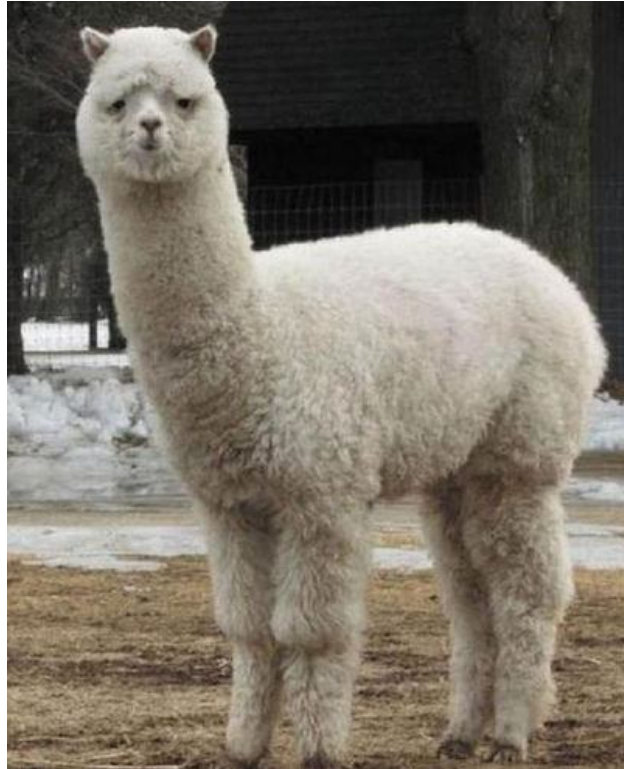
If the people arrest someone for rape, that's anti-China [*he's referring here to the Deng Yujiao case*]. Children are crushed to death and if you ask about the quality of the buildings, that's anti-China. Exposing the poison in our foods is anti-China. Common people who've been beaten and abused seeking an audience with higher authorities is also anti-China. Selling children, selling AIDS-infected blood, black [corrupt] coal pits, fake news, those who should be administering justice abusing it, widespread corruption, rights violations, internet censorship; all you need to do is ask a question for it to be anti-China. Are the people who *aren't* "anti-China" even people?

If it's something that's for the sake of the public, it's a case of "assembling people to cause trouble". If it's something for the sake of the country, it's a storm of political turmoil. If something is obviously wrong, [those against it] have ulterior motives. If there are too many people who are upset, they are being incited and are unaware of the truth. If an international source criticizes [China], then it's foreign anti-China powers. In sixty years, [I] have never seen a ballot. There isn't education for everyone, there isn't medical insurance, there's no freedom of the press, there's no freedom of speech, there's no freedom of information, there's no freedom to live and move where you choose, there's no independent judiciary, there's no one supervising public opinion*, there are no independent trade unions, there's no armed forces that belongs to the nation**, there's no protection of the constitution. All that's left is a Grass Mud Horse.

**I assume that what he means by this is that no one is paying attention to what the public thinks about things and adjusting policy accordingly.*

***I think he's referring to the army being directly affiliated with the Party rather than the nation, but I'm not sure whether or not that's true, can anyone verify?*

(Translation retrieved from: <http://chinageeks.org/2009/06/ai-weiwei-all-thats-left-is-are-grass-mud-horses/>)



An alpaca pictured above in Chinese is translated as a “grass mud horse” and has become the metaphor for the struggle over internet censorship. Picture retrieved from: <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2009/02/music-video-the-song-of-the-grass-dirt-horse/>

Appendix L



Print reads: Taiwan, Russia, Turkey, India, Italy, Mexico, South Korea, Japan, China (asleep). Retrieved April 16th, 2011 from Renren.com

Notes

¹ Simplified Mandarin characters were implemented in printing and writing in mainland China in waves beginning in the 1950's as an attempt to increase overall literacy. Currently, simplified Mandarin is the commonly used set for printing and writing in the mainland, as well as Singapore and Malaysia. Overseas programs in the US, Canada, and Europe among many other countries have moved/are moving to teaching simplified characters. Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau remain using exclusively traditional characters.

² The Wikipedia page, "pinyin" provides a basic introduction to the components of pinyin as well as history, pronunciation, tones, and rules: <http://Wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinyin>.

³ Although from Taiwan, my mother identifies herself as Chinese in most situations in the U.S. At times, when a Taiwanese perspective differs from a mainland Chinese perspective she will identify as Taiwanese.

