

AMERICAN EXPATRIATE TEACHERS IN CHINA

by

Norris Thigpen
A Thesis
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty
of
George Mason University
in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts
Anthropology

Committee:

_____ Director

_____ Department Chairperson

_____ Dean, College of Humanities
and Social Sciences

Date: _____

Spring Semester 2010
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

American Expatriate Teachers in China

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at George Mason University

By

Norris Thigpen
Bachelor of Arts
University of South Carolina, 2006

Director: David Haines, Professor
Sociology and Anthropology

Spring Semester 2010
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

Copyright: 2010 Norris Thigpen
All Rights Reserved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	iv
Chapter 1: Summary and Statement.....	1
Chapter 2: To the Bund.....	22
Chapter 3: Out and About.....	44
Chapter 4: At Home.....	72
Chapter 5: Where is Home?.....	94
Appendices.....	109
Bibliography.....	114

ABSTRACT

AMERICAN EXPATRIATE TEACHERS IN CHINA

Norris Thigpen, Master of Arts

George Mason University, 2010

Thesis Director: David Haines

This thesis examines American expatriate teachers working in the People's Republic of China. Principally, it examines the various methods by which, and places in which, teachers create, maintain, and transgress boundaries, both physical and cultural. Based on participant observation and semi-structured interviews, the thesis focuses on boundaries in both the public and private spheres, such as large-scale social events, everyday routines and places, and the homes in which teachers live. These boundaries exist not only between expatriate teachers and local Chinese, but also between expatriate teachers and other expatriates. The multiplicity of boundaries that the teachers in China must negotiate suggests a need for a refuge, a physical and emotional place in which they may relax. That refuge is most closely linked to the idea of "home," in both its physical and cultural senses. But it is difficult for the teachers to fully create or recreate such a home due to their deterritorialization and the fragmentation (or at least multiplicity) of their identities. Since it may be impossible to fully reassemble the home once people leave

their countries of origin, the idea of a transnational life may seem appropriate. But even here, the teachers face difficulties since the technologies that permit time-space compression are powerless in the face of the half-day time difference between China and North America.

CHAPTER 1: SUMMARY AND STATEMENT

The rapid rise in the flow of peoples in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has included a boom in the number of people, often referred to as expatriates, who choose to live abroad for extended periods of time, yet remain in a position to return home at will. This thesis will examine expatriate Americans who choose to leave their country of birth to live abroad. In particular, I will examine how they carry out their lives abroad, particularly through the physical and social environments around them. Some relevant questions to the study of expatriates are: Who are American expatriates and do they comprise a homogeneous group? How do they engage the physical and social environment of a foreign country? How do they create their “home” while overseas?

Expatriates are of great importance to the field of socio-cultural anthropology, yet have largely been ignored. Anthropology traditionally focuses on the exotic “Other,” distant peoples living in remote areas, rather than westerners who have moved abroad for extended periods of time. Yet, expatriates play an ever increasing role in the transmission of cultural practices. People in the expatriate’s host country inevitably come into contact and experience some aspects of the expatriate’s customs and lifestyles. Once expatriates return to their native country, they bring new ways of thinking and transmit them to those who have not left. This interaction and flow of cultural knowledge is important to many of the social sciences and humanities including, but not limited to, sociology, political

science, public policy, and economics. A better understanding of the expatriate experience can provide valuable information not only for those who are interested in working or settling overseas but also for those who want to better their understanding of cultural flows in the modern world.

The existing literature on expatriates and expatriate communities has largely been focused in two areas. First, the profession of human resources management has taken a keen interest in how overseas employees adapt to their working environments. This discipline, however, often focuses more on how to maximize worker efficiency and return on investment rather than cultural exchanges and adjustments. Second, expatriates have been examined from the lens of neo-colonialism. This is exemplified by many studies of expatriate communities of overseas Britons, often living in former colonies. While both areas play an important role in the overall examination of expatriates, this study adds to them in two ways: first, by focusing on how American expatriates create and shape their non-work lives while overseas and, second, by focusing on expatriates who live somewhat closer (financially, physically, and socially) to the native inhabitants of the host country.

STUDYING EXPATRIATES

The study of expatriates has largely been confined to human resources and management and the examination of overseas Britons. Traditionally, anthropology tended to ignore expatriates living in the field (and expatriate communities), but has recently

shown some interest in the subject. This section provides a brief review of some of these studies.

From an American historical perspective, Thomas Jefferson is often referred to as one of the earliest Americans to have lived abroad. Living in France in the 1780s he exclaimed that “While we shall see multiple instances of Europeans going to live in America, I will venture to say no man now living will ever see an instance of an American removing to settle in Europe and continuing there” (Peabody 1915). In 1915, Francis Peabody astutely observed that Jefferson was mistaken. Americans were not only traveling to Europe but also settling down there. However, even Peabody could not have possibly realized that by the beginning of the 21st century the number of Americans living overseas would be so large that even the Census Bureau could not “estimate accurately the size... of the overseas population... other than federally affiliated groups” (U.S. Census Bureau 2001). Most historians link the emergence of large numbers of American tourists and those living abroad to the advent of industrialized travel, the steamship and later the airplane. These inventions not only decreased the cost of travel, but more importantly decreased the time it took to travel vast distances (Dulles 1966).

In the field of anthropology, however, ethnography has largely ignored the expatriate. This is explicitly true in the classics of anthropology. Malinowski describes some local whites living in the Trobriand Islands as “men who had lived for years in the place with constant opportunities of observing the natives and communicating with them, and yet hardly knew one thing about them” (Malinowski 1984[1922]:5). In *Return to Laughter*, Elenore Smith Bowen had an encounter with the local colonial administrator

before she went off into the bush (1964). The expatriate official offered her supplies, and advice, as well as occasionally intervening in certain situations, but is usually absent. Interestingly, he apparently plays an important role in the affairs of the village in which Bowen lives, but he is not examined in any detail. A similar argument could be made about Evans-Pritchard's book, *The Nuer* (1969[1940]). The colonial administration is completely absent, though it is through them that Evans-Pritchard received access to his field site (Singer 1990). Collin Turnbull's account of the Mbuti in *The Forest People* provides a glimpse into the lives of expatriates, though this is somewhat of an exception to the general trend (1961). Turnbull focuses on missionaries, each of whom has a different perspective on the African peoples, some wishing to help anyone, others favoring only those that have converted to Christianity. Such an overview of classic ethnographies reveals that expatriates are, in general, conspicuously absent from the work of anthropologists. Instead, the anthropologists focus primarily on the exotic and ignore how the expatriate's presence is causing social change in the observed groups.

Recently, anthropology is beginning to change this trend. One example is the study of migrant groups in the United States. Paul Stoller's book, *Money Has No Smell*, focuses on an expatriate group, the Songhay speaking traders of Africa, who are living in New York and how they interact with other migrant groups and local Americans. However, this group of people is not referred to as expatriates and would not likely identify themselves as such, at least in the context of a European or American expatriate. Paige West's book *Conservation is Our Government Now*, provides an in depth examination of expatriates. Yet, expatriates exist primarily through the eyes of the Gimi,

the local peoples of New Guinea, who have to interact with them on a daily basis. Nonetheless, this is a far greater examination of expatriates than has been provided by Malinowski, Bowen, or Evans-Pritchard.

Expatriates have also been studied by contemporary British anthropologists. Two recent examples illuminate this point: Anne-Meike Fetcher's *Transnational Lives: Expatriates in Indonesia* and Karen O'Reilly's *The British on the Costa Del Sol*. Anne-Meike Fetcher conducted fieldwork in the city of Jakarta, Indonesia. She suggests that Jakarta is a city of contrasts: rich and poor, modern and old, and that this makes the city a good place to examine expatriates because this contrast of physical features fundamentally structures the lives of the expatriates living there (Fetcher 2007: 12). Anne-Meike Fetcher is very specific about whom she is studying. She says that she is "studying-up," focusing on expatriates who have been posted abroad through multinational corporations. This sometimes created problems for Fetcher, because she felt that she had a difficult time being accepted due to her desire to willingly come to Indonesia and her low income. Fetcher focuses almost exclusively on expatriate women, not because they are more important, but because they did not work and were available for more interviews. Also, women are the ones who "re-create national or regional cultures abroad" and that they "often interact within the community more than men" (32). Men, on the other hand, focus primarily on work. Along with men, Fetcher tends to ignore local Indonesians because, as she states, "local Indonesians are absent from the text because they are in general absent from expatriates' lives" (11). She also left out

Asian expatriates, in favor of European descended expatriates (primarily Americans, Germans, and Britons), because of substantial living differences.

Karen O'Reilly conducted fieldwork in the Costa del Sol region of Spain (2000). The town of Fuengirola was primarily composed of British expatriates and the local Spanish population. The expatriate British often own their own homes and live next door to local Spaniards (37). O'Reilly's analysis of expatriates includes a varied group of people. She originally came to Spain because the British press was creating images of expatriates who were unhappy, criminals, and elderly. To understand the reason for these images she thought it would be apt to take a flexible approach that focused on "elderly expatriates to migrants of all ages, and from permanent migration to many forms of fluid movement, including tourism" (9). She argues that to understand how the British form their identity, it is necessary to understand how all of these people interact.

While book length ethnographies on expatriates have been sparse, shorter examinations of expatriates have been more plentiful. A few examples show that expatriates are a diverse group and the methods used to study them are equally as broad. In order to study members of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), it was necessary for Anne Coles to be on the "inside" (Coles 2007:127). Coles explains that she was, in the past, a wife of a British diplomat but did not perform this anthropological inquiry until after her husband had left the service. Nonetheless, Coles' experience as an expatriate was essential to her gaining the required rapport to conduct interviews in such a private organization. While she set out to study spouses of diplomats in general, her main respondents were educated women. Her study thus leaves out men who were

spouses to women diplomats, though this was not by choice. Coles used focus groups and surveys to understand common experiences of members of the FCO who lived in various countries.

As we have seen, expatriate Britons have been studied mainly by British anthropologists. Yet, American anthropologists have recently begun to study American expatriates. Lisa Porter's examination of U.S. expatriates in Costa Rica reveals that one way to examine expatriates may be through the lens of transnational migration (2009). She explains that expatriates exist in a space in which ties to the home country are engaged on a daily basis. Thus, U.S. expatriates live in a setting where they are constantly shifting between two national characters and ideals. This duality leads expatriate Americans to form closed groups, often ignoring the local peoples while at the same time believing that they are actively engaged with them.

Daniella Arieli studied expatriates in Beijing, China. She describes herself as an expat wife who lived in Beijing for a year and a half, who "personally witnessed and experienced this special situation" (Arieli 2007:19). Like Fetcher, Arieli studies up, conducting research on the wives of international organization or embassy staff members. She leaves out expatriates of lower incomes such as teachers. There is very little mention of local people except as domestics who clean the houses of the expatriates. Her primary methods of inquiry were participant observation and in-depth interviews.

James Farrer lived in Shanghai, China for three years. Farrer attempts to understand relationships between expatriate men and Chinese women who have moved to Shanghai (2004). In particular, the expatriate men were long-term residents and social

elites. While Farrer leaves out many of the expatriate voices, he includes the voices of Chinese women who are interested in foreign men. Farrer conducted interviews from informants obtained through both foreign and Chinese friends as well as ads placed in a local English language magazine.

These studies suggest several crucial themes. One is that anthropologists living overseas often come into contact with expatriates through their fieldwork as well as through personal acquaintances. Another is the heterogeneity of expatriate populations, ranging from government officials and businesspeople, to retirees. This heterogeneity of expatriates around the world is paralleled by multiple methods in which to approach the expatriate question. Different types of expatriates in different physical and social settings require different ethnographic styles. Modern anthropologists have begun to actively engage this diverse group of peoples and have laid the foundation for further study through their examinations of the interactions between other expatriates and local peoples and how boundaries are used in both public and private.

INTERACTIONS AND SEPARATION

The ethnographies examined have shown that there is little interaction among expatriates and locals. However, while there is little interaction, both expatriates and locals are constantly aware of each other. For example, Paige West, in her book *Conservation is Our Government Now*, examines how the Gimi of Papua New Guinea interact with white expatriates who work for conservation organizations (2006). To the Gimi, white people are humorless and clumsy. The Gimi attribute this to the fact that

expatriates are serious all of the time and do not know how to have fun. Expatriates, on the other hand, also construct narrow definitions of the Gimi. This is primarily seen in the literature produced by conservation groups who describe the Gimi as living in an exploitive and primitive society. West's examination of how both local populations and expatriates view each other reveals that their conceptions of the other are based on limited interactions. She argues that these limited interactions are usually based on the fact that each group has limited language capabilities and thus cannot communicate and gain a broader perspective.

The literature on expatriate communities suggests similarities between these expatriates in Papua New Guinea and other expatriate groups throughout the world. Fetcher, for example, describes a phenomenon known as the "gaze of the Other" (2007:72). The gaze is a primary space for expatriate-Indonesian interactions. The "gaze of the Other" involves a process in which Indonesians stare at expatriates, usually in public, and call them *bule* or foreigner. Expatriates perform the gaze also, but usually at a safe distance and in secrecy. The gaze is a way in which the two groups interact and can even be called a "visual dialogue." In Indonesia, Fetcher indicates this is the primary means of communication between expatriates and local Indonesians.

The British living in Spain have a closer relationship with the local Spanish, but there is still a degree of separation between the two groups. The "gaze of the Other" is less prominent and the more permanent British residents in Spain describe themselves as "integrated" (O'Reilly 2000:101). These integrated Britons attend local festivals and have Spanish friends, at least on a superficial level. In China as well, expatriates have a wide

variety of relationships with the locals. While expatriates have difficulty interacting with the Chinese population in general, they have an easier time getting to know Chinese women who are already on the fringes of Chinese society (Farrer 2004).

Despite these examples, one shortcoming of the literature is that it fails to actively engage this conversation between the expatriate and local communities. Many anthropologists have failed to understand the analytic tension between integration and separation. Instead, anthropologists should embrace this dilemma because they themselves have lived it. To correct this issue and to create a more dynamic process I propose that anthropologists examining expatriate communities should recognize and take advantage of what I call the anthropologist-expatriate paradox. The paradox is that an anthropologist conducting research on expatriate communities in fact becomes an expatriate while doing the research.

FRAGMENTS, BOUNDARIES, HOMES

The study of globalization is a good place to start when examining expatriates and expatriate communities. Globalization can be seen as a dialogue between multiple, often competing forces (Kellner 2002, Giddens 2003). As globalization becomes entrenched in the world economic system, flows between geographic locations bring both positive and negative effects to both the sending and receiving countries. The result of these competing forces is the creation of disjuncture (Appadurai 1996). The continual adjustments of the global economy result in disjunctures of the economy, culture, and politics where new values are created and reassigned to existing signs and symbols. An

object or idea's original meaning becomes lost and replaced with another meaning.

Scholte argues that the result of globalization has been the fragmentation and deterritorialization of peoples and their identity (1996). People no longer see themselves as having a single identity rooted in a place, instead they take on multiple identities and "location becomes no more than a moment of social experience isolated in time and space" (Scholte 1996:595).

An examination of expatriate teachers in Poland, for example, reveals that the processes of fragmentation and deterritorialization have left expatriates in marginal positions even though they have comparatively high status and pay compared to the local population (Johnston 1999). Teaching English is a means to live abroad rather than a desired occupation. However, once arriving overseas, teachers often have a continuing desire to travel to other places but find themselves unable to leave a particular place. These paradoxes manifest themselves in Scholte's concept of multiple identities in which location and time lose meaning. Johnston illustrates this by describing how these expatriate teachers in Poland do not have cohesive life stories, yet try to maintain that they do. Expatriate teachers try to justify to themselves that they have made and are continuing to make strategic decisions as part of a life plan, always planning to make the next move, but often finding themselves unable to act.

The fragmented identity of expatriate teachers can be seen in the ways in which they create, maintain, and negotiate boundaries. Boundaries serve to both include and exclude physical places, social groups, and cultural ideas. This notion has been taken up by many anthropologists. Evans-Pritchard, for example, explains how groups shift and

encompass different things depending on time and space (Evans-Pritchard 1969[1940]). Thus depending on time and location, a “group” can actually consist of different people and places. For expatriates the creation of boundaries is especially crucial, allowing expatriates to create an expatriate identity and exclude those who are seen as different. Expatriates negotiate boundaries through both social organization and the manipulation of physical spaces. Anne-Meike Fetcher, for example, describes how expatriates are “fundamentally concerned with the production and negotiation of boundaries” (2007:104). She describes how clubs and associations are one method expatriates use to create a shared identity and differentiate themselves from “the Other.” On the one hand, international clubs attempt to sharpen the overall boundaries between expatriates and locals. On the other hand, national clubs, both excluded expatriates who were not from the same country of origin and often exclude members who had local wives, thus sharpening the divide between national categories. While these clubs create boundaries between expatriates and locals, they also allow “true” expatriates to transgress these boundaries and experience the host country, albeit a simulated one. This transgression takes place in the form of organized tours of the countryside or lectures on cultural practices. Coles observed a similar practice by Foreign Service members which often involved the consumption of local foods in a safe and sterile environment (2007).

Another way to look at boundaries is to examine buildings and public spaces. Boundaries are manifestations of social classifications which are based on a set of customs and rules (R. Lawrence 1996). Boundaries can be physical or symbolic, impermeable or fluid. For example, a boundary could be a steel fence or it could be the

idea of not going where you think that you do not belong. Buildings provide a prime location to study boundaries because they have both explicit and implicit functions. The walls and doors represent spatial organization and shelter from the environment and also serve as a site for the expression and reproduction of status. Physical locations provide an ample space for the examination of expatriate lives because they can be altered, to certain degrees, by outsiders who refashion physical structures to suit their perceived notion of what they should look like (D. Lawrence 1996). This may take the form of enclosing a patio or simply attaching a flagpole. Physical spaces can be appropriated and values reassigned when a new occupant enters that space.

Public spaces also provide an opportunity to see how boundaries are constructed and transversed. Pellow, for example, examines how the street in China is not part of one's "intimate society and culture" and therefore one can behave as if no one is around (1996:126). However, when in a private setting it is necessary to behave and act according to society's rules because others of importance are around. Public spaces can also be used for different things at different times. In an examination of Costa Rican plazas, Low demonstrates that different activities take place in the same location depending on the time of day (1996).

