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## The Alienation of Spiritual Existence: Temple Festivals and Temple Fairs in Old Beijing\*

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### Abstract:

The wall-confined Old Beijing was a rural city in an agricultural civilization. Its ruralism is reflected by the sacredness of revering earth and also by isomorphic space aesthetics of houses, streets and the city. All kinds of temples, such as *Gong*, *Guan*, *Miao*, *An*, *Ci*, *Tan*, and *Si* 宫观庙庵祠坛寺, were distributed in Old Beijing according to their own ranks and attributes. In addition, the Three Mountains and Five Summits (*Sanshan Wuding*, 三山五顶) which enshrined the Lady of Taishan (*Bixia Yuanjun*, 碧霞元君) were regarded to be surrounding and protecting the capital city. There were even numerous small temples in ordinary streets and lanes, such as the Nine Dragons and Two Tigers (*Jiulong Erhu*, 九龙二虎) in Xizhimennei Street. The once prevalent cult of Four Sacred Animals (*Sidamen*, 四大门) has enabled the space of many households in Old Beijing to bear more or less the properties of a temple. Accordingly, temple festivals in Old Beijing were spiritual existence connected with the leisure and graceful life of the Bannermen and intensively revealed their daily life and individual values. The Western civilization has been set as the model in China by most of native elites in different periods since 1840. There has inevitably been a process of secularizing and stigmatizing the worship-centred temple festivals in Old Beijing. Temple festivals have generally deteriorated to displays of manpower and lust for material goods. With the intangible cultural heritage movement since the 21<sup>st</sup> century, temple fairs have returned to temple festivals to a limited extent.

**Key Words:** Old Beijing, Temple Festivals, Temple Fairs, Space, Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

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## 1. BASIC CONCEPTS

Temple festivals are active, intermittent and periodic folklore matters reflecting people's daily life in China. Organized by specific groups, temple festivals have been growing and developing in certain places, especially in the shared space which is alienable and convertible between homes and temples. Temple festivals are both private and open. Their kernel is to worship gods which is practiced by underclass believers in the space convertible between homes and temples. They are communal celebrations with a festival touch and a beautiful scenery in the soul and are concentrated presentation of a rural religion in which gods depend on people and people depend on gods (Yue 2014a; 2014b, 49-53, 83-106, 166-171, 307-316). They are, especially, an extension of people's daily life.

With the strong advance of western leaning after the Opium Wars, temple festivals were viewed as either 'worshiping wrong gods' (*Yinsi*, 淫祀), superstitious, ignorant or 'another life force' in the society according to different elite-dominated ideologies. The argument between the two sides has never stopped. It resulted in various views of temple festivals and rural religions from despising to fair treatment among academia. This also led to the transformation of temple festivals to temple fairs in accordance with a modern nation for nearly a century, in other words, temple festivals turned utilitarian in the name of revolution, development, education, economy, culture, etc. (Yue 2014b, 4-30, 98-106; 2015a; 2015b).

In the contexts of pursuing development since the end of Qing Dynasty, temple property was essential to education (Zhang Zhidong 1998, 120-121). Hence, temple fairs were more significant to economy than all kinds of the religious actions in temple festivals. Quan Hansheng (1934) described the origin of temple fair and its general situation in cities and rural areas of Song, Ming, Qing Dynasties and modern times, demonstrating that just like in the West, there were also temple fairs in China. In a sense, he simply corresponded temple festivals to temple fairs. There could be various relations between rural temple festivals and fairs (markets)<sup>1</sup> such as duplicating, intersecting and alienating each other. Thus since the end of Qing Dynasty, the main-stream ideology has always been doing its utmost to convert temple festivals centring worship activities performed by common believers to fairs and material exchange meetings, expositions and exhibitions which still bore the name of temple festivals. Temple fairs are not only the predominant orientation of temple festivals approved and supported by officials of different times but also one of the major research orientations of Chinese temple festivals (e.g. Cooper 2013).

Since the Reform and Opening-up, while the definition and the public's understanding of temple festivals are entangled between 'superstition' and 'culture/folklore', people's knowledge of it is still limited to its secular functions of commerce, entertainment and community integration which stem from its religion function (e.g. Gao 1992, 1-14; Liu Xicheng

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<sup>1</sup> Fairs are important in Skinner's (1993) studies of Chinese social structure.

1996, 106-130). Therefore, they simply put emphasis on revelries of temple festivals.<sup>2</sup> In the context of ICH movement, tourist spots are produced to bring about ornamental value and economic benefits, and their subordinate (traditional or folk) culture exhibiting function is strengthened which includes the reciprocal movements of landscaping sacred places and sanctifying scenic spots (Oakes, T. & D. S. Sutton 2010; Yue 2016a). The same as Quan Hansheng's definition (1934), *Ci Hai* 辞海 (1980, 852), the authoritative reference book, also neglects the differences among temple festivals, markets and temple fairs. Different things which are dominated by different civilizations and ideologies are equated and correlated with each other. That is to say, through temple fairs, temple festivals are equated with markets in *Ci Hai*.

Such inadequate knowledge is the reason why the definition of the temple festival is firstly specified in this paper and also why the temple festival and temple fair are distinguished based on the realities in Old Beijing in the latter part. To be brief, despite their commonality in directing to the daily life of the majority, the temple festival is a spiritual existence while the temple fair is a materialized existence which derives from and attaches to temple festival. The latter now has the tendency to incorporate the former. However, I have no intention in giving any detailed description of any temple or temple festival in Old Beijing.

Another keyword 'temple', Miao 庙, has many meanings, Gong 宫, Guan 观, Si 寺, An 庵, Ci 祠, Tan 坛, etc. in daily communication. However, the common people are still used to saying 'Miao' although these buildings have different religious attributes. In this paper, temple means the exhibiting space of ceremonial activities in which believers are agencies to communicate with supernatural power – heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, god and ghost. In a word, temple, whose foundation is the daily practice of autonomous underclass believers, is the exhibiting space of rural religion whose core is the dialectics of god-man being one and home and temple alienate. People can entrust their hopes of life and death to the temple, and it is closely related to the value and significance of individual life. Meanwhile, as a key symbol, religious professionals in the temple such as monk, nun and Taoist whose leading role is diluted by believers' autonomous behaviour and has become more or less a decorative symbol.

As a category of time-space integration and a *Self-fluid*, Old Beijing refers to the Beijing of vicissitudes undergoing great changes from 1840s to 1950s. Being the capital city of empires and a political test zone, Old Beijing did not change its former tracks within the hundred-odd years despite changes in elite ideologies and political powers. In contrast, Old Beijing fully

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<sup>2</sup> On the revelries of temple festivals, the academia has rigorous thoughts. Based on further research on temple festivals of North China in Ming and Qing Dynasties, Zhao Shiyu (2002) noted that seemingly in contrast to the daily life, revelries actually expressed the static and dynamic, usual and unusual rhythm of 'our' life. Liu Xiaochun (2003) put it that as they were not in opposition to the mainstream ideology, contemporary folk temple festivals were not subversive, derisive and orgiastic anymore; in contrast, they were 'an organic part of the modern discourse in contemporary China' and were utilised. Recently, empirical studies on 'Jollification' in Shanxi also powerfully questioned the validity and applicability of the 'revelry' theory (Guo Mingjun 2015)

extended and practiced evolutionary notions of upward innovative and ingrained Confucian culture and revolutionary ideals of somewhat plain Utopia.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. THE ROAMING 'EMPTY SPACE'

Buildings are an interpretation of preferable life style of an age (Harris 2001, 11). A saying of Old Beijing, 'pergola, fish tank and pomegranate tree; sir, chubby dog and overweight girl' (*Liangpeng yugang shiliushu, xiansheng feigou pangyatou*, 凉棚鱼缸石榴树, 先生肥狗胖丫头), perfectly interprets the classical proposition and expresses the cultural implication of well-praised courtyard houses (*Siheyuan*, 四合院), which is by no means simply a yard with clearly-divided layout for people coming and going, its key point is the emptiness and pleasure of the 'empty space' (Brook 1972) between clearly-divided layout. In such an empty space, residents and passers-by have no communication barrier. They co-structure and share the same world while enjoying spiritual resonance and joys together.

