Daughters of the Motherland and (Wo)men of the World.
Global Mobility in *Shishang* (*Trends/Cosmopolitan*), 1993-2008

Abstract

The present paper undertakes a discourse analysis of *Shishang* (the PRC edition of *Cosmopolitan*) and assesses the extent to which this magazine promotes Western consumerism instead of strengthening a local national character, as Chinese scholars impute. I explore the evolution of *Shishang's* approach to globalization, as reflected in articles from 1993 to 2008, and focus on global mobility as a dimension of the female image constructed in the magazine. Throughout this period, *Shishang* seeks to stimulate the imagination of its readers (in Arjun Appadurai's terms) by presenting them with experiences, attitudes and life scenarios that increasingly conform to John Tomlison's concept of cosmopolitanism and Aihwa Ong's idea of flexible citizenship. The PRC's *Cosmo* women "link up with the tracks of the world" by actively pursuing career development and self-fulfillment in a global context while opportunistically employing available resources, a process accompanied by a growing openness to and understanding of other cultures. *Shishang* not only depicts them as women of the world, but also strongly emphasizes their Chineseness, thus doubly complying with the ideological task of the media in the PRC. My study thus proves the above-mentioned criticism to be largely unfounded, but not entirely so – *Shishang*'s recent issues promote a model of lifestyle whose overt rejection of materialism in favor of spiritual values are built upon the consumption of expensive global tourism experiences.

Keywords

Shishang, woman image, global mobility, cosmopolitanism, flexible citizenship, nationalism

Introduction

Fashion magazines appeared in post-Mao China during the 1980s and consolidated their position as a market niche during the following decade. Their development interrelated with significant economic and social transformations, triggered by Deng Xiaoping's program of reform and opening up: the "consumer revolution,"[1] the emergence of white-collar professionals, and the rebirth of the fashion industry. The creation of the fashion periodical market was also impacted by media reform, consisting of the commodification of the media while retaining state ownership and upholding official ideology. Moreover, it was parallel with the rise of a public discourse of modernization and globalization[2] and with an upsurge of academic interest in Western theory.[3]

In the early 2000s, the upscale fashion press (especially local editions of renowned international titles) became a popular research topic among Chinese scholars and publishing professionals working within the framework of cultural studies and critical theory. Many of them accused fashion magazines of promoting consumerism and patriarchal gender relations,[4] and of

1 Deborah Davis, *The Consumer Revolution*.
2 Nick Knight, *Imagining Globalisation in China*, 2.
3 Michelle Yeh, "International Theory and the Transnational Critic," 255.
4 A summary of research to date is made by Suhong Song, " Nüxing shishang chuanbo." For other critical voices, see Qiang He, "Cong renwen guanhuai de shijiao," Yuyong Yin, "Dianshi guanggao," Peiyun Guo, "Dazhong chuanmei zhong de nüxing xingxiang," Yinghong Li, "Nanquan shiye xia de nüxing shishang qikan" and Fanhua Meng, "Zhongchan jieji de wenhua fuhao."

formulating normative statements on desirable changes.[5] These periodicals also come under fire for indiscriminately copying Western models, alien to local national conditions, moral standards and readers' needs. Their editors are required to strengthen local specificity by propagating Chinese culture through a local fashion discourse, and to cut down on moral ambiguity and worthless entertainment.[6]

Critical remarks such as those mentioned above are directed against the fashion press as a cultural phenomenon and relate to the magazines' overall structure and visual aspect. As criticism is rarely grounded in consistent empirical research,[7] it would seem that the concern of these scholars in relation to Western influence is caused less by actual magazine content than by what Michelle Yeh terms as "an insecurity about self-identity"[8] - a general anxiety about Western hegemony and expectations regarding China's position on the global stage.[9] Instead of providing insight into fashion magazines as texts, such criticism echoes the debates on Western theory and cultural globalization that have been ongoing since the 1990s in official and intellectual circles, and employs the fashion press as a pretext for cultural nationalism.[10] Moreover, negative assessments of these periodicals' didactic role and potential influence on readers (seen as devoid of agency)[11] reflect controversies as to whether profit-making or ideological cultivation should be the primary task of the media in China.[12]

Through the close scrutiny of article contents, this paper argues that the PRC edition of *Cosmopolitan* displays a more complex approach to globalization and localization than it is given credit for, while also performing an ideological, nationalist function. I will focus on global mobility as a dimension of the model of womanhood constructed in this magazine, and show that the Chinese *Cosmo* woman is not a worshipper of the West, but is firmly grounded in local conditions, displays a keen awareness of opportunities at both the local and global level, and manifests agency in making use of them for specific goals.

Research to date; theoretical and methodological framework

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5 Qiang He, *Ibid.*; Jifeng Zhang, "Shishang lei zazhi: shiwu yu qixu;" Jianmin Ji, "Cong nüxing shishang zazhi de wuqu."

6 Jifeng Zhang, *Ibid.*, 20; Jianmei Ji, *Ibid*., 130-131; Suhong Song, " Nüxing shishang chuanbo," 63; Shengzhi Liu and Xuejie Qi, "Shishang zazhi nüxing xingxiang"; Lu Ye, "Shishang qikan bentuhua de sikao."

7 Suhong Song also points out this fact (" Nüxing shishang chuanbo," 65).

8 "International Theory and the Transnational Critic," 253.

9 The issue of Westernization, along with its potentially negative effects, has been debated in PRC intellectual circles and official discourse since the 1980s. For the 1980s' "cultural fever" and the campaigns against "spiritual pollution" and "bourgeois liberalization", see Merle Goldman, Perry Link and Wei Su, "China's Intellectuals in the Deng Era." On Deng Xiaoping's rhetoric of "two civilizations", which permitted the maintenance of a balance between borrowing from the West and Western corruptive cultural influences, see Nicholas Dynon, "'Four Civilizations'." Unease about the effects of excessive Westernization on local cultural identity has also been reflected in discussions on globalization and localization, frequent in PRC cultural studies circles since the turn of the 21st century (see Ning Wang, "Chinese Literary and Cultural Trends," 519). Wang also mentions criticism against consumer culture as representing a threat to local traditions (*Ibid.*, 510).

10 Yeh, "International Theory and the Transnational Critic," 260; Nick Knight, *Imagining Globalisation in China*, 118-137.

11 Peiyun Guo, "Dazhong chuanmei zhong de nüxing xingxiang," and Yuyong Yin, "Dianshi guanggao."

12 Chin-Chuan Lee, He Zhou and Huang Yu, "'Chinese Party Publicity Inc.';" Yingchi Chu, "The Emergence of Polyphony," 50.

In spite of the popularity that fashion magazines enjoy in the PRC academia, there are few publications on this topic in English. One of the most in-depth studies is Jui-shan Chang's ethnographic content analysis of articles from the Taiwanese *Cosmopolitan*,[13] which focuses on the way Chinese and Western images and values interweave to form an image of modern womanhood. However, international periodicals have different editions in various parts of the Chinese-speaking world, and their contents are influenced by the characteristics of the media systems in which they operate. In Taiwan, the legal framework regulating media activity does not stipulate an ideological mission, and globalization is not a topic laden with nationalist connotations. Global and local issues related to Chinese-language women's magazines in the PRC have also been discussed by Perry Johansson and Katherine Frith. Their research into fashion magazine advertisements concerns the localization of values related to Western consumer culture in constructing images of modern Chinese femininity,[14] as well as the connotations of race in the portrayal of female models.[15] Frith and Yang[16] turn their attention towards the market and look at the rise of women's magazines in China and various forms of transnational partnership in the fashion magazine industry. My study supplements these works with a detailed inquiry into the textual contents of *Shishang*, which have hitherto received insufficient scholarly attention, both in the Chinese and the English-language literature.