The private space of the home is also a vital setting for examining boundaries. The home is both a physical construction and a familiar environment. This is especially true when people are living in unconventional living arrangements (Rodman and Cooper 1996), and such unconventional living arrangements are a hallmark of the expatriate experience. Living in a foreign country with little or no social support requires the

expatriate to adapt to new “home” conditions that can be dramatically different from the country of origin. What makes a house a home; however, is a complex issue. Evans-Pritchard, for example, explains that the Nuer word *Cieng*, which means home, has different values depending on the situation in which it is spoken (Evans-Pritchard 1969[1940]:136). As the Nuer move to different physical spaces, associate with different people, and inhabit different places at different times, the meaning of home changes. Thus, “home” can be in multiple locations at any one time depending on the context and location of the speaker. Americans living overseas are in the same position of having multiple “homes” as they maintain relationships with people across time and space. They often preserve connections in the country of origin as they also try to establish themselves in another location. Home thus can have several values attached to it. It can be a physical space such as a house, a cognitive idea that does not necessarily exist in the physical world, or a specific place where the physical and the cognitive intersect. Home could come to mean a house or a country, a family or a community, or a combination of any of these. One of the key issues for expatriates is what they identify as home. By examining what home means to someone living abroad, we can determine the degree in which an expatriate is interacting with or separated from their country of origin, and the society in which they are now living.

These issues of “home” have been studied by many anthropologists. However, as with expatriates, anthropologists often center on exotic homes made by distant peoples. Ted Bestor, for example, has examined housing patterns in the Japanese metropolis of Tokyo (1989). In his ethnography, the local community and the notion of specific place

are vital in a large cosmopolitan city. Housing types in China, as another example, vary in both construction and social implications. The analysis of three types of housing indicates how the physical construction of a building can alter social interactions (Pellow 1993, Fleischer 2007). The anthropology of the Western home has been studied to a lesser extent, but nonetheless is crucial in understanding how expatriates carry their idea of home with them as they travel abroad. In Irene Cieraad's edited volume *At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*, several theories of domestic home creation are explored. In the foreword, John Short explains that the home is "rife with ambiguities and ... a place of paradoxes" (1999). The volume goes on to articulate many of these ambiguities and paradoxes. Among others, the home: embraces both physical and social space (Munro and Madgin 1999); is a place where corporate and domestic decisions interact (Shove 1999); and is both technologically and naturally constructed (Putman 1999).

Home however is much more than a house; it is a community and a country. Many expatriates comment that when visiting or moving back to their country of origin, they experience dissatisfaction and want to "return home." After an expatriate German couple visited Germany they said, "We go to Germany, we're just having a stressful time, but home is here, in Jakarta" (Fetcher 2007:116). The British in Spain tended to be more hesitant about calling Spain their home, often contradicting themselves, but eventually agreeing that "home" was in Spain (O'Reilly 2000:58). The hesitancy is crucial considering that many Britons had to sell their houses in Britain, in order to fund their retirement in Spain, thus suggesting that your "home" country must also include a

residential house. Some British expatriates considered it to be their home to such an extent that they expressed their desire to be buried in Spain. Many British diplomats frowned on “home postings” which would mean a return to the UK (Coles 2007:141). Indicating that the UK had lost its relationship with what they considered to be their current home.

An interesting paradox in the nature of “home” is that expatriates tend to dissociate themselves from their country of origin, but they recreate the country of origin in and through their housing. In Indonesia, Fetcher noticed two patterns of home decoration. Some expatriates, especially those who had been there for shorter periods of time, decorated their homes with ethnic artifacts such as tourist items and markers of the local culture (Fetcher 2007). However, as time abroad increased, there was an increase in the amount of domestic artifacts that reminded people of their country of origin, and that these artifacts became more prominent. In Spain, as another example, the British expatriates often traveled to Gibraltar, a British colony, in order to buy British products such as tea and other home-products (O’Reilly 2000).

When examining the home through the expatriate lens it is important to realize that there are multiple “homes” of residence and attachment, both here and there. Furthermore, the home in the country of origin is continuously changing even when the expatriate is away (Storti 2003). The lives of family and friends are continuing even when the expatriate is abroad. This fact is usually ignored by the expatriate as he or she is busy recreating another home while living overseas and creates a point of disassociation

when visiting or permanently moving back to the country of origin. The concept of home is thus continually changing in multiple places and by multiple people simultaneously.

APPROACH

The work of Anne-Meike Fetcher provides a particularly good starting point for this thesis. While her focus is primarily on British expatriates, her work suggests that Britons and other Western expatriates have many similarities. Thus, her method is applicable to the research on American expatriates. Her work examines how expatriates create boundaries both physically and socially. Expatriate housing conditions, eating habits, and social groups all affect how expatriates negotiate boundaries. The factors that affect the expatriates in Fetcher's book, however, may be limited to what she calls "corporate" expatriates. Instead, I thus examine expatriates who are in closer contact with local peoples, both physically and socially. This will complement the literature, which to date has focused on the upper crust of expatriate living, showing how expatriates comprise a heterogeneous group even when examined within a single nationality.

My approach to understanding expatriates is also grounded in the approach of Paige West who argues that a dialogical model is the best approach to understanding how groups of people see each other (2006). However, since the two groups are often unable to communicate with each other in more than a limited fashion, these conceptions of each other are often a cause for the creation of separation and distance. Anne-Meike Fetcher reinforces this as she describes how expatriates are "fundamentally concerned with the production and negotiation of boundaries" (2007:104). Limited interactions (between

both the local peoples and expatriates from other countries) perpetuate the creation of boundaries, both socially (clubs and friends) and physically (house and food consumption). In addition, I engage Renato Rosaldo's theory that to understand a culture it is necessary for the anthropologist to have experienced the same set of circumstances as those who are being observed (1989). By building on these approaches I propose the anthropologist-expatriate paradox and suggest that it is a particularly conducive approach to understanding expatriates.

The paradox is this: on the one hand, anthropologists are, by virtue of living abroad, expatriates. They have left their country of origin to resettle, albeit temporarily, in a foreign place. Thus, the anthropologists are in fact studying what they themselves have become. On the surface, this appears to go against traditional anthropological methods in which the anthropologist's goal is to study "the Other." However, upon closer examination, the anthropologist, while being an expatriate, is nonetheless often on the outside of the expatriate group, which can be a tight-knit community with elaborate rules for membership and inclusion. By engaging this paradox, anthropologists can use the cognitive changes that they experience as expatriates to understand how the "Other expatriate" engages the culture and people of the host country.

The anthropologist-expatriate paradox may be best employed when studying expatriates of a similar economic and social situation as the anthropologist. Anne Meike-Fetcher, in contrast, chose to examine corporate expatriates and was thus unable to use her knowledge as an expatriate (who lived in close contact with local Indonesians) to understand corporate expatriates, whose lifestyles were fundamentally different than hers.

The advantage of studying expatriates of equal status is that anthropologists can more fully use their lived experiences to better understand how expatriates negotiate boundaries in both the public and private sphere.

Through that anthropologist-expatriate paradox, this thesis examines how American expatriates create their home and boundaries while overseas. I utilized a four-pronged research approach. First was a thorough library search to understand various topics including expatriates (especially ethnographies of expatriates as well as their role in ethnographies of other peoples), housing and home, and boundaries. This included an analysis of newspapers, especially the foreign press, to understand to what extent expatriates were being discussed.

Second was a series of semi-structured interviews with Americans who have lived abroad for a minimum of six months. The six-month period was set as a minimum because this allowed for expatriates to become immersed in their host country, having time to realize that they would have to cope with their surroundings due to the fact that they were unable to immediately return to the United States. This sample consisted of returnees as well as those still living abroad. Both segments provided similar data because the questions focused on living conditions and interactions while living abroad. The interviews did not focus on how their lives had changed since they returned, but they did have the opportunity to express these ideas.

Third was a review of information on the Internet. Expatriates are using the Internet to keep in touch with news and information from the home country, news and information about their host country, and information about living in other countries with

sizeable expatriate populations. Internet web forums provided many insights into the types of questions expatriates have as well as a place for expression of what they miss or want. The Internet can be seen as a community of expatriates and therefore should be examined (Wilson and Peterson 2002).

Fourth was participant-observation fieldwork in Shanghai and Beijing, People's Republic of China. I chose the People's Republic of China partly because of my own familiarity with it, but also because the coastal centers of this country provide an excellent place to understand the fragmentation process of globalization (Sholtze 1996). The business center of Shanghai is at the heart of the confluence of western capitalism and Chinese socialism. I conducted three weeks of participant-observation observing social gatherings, physical buildings, and public spaces. In particular, I observed a large expatriate New Year's Eve celebration, shopping areas and restaurants that cater to expatriates, and shopping areas and restaurants that cater to local Chinese but which expatriates visit on occasion. The analysis focused on the physical construction of spaces and how expatriates negotiated these physical settings. I examined in detail physical structures, signage, and cleanliness. Social interactions were also examined. I interacted with local sales people and pedestrians in general. While this limited time frame was not enough to do a complete seasonal account of the expatriate life-cycle; it provided useful ethnographic evidence to complement the interviews.

Chapter two begins the examination of expatriates. My arrival in China coincided with the New Year celebrations for 2010 and attendance at a large celebration for expatriates serves as the springboard to understand how boundaries are created and

crossed—and what an expatriate is like when amongst large groups of other expatriates. The third chapter entitled, “Out and About,” presents the other side of public interactions. Unlike large annual celebrations, expatriates must live in a world where daily interactions take place. An analysis of everyday occurrences in public places will illuminate how boundaries are constantly shifting on a daily basis. Primary sites for examination will be the travel space between work and residence, shopping areas, and restaurants.

After negotiating boundaries in public life, expatriates return to their house where they have more control. Chapter four, “At Home” will examine the physical space that expatriates inhabit while living overseas. In addition to the physical aspects of the building and the objects that are in it, this chapter will look at how boundaries are continually reinforced by expatriates once they leave the public sphere. This chapter will particularly look at how the home is either closed off to the outside or opened up to let elements of the host country in.

The fifth and final chapter will provide a summary of the key characteristics of American expatriates and how they go about negotiating boundaries in their host country. Perhaps the most crucial themes are the varying constructions of “home” (as both a physical place and a cognitive idea), the ways in which globalization has had multiple effects on teachers, and how teachers must negotiate between the ideas of Western and Chinese.

CHAPTER 2: TO THE BUND

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I look at how American expatriate teachers in China negotiate boundaries at one specific event. I do this by describing a New Year's Eve party that was held in the heart of colonial Shanghai. This chapter will illustrate that boundaries are evident physically and socially, as well as between groups and within groups. The restaurant that the event was held at physically separated those who could afford to enter and those who could not. In addition, once at the party, expatriate groups tended to stay apart from locals who attended. I will also make the case that American teachers should be looked at as a distinct segment within the expatriate group based on their own expressed opinions. Yet, teachers also should still be considered expatriates because they share many characteristics, including financial status and both physical and social separation from "locals."

ARRIVING IN SHANGHAI

On the airplane waiting for it to receive permission to leave the gate at Newark International Airport and head for the runway, I had the good fortune to sit next to two teachers returning to Shanghai (上海) after a winter vacation visiting their families in New York City. Emily and Randy were married and both were in their early thirties. They taught at a British school in Shanghai, he teaching in the high school, she in the

primary. As we started to pull away from the terminal, Randy said to Emily, “We are finally going home! I wonder if *Star Trek* is out on DVD there yet.” “Of course it is. We saw it for sale here in the United States,” was Emily’s response. As the plane took off for China, we settled in for the long flight over Canada, the Arctic, and down through Russia; the gleam of ice and frozen earth was the only visual distraction from the plastic of the airplane and the continual succession of movies.

Landing at Pudong International Airport on a cold Tuesday afternoon filled me with a sense of trepidation. Why did I come back? Will it be as I remember? Is my Chinese still functional? It was 3:00 PM and I had one goal: get into the city and try to find my friend’s apartment before it got dark. At this time of year the sunset is early: a few minutes before 5:00 PM. I buckled my backpack and grabbed my travel bag heading for the Mag-Lev train bound for the city. At the terminal there were dozens of posters featuring a blue-shaped figure with a slicked-back wave reminiscent of hair. A pair of big eyes, a smile half the size of its face, and an up-stretched right arm are the characteristics of Hai Bao, the official mascot of 2010 World Expo. The Mag-Lev train provides an alternative means to get to the airport. Touted as an experiment, there were once plans for an intricate system of magnetic trains throughout China. Currently, however, the short span from the Pudong Airport to a connecting subway station on Line 2 is the only such train in China. Zooming through Pudong New Area (浦东新区, *pudong xin qu*), I saw on my right the construction of an extension to subway Line 2. This new expansion will provide a direct link from the airport to the city’s subway system, albeit at a much slower pace. After fifteen minutes, and a maximum speed of 431 kilometers per hour, the train

stopped at the subway station. I transferred to the subway and was off to my destination station located in the heart of Shanghai.

The weather was cold but pleasant. Expecting the pollution dome of fall and winter, when the sky is perpetually orange, I was surprised to find the sky relatively clear—not quite blue but certainly not orange. Carrying two bags of luggage on the crowded sidewalks of downtown Shanghai was no easy task—uneven sidewalks, puddles of spittle, and the ever present slow moving white hair of the many crouched over *nai nai* (奶奶, grandmother) shuffling along, many whose eyes barely left the pavement. As I moved hurriedly through the twists and turns, following the printed directions, I arrived at what I thought was my place of residence in the city. I had made the trip and it had taken only one hour. To my dismay, no one was home and I was forced to sit on the steps for another hour before my friend approached in the distance, bundled up against the cold of the quickly setting sun.

I arrived in Shanghai on December 29th after nearly thirty hours of flight, layovers, and waiting in lines, I had reached my destination—a swanky apartment that my friend had just recently rented. The two of us spent that first evening watching episodes of an American TV drama on DVD and drinking beers. My meal that night was an expensive, yet pitiful meal of Italian style pasta. I, half-exhausted and delirious from travel and what appeared to be the symptoms of dehydration, managed to stay awake much later than I should have.

The next day began the search for what it was like to be an American teacher in China. Though I had not been in the profession, nor in the country, for almost two years,

I thought I knew where to begin. I would spend the day exploring the neighborhood of the area that I was to call home for the next two and a half weeks; Thomas had the pleasure of going to work—having no paid leave makes playing hooky an expensive endeavor.

AN EXPAT PARTY

The next day we began to contemplate how to spend New Year's Eve. We looked online and in expat magazines to try to find something that would be interesting, likely to have a large number of expats, and that would not be over the top. I combed through *City Weekend* magazine to find something to do. The issue for December 17th to January 6th had a red and white background with a red-headed Caucasian model on the cover. She was wearing a Santa Clause hat that had the words "Merry Christmas" embroidered on the front. Her large open-mouth smile was peeking out from behind a stack of five presents—all wrapped and tied with ribbon. On the cover, the headlines mostly concerned Christmas and New Year's related events as well as restaurant and travel destinations. The top left hand corner claimed my attention "Best New Year's Eve Parties." I flipped through a classified section highlighting place, time, theme, and cost of admission to fourteen New Year's related events. Thomas floated a suggestion that we join a group of teachers and their friends who were renting a bus to take them to various destinations culminating at a ritzy location for the celebrations at midnight. However, indecision was rife and we agreed to postpone any commitments until the next day.

In the early afternoon of the following day, we met with a group of teachers who lived in a building across the compound courtyard. Three teachers lived together in a two-bedroom apartment on the twentieth floor, with a stunning view of the city. Facing north, the window provided an unobstructed view for at least a kilometer of the city. Looking below, one could see smaller apartment buildings of five stories and the classic tiled roofs of Shanghai *shikumen* (石库门)—a scene that is becoming rare as they are replaced by modern high-rise apartment buildings. These three teachers' plan was to go to a restaurant on the Bund for the evening—a one-price event that featured all you could drink and a fantastic view of the fireworks. We told them that we would see them there.

After leaving the teachers' apartment, we headed for an upscale complex located in the heart of the French Concession. After a thirty-minute taxi ride, we turned off onto a smaller tree-lined road. High iron fences and magnificent evergreen trees led to a gate into a large apartment compound. We passed by a private parking garage where black Buicks sat silently and a group of uniformed drivers chatted together. The taxi pulled right up to the building and a large glass door waited for us to enter. Inside the door, a large corridor with mirrors rising two stories high greeted us. The guard, sitting at the far end of the corridor looked up and then went back to work. We passed along the marble tiled floor and through another corridor to the elevator. The ride in the elevator was quick and the doors opened into a wood-paneled hallway. Each door in the hallway had molding around it and a small button for the doorbell. We were visiting a friend who was housesitting for her employer who happened to be a doctor. The high salaries of some expatriates, such as this doctor, enable lavish decoration of their homes. The apartment

was decorated with high-end Chinese antiques. Large wardrobe-style furniture made out of red-polished wood served as the primary pieces. These cabinets had many doors and drawers, most of which were inlaid with copper plating. In the middle of the room was a large Persian rug measuring approximately 1.8 meters x 3 meters. Intricately woven patterns of flowers covered the black field and red trim of the rug. Around the large rug were two sofas of soft yellow fabric. A glass table sat in the middle with coffee table-size books on Shanghai and the architecture of the French Concession. A smaller red Turkmen rug with geometrical designs covered a shorter hallway. The rugs covered most of the dark wooden floor in the living room. The only area not covered was the dining area and the entrance hallway. On the walls and on the furniture were ornate pieces of art. A Chinese style painting of three identical women—all in matching face paint and ornate costumes—was positioned next to the dining area. A silver western-style tea set sat on a trunk while an exquisitely crafted belt of a Chinese minority hung stately in a shadow box on the wall.

We ate dinner and then left, taking the elevator back down to the lobby. There we asked the guard to call us a taxi, which he did. The two of us sat on a couch and looked up at the opposing mirrors—the infinite reflection of the mirrors provided some relief as we waited for the arrival of our transportation to the Bund. About twenty minutes passed and still the taxi had not arrived. A young Asian woman (who appeared to be more Southeast Asian than Chinese) then walked through the doors—apparently arriving by foot. As she walked up to the guard desk, the doorman pulled out a notebook and handed it to her. Without saying a word, she signed it and then proceeded down the hall towards

the elevator. Apparently, she had to sign in to enter the building. On the other hand, the two of us had simply walked right by the front desk when we entered the building. This type of exchange is quite common in China. Race and class often determine what areas are accessible and what services are provided without formalities.¹ We waited for another ten minutes when the guard must have noticed our dismay. “*Wanshang shi xinnian jie. Chuche hen mang,*” (晚上是新年节. 出车很忙., Tonight is New Year’s Eve. The taxis are very busy.) said the guard to us in Chinese. “*Meiguanxi,*” (没关系, It is not a big deal.) was our reply as we sank back onto the couch. But a taxi arrived not too long after our short exchange with the guard, although possibly not the one the guard called for us. Two people got out of the taxi and entered the building and we pounced for the now empty taxi. “*Waitan,*” (外滩) we blurted out to the driver. To the Bund.

ON THE BUND

As I stepped out of the taxi on Zhongshan Dong Yi Lu² (中山东一路) I immediately noticed two things—the splendor of the old colonial buildings and the new modern skyscrapers of Pudong’s Lujiazui (陆家嘴) across the Huangpu River (黄浦江, *Huangpu Jiang*). The bright pink and green neon lights of Lujiazui provided a stark

¹ Interestingly, several years earlier I had experienced the reverse of this in rural central China when I became stranded in a small town off the tourist path. I was only allowed to enter into a small worker’s hotel after I had signed an “official” book. My name, however, was the only name on the registrar even though the hotel was full.