Inside the yard, there are pomegranate trees symbolizing abundant offspring and blessings. On either side of the sill, colourful gold fish are quietly swimming in the glass tank. Pergolas are put up in the patio of the yard from April to October every year. Under the 'summers shade' (Chang 2015, 5-6, 92-94), people can enjoy the cool, savour tea, chat, watch fish, listen to or sing songs, or just snore. In the roaming empty space, there are doorkeeper, accountant and servant girls available in any time of need. Stout dogs running about and following people everywhere. All of which reflect both the master's superiority, taste and affection and the servant's loyalty and subservience. In the empty space of *Siheyuan*, 'it is not people surround buildings but buildings surround people', it is not the static 'watchable' but the dynamic 'roaming' (Xiao 2014, 69). It is closed to the outside world but open to the inside. The layout keeps delight within *Siheyuan*. For one thing, the self-sufficient 'family needs to keep detached from the outside world to avoid natural and social mishaps, so that it may enjoy the peace and privacy of life'. For another, the fixed mentality of agricultural lifestyle makes people 'particularly willing to get close to nature and stay at home to watch sky, earth, grass, flowers and trees'. (Xiao 2014, 79)

Bannermen lived a carefree life, lacking nothing because the court bore all the cost. They might carry a birdcage or have a bird stand on the arm, listen to or sing ballads, walk a dog, amuse themselves by seeing crickets fight or stroll in the street. All this becomes the normal state of Old Beijing, particularly in the inner city within the city walls. As 'idlers who have roosters fight or dogs race' grew in number, the Bannermen who were immersed in Han culture composed 'quite a few' *Zidishu* 子弟书 (Zheng 1998, 601). Between one gate of yard to

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<sup>3</sup> The internal continuity of modern and contemporary evolution in Chinese society was the core topic among Chinese scholars at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For instance, with its analytical hypothesis of hyper-stable structure, Jin and Liu (1993) discussed the changes in macro-structure of Chinese society between 1840 and 1956, and put forward the behaviour pattern of hyper-stable structure under the condition of the Opening-up. Gan Yang (2006, 125-130) distinguished and analysed that socialist society in nature had convergence with traditional society which highlighted ethics and morals and predominated by value rationality.

another, amateurs were singing and performing, not giving a thought to their gains or losses (*Daye gaole, haocai mailian, chema zibei, chafan burao*, 大爷高乐, 耗材买脸, 车马自备, 茶饭不扰)<sup>4</sup>. Inside and outside the city walls, a great number of people visited the holy mountain (*chaoshan jinxiang*, 朝山进香) and participated in a prayer service at the temple festival (*xingxiang zouhui*, 行香走会). They served for the respectable goddess, Bixia yuanjun, known as Laoniangniang 老娘娘 and refused to take any payment because of their proud, which the Old Beijing saying is ‘*qiangyang dousheng, haocai mailian* 抢洋斗胜, 耗材买脸.’ (Feng 1929)<sup>5</sup>

All this clearly revealed the essence of Old Beijing, especially of Bannermen whose life, as a whole, was not involved in any special purpose and was ‘free’ in nature, giving no thought to personal gains and losses. In other words, as the reification of a desirable lifestyle in a certain period, Siheyuan to which architects attach importance expressed a leisurely and graceful life attitude, a stately form of civilization – the ruralism of Old Beijing featuring a slow-paced life brewed in agricultural civilization.

There was no match-maker in the marriage of Manchurian in Old Beijing before 1940s. Individuals who voluntarily sacrificed their time, money and energy to introduce potential partners among relatives and neighbours were referred to as ‘drinkers of winter melon soup’ (*Hedongguatangde*, 喝冬瓜汤的) (Zhou 1940, 28). At the end of Qing Dynasty and the beginning of Republic of China, quite a few declining Bannermen of noble origins still did their best to stick to their reserve and interest. They even tried to maintain the life after being compelled to emigrate to the compound of peripheral city (*Waicheng*, 外城) occupied by many Han people (Yue 2011, 251-252) presenting “a caricature of the traditional cheerful culture” (Zhao Yuan 1991, 216). The following description is quite precise in presenting their way of life:

They neither work nor try to seek a job. They would spend all their time and energy on flowers, insects and fish. Just a pot of plant or a bird is all their lives about or is even more cherished than their lives. They themselves would rather eat ‘noodles made of course grain’, but food for the thrush has to be dainty and it must be mixed with an egg. They could get up at midday, but in order to ‘walk the thrush’, they have to rise when the rooster crows. Besides, dining out and listening to famous actors singing are also their particular hobbies. The flavour of food or singing skills of an actor became the final verdict once being appraised by them. In this sense, they are critics and

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<sup>4</sup> This is clearly shown in various articles in the folk magazine *News on Bajiaogu* (八角鼓讯) whose chief editor is Weidong Zhang. From the affectionate memories and emphasis of present masters for *Qingmenr* comic dialogue, its clues can be seen (Chen 2011). For this, I proposed that Liaodi (撂地) comic dialogue, which was performed in the empty space, was straightly derived from ‘vulgarity’ and ‘wildness’ of Bajiaogu and had the essence of ‘free arts’ praised by Josef Pieper as *Qingmenr* Bajiaogu (Yue 2011, 383-395).

<sup>5</sup> Based on this, it is not difficult to understand the viewpoint that traditional Miaofeng Mountain temple festival can be seen as another Forbidden City – the forbidden city of fold burlesquing and revelries (Wu 2006, 3-6, 199-217).

connoisseurs. However, they only linger on the luxurious and noble life in the past and make no attempt to make progress or achieve anything, which is the typical figure and unique characteristics of Beijing whose custom is greatly influenced by them. (Meng 1939, 131)

The communal property of the empty space in Siheyuan is also the basic feature as well as the soil and greenhouse of temple festivals in Old Beijing. All sorts of people kowtowed before images of gods in various temples on either side of the city walls that expressed the heterogeneous group's joint spiritual world, thinking ways and daily life, i.e. their reverence to heaven, earth, the sun and the moon, their desire and maintenance for blessings, ranks, salary, longevity, happy marriage, offspring succession, living peacefully in a prosperous country, favourable weather for crops and good harvest (e.g. Pei 1929; Hsu 1952, 119-120). It conveyed the basic relationships of everyone being equal before god and man and god being equal, i.e. 'the equality of kowtow' (Yue 2013). The temple gate or temple wall, as a divider, is useless but in name only. In such empty space where rhythm, intermission and periodicity occur frequently, people return to the 'primitive' state of the spiritual world, share and practice ideals of the plain Utopia.