As Arjun Appadurai and Michael Herzfeld point out, mass media are a pervasive part of everyday life, and thus constitute a rich source of material for their consumers' construction of reality and self-identity.[17] Appadurai also speaks of the media's effect on the work of imagination, which he defines as "a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity" and a driving force for action.[18] The media provide stories, experiences, and realities that differ from the audience's own daily lives, and engender awareness of the possibility of joining communities and public spheres that transgress the borders of physical locality and the nation-state. This paper examines the way in which *Shishang* formulates women's attitudes, experiences and life scenarios as a possible source of inspiration for readers to imagine their own lives in a global context.

My choice of *Shishang* 时尚 for this project was motivated by several reasons. It is among those titles most frequently criticized by PRC scholars and has had a long-term presence in the market: it was established in 1993 as a local magazine targeted at the emerging white-collar professional group and has been published as the PRC edition of *Cosmopolitan* since 1998. At the time of my research, it was among the leaders of the upscale fashion and lifestyle press.[19] Its success

13 "Refashioning Womanhood."
14 "Consuming the Other."
15 Perry Johansson, "Selling the 'Modern Woman';" Katherine Toland Frith, "Portrayals of Women."
16 "Transnational Cultural Flows."
17 Michael Herzfeld, *Anthropology. Theoretical Practice*, 297, 304-305; Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 3-4.
18 *Ibid.*, 3-7.
19 In terms of sales, at the time of my research the Western-style magazines *Shijie shizhuang zhi yuan* 世界时装之苑/ *Elle*, *Shishang/ Cosmopolitan*, and *Fushi yu meirong* 服饰与美容 / *Vogue* ranked behind the top market leaders, the Japanese-inspired titles published by the Ruili group (*Ruili fushi meirong* 瑞丽服饰美容, *Ruili yiren fengshang* 瑞丽伊人风尚, and *Ruili shishang xianfeng* 瑞丽时尚先锋). See Ke Tian, "2007 nian quanguo gelei qikan" and "2008 nian quanguo gelei qikan."

was due to a marketing strategy built upon a strong anchoring in local realities, continued after the establishment of collaboration with Hearst Magazines,[20] which makes it particularly interesting as a case study for the actual outcome of this policy.

My qualitative analysis of *Shishang* was aimed at reconstructing the model of womanhood this magazine proposes to its readers.[21] In order to gain a diachronic perspective, I decided to focus on the whole period from 1993, when the magazine was set up, until 2008, when I conducted my project. In order to capture differences that emerged over time in the discourse of womanhood rather than its evolution as a continuum, I chose four one-year periods with a similar distance in between: 1993-1994, 1998-1999, 2002-2003, and 2007-2008. The length of the time gaps between these periods was dictated by the inclusion of the year 1998 in my sample, when *Shishang* became a partner of Hearst Magazines, as I assumed this event might have had an influence on its contents. To limit my sample to an amount that made research feasible (in 2002 *Shishang* increased its size to about 500 pages), I only took into account part of the issues from similar months. I included August "birthday" issues, when *Shishang* publishes special features on the female model it is promoting. Thus, I obtained 24 issues, from which I selected textual material with in-depth reference to Chinese women (367 items altogether), and excluded material on other topics or with prevalent visual contents, such as advertisements, articles on fashion trends, cosmetics, travel, horoscopes, etc. My analysis was performed within the methodological framework of grounded theory[22] and discourse analysis.[23] The image of womanhood thus reconstructed is strongly centered on career, a sphere of activity traditionally associated with men. Its other key dimensions are: relationships, lifestyle (built upon consumption, but also on traits and values that define white-collar identity), the body and personal image, and a gender and feminist consciousness. Although it relatively rarely appeared as the main topic of articles (14 occurrences), the issue of global mobility was often present in texts on other topics, particularly career and lifestyle. Therefore, it can be regarded as a significant part of *Shishang*'s image of womanhood.

By addressing various patterns of global mobility depicted in *Shishang* in chronological order, this paper will discuss the increase over time in mobility itself, as well as the increasingly complex approaches to mobility displayed by article characters. These approaches will be considered with reference to Aihwa Ong's model of flexible citizenship[24] and John Tomlinson's ideal of

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20 See Yanjun Sun et al., *Qikan Zhongguo*, 62. In an interview conducted in December 2007, Xu Wei (Vera Xu), *Shishang*'s chief editor, confirmed the magazine's strong localization policy and the support it received in that respect from its American partner.

21 This article reformulates and elaborates on the findings from a broader project on the image of women constructed in two PRC editions of international fashion magazines – *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*. For a full report, see Adina Zemanek, *Córki Chin*.

22 Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*.

23 Jonathan Potter, "Discourse Analysis and Constructionist Approaches;" Rosalind Gill, "Discourse Analysis: Practical Implementation;" Nelson Phillips and Cynthia Hardy, *Discourse Analysis*.

24 "Flexible Citizenship Among Chinese Cosmopolitans," 134-137, 147; *Flexible Citizenship. The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, 6.

cosmopolitanism.[25]

Tomlinson defines globalization as a state of "complex connectivity" through various channels that enable the flow of people, information, goods etc. across national and social borders. Globalization is not limited to the means of modern communication and transportation, but also comprises the new deterritorializing experience of closeness which they entail. Ideally, this experience should transcend immediate, physical locality and result in the acquisition of a global awareness - "cosmopolitanism," which involves commitment and responsibility. In Tomlinson's terms, a cosmopolitan subject is globally mobile, but seeks variety, and not familiar uniformity. (S)he is open to other cultures while also being aware of the limitations of his or her own, culturally shaped worldview.

Ong's concept of "flexible citizenship" refers to a type of subjectivity manifested by ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs who move across national borders seeking globally relevant financial and social capital. They manifest flexibility in assimilating cultural and social norms specific to different geographic localities, as well as in adjusting to changing political and economic circumstances within these localities. They opportunistically manipulate cultural differences and racial hierarchies as part of their highly efficient strategies aimed at amassing capital and social prestige. As holders of multiple national statuses (citizens or residents of several states), they are not unquestionably loyal to their native country; their patriotism and nostalgia for the motherland are inextricably linked with material calculations. However, apart from the flexibility discussed above, which liberates the acting subject, there is another type of force at work, one which disciplines the subject by constraining him[26] to a certain locality related to each regime within which he functions. Kinship and the family, the network of connections and mutual commitments (*guanxi* 关系), the market and the national state are all examples of such disciplining forces.

