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The Habitable City in China

Urban History in the Twentieth Century

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CHAPTER 5

To See and Be Seen: Horse Racing in Shanghai, 1848–1945

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Early modern China was characterized by rapid urbanization. In addition to administrative units such as provincial capitals, prefectural seats, and county towns, as well as the trade-intensive cities and towns of Jiangnan, in the second half of the nineteenth century, there also emerged 77 trading ports, the majority along the coast.[1]

The increase in the scale of cities, as well as the improvements made to the fabric of the city, prompted more and more people to congregate there. When analyzing this historical progression, one cannot help but ask what it was that drew large numbers of people to abandon their land and gather in a narrow city space. In other words, what kind of opportunities and lifestyles did cities represent for people of that time? The answers to these questions naturally vary, due to the differences in sizes of cities and their geographical conditions. But generally speaking, for a city to be habitable, it has to provide certain living conditions: Firstly, it needs to have an established supply system, allowing its residents to obtain basic food, drinking water, and shelter; secondly, it must have plenty of employment opportunities so as to enable those residents who leave the land to support their families; and finally, whether a walled city or a market town without walls, it should have a force to protect its inhabitants. However, these merely constitute basic urban facilities which are common requirements for a city

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of any era or region. For a city to be considered a greatly advanced modern metropolis, it has to satisfy yet another requirement: It must provide its inhabitants with various amusements to enjoy in their leisure time. This enables cities to flourish, making them even more attractive and entertaining, while increasing the number of 'things' which can be consumed. These 'things' can include goods and places which can only be accessed through payment, such as shops, restaurants, brothels, and gambling houses, and also sights that can be enjoyed free of charge. Chen Hsi-yuan's research on late Qing Shanghai and the annual processions for the City God to make his tour of inspection, which were held at each of the three Spirit Festivals (Tombsweeping Festival, Ghost Festival in the seventh month, and the Later Ghost Festival in the tenth month),[2] together with He Qiliang's research on the early years of the Republic and the great funeral procession after Sheng Xuanhai's death, which was the sensation of the day, indicate that both these events drew crowds of thousands of people gathering to watch.[3]

In addition to these religious festivals and funeral processions, there was also another notable spectacle in the treaty port cities of modern China: the biannual spring and autumn race meetings. The number of spectators at the races ranged from thousands to several tens of thousands. Every year, the event provided city residents with regular entertainment as well as a topic of conversation. What makes these race meetings distinctive is that the history of British horse racing in China covers the same period as the history of treaty ports in China—from the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 to 1943. The distribution of the racecourses also corresponds to the locations of the treaty port cities. Regardless of the size or scale of these cities, wherever there were foreigners taking up residence, there was always the obligatory racecourse nearby. It could be described as a tangible representation of treaty port culture. Since horse racing was a leisure activity imported from outside China, it was not possible to dissociate it from the foreign concessions and colonial society. Combining as it did the dual elements of sport and gambling, this created a constant tension with traditional Confucian values. At the same time, it is also an extremely good case study for understanding the cultural translation process, and observing how a foreign activity from a different culture was indigenized through a new interpretation.

This chapter explores the relationship between horse racing and the treaty port cities, with the central focus being trendsetting Shanghai, with the other treaty port cities as a secondary focus. It identifies horse racing as a defining element in the shaping of consumption in early modern Chinese cities. Because of its high profile, horse racing was both the most

distinct feature of the treaty port cities and the driving force behind the transformation of urban culture. During different periods, horse racing served respectively as a spectacle which could be enjoyed free of charge and as paid-for entertainment. Over time, most notably at the dawn of the twentieth century, it became the main force in promoting the popularization of recreation.

This chapter also argues that the most important characteristic of horse racing and urban culture is the concept of 'seeing and being seen'. It shows that the pleasure of watching was not only the reason for the emergence of such urban spectacles, but also formed the basis and motivation for urban consumption. In order to explain this concept, this chapter is divided into five sections. Section one explores the channels through which British-style horse racing was imported into China, as well as examining why the sport was embraced whole-heartedly in colonial society; section two explains the importance of seeing and being seen for Western spectators, taking as a case study the ladies attending and watching races. Section three analyzes the reasons why Chinese people living in treaty port cities toward the end of the nineteenth century showed such enthusiasm for watching horse races, while also examining the importance of the pleasure of spectating within the context of urban culture and life. Sections four and five illustrate the move toward popularization of leisure activities in treaty port cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, and identify the role horse racing played in this process.