### 3. THE SACREDNESS AND RURALISM OF OLD BEIJING

In a sense, it is sacredness that constructs the world and defines boundaries and orders of the world. Inhabitation makes a place sacred (Eliade 2002, 7-19). In Heidegger's opinion (1971, 146-153), people's dwelling is 'poetic', and his 'cottage in black forest' is the unification of heaven, earth, god and man. In rural China, dwelling space is both home and temple and is shared by men, gods, ancestors and ghosts (Wang 1974). In addition, extension of home furnishing lies in the central room's wings where ancestors and gods are worshipped. The structure resembles the layout of various temples and ancient Chinese cities (Paper 1995, 42). The only difference is that the central room of a household has a variety of functions: worshipping, dining, sleeping, entertaining, receiving visitors, etc.

Probably because of being defined by the structure of wooden pillars, present architecture relics in Beijing such as the Forbidden City, Dong Yue Temple and Siheyuan all adopted the method of combing a courtyard with rooms. Similar structure indicates homogeneous architectural aesthetics of living space shared by men, gods, officials and ordinary people: parallels of centre/periphery and civilization/barbarism; extremely grand memorial archway, courtyard gate or temple gate, external walls, screen wall; the structure of successive courtyards one attached to another; the main hall/room, side hall/room, superior and inferior order strengthened by both sides and verandahs in which all sorts of men and women walk in an orderly and peaceful way, whether they were the emperor, officials, concubines, eunuchs, ladies-in-waiting in the Forbidden City, or hosts, doorkeepers, accountants, overweight girls in Siheyuan, or Taoist priests, worshippers and so on in Dongyue temple.

As a sacred city, the Old Beijing is an integration of its sacredness and agricultural civilization. High city walls and moats nestling up against them never impaired the wholeness of the society which though physically segmented by city gates. From the cultural perspective, Fei (1992) convincingly testified the ruralism of traditional China and named the agricultural China which as 'the Earthbound China', meaning the China from the soil. In fact, the actual state of folk art forms passed down for hundreds and thousands of years shows from another perspective visible city walls' emptiness in traditional China (Yue 2015c, 78-83).

According to ancient architectural structure, the temple for emperor's ancestors should be on the left side in the city while temples for soil and grain gods should be on the right side, the imperial court should be in the front and markets in the back of the city. The construction of altars for heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, farming, mountains, plains, soil and grains over hundreds of years and official sacrificial ceremonies strengthened the principals above and profoundly influenced the nation's world view of 'taking the world as the family' (*Jitianxia*, 家天下) and operative norm. In daily interactions, being introversive, euphemistic and willing to suffer losses were seen as virtues and the actors were looked upon as a model or saint. On the national level, there was tribute system which stemmed from the non-reciprocal exchange relations between China and its neighbouring countries: the neighbouring countries' ambassador came to the Chinese court to pay respect or filial piety and received hundreds of times' return. The long-standing interaction principle of peasant, i.e. tributes paying system (Ge 2014, 225-249), allowed the giving party to suffer losses without the receiving party necessarily willing to submitting itself, made Old Beijing bewildered and fragile before the profit-grabbing colonial system of capitalism.

As for Old Beijing, the sacred city, there was a set of complementary explanation system among the people, which can be distinctly reflected by sayings such as 'Three Mountains and Five Summits' (*Sanshan Wuding*, 三山五顶), 'Nine Dragons and Two Tigers' (*Jiulong Erhu*, 九龙二虎) and 'Four Sacred Animals' (*Sidamen*, 四大门) which respectively referred to the city, blocks and households.

Sanshan refers to the three Mountains on which the temples of the Lady of Taishan, commonly known as Laoniangniang in Old Beijing were built. They are Miaofeng Mountain in Mentougou, Yaji Mountain in Pinggu and Tiantai Mountain in Shijingshan. Yaji Mountain, also called *Dongshan* or *Dongdasha*n, namely the Eastern Mountain, is about 100 kilometres away from Beijing. It got its name because its peak looks like a pair of hair buns of a girl. Tiantai Mountain, also called *Xishan*, namely Western Mountain, is located in Shimokou. In Qing dynasty, there was a temple festival on every 18th of March according to lunar calendar. As it was earlier than temple festivals on Yaji Mountain and Miaofeng Mountain which were on lunar 1<sup>st</sup> of April, most pilgrims would first go to Tiantai Mountain to offer incense, and then make a pilgrimage to Yaji Mountain or Miaofeng Mountain. The saying among folks, 'after offering incense in Xishan, then in Dongshan, one will view goddess on bridges as ordinary' (*Xishan xiangba you dongshan, qiaoshang niangniang ye yiban*), indicates this

‘People worship goddess on Sanshan Wuding, only with Tiantai for worshipping the tyrant’ (*Sanshan wuding gong niangniang, zhiyou tiantai gong mowang*) expresses the mountain’s close association with the imperial household in Qing dynasty. According to legends, the tyrant here refers to the Emperor Shunzhi (1638-1661) who shaved his hair and became a monk there (BJCS 1998, 82-85).

Wuding refers to the five temples around Beijing city where Laoniangniang was enshrined and worshipped. Beijing city is roughly square with bilateral symmetry, so residents used to give abbreviated names for places according to temple locations. Moreover, Laoniangniang is on the top of Tai Mountain, hence people call the temples enshrining and worshipping Laoniangniang ‘*Ding*’ (meaning summit) in Beijing city. The Wuding surround and protect Beijing, and interact with Dongyue Temple – the Government’s Rituals (*Zhengsi*, 正祀) (Zhao Shiyu 2002, 352-378). There are different versions of Wuding among the people. In Ming Dynasty, the Ding of ‘the north of Maizhuangqiao is called *Xiding*, the Western Summit; Caoqiao is called *Zhongding*, the Central Summit; Dongzhimenwai is called *Dongding*, the Eastern Summit; Andingmenwai is called *Beiding*, the Northern Summit; the Hongrenqiao is the most prosperous’ (Liu & Yu 2002, 132). The Ding of the Hongrenqiao, outside Zuo’anmen, is also called the Southern Summit.

Pan Rongbi in Qing Dynasty gave a more detailed account for Wuding:

Among all the temple festivals in the capital city, those for Bixia Yuanjun was the most prosperous. There are numerous temples, among them seven are most renowned. One in Gaoliangqiao of Xizhimenwai is called Heaven Fairy Temple (*Tianxian Miao*, 天仙庙). According to legends, she arrives on lunar 8<sup>th</sup> of April, and all women in the city go to pray for her protection. One lies in Hongrenqiao, outside Zuo’anmen; one in Dongzhimenwai is called *Dongding*; one in Changchunzhaxi is called *Xiding*; one in Yongdingmenwai is called *Nanding*; one in Andingmenwai is called *Beiding*; one in Caoqiao of You’anmenwai is called *Zhongding*.... Yuanjun’s birth is celebrated from lunar 1<sup>st</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> of April every year. The celebration is always the most bustling, with men and women rushing there along with pilgrimage associations. In *Nanding*, the temple festival begins from lunar 1<sup>st</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> of May. People in the capital city contribute Chinese operas and other offerings hang up lanterns and compete to pray about their wishes, being afraid to lag behind in worship activities. (Pan 1961, 17)

According to the researches of Naquin (1992, 334-338; 2000, 243-245, 517-528), Wu Xiaqun firmly believes that Wuding in Old Beijing was an ‘expression of philosophical ideas’ on the centre-four directions and five elements (*Wuxing*, 五行), and was ‘set up by feudal empire for the sake of protecting its capital city’ (2006, 35-39).