This paper will show not only how women portrayed in *Shishang* increasingly display traits which fall under the categories mentioned above (flexible citizenship and cosmopolitanism), but also the limitations that apply both to mobility itself and to a full attainment of Tomlinson's ideal. One such factor is consumerism, a sensitive topic that is negatively assessed by Chinese scholars. However, there is another, even more significant constraining factor - a nationalist attitude. Article texts examined here perform a double task by building both a global and a national consciousness. For this reason, *Shishang*'s model of femininity conforms with two ideas that are ubiquitous in the PRC public and official discourse – that of "linking up with the tracks of the world" (*yu guoji jiegui* 与国际接轨[27]) and that of strengthening China as a national entity within the global context. This shows that the magazine not only is not as subservient to the West as deplored by its critics, but in fact already

25 *Globalization and Culture*, 2, 30-31, 115, 185.

26 Ong's model is marked for gender: it is men (Chinese businessmen from Southeast Asia or Hong Kong) who acquire economic and symbolic capital by means of global mobility. Women and children are subjected to the disciplining rules of the family regime and as such are confined to specific geographic locations. This is why it is all the more interesting to see how this model applies to the image of women constructed in *Shishang*.

27 For more details on this topic, see Zhen Zhang, "Mediating Time: The 'Rice Bowl of Youth'."

does what they require it to do, while also supporting and propagating state ideology as stipulated in legal regulations concerning the media in the PRC.[28]

Global mobility in statu nascendi: 1993-1994

The 1993 and 1994 issues build a general framework of identity and lifestyle for the emergent middle class.[29] They expound on new possibilities in the fields of career, consumption and leisure made available by the program of economic reform and opening to the world: new models of employment contrasted with the "iron rice bowl" of the Maoist era (professional positions in international companies that require personal skills and qualifications, or private enterprises), as well as patterns of behavior, commodities and services imported from the West or (less frequently) Japan, the acquisition of which allows the individual to partake in global modernity. One of these newly available opportunities is travelling abroad. An article on the formalities required for this purpose aims at opening new vistas for the reader's imagination as it directly addresses her as follows:[30]

> "Since our country's door was opened, Chinese citizens have begun to step out of it, for official, private and travel purposes, to have a look at the world outside. To most common people, however, the 'dream of going abroad' still seems to be too much of a luxury. Ordinary people have neither official business to attend to, nor foreign friends to act as guarantors. Though they may save up some money in their purses, they cannot but flinch. I'm telling you now, my friend: going abroad is actually an easy thing!"[31]

Other articles portray women who actively seek and make use of the above-mentioned possibilities to push forward their careers. Some of them act globally without actually leaving China. They exchange previous jobs in state-owned work units, stable but lacking in prospects of high income and advancement, for employment in local branches of transnational companies such as McDonald's[32] or for running their own businesses, which they expand by collaborating with foreign companies.[33] Other women use the opportunities provided by foreign travel as a means of acquiring new professional knowledge and skills, which they then employ after returning to China. During training courses in Thailand and the US, one of them becomes acquainted with new models of management, which she applies in her job with a large hotel in Beijing;[34] the other, a dancer and

28 See, for instance, Article 3 of the "Provisions on the Administration of Periodical Publishing" and Article 3 of "Regulations on the Administration of Publishing". It must be said, however, that neither these regulations nor other similar legal documents contain any specifications as to the particular ways in which the media are to fulfill this task.

29 More information on the emergence of the white-collar group in China is provided by Laurie Duthie, "White Collars with Chinese Characteristics."

30 All fragments of texts from *Shishang* quoted throughout this paper are provided in my English translations.

31 Huli, "Chuguo tujing," 61-62.

32 Yamin Liu, "Maidanglao gei le wo jihui."

33 Liu Jiang, "Jia Wei: wei ziji dian yi zhi ge."

34 Xiaoyin, "Fu Liru: shiqu ji shi dedao."

choreographer, finds inspiration for her own artistic career in local folk handicrafts during her tours abroad.[35] Wang Aibing is the only character in the 1993-1994 issues who chose to stay abroad: she applied for a job at SinoVision and at the moment the article was written was working as anchor for that particular American TV network.[36] It is interesting, however, to see that while she cannot be "appropriated" as a member of the nation in terms of geographic location and current citizenship (as a US resident and probably also as a citizen), she is "reclaimed" as such on the basis of her Chinese descent. The article (written in the third person) introduces Wang and speaks of her visit to China to collect materials for a feature on China's program of reform. After expounding her individual story of global mobility, the text exchanges her individual identity for a national one as it depicts her as a "loyal daughter" of the motherland (geographically identified as the PRC) and cultural ambassador of the latter to the US.[37]

Studying abroad as a rite of passage: 1998-1999

The issues from 1998 and 1999 offer readers glimpses into "parallel modernities", through the prism of which they can perceive their own lives[38] and position them as members of an international women's community. A column entitled "Naozhendang" (translated as "Brainstorm" or "Global Info"[39]) provides information on opportunities available to women in other regions, particularly in Western countries – web pages promoting their involvement in politics, the legal recognition of civil partnerships, women's activity on the Internet,[40] or legal protection for single mothers.[41] Moreover, most women depicted in the articles are already mobile, and for some of them global mobility has become a lifestyle. One such example is Lan Lan, a lawyer, who spends most of her time travelling between Great Britain, Hong Kong and the US, and only sporadically returns to China, mainly for the New Year, in order to be reunited with her equally mobile husband.[42]

Experiences of global mobility have become an individual's defining traits and sources of symbolic capital. When introducing characters, articles from 1998 and 1999 usually mention their profession, as well as their experience of working and studying abroad (mainly in Western Europe and the US). Education, only rarely and briefly mentioned in 1993 and 1994, has now become a salient topic. All articles portraying successful career women end with a short biography, which always lists education, particularly at Western universities. Some texts discuss this topic in detail and according to the same narrative pattern. Studying in the West is depicted as a rite of passage, a test of character,

35 Ruifeng Han, "Yang Liping: yingzao dushi li de 'daziran'."
36 Yage Fan and Jin Tang, "Niuyue huaren de 'Aimi'."
37 For a detailed discussion of this rhetoric device in this and other articles published in *Shishang*, see Adina Zemanek, "*Shishang* (*Trends/Cosmopolitan*) and the Nationalistic Project."
38 Brian Larkin, "Indian Films and Nigerian Lovers," 407.
39 Although their contents are written by local authors in Chinese, the titles of many columns and articles in *Shishang* are given in both Chinese and English versions.
40 Lin Feng, "Nüren yu wang de gushi."
41 Jian Zhou, "Yao haizi bu yao nanren?."
42 Xiaohong Zhou, "Lan Lan: wuxiekeji."

during which the woman in question proves her worth:

> "If you're really smart, then prove it. So I really got down to proving it with deeds."[43]

This test may begin during university studies in China, when the heroine displays great industriousness, as does Lan Lan, who (as she states) used to leave the library only at closing time. It may also start when she takes up her first job and embarks on the difficult path of acquiring necessary skills in an unfavorable environment, as does Chen Ling, the only female reporter recruited to the central writing team of the Xinhua News Agency.[44] However, the real test of strength only takes place abroad, at such prestigious institutions as the University of Cambridge, the London School of Economics and Political Science, Harvard University, or the State University of New York at Buffalo. The story begins with an image of the heroine as a rank-and-file member of a large community of Asian students, starting out in an atmosphere of fierce competition, with nothing to make her stand out from the crowd:

> "For that daunting decision of hers, she gave up everything: status, professional qualifications, scholarships, letters of recommendation. […] She started again from the beginning, together with all the foreign students: working part-time, waiting tables in restaurants, doing secretarial work, working for travel agencies."[45]

Her way to success is an arduous one. The articles emphasize the difficulties that heroines have to face - considerable efforts required for academic success and personal setbacks, such as the writer Yan Geling's divorce -, and their industriousness in overcoming hardships:

> "In the first placement test, she suffered utter defeat. From that day on, Chen Ling no longer deemed herself worthy of raising her head above her piles of books. She would fling herself at her desk as soon as she opened her eyes in the morning. The books she had to go through each week were never fewer than 20, not to mention the supplementary books recommended by her tutor, articles she had to write, as well as the five hours she would spend three times each week on the journey between school and her own place."[46]

The way to success is a lonely one too, as the heroine has to cope with being on foreign soil, in a hostile environment:

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43 Miaozi, "Li Yifei, MTV nü zhangmen," 63.
44 Xiaohong Zhou, "Chen Ling: xihuan zuo nüren."
45 *Ibid*., 63.
46 *Ibid*.