² Chinese road names are based on a system referring to common places throughout the country. Most Chinese cities use the same set of names for labeling their roads. In addition to the name the second part, in this case “dong”, refers to direction. “Lu” on the other hand translates to road. So “Zhongshan” refers to a place (the middle mountain), “dong” direction (east), and “lu” means road. So it translates to The Middle Mountain East Road or East Zhongshan Road, as it is called in English.

contrast to the yellowish-brown stone of the old customs house and banking buildings of the Bund. Between the towering skyscrapers of Lujiazui off in the distance and the stately buildings of the Bund lay Zhongshan Lu which was, as with much of Shanghai, currently undergoing redevelopment for the 2010 World Expo.

The only place to get out of the taxi was in the middle of the street due to the piles of debris: broken concrete blocks, piles of dirt, and wheelbarrows tipped on their sides that littered what was the sidewalk. After walking around these signs of development we were out of the road, but hardly on anything that could be recognized as a sidewalk. It was so narrow that barely three people could walk abreast. To get by we had to precariously hop; looking intently at the ground so as not to trip over another person's foot, paving stones (that once made up a mosaic pattern of concrete blocks that is characteristic of Chinese walkways), a worker's hoe, a deeper hole in the already uneven ground, or just a pile of trash. All of this was in an area where most of the streetlights were removed. The only sources of light coming from the buildings, whose windows all seemed to have a layer of grime, was the ever present reflected glow of Lujiazui. Yet hundreds of Chinese people milled in both directions. Middle-aged couples walking hand in hand were huddled closely together in the blistering cold. Younger Chinese clustered in groups walking as a phalanx where possible, in pairs where the broken concrete obstructed the pathway. The gold lettering of one young Chinese girl's black hat glimmered in the sparse light shining through the windows of the China Merchants Company Building, Number 9 on the Bund. Her cap fitted snugly over a long flow of black curly hair. A shiny silver jacket buttoned up tightly, large belt, and black denim

jeans tucked into black leather knee-high boots rounded out her outfit. Her male companion walked next to her, carrying a leather bag, his hair as meticulously styled as hers with a sharp greased-down lock over his left eye. His denim jeans were blue, however, and his shoes Converse All-Stars.

The entrance to Three on the Bund was located on Guangdong Lu (广东路), directly off of Zhongshan Dong Yi Lu. The door to the entrance was a massive set of opposing glass doors that were opened by two smartly dressed Asian men wearing large black overcoats. Gliding over the gray colored marble floors, we noticed our reflections bouncing off the sleek black marble walls. The two story vaulted ceilings made the entranceway seem vast, however the long yet orderly line, wrapped around and doubled back, left a sense of claustrophobia. Perhaps one hundred people were in line wearing stylish but casual clothing—sports coats, ties, and sweaters for the men; cocktail dresses and furs for the women. The party was at New Heights located on the seventh floor of the building. To get to the restaurant one had to pass through a series of stations, ultimately ending at the elevator. While it was not a line in the strictest sense, for it was more like small groups of four or five people moving in conjunction with the other groups, it nonetheless was orderly and moving in a coherent fashion. First stop, a place to check your coat. There were three racks located at the end of the reception area. This was the spot where the line reached the apex of the U-turn. Coat racks—which were only half-full—were on all sides.

As we made the turn, a desk was set up on and we paid 350 RMB (人民币, The People's Money) to get a ticket. The ticket was primarily gold and blue in color. Gold is

around the trim on the front face, while blue made up the center and proclaimed the “Absolute Rocks Express Yourself New Year’s Eve Party 2009” and its sponsorship by Absolute Vodka. The ride up the elevator was packed, ten people all decked out in fine fashion, the smell of perfume filling the small, enclosed space. As the elevator opened, one last checkpoint was left to cross. Two young Chinese women checked the tickets that were just bought, tearing a small rip on the left side and then examined our right hands with a black light, waving through those who passed the test.

The New Heights restaurant was divided into three areas. Passing through a long corridor we arrived in the main seating area of the restaurant. Glass tables with accompanying leather chairs and stools were placed on top of a sleek wooden floor, polished with high gloss. Metal countertops and fixtures gave the venue a sanitary feel. Small wire lights hung closely over the tables providing a personalized touch. By the time we arrived at around 10:30 PM nearly all of the seats were occupied. Asian men and women sat hunched over, conversing in the loud restaurant. However, no one was eating; this was a strictly drinking affair. Surrounding the dinning space were large glass windows running the length from the floor to the ceiling. We quickly passed through this room, for there were no seats and no drinks.

The next room was bare of furniture except for two bars. Masses of people huddled together in a space of approximately fifty square meters. At this point in the evening there were primarily western faces, all of which seemed to be aiming towards the bar to order drinks. Trying to order amongst the thirsty and not yet intoxicated push of the crowd was a task in and of itself, but trying to be heard above the rumbling tunes of

Michael Jackson's *Billy Jean* proved to be even more difficult. The event featured free flow drinks but only two types were offered. The primary drink was Absolute Vodka which could be mixed with your choice: tonic, cranberry juice, or orange juice, among other mixers. In addition, there were bottles of Tsingtao beer. Thomas ordered a beer and I a gin and cranberry. Then, as we turned around to look out the glass windows overlooking the Huangpu River, there stood a group of seven teachers chatting amongst each other. "Hey, haven't seen you for a while," exclaimed Suzy as I approached. "I know long time isn't it?" was my reply, "I just got into town the day before yesterday." Suzy had arrived in China on the same plane as I three and a half years ago. She had returned to the United States at the end of the second school year as had I. "I am so glad to be back in Shanghai. How about you?" was her next exclamation as we embraced. I replied, "Yes, but a little bit apprehensive. It is quite surreal." With a large smile she said "I know what you mean."

DRINKS, CHILDREN, AND FIREWORKS

After talking for a while, another round of drinks was in order. By 11:00 PM, the crowd had grown immensely. I looked over my left shoulder and noticed a Caucasian couple making their way from the bar back to the dining area with two children in tow. I looked back to the group of teachers who were huddling ever closer due to the increasing noise and the larger number of people in the small and progressively hotter room. I gave Suzy and Matt, who had both been looking at the young children, an inquisitive look.

With a broad grin Matt commented “I would never see that back home.” Then as a group we turned to the door that led outside.

We finally made our way into the third area of the restaurant—the deck. Upon stepping outside we immediately noticed the drop in temperature but one that was not as severe as we had expected. Placed at intervals were metal tubes holding giant lanterns which, instead of producing light, emitted heat; the hiss of gas and the accompanying flame were ever present. New Heights restaurant describes itself as the best-situated restaurant in Shanghai due to the view of the river and the dazzling light of Lujiazui that can be seen from the spacious deck. The deck comprises an L-shape; one side of the “L” overlooking the river, the other overlooking Guangdong Lu. The deck featured the only Christmas decorations of the entire restaurant. Cut out paper snowflakes were randomly attached to the glass windows. These snowflakes looked handmade and were about twenty centimeters in diameter. In addition there were two blue tinsel Christmas trees; one situated in the corner of the “L” and the other next to a door that led back inside. Aside from these decorations, there were no other Christmas decorations and there was surprisingly no reference to the New Year in either English or Chinese.

We continued conversing on the deck. I introduced myself to the group at large and began to ask the teachers what they were doing in Shanghai and whether they liked it. Some of the teachers explained that they were in the country because they could not find anything better to do. “I tried to be a DJ back at home but failed,” Jerry said raising an eyebrow as he took a drink, “So here I am.” Lindsey explained that she hated working in China. “The job hours suck, I have to work in the evenings and weekends.” Lindsey

works at an English teaching company (rather than a school) and primarily teaches kids seeking additional tutoring and adults after work. “I’d rather be in a warmer climate because it is so cold here. Next time I will go somewhere warmer,” she said with resolve. However, she was actually seeking new employment at a regular school in Shanghai. At that point, Lauren joined our conversation. This was the first year in which she had been teaching at her current school and I inquired what she would normally be doing on New Year’s Eve in America. “Watching football,” she replied, “we always go to see a football game this time of year.”

At approximately 11:30 PM, one lone firework went off from the ground level to the east. Everyone stopped talking to look in the firework’s direction but soon realized that it was not quite midnight yet. Outside on the deck the crowd continued to increase. The majority of faces were white. There were Asian faces, mostly women, but the foreigners predominated. In the dining room however, people were almost entirely Asians. Not a single white face was to be seen.

Back on the deck an amazing sight was beginning to unfold. From behind the glowing pink and white orbs of the Oriental Pearl Tower and the spires of Jin Mao arose hundreds of red glowing paper lanterns. Slowly wafting upward, they quickly surpassed the antenna of the Pearl Tower. Rising gracefully against the black backdrop of the night sky, many people followed them upwards with their eyes. As the final minute of the old year arrived, the Aurora building’s clock began to count down the seconds. From beyond Suzhou Creek (苏州河, *suzhou he*) the fireworks erupted and champagne was sprayed by employees of the restaurant. Teachers, who seconds before had been counting down the

last moments with their cups held high, began to light cigars that were sold on trays just minutes before. Amid the celebration what remained of a bright red floating lantern came drifting down just feet from the deck's edge—a small black sheet of paper gliding downwards towards the redevelopment of Zhongshan Dong Yi Lu.

Soon after midnight, people began to leave. However, some stayed and continued to drink from the free flowing bar. Several people at this point became more talkative, affected by the euphoria of ringing in a new year and a steady supply of alcohol. Thomas ran into Mitchell who asked how the teaching was going and when Thomas had plans to return home. “Finish out the next contract and then heading home,” Thomas said. Thomas had committed to next year and had told me that he was planning to sign up for another round of two years. Then he might return to the United States. A New Zealander then joined the conversation. He was in the art business—promoting exhibitions and sales. Upon parting, he handed a business card to both of us “Aaron McNeal, M.A. Fine Arts” followed by a telephone number. He then asked us for our cards, to which we replied that we did not have any but we offered our contact information. “Oh well, I will see you guys around,” he said as he walked off to another group of men huddled around a table, arm wrestling. Further observation revealed that Aaron was attempting to ascertain the sexuality orientation of the men: arm wrestling and the business card indicating the sexual orientation and interests of the individual as well as how to get in touch later. After watching this, I gravitated back towards the remaining teachers who were by this time both weary and intoxicated.

A conversation with Matt, a veteran teacher who originally came to China in 2006 and decided to stay on, indicated that he was fed up and ready to return to the states. “I’m sick of this place. I find no more fun in teaching anymore. Instead, I dread it every day. When I get back to the U.S. I can always go and work for my old company. They will give me a job.” Matt’s gaze and thoughts were dazzled by the neon lights as he continued, “Yeah, but I am sick of it. I have been doing the exact same thing for four years now and it doesn’t change. Same subjects, same hassle from the administration.” We laughed as we turned away from the railing.

Around 2:00 AM, we made our way to the bar for another drink. However, we found the staff cleaning up empty bottles and cans of both alcohol and mixers. The bar was closed. We looked down at our ticket “Party is from 10:00 PM onwards.” Though we were expecting the drinks to continue flowing, we resigned without an argument; for we knew that it would get us nowhere. At 2:10 AM, the group of teachers split up to head back home. Thomas and I, after a forty-five minute wait standing amongst construction debris at a major intersection for a taxi, proceeded to a hot pot restaurant for spicy soup and as many meat dishes as we could identify on the menu. I requested a plate of snake and was rebuffed by the waitress, “*Ni yao she? Ni bu yao! She bu wei dao.*” (你要蛇? 你不要! 蛇不味道., You want snake? You don’t want it! Snake is not tasty.) Deciding not to make a scene I reluctantly agreed, for the waitress was stern and the hour was very late.

BOUNDARIES

The New Year's Eve party was both exciting and entertaining. The teachers at the event had a good time, were lively, and seemed to believe that what they were doing was merely a part of living in China's largest and most modern city. But, at the same time, the party reinforced the idea that American teachers in China are fundamentally separated from the local population and are, indeed, actively involved in the production and maintenance of social boundaries. These boundaries are both physical and social. The restaurant for the New Year's Eve party was situated in an old colonial building in the heart of the British enclave of old Shanghai. This building was sleek and modern on the inside. But just to the outside were piles of rubble and debris. Outside, milling around the Bund, were hordes of Chinese people walking precariously through this construction debris. At the restaurant, the American teachers were physically separated from the people and pollution down below by seven stories. Instead of having a view of the fireworks marred by fences and cranes, the revelers at the party had clear unobstructed views from one of the Bund's best vantage points. The teachers saw the fireworks with the impressive backdrop of Lujiazui and the skyscrapers built with foreign capital. In addition to being physically separated from those below, the teachers stayed segregated from other Asians at the party. With the restaurant being compartmentalized into three distinct areas, the teachers chose to be on the deck where there were the best views. Indeed the cold temperature was even pushed aside with the help of gas-powered heaters helping to create a space in which the teachers could be away from unwanted elements and people.

The boundaries created by the American teachers at the New Year's Eve party may be just coincidence. Friends and acquaintances may just be wishing to spend time with people they already know, building solidarity and camaraderie. While that may be one way to look at it, another may be to look at this separation as central to the experience of being an expatriate. As Anne-Meike Fetcher notes, expatriates are "fundamentally concerned with the production and negotiation of boundaries" (2007:104). This concern with boundaries is fundamental to the expatriate identity. So then we must ask are the teachers expatriates?

What to call the people that I chose to study has been a challenge. There are many terms to identify those who are teaching overseas. Therefore, to choose one label would be counterintuitive and would not fully take into account the many individuals who move overseas, each with his or her own personal motives and characteristics. Thus instead of creating a blanket term for the classification of Americans who live abroad, I have decided to let those to whom I have spoken describe how they see themselves and others whom they work with and meet on a daily basis.

One couple, Jane and Frank, who had been living in China for almost four years, said that they saw themselves as Americans first. However, when they told people that they were American, "Some people would ask where in America we were from. But since I am from an obscure state I just tell them that I am from near Texas. Everyone knows where Texas is." Yet this became a problem for others. Ron said, "I am from the U.S. It kind of annoys me when Americans say what state they are from. Many of my friends here are non-American and non-Chinese. So I usually just leave it at I am an

American and I teach.” Karen, who taught for two years before she and her husband returned to the United States said, “I thought of myself as a teacher.” This sentiment was echoed by many others. However some thought that this type of description did not go far enough. Garen, a tall male who was on the cusp of finishing his first year two-year contract in China, said after much thought, “I teach at an international school. I am a teacher. Some people will say ‘Oh, you are in China. You must teach English.’ No, I say, I am at an international school. Teacher is the key word, but I delineate more by saying I teach at an international school.”

Most of the people interviewed expressed some connection to their homeland or their occupation. However, some added that their religion was also an important marker to their identity. While some saw themselves as Christians, this was not something that they put forward immediately when meeting new people. However, as one new mother said, “Being a Christian is an important thing. I wouldn’t try to hide it, but some people would think you are weird if you said hi I am Jane and I am a Christian.” She continued by adding, “Saying hi I am Jane from America,” on the other hand, “would be acceptable.”

Anne-Meike Fetcher, in her book *Transnational Lives*, states that expatriate is a word that is “socially contested, politically and morally charged, ambiguous, and is linked to particular notions of ethnicity and class” (2007:6). Does this characterization of the concept describe American teachers? Everyone to whom I spoke knew the word “expatriate,” and many also used the shorthand term “expat” interchangeably. To those teaching in China, “expatriate” had many different connotations but one of the key

characteristics of expatriates in general was that it had to be “somebody who is living outside their natural country.” This was the main prerequisite of being an expat as one eight-year veteran of China put it, “So if I went to Mexico from America, I would still be an expat.” Teachers also explained that this definition encapsulated more than just Americans and included the many Asians from other countries who lived in China. Being defined as an expatriate was neither positive nor negative, but it carried along some specific features. Most of the teachers believed that being an expatriate was mainly about finances and, to a lesser extent, attitude. There was the expat package which provided incentives for foreigners to move overseas. “I think of expats as generally people who work for companies that make a lot of money and who live on the outskirts of town. They have cars and a driver,” explained one teacher who had recently married and had subsequently moved to China. Even teachers who were hired from abroad get “packages with lots of benefits” while teachers who were already living in China “get a lot less money and package.” The financial packages that many expatriates received reinforced the expatriate attitude:

A lot of people on expat packages didn't chose to come to China, their company sent them here. They are not necessarily interested in China or plan to be here for only a short period of time. There is no incentive for them to learn to Chinese. They are isolated from China and Chinese people. The people they do come into contact with on a daily basis are more likely to speak English. That is what happens when you live in gated compounds.

Indeed, another teacher agreed believing that the financial prowess of many expatriates increases the expatriate inclination towards separation. “There were not a lot of expatriates who were learning how to live like a Chinese person and absorb the culture. A lot of them may not have wanted to, they were not ready to embrace the standard of living that a lot of Chinese people have.” To make a rough comparison of the differences in incomes, for 2009 the average annual salary for a Chinese resident of Shanghai was 15,051 元 or roughly US\$2,200 (Shanghai Daily 2009). An expatriate American teacher, on the other hand, may earn around US\$35,000 to \$40,000 plus paid housing expenses. Corporate expatriates are likely to earn much more.

While many of the teachers that I spoke with had a clear view of what an expatriate was, most of them also used the term in a much more liberal way. “I use the term all the time to describe other people. It has kind of become part of the vernacular,” said one teacher. Expatriate, and its shortened partner expat, was often used in this manner to describe other people or a large group of unknown people. However, this was compounded by the fact that many teachers saw themselves as expatriates but at the same time often described that they are different from the preconceived notion of wealth and an attitude of non-integration. Because of this discrepancy, I have decided to refer to the teachers whom I interviewed as American teachers.³ This choice of words makes clear

³ Other terms that teachers used to describe themselves are: American expatriate teacher, expatriate teacher, foreign teacher, international teacher, and English teacher. American teacher acts as a blanket term to describe all of the preceding terms but, in some cases individual teachers preferred certain terms over others especially in the case of differentiating between English teacher and international teacher—although many international teachers also taught English.

that they are a distinct group from other expatriates in general, whose profession is not that of a teacher and whose nationality may or may not be American.

How then can the American teachers actively believe that they are and are not expatriates? How can they actively manage this boundary? One way to look at American teachers may be to look at them as a segment of the expatriate imagined community. Anderson (2006) argues that this is often coupled with “amnesia,” whereby there is a deliberate forgetting and reconstruction of narratives to show continuity and order in choices that are made. American teachers in Shanghai illustrate signs of this process through their definitions of what they are and are not. This is exemplified in their view of “expatriates.” To these American teachers, an expatriate was someone who was separated from the host culture by choice and had a large degree of financial and physical differentiation compared to local peoples. American teachers interviewed admittedly described themselves as different from expatriates but at the same time exhibited many of the same characteristics. Both groups had comparable financial advantages over the local population and were physically separated through barriers. Teachers also created narratives to justify to themselves their reasons for coming to and staying in China. The comments of Lindsey and Jerry illustrate that a created need for continuity is important to maintain the balance between conflicting notions of multiple identities. Their justification that they were in China because nothing else worked out, and would stay even though they claimed to dislike their profession, mirrors others who argued that teaching in China was, “The best I could do with a B.A. and no clear direction.” It seems that expatriate then is both a category of voluntary acceptance and one of necessity. By

managing this boundary, American teachers in China are able to have the benefits of the expatriate community and also the benefits of being on its fringes.