Pillar of the Foreign Community

The introduction of British-style horse racing into China can be traced back to the time of the East India Company. According to Austin Coates, the first race meeting in China took place in Macau sometime in 1798 or 1799. At the time, trade was confined to the Thirteen Factories area of Canton for both staff employed by the East India Company and private merchants. Not only were conditions in the area cramped, traders did not have the company of their families. As soon as the low season arrived, they would retire to Macau for a break, where they would organize horse races for entertainment. Since these races were a rare embellishment in an otherwise monotonous life, the foreign community would attend in their finest clothes.[4] In the mid-nineteenth century, after the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing, traders were allowed to move north to other newly opened treaty ports. The social life of the foreign community had also become positively English by this time, owing to Britain's long dominance in trade

and the number of British troops and traders in China. Thus, it was that horse racing became a major annual event that brought the community together.[5] The foreign community in each port looked for an adequate site and held races there as soon as they had solved the basic issues of settlement. In the autumn of 1842, British troops began racing horses on the island of Gulangyu 鼓浪屿 in Amoy. Subsequently, in the spring of 1848, Shanghai held its first race meeting, and horse racing spread to many other treaty ports over the next two decades.[6]

Most of the earliest race meetings in the treaty port cities were simple and economical due to lack of funds. Rather than an official competition, they resembled a 'local picnic on an extended scale'.[7] But after the first race meetings, the foreign community in each treaty port rallied together and formulated a plan to ensure the races could continue to be held. Since speed was the main element of British-style horse racing, the racecourse had to be wide, curved, and oval-shaped in order to facilitate viewing. As space was limited in the concession, the land for the racecourse had to be outside the concessions, and the foreign community in each port made great efforts in securing and preparing it. Next, they took great pains to establish stables and stands, collect funds, and set up race clubs to organize race meetings. However, increasing land prices and damage caused by floods and sandstorms meant that racecourses repeatedly had to be moved to new venues until they found permanent locations.[8] The persistent efforts of the foreign community and their deep commitment to organizing races were due to several factors.

Firstly, it was their way of imitating the lifestyles of the metropole. In addition, horse racing played an important role in redirecting the attention of the younger members of the foreign communities in the treaty ports, thereby maintaining order in the newly established colonial society. Foreign communities in China were small with a gender imbalance of men over women. Consequently, life could be best described as dull and lonely. The mix of nationalities was also a problem. For instance, in Shanghai, half of the foreigners were British, and the rest were, in descending order, American, German, French, Dutch, and other. In order to prevent the 2000 young men, who were herded into the narrow space of the concessions and, moreover, were of different nationalities, from fighting, drinking, gambling, or becoming infatuated with local girls, the elders of the concessions encouraged them to take part in sports so as to exhaust their energy and redirect their attention, thus maintaining the wellbeing of body and mind.[9]

The heads of the trading houses and the elders of the community not only encouraged the youngsters to ride and race but often joined in and assisted them in such diversions.[10] Many owned big stables and even acted as jockeys in the races, and thus competed with each other in both trade and on the racecourse. The intense rivalry between the Jardine and the Dent families, for example, dominated the racing scene in Shanghai between 1857 and 1867.[11] Horse racing thus became one of the pillars of the foreign communities along with churches, clubs, freemasonry, national societies, militias, and other sporting activities.

To See and Be Seen

Horse racing also possessed its own entertainment value. From the point of view of the audiences, the pleasure mostly came from 'seeing and being seen'. As each season's races came round every spring and autumn, even more important than seeing the races was seeing the rich attire of the ladies who had come to watch. Examining *The North China Herald*'s reporting on the races, the first topic to be addressed was that of the weather, which not only affected the performance of the horses, but also the number of ladies who would turn out to watch the races. For instance, on the first day of the autumn races in Shanghai in 1873, the weather was unusual: Although the sun did make an appearance, there was a bone-chilling wind. Thus on the side of the stand that was in the sun, it seemed like summer, but on the side that was in the shade it was like a winter's day. Naturally, the ladies present were all at the sunny end. *The North China Herald*, noting that these ladies had been invited by the members of the Race Club, did not neglect to add the line 'it was the sunnier for their presence' to their report.[12] In 1878 on the first day of the Shanghai spring races, the weather was warm. To everyone's surprise, the number of ladies attending exceeded the usual number of a dozen or so. The arrival of the ladies was described as 'an assemblage of the fairer portion of humanity that at once imparted colour to the meeting and relieved it from that feeling of dullness that has so often prevailed'.[13] Generally speaking, regardless of which treaty port they were held in, all the race meetings were graced with the presence of ladies. The presence of women was considered so important that *The North China Herald* opined that three things were necessary for a race meeting: 'fair faces, bright sunshine, good sport', and that the first listed, the presence of ladies, was the most important.[14]

That ladies were willing to brave the sandstorms to attend the races undeniably raised the morale of the jockeys and horse owners. Naturally, the ladies had their own motivations as well—they did not attend simply to see, but to be seen. The biannual spring and autumn race meetings were such grand gatherings for the foreign community that they provided perfect occasions for the ladies to show off the latest fashions. Seeking the spotlight on these rare social occasions, they would have stylish new clothes tailored in advance and would prepare plenty of outfits, which good weather would enable them to showcase.[15] In comparison with the autumn race meetings, the spring meetings provided an especially good opportunity to showcase their new clothes, as the ladies were able to rid themselves of their thick winter coats and reveal their well-cut spring styles and matching fashionable shoes and hats. For instance, on the first day of the 1895 Tianjin spring race meeting, it was pleasantly warm and so, braving the hardships of travel, the ladies chose to bless the races with their presence. There was a fairly large assembly of ladies, 'gay in smart frocks and elegant with divine millinery', as a former Consul said, 'whose presence indefinitely enhanced the general interest'.[16] At the 1899 Tianjin spring race meeting, 'many ladies graced the proceedings, and there was the usual aesthetic display of dainty dresses and lovely ducklings of bonnets'.[17]