> "When you have hardly turned 20 and have hitherto led a smooth and easy life in your home country, you find yourself in an unfamiliar environment. All foreign [i.e. Chinese] students think of themselves as awfully gifted, whereas in fact they're not accepted by that particular society at all."[47]

The articles play upon sameness and otherness in order to achieve persuasive appeal. As indicated above, they place the heroine in competition with other Asian students, where her chances of prevailing are diminished by the large number of competitors and their similarity to herself. They also depict the heroine as being engaged in competition with her American colleagues, where her likelihood of succeeding is limited by her being dissimilar, and by the lack of equal chances her otherness implies. In an attempt to make an even greater emotional impact on the audience while contradicting this assumption, one text places otherness at the physical level as well (with a possible detriment to credibility, given the considerable ethnic diversity of the US population):

> "Geling was the first foreigner ever to enroll on the Creative Writing Program at Columbia University in all its hundred years' history. Majoring in creative writing was originally supposed to be a native speaker's exclusive domain, so Geling's breaking of the mold was an event both dignified and funny. Floating every day in a sea of blonde hair and blue eyes, this clever Asian student with black hair brushing her shoulders would never be able to blend in with the background. […] Particularly when the black hair surged above her seat, those heads with light-coloured hair would look up and prick up their ears, listening attentively and with great interest."[48]

Although involving global mobility, such "rites of passage" seem to be more relevant in the local, Chinese context of the reader. They do take place abroad, where the heroine acquires proof of her worth - diplomas from prestigious Western universities confirming fulfillment of all requirements for a degree. However, these stories only emphasize the great difficulty inherent in the process of studying, and mention its outcome (the obtained degrees), but do not provide any details as to the actual knowledge and experience the heroine gains abroad, or to how exactly she employs them later. In some cases, the academic disciplines in which the heroines graduated are quite distant from their current profession; other articles omit the discipline altogether, and only mention the protagonists' degrees. Except for studies and some cursory references to the jobs these women take up to support themselves, the articles do not provide any information concerning their life abroad and their encounters with different cultures. The only exception is Yan Geling, who mentions intercultural dialogue as part of the relationship with her American husband.

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47 Miaozi, "Li Yifei, MTV nü zhangmen," 63.
48 Xiaohng Zhou, "Xiuchu shengming de weidao," 55-56.

The heroines' success, according to high Western standards, is therefore not depicted as a source of skills but of symbolic capital. The fact of acquiring this capital and its very value as capital are to be confirmed in a local (Chinese) context by the magazine's readers, to whom these stories of success are addressed. Other than universities issuing degrees, the texts do not depict any person or institution that would be capable of assessing these women's performance abroad, but places the reader in that position. As Liu points out,[49] education as a source of prestige, the long-term, arduous process needed for obtaining it, and the mobility involved in this process, were the defining traits of the Confucian story of success and advancement in the social hierarchy. For Confucian scholars, the cultural center and ultimate destination of mobility was the empire's capital, where examinations for the highest academic degree were held. During modern and post-Maoist times, the geographic location associated with power and prestige shifted to the West, which became the place of choice for Chinese intellectuals seeking an accumulation of social and cultural capital which could be exploited once they returned to their home country. The *Shishang* heroines re-enact the model of mobility.

Intercultural awareness, code-switching and cultural distance: 2002-2003

In articles from 2002 and 2003, studies abroad still constitute a part of women's biographies, but are no longer depicted according to the pattern discussed above. The texts now focus on studying abroad as embedded in a larger professional context, and examine the prospects for promotion that such studies may entail and the practical application of the acquired knowledge. The title of one article[50] hints at the prestige associated with studying in other countries: it contains the word *dujin* 镀金, which literally means "to plate with gold", but also refers to enhancing one's social status by travelling abroad. In the main text, however, the author leaves behind the idea of pure social prestige and focuses on more practical matters instead. The reader is advised to make informed choices as to the right moment in her career when she should go abroad, or as to those universities and majors that can prove most beneficial for career advancement. The protagonist of another article gives similar advice as to where and what to study in order to increase one's chances of getting a job on Wall Street.[51] For other characters, it is not the degrees obtained abroad that matter, but other kinds of knowledge and experience acquired during their studies. On her part-time job in a kindergarten while studying in the US, Wang Gan became acquainted with American teaching methods, which she applied in the private kindergarten she established in Beijing.[52]

In the sample from this period, the cultural aspect of global mobility acquires a more distinct presence. One text[53] specifically discusses the implications of growing up and living in several cultural environments, cultural code-switching, values and attitudes selectively adopted from these

49 Xin Liu, "Space, Mobility and Flexibility."
50 Rong Ye, "The Cost of the Gilt Trip."
51 KK, "A Mermaid Who Never Lands."
52 Xiaochen, "Cong 'xiangyata' dao 'Xiao xiangshu'."
53 Bing Xu and Abao, "ABC nüren de weitaming ABCD..."

cultures, and cultural differences between self and others within each of these localities. The significance of these topics is made all the more prominent by the fact that this article is part of a column entitled “3F Nüren” (“3F Women”), which features women labeled “Fun, Fearless, Female” (the slogan promoted by worldwide editions of *Cosmopolitan*) as model embodiments of values upheld by the magazine. The text portrays three “ABC women” - ethnically Chinese, brought up in the US and Australia, and currently working in China. At the very beginning, the authors identify these women's proficiency in operating within different cultures. Cultural mobility is depicted as an asset women should acquire in order to “link up with the tracks” of the globalized world – to access modernity, which the second fragment below associates with the West. The second fragment also emphasizes the need for flexibility in cultural code-switching, in order to maximize personal benefits.

> “Foreign cultures have placed their lives within a broad space, and traditional foundations are in them interpreted anew. In this increasingly globalized world, such women will be competitive, and such competitiveness and boldness is important for you, for me, and for all women fighting for what's theirs.”[54]

> “The ABC women, situated between tradition and modernity, freely choose all the rules that suit themselves. This is what Feng Kelin does, and she describes her own experience as follows: 'I was brought up in a traditional Chinese family; I obtained an American education and have worked in Europe. These three cultures and ways of thinking greatly differ; however, I do not think that they contradict each other, and much less that they might come into conflict. They can only offer me more options I can choose from, by making my own judgments. […] Those that I finally choose will surely be the ones that are best suited to me in this world.”[55]

Chineseness, on the other hand, is associated with tradition, which may seem to ascribe it a negative connotation, as opposed to the desirable modernity. However, the use of the adjective “traditional” as modifier for “foundations” has the opposite effect. This phrase implies a temporal sequence, further elaborated upon in the second fragment: it was elements of Chinese culture that were internalized at the earliest stage in the protagonists' upbringing, and Western influences only came later. It also implies a hierarchy of values: although influenced by Western culture, these women are essentially Chinese.