It is clear that American teachers in China are expatriates. But they do exhibit some characteristics that would allow them to be closer to the local population than would foreigners on “expat packages.” The American teacher in China does not have unlimited resources in which to maintain this degree of separation. The price of 350 RMB for a night on the Bund is affordable, but would quickly exhaust the income of most teachers if this happened on a regular basis. How does this once yearly special event reflect the everyday lives of American teachers in China? Are the teachers continually separated from the local Chinese on a daily basis or are there moments and places where this boundary is transgressed?

CHAPTER 3: OUT AND ABOUT

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I look at how boundaries are negotiated when out in public. I do this by following American teachers to the places that they visit and the areas in between. I look at the people and physical environments with which they must interact. What I found was that American teachers use a variety of methods in which to impose, manage, and transcend boundaries. To teachers, the public area of China is both a familiar and alienating area. Auditory, visual, and communicative boundaries serve to isolate teachers from perceived polluted and dangerous elements. Boundaries help teachers cope with many of the foreign elements in China.

TO GET TO WORK, ONE MUST HAVE DISTRACTION

Thomas lives in an apartment that he just recently rented. It is located in a complex of four high-rise buildings each with twenty-three floors. The complex is located near the old French Concession area of the central part of the city. This area is home to one of the city's largest temples, and provides ready opportunity to venture into both western and Chinese areas of the city. Heading towards the temple, one quickly runs into upscale shopping at a large mall, which is surrounded by foreign restaurant chains. Venture out in the opposite direction and most traces of western amenities disappear. In ten short minutes, you are completely surrounded by *shikoumen* and narrowing streets.

To get to work Thomas has a one-hour commute through the city by foot and subway. After changing out of his slippers, which have a cartoonish picture of a cow-devil on one foot and a cow-angel on the other, Thomas puts on his tennis shoes and opens the door. Immediately he feels the cold winter's air because the corridor to the elevator is open with no windows protecting the landing from nature. There is a second door which separates the two apartments from the corridor, but this door is broken and thus always open. Thomas leaves his home at 7:00 AM every weekday morning. "Any time after 7:05 and I am late," he says. Riding down the dimly lit elevator poses several problems, the most menacing of which is the giant puddle of water that is ever present and of uncertain origin. The elevator is cool, gray, and composed of sheet metal walls and linoleum green floors; the only decorations are two posters advertising laundry detergent.

On the day I joined Thomas on his commute to work, the ride was a lonely one (though on other days as many as eight people would be crammed together, along with small bundles of garbage destined to be delivered to the heap on the ground floor). As we passed the fifteenth floor, dogs could be heard barking loudly. Once the elevator stopped on the ground floor, Thomas walked purposefully down the front steps and through the courtyard. People were out doing the daily morning rounds: several men practicing *taichi* (太极), the landscaper pruning hedges with an old pair of shears, and a woman walking her dog. The dog, not on a leash, quickly ran up to me and sniffed my leg as we walked by. The dog wore a black sweater with the words "I love you" written in red English letters.

As we exited the compound of the apartment complex, we reached a secondary road. To the left, a line of four taxis patiently waited for passengers. I noticed two Caucasian faces talking on cell phones and looking around. To the right a sidewalk was beginning to be covered with parked bicycles.⁴ In order to make quick progress, as Thomas likes to do, we had to weave in and out of these slow moving pedestrians. Turning sideways along a wall or hopping on a ledge provided just enough maneuverability to pass.

While traveling through the city on his way to work Thomas prefers to listen to music. He usually keeps an iPod in his jacket pocket, the white cord noticeably connected to his ears underneath a black toboggan.

Music helps me focus. If I don't have music to focus, to help to keep aware of what I am doing, then I drift off into my thoughts. I come to five or fifteen minutes later and I realize that I have gotten to a place completely automatically. It scares the shit out of me. The music helps me to clean my mind.

Arriving at the first intersection the traffic light was in our favor. We looked and proceeded but barely avoided a motor bike whizzing though the red light. Turning left and then making a quick right, it was a straight, but still distant, shot to the metro station. We passed an air conditioner repair crew that was working on the unit of a second floor room. (In Shanghai, nearly all air conditioners are room-based units where the fan and

⁴ The sidewalks in Shanghai are often narrow and, when they have a bicycle parking area along the side of the road, the sidewalks quickly lose at least fifty percent of their walking space. This is compounded by the many people pushing strollers and couples enjoying walking arm in arm

cooling system are mounted externally on the outside wall.) There were three men working: one was on the scaffolding, another just below him on ground level handing tools and equipment up, and a third a few steps back looking on. The ground around them was strewn with sheets of metal and filings, hoses and bolts, and tools. The two of us took a step down into the street to avoid this tight bend and especially any potentially falling pieces. The Chinese, however, simply continued on the sidewalk merely walking around the parts on the ground.

The street was full of shops and vendors. There were several fruit stands as well as snack food stalls, massage parlors, and clothing shops. The bright sight of oranges in baskets titillates the eyes as the smell of *jidān bing*⁵ (鸡蛋饼) and *jiao zi* (饺子, fried dumplings) stimulates the nose. Thomas explained:

I pass by the breakfast stand every morning and get the only breakfast food I like, ji da bing. It is kind of, in a vague way, similar to a breakfast burrito. It has more of a western taste than a steamed bun with nothing in it or a chunk of unknown meat.

At the last major intersection before the metro station, there were a pair of crossing guards and a policeman. We stopped and waited for the signal to cross at this intersection; those that crossed without a signal received a sharp tongue-lashing from the guards. The sight of crossing guards was a new experience for me. Thomas commented that since the National Holiday in October, crossing guards—and the metal detectors in

⁵ Teachers also referred to this crepe-like food as *ji da bing* (鸡大饼) and *jian bing* (煎饼). I am not sure if this multi-usage of several words for the same item is a result of a foreigner's inability to communicate well or if it is based on linguistics where all three words actually mean the same thing. However, all three usages will get the same result—a hot, freshly made breakfast item.

subway stations—had been ever more common. Here we see how boundaries may be imposed from the government onto the people. American teachers, in this case, must obey the same rules as local Chinese.

We finally reached the subway station and had one little, but busy, road to cross. In the middle of this road was a middle-aged man dressed in the blue uniform of a city worker. In his hands was a pole about four meters long. He stood in the middle of the intersection bending down next to an open manhole. He pulled the long pole out and on the end of it was a basket. It appeared that this man was fishing out garbage from a sewer and putting it in the metal wheelbarrow that stood next to him. As he worked, cars, motorcycles, and bicycles whizzed past.

The subway station was located under a large temple. Around the temple was a plethora of western shopping as well as upscale restaurants. A few days before there had been a large blue Christmas tree and pictures of Santa Claus at the mall, but today a large red sign was overhead with 新年快乐 (*xinnian kuai le*, Happy New Year) written in large yellow letters, and a happy cartoon-like tiger smiling to the left side. Thomas paid no attention to the sign nor did he stop to purchase dried duck, fruits, or candies that were set up under an official-looking red tent. The canopy provided the only protection from the construction debris, which rained down from the remodeling of the temple.

The total time to the subway station had been fifteen minutes. After which we descended down into the depths and, through the ever-increasing number of people, to ride the subway for thirty minutes. The subway stations in Shanghai exhibit an odd set of characteristics. On the one hand, the throngs of people leave little room for personal

space. This fluid nature of the subway caused one teacher to describe it as “organic,” an entity unto itself. Being crowded next together, pushed and pulled, and performing an inspection of the dandruff in your neighbor’s dark black hair are typical of any rush hour experience on the metro. On the other hand, the smells of human bodies are mitigated by the antiseptic clean look of the station and the subway cars. Glistening whites of marble and plastic, as well as the sleek designs of high quality advertisements and modern trains, leave one often disoriented. If Thomas is lucky he may find a seat on the return trip, but for our trip together in the morning, this was not an option.

We arrived at another major subway station and got off, ready for another fifteen-minute trek to the school where he teaches history. “When I get here I always notice two things,” he said, “the busses pulling out and that annoying wheeled luggage. I hate that wheelie sound!” This area of the city, which is on the outskirts of the city proper, is less developed and certainly less westernized. Instead of passing large western restaurants and upscale Chinese establishments, we walked by appliance repair shops, motorbike stores, and a vegetable market set up along a sidewalk. We crossed several intersections, as well as a bridge over an open canal and finally arrived at his school. There he would spend his day moving from classroom to classroom teaching and, when not teaching, working out of a café on the school grounds away from the hustle of his noisy office where students, foreign teachers, and Chinese teachers were all attempting to get their work done.

Several hours later Thomas arrived back to his apartment after work. He opened the door, took his shoes off, and came around the corner. He looked at me sitting on the couch and said his iPod had been stolen:

I was on the subway downstairs getting ready to get on the train and suddenly the music stopped. This is not unusual because my Mp3 tracks are rife with holes and they stop for a few seconds so I didn't pay attention to it and I got in the train. When the train started up, I thought to myself "wow this is really a long pause." I reached my hand in my pocket and realize there is nothing there! I looked down and saw the cord swinging at my feet. So some mother fucker took it while I was listening to it out of my pocket in front of tons of people.

He lamented that the next few weeks of traveling to work would be long and difficult. His commute would be different without his iPod providing an auditory buffer—a boundary—between him and the noisy Shanghai around him.

ONE (OR SIX) DVD AT A TIME

One important place of interest to American teachers is the DVD shop. DVD shops in China come in several varieties, from a single salesman with a box on the side of the street to buildings with automatic glass doors, neon signs, giant posters, and inflatable characters advertising recently released movies. Thomas and I decided that it would be prudent to stock up on movies. The store we went to was located next to another DVD shop of smaller size and a pair of fruit vendors—the bright colors of the oranges providing a stark contrast to the dull browns and gray of the leafless well-pruned trees. We pushed the heavy glass door—which was covered in movie box inserts—and immediately noticed the building was sunken by about fifteen centimeters. This precipice

was marked neither in English nor in Chinese. This store was characteristic of most DVD stores in that it was small and cramped. The total area of the store was no more than 60 square meters. In this small space were many racks containing DVDs. The walls are completely lined with wooden bins that allow for DVDs in slim plastic envelopes to stand upright next to each other. In the middle of the room stood another set of bins, which had DVDs on either side. In all there were five groups of bins each containing DVDs reaching from waist high to the ceiling. At waist level, the shelves came out about seventy-five centimeters. The bins were packed so full of DVDs that the DVDs stood upright. The bins were segregated into two primary categories: Chinese language media and everything else, though these were not marked with any signage. Chinese DVDs took up about two-thirds of the store. The other section was DVDs from other countries, primarily American movies. Along the wall of the street side of the building was the sales counter; behind which stood a middle-aged man wearing an olive colored corduroy jacket. Further behind him was a large cabinet that reached almost to the ceiling containing computer software such as the newest version of Windows as well as graphics design software. These were in hard cases and looked more legitimate than the plastic sleeves that contained the movies. Covering up the windows were hundreds of movie posters and DVD inserts consisting of both foreign and Chinese titles. This included a poster for Avatar which was about to come out in Chinese theaters.

The two of us flipped through the DVDs—the ever present snap of plastic sticking together and being separated in the air. We flipped through the movies and had to squish our bodies parallel to the bins as the two Chinese men who worked there

squeezed by—there being just enough room for two people to pass with their backs against each other—restocking the shelves from a cabinet underneath. The addition of three more Chinese customers made the tiny store seem more cramped.

There are two main things that you notice in a DVD shop other than the small surroundings. One is the immense number of both popular and obscure titles. The new *Star Trek* movie sits next to classics like *Casablanca*; a documentary on bible salesmen in the U.S., 1960s Japanese film noir such as *A Colt is my Passport*, and a BBC documentary on the Battle of the Coral Sea. There is no discernable order to the movies although sometimes there are small groups of common themes. The second thing you realize as you thumb through this immense collection is the slow graying of your fingertips. The ever present grime of dust is felt both on your hands and in your mouth, seeming as if you had just passed through a construction site. On that particular day, we picked up some horror movies, opting to bypass the Chinese section and stick with the American movies. Perhaps this is the key to the expatriate experience, the sterility of partially familiar cultural items grouped in strange ways with a particularly local, often dirty, patina. As we exited the small shop two individuals—a man and a woman—entered the store speaking to each other in German. The two of us headed back to the apartment so that we could get out of the cold and begin to enjoy the weekend.

PHOTOS OF HOME

The Likes Art Gallery is located on a secondary road near Thomas's house. As I was wandering around the neighborhood looking for some *yangrou chuan* (羊肉串, lamb

kebabs), I passed through a tree lined street and noticed a small sign high up near the top of the wooden doorway of a two story row of stucco buildings. It was so small that I would have easily missed it if I hadn't noticed a different sign in a window that looked to have a picture of an old gas station on it. "Super America" read the poster. The red and blue of the lettering perked my interest and I decided to take a look. I passed through the wood and glass doorway which led into a small courtyard. I then walked into the open door gallery where I was struck by the bright white walls on which were large color photos measuring from 61x48 cm to 98x75 cm. I turned around to two young girls in the room and said, "*nihao*" (你好, hello). They giggled a reply and then left the building—apparently they were patrons, not employees.⁶ The art exhibit featured photographs of America by a Washington, D.C. based photographer Susana Raab. There were nineteen photos depicting various situations regarding America: particularly fast food, modern culture, and what happens after progress moves on. One photo was titled "Too Long at the Fair." The central focus of the piece is a dumpster overflowing with refuse from a country fair. Brown and yellow French fry containers, empty bottles of water, and the bright blue from a Pepsi cup sit prominently in—and around—a grayish-blue trash can. Behind the trash is a building trimmed out in red siding advertising cold drinks, cones, shakes, and sundaes as well as a picture of a vanilla ice cream cone. In between the snack stand and the trashcan mill about sixteen adults and children—a woman in a blue cap and red shirt with the American flag emblazoned on the front pushes a stroller and a baby

⁶ Here is another example of how race and class affect social interactions in public. Expatriates often assume that Chinese people working in what are perceived to be expatriate locations, such as this high end gallery, must invariable be employees and not patrons.

towards the mountain of refuse. In another picture spectators clamor to watch the Nathan's hot-dog eating contest. The two central figures appear to be Asian—possibly Japanese because the caption reads “fans...trying to get Kobauashi's attention”—stand packed together with Caucasians along a metal barricade fence. Overall, the photos appeared to present an America that was full of happy, smiling people while an overall sense of gluttony and despair existed simultaneously.

After looking at the photos, I spoke to the two employees of the gallery. Both were young girls, one of whom was a college student. Both spoke excellent English and were photographers themselves. They said that about half of their patrons were foreigners and the other half were Chinese. Many tourists visit the place but at the same time they have a large number of local residents. I inquired in Chinese about the exhibit and whether the foreign patrons found it interesting, but was answered in English: “The foreigners like the gallery in general primarily because of the nostalgia. They like to see places that are familiar to them.” After chatting for a while, I bought a booklet of reproductions of the photographs and was on my way. I had found a place in China that, because it focused on America, permitted a relatively equal participation of tourists, expatriates, and “locals.”

THE ROAD OF FORTUNE AND BOOKS

Another place in the city that attracts foreign residents and tourists is the area surrounding People's Square (*renmin guangchang*, 人民广场). This area serves as a central park, is home to several of the city's museums, and has upscale shopping.

Conveniently located at the hub of the two main subway lines, the area around People's Square is between Nanjing Dong Lu (南京东路) and Fuzhou Lu (福州路). It stretches all the way to the Huangpu River, and is densely packed with people most of the time.

As I exited the subway station and crossed a large intersection with hundreds of people, I was immediately approached by a man who flashed a laminated piece of paper. The paper was imprinted with small images of watches and bags. "Shoes, real shoes," the man said in English. He hurried quickly over to me from the corner of building where he had been standing. His approach was direct, choosing me out of the large mass of human bodies hurriedly crossing the intersection. While I choose to ignore him with a curt but purposeful "*Wo bu yao*," (我不要, I do not want anything.)—which usually is enough to dissuade a salesperson—I will recount how this encounter would normally develop since it is a common part of the expatriate experience. If one accepts the invitation to purchase, for example, a Rolex watch, the salesman will then lead you to another place. This usually entails following the person through a maze of twists and turns to a small store tucked in between larger places of business, or back through the subway station to a store located in its many connecting passages. There the salesperson will pass you off to the person who actually works at the store. The store may or may not have the exact item that that you wanted but you will have to the opportunity to purchase anything that you wish after a fair round of haggling. But on that day I refused to buy a pair of shoes and continued down Fuzhou Lu in search of my destination.

I passed by several coffee shops, small Chinese fast food shops, and two English language teaching schools. One had a large billboard reaching over two stories high.

Written in Chinese “24 小时私人英语教练” (24 *xiaoshi siren yingyu jiaolian*, 24 hour private English training) was emblazoned on the top. Underneath the text were pictured two figures. To the left, was a Caucasian male in a black business suit; his confident face looked forward towards the viewer, unsmiling. On the right, was a Chinese woman in a slender fitting blue dress, her hair pulled back, a beaming smile on her face. Each person had a hand held over their head clenched in a fist, and their hands were tied together with a thick rope. Below was the name of the teaching company, a telephone number, and a website. This sign is significant because it implies that English is uniting foreigners and Chinese together, minimizing any preexisting boundaries.

Continuing down the road there was a change in the types of stores, with an abundance of stores selling art supplies and books. There were three large bookstores. The third one was an unimposing brick building with large windows and a glass door. However, mounted above the door, were four Greek-styled figures of about life size looking down at you. Wreaths of faux pine exclaiming “Merry Christmas” were also to be seen. This was the Shanghai Foreign Book Store, with four floors. Each floor seemed to be independently run—each focusing on a particular segment of the publishing industry. Upon entering the building, I had to put my bags in a locker. After placing my bag in, I turned the orange key and put it in my pocket. Afterward I proceeded into the store. I noticed a big blue sign and as I began to read it a voice asked in English if I needed any help. “Yes. I’d like to see English translations of Chinese literature,” I said in a confident voice. The young Chinese girl in a red and white uniform dutifully showed me to the section, but as I began to browse, she asked how long I had been in China, if I

liked it, and whether I studied Chinese. I responded that I had been studying for several years and then the sales pitch began.