An Exotic Fun Spectacle

Foreigners raced horses in order to encourage community cohesion, but these occasions also proved an amusement for the Chinese population of the treaty ports. When the racing season arrived, the spectators would brave the journey to the racecourse outside the city, and transform that originally desolate land temporarily 'with a bustling atmosphere'.[18] The phenomenon of Chinese attendance at the races was like that of the ladies: The degree of enthusiasm was directly proportional to the pleasantness of the weather. Taking Shanghai as an example, in 1878, the peak number of Chinese in attendance reached 20,000.[19] In a city which then had a population of 200,000 on the basis of these figures, around 10 percent of the Chinese population in Shanghai would turn out to watch the races.[20] However, except for the local Daotai, the county magistrate, and the magistrate of the Mixed Court who could get invitations to sit on the Grand Stand, after 1898 the majority of Chinese were unable to get in the venue[21] and were merely able to stand outside the racecourse, peering over

the trenches that separated them from the track. *Shenbao* 申报 described the crowds who gathered on the north and east sides of the Shanghai racetrack in the following terms: 'There were those wearing the short tunic of the craftsman, others in long scholar's gowns, as well as sons of wealthy families in silk cloth and white-haired elders. Still further, there were old women and young ladies, all treading on each other's toes and stretching their necks to attend and striving for a glimpse [of the action]'.[22]

Most of *Shenbao*'s journalists were not conversant with Western languages and when reporting on the outcome of the race were either unable to give details or often relied on hearsay. Hence, they would distinguish the horses and jockeys by means of color, for example 'the victor was the black horse, its rider in red and wearing a black vest',[23] or else 'there were many competitors, and it is said that the winner was the American firm Russell & Co., but it is still not yet properly known'.[24] With journalists such as this, one can well imagine the level of knowledge available to ordinary spectators. However, this did not hinder the crowd's delight in sightseeing. Sometimes, the weather was bad and the visibility was not good, and thus anything of value that had been seen was questionable. For example, in 1880, one spectator described it thus: 'Our quality of vision was poor due to the distance, and in a flash they had passed us by, the riders like ants and the horses like beans. I was just about to watch but the gale struck me in the face, the dust blinding the eyes so I could not bear it.'[25] The far distance and insufficient information added to the fact of the weather meant that the phenomenon of watching horse races in the nineteenth century was undoubtedly about watching the bustle and the crowds. However, it was precisely because these Chinese crowds were outsiders looking in who did not mind about winning or losing that the stimulating atmosphere of excitement was so pure.[26]

Horse racing was not the only thing worth watching. During the two seasonal meetings held each year, the area around the edge of the racecourse became a temporary leisure space, and for those few days, it would be like a Chinese festival or a Western holiday. For the Westerners, for the few days of the race meeting, the consulates, customs office, and the Mixed Court would suspend work for the afternoon, while foreign firms, banks, and factories would also close down for the half day. All taboos were off. The Shanghai Municipal Police usually adopted a stern approach toward gambling, but were relatively relaxed during the races. Any foreigners setting up gambling counters outside the racetrack were not prevented from doing so, and thus the area around would be filled with gambling stands

and wine stalls.[27] As for the Chinese, as the foreign institutions closed, any enterprises which had doings with foreigners would also be quiet. Many businesses which did not have direct dealings with foreigners also felt the pull of novelty in the horse races and came out to spectate. Aside from the literati, young men from wealthy families, rich merchants, high officials, craftsmen, and peddlers, the attendees also included famous courtesans, young daughters of rich families, and pretty daughters of more humble homes. Even Shanghai's silk-spinning factory women and those who ran their own stores would call their aunts and sisters to take advantage of the horse racing holidays to make merry.[28]

Within this space, the most attractive aspect was that men were allowed to watch women without restrictions regardless of whether they were decent women or courtesans from Shanghai's brothels.[29] For the many 'hungry men' who normally did not have the opportunity to enter theaters or restaurants to gaze upon the grace of the courtesans nor the opportunity to meet the ladies of rich families, this time was tantamount to a godsend. At the outer circle of the racecourse, they would so busy themselves with running back and forth and looking around that they 'saw no person on horseback, but sighted only the beauties in carriages'.[30]