After setting up such a frame of reference, the authors skillfully move between the two poles stated at the beginning (Chinese and Western culture) by increasing or decreasing cultural distance in order to attain various persuasive goals. The “ABC women” discuss several topics that are central to

54 *Ibid*., 95.
55 *Ibid.*, 98.

the image of white-collar womanhood promoted by *Shishang*, and very likely also relevant to its target readers: career, marriage and motherhood, women's age, and basic criteria for value judgment and decision-making. Their stances on these issues (marriage should be regarded as only one of the choices women make in life, and not as their destiny; women should live according to their own beliefs and needs, and not fulfill other people's expectations; they should be independent instead of relying on men, etc.), are in keeping with the values promoted by the magazine and reflect recent social changes, but run counter to traditional views of womanhood and the relationship between the individual and society. The cultural distance created by attributing these convictions to the "ABC women's" Western education may make them more acceptable to traditionally-minded readers, and more desirable because of their association with Western modernity. The emphasis on cultural distance allows the authors to consider new aspects of womanhood that are relevant in China, while at the same time avoiding tensions within the local context, triggered by the conflict between tradition and modernity. On the other hand, the cultural closeness of these women's being Chinese may make their criticism of local patterns of behavior more palatable. The "ABC women's" Chineseness is also highlighted when approaching the potentially sensitive topics of relationships and sex:

> "Cindy and Christine's single-mindedness in love really surprised us. This is because we often associate them, women who grew up in the West, with the avant-garde of sexual love. However, Christine, Cindy and Feng Kelin actually hold traditional views in matters of love. 'Extra-marital affairs, sexual liberation? Are they good things? I don't think so [...]'. [...] This time, the ABC women, placed in between Eastern and Western culture, chose a rather 'Chinese' approach."[56]

Intercultural competence, China as a destination for "global citizens", globally mobile women and their "tourist gaze": 2007-2008

The largest number of articles that specifically discuss global mobility occur during the most recent period chosen for analysis, and they are also placed in prominent positions within the respective issues. Both of the issues from 2007 and 2008 feature a guest editor representing a central topic, debated in an interview with her and in a special column, both of which are allotted significant editorial space. The guest editor of the October 2007 issue is Mao-Ou Jianli (Monita Mo), a Hong Kong-born financial adviser and entrepreneur with American citizenship, who in the 1990s focused her career upon China as a foreign investor and business consultant, and in 2002 founded the Beijing-based Ascend Capital Partners, a company providing financial consulting services for Chinese enterprises and foreign investors opening up businesses in China. In accordance with the guest editor's professional, cultural and national status, this issue is dedicated to career-related global mobility as capital that increases women's competitiveness, and the model of mobility it puts forward is the most

56 Ibid. For a more detailed discussion of this rhetoric strategy, see Adina Zemanek, "Cultural Closeness and Remoteness."

complex in the whole analyzed material. An editorial authored by Mao-Ou and a whole column dedicated to the topic of global mobility[57] exhort Chinese women to join the communities of "global citizens" (*quanqiu gongmin* 全球公民) and "worldwide middle class" (*shijie zhongchan jieji* 世界中产阶级, whose significant expansion was assessed by the World Bank in its 2007 Global Economic Prospects report, quoted in an article), on account of the benefits they can thus gain. The texts also provide a detailed definition of mobility as capital and propose a complex strategy for acquiring it. According to the articles, global mobility does not merely imply physical movement across national borders, but is a multifaceted, superordinate ability that requires seamless integration and proficient usage of several other skills. It is the result of a long process which should begin in one's childhood and consists of learning to perceive oneself, one's life and environment against a larger, global background. Proficiency in foreign languages is another requisite skill. However, language proficiency in itself is not sufficient – language acquisition should be accompanied by openness towards multiculturalism and should proceed while immersing oneself into the respective culture in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of it, which in turn develops the ability of functioning within multiple symbolic structures. Mobility also requires awareness of the fact that one's own cultural principles are only applicable within a limited geographical locality, as well as the ability to withhold from applying one's own cultural standards while functioning within other cultures. As a result of this self-education process, elements of Western and Eastern culture become internalized and can be flexibly employed in various contexts:

> "It was during that time that I mastered both Eastern and Western culture in a systematic and holistic manner, which improved not only my way of thinking, but also my approach to people, and my abilities in analyzing and appraising problems by freely moving between both perspectives – Eastern and Western. This in turn significantly developed my abilities to handle various affairs and to make decisions."[58]

The qualities of flexibility and readiness to understand other cultures, central to the definition of global mobility discussed above, are applied as criteria for the negative appraisal of the behavior of Chinese women who do not display interest in local cultures and instead limit their scope of activities to local enclaves of ethnic Chinese while working in other countries. The need for flexibility is also emphasized in relation to the issue of discrimination, which is here raised for the first (and only) time in my research material. Mao-Ou Jianli provides advice on finding a place for oneself not by seeking to overthrow existing power relations but by using one's assets to turn the system's shortcomings into benefits - this was what she did during her early career in the US, when she applied for a job discriminating in favor of the female gender and Asian descent. She also advises Chinese people

57 Jianli Mao-Ou, "Zuo ge you tounao yidongli de nianqingren;" Summer et al., "Global Locomotivity 21."
58 Jianli Mao-Ou, *Ibid*., 54.

living in the US to refrain from too hastily labeling as discrimination criticism coming from colleagues representing the racial mainstream, which would instantly generate conflict, and to consider instead the fact that criticism may indeed be well-founded, which could lead to constructive solutions.[59]

However, outbound movement, multicultural proficiency and the personal benefits they may lead to are not the only aspects of global mobility depicted in these articles. Another very important aspect is inward-bound migration and the national benefits it entails. Mao-Ou Jianli, who mentions her own experience of mobility outside China, speaks from China as guest editor. When discussing her motives for migrating to the PRC, she mentions not only individual considerations, but also openly submits to the disciplining regime of the Chinese national state as she speaks of her intention to make a contribution to the country's development and the strengthening of its global position by supporting the global activity of local business:

> "The second instance of my mobility had to do with starting my own business. I noticed the good prospects of China's economic development, so I came from New York to Beijing, where I established my own investment consulting company in 2002. On the one hand, I wished to make my contribution to moving forward China's development, by using the knowledge I had acquired as a result of my 'mobility'. On the other hand, I wished to develop and achieve success with my own business and realize my own life values. […] My company helped many Chinese enterprises obtain 50 billion USD in foreign investments, which transformed them from weak to strong and allowed them to step outside the country and onto the world stage."[60]