“Would you like to see some study materials?” she asked. Then she led me to a computer and rapidly pressed a series of keys. This brought up a listening program which read out a question in Chinese. “Do you know the answer?” she asked. I did and made the correct reply. More questions came up and as we got further along in the program the sales clerk spoke more and more Chinese and less and less English. A few more minutes of questions and I attempted to get out of the sales pitch and redirect this exchange into a conversation. “*Ni de yingyu bi wo de hanyu,*” (你的英语比我的汉语, Your English is better than my Chinese.) I proposed. A giggle and she was briefly out of sales pitch mode. Amy was nineteen years old and had not gone to college, instead opting for work immediately after high school. She thought that many foreigners who live in China wanted to learn Chinese because Chinese culture is very interesting and more enjoyable if you can speak the language. After a brief continuation of our conversation, I told Amy that I would have to think about purchasing the language software and continued my exploration of the bookstore.

The first floor of the bookstore was divided into two, roughly even parts. The first part sold Chinese language materials, textbooks, dictionaries, and readers. The other half of the first floor sold English language materials, primarily books but also DVDs and audio CDs. In the center of the store was a display of Stephen King paperback books. There was also a display promoting Signet Classics from primarily British and American authors. The section selling DVDs featured authentic looking DVDs in hard cases, which

sold for 18 元 (*yuan*⁷, Chinese dollars). In addition, the ground floor sold coffee table books of high quality, Chinese history and culture books, and postcards and maps. Prices in this section of the store ranged from 30 元 for the Signet Classics, which are of dubitable quality, to books starting at 200 元 for history imports. Fancy, large format coffee table books of Shanghai's French architecture started at around 550 元. The second floor focused mainly on language materials other than English or Chinese, as well as testing materials. Texts on studying Korean, French, and Italian were available. The third floor specialized in art publications. Books on how to draw and paint were alongside histories of art and busts of Leonardo and Picasso. The fourth floor was another place for the sale of English language books. This floor specialized in high quality imports of histories as well as contemporary novels. In addition, there was a children's section with picture and storybooks in English. The prices for books on the fourth floor were considerably more expensive than on the first, with books starting at 100 元. Here, it seems, the American expat has access to much that is familiar and also to the cultural and language materials that would permit a narrowing of the distance between expat and local life.

To exit the building I had to huff down the four flights for stairs, there being no elevator. I passed around the Stephen King display table and returned to the locker to pick up my backpack. As I was doing so, I noticed a sign that stood about two meters high. It was our good Expo friend Hai Bao and his blue faced grin holding up a sign. The

⁷ The words *yuan* and *renminbi* are often used interchangeably. In addition *qian* (钱) is often used for small amounts.

sign listed ten rules in English and Chinese. Among the rules were: “All books are not illegal reproductions. You can return all goods. All staff are uniformed.” These rules provided a written declaration of how this store was a legitimate business.

I quickly left and soon reached Nanjing Dong Lu Pedestrian Street, one of the most famous areas of Shanghai. This is not only a place for upscale shopping but also a place where tourists and locals come to see the bright lights in the evenings. There were thousands of people walking back and forth—some carrying shopping bags, others just holding the hand of a loved one or friend—in the cold winter air. I met several people who were eager to talk while I took a leisurely stroll down the boulevard. Riding up an escalator, a young man turned around to me and said hello in English. I looked up and replied in Chinese and as we reached the top we began to converse. The young Chinese couple was dressed in sensible yet fashionable outfits. He wore a gray bubble jacket with a white scarf and blue jeans. She wore a pink jacket and blue jeans with a pair of mittens that had monkey faces on them. She asked me to determine which one was the male monkey and which was the female monkey. I looked at the two carefully and said that the female must be the one on the right hand because she had a ribbon. She giggled and said no—it turns out that they both wore ribbons. Instead, the monkey on the left hand was the female for it had long eyelashes. The two, originally from Nanjing (南京), were visiting Shanghai. They were on their way to a tea demonstration back on Fuzhou Lu. We talked for a few minutes about what they did. They said that they were university students, the male studying business and the female studying English. That got us talking about friends. “Do you have any foreign friends?” I asked the girl. “No,” was her reply, “but

there are some foreigners in my class—though they are mostly overseas Chinese. But we have an American teacher who sometimes comes to the class to talk to us.” After talking for a few more minutes we parted ways for the couple had an appointment to meet at the teashop.

I continued to walk down Nanjing Dong Lu when I was approached by two women. The two were quite short barely coming up to my shoulder. They approached from my left side and walked with me, conversing as we weaved in and out of the throng of shoppers and gawkers. One spoke to me in Chinese and the usual conversation ensued: Where are you from? Do you like Shanghai? What do you do? Then an unexpected question: What kinds of movies do you like? We talked about Jackie Chan (always a safe topic) and whether he made good movies. After another fifteen meters or so, the girl asked if I wanted to grab some tea with her. Her friend, who had thus far said very little, seconded the idea. I responded in one of the first Chinese phrases that I learned “*Wo mei you qian.*” (我没有钱., I don’t have any money.) “*Wo you. Wo you qian. Ni bu mai wo de cha.*” (我有. 我有钱. 你不买我的茶., I have. I have money. You do not have to buy my tea.) Her persistence was unusual for someone met at random. To me, this confirmed my opinion that she was attempting to sell me something or trying to get my money in some other fashion. As I walked away, I saw the pair go into a mall at the exact spot where we had argued about the tea. Here too is a key element of the expatriate life in China: Do I loosen my boundary control or do I strengthen it?

RESTAURANTS

Around Thomas's house there were numerous restaurants selling snack foods, noodles, and fancy Chinese food. In addition, there were many restaurants that featured western food, such as hamburgers, as well as Japanese, Korean, and Italian food. I stopped at one restaurant on the main path to the subway station. This was a small restaurant with only six tables in it. There was one large round table with six chairs, and the rest were small, square tables with only two or three chairs. As I walked in, the young waitress indicated with a wave that I could sit anywhere I liked. Choosing a small table next to the window, I sat down and waited for the waitress to come and take my order. The menu was printed on two pieces of white paper which were placed under the glass table top. I sat and began to read the menu, which was in Chinese characters: noodles with vinegar, pork meat noodles in soup, noodles with vegetables, the list continued with about twenty dishes all of which used basically the same ingredients. As I looked over the menu, the young waitress and an older man came over to my table. "*Ni shuo de Putonghua?*" (你说的普通话., Do you speak Chinese?) he asked with a raised eyebrow and a small opened-lip smile. The waitress looked on but did not say a word. "*Wo shuo de. Wo shuo de yidian,*" (我说的. 我说的一点., I speak it. I speak it a little.) was my reply. He chuckled as he walked away. I proceeded to order a plate of noodles and pork as well as a large bottle of beer. The waitress and the older man slipped behind a partition that led to the kitchen and I was left alone with the one other patron in the restaurant, who was busy slurping down soup. A group of three people (an older round woman, an older man in a blue hat, and a young child of perhaps five years) entered the restaurant carrying

four packages of what appeared to be spinach. They did not sit down and order but instead put the vegetables on the counter and stood around chatting with the gentlemen who had asked if I could speak Chinese. My noodles were brought out and I readily ate them in silence.

The noodles were tasty but not what I had thought. Each dish in China varies from restaurant to restaurant, consistent taste and ingredients are almost impossible to find; thus eating the same dish is always a slightly new experience. As I finished eating the noodles, I overheard the conversations of those who had just walked in. They were all family members of the restaurant owner. I walked over to the cash counter and looked up to the red statue and fake candles that adorn many restaurants (as well as the wall cabinet full of liquor) and put my seven *yuan* on the counter. As I turned around to leave the older round woman asked, “*Ni chi hao bu hao?*” (你吃好不好?, Your food was good?) Surprised, as this was the first time I was spoken to since I had ordered, I responded by saying “*Hao. Ta shi weidao le.*” (好. 它是味道了., Good. It was very tasty.) The three older members of the family laughed and said goodbye, the young waitress however continued to stand there with a blank expression, her eyes cast down. Eating at this restaurant showed evidence of many types of boundaries. It would be nearly impossible for expatriates to eat here if they lacked Chinese language capabilities. In addition, the waitress was unwilling to interact with me in the presence of the older man; she looked away, gazing at the floor.

Thomas had lived in Shanghai for nearly four years. In that time he had become more interested in eating western food and as a result visited Chinese restaurants less

often. Nonetheless, I managed to convince him one afternoon to eat a late lunch of Xinjiang (新疆) noodles. What should have been a simple task of finding a noodle shop turned into a forty-five minute excursion through his neighborhood. He knew of one restaurant but it was closed presumably for repairs, since there was a middle-aged Uyghur man giving instructions to a young Uyghur on a ladder. Thus with no known noodle shop, we were forced to search out one. We decided to make a journey based on a square pattern. We would follow the major roadway north until we reached another major roadway heading east. If we were unable to find a restaurant by the time we reached a third major road we would turn south and return to his apartment. This way we could cover the most amount of area without backtracking. We proceeded north along a major secondary road. Narrow sidewalks were crowded with motorcycle parts, tubs of used oil, and a mechanic filling the tires of a small blue Chinese-made car. We weaved through this and past a vendor selling crabs in styrofoam containers, their legs and claws held to their bodies with blue rubber bands. As we maneuvered through these and other obstacles, a young girl and her mother approached in the opposite direction. They held hands as they chatted away with each other. As we neared, Thomas and I shifted from walking abreast to in file, one behind another, so that the child and mother could pass. They walked past us, but as they were passing, the girl's head turned, in one fluid motion, ninety degrees to our direction. Wide eyed and forgetting the conversation she was having with her mother, we became the subjects of her intent gaze. She looked directly at us but did not speak.

We continued our trek for another twenty minutes through an area of Thomas's neighborhood that he had never been in. We finally found a noodle shop and entered.

This restaurant was different than many other noodle shops due to one major factor. Many Xinjiang noodle shops feature a menu written in Mandarin Chinese as well as a large picture menu. These picture menus are often quite huge, sometimes taking up an entire wall, and are on a light lime-green or sometimes blue field. On it are individual pictures of various noodle and rice dishes. Noodles with lamb, noodles with beef, noodles with red sauce, or noodles with soup; there are often pictures of over fifty dishes. However, this large picture menu can be deceiving. Often most of the dishes are not available when you point to the mouth-watering picture. Yet this restaurant did not have a picture menu. Instead, it had a menu written entirely in Chinese characters, though it was equally as large as the biggest of picture menus. The menu without pictures provided an interesting challenge for Thomas. Unable to see pictures of the dishes, Thomas had to rely on his limited Chinese skills. There are a few words that most teachers learn within a few months of living in China: *Yangrou la mian* (羊肉拉面) is one of those words. The dual dishes of pulled noodles and lamb were quickly served and we ate. The green of the cilantro provided a bright burst of color to the thinly sliced pieces of lamb and the white noodles. As we ate, a group of Uyghur men, who had entered and sat down to our left, talked to each other. One man, however, seemed distracted as he watched the two of us drink the remaining soup out of the bottom of our bowls. As I returned his look, he quickly returned to the conversation emanating from his table. As at the Chinese restaurant, here too the “locals” would look directly at foreigners but also look away when noticed.

Local restaurants act as a place where expatriate teachers can enter into the Chinese sphere, though this is often with some trepidation. Here both the organization and the content are distinctly Chinese. One of Karen's favorite restaurants near her home was called the "English Menu" restaurant. She explained, "A lot of people didn't know what it was called [in Chinese] and it was one of the first places on the street to have an English menu." But while the comfort of having a menu in English was appealing and welcome, she always felt "a bit off" after eating. "It was nothing serious," she added, "but I was always afraid that no matter what I ate I would always feel a little bit sick afterwards." This feeling after eating was compounded by the fact that the inside was often very smoky and had food and cigarettes on the floor. "I felt that at a Chinese restaurant, people would really make themselves at home. They would talk very loudly and leave their things lying around." This bothered Karen, she never felt completely at home in the Chinese restaurant. To her, being at home did not include being loud and putting food and garbage on the floor. Instead, she and her friends would be talkative but not boisterous.

There are also many foreign restaurants in the city. While Korean, Indian, Japanese, and Vietnamese restaurants are frequently visited by expatriates, western cuisine restaurants were among the most popular. "I liked going out to get a hamburger or pizza," Sue explained, "but sometimes the taste was off or the portions were quite small." Cathy liked the nostalgic feel of the many diners and especially the "Teacher Tuesday" discount at her favorite restaurant, which styled itself as a 1950s style diner. While the

food was not exactly what they were longing for, the atmosphere and the people there allowed them to relax and feel back in America, if only for a short time.

Bringing Thomas to the Xinjiang noodle shop was a treat for him. After nearly four years in China, he had become fed up with Chinese food in general. Instead, he relished the fact that he had a large variety of western restaurants near his new apartment. “Being able to walk five minutes from my apartment to a western style restaurant lets me separate myself from my teacher identity.” In places that serve western food, Thomas felt more relaxed and was, if temporarily, no longer encumbered by either his occupation or the oppressive gaze of the Chinese.

THE GAZE AND LIMITED INTERACTIONS

In *Transnational Lives*, Anne-Meike Fetcher (2007) describes how interactions with locals and expatriates are limited. She illustrates that, by staring at each other in public spaces, the two groups engage in a visual dialogue. For expatriates in Indonesia being in public presents an opportunity for “being Othered” in an “Asian public space” (71). In China a similar phenomenon occurs. Jos Gamble, in *Shanghai in Transition*, explains how many Shanghainese people will loudly gossip amongst themselves that a “*nakunin*” (“foreigner” in Wu dialect) is passing by (2003:xviii).

Similar to Fetcher’s and Gamble’s examples are the experience of American teachers. Thomas and I encountered several instances of “the gaze” while looking for a noodle restaurant. However, the gaze may also extend past merely being stared at and include direct communication. Several teachers explained that children and the elderly

had a tendency to do such things. “Some people will come up to you and say whatever English they know like ‘hi’ or ‘12345’.” In other instances, local Chinese would simply repeat words that a teacher said in casual conversation like “donut” or “hello”. This was tempered by the fact that some major Chinese cities were “globalized as far as the number of foreigners that are here.” In other words, this teacher believed that because the Chinese in the major cities were used to a large number of foreigners, the gaze was never meant to be hostile. This is different from how Fetcher describes the gaze as an “acutely unpleasant, unsettling experience” (2007:72). Perhaps, in part, because American teachers in China are positioned between local Chinese and expatriates this allows them to feel less threatened and thus can engage this boundary with less trepidation than the expatriates in Indonesia.

The sentiment that the gaze was not hostile and instead was more of a friendly interaction (especially among the young and elderly) was a common theme for the teachers. However, when these interactions came from a middle-aged person it could be construed as more threatening. I spoke to one teacher about my encounter with the two Chinese women on Nanjing Dong Lu. “I would be a little skeptical of two Chinese women approaching a foreigner with no cause,” He said. “They may have just wanted to be friendly; they may have wanted something else. You never know.”

While a visual dialogue can be construed as both positive and negative, it nonetheless can be mitigated through the use of groups. After standing on a cold, wind-blown street one teacher explained:

When I have no one to bounce anything off of when I see something crazy in the middle of a hutong (胡同), I feel isolated. The other day we were trying to get a cab which was impossible. This cab stops right in front of us and the door opens. A lady comes out with her son and I am standing there looking at my friend and said, “Cool we got a cab. No one else has got a cab!” So we are standing there waiting and my friend goes “dude dude dude” and he grabs me. The lady took her son out of the cab just so he could pee on the ground. He was about to pee on my leg!

In most cases when in close contact with locals, visual dialogue and direct interaction ensue. However, shared experiences with other foreigners help to fight personal isolation, which the visual dialogue or interaction can cause. This buttresses the notion that, as a group, American teachers are isolated from the local Chinese. By making light of the situation, American teachers reinforce the idea of “the Other.” “He was about to pee on my leg.” becomes exoticized and foreign but nonetheless part of the China experience—the “real” China. Thus, while the boundary created through the visual dialogue may not be threatening, it is nonetheless reinforcing of an already existing separation between foreign and local. With support, however the boundary can be temporarily, and thus safely, transgressed.

American teachers in China thus experience “the gaze of the Other” much as Fetcher describes it for Indonesia. But at the same time they come into direct contact with local Chinese at certain places. These places allow American teachers to cross the local Chinese boundary and directly interact with the Chinese. The small, cramped DVD shop

is one of these places. The smallness of the DVD shop is not seen as threatening when compared to the smallness of public transportation. One teacher who had been a long time veteran of living in China said, "I don't like being crushed up by that many people when on the bus." In the DVD shop, we were crammed in between shelves of DVDs and had to shimmy sideways to get past the sweaty back of a local Chinese man who was also looking for something to watch. But the DVD shop is enjoyable and one of the most memorable places that American teachers visit. Places like Fuzhou Lu and Nanjing Dong Lu also provide for ample opportunities for Chinese and Americans to interact directly with each other. The couple who were on vacation from their university were of closer economic status to teachers than the street hawker selling fake watches. In that case, interactions moved beyond visual dialogue and resulted in direct communication. If American teachers were of higher economic prowess, such as the corporate expatriates that Anne-Meike Fetcher studies in Indonesia, they would be able to avoid such interactions through the use of personal cars and drivers. Instead, American teachers are often compelled to take public transport and are forced to confront such people directly. These incidental daily contacts thus greatly reshape their experiences as expatriates.

The visual dialogue and direct interactions with local Chinese are often seen as non-threatening by the teachers and in some cases are quite rewarding. Why then do American teachers create boundaries that divide themselves from the local Chinese but also, in some situations, purposefully transgress them? As an example, one of the most extensive problems in China is pollution. It is both physically very apparent and also a cognitive concern. The streets are littered with rubbish, fish guts, and human waste; the

water is undrinkable; and there have been numerous food safety recalls. “I ride my bike a lot so I notice the poor air quality,” commented one teacher. Another teacher, who had left China to move back to America and then returned to China, said that one thing she brought with her the second time was hand sanitizer: “Everything here in China is dirty. The air is dirty, the subway is dirty. My hands always feel really gross after I touch things. The classrooms at school are dirty. It is just dirty here.” Another couple, who had a young child, was concerned with the safety of milk after the melamine milk scandal. “We don’t trust the Chinese milk after a bunch of babies died,” said the mother. Now they buy imported milk. Pollution is thus a major problem that Americans in China have to face. Many teachers face this problem head on by taking measures to prevent contamination. But in some instances they choose to cross these self imposed boundaries and enter into the polluted local arena. An example of this was Karen eating at a local Chinese restaurant. She always “felt a bit off” after eating there, but found the food delightfully tasty.

American teachers in China sometimes choose to stay out of, and sometimes selectively enter, the local or “real” China. They can do this because they have a place to retreat to when they have had enough—their homes that will be discussed in the next chapter. If they choose to selectively enter, they sometimes find some familiarity that makes their entry more comfortable. The Likes Art Gallery showcased images of America that matched how, according to one staff member “[foreigners] like to see places that are familiar to them.” Foreign restaurants also allow teachers to reassert their foreign or American identity through the consumption of American food. One teacher explained

that she liked the nostalgic feel of the many diners and especially the “Teacher Tuesday” discount at her favorite restaurant. While the food was not exactly what she was longing for, the atmosphere and the people there allowed her to relax and feel back in America, if only for a short time. The small portions and higher prices of western restaurants were not as much of a concern as the prospect of “feeling a bit off” after a trip to the local Chinese restaurant. In addition, Christmas had just passed when I visited China and images of Santa Claus and Christmas trees remained in areas where they would be expected like western shopping malls; but they were also to be found in small local restaurants and in Shanghai’s 1930s underground museum.