While men used the opportunity provided by the race meetings to watch people, Shanghai's high-ranking prostitutes would seize the golden opportunity to be seen. By this time, they were often discussed in local tabloid newspapers, and the subject of gossip in Shanghai society. Stars require both stage and audience, and the biannual race meetings were the best stage of all. From the 1870s, the highest-ranking prostitutes, known as 'changsan'長三 and 'yao'er' 么二, began to see the races as an excellent opportunity to display new clothing and makeup. When the date of the race meeting approached, the courtesans would all purchase outfits, hire a good carriage, and prepare to set forth with their clients to see the race. The carriages were also carefully chosen, the best being the four-wheeled coach with glass windows. Described as 'glass on four sides [of the coach], a line of carriages with charming and beautiful women [inside]', passersby could see within at a glance.[31] Sometimes if they had no client to cover the costs, wealthy courtesans would foot the bill themselves and set out hand in hand with their female friends.[32]

The temporary leisure space which formed around the racecourse was not only a platform for courtesans to display themselves, but also an opportunity for others who liked to be in the limelight. In the early twentieth century, such usage of the horse races to seek the spotlight

extended to society's fashionable men and women.[33] At the same time, adverts began to appear in newspapers for 'up-to-the-minute dress materials for watching the horseraces', marketing 'newly arrived silver-ribbed brocades in many colours from abroad' and 'new multi-coloured coat fabrics woven with golden threads'.[34] Thus watching the races and watching those watching the races became unified, and together became one of the city sights of late Qing Shanghai.

From Outsider to Insider

The custom of watching the biannual races from the sides of the track persisted until the end of the 1910s when it was gradually supplanted by entering the track to bet on the horses. There are several factors that caused this change. Firstly, a number of the treaty ports experienced substantial growth during the early twentieth century.[35] The rapid increase in the population of these cities caused occupational and class differentiation. Between the two extremes of the rising bourgeoisie and the underclass of laborers who struggled for food and shelter, there was also a middle class. Broadly speaking, this included company managers, store owners, factory girls, office staff, ordinary workers, school teachers, and even the new professionals, such as lawyers, journalists, writers, doctors, and accountants. Some of these were well-off, others were not, but they had similar requirements for entertainment to fill their time outside work or the office. Aside from the traditional pleasures of smoking, gambling, and prostitutes, they desired new, modern entertainment appropriate to the times but which could be afforded by the masses. As flourishing, modern cities, the treaty ports (or that is to say the quick-thinking businessmen within the treaty ports) sensed this need and issued two responses. The first was to combine many forms of entertainment into one, creating a new style of leisure; and the second was to mass-orientate the pleasures previously reserved for the elite, allowing ordinary people to enjoy them for a comparatively low price.

In the 1910s, Shanghai's amusement parks emerged in light of this first response. They took the activities which had previously been conducted separately in teahouses, theaters, and fairs and housed them together in a single building, creating something like a department store for leisure activities.[36] Provided one had an entrance ticket, people could spend an entire day within enjoying Chinese operas, theater, storytelling, films, riddle-guessing, magic shows, distorting mirrors, and even boxing

matches. Such entertainment, in addition to the popularity of films with sound and the rise of department stores, made the trend of increasingly mass-orientated leisure in the treaty ports very clear, and thus the Race Clubs also had no way of persisting in their former aloof attitude and insisting that horse racing continue to be a leisure activity for foreigners.

Aside from the impetus to the popularization of leisure provided by the city's development, the second spur to the Race Clubs of each treaty port to change their tune was provided by the establishment of international race clubs by Chinese merchants. Following a half century of observing and imitating, at the beginning of the twentieth century, a group of Chinese 'sportsmen' had emerged. These were the newly risen metropolitan elite, who had intimate connections with foreign firms, maritime customs, or missionary schools, either personally or through their families. Having grasped the know-how of British-style horseracing, they wanted to enter the Western-run Race Clubs and be treated the same as the foreign horse owners. However, the Western-run Race Clubs were closed groups, from which Chinese were excluded. Following this setback, together with a few Westerners sympathetic to their plight, these Chinese people established their own race clubs in Shanghai, Tianjin, Hankou, and Qingdao. They then used the clubs as an opportunity for social interaction between Chinese and foreigners and to expand their interpersonal networks, thereby consolidating their newly acquired social and economic statuses within the concessions.

Of the many Chinese race clubs that were established, Shanghai's International Recreation Club (IRC) was undoubtedly the pioneer. It was established in 1908 and presented a challenge to the Shanghai Race Club (SRC). Aside from the rise of Chinese owners and jockeys, a more serious issue was the admission of the Chinese to the racecourse. In the early years of horseracing, Chinese people had watched alongside Westerners without any discrimination. However after 1898, in order to maintain order, Chinese had been forbidden from entering the racecourse.[37] Contrary to SRC's practice, IRC adopted a policy of gate money. All spectators, whether foreign or Chinese, were permitted entry to the racecourse to watch the races so long they bought tickets. The ticket prices started at two yuan for a first class ticket, and one yuan for second class,[38] although later this was reduced to one yuan for all tickets.[39] That the IRC admitted Chinese spectators made conspicuous the unfairness of the SRC regulations and public opinion began to turn against them. The news coverage in the Chinese newspapers gradually moved from praising the importance

Westerners attached to military preparations to satirizing SRC policy, describing the racecourse as a 'Pleasure Place for the Arrogance of the White Race' that Chinese were not permitted to set foot in.[40]