The portraits of other globally mobile women contained in the same issue do not directly mention their dedication to serving the nation. However, in the context of Mao-Ou's statement pointing at US citizens' mobility as an important factor for the country's economic growth,[61] these Chinese women's mobility can also be interpreted as a contribution to strengthening the economy of their own country. Moreover, these women's national status and migration trajectory (they have chosen China as the destination for the current stage in the development of their careers) also place China in a favorable light. Some of them were born and grew up in China, and have now returned, which shows that Chinese women already qualify for "global citizen" status according to the criteria discussed earlier, and proves that China now enjoys brain-gain instead of being afflicted with brain-drain. The other women are also ethnically Chinese, but have (clearly or arguably) non-PRC national status: one of them is Singaporean, and several are Taiwanese; it is also worth recalling the Hong Kong – American status of guest editor Mao-Ou Jianli. This shows that China is an attractive

59 Summer et al., "Global Locomotivity 21," 207-208.
60 Jianli Mao-Ou, "Zuo ge you tounao yidongli de nianqingren," 54.
61 Beigu, "Yidongli, xian cong tounao kaishi," 206.

destination not only for her own citizens, but also for highly qualified professionals from regions usually regarded as being at a more advanced stage of economic development. This fact is further underlined in the column's introductory article; part of this is enclosed in a framework that transfers the issue of global mobility from the individual to the national level. Here, China is juxtaposed not with countries in geographically and culturally close Southeast Asia or with regions it can claim as its own territory (Hong Kong and Taiwan), but with the ultimate global power – the US. The latter is praised for its efforts to reduce what is termed "global illiteracy", but the text also states the PRC's competitiveness as a destination choice for the "worldwide middle class" according to the World Bank report:

> "The report also lists another piece of information: the number of people transferred by their employers to mainland China ranks third on a worldwide scale and is growing at the fastest rate. What does this mean? That in the future China will become *the* destination and meeting point for many globally mobile people."[62]

The advantages that China offers as a destination for globally mobile, highly qualified professionals are also asserted in an article that discusses the implications of holding a foreign citizenship or permanent residence permit.[63] After a general introduction, there follow several portraits of women who expound their own experience and views on this matter. All of them have First World citizenship or resident status (they mention the US, Canada, Australia and France) and list the incentives that made them apply for it. They mention advantages related to global travel and residing abroad, some of which reflect long-term calculations: unrestricted freedom of movement both for themselves and for their children (visa procedures for many countries are no longer required), better prospects for their children's education, higher income, or the benefits of a welfare system more efficient than the Chinese one. Their foreign national status also enables them to evade the disciplining regime of the state while in China. Thus, as holders of foreign passports, they are no longer subject to the restrictions of the one-child policy, and can obtain health and retirement insurance on more favorable terms than PRC citizens.

Although it does outline some of the benefits of foreign passports, this article seems to aim rather at dissuading readers from emigrating. It elaborates on a topic already introduced in the 2007 issue discussed above: China's attractiveness as a place for furthering one's career. The text strongly highlights China's economic development and the new opportunities for employment and high income it has created. Many China-based companies, the article says, have given up the unequal remuneration policy regarding Chinese and foreign citizens. The six women portrayed here are all Chinese and have chosen to return to the PRC, temporarily or permanently. As many as five of them describe the career

62 Summer et al., "Global Locomotivity 21," 204.
63 Yun Zhang et al., "Why Another Passport?"

opportunities that China now offers, the deep emotional ties with their country and their feeling of belonging to the local cultural community:

> "From a long-term perspective, one should definitely develop [one's career] in China, which has boundless potential."[64]
> "I got a foreigner's status in order to have a better life; in spite of this, I am clearly aware that Shanghai is the place which can give me a better life."[65]
> "It is only in China that I have the feeling of social recognition […] In the end, I didn't apply for French citizenship, as deep in my heart I feel that I am Chinese after all."[66]
> "China makes me feel that both my feet firmly touch the ground. […] If only [one] had known earlier that our country would open up to such an extent, that you would be able to go traveling whenever and wherever you pleased, to have a look [at the world outside], who then would have left the country!"[67]

The article also lists problems caused by global mobility and foreign status, which seem to outnumber the benefits. Instead of praising the advantages of flexibly switching between cultural codes (as Mao-Ou Jianli does), one of these women mentions the difficulties she has had in adapting to living in China after a long stay in Canada, which changed her world view and behavior. Another speaks of the low social acceptance she experienced while abroad. The decline in social and professional status on leaving China and the long time it takes to rebuild it abroad are pointed out by yet another heroine. The loss (or lack) of Chinese citizenship entails the lack of a household registration record, which causes problems both for the woman herself and for her children, who cannot enroll in ordinary schools and only have access to schools for foreigners, which charge very high tuition fees. Other problems are related to property and include: double taxation, the fact that pension fund contributions paid in China will not be taken into consideration abroad, the possibility of buying only one piece of real estate, and restrictions in relation to investing in stocks and shares in China.

As seen above, in this article global mobility is not depicted in a positive light, but rather as a source of anxiety related to a lack of stability and coherence in spatial, cultural, social and administrative terms. Nevertheless, no matter how much it tips the balance towards the disadvantages of foreign national status, the text does not rule it out altogether. In spite of cultural and social obstacles related to moving between two locations, some of the heroines still express a willingness to travel back and forth between China and their other, adoptive motherlands, in order to retain the right of permanent residence. Although one of the women repeatedly complains about the bureaucratic

64 *Ibid*., 118.
65 *Ibid*.
66 *Ibid*., 119.
67 *Ibid*., 120.

obstacles she has to overcome in order to obtain a Canadian green card, she never gives up trying. Although she speaks of her intention to dissuade her sister from emigrating, she does not mention any actual attempt at doing so. The mother of children without a Chinese household registration record finally decides to send them back to France. Several other women claim that they plan to give birth to their children abroad, or to settle abroad after retirement.

In other articles from 2007, global mobility is not related to career, but to lifestyle and to the definition of middle-class identity. Its declared aim is the fulfillment of spiritual needs, but underlying it is a marked consumerist strand. One of these texts portrays Zhang Jinr (Zhang Jinjie), designer and owner of Ziyunxuan / Green T House, an ultra-chic spa and restaurant in Beijing. Her manifold artistic skills – as a chef specializing in fusion cuisine with high aesthetic values, tea connoisseur, musician, architect and interior designer –, avant-garde projects, and the additional asset of beauty, have made Zhang a lifestyle media celebrity, hailed both at home and abroad as "China's first celebrity chef" and "Beijing's queen of style". The article, written in the first person, constructs for Zhang a stylish persona based on the central value of luxury, in tune with her artistic concepts, the nature of her business enterprise and her target clients: Chinese and foreign jet-setters. The Chinese word used to denote luxury is *shehua* 奢华 – "sumptuous, extravagant", but the implication of wealth associated with it is countered with the definition given in the text, which places the concept in the realm of spiritual values. The text promotes material affluence, but does so indirectly, as a covert prerequisite for a lifestyle built upon inconspicuous consumption, simplicity and "naturalness" instead of opulence:

> "Luxury is not about the things you use, what it actually entails is comfort and naturalness."[68]
> "In these commercialized times, when [our] outstanding tradition of *belles-lettres* has been hidden under a layer of worldly dust, I think that one should observe the world around with the eyes of the soul."[69]