⁴ Chinese have separate labels to distinguish between a grandfather along a mother's lineage and a grandfather along a father's lineage. Likewise, there are separate labels to distinguish which lineage a grandmother is along. In addition, uncles, aunts, cousins, and in-laws also have unique labels to demarcate the relationship, each label changing based on the position and relationship.

⁵ The atrocities I refer to are a civil war between what is now Taiwan's Guomindang (KMT) and the CCP, Japanese occupation (1937 – 1945), and the Great Famine of 1958-1961 when an estimated 15-45 million Chinese died.

⁶ In using the term "melting pot world politics" I refer to China as assimilating to western practices, in political fashion to make the world happy to ensure smooth operation of the Olympics.

⁷ Past studies have deemed Chinese in the U.S. as the model-minority, that is they assimilate into the so called, melting pot of white American culture without struggle. Thus, to the benefit of white and powerful Americans, they should be the example upon which other non-white ethnic minorities in the U.S. should strive toward. Hence, the myth is created. I refer to China and the model minority myth here in the sense of a global context with assimilation toward western political practices as the myth.

⁸ "Yellow Peril" discourse has been used to describe the historical and politically racist rhetoric, representations, and discourses against Asians as a yellow threat to white America. The "Yellow Peril" solidifies its racist reign in U.S. discourses by way of three major tenets: 1) The fear of a "yellow" competition that results in Asians being perceived as an economic threat to white American workers; 2) The fear of Asian immigration that degrades cultural values and "Orientalizes" the U.S. thereby diminishing the superiority of the white race and; 3) The fear of the rise of industrialization, arms accumulation, and mainly military power of Asian countries (Thompson 1978 31-37). White logic has rested on the idea that the "Yellow Peril" could be stopped if racial miscegenation were outlawed, specifically the interracial marriage of white and yellow races (Thompson 1978). While Orientalism was distinguished as something far and away in an "exotic" land, the "Yellow Peril" was the manifestation of the direct threat of Orientalism spreading into the white American imaginary and physical territories at home in the U.S.

⁹ For good self-reflexive intercultural communication research examples see: Carrillo Rowe 2003; Mendoza 2005; Nakayama 2005.

¹⁰ While this section may initially appear out of place, and more fitting for a methods section, the importance here is to really highlight issues of self-reflexivity, context, politics, and ethics involved in intercultural and international research in China.

¹¹ Liu Xiaobo was one of the key figures in the demonstrations during the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. More recently, he helped author a document called “Charter 8” that advocates for democratic reform in China. He was imprisoned in 2008 for a term of 11 years for the production and circulation of what the CCP deem dangerous dissident behavior. Liu was given a “mock” trial, convicted in 3 hours, and now is being held in a prison in China’s north-eastern region.

¹² Renren.com is a SNS site with similar layout and features of Facebook and MySpace. This year, over 160 million registered users have an account on renren.com. Compare that to Facebook with 600 million registered users.

¹³ Each of these politically sensitive issues have been the topic of much international debate. Furthermore, each topic in their own right could be a dissertation. For the purposes of this study I provide a brief description of each of the issues at play, with no intention of fully explicating the situation or stances and posturing taken by China or corresponding countries involved.

¹⁴ In 1999 the Dalai Lama won the Nobel Prize Human Rights award. The Dalai Lama has been exiled from China and deemed a “gang leader” by Chinese leaders, a radical trying to destroy China from the inside.

¹⁵ For Ting-Toomey’s original theorization of face refer to Ting-Toomey 1988.

¹⁶ Beijing geographic layout is based around Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. Historically, the Forbidden City housed China’s emperor and what are now highways or ring roads laid out in concentric circles around the Forbidden City. These were once city walls that were built as protective walls to protect the emperor from invasion and military threat. For example, in Beijing there is a 2nd ring road, 3rd ring road, 4th ring road, 5th ring road, 6th ring road, etc. Other cities besides Beijing have ringed roads modeled along their city’s historical, defensive positionings.

¹⁷ Here I refer to domination specifically in the Olympic context of the regulation of speech and expression, and the overall control of acceptable performances and practices as a volunteer.

¹⁸ Chinese netizens have used the word “harmonize” to describe the situation in which you have been censored online. Take for example the example, “the Liu Xiaobo comment I posted last night has been *censored*”. In the hidden transcript, netizens refer to this context as, “the Liu Xiaobo comment I posted last night has been *harmonized*”. In pinyin, “wo de Liu Xiaobo zhi pin *bei he xie le*”.

¹⁹ I provide examples of and further discuss some internet postings and pictures as acts of resistance in the hidden transcript in Chapter 5.