Aside from the challenge presented by the IRC, the SRC itself was facing a crisis of transformation in the early twentieth century. In the early period, foreigners numbered only a few thousand. In general, most people knew each other and so holding the races was rather like holding a large-scale picnic. However in 1905, the population of foreigners in the International Settlement passed 10,000 and moreover non-British and non-American nationalities such as Russians and Japanese continued to flood in. When holding races, it became normal for foreigners meeting not to know each other, and the races thus lost their original function of promoting social cohesion and strengthening of community consciousness. Under such circumstances, the SRC was forced to reconsider its policies and position. After almost ten years of resistance and public pressure, the SRC finally changed its tune in 1919. With the spring races of that year imminent, the SRC began to advertise in all the major Chinese newspapers for the first time, inviting Chinese to enter the racecourse. The ticket price was six yuan for all four days, or three yuan for a single day. Women were given preferential treatment, and so a four-day ticket was three yuan and a day ticket was two yuan for them.[41]

The SRC not only admitted Chinese spectators to the enclosure of the racecourse, but it also followed in the footsteps of the IRC and greatly increased the number of races held. When the IRC had first begun to hold races in 1911, as they knew well that they could not compete with the time-honored spring and autumn race meetings, so they adopted a 'small and delicate' policy. Aside from the formal meeting held over two days, they began to hold regular afternoon events. To encourage city residents to attend, when these were not held on weekend days when all were off, they were held on Chinese festivals such as Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival; later national holidays such as National Day and Republic Day were added to the roster as well.[42] This schedule was clearly well-suited to the requirements of city residents and from 1919 onward, the SRC began to imitate their practices. In addition to the large race meetings held in spring and autumn, they also began to hold single day one-off events on Saturday afternoons.[43] Thus all at once, Shanghai came to have more than 30 races in a year. Aside from July and August when the weather was too hot to race, each month had at least one or as many as six days on which horse racing could be watched.[44] In 1926, Shanghai's

second Chinese organization was established, the Chinese Jockey Club,[45] and thus the number of race days increased to 68.[46] Thus, horse racing had now been entirely popularized. It was no longer an occasional event, a holiday, or festival anticipated by all, but was an everyday consumer activity for the city's middle classes. The content and meaning of watching horse racing had thus changed completely.

Betting and Watching

In horse racing, betting and watching were two sides of the same coin. Betting made the races more exciting, while watching the races sharpened the success or loss that came with betting. In the beginning, the size of bets was quite limited, but as the numbers of foreigners increased, the bets also increased in size. In 1894, the SRC introduced totalizators to help punters understand the size and distribution of bets.[47] It was at this time that betting became an important part of Shanghai's horse racing scene. In the early years, although Chinese spectators had heard about betting, as they were unable to enter the course they could not participate. However as the IRC and the SRC successively opened up to them, the Shanghainese were quick to discover that not only had they moved from distant viewing to close spectating, but that they had discovered a whole new form of gambling.

Betting on horseraces can be divided into two main forms: pari-mutuel and cash sweeps. In the first form, after a set commission has been deducted from the pool of all the bets, the remainder is divided between the winners. In this style of bet, the banker merely plays a managerial role and does not participate in the betting. The betting is between the punters themselves. The advantage of this style of betting is that provided one bets on the favorite, the probability of winning is high. Under the winners-divide-all rule, winning money is relatively easy. However, the share of the prize money is also likely to be limited. It is common for a bet of one yuan to win a return of only one yuan and two jiao. It is only when a rare upset occurs that it is possible to come away with a substantial pot.[48]

Cash sweeps were divided into 'lottery tickets' and 'championship tickets'. The former were in play at every race, while the latter were only available at the final race of each season. Horse tickets were issued in advance, and the day before the races ticket numbers would be drawn and then the numbers of the horses competing in the races. If that horse came first in the competition, then the person holding that ticket would also claim first

prize. The prize money was the total made from sale of tickets minus commission. Of the remainder, seven tenths was allocated to the first prize, two tenths to the second, and a tenth to third place. The distinguishing characteristic of such cash sweeps was the highly concentrated prize money, especially in the championship stakes. A win in these was a true windfall, but the winning rate was extremely low.[49]

Of these two betting methods, the cash sweeps system was extremely close to the late Qing game of 'pakapoo; 白鴿票' (literally 'white dove tickets', a particular form of prize lottery from Luzon in the Philippines) and so it was not unfamiliar to the Chinese. However, pari-mutuel betting was something fresh that had not been seen before by the Shanghainese. At the time, Shanghai already had many types of gambling. However, in all these games, there was normally only one winner, whereas in pari-mutuel, it was possible for many people at the racecourse to win at the same time, making it highly entertaining. Moreover, the traditional gambling games were not large in scale and only limited numbers of people could participate. The pari-mutuel system could allow hundreds or thousands of punters to bet at the same time. Thus, as soon as the SRC opened the racecourse to Chinese clientele, people crowed in 'like water running down a ravine'.[50] Spectators frequently numbered 7000 to 8000 people per race.[51]