Zhang praises spirituality as an antidote to modern materialism and illustrates her statement with a personal example: her own wedding ceremony, held in Bhutan. This instance of global mobility, however, only offers Zhang a convenient means for legitimizing her criticism of materialism (which in this context appears both trendy and tasteful), without pledging to change her current affluent lifestyle. From a more formal viewpoint, the ceremony undoubtedly involved spirituality: it took place in a monastery and was conducted by a monk who (according to Zhang) was the seventh incarnation of the Living Buddha. Zhang values Bhutan for those features that contrast with her own urban, modern and globalized life: its inaccessibility to many foreign tourists, its beautiful natural scenery untouched by modern metropolitan civilization, and ritual-like everyday routines attuned to

68 Qianzibi, "The Splendid Purity," 419.
69 *Ibid*., 421.

nature and religion. Her trip to Bhutan seems to have been a noncommittal, one-off experience, leading neither to a real understanding of local culture nor to a deep spiritual transformation. She does not report any long-term influence that it has had on her life, and does not profess any interest in Bhutanese Buddhism or the significance of her wedding as a religious ceremony, conducted in a language alien both to her and her husband. Moreover, Zhang's choice of Bhutan over other destinations was motivated not on religious grounds, but by a craving for originality. In her deliberations below, she resembles a customer considering an offer from a travel agency:

> "My husband is Australian. Before the wedding, we talked about the best place for organizing it. I didn't care about a Chinese-style ceremony as it's only about holding a banquet in a restaurant for guests. It could have had more flavour if we'd moved it to the Great Wall, but then I go to the Great Wall all the time, and there's nothing novel about it. I was not interested in Australia either, and even less in other, European, countries."[70]

Therefore, the article positions Zhang as a consumer and presents global mobility as part of the consumed experience. The act of consumption serves two purposes. It confirms the consumer's wealth, albeit indirectly: a wedding abroad is a costly event, and due to officially required minimum tariffs for foreign tourists, Bhutan is a particularly expensive destination. On the other hand, it allows Zhang to divert the reader's attention away from material affluence towards a trendy "spiritual" luxury. At the end of the day, luxury is nothing but a marker that determines the boundary between elite groups and ordinary people:

> "If you take pains to copy others, and if 'having what others have' is for you an absolute must, with this mentality, the things that make you happy and those you create will not count as luxury, no matter how costly they are."[71]

Global mobility occurs in a similar context in a special feature from 2007 that describes several Chinese women's journeys abroad.[72] The introduction identifies these women as members of a group – *san gao nüxing* 三高女性 ("three-high women", i.e. high income, high professional position, and high social status) or *gaoduan nüxing* 高端女性 ("high-end / top-notch women"). The term *gaoduan* 高端, which positions these women as elite, is reiterated throughout the feature. The words *zu* 族 ("tribe", "group") and *qunti* 群体 („community"), on the other hand, further hammer home the idea of a community with shared characteristics. The heroines' middle-class status is highlighted by their jobs, listed in a short biography that precedes a detailed description of the travel experience. Their global

70 *Ibid.*, 420.
71 *Ibid.*, 419.
72 Summer, Yinuo and Dongfang, "Go with My Heart!"

mobility takes place outside the professional sphere, but is closely related to it. Apart from providing the financial means for spending a long time abroad (from one to six months in the Sahara, Cambodia, Brazil, India; only one heroine goes to Tibet), career is a stress-generating factor that causes these women to undertake their "soul-redeeming" journeys. As stated in the introduction,

> "After Sammi quit her job at HP's high-end customer department, she went to Vietnam, then to India, finally spending six months of the year on the road. The last few years have witnessed a violently surging wave of people setting out on journeys because of professional setbacks."[73]

Emotional dilemmas caused by divorce, the prospect of a new and long-term commitment, or both, are the other major reason for leaving:

> "Should I start a family in a foreign country with him, someone who gives me a plentiful sense of security but no surprises, or should I instead give in to the appeal of Beijing, which has been in my thoughts day and night?"[74]

In spite of the lengthy periods they spend in other countries, these women do not seem to have any interest in immersing themselves in the local cultures. The reason is that, as the text repeatedly emphasizes, "the real route does not lie outside, but in the heart".[75] Global mobility is depicted as an instrument which allows them to step outside familiar surroundings as well as social and professional networks, in order to discover what they term "the real me", and to inwardly search for answers to questions that bother them:

> "You left behind your own life, left behind all your worries, left behind that which you had long been 'powered off'."[76]
> "Here, I am not a woman, a student, a translator. I have no profession and no status. I am the real true me. I am here together with myself."[77]

Although throughout the text the heroines are depicted as "paying their respects to sacred places" (*chongbai shengdi* 崇拜圣地) or "going on a pilgrimage" (*chaosheng* 朝圣), none of them actually participates in any religious activities. Angkor Wat, which businesswoman Zhang Yin visits, is a vestige of the religious past. Rishikesh, on the other hand, is still alive as a religious center, but

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73 *Ibid*., 146.
74 *Ibid*., 150.
75 *Ibid*., 146.
76 *Ibid*.
77 *Ibid*., 151.

Yin Yan (former chief editor of *Elle*'s PRC edition) is no Hinduist. She practices yoga and meditation, and her daily schedule displays quasi-monastic regularity, but she is not subject to actual monastic discipline. Singer Sa Dingding spends six months in Tibet, but does not mention anything related to religion. The other heroines do not visit any sacred places at all. As mentioned above, they focus on their inner selves. They only register their surroundings with a detached tourist's gaze. They describe scenic spots and historic sites, but are not concerned with local culture; even in the rare moments when they are surrounded with people, they do not establish any bonds, but remain solitary sightseers whose main preoccupation is personal feelings triggered by various external circumstances:

> "A crowd of people was gathered together; everyone was silent and still, looking with piety at the place where the sun was about to rise. Huge red-colored rocks were rising up before our very eyes, looking as if they'd been smoothed out with a knife, their furthermost end remaining out of sight. People in the distance seemed to be as tiny as ants, and flocks of sheep ambled languidly along the limpid river. Magical Sahara, the place of my dreams."[78]

The text thus constructs its heroines as tourists, searching for an imagined local "primevalness" and authenticity. According to Anthony Giddens, the modern consciousness is characterized by reflexivity, questioning and the constant reconstruction of social practices, which gives rise to incertitude and anxiety.[79] The ideology of rationality underlying the Enlightenment progress-centered concept of modernity has brought about a reorganization of the individual's relationship with the world, but has also led to the oppression and exhaustion of the soul.[80] The tourist as modern subject strives to escape the entrapment of rationality by searching in remote, "exotic" places for an "authenticity" the modern world has lost, but which in fact is a creation of modernity itself.[81] A fragment on the article's first page clearly reflects such concerns:

> "Metropolitan women, who have never been so bewildered and uncertain as now, crave the opportunity to bring their bodies into a close embrace with nature, to have their souls listen respectfully to the holy voice of sacred places, and do so in the hope of finding answers while out on their journeys."[82]

The introduction also mentions "primeval" (*yuanshi* 原始) nature and "sacred places still unexplored" (*wei bei kaicai de shengdi* 未被开采的圣地), which enable women to regain the "original force of inborn abilities" (*yuanshi benneng liliang* 原始本能力量).[83] Yin Yan speaks of "traditional

78 *Ibid*., 150.
79 Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, 38-39.
80 Tim Oakes, *Tourism and Modernity in China*, 14-16.
81 *Ibid.*, 24.
82 Summer, Yinuo and Dongfang, "Go with My Heart!" 144.
83 *Ibid*., 146.

civilization, food and drink, beliefs and religious practices" preserved intact in Rishikesh, where "everything is strikingly close to the origins of humanity".[84] Their spiritual preoccupations notwithstanding, these women are also consumers: of tourist attractions (most of which are not unexplored, but very popular destinations), food, beverages (trendy coffee), internet services, CDs and jewelry. Not only the heroines themselves, but also the readers are positioned as potential consumers. As well as the descriptions of the heroines' personal experiences, the text also provides advice for readers who might wish to set out on journeys to the same places, formulated in tourist guide style. Each part contains recommendations for readers as to local attractions, hotels, eateries, pubs and services, as well as instances of local culture worth witnessing or experiencing (ritual bathing in the Ganges, the aarti ceremony at Dashashwamedh Ghat, weddings in Rishikesh, or Moroccan hammams). These are the only places in the text where local cultures are actually mentioned; however, they are presented only as tourist packages that have already been consumed by the heroines and handed over to readers for further consumption.