The public sphere of China is a place that, for American teachers, is both familiar and alienating, and needs to be carefully navigated. It presents both obstacles to overcome and inviting messages that remind teachers of their own culture. Interacting with local people (and their gaze) and with the local physical environment (including its pollution) may be possible at times. But that effort requires a retreat. But even in that retreat, they must still make decisions about their attachments to China and America.

CHAPTER 4: AT HOME

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I look at how boundaries are created inside the physical house. There are several types of housing assistance for American teachers. For example, some schools offer housing on campus. This type of housing is often in dorm-like apartments and is fully managed by the host school. Other schools provide housing in the form of a cash allowance and other schools provide no housing assistance at all. In all cases, teachers usually end up living in a flat in a large apartment compound. Each physical type of housing has its benefits and detractions, but nonetheless can still become a home in the cognitive sense through various adaptations. By looking at two different scenarios, we can better understand how teachers use their houses to form and maintain boundaries between their private lives and the China outside their doors. The first scenario is a bicultural home and the second a home maintained by two Americans.

A BICULTURAL HOME

Jeremy has lived in China for a total of eleven years. He is a career teacher and has worked in three of China's largest cities. Jeremy is married to a kindly Chinese woman who speaks English well. Together, they have two young children, one of whom is only a few months old.

Jeremy's apartment at the time of my visit was located on the 9th floor of a large apartment building called Next Century Apartments which is similar to the apartment compounds of the "new middle class" in Fleischer's study of China's modern urban landscape (2007:288). The building was composed of a single large black building broken up into four towers. The towers were individually numbered with the letters A, B, C, and D. Each tower was only accessible from the ground floor, so the towers were essentially separate buildings. When you approached the ground floor of the building, the large glass door was opened by a guard dressed in a thick, black coat. He wore a hat and had a walkie-talkie attached to his shoulder. The floors in the lobby of the building were concrete but they had a polished and smooth feel. There were three elevators to each building, which go two floors down from the lobby and eighteen floors up. Unsure of which tower was the correct one, I asked the guard where to go "*Zai nar li?*" (在哪里), as I showed him a piece of paper with the address on it. "*Zhe li,*" (这里, Over there.) he said, as he motioned to the right. The use of pre-written messages with the address in Chinese characters is common when searching for locations, even when the expatriate knows how to say the words. I rode the elevator up nine floors and the doors opened revealing beautifully carved wood paneled walls, polished just enough to mirror the gray speckled marble floors. I trekked down the hallway past two other apartments and knocked on the door.

As the wooden door opened, I was thrilled to see my friend's wife and yet was struck by the enormous size of the place. Upon entering, there was a small hallway which was about one square meter. In this small alcove was a space for the door to open, a coat

rack, and a pile of slippers and shoes. I later found out that this was originally a larger area connected to the living room, but most of it was enclosed for a third small bedroom, leaving only this small alcove. As it was winter, the coat rack was full of coats, sweaters, and bags. I passed through the alcove and entered the main living room where I noticed a breeze and the hum of an air conditioning unit warming up the house. Usually there is a large unit in the corner but in Jeremy's apartment there were overhead vents piping out central air and heat. The floors were of polished pine and were very shiny.

The apartment was roughly broken up into three areas, the central of which was the living/dining room, which I saw immediately upon entering. In the living room there was a matching sofa, chair, coffee table, and TV stand. The design was very modern: dark wood and white cushions. There were no curves; all of the components being square in shape. There was also a bookcase which had history, religious, Chinese, and children's books on it. In addition, there were wedding photos. These marriage photos were in the Chinese style with the couple in many different poses. On the bottom shelf were plush animals for the older child. Many of these toys were Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse and Tigger. At the opposite end of the room from the main doorway was a small eating area. The eating area was divided from the main room by a change from wood flooring to ceramic tiles and a curtain that could be drawn, but remained open during the day. This curtain has the ability to block out the wall of windows that run the entire length of the room. Outside you could see part of the next tower in the apartment complex, but there was also a large park with a lake that made for pleasant scenery. "All of these apartments face north," explained Jeremy. "Therefore they are cheaper because

the Chinese don't want to live in them." According to the principles of *fengshui* (风水) the best view is to face the south or southeast (Knapp 1999:30). Since Jeremy's apartment faced north, and was thus in a poor location based on the principles of *fengshui*, he was able to get a larger apartment for a lower price. The ability to get more for less was more important to him than any misfortune that might arise from poor *fengshui*. This shows a boundary between Chinese and western notions of location and space; Jeremy, a westerner, was willing to take advantage of that difference to have a larger apartment.

To the right of the living room was the bedroom suite. The bedroom consisted of a Chinese bed, a desk, a closet, and a crib. Chinese beds are low, often having no box spring. Instead, one stiff mattress is usually all one sleeps on. Fitted sheets are also uncommon, the sheet and the bedspread just lie on top of the mattress. There was a headboard made out of wooden slats of the same dark-brown color as the living room set. On the desk was a computer with microphone and camera, which were used when talking to family. The last section of the house contained the kitchen and a bathroom. The bathroom was small containing a toilet, sink, and a rare full-size bathtub. The kitchen was separated from the rest of the apartment by a door with frosted glass. The kitchen was in an L-shape and was very narrow—two people could not walk abreast and would have to turn sideways to get past. However, there was still a lot of space in the kitchen because of its length. A small refrigerator that was about 1.25 meters tall was the first thing that one passed upon entering, followed by a table upon which sat a coffee maker, toaster, and other small appliances. At the bend of the “L” was a cabinet containing glasses and

plates. Next to it was a stove with four burners on which to cook, an empty counter space for cutting and preparing meals, and then a sink.

To Jeremy, the kitchen was what made his apartment a home. “I didn’t have a kitchen at my first school. At another school, the kitchen was in the living room. But now we have a large kitchen and I can cook in it.” With each change of job, Jeremy moved into a new apartment that had different amenities. He continued, “Every morning for breakfast I cook two eggs with cheese. I buy cheddar cheese so I have to go to a foreign supermarket. But after that my wife and the *ayi* (阿姨, literally “auntie” but used when referring to a maid) cook Chinese food.” Another door separated a room which was not completely sealed off from the outside. Here was a washing machine and all of the accessories needed to wash clothes. Here we see how the kitchen, as both a physical room and a place for cooking, acts as a location for both Chinese and American influences.

I arrived just in time for lunch. Jeremy’s wife, his two sons, the maid, and I sat down at the table to eat soup and a pork dish. The soup brought needed warmth to the bitterly cold day. After lunch, I took a seat on the couch and relaxed. Jeremy’s son decided to watch a movie. He gets to choose whether to watch Chinese or American movies. However, I observed, and Jeremy confirmed to me later, that he never chooses to watch Chinese movies. Instead, he rather would watch American animated films. This was interesting because he would adamantly watch Chinese children’s television programs. One such program featured a scientist who went to schools to demonstrate science experiments. “Look Allen,” his mother said, “it is *shu shu* (叔叔).” *Shu shu*

means uncle and is used by children to address unknown adults who inhabit a place of authority such as policemen, taxi drivers, or in this case a teacher. Television acts as a place for boundaries, especially for this young child. While content can be viewed in both American and Chinese formats, this child consistently chooses the American when given the opportunity. As Allen watched TV, my attention began to wander and it settled on a group of small pictures leaning against the wall.

The picture on the left was a Chinese painting of a plant in a vase. The vase was white and had a blue outline of a flower on it. The plant had little red flowers, much like miniature peonies. Behind the plant were a closed window and a burnt sienna-colored wall. It looked like the plant was located on the inside of a building. Next to this painting was a green frame measuring about thirty centimeters square. The green mat had a circle cut out of the middle. The circle was gold and featured three concentric rings of Chinese characters and in the very middle was the character for good fortune, *fu* (福). *Fu* was roughly three times the size of any other character on the picture. To the left and right of *fu* were two red stamps. However it was what was underneath *fu* that was surprising. Written in the same font as the Chinese characters was “Mathew 5:3-10”. According to the New King James Version of the Bible these verses state:

3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom in heaven. 4. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. 7. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. 8. Blessed are the pure in heart, for

they shall see God. 9. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom in heaven.

Good fortune is thus the blessedness that is bestowed upon the believers by God. The *fu* character is commonly used in Chinese houses (Knapp 1999:102). As in most instances of its use, *fu* was written in red and on a square shaped piece of paper. However this paper is normally pasted onto the walls near doors or a kitchen, as a diamond. While the inclusion of the Biblical verse may have seemed pastiche, Chinese character motifs have a tradition of combining customary themes with contemporary imagery (82). In this case the customary use of *fu* works well in the Christian context of benefiting from God's grace. Below and in front of the two pictures sat a small red house-shaped clock with a picture of Mickey Mouse with the arms of the clock protruding directly out of the center of Mickey's nose. Here we see something like a complete representation of popular and high culture, of the mundane and the spiritual, of China and America.

The next day we began the morning with a round of TV piped over the Internet. The one thing that Jeremy missed the most about America was sports: "I like watching sports, live sports every day. Playing sports, people that understand sports. Someone to talk to about sports." To Jeremy sports and America are synonymous. It is not even that Jeremy misses watching sports at a crowded stadium, instead:

I miss watching sports with friends that want to watch it too. Just being able to go home on Sunday after church to watch my favorite team play. Here I can still watch it, but it is not the same. First of all the time is

different. My team may be playing at one in the morning and I am not willing to stay up that late or get up that early. My university basketball team plays on Friday and Sunday mornings. So that means that I can never watch them because I am either teaching or at church.

We spent that Sunday morning watching football, Jeremy decided not to go to church and to relax with me. However, at about 11:30 AM a knock on the door brought us away from the small computer screen and the live broadcast of the NFL over an anonymous user's television stream. We looked up and Jeremy's wife opened the door. In walked a German couple and their three blonde-haired blue-eyed young children.

The couple had come by after church, which was located in the complex next to Jeremy's apartment. They arrived by car and parked it in the garage underneath the building. As Jeremy, the German man, and I sat and talked about sports, the children played with Allen's toys. When talking among themselves, the three German children all spoke German. However, when Allen wanted to get a toy that one of the others was playing with, the older girl would, in a loud voice say in English, "No. I am playing with that now." Yet, when the German couple would speak to each other, they would often use German, and would switch back into English when addressing someone else, including their children. This is a frequent pattern for expatriates, continually switching between languages.

Since they arrived just before lunchtime, Jeremy's wife decided to order in. She called a local Chinese restaurant and ordered eight dishes: sweat and sour pork, vinegar and pork, eggs and tomatoes, fried steam buns, and several others. We all gathered

around the table to dig into our hot and tasty looking meal. Jeremy and I stood, for the table could not hold all of the guests. As I reached over with my chopsticks, the German family broke out in an English song:

Thank you Lord for giving us food. Thank you lord for giving us food.

Thank you lord for giving us food. Ah ah amen. Hallelujah praise the lord.

Hallelujah praise the lord. Hallelujah praise the lord. Ah ah amen.

The prayer lasted only about twenty seconds but I was stunned, having been in the middle of reaching for a delectable slice of pork. Jeremy and his family stood still, not participating in the song. I originally thought that they did not know the prayer but Jeremy later explained that they did, “We sang it in our small group a few times.”

The meetings of this small group took place outside of the church. It was comprised of a few families who came together to discuss religious themes. There were people from many different countries in the small group. Chinese and Japanese attended as well as Germans and Americans. Small group meetings took place every other Saturday in the evening at somebody’s house. But Jeremy’s house was too small to host an event. “We would need a couple more sofas and chairs to make it work,” he said. Religion was one the most important aspects in Jeremy’s life. He could “stay connected” as well as keep up with his religious ideals. “It is really hard if you are just by yourself and if you don’t have any friends. So we met these friends at church and we really care about each other. We want to stay connected in case we run into any problems. We can talk to them or we can help out if they need assistance.” While Jeremy’s home provided a place of retreat from the outside, it nonetheless was not enough. Religion provided

another way for Jeremy to stay connected within the expatriate community, and one that was very important to him. Even though Jeremy had excellent Chinese language skills, and his wife was Chinese, he still felt that outside support from other foreigners, even if they were not American, was essential to overcoming the obstacles of daily life in China.

Jeremy had been in China for a long time. His house was large and spacious and in an upscale building. There was a definite blend of western and Chinese influences in many areas of the house. To Jeremy the kitchen was the center of his concept of a western space. Here, Jeremy could cook a western breakfast of eggs and cheese which was an important part of his day. But the kitchen was also used as a primary place for the creation of Chinese food. The majority of the cooking in Jeremy's household was done by his wife and the *ayi*. They cooked both lunch and dinner meals nearly every day. Soups, noodles, braised pork, and hot pot were all meals that they made. For Jeremy Chinese food in the house was the norm, while going out to a western restaurant was a treat. The living room also acted as a place where expatriates and western culture could enter. By having foreign guests visit, and shift from their native language to English, Jeremy could maintain a western, specifically American, zone. But, because of his teacher's salary, Jeremy was unable to fully maintain an expatriate lifestyle. To be more western (and thus more like other expatriates), Jeremy would have had to be able to host a small group church meeting in his house. But because of its size, he was unable to do so. Thus, while his apartment was spacious, it was nonetheless not as large as the houses of other expatriates—even those within the same apartment compound. One point to

make is thus that his house was adequate as a home but not for linking home and community.

AN AMERICAN HOME

Jeremy is one type of foreign teacher. He has lived in China for many years and has taken a Chinese wife. Thus, Jeremy has more direct contact with Chinese culture than many other teachers. As we have seen, his house was a place of both the production of Chinese and western customs. How does Jeremy's house then compare to someone who has not married into the Chinese culture?

Jane and Frank, an American couple, lived in an apartment compound with Greek-style statues in the courtyard. They had moved many times, once in each of the four years that they had been in China. Starting in a school-provided dorm, they had finally moved to their own apartment once they changed jobs. "This place is great," exclaimed Jane. Unlike living in the dorm, where they had a small living space and a constant problem with mold, Jane and Frank really thought that their current apartment was amazing. Unlike their past apartments, this place had a bathtub. In addition, they had enough space to have both a drier and an oven. Perhaps more important than the amenities, however, was the close proximity to their friends and the ability to accommodate many guests. Frank explained, "We have six friends who live in this complex. And since this place is big we can have a lot of people over. For Thanksgiving we had 35 people in here!" Living close to friends was important for many teachers. One teacher noted that if she could have chosen where to live, it would have been near

downtown, not because of the upscale neighborhood and shopping, but because her friends—who were foreigners—lived there.⁸

In China, most apartments came furnished with the major pieces of furniture such as tables and chairs, beds, and wardrobes. This was the case for Jane and Frank’s apartment. In the living room, there was a wooden table and chair set, a sofa, a large TV stand with drawers underneath, and a big, red antique Chinese chest of drawers. “The furniture is actually one of the things we love about the apartment because it is not typical of our other friends’ apartments,” explained Frank. “Most Chinese furniture,” he continued, “is really flashy, looks nice, but is cheaply made and falls apart. Our furniture is the opposite. It doesn’t look like anything fancy but it is really strong and sturdy.” Frank’s sentiments matched my own personal observations. While the furniture looked plain, it was nonetheless stout and comfortable. In fact, much of it (other than the chest of drawers) had a very European style. It could have been originally purchased at Ikea, one of the favorite places for teachers to shop.

Frank’s negative description of most Chinese furniture mirrors that of other American teachers. When describing her furniture, another teacher explained:

It was really uncomfortable, because the mattress on the bed was more like a box spring than a top mattress, so right away I purchased a softer mattress that I could sleep on. And the chairs were just hard backed and

⁸ But for some, close proximity to foreigners became a problem especially when these were the same people whom one worked with. Marion described how living and working at the same place and always seeing the same people became tiresome, for she was never able to break completely away from work.

up right. They were really uncomfortable. I didn't feel like there was any comfortable place to sit and relax. So I purchased a table and a couch.

Apartments with uncomfortable (i.e. Chinese) furniture were often a cause for concern. Teachers usually replaced what they could, and modified what they could not replace through the purchase of more western items. One of the redeeming features of Jane and Frank's apartment was that the furniture met their standard of comfort and thus they were more happy with the house in general. However, there was one piece of furniture that they originally loathed—the red antique Chinese chest. “I hated it at first when I saw it in my landlord's apartment,” said Jane. “It was next to three other wardrobes just like it and it looked like junk. But here it looks really nice because it is on the wall by itself.” The couple then decided to use it as storage—filling it up with board games such as Apples to Apples and Risk, which they brought over from the United States. These games were an important part of community for Frank, “I was thinking we would be playing games all of the time, but work has been very busy. Though we played a lot during the holidays.” Here again, the house and the western amenities inside served to anchor both the family and the community.

DOORS AS BOUNDARIES

Doors and gates are a common feature in China and can be seen everywhere. Doors and gates provide privacy from the outside and act as status symbols. For American teachers in China, doors and gates act as boundaries where unwanted elements

can be prevented from entering the house. Yet doors and gates also serve as places where people and goods that are wanted can safely move from the outside world to the inside.

Jane and Frank, for example, had three layers of doors to get through before they were inside their apartment. There was an outer gate that led into the apartment compound. This was manned by two guards who, unlike in many other places, were very friendly and willing to point out the direction of the building (though, they spoke no English). Once at the building, you had to pass through a glass door which was locked with a magnetic strip. To get in, one had to be buzzed through or possess an RFID card. This door often created a problem for Jane. “It is annoying because it is really hard to get out of with my baby and the stroller,” she explained. “It’s on a timer and once you push the button you have to prop it open.” Another one of their doors, one that led out to the back patio, was made of cast iron. It blocked cell phone reception so if they wanted to use their cell phone inside, they had to open that door. Here we see how doors act as boundaries that are helpful and needed, but also act as impediments.

Several other teachers that I spoke with had similar misgivings about their doors. While their doors were often described as plain, they nevertheless had quirky features that served to prohibit entry for those unfamiliar with how the system worked. Ron described an incident with his landlord as he was moving in:

When I moved to this apartment there was no number on the door so I asked the landlord about this. He said, “Oh, everybody knows which number it is.” I said, “How does everybody know?” So the first couple of times that I ordered food I would peer out the door and the delivery guy

would be looking around, unable to find my apartment. So currently, my door has the number written on it with a black white board marker. I have had a goal for the last six months of buying some proper numbers but I haven't actually gotten them.