After the opening-up of the racecourses, the Chinese were no longer merely outsiders watching the fun. To assist the city dwellers in attaining a greater understanding of horse racing, from the autumn of 1922 onward, *Shenbao* engaged SRC staff member Fang Bofen 方伯奮 to write comprehensive race reports. From this point onward, the colors were no longer the sole distinguishing characteristic in descriptions of the competition, as in 'the second race, of fifteen horses, the black horse with the rider in yellow with a white hat belonging to a British company won'.[52] Now, the reports clearly gave the correct names of the race, the participating horses, their jockeys, and the weights each horse carried as well as the prize money for each win and place. They even listed the names of those who had not won, making the races clear and comprehensible to all.[53] Aside from reporting on the race results, before the races Fang Bofen would also provide readers with information on the horses' recent trials and the form of the jockeys,[54] and on the day of the races he would publish his predictions.[55] In 1923, horse racing veteran Qiu Rushan 邱如山, in order to assist the race-goers, went a step further and published a pocket-size form book, entitled *Saima Zhinan* 賽馬指南 (A guide to horse racing).

This guide listed the performance of each horse for the year and noted whether the horses in question preferred soft or hard going, making it easy for punters to decide.[56]

Under such intensive publicity and educational efforts, city residents gradually grasped the techniques and methods of betting. Simultaneously, their spectating habits began to change. The former hectic dashes to watch the excitement that had characterized Chinese viewers were replaced by spectators who sat in a fixed place gazing with rapt attention at the races. The visual interaction between seeing and being seen in the racecourse naturally persisted. For instance, Chinese and Western ladies continued to use the opportunity provided to display their costumes,[57] and those who went solely to watch people still felt that watching the faces of those who had won money was more interesting than the races themselves.[58] However, as the majority of spectators now worried about gains and losses, the focus shifted from watching people to watching the galloping horses and their jockeys.

With the gaze of the spectators concentrated on the outcome of the races, the preparations for and self-consciousness of 'being seen' shifted to the winning owners and jockeys. After victory had been determined, the owners of the first three finishers had the privilege of walking through the front of the grand stand along with the winning horses and receiving the applause of the spectators. This was the moment of glory for owner and jockey, but also the focus for being seen.[59] Following the spread of photography, their moment in the gaze of the crowd could further be made eternal, incarnated in photographic form and published in a newspaper or magazine for yet more people to see. Or otherwise the image could be enlarged, placed in a frame, and hung on the wall for passersby to see again and think back, and discuss once again the events of the day. Or else it was simply kept in an album and treasured by the owner so that henceforth no matter how life changed, the image traveled with him as proof to later sons and grandsons of that instant.[60]

Conclusion

The history of horse racing in China not only shows the development of the treaty ports, but also presents in microcosm the changes experienced by the modern Chinese city. Across China during this period, the cities were changing, with some older urban centers declining, while new ones developed. One of the problems of development was how to cope

with an increase in the city's population. Some of the other chapters in this volume have emphasized safety and environment, but this chapter has emphasized urban consumption and especially recreation. It proposes that what attracted people to the city was the 'good life'. However, what precisely is living the good life? Aside from eating and drinking well and having money to spend, a factor that cannot be neglected is the abundance of dazzling, unprecedented new entertainments, including horse races, amusement parks, taxi dancing, cinemas, and department stores. These are all leisure activities that can only be provided by the city. Among all these, the horse races were a rare spectacle from which different nationalities and social groups drew different things according to their needs. They thus fully embodied the Chinese-Western mix of the treaty port city. When horse racing first entered China, it was used by the leaders of the foreign community to promote social cohesion and to exhaust the energy of their youth. Meanwhile, the Chinese population used the gray area on the outer circle of the racecourse as a space for wild display and spectating. As the population of the treaty ports increased, the race clubs responded to the demands of city residents and opened the racecourses to the Chinese. The gambling-loving population was thus able to come and enjoy the excitement of betting, while the sport-loving Chinese elite were able to become jockeys and horse owners alongside the foreigners.

Leisure entertainment embodies all forms of sensory experience. Among them, to watch and to listen are paramount, hence the phrases 'to feast the eyes' and 'to delight the ears'. Thus, these 'to see and be seen' activities have always existed, but in horse racing, the element of viewing was especially intense and the scale was also much larger than is conventional. Whether within or outside the racecourse, or as an insider or an outsider of the game, actions were repeatedly taken to see and be seen. There were those watching people, those watching horses, men watching women, women watching men, members of the same sex sizing each other up, judging by appearance, dressing, physique, and manner, and all watching for the outcome. It can be said that without the element of spectating, there would be no such thing as horse racing. To prioritize and greatly expand the visual is one characteristic of the modern entertainment industry. From cinema and television to the recent development of the internet and smartphones, all have advanced step by step toward the absolute domination of the visual, and horse racing was truly the vanguard of this movement. From another perspective, to see and be seen also touches upon the essence of consumption. Whether consuming an item or a loca-

tion, the act of consumption itself and the results of consumption both require to be seen before enjoyment can be fully achieved. Again, in this regard, horse racing was a pioneer of consumer culture.