Conclusion

As shown above, *Shishang* does not advocate the indiscriminate worship of the West, but presents its readers with increasingly complex models of global mobility enacted by women as informed subjects, who perceive their lives in a global context and use mobility to their own advantage. The earliest issues do not so much expound on already acquired mobility, as on the possibilities of traveling abroad and of partaking of global modernity within the local. The few women for whom global mobility is available are depicted as agents who are actively appropriating knowledge and skills during their travels abroad, which will be useful when back in China in order to advance their careers. In 1998 and 1999, global mobility is already part of many heroines' life stories. These women also act as agents who make their own decisions to study and work abroad, determined to succeed in a lonely, arduous and unequal competition for degrees issued by prestigious Western universities. However, they do not display any knowledge of, or openness to, other cultures, but are only depicted as reenacting a story of success that is mainly relevant in their home country, but not abroad. Their flexibility as global citizens is therefore limited. This changes in the issues from 2002 and 2003, which go beyond the possible social prestige that studying abroad may entail, and instead focus on the actual effects it may have for women's professional development. Moreover, these issues also contain an instance of global mobility that conforms to Ong's model of flexible citizenship and to a great extent also to Tomlinson's ideal of cosmopolitanism, as enacted by Chinese women brought up in Western countries, who skillfully choose from both kinds of cultures those elements most suited to their life principles. Tomlinson's ideal finds its highest expression in a series of articles from 2007, whose definition of global mobility lists elements required by Tomlinson as well: readiness to experience other cultures and an awareness of the limitations of one's own cultural standards. The

84 *Ibid*., 166.

2007 model of global mobility also involves flexibility in manipulating cultural differences and racial hierarchies to one's own benefit, which in turn are traits of flexible citizens, as defined by Ong. However, this is not the only model of global mobility constructed in 2007-2008. There is also one other, in which mobility becomes the object of consumption for women positioned as tourists, i.e. those who do not aim at developing an understanding of other cultures but at confirming their elite, middle-class status or at solving personal existential crises.

The models of global mobility summed up above are both deeply grounded in local realities and highly relevant for the magazine's middle-class target readers. Their growing complexity reflects the increasing opportunity for Chinese citizens to travel and study abroad from the early 1990s onwards, due to state policies and personal income. The opening of state borders for outbound travel and media images of material achievements made by native Chinese living and working abroad triggered a "craze for going abroad" (*chuguo re* 出国热) during the 1980s and 1990s.[85] Liu Xin's field study of Chinese intellectuals who had studied abroad confirms the prestige such an experience granted them in the eyes of compatriots on their return to China.[86] The brain-drain following liberalization and the events of 1989 took on such proportions that the state sought to counter it by implementing brain-gain policies in 1992, with obvious effects, especially since 2000. However, the number of returnees is not too impressive when compared against the backdrop of the continuing brain-drain.[87] China's attractiveness as a destination for the "global middle class", emphasized in articles from 2007 and 2008, as well as the ambiguous stance on owning a foreign passport, may echo official attempts at creating favorable conditions for returnees, and the never ending flow of Chinese citizens who choose to leave the country in spite of them. The various ways in which global mobility is depicted in different periods may also be said to reflect the process of the formation of the Chinese middle classes. In 1993 and 1994, when this process was still in its early stages, *Shishang* focused less on global mobility itself (its actual availability was limited in any case), and more on promoting new models of career development, which defined white-collar professionals – meritocratic, Western contract-based employment (most readily available in transnational companies), and (to a lesser extent) self-employment. In 2007 and 2008, when the newly rich already had an established position in terms of career pathways, the magazine concentrates on promoting a specific lifestyle as a marker of elite status. It is a lifestyle based both on material affluence (which allows these people to also go abroad as consumers, not only as professionals and students), and on its denial (by upholding certain values such as self-cultivation, spirituality and naturalness, as contrasted with opulence, albeit purchased at an equally high price).

Shishang's models of global mobility also reflect the ambivalent official attitude towards globalization that underlies the post-Maoist program of modernization. On the one hand, globalization

85 Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship. The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, 48.
86 Xin Liu, "Space, mobility and flexibility," 104-114.
87 David Zweig, "Competing for Talent;" David Zweig and Benjamin Robertson, "China Learns Education Lessons."

has been perceived as providing an opportunity to lead the country out of ideological stagnation, and as such, as a source of political legitimacy. “Linking up with the tracks of the world” would allow China to fully recover its national dignity by wiping away all remnants of its former status as “sick man of Asia”. On the other hand, there is anxiety about the possible loss of national identity under the influence of global cultural flows. The preoccupation with asserting China's national identity and rebuilding a “national culture” (which also works as an instrument of political legitimization) has led to attempts to build an alternative, local model of modernization.[88] *Shishang* is in tune with both these trends. On the one hand, it shows that China is already part of global modernity. It portrays Chinese women as citizens of the world, increasingly worldly-wise, actively seeking opportunities within a global field, fluent in several cultures, and well-versed in intercultural switching. Even the final instance of mobility discussed in this paper – the one that positions both heroines and readers as tourists, and thus bears the stigma of consumerism - can be reevaluated in this light. The tourist gaze, which seeks out a “primevalness” and “authenticity” lost in the process of modernization (an attitude termed “imperialist nostalgia” by Renato Rosaldo), and which used to be the privilege of the culturally and economically dominant West, is now appropriated by Chinese women in search of spiritual renewal.[89] On the other hand, since the earliest issues, by quoting the heroines' own words or (more frequently) by employing various rhetoric and linguistic strategies in formulating their discourse, the authors of articles contained in *Shishang* assert these women's Chineseness, emphasize their patriotism, and advocate China's advantages as a place for professional development. Thus, while constructing Chinese women as global citizens, *Shishang* also constrains their mobility and brings them under the disciplining regime of the national state, thus simultaneously marking them as daughters of the motherland.

88 Kang Liu, *Globalization and Cultural Trends in China*, 4, 29.

89 For more information on Japanese tourists' appropriation of the Orientalist gaze (Euro-American in origin), see Koichi Iwabuchi, “Time and the Neighbor,” 153-155. For a lengthy discussion of this issue in the Chinese context, see Tim Oakes, *Tourism and Modernity in China*.

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