Ron's comments illustrate how the Chinese notion of doors is somewhat different than the western notion. To Ron, the unnumbered door was unidentifiable and impassable, while to his Chinese landlord, the door's anonymity simply reinforced its individuality. Because it was the one with no numbers, everyone should be able to find it. Another teacher described her door as orange and plain. The door had Chinese characters on it, but she could not read them. "Going inside always provided a sense of relief," she said while on the verge of giggling. "I was getting away from work and school, the teaching environment. I was normally glad to be there."

All of the residents agreed that doors often had some impediment, but felt that the doors, guards, and layers of security made them feel safer by allowing them to get away from both China and teaching. Doors thus acted as a physical boundary that provided tangible separation from the public, preventing unwanted elements from entering the house. But there were also some aspects of China that teachers did bring into the house by choice. Two common ones were Chinese cultural objects and Chinese household servants.

The collection of artwork is a common practice of both travelers and expatriates throughout the world. American teachers in China are no exception. Art provides several avenues into the study of the house and to the understanding of how expatriates negotiate

boundaries. In all of the houses which I visited, there were examples of Chinese art either hanging on the walls or waiting to be hung. There was calligraphy on silk scrolls, seasonal sets where four paintings of a similar scene were represented in the different seasons, and large acrylic paintings which were often of people or faces. There were also more traditional watercolors with calligraphy; these were not in scroll form and usually had horses or fish on them with several lines Chinese poetry. In addition to these, there were batiks, embroidery, and other generic “minority” artifacts⁹ such as blankets and tapestries. Nearly every teacher whom I met had at least one of these types of artwork. Few had western art in their apartments, except for a few who were artists themselves or who had brought posters with them overseas. When hanging up artwork, many teachers put them wherever they seemed to fit best, often in the center of a wall in the living room where they were sure to catch the attention of visitors.¹⁰

Another way in which American teachers bring China into their houses is through the use of an *ayi*. Most teachers I interviewed used the services of an *ayi* to some extent. Jeremy and his wife had a full time *ayi* who came over daily to help take care of the children and to prepare meals. This was convenient and helpful to Jeremy’s Chinese wife. However, most teachers used *ayis* only on a weekly basis. The small amount of space in a teacher’s apartment was one reason for only needing an *ayi* for a limited amount of time.

⁹ These “minority” pieces are of a generic nature and are not attributed to any specific minority, often being sold in tourists areas. Generic “minority” artifacts are different from the stately minority belt (see chapter 2) which hung in the doctor’s apartment. That belt was of fine craftsmanship and made of silver.

¹⁰ It is interesting to note that many Chinese voluntarily brought western goods into their house in a similar fashion. Gamble states that foreign artifacts such as liquor or tea were a source of pride to be displayed in prominent places (2003). This was especially true in the early 1990s soon after the opening up of the country to outside goods, but continues to this day.

Another reason was because of a limited ability to communicate. For most teachers, interacting with an *ayi* had to be accomplished through pantomiming. Cathy, a single female said:

She came once a week and cleaned the floors, bathroom, ironing, and she did my dishes. When I wanted something specific done like ironing, I could say "clothes" but I didn't want her to wash my clothes, so I held up the iron and the ironing board and she understood. Otherwise, I didn't have to give her any directions, and I'm not that picky so I just figured out that whatever she did was good.

Cathy's description of letting the *ayi* just do what she thought was best was common. For most teachers, living in China was the first time that they were able to have a household servant. Since many teachers did not know Chinese, they just let the house cleaner do what they thought they were supposed to do.

Art and household servants are thus two ways in which American teachers willingly bring China into the house. These two practices are ways in which boundaries can be safely transgressed. We have seen that the house has many physical elements that allow for boundary formation maintenance and transgression. But does this physical house relate to the concept of home in a more abstract sense?

HOME: FAMILIAR AND FAMILIAL

There are many ways in which American teachers in China go about living in and maintaining their houses. But a comfortable house is not always the same as a home.

Many teachers expressed how being out of touch with their “home” was a gnawing problem that was difficult to address. However, they were continuously searching for a solution, to address this problem.

One Chinese American—or ABC as he calls himself—described home as any place where he felt comfortable. “A lot of people are like, ‘Oh it’s a home coming for you since you are a Chinese person going back to China.’ But it is the most uncomfortable experience I have ever had in my life.” He continued:

There is a term my uncles and aunts call me which essentially translates to “empty bamboo shoot.” You have no form. I don’t deny it whatsoever. For me coming to China was not necessarily to recognize that I am Chinese. I know that I am Chinese; but it was more to understand where my parents are coming from and where the rest of my family is coming from. So the uncomfortability and uneasiness comes from my first year here. I would look around and try to buy vegetables and I was the dumbest kid on the block.

For this “ABC,” many people thought that he would be very comfortable living in China because his parents were Chinese, it would be just like coming home. But his family background did not prepare him for living overseas; instead it created a boundary that prevented him from fully understanding where his parents came from because Chinese people assumed he was Chinese rather than American-born-Chinese.

This type of desire for the familiar can also exist when teachers return to America. One couple, who taught in China and then returned to the United States and then decided

to go back to China, described the United States as “home” but that it was also an uncomfortable place. Marion explained, “Here in China I got used to just turning off all the ambient noise around me because I knew I didn’t understand. When we went home we would go to restaurants or the mall and everywhere: noise, noise that I can think about and comprehend.” This ability to comprehend noise and the inability to control what people can and cannot understand created problems for her husband who almost got a thrashing from someone who overheard him talking:

I got used to talking about people in front of them. I found that I have to stop it in America. I almost got beat up in a mall for this. My little brothers and I were walking around in a mall near a game shop in my state. There is a game called “Left 4 Dead” and one of the special zombies on Left 4 Dead is a Boomer. And it is a very large zombie. So if you are playing with a group of friends you would say, “Oh there is a boomer over there, don’t go near it.” So we see a very large woman walking with her very large husband and I make the comment: “Oh a boomer watch out,” really loudly. Everyone in the mall heard us and my little brothers cracked up laughing. The very large husband then turns around and looks right at us.

Uncomfortability thus can exist in both the country of origin and the host country. This is one issue that teachers must continually address in order to maintain their sense of home, but it does not fully answer what home means to them.

Another way to look at home is to look at family. Nearly all teachers that I spoke with commented that they brought pictures of family members with them overseas. “I have pictures everywhere,” said one teacher. “I have them all on my laptop,” explained another. To Martin, a young man who described himself as a “certified academic teacher who is still new and getting used to China,” home is “my family.” He went on to describe what he meant by home: “It is where my family lives. Not necessarily the place that I grew up, but the people I grew up with. When I get homesick it is not because I miss a place but because I miss some people.” This concept, that home is family, was a recurring theme, especially when teachers talked about how they spent their summers. “My family is pretty close and my mother is getting old and my stepfather is not in good health,” explained one veteran teacher.

They are very upset at me not being there. They are not mad at me, but they miss me for whatever reason. They cannot get used to the fact that I am not nearby. So if I didn't go back every summer I would feel pretty bad, especially if something happened to a family member and I hadn't seen them in a year or two.

Like Martin, teachers visited the United States over their summer breaks to spend time with parents or to see other family members.

For many teachers home was where family was currently located. For many this meant the United States. But family can include large groups of people. Since families are actually made up of individual persons, who can move individually, families can thus be dispersed. There is thus a consequent need to reassemble the family, but this can occur

in different ways. The most common form of reassembly of home occurs when family members come to visit teachers in the host country. Martin explained that having his family members come to visit was great and made him feel better:

The best part was being able to show them how I was living. For them to experience what I was talking about in my phone calls. Showing them the world which I lived in. Showing them how really different it was and how those differences are really hard to verbalize in a phone call or write about in an email. To experience it firsthand, because it is a different world. It is completely different from what we are used to in the states.

Other teachers attempted to bring their family members over permanently. Garen, a primary school teacher, said, “I am getting married this summer and after we get married my wife is going to move with me to Beijing and we are going to live here and call this home for a while.”

However, in the absence of reassembly, “home” is actually in multiple places. Garen continued, “Beijing is home for me and the rest of my extended family and siblings all live in Wisconsin. I go home to see them but even when I say ‘go home’ I sometimes confuse myself because I think that Beijing is home. I think it is just where I am investing most currently is my home.” By investing he meant spending most of his time and energy in living. With the addition of a future wife, Beijing would gain an added investment, and be more like home.

Are there any instances where teachers once thought of home as being in more than one place and then lost this multi-home approach? A few teachers commented that

they would be more likely to stop visiting the United States or permanently stay in China if there were no more family members left to visit in the United States. Indeed, some also stated that the main reason for visiting the United States was that their parents were getting old and sickly. So what happens when there is no one left to see in the United States? Jeremy, who had lived in China for eight years and was raising a family with his Chinese wife, may provide some answers to this question. Jeremy used to visit the United States frequently but since he has had children the visits are less often. He explained, “So far since I have been here it has been once every two years but now with two kids it is a lot harder to travel. So it will probably be more like once every four years. Also because my family, my dad, mom, and sister all live in Hong Kong now.” Instead of spending the summers or holidays in the United States, Jeremy was now more likely to visit relatives who lived in China. Even when he visited the United States, Jeremy lamented that he didn’t stay there very long. “My sister and grandma still live there, but we don’t stay for very long. We usually only stay for three or four days.”

The concept of home exists on many levels. Home can be a physical house, familiarity, family, or country. For most, it is a combination of all of these. The physical house serves as a place to root these notions together but for American expatriate teachers the result is rarely a single fully complete home. This inability to fully complete the home may influence the boundaries that exist in public and in private. How then does this difficulty affect the creation of a self-identity and the rooting of where home is?

CHAPTER 5: WHERE IS HOME?

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I examine how “home” is constructed and experienced by American expatriate teachers, dealing sequentially with how the teachers create boundaries through self-identification, when in public, and in terms of home as a physical construction, a set of people, a country, and an abstract notion. I conclude by describing how home cannot be fully put back together after leaving the country of origin because of the processes of deterritorialization and fragmentation of identities. In addition, I suggest that, because of this, transnationalism may not be the best notion through which to understand expatriates.

SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Globalization plays a large role in the lives of American teachers. Without the economic flows between geographical locations throughout the world, the occupation of international teacher would not exist. Teachers then provide one way in which to understand globalization and its effects. Yet, the converse is also true, teachers themselves act as propagators of globalization; as education spreads, more people are better prepared to enter into global markets. However, while globalization may spread education and wealth, it nonetheless has negative factors. Perhaps two of the most damaging are the deterritorialization of people and the fragmentation of their identities.

Because teachers deal with multiple peoples and cultures and because of deterritorialization, teachers have multiple self-identifications. Having multiple self-identifications allows teachers to move in and out of social groups or stay away from certain groups completely. American teachers in China primarily interact with other expatriates and local Chinese people, existing somewhere in between the two groups—not quite expatriates but certainly not Chinese.

Teachers generally deal with the other expatriates by distancing themselves from them but also sometimes by embracing the same identity. According to the teachers themselves, they both are and are not expatriates. To be an expatriate one has to have a certain level of income and a certain mindset. Teachers' salaries are often lower than those of many foreigners in the city with foreign companies, thus putting them at an economic disadvantage when compared to corporate expatriates. Yet at the same time, teachers often describe the “expat package” that teachers from overseas receive. This includes not only a high base salary, but also the cost of housing and a deferment of American taxes. While the salary of teachers is thus lower than other expatriates, it is many times above that of most Chinese, especially if the benefits of free housing and year-end bonuses are included. One couple, for example, mentioned that while the school paid for housing, they still wished to live in another apartment away from school supervision. They sought a place where there were western amenities such as a western-style toilet, bathtub, and high-speed internet. They went on to explain that, “Anywhere that we would be living would almost invariably be middle class by Chinese standards.”

Another teacher recalled how expatriates were usually able to gain access to services that local Chinese could not:

There was one neighborhood that had a lot of expatriates living in it. It had a fitness club that was not meant to be exclusively for westerners but the entrance fee was around 200 RMB which is the equivalent to about fourteen dollars. Based on that, it was extremely unlikely that any Chinese people would go there. So I felt like there was so much segregation between local Chinese people and expatriates.

Gym memberships were a common purchase for many teachers, especially in the winter months. While the price of 200 RMB is steep, it is nonetheless more than affordable for a teacher. The above examples reiterate that American teachers in China are, at the very least, more similar to expatriates than to the majority of local Chinese in terms of economic status.

The financial prowess of the teachers is quite evident in their ability to purchase western goods and high-end services. But perhaps more revealing is the way in which teachers describe the expatriate mindset. “There were not a lot of expatriates who were learning how to live like a Chinese person and absorb the culture,” explained one teacher. This was specifically exemplified in the learning of the Chinese language. Nearly all of the teachers had a basic grasp of survival Chinese language skills.¹¹ This primarily took the form of directions for travel, counting, and the ordering of basic foods at restaurants.

¹¹ It is important to note that the knowledge of a Chinese word does not necessarily mean that the speaker could read, much less write, the Chinese characters. In this case, basic survival Chinese refers to knowledge of spoken Chinese.

But, out of all of the teachers with whom I spoke, only one spoke Chinese fluently and only three others spoke with a high degree of competence and accuracy.

Teachers move in and out of the expatriate identity by criticizing other expatriates' lifestyles but at the same time behaving in similar ways. By being expatriates and not being expatriates, teachers create boundaries between themselves and the more wealthy expatriate groups, but at the same time enjoy some of the expatriate benefits.

Another way in which to examine how teachers form identities is to look at how they interact with Chinese people. One of the major factors when living in a foreign country is that one has to interact with the local population. In China, a foreign teacher must deal daily with local Chinese people. This presents another arena in which to understand identity. In interactions with Chinese people, several teachers exclaimed, "I always said that I was American." On the surface this identification may be chalked up to limited language capabilities; however most of those interviewed explained that they could say both American (*meiguoren*, 美国人) and teacher (*laoshi*, 老师) in Chinese. Two explanations for the use of American should be considered. First, the Chinese have a propensity to lump all foreigners together into the group *laowai* (老外), which is a combination of the terms "old" and "outside" which translates to "foreign." However, *laowai* leaves the term *ren* (人) out, which means person. Thus, *laowai* is not a person in the Chinese sense, unlike *meiguoren*, which is an American *person*. The other explanation of the identification with America may be the desire to distance oneself from becoming too involved with the local Chinese population. Cathy explained, "I was afraid that if I tried to become their friend then they would want me to be their child's tutor."

Thus, by becoming an American rather than a teacher, one could avoid falling into an obligation of maintaining a friendship at the expense of having to provide educational services. Both explanations show that outside influences shape one's self-identification and result in the distancing of a teacher from the local Chinese community.

As we have seen, there are competing notions of identity. On the one hand, teachers see themselves as teachers (but can revert back to being American when the need arises). This, in their minds, makes them different from other expatriates in general. At the same time, however, teachers embrace the expatriate lifestyle through shopping, travel, and eating. Indeed, in some instances, such as the New Year's Eve Party, teachers actively transcend the teacher boundary and become full-fledged expatriates, living it up—both metaphorically and physically—above the local Chinese. American teachers in China use this fluidity and multiplicity to cope with deterritorialization and fragmented identities. Here we see how identification boundaries are important to teachers, but also how it is important to be able to move across them.

BOUNDARIES IN PUBLIC

Teachers see themselves as both similar to expatriates and different from expatriates; both exhibiting the characteristics of that group but at the same time proclaiming that they are fundamentally different. Paige West (2006) argues that a dialogical model is the best approach to understanding how groups of people see each other. As we have seen, American teachers do have contact with local Chinese people. Unlike in Indonesia, where Fetcher describes how local Indonesians do not come into

contact with expatriates, teachers in China do come into contact and interact with locals on a daily basis (2007). There are many instances in which teachers talk to Chinese people in public places and in restaurants, and there are images of foreigners and Chinese being propagated on advertisements. In addition, the profession of teacher requires daily interaction with local people when in the act of teaching. But, since the two groups are often unable to communicate with each other in more than a limited fashion, misconceptions can cause separation and distance. Limited interactions help perpetuate boundaries.

American teachers in China experience a similar distancing from local populations, as did the expatriates studied by West and Fetcher. Many interactions took place in the form of the visual dialogue, or “the Gaze of the Other.” Yet teachers also had direct contact with local Chinese, especially in the form of salespeople, street hawkers, or questionable women. These interactions often created uncertainty and a feeling of danger unless they were encountered with a group of other foreigners. In addition to problems with people, there was a real sense of pollution. This manifested itself physically in the form of dirty streets, a close proximity to other people on public transportation, or contaminated milk. If interacting with locals and pollution is considered potentially harmful where then do teachers create boundaries to minimize such negative effects both in public situations and in private? The New Year’s Eve party at New Heights on the Bund is a prime example of boundary creation in the public sphere. Boundaries in this case were both physical and social. The lofty position of the restaurant provided clear, unobstructed views of the fireworks display which was occurring behind and above

Lujiazui, Shanghai's ultra-modern financial zone. In addition, teachers were positioned above the clutter and rubble of redevelopment that was occurring at street level. If the restaurant were at street level, views through the windows would have been impossible because they were covered in grime and dust from the construction. In addition, social boundaries were created through the division of rooms at the restaurant and from those at street level. The teachers spent the majority of their time on the balcony, which not only provided the best views of the neon lights and fireworks of Lujiazui, but also kept them, and other foreigners, separated from Asians who spent the majority of their time inside the restaurant, much less those who could not afford to enter the restaurant and were forced to see the fireworks from ground level.

Places like Fuzhou Lu and the DVD store were, by contrast, areas where individual American teachers could enter into Chinese areas but at the same time create a safe environment. The bookstore on Fuzhou Lu had the feeling of safety and cleanliness. This was reinforced through the sign declaring that it was a legitimate business with a list of rules and promises in both English and Chinese. However, the store was packed with sales people who were more than eager to sell Chinese language materials. The DVD store was a place where foreigners and locals generally come together, but there was still a large degree of pollution in the form of dust and the tight, narrow aisles. Both the pushy sales people at the bookstore and the pollution at the DVD store were part of what one teacher called the "real" China. These public places allowed teachers to safely, albeit temporarily, enter into the native or real China, perhaps especially because much of the cultural context—whether books or DVDs—was familiar.

Dealing with situations in the public sphere can be trying and difficult. In order to cope with such issues, teachers used a variety of methods including friends, music, and associations to create boundaries. Being alone in the city was the most difficult part of getting through the pollution. When unaccompanied, teachers often had a more difficult time dealing with the unfamiliar. China would become more exotic and dangerous when alone. One way in which teachers dealt with being alone in the public sphere was with the use of music. Having a digital music player allowed one teacher to “clear his mind” when he traveled through public spaces. In this way, he could ignore intrusive sounds such as the wheelie noise from luggage or the screech of bicycle brakes. Yet, as we saw, this presented a myriad of other risks, including theft. Being accompanied by a friend allowed teachers to cope with surrounding people and places. This was clearly demonstrated by one teacher’s comment that, “When I have no one to bounce anything off of when I see something crazy ... I feel isolated.” Commenting on the time when he was about to be urinated on by a child, this teacher felt amusement more than disdain; the event became uniquely foreign but manageable, a part of “real” China. Isolation was avoided through the use of a group, thus allowing for a safer transgression.