In addition to various official temples of different sizes, Beijing city was also densely distributed with big and small temples concerning agricultural civilization, handicraft, guild halls, etc. In 1928, Beijing municipal authorities registered temples for the first time. The total



number being registered was 1,631. There were actually far more temples in Old Beijing. In my interview, those elder people, who are well acquainted with Old Beijing, often say, 'There were numerous temples ago. If you stand in any place of Beijing city, suppose you are the centre of a circle, there must be a temple, big or small, on the circumference 50 meters away from you'. In the old neighbourhood of Xizhimennei Street, there is such a saying as '*jiulong'erhu yitongbei*' (九龙二虎一统碑).

According to the investigation of Ju Xi (2016), Jiulong respectively refers to the nine temples enshrining and worshipping the Dragon King on both sides of the street, including: Longquan'an on No. 11 of Beishuncheng Street, Dragon King Temple of Shegutang Guanyin'an of No. 1 of Qiantaoyuan, Xinjiekou Dragon King Temple on No. 4 of Xinjiekou South Street, Dragon King Temple in North Guangji Temple before Xinjiekou Cinema, Dragon King Temple in the east of the south end of Gaojing Hutong, Dragon King Temple outside Beicaochang Hutong, Longquan Buddhist Temple near No. 27 of Guanyingyuan, Amitabha Temple on No. 51 of Xinjiekou South Street, Dragon King Temple in the north-east of the intersection of Qianbanbi Street and Nanxiaojie Street. Erhu refers to *Wusheng* 五圣 Temple in Houbanbi Street and Iron Lion Temple, also called Zhenxuan Temple, Xuandi Temple, near No. 16, 1<sup>st</sup> block of Yutaoyuan that is originally known as Tieshizi Hutong.

As the habitat for gods and the field for collective memory, the densely distributed small temples had nothing to do with the imperial household or outstanding virtues of great monks, their prestige was clearly limited, but they were closely related to the underclass daily life in the neighbourhood. They not only blessed individual well-being, but also were sacred symbols of rational allocating and using drinkable water and a supplement to the ethical society that the disadvantaged groups and power-lost groups depended on, such as widowers, widows, orphans, other solitary persons and elder eunuchs and court ladies. Because it profoundly influenced and constructed spatial sense and daily life of the underclass, in the oral narrative of present neighbourhood, the completely changed Xizhimennei Street is still habitually called Jiulong Erhu Street.

'God is just above your head (*Lidi sanchi you shenming*).'<sup>9</sup> As the former cited saying, most people in rural China lived in a world full of reverence, and they constructed their own living world according to their inner reverence. It was true in Beijing city which was surrounded and protected by Sanshan Wuding, and is also true in its neighbourhoods and households. It can be said that 'there are doors in every lane and there are gods on every door' (*Daodao you men, Menmen you shen*). There existed a reciprocity of interdependence between man and god, i.e. 'god depends on man and man depends on god' or even god-man being one and the same. This is typically embodied in the Four Sacred Animals, referring fox, weasel, hedgehog and snake, known as *Huhuang Bailiu* 胡黄白柳, and organizers of pilgrimage associations, *Xiangtou* 香头 – the media between man and god, who used to be common on either side of city walls in Old Beijing.

Within the gate of most yards in the suburbs of Old Beijing, there was a shrine of the God of Wealth (*Caishen louzi*, 财神楼子) where people worshiped Sidamen, especially the Wealth God *Baiye* 白爷, namely hedgehog (Li Wei-tsu 1948, 83-86). Some servants in wealthy and influential families inside the city also had a shrine of the Wealth God. Households were actually man-god coexistence. The kernel of the Sidamen was organizers of pilgrimage associations, at whose homes, known as ‘Spirits Altars’ (*Xianjiatan*, 仙家坛), there were worshipping tables for gods according to their orders with fragrance in the air. It was pilgrimage associations whose kernel was Spirits Altars that became the influxes of pilgrimages to Sanshan Wuding (Li Wei-tsu 1948, 63-69). Therefore, temples in Old Beijing existed more than immobile forms including various temples and households. As the rural temple festivals of Northern China (Yue 2014a; 2014b), temples and their festivals in Old Beijing were dynamic existence that could deform, expand and contract.

During the Period of the Republic of China, thirteen types of pilgrimage associations went to Miaofeng Mountain, and they were known as ‘thirteen types accompanied with banners and drums’ (*Fangu qidong shisandang*, 幡鼓齐动十三档), i.e. association for opening a way (*Kailu hui*, 开路会), association for five-tiger sticks (*Wuhugun hui*, 五虎棍会), association for stilts (*Gaoqiao hui*, 高跷会), association for mid-banners (*Zhongfan hui*, 中幡会), association for lion dance (*Shizi hui*, 狮子会), association for lifting double stone (*Shuangshi hui*, 双石会), association for stony apparatus (*Zhizi shisuo hui*, 掷子石锁会), association for playing tricks on a horizontal bar (*Gangzi hui*, 杠子会), association for porcelain jars (*Huatan hui*, 花坛会), association for musical instruments (*Chaozi hui*, 吵子会), association for lever boxes (*Gangxiang hui*, 扛箱会), association for *Tianping hui* 天平会, also called *Shibuxian* 什不闲 and association for bass drum (*Shendan hui*, 神胆会). After 1911, another three types, association for bicycles (*Zixingche hui*, 自行车会), association for cars (*Xiaochē hui*, 小车会) and association for land boats (*Hanchuan hui*, 旱船会), were supplemented, making the whole sixteen types. At that time, there was a ballad describing the sixteen types of associations:

The imperial carriage with Laoniangniang is in the middle, and the marshal Zhao Gongmin riding the black tiger is crowded in the back. Boys singing qingyin are closely guarding the imperial carriage, and year, month, day and hour gods are holding big copper weapons. The horizontal bar is the door and the stony is the lock, with a pair of sacred beasts (referring to the lion association) sealing off the door. The flower cymbals and musical instruments with a big drum on the hip are pioneers opening a way accompanied by five-tiger sticks. Double stone, lever boxes are collecting money and foodstuff, and the sacred water is always in the porcelain jar. Yangko is performed together with Shibuxian, with godly banners of five colours ahead of the procession. In the front a herald is leading the way, in the back a big banner with seven stars is fluttering. Zhenwu 真武 is leading his tortoise and snake walking behind with a big army banner. Land boats are waiting for the carriages

outside the gate, and pedalling instruments (referring to association for bicycles) and luxurious vehicles (referring to associations for cars) are closely followed.