Notes

1. Fei Chengkang (1991) *Zhongguo zujieshi* [History of the concessions and settlements in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe), appendices 1 and 2, pp. 427–36.
2. Chen Hsi-yuan (2009) 'Wangfan yu miao tan zhijian: cong Shanghai sanxunhui kan guanfang sidian yu minjian xinyang de jiaojie yu hudong' [Travelling between the altar and the temple: observing the connection and interaction between state cults and popular beliefs in Late Qing Shanghai by the case of the three spirit festivals], Paper presented to international conference on 'City splendor: the urban living for 1500 years in East Asia', Fudan University, Shanghai, 26–29 March 2009.
3. He Qiliang (2016) 'Spectacular Death: Sheng Xuanhuai's Funeral Procession in 1917', *Twentieth-Century China*, 41:2, 136–158.
4. Austin Coates (1994) *China Races* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press), pp. 4, 10–11.
5. Coates, *China Races*, p. 13.
6. Coates, *China Races*, pp. 14, 27, 38, 49, 54, 58, 62, 80, 86.
7. George Lanning (1921) *The History of Shanghai* (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh Limited), p. 431.
8. This was particularly the case in Tianjin and Shanghai. The racecourse in Tianjin shifted from place to place owing to dust storms and floods. It was not until 1887 that the race club acquired its permanent course with the help of Gustav Detring, the Commissioner of Tianjin Customs. The racecourse in Shanghai also moved twice due to increases in land value. See Coates, *China Races*, pp. 47–8, 91–3; Xu Baorun (1990) 'Paomating lueduo guoren tudi jilue' [A rough record of how the racecourse plundered Chinese people's land] in *Jiu Shanghai de fangdichan jingying* [The real estate industry in old Shanghai] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), pp. 169–78.
9. For more on the role of sports in colonial society, see Chang Ning (2000) 'Zai Hua Yingren jian de wenhua chongtu: Shanghai "yundongjia" duikang "niaolei tuhaizhe", 1890–1920', [Cultural con-

flicts in the British community in China: Shanghai 'sportsmen' vs. the 'bird slaughterer', 1890–1920], *Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica*, 34, 89–144.

10. Hornby, *Sir Edmund Hornby*, p. 263.
11. Coates, *China Races*, pp. 36–7, 39.
12. 'Shanghai Races', (6 Nov. 1873) *North China Herald* (hereafter *NCH*), 393.
13. 'Shanghai Spring Races', (4 May 1878) *NCH*, 457.
14. 'Tientsin Races', (20 May 1887) *NCH*, 552.
15. 'Tientsin Spring Race Meeting', (25 May 1894) *NCH*, 814.
16. 'Tientsin Spring Race Meeting', (31 May 1895) *NCH*, 826.
17. 'Tientsin Spring Race Meeting', (29 May 1899) *NCH*, 974.
18. 'Ji Xiren saimashi' [Notes on Westerners' race meetings], (3 November 1873), *Shenbao*, 2.
19. 'Shanghai Spring Races', (4 May 1878) *NCH*, 460.
20. According to the *Shanghai County Gazette*, the population in Shanghai in the 1860s was around 540,000. This however included both people in the city and in the surrounding rural area. Based on the percentage of people living in the city and rural areas, it was estimated the city population should be around 200,000. Here, the author thanks Professor Wu Renshu for his advice and assistance. See Ying Baoshi and Yu Yue (1975) *Shanghai xianzhi* [Shanghai County Gazetteer] vol. 5 (Taipei: Chengwen Reprint), pp. 378–9.
21. 'Qingkan da paoma' [Ad.: Please see the grand horse racing], (30 April 1899), *Shenbao*, 4.
22. 'Paoma jingxiang' [Scenes at the race meeting], (3 November 1874) *Shenbao*, 2.
23. 'Zaiji paoma' [Second report on the race meeting], (5 November 1877) *Shenbao*, 3.
24. 'Saima xushu' [Further report on the race meeting], (2 May 1877) *Shenbao*, 2–3.
25. 'Lun paoma' [Discussing the race meeting], (3 November 1880) *Shenbao*, 1.
26. 'Yue benbao chunsai jishishu hou' [Thoughts after reading the spring race meeting report by this newspaper], (8 May 1896) *Shenbao*, 1.
27. 'Dutu jiaokuai' [The cunning gamblers], (1 May 1895) *Shenbao*, 3; 'Shanghai Autumn Races Meeting', (7 November 1879) *NCH*, 455.