Finally, teachers also used formal clubs and associations to create a shared identity and differentiate themselves from “the Other.” For some teachers, church groups served this function. Church served as a way to protect expatriates from dangers that could be encountered in a foreign country. One teacher explained, “We want to stay connected in case we run into any problems...help out if [anyone] needed assistance.” In addition, church associations reinforced the idea of the expatriate group by using English

at services. English helped unite expatriates from different countries through the use of a common and hegemonic language.

BOUNDARIES IN THE HOME

“Home” can be many things: it can be a physical building such as house, it can be a country, or it can be people such as family members. “Home” also may invoke an idea, such as comfort or familiarity. “Home”, then, has a multiplicity of characterizations that may be linked to multiple places over time and even multiple places at the same time. To understand how boundaries are created and maintained in the lives of teachers, it is necessary to look at how the home, in both its physical and cognitive senses, is maintained.

Buildings represent spatial organization and shelter from the environment and serve as sites for the expression and reproduction of status (D. Lawrence 1996). As Rodman and Cooper note, unconventional living conditions, in this case living in a foreign country, require people to adapt to new living conditions (1996). In China, the house itself becomes a place where teachers attempt to exit the pollution and changing physical environment of rapidly modernizing China. The environment of China thus is different from that of the United States, which is perceived as clean but stagnant.

Americans living in China often saw their houses as central parts of their daily lives. Some even commented that a teacher in the United States could never afford such living conditions. As we have seen, boundaries manifested themselves in particular areas; chiefly doors, walls, and the kitchen. The doors were places of safety and security,

though often overlooked. But doors in China often had some type of flaw, whether being difficult to open or having to go through too many to gain access. In addition, doorways were areas where one threw off the pollution of China by changing shoes. Walls, in turn, were the main places for the acquisition of cultural artifacts. Teachers often bought paintings and artwork and proudly displayed them for people to see. (Incidentally, artwork was one of the main items that teachers brought back to the United States when they returned.) The kitchen was a place where teachers brought potentially dangerous foreign food into the house and changed it into a safe, and usually western, meals. This was done through many methods including washing, combining with western ingredients that had to be bought at import stores or shipped from the United States, and through the use of western appliances—principally the oven.

It is clear that the house as a physical building is a place where boundaries are maintained. But how does the physical structure relate to the cognitive idea of “home?” Do they exist in the same place? John Short explains that the home is “rife with ambiguities and ... a place of paradoxes” (1999). In this case, Short explains that the home, in a physical sense, can be a place where multiple, often contrasting ideas, manifest themselves in one location. The expatriate house in China definitely fits these criteria. Furthermore, Evans-Pritchard’s examination of home reveals that home can exist in multiple locations depending on when and where it is talked about (1969[1940]). This notion, that home in the cognitive sense (like home in the physical sense) can exist in multiple places, was commonly mentioned by teachers. They often referred to America as “home”, but also described how they would want to return “home” to China, when they

were visiting the United States. Home then can, at least according to these teachers, exist in both China and America simultaneously.

Most teachers also commented that home had something to do with family. Many teachers lamented that the main reason for returning to the United States over the summer was to see family members. Other teachers made a much more immediate connection, “Home is my family. It is where my family lives. Not necessarily the place that I grew up but the people I grew up with.” This comment reinforced the notion that home can exist in a place, but without family members in that place, it cannot fully be home. This is similar to the Chinese notion of *jia* (家) which connects family and the home together (Gamble 2003). Home in China, then, cannot be fully complete if family members are not present from abroad.

But people are mobile. Most teachers explained that family members had visited them and that this was often a cause for comfort, not only when they visited but even after they left. One teacher explained, “The best part [about having my parents visit] was being able to show them how I was living. For them to experience what I was writing, what I was talking about in my phone calls. Showing them the world which I lived in.” By having home come to China for a short period of time, this teacher felt more comfortable living overseas. Having family members accompany one overseas, as in the case of teaching couples, also serves to mitigate these problems.

TRANSNATIONALISM OR SOMETHING ELSE?

Both Fetcher (2007) and Porter (2009) attempt to explain where home is in their examinations of expatriates. Both argue that expatriates are actively trying to recreate their home while overseas. Fetcher argues that expatriates in Indonesia have the financial means to do so, while Porter believes that expatriates in Costa Rica engage in transnational practices by being actively engaged in the formation of ties in both the United States and Costa Rica. But one factor that needs to be considered is time. Time is one of the most critical components in the increasing flows of globalization and is an essential aspect when negotiating the boundaries between the home country and the home overseas. Portes et al. (1999) argue that the access to time-space compression technology and capital fosters transnational links (cited in Porter 2009). This was the case for expatriate Americans in Costa Rica who had the technology and financial means to stay closely linked to family members in America. Steven Vertovec has described the ability to place “cheap calls” as “the social glue of migrant transnationalism” (2009). Cheap telephone calls allow people overseas to stay closely connected to family members in other countries. But the linking of time and space created a more difficult problem for those in China. While teachers had the economic means to return home (as they often did on a yearly basis) and had access to time-space compression technology (such as Skype and discounted black market phone cards) time was still a problem. China is thirteen hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (twelve hours ahead of Daylight Savings Time) in the United States. The time difference means that if it is night in China then it is day in the United States, or vice versa from the United States to China. There is thus only a very

short window for teachers in China to contact family members in the United States before they either have to go to work or to bed. Garen explained how this was a source of difficulty:

This morning the frustration that I woke up to was that I was expecting to wake up to call my fiancée for an hour or two because that is Friday night for her. But I over slept so that means unless she stays up really late then I can't call her for another day. Whereas if I overslept and I was in America we could make something work. But the time difference is really difficult.

This type of boundary is unique because it cannot be easily overcome through the use of technology. The short window to talk to someone back in America prevents teachers from fully becoming transnational even though they have the financial means to do so.

When I began my search for the expatriate “home,” I originally thought that this transnational re-creation was the key. I surmised from personal experience that teachers would create tiny little Americas in their houses. But further inquiry into the topic revealed a new way of understanding. Perhaps it is impossible for expatriates to fully recreate home overseas. In fact, it may be impossible to fully recreate home even after returning to the country of origin and being in the company of family members. Maybe once someone leaves, it is impossible to fully bring all of the components back together again, no matter where you are. Because a person has become deterritorialized, their attachments to place will always be multiple. Furthermore, in the Chinese case, time itself becomes a formidable barrier to reconnecting these components in any kind of synchronized transnationalism.

OTHER ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

There are several other aspects of expatriate teachers that this thesis did not have the opportunity to fully address, but nonetheless may prove to be of interest in the future. A closer and more detailed look at American teachers who are raising children overseas would be, for example, a good starting point for further research. As we have seen, the notion of family is critical to the idea of home and thus those who are raising children, whether it be an American couple or a mixed American and Chinese couple, are likely to be the ones who transcend the limitations of an overseas home. Since families are being raised, and are traveling back and forth to America, this type of study would best be conducted through a multi-site approach. An examination of how the family is developing routines both while living abroad and when visiting other family members back in America might also be beneficial. In addition, a more in-depth analysis of space-time compression technology might be useful, especially for time zones where there is only a small window of opportunity for transnational interaction each day. When the window is small, what are the most important issues that are discussed and how does failing to communicate on other issues affect the ways in which boundaries are negotiated? These topics, coupled with a look at teachers worldwide, could lay the groundwork for a more holistic approach to the understanding of how home is created both practically and affectively.

Another area of prospective research might be the waning hegemony of the United States in relation to many foreign governments. As the numbers of Americans overseas increases, governments are beginning to take a keener interest in expatriates

who come to live in their countries. In China, large population shifts from rural to urban areas have also meant that the central government has a need to re-examine demographics. In the upcoming national population census, all expatriates will be counted and their data analyzed (Cai 2010). In addition, new laws have been and are continually being enacted that further limit the numbers of expatriates, including expatriate teachers, based on age limits and certification requirements. It would be fruitful to see how these political issues are being dealt with on the ground level by expatriate teachers, since this represents a new set of boundaries with which they must contend.

Finally, further socio-linguistic research would help to identify what words are commonly learned and used by expatriate teachers and further participant observation could provide insight on the implications of daily routines in expatriate life—for example that American teachers are less separated from local Chinese than corporate expatriates because their interactions occur with greater regularity. In addition, it would be fruitful to better understand how the Chinese and expatriate notions of home are interrelated. For example, how do Chinese cope with family members living or studying overseas? This could be understood through further research in China, coupled with research of Chinese living in America, both permanently and as expatriates.

APPENDICES

Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I am conducting interviews as part of my Master's thesis in Anthropology at George Mason University. The goal of this project is to understand the expatriate experience. Primarily, I am interested in how expatriates identify themselves and how they create or recreate "home" while living abroad. Do you give your consent to be interviewed and recorded? (GIVE INFORMED CONSENT FORM)

Background

- Could you please tell me about your job overseas and why you decided to take it?
- Why did you decide to move overseas?
- What country/city did you work in? Why did you decide to go to that particular place?
- Did you have any training or preparation that would aid in your transition before you decided to move?
- Do you have any memorable first impressions about the country/city in which you worked?

The home while aboard

This section examines the house that the participant lived in while abroad.

- Would you please describe the neighborhood or area of the city in which you lived? What was near to that location?
 - Is this were you wanted to live?
 - Where would you have lived if you had a choice?
- Please describe the house in which you lived.
 - Could you tell me about the floor plan?

- What did the entryway/ doorway look like?
- What floor did you live on? Was there an elevator?
- What did you see when looking out the windows?
- Describe the kitchen. (refrigerator size, pots, utensils, pantry space, etc.)
- What furniture (table, chairs, etc.) did you have? Were there any particular qualities to these pieces of furniture that struck you as interesting?
- How did you decorate your house? (wall hangings, pictures, souvenirs, objects from home, etc.)
- Did you decorate for festivals or special seasons? (e.g. Christmas, Chinese New Year)
- Communication Devices
 - Did you have internet, phone, TV?
 - How often did you use them? What did you use them for? What did you watch?
- Did you have a maid or other type of household servant?
 - In what manner did you interact with these people?

People and friends

This section examines social interactions while living abroad.

- How did you identify yourself?
 - Did you or your social group call yourselves anything in particular? Was there a term or set of terms that you identify with?
- What does the term “expatriate” mean to you?
- Do you associate this term with any other words?
- How would you describe other expatriates in general?

- How does an expatriate differ from a tourist? What is your general impression of tourists that you encountered while living abroad?
- Do you see yourself as an expatriate or any of the above mentioned words?
- Did you have any of your family overseas with you?
- Did any members of your family ever visit you?
- Please tell me about your friends while you were living abroad. Did you spend time with primarily locals or other expats? Why?
- Where did you spend time with these people? At your house or at another place (e.g. western pub, local park, teas house)?
- Did you use any tools to find out about events or places to socialize (e.g. internet, magazines, word of mouth, etc.)?

Food

This section examines the role of food in the expatriate experience.

- Please describe the types of food that you ate.
- Where did you get/ buy food? Please describe the places (physical location, vendors, people that shopped there, etc.) that you bought food.
- Describe any packaging that the food came in. Was the food fresh, processed, imported?
- Please describe the restaurants that you ate at.
 - What types of restaurants did you visit? (e.g. local, street vendor, western?)
 - What did the interior look like?
 - Did you have to order food in the local language or did you use English? Were there menus?
 - In what manner was the food brought to you?

Wrap-up

- After returning to the United States, what aspects of your life abroad do you feel impact your life today?
- What do you miss the most about your home in which you lived?
- Are there elements of your home overseas that you have incorporated into your home in the United States? If so, what?
- Overall, what was most frustrating about living overseas and what was the most rewarding?
- Is there anything you wish to add that was not discussed?

Expatriates and the Creation of Home
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH PROCEDURES: This research is being conducted to gain an understanding of how expatriates identify themselves and how they create the home while living abroad. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to discuss your experiences as an expatriate. The interview will be audio taped and will take approximately one and a half hours.

RISKS: There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this research.

BENEFITS: There are no benefits to you as a participant other than to further research in understanding the expatriate identity.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The data in this study will be confidential. To insure your confidentiality: (1) your name will not be included on the surveys and other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the survey and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your survey to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. All audio recordings will be stored in a locked box at the researcher's home and will be permanently deleted once transcribed.

PARTICIPATION: In order to participate in this survey you must have lived abroad for a minimum of six months. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you withdraw from the study, there is no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no costs to you or any other party.

CONTACT: This research is being conducted by Norris Thigpen and David Haines of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at George Mason University. Norris Thigpen, a George Mason University student, may be reached at 703-250-8428 or nthigpen@gmu.edu. David Haines, a faculty member at George Mason University who is supervising the research, may be reached at 703-993-3600 or dhaines1@gmu.edu for questions or to report a research-related problem. You may contact the George Mason University Office of Research Subject Protections at 703-993-4121 if you have questions or comments regarding your rights as a participant in the research.

This research has been reviewed according to George Mason University procedures governing your participation in this research.

CONSENT

I have read this form and agree to participate in this study.

I also agree to have this interview recorded.

do not agree to have this interview recorded.

Name

Date of Signature

Version date: 11 July 2009

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Benedict
2006 *Imagined Communities*. New edition. London: Verso.
- Appadurai, Arjun
1996 Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. In *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Pp. 27-47. Minneapolis: UMN Press.
- Arieli, Daniella
2007 The Task of Being Content: Expatriate Wives in Beijing, Emotional Work and Patriarchal Bargain. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 8(4):18-31.
- Bestor, Theodore C.
1989 *Neighborhood Tokyo*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bowen, Elenore Smith
1964 *Return to Laughter*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Cai Wenjun
2010 City Expats to be Counter in Census. *Shanghai Daily.com*, 16 January.
- Coles, Anne
2007 Making Multiple Migrations: The Life of British Diplomatic Families Overseas. In *Gender and Family among Transnational Professionals*. Anne Coles and Anne Meike Fetcher, eds. Pp. 125-148. New York: Routledge.
- Dulles, Foster Rhea
1966 A Historical View of Americans Abroad. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 368(Nov.):11-20.
- Evans-Pritchard, E.E.
1969[1940] *The Nuer*. Oxford: Oxford Press.

- Farrer, James
 2004 Shanghai's International Community: A Symbolic Interaction and Gender Studies Approach to Understanding China's Rising Global City. Paper presented at the University of Georgia Sociology Workshop, Athens, September 10.
- Fetcher, Anne-Meike
 2007 Transnational Lives: Expatriates in Indonesia. Aldershot, England: Ashgate.
- Fleischer, Friederik
 2007 To Choose a House Means to Choose a Lifestyle. The Consumption of Housing and Class-Structuration in Urban China. *City and Society* 19(2): 287-311.
- Knapp, Ronald
 1999 China's Living Houses. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Kellner, Douglas
 2002 Theorizing Globalization. *Sociological Theory* 20(3):285-205.
- Gamble, Jos
 2003 Shanghai in Transition. London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Giddens, Anthony
 2003 Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives. New York: Routledge.
- Johnston, Bill
 1999 The Expatriate Teacher as Postmodern Paladin. *Research in the Teaching of English* 34(2): 255-280.
- Lawrence, Denise
 1996 Tourism and the Emergence of Design Self-Consciousness in a Rural Portuguese Town. *In Setting Boundaries: The Anthropology of Spatial and Social Organization*. Deborah Pellow, ed. Pp. 71-90. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.
- Lawrence, Roderick J.
 1996 The Multidimensional Nature of Boundaries: An Integrative Historical Perspective. *In Setting Boundaries: The Anthropology of Spatial and Social Organization*. Deborah Pellow, ed. Pp. 9-36. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.

- Low, Setha M.
 1996 Constructing Difference: Spatial Boundaries and Social Change in Two Costa Rican Plazas. *In Setting Boundaries: The Anthropology of Spatial and Social Organization*. Deborah Pellow, ed. Pp.161-178. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw
 1984[1922] Argonauts of the Western Pacific. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.
- Munro, Moira and Ruth Madgin
 1999 Negotiating Space in the Family Home. *In At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*. Irene Cieraad, ed. Pp. 118-129. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- O'Reilly, Karen
 2000 The British on the Costa Del Sol. London: Routledge.
- Peabody, Francis G.
 1915 Americans Abroad. *The North American Review* 201(Mar.):366-371.
- Pellow, Deborah
 1993 No Place to Live, No Place to Love: Coping in Shanghai. *In Urban Anthropology in China*. Greg Guldin and Aidan Southall eds. Pp. 396-423. The Netherlands: E. J. Brill.
 1996 Intimate Boundaries: A Chinese Puzzle. *In Setting Boundaries: The Anthropology of Spatial and Social Organization*. Deborah Pellow, ed. Pp. 111-136. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.
- Porter, Lisa
 2009 Transnational Spaces: U.S. Expatriates Recreating Home in Costa Rica. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*. 3(10):217-223.
- Putman, Tim
 1999 "Postmodern" Home Life. *In At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*. Irene Cieraad, ed. Pp. 144-154. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Rodman, Margaret and Matthew Cooper
 1996 Boundaries of Home in Toronto Housing Cooperatives. *In Setting Boundaries: The Anthropology of Spatial and Social Organization*. Deborah Pellow, ed. Pp. 91-110. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.

- Rosaldo, Renato
 1989 Introduction: Grief and a Headhunter's Rage. *In Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*. Pp. 1-21. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Scholte, Jan Art
 1996 The Geography of Collective Identities in a Globalizing World. *Review of International Political Economy* 3(4):565-607.
- Shanghai Daily
 2009 Average Income Hits 21,871 Yuan. *ShanghaiDaily.com*, Nov. 02.
- Short, John Rennie
 1999 Forward. *In At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*. Irene Cieraad, ed. Pp. ix-x. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Shove, Elizabeth
 1999 Constructing Home: A Crossroads of Choices. *In At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*. Irene Cieraad, ed. Pp. 130-143. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Singer, Andre
 1990 *Strangers Abroad: Pioneers of Social Anthropology*. 316 min. Films for the Humanities. Princeton.
- Storti, Craig
 2003 *The Art of Coming Home*. Boston: Intercultural Press.
- Turnbull, Colin
 1961 *The Forest People*. New York: Touchstone.
- U.S. Census Bureau
 2001 *Issues of Counting Americans Overseas in Future Census*. Washington, D.C
- Vertovec, Steven
 2009 *Transnationalism*. London and New York: Routledge.
- West, Paige
 2006 *Conservation is our Government Now*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Wilson, Samuel and Leighton C. Peterson
 2002 The Anthropology of Online Communities. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31:449-467.

Curriculum Vitae

Norris Thigpen graduated from the University of South Carolina in 2006 with a Bachelors of Arts in Anthropology. Immediately afterwards he spent two years teaching and living in Shanghai, People's Republic of China. At George Mason University, his studies focused on globalization, cultural adaptation and change, and political economy. His current research interests focus on East Asian cultures as well as the nature of home.