When these types of associations assembled, a picture of worshipping in the temple was formed (Jin Shoushen 1999, 155). Lions, stony lions before the gate of the temple, are responsible for protecting. In time of offering incense, lions protect the associations to pass by them and then follow behind. Mid-banner refers to the banner pole before the temple, which explains why it is in the front of the procession. Association for bicycles is like five types of chariots boarded by messengers urging turning in money and food. Opening a way is like the herald before the arrival of gods. Wuhugun and Shaolin stick are all messengers leading the way. Shibuxian is like the steelyard weighing the money of gods offered by pilgrims. The brass drums are like godly musical instruments. Lever boxes are like those that keep in storage of money and food for god, therefore, there is Lever Boxes Officer. Yangko (or stilts) and cars are like tourists strolling around the temple festival. Double stone, horizontal bar, porcelain jar, etc. are like persons in charge before god and playing things on temple festival.

#### 4. HOPE OF LIFE AND DEATH AND COMMEN LIVING

The temple festivals are an integration of dynamics and statics. The dynamic refers to revelries that have been stressed unilaterally by some contemporary scholars, such as miscellaneous variety show, bustling fairs and markets. The static primarily refers to religious attributes of temple festivals, spiritual communication between individuals and god, such as possession, silent prayers, concentrative listening, meditations, etc. In terms of dynamic and static blending with and incorporating each other, temple festivals are not a separation of daily life but an extension and concentration of it, as they not only manifest individual values, but also give expectation to individuals who are unbalanced in daily life due to different reasons (Yue 2014a, 52-59; 2014b, 134-146).

Those little-known small temples like Jiulong Erhu played an important part in the daily life of people in Xizhimennei Street. Similarly, many temples in Old Beijing served as buffers and balancers of social conflicts, and regulators of mind and body. Religious belief relieved people's anxieties, satisfied their wishes and desires. Meanwhile, on the material level, it also fulfilled the duty of welfare institutions in modern society, practiced the charity idea of relieving impoverished people. Quite a few temples in Old Beijing provided clothes and meals to the poor, and some like Good-Fruit Temple (*Shanguo Si*, 善果寺) kept pace with the times by setting up a free primary school only for the poor.

It is particularly important that temples were places that individuals put their hope of life and death in. In Old Beijing, pleading for a child was one of the basic functions of temple festivals that worshiped Laoniangniang in numerous temples. Until now, on Miaofeng Mountain, whether during temple festivals or not, asking for a child remains one of the primary activities.

In addition, as for the weak and difficult to be raised children, people in Old Beijing would have temples foster or adopt them. The children, known as ‘Registered Monks’ (*Jiming heshang*, 寄名和尚) or ‘Registered Taoist’ (*Jiming daoshi*, 寄名道士), would have to fulfil a rite of ‘Jumping off the Wall’ (*Tiaoqiang*, 跳墙) in the temple when reaching the age of twelve or before getting married. Hence, they possessed a special term of ‘The Monks/Taoists jumping off the Wall’ (Chang Renchun. 1990, 251-253). Boys were usually fostered in Guanyu Temple, Lv Dongbin Temple (*Lvzu Miao*, 吕祖庙), Laoniangniang Temple, etc., while girls usually in Buddhist nun Temples such as Peace and Tranquility Temple (*Taiping An*, 太平庵), Three Sacred Temple (*Sansheng An*, 三圣庵), etc..

In volume I of *Trivial Notes of Old Beijing* (*Jiujing suoji*, 旧京琐记), Xia Renhu (1874-1963) recorded that offspring of Bannermen in Qing Dynasty usually apprenticed themselves to monks or Taoists to seek protection. Some worried their children might be difficult to raise so would bought a child from a poor family to make him a monk and they were called ‘Substitutes’ (*Tishen*, 替身). After the one who was substituted grew up, the substitute was seen as a biological brother to him, and the whole family should treat the substitute with respect (Xia 1986, 41). With regard to the weak and sick children, worrying they might die young, ordinary families practiced the custom of ‘burning the substitute’ (*Shaotishen*, 烧替身), also named ‘returning children’ (*Huantong’er*, 还童儿) (Chang Renchun. 1990, 248). In this case, the substitute was usually a little person of approximately one meter high made from paper in papering shops. On the 15<sup>th</sup> day of January according to lunar calendar, the substitute bearing the birthday of the child was burnt in the temple. Just like people believing children could be given by gods, they also believe the children from god could be recalled anytime. Therefore, a paper person – substitute – was employed to cross off an account, and their children would be spared.

Old Beijing was also an immigrant city with much mobility. Beijing city, particularly the numerous guild halls in Xuannan were clear proofs for this (BMA 1997; Bai 2001). Numerous temples became temporary settling place for dead bodies without a proper graveyard or waiting to be conveyed to their respective hometown. There was a special term in Old Beijing, ‘placing a coffin in a temporary shelter pending burial’ (*Tingcuo*, 停厝). After Chen Baochen 陈宝琛 (1848-1935) and Zhu Yifan 朱益藩 (1861-1937), both being the emperor’s teachers (*dishi*, 帝师), died, their coffins were laid in Fayuan Temple in a small alley between Jiaozi Hutong of Guang’anmen and Xizhuan Hutong. After Liang Qichao 梁启超 (1873-1929) died, for three years his coffin had been in Universal Blessing Temple (*Guanghui Si*, 广惠寺) which was near Fayuan Temple. The coffin of Wu Peifu 吴佩孚 (1874-1939) stayed in Nianhua Temple which was in Dashiqiao Hutong for seven years. After Li Dazhao 李大钊 (1889-1927) died, his coffin was put into Changchun Temple and Zhe Temple afterwards. Zhe Temple and Changchun Temple adjoined each other and were located in the north of present Xuanwu Hospital.

Due to the basic function of Tingcui, some temples in Old Beijing like Baoying Si 宝应寺 became consortium with Yiyuan 义园<sup>6</sup>. Baoying Si lies in the south-west of Good-Fruit Temple, and the latter lies in the very west of Zhe Temple. The society of the Yiyuan for Dengzhou, Laizhou, and Jiaozhou of Shandong province dealt with its office work in Baoying Si. Yiyuan conducted funerals and provided coffins with temporary shelter. The front yard of the temple was for Yiyuan. Guangong, namely Guanyu, was enshrined and worshipped in the main hall, which projected the 'righteousness' of Yiyuan. In the west yard of the temple, there was a big carriage gate for entrance and exit of coffins. A row of small single rooms in the middle of the door was especially for placing coffins and this arrangement was for convenience of holding memorial ceremonies. To the south of the front unsurfaced road, a big yard enclosed by the wall made of tiger's-eye stones was the graveyard of Yiyuan. A stele was embedded into the wall on which 'bone-depositing place' (*Jigusuo*, 寄骨所) were carved in big letters. Within the yard were temporary tombs before the formal burial (*Qiuziwen*, 丘子坟). Wang Yirong 王懿荣 (1845-1900) – the discovery of oracle bone inscriptions, and Xu Jingxin 徐镜心 (1874-1914) – the master of Shandong branch of United League, were placed here for temporary shelter.

## 5. TEMPLE PROPERTY, CULTURAL RELICS AND MUSEUM

Under the influence of agricultural civilization, Old Beijing was a society of acquaintances with the presence of heaven, earth, man and god whose ranks and orders were clearly divided. After the Opium Wars, although the basic gist of Westernization Movement was 'learning western advanced technology to resist foreign invasion, taking moral obligations and preaching for basic and employing western science and technology', the foundation of indigenous culture obviously showed a cleft. The Reform movement of 1898, the Revolution of 1911, particularly May Fourth Movement made the indigenous elegant and secular cultures and the spirit they conveyed encounter overall negation. Eager to break imperial system, eradicate the emperor's power, remodel the countrymen, society and the state, intellectuals made efforts on systems of time and space to reconstruct people's view on time and space.