28. Bao Tianxiao (20 March 1930) 'Xinshang wenxin' [Warm at heart], *Shenbao*, 11.
29. 'Chunsai sanzhi' [Notes on the third day of the spring races], (5 May 1892) *Shenbao*, 2.
30. *Lun paoma*, p. 1.
31. *Ji Xiren saimashi*, p. 2.
32. *Lun paoma*, p. 1.
33. Zui Chisheng (15 November 1929) 'Ershi nian qian zhi paomaxun' [Recollections of the racing heat twenty years ago], *Shenbao*, 19.
34. 'Kan paoma jishi yiliao' [Ad.: Up-to-the-minute dress materials for watching the horse races], (4 November 1900) *Youxi bao* [Entertainment], 3.
35. See Liu Shiji (2012) 'Cong zhucheng dao chaicheng: jinshi Zhongguo kouan chengshi chengzhang de moshi' [From building cities to demolishing cities: the model of constructing and expanding modern Chinese treaty port cities] in Liu Shiji and Wang Yijun (eds.) *Haiyang lishi wenhua yu bianjie zhengzhi* [Maritime history and culture and the politics of the borderlands] (Kaohsiung: Center for Humanities at National Sun Yat-sen University), pp. 55–83.
36. Frederic Wakeman Jr. (1995) 'Licensing Leisure: The Chinese Nationalists' Attempt to Regulate Shanghai, 1927–49', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 54: 1, 19 and 26.
37. Qiong Lu, 'Paoma' [Horse racing], (7 May 1914), *Shenbao*, 14.
38. 'Wanguo tiyuhui diyi qi youxi saima guangao' [Notice on the first Gymkhana meeting of the International Recreation Club], (4 March 1911), *Shenbao*, 2.
39. 'Wanguo tiyuhui saima guangao' [Notice on the race meeting of the International Recreation Club], (2 Jun. 1911) *Shenbao*, 1.
40. Qiong, *Paoma*, p. 14.
41. 'Shanghai chunji da paoma' [Ad.: The grand spring race meeting in Shanghai], (1 May 1919) *Shenbao*, 2.
42. Ye Mengying (2 October 1925) 'Shuo saima' [Discussion on horse racing], *Shenbao*, 17.
43. 'Xishang saima ji' [Report on the race meeting by Western merchants], (30 March 1919) *Shenbao*, 11.
44. 'Minguo shi'er nian zhi saima riqi biao' [Racing program for the year 1913], (29 December 1922) *Shenbao*, 14.

45. 'Zhongguo saima hui chengli' [The establishment of the Chinese Jockey Club], (9 March 1926) *Shenbao*, 15.
46. 'Minguo shiqi nian saima riqi biao' [Racing program for the year 1928], (17 December 1927) *Shenbao*, 16.
47. 'The Shanghai Race Club', (27 April 1894) *NCH*, 646–7.
48. Liu Lun (1943) 'Shanghai de dubo jiguan yu suo yinqi de shehui wenti' [Gambling organizations and the social problems they caused], B.A. thesis of the Department of Social Science, University of Shanghai, pp. 20–1.
49. Ibid.
50. Wu Yunmeng, 'Tebie saima huaxu lu' [Highlights of the extra meeting of the Shanghai Race Club], (24 March 1928) *Shenbao*, 17.
51. '*Saima Zhinan* fashou yuyue' [*A Guide to Horse Racing* available for purchase and subscription], (11 Aug. 1923) *Shenbao*, 17.
52. 'Chunsai chuzhi' [First report of the spring race meeting], (4 May 1910) *Shenbao*, 19.
53. 'Shanghai disi ci tebie saima ji' [Report on the fourth extra meeting of the Shanghai Race Club], (8 October 1922) *Shenbao*, 14.
54. Bo Fe, 'Shanghai qiusai xiaoxi ji shima zhi chengji' [Information on the autumn race meeting of the Shanghai Race Club], (20 October 1922) *Shenbao*, 14; Bo Fen, 'Shanghai xingqi er san zhi shima chengji' [The trial results of last Tuesday and Wednesday in Shanghai racecourse], (2 November 1922) *Shenbao*, 14.
55. Bo Fen, 'Jinri saima zhi yuce' [Forecast of today's race meeting], (7 November 1922) *Shenbao*, p. 14.
56. Saima Zhinan fashou yuyue, p.17.
57. 'Champions Day Brought out a Disposition for Warmer Garb', (8 November 1924) *NCH*, 241.
58. Liu Na'ou (2001) 'Liangge shijian de buganzhengzhe' [Two men out of tune with time] in Li Oufan (ed.) *Shanghai de hubuwu: xin ganjue pai xiaoshuo xuan* [Foxtrot in Shanghai: selected short stories of new sensationism] (Taipei: Yunchen wenhua), p. 327.
59. Zhang Xu'e (2009) *Luanshi fenghua: ershi shiji sishi niandai Shanghai shenghuo yu yule de huiyi* [Glamor in turbulent years: recollections of the life and entertainment of Shanghai in the 1940s] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), pp. 164–5.
60. For instance, Zhang Xu'e and his elder brothers were leading horse owners in Shanghai. Their Chang Brothers stable won many

important races in the 1940s and thus had quite a few walking-through-the-front-of-grandstand photos. The family so treasured those images that they left Shanghai with them after 1949. See photos in Zhang, *Luanshi fenghua*, pp.164, 166, 172, 181, 185, 188, 189, 190, and 196.

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