On the revolutionary of time system, the key point was to abolish old calendar and implement new calendar from the West. To implement the new calendar, *Publicity Key Points for the New Year from the Ministry of China* published on *Shen Bao* 申报 on 28<sup>th</sup> of December, 1928 clearly defined the old calendar as 'five elements of Yin and Yang, canon for superstitious schedules', 'superstitious staff headquarters'. On the space system, smashing the statues of gods, transforming temples, revolutionizing temple festivals and discarding spiritual orientation of temples became inevitable. Temples in cities and countryside, big and small, were all pushed to an opposite position. Gods enshrined and worshipping activities became synonyms and concretization of 'superstition'. As it conformed to educational cause, revolutionary

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<sup>6</sup> In Old Beijing and traditional China, the Yiyuan, also called *Yidi*, meaning righteous garden, was the cemetery for the fellow townsmen or the poor and their family dependents.

righteousness and economic growth, the movement of ‘temple properties prospering schools’ (Tai 1929) derived from the Reform movement of 1898 had been continued during the whole 20<sup>th</sup> century, which presented a splendid sight and gave an expression of righteousness, progress and revolution.<sup>7</sup>

During the movement, temple space inside walls were confiscated, borrowed or occupied by science and education organizations whose intention was to enlighten the public, and became schools to mould a new kind of individuals. Fairs, markets and entertainment outside temple walls were naturally prominent and became pure temple fairs. Meanwhile, the construction of sites such as monuments to the revolutionary martyrs, Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall or park, exhibition halls for Chinese goods, etc. flourished. The transformation of old imperial capitals like Beijing, Nanjing was all executed. Similarly, Guangzhou, having had a two-way overlapping reconstruction on time and space systems, rightly became the cradle for the National Revolution in the 1920s (Poon 2011).

In Old Beijing, the complete transition was also embodied in sayings. The sayings is still prevalent today. Before the transition, each temple festival in Old Beijing had its own uniqueness. Goddess in Miaofeng Mountain cares for those who are far away rather than those nearby (*Miaofengshan de niangniang, zhaoyuan bu zhaojin*, 妙峰山的娘娘, 照远不照近) (Yue 2014c, 121-122). On *Yanjiu* Festival, people would meet the god, a famous Taoist, Qiu Chuji 丘处机 (1148-1227) (*Yanjiu hui shenxian*, 燕九会神仙).<sup>8</sup> On lunar 8th of August, walking around the White Stupa (*Bayueba, zhuanbaita*, 八月八转白塔).<sup>9</sup>

In addition, there was a famous folksong about the temple festivals of Old Beijing as follow:

*Caishenmiao li jie yuanbao, Jueshengsi li Zhuang dazhong.*

*Dongyuemiao li shuan wawa, Baiyunguan li mo houjing.*

*Chenghuangmiao li kan huopan, Chongyuanguan li kan huadeng.*

*Huoshenmiao li liangbaohui, Changdian miaohui jia dijing.*

<sup>7</sup> Because of the economy, especially the needs of industrial economic development, some temples were transformed into the factory, such as the Hong'en Guan 宏恩观 next to the Drum Tower in Beijing was changed the second factory of Beijing Standard Parts in 1950s.

<sup>8</sup> In Yanjiu festival of Old Beijing, the most prominent thing was that people might meet Qiu Chuji in Baiyun Guan. At the same time, there were also yangko, acrobatics, recreation feast, date arrangement for single men and women, women crossing over the bridge in the hope of receiving health and longevity, touching front gate nails to get children, throwing coins to hit the bell hung in the hole of the cash made from paper coated with gold paper in hope of making more money in future, touching stony monkeys for blessings and other activities, which are described in *Yanjiu zhuzhici*, 燕九竹枝词 composed by Kong Shangren 孔尚任 (1648-1718) et al (Wang Yingchao 2012).

<sup>9</sup> As one of the holy lands of Tibetan Buddhism in Old Beijing, walking around the temple which worshiped Buddha, pleading to avoid calamity, accumulating merits should be the most magnificent on lunar 4<sup>th</sup> of June and 25<sup>th</sup> of October. The origin of the ‘8<sup>th</sup> of August’ in the saying remains unknown. For the historical evolvement of the White Stupa Temple (*Baita Si*, 白塔寺) and its temple festivals in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, see Huang 2002, 1-100; Jiang 2004, 99-153.

The folksong means borrowing money in the temple of Wealth God, striking the big bell in Juesheng Temple, i.e. Big Bell Temple, rushing to get children in Dongyue Temple, touching monkeys in Baiyun Temple, watching fire sentence<sup>10</sup> in Town God's Temple, watching lanterns in Chongyuan Temple<sup>11</sup>, exhibiting treasures in the Fire God's Temple, temple festivals in Changdian being the best in imperial Beijing.

After the transition, most temple festivals of their own features became relatively homogenized fairs and markets. There were fairs on every third day of *Xun* 旬 in Earth Temple (*Tudimiao*, 土地庙), every fourth day in Flower Market (*Huashiji*, 花市集), every fifth and sixth days in White Stupa Temple, every seventh and eighth days in Protecting Nation Temple (*Huguosi*, 护国寺) and every ninth and tenth days in Prosperous Blessing Temple (*Longfusi*, 隆福寺). Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> days of each *Xun* were public holidays regulated by the government. Based on the five major traditional temple festivals in and outside the city, the five major temple fairs became the main place for most citizens to trade and entertain. There was already a saying in 1930s of '*fengsan Tudimiao, fengsi Huashiji, wuliu Baitasi, qiba Huguosi, jiushi Longfusi*'.

The complete transition from temple festivals to temple fairs can also be found in many investigation reports and research writings by academicians in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century on 'temple festivals' in Old Beijing such as Changdian temple festival (Wang Zhuoran. 1922) and fairs for five major temples (BCRC (1937)2004). Just like the survey on Miaofeng Mountain (Gu 1928; Li Jinghan 1925), and the survey on Dongyue temple outside Chaoyangmen (Guo Licheng. 1970), these researchers would call themselves 'Chinese reformed sociologist', and solemnly stated that their surveys did not mean to preach 'superstition' but to educate people, although their surveys touched worship activities.

According to the investigation on the economic aspects of the five major temple festivals, the following perceptual cognition has already evolved into facts:

After the 18th year of Republic of China, the dates of temple festivals for Earth Temple, Flower Market, White Stupa Temple, Protecting Nation Temple and Prosperous Blessing Temple were all converted into the ones of the Gregorian calendar. The dates other temple festivals were still based on lunar calendar. As the notion of the Gregorian calendar grows deeper, that of the lunar calendar will diminish. As a consequence, the temple festivals, such as burning incense, pilgrimage, etc., will gradually be forgotten.... With regard to the development of Beiping, the

<sup>10</sup> Chai Xiaofan 柴小梵 (1893-1936) wrote the entry 'Fire Sentence (火判)' in his *Fantianlu Conglu* 梵天庐丛录: 'It was an old custom that people would coat mud on ghostdom, empty its seven orifices, keep fire burning inside, and let light radiates in all directions, which was called fire sentence.' (Chai 2013)

<sup>11</sup> It was an eunuch temple in Ming and Qing dynasty (Ma Zhixiang. 1997, 154), also called Chongxuan Guan, known as Old Eunuch Cao (*Caolaogong*, 曹老公) Guan, Eunuch Cao (*Caogong*, 曹公) Guan and Tiger Cao (*Caolaohu*, 曹老虎) Guan, which was located in Xinkai Hutong, northeast of the T road in Xizhimennei Street, where West Branch of Beijing Institute of Education lies now. There had been temple festivals from the Spring Festival to the Lantern Festival every year until the early of the Republic of China.

triangle strip formed by Dong'an Market, Xidan Department Store, Zhengyangmenwai Street and Tianqiao has become the great business quarter of the metropolis, whereas the five major temple fairs became small markets in the surrounding area. With the expansion of the city, such markets will also expand. They will become big markets or new department stores. The change of their past appearance can be expected. (BCRC (1937)2004, 367, 381)

Old Beijing's process of modernization set Western cities in modern times as the benchmark, and also was an 'inherent expansion' (Mizoguchi 2011, 55, 111) and 'endogenous development' (Mitsuishi 1999, 1-4) to a modern city of industrialized civilization from the 'historical matrix' – rural city of agricultural civilization with difficulty and endeavour. Over the course of deterioration that somewhat is still causing discomforts and adverse reactions today, 'dismissing sacredness' or 'dismissing theism' which was freeze-framed as being revolutionary, developmental, progressive and modern is its basic feature. Imperial altars of heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, gods of land and grain, etc. and imperial gardens like the Summer Palace successively became parks that ordinary citizens could visit (Shi 1998). Large temples like Chongyuan Guan and mansions like the Prince Gong's Mansion were converted one after another into schools or factories of different levels, grades and scales. Three-dimensional spiritual space was obviously flattened, simplified, professionalized and functionalized. Four Sacred Animals, defined as 'witch doctor' was wiped out and driven off the cities and households (Yang 2006, 203-242). Connection, meeting and communication between men and gods gradually lost place for existence. To some extent, the relationship between gods and men was transformed into the relationship between man and man, even the relationship between man and materials, and ultimately has evolved into the relationship between one material and another material these days.

From 1928 to 1931, the Kuomintang Central Government successively issued a series of decrees such as *Methods for Abolishing Divination Rites, Astrology, Witchcraft and Geomancy*, *Existing and Abolishing Criteria on Temples and Shrines*, and *Methods for the Ban on Running Superstitious Articles*. Among the decrees, the most important was *Existing and Abolishing Criteria on Temples and Shrines*, which especially enacted criteria on prohibiting superstition and protecting religions. Due to the ambiguity between superstition and religion, the criteria were also ambiguous. For instance, it stipulated the belief of earth god and kitchen god legal, while the belief of dragon king, wealth god and town god illegal (LB 1934, 813), which caused much ambiguity in practice and ended up in nothing definite.

One thing to be particularly noted is *Regulations on Administration of Temples* issued by the government of Republic of China in 1914. It stipulated that all temples should convert themselves into schools; only architecture belonged to arts, temples concerning celebrity relics, historical memories and historic interest and scenic beauty could be retained by the abbot of the temple. Once temples were left abandoned and had no abbot, local officials should ask their senior officials to verify and dispose the properties. This regulation enabled some temples and



statues to bear the name of presently prevalent historical relics (*Wenwu*, 文物). This conception extended to numerous cultural relic protection units after 1949. As temples and gods' statues in temples on which temple festivals were based were turned into historical relics, hence came the taboo that they were untouchable. Moreover, their sacredness, value and significance to individuals were all gone. Temples full of vitality because of temple festivals were no longer the 'empty space' shared by all living creatures, but the solitary 'empty-shelled space' where only demonstrated values that could be watched in distance.

After the reform and opening up, just as what has happened and is happening, some temples turned into historical relics either continue to be converted into historical relics and museums like White Stupa of White Stupa Temple and also become city landmarks and scenic spots for tourism that can be appreciated afar but not be approached, or become destinations for travel and relaxation with expensive tickets like Miaofeng Mountain and Dongyue Temple.

## 6. THE AWKWARD SITUATION OF TEMPLE FESTIVALS OF ICH

Since the reform and opening up, mainstream ideology has been interpreting folk culture and traditional culture from heritage and archaeology perspectives and the repositioning them as national cultural treasure and living fossil. The foremost value of temple festivals is still judged on instrumental reason by those who strongly support temple festivals. First, under the frame of 'culture sets the stage and economy performs' (*Wenhua datai, jingji changxi*, 文化搭台, 经济唱戏), the economic function of temple festivals is preached, and temple festivals are held in the forms of material exchange fairs, business fairs and investment promotion fairs while their essence of worshipping gods remains reluctant to be expressed. Next, in the movement of applying, reviewing and protecting ICH, temple festivals' functions of education, entertainment, religion, arts, etc. all assume an air of legitimacy, which makes temple festivals – 'unorthodox sacrifice' like Miaofeng Mountain festival whose kernel should be worshipping stand shoulder to shoulder with official sacrifices and orthodox sacrifices like the ceremonies of worship to heaven in the Temple of Heaven (*Tiantan*, 天坛), memorial ceremonies for Yandi 炎帝 and Huangdi 黄帝 and be enrolled into the list of national ICH. Worship activities during temple festivals somehow regain its rationality partially due to the cultural features they present. Whether stressing the economic function or cultural function, across the country employing attributes of temple festivals that have a long history to develop tourism and economy, and construct culture at their convenience is the core purpose of elites who condescend to temple festivals.

The fate of temple festivals is quite different in Japan. Although in early Meiji period it 'showed its attitude to prohibit popular relieving etiquette that hindered civilizing progress', on the whole the belief derived from indigenous religion did not undergo the course of total negation because of Meiji Restoration. Instead, dominated by 'the ideology of antiquity-reviving Shintoism', it was brought into the level of national administration and popularized in the name of Shintoism, and was viewed as a symbol of the nation (Miyake 2008, 57-58).

Therefore, in the highly crowded urban space of contemporary Japan, vivid and various temple festivals of entertaining gods based on Japanese indigenous religion are not only scenic spots and destinations for tourists, but also delight for different heirs who commit to them, recurring the admirable 'Japanese spirit'.<sup>12</sup> In its inheritance community, almost all members participate in each temple festival, revealing its strong ability of self-adjustment that can keep pace with time and become an important part of Japanese tourism.

Constantly under the shadow of superstition, completely different from the spectacular of Japanese traditional temple festivals, these temple festivals such as Miaofeng Mountain, Yaji Mountain and Dongyue Temple, which presently are considered having 'traditional' significance and 'folklore' features in Beijing, can only undergo partial spiritual renaissance. Religious rites concerning spiritual existence have to be practiced under disguise or in the name of practicing 'folklore', 'traditional culture' and ICH. As far as Miaofeng Mountain temple festival is concerned, the once one-sided 'visiting the holy mountains' – going up to the mountain – has involved into the interaction and reciprocity between the administrator and the head of pilgrim association, i.e. going in the opposite direction between coming down and going up the mountain (Zhang Qingren 2013, 147-169; Yue 2014c, 304-306). People just try their best to make the activities look like temple festivals.

However, held for years without a temple or a god, temple festivals in Changdian, Longtanhu and Earth Temple (*Ditan*, 地坛) are simply dreary amusement and disheartening consumption filled with citizens' complaints and regret, and even the desire for food is satisfied with limits (Li and Li 2004; Shu 2010). Seizing the opportunity of 2008 Olympic in Beijing, the restored Beiding, leisurely and affectionately standing close to the Water Cube and the Bird's Nest simply has the appearance of a temple appearance but no association with ordinary citizens and district residents' daily life and other matters such as birth, aging, illness and death, the value and significance of individuals.

Now, Beijing as a secularization city has completely lost its rural feature in both external appearance and internal charm and become a materialized international metropolitan instead of a leisure life space. Temple festivals as spiritual existence, which are common people's collective celebrations and a beautiful scenery in the soul, can only become out of time and come to an end. Certainly, Meyer (1991) thinks that contemporary Beijing is still a sacred city because of rebuilt after 1949. And there are a lot of semi open family churches spreading in the capital these days (Liu Baozhong 2015). However, Meyer's judgment is mainly from political factors and there is a fundamental difference between temple festival and family church. In other words, the secularization of contemporary Beijing is mainly based on the changes of temple festivals in the past.

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<sup>12</sup> See 'Adjustment Strategies of Temple Festivals in High Density Space of Contemporary Japan', the speech made by Wang Chong in 29<sup>th</sup> of September, 2015 for Space of Temple Festivals: Forum of Old City Culture in Beijing International Design Week. For the diversity of Japanese sacrificial rites and temple festivals, see Ma Guojun 2009, 153-211.

## 7. CONCLUSION

In the end of the paper, one thing needs to be mentioned again that under the auspices of Wang Yichang, the juniors of the College of Republic of China in Beijing conducted a survey on Beijing temple festivals focusing on its economic aspect in March, 1937. It was a pioneering attempt to systemically demonstrate the role of temple festivals in the history of urban development in Beijing. Therefore, although it focused on Beijing temple festivals of that time, particularly the economic aspects concerning the distribution, place and commerce of temple fairs, the report took the lead in briefly analysing the meaning, origin and historical evolvement of temple festivals in Beijing. It pointed out that in the oral language of Old Beijing, ‘temple festivals’ which derived from religious or commercial reasons actually included various connotations like incense (*Xianghuo*, 香火), participating in a prayer service at a temple festival, incense market (*Xiangshi*, 香市), suburban space reserved for hunting in the spring (*Chunchang*, 春场), temple fairs and markets, and also gave an overview of temple festivals’ multiple forms in Yuan, Ming, Qing and Republic of China (BCRC (1937)2004, 354-367).

Obviously, the birth of temple festivals – concentrated presentation of people’s daily life – was by no means simply derived from religion or commerce, it also interacted with world views, civilization forms, living ways, living tastes and interests. Thus, in the beginning of the article, I used the phrase ‘a beautiful scene in the soul’. It is absurd that although with brilliant assertion and prediction, the pioneers such as Wang Yichang etc., did not realize that their surveys and writings themselves were the boundary monument and catalyst for the overall transition from temple festivals to temple fairs.

With the overall social facts that happened in Beijing during radical changes, I try to illuminate the heterogeneity of the two terminologies, ‘temple festivals’ and ‘temple fairs’, which are intentionally obscured and taken for granted. On the whole temple festivals in Old Beijing, which are symbiosis, encompass and intertextuality with agricultural civilization, are spiritual existence while temple fairs are materialized existence. In other words, in Beijing where the post-agricultural civilization especially in the form of materialism, utilitarianism and pragmatism predominates, temple festivals as spiritual existence are a thing of the past, while temple fairs burdened with complaints from consumers will inevitably be advocated by privileged elites and become popular.

Despite being surrounded by city walls, Old Beijing was a rural city that intertextual with agricultural civilization. Its ruralism was reflected by the sacredness of nature such as heaven, earth, etc. that officials and common people worshipped, and also by isomorphic space aesthetics of houses, streets and the city. Just as stated above, various temples were densely distributed in Old Beijing according to their ranks. Furthermore, in common people’s imaginary Utopian world, Sanshan Wuding enshrining Laoniangniang surrounded and protected the capital city and its good geomancy, and also blessed the nation’s prosperity, world peace, favourable weather, good harvest, descendants’ well-being. Like in Xizhimennei Street, while those numerous small temples like the little-known Jiulong Erhu in ordinary

streets and alleys not only were closely associated with those people's everyday life but also had been constructing the spatial feeling and world view of the people at the bottom of the society. Meanwhile, they were also shelters for disadvantaged, power-lost individuals and groups whose life lost balance. The once prevalent belief of Four Sacred Animals enabled home furnishing space of many households in Old Beijing to bear more or less properties of the temple.

The significance of well-praised Siheyuan not only lies in their distinctive layout, but also in the formless and shapeless empty space converted from the tangible space constructed by the leisure life of the Bannermen over hundreds of years, and it was comprehensively colluded, co-constructed and shared by all those coming and going. Taking this as the foundation and bearing soil, temple festivals involving all sizes of temples on either side of the city were a concentrated presentation to the daily life of the Bannermen who had a cheerful pattern and temperament. In the orderly blending of dynamic and static, frequently held temple festivals in Old Beijing displayed individual and collective value and also gave significance to individual life through ceremonial practice straightly directing to life and death such as relieving the poor and weak, registering name and placing a coffin in a temporary shelter pending burial so that temple festivals in Old Beijing became spiritual existence that all sorts of people actively participated and enjoyed in.

In the process of modernization which set the West as the benchmark and was promoted by the endogenous development, Old Beijing inevitably underwent the process of secularization of time and space systems. Compelled by the shadow of being superstitious, temple festivals centring worship activities were stigmatized. Thus, temple festivals collectively deteriorated into displays of manpower and desire for materials. Temple fairs attaching importance to business deals and sensory entertainment became materialized existence. Some temples and a few god statues were turned into historical relics. Since the movement of ICH in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, temple fairs in Beijing have been having a renaissance to temple festivals in Old Beijing. However, in the context of materialism and atheism as the mainstream, such renaissance can only be partial and limited under the dominion of instrumental rationality.

It should be added that the above conclusions concerning temple festivals, temple fairs and temple festivals that as ICH are aimed at what happened in Chinese capital city – Beijing. To other metropolises like Shanghai, Guangzhou in the course of modernization, these conclusions are also applicable to a certain extent. However, to the rural areas which still have strong rural characteristics and are far away from metropolises, these conclusions are obviously limited. In contrast, just as shown in the research on contemporary Black Dragon King temple festivals (Chau 2006) in Yulin, Shaanxi, village temple festivals (Gan Mantang 2007) in Fujian and rural temple festivals in rural North China (Hua 2013; Yue 2014b, 2016b), the qualitative change of rural temple festivals is slow or even inert. In the face of the great external forces of politics, economics, culture and the grand discourse of revolution, development, science, civilization, ICH, rural temple festivals show exceptional wisdom of viability and ability of self-adjustment.

Flexible deformation, expansion and contraction have enabled rural temple festivals to remain spiritual existence as a whole till today.

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