

THE HONG KONG HIGHLANDERS: ETHNIC IDENTITY IN AN EXPATRIATE GROUP

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Abstract

Few migrants are ever as successful as expatriates. Nonetheless, a few anthropologists decide to study their experiences. Focusing on the cases of the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Hong Kong Reel Club, this essay will try to provide some information on the subject. First, an overview of the creation of both clubs will be given. Then, the St Andrews Reel Dance will be shown as an event allowing participants to recreate their Scottish selves while in contrast, the weekly dance classes' do not exhibit any Scottish characteristic. The members of those clubs will be divided in three analytical categories using relevant examples and life stories of members to support them.

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Introduction

Two approaches to the clubs, two “Paradigms” will thereafter be identified. One aims to reproduce and recreate the Scottish culture and find within it a psychological and social security, while the other paradigm perceives the activities as opportunities for socializing rather than cultural generators. This duality will be explained from a historical perspective going back to the colonial Hong Kong and the analyzing the effects of the Handover. An emphasis will be put upon the Reel Club which was especially influenced by those events.

Foundation

Methodology

I decided to focus my interest on the smaller group of the Reel Club. Not only do many of the members participate actively in the activities of the Highlanders but they also meet more often, giving more opportunities to participate in their activities.

The Fieldwork conducted for this research took place from September 2011 until March 2012, -mostly- at the Hong Kong Cricket Club every Monday evening during the regular meetings of the Reel Club which has for purpose the practice and learning of SCD. Two research methods were employed: Participant Observation and Semi-Structured Interviews. Surveys were avoided to prevent the alienation of the subjects. Furthermore, because of the small size of the group, such "personal" interviews were just as exhaustive in gathering data as would have been questionnaires.

History of the Clubs

After World War II, the service of the Union Church started to be conducted in the Hong Kong Volunteer Defense Corps Officers Mess. (Union Church website) In order to prevent the soldiers positioned in the colony from visiting the poisonous, "sin-prone" areas of Hong Kong, the then minister decided to organize Scottish dance classes and activities after mass. The Reel Club was born. There, the soldiers stationed in the colony had the chance to meet new friends and perpetuate their own tradition (Martin; HK Highlanders). Since its creation, the Reel club has grown to have a majority of civil participants and has become an affiliate member of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Eventually the club merged with the "Hong Kong

Highlanders" as the "Hong Kong Highlanders Reel Club". (HK Highlanders) Founded more recently in 1988, the Hong Kong Highlanders was conceived by a group of Scottish expatriates: "[to] enjoy and participate in Scottish traditions and to ensure that their children would come to know these same traditions while living away from their native land." Those "traditions" and this Scottish identity are perpetuated through the means of monthly activities. "These vary from the type of event which is expected of any expatriate Scottish society, being the same events that they would enjoy at home, to those with a more local or topical slant." (HK Highlanders) Respective examples would be the "'Reel' St. Andrew's Dance" and the "Junk trip".

Ethnographic Descriptions of Given Events

The 'Reel' St. Andrew's Dance

St Andrews is a central figure of the Scottish lore. It is said that he appeared in a dream to King Angus the night before an important battle and as his men slaughtered their enemies, an X-shaped cross, appeared in the sky. Consequently, the Saint Andrew's Cross became the national emblem and flag of Scotland (Scotland.org). The Saint is celebrated on the traditional date of his martyrdom, the 30th of November. Despite being a relatively recent holiday in Scotland, Saint Andrew's Day enjoys a greater popularity among expatriates who use it as a day to celebrate the best of Scottish culture, through food and activities.

It is therefore not surprising this was the event chosen to take place in November. This yearly event is representative of a broad range of events taking place throughout the year.

The Reel

Venue: The 'Reel' St. Andrew's Dance took place in a pavilion of the United Services Recreation Club, situated in Kowloon. The big rectangular area was organized with the central dancing space directly in front of the stage at the center of the room. This disposition allowed the live music band to be clearly heard and provided an ample space for people to dance. The "Scottishness" of the event was expressed through different means:

Decorations: In opposition to more "popular" places in Hong Kong, this event had a more "Western formal" setting. What made it "Scottish" was mostly the presence of half a dozen great Scottish flags hanging on the walls of the pavilion. Two

kinds were present. First was the Saltire, the Flag of Scotland, that represents Saint Andrew's Cross. The second type is known as the "Banner of the King of Scots" (Innes of Learney, 1934) which consists of a red lion rampant on a yellow field. With the Saltire, they are "two of Scotland's most recognizable symbols" (BBC, 2005).

Food: Brillat-Savarin wrote in his "Physiology of Taste" (1826): "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are". Had he been told the menu offered during the 'Reel', there is no doubt he would have shouted "Scottish!". Among others were served: "*Scotch Broth*"; and "*Grilled Lamb Chops with Rosemary Gravy Served with Colcannon*".

Scotch broth is a hearty, filling soup which was served as the main meal of Scottish peasants in the past but became in the past years, a starter (Green, 2010). Finally, mutton is a common meat enjoyed in Scotland and while Colcannon is not per se Scottish but Irish, it is part of the broader "Celtic identity" and heritage which various members told me enjoying in their youth.

Music and Dance

The live band included an Accordion and a Fiddle, two instruments with a long history in Scottish music and which are especially fitted to the needs of SCD. After the main dish, a guest performed a Great Highland Bagpipe solo. The Saint Andrews' Reel's main activity was to dance Reels, which is probably one of the most "Scottish" activities one can pursue. "The smooth flowing quavers of a reel are quintessentially Scottish, and the dances themselves are Scottish". (Hood, Henderson and MacFadyen, 2000)

Clothing

Many of the members came wearing the Highland dress (traditional dress). For the men, this included a kilt, a sporran - a "pouch" which performs in the same way as a pocket-, a sgian-dubh - a small single-edged knife tucked inside the right leg's sock- and ghillies -thick soled shoes. Women also wore ghillies and a dress with a shawl. Kilts and Shawls were all assorted to the appropriate ancestral or regional Tartan.

Composition of the Participants

Though not everyone wore the Highland Dress, most of the members present were either Scottish or married to one and only a fraction of the eighty plus participants were not related in such a way to Scotland. Consequently, many of the

discussions involved the "homeland" in some ways. Some talked about the food, others about the culture, but most expressed some sense of nostalgia.

The Hong Kong Reel Classes – A Typical Monday Evening

The Reel Club meets on a weekly basis for SCD classes. Currently, the meetings take place every Monday between 8pm and 10pm at the Hong Kong Cricket Club on Hong Kong Island.

Venue: In contrast to the Saint Andrew's Reel Dance described earlier, the settings of the Reel Club's weekly meeting do not exhibit any Scottish characteristics. Indeed, the room rented in the Hong Kong Cricket Club is an impersonal multi-purpose room with strictly no Scottish design or cultural reminders of the supposedly ethnic nature of this club.

Composition of the Group: The weekly classes are much smaller than the Saint Andrew Reel. While the precise number of participants may vary from one week to another, there fifteen core members distinguished themselves with a strong attendance. A dozen or so other participants would frequently miss classes. Finally, every now and then, there would be a few "newcomers" or "one-timers" that would attend a session and never be seen again. To my surprise, some of those "one timers" were long time members, but barely ever attended any activity. Because participation rates vary (from 9 to 22 witnessed), it is hard to give specific details or statistics on the group. Two things could nonetheless be observed.

First, no participants came from the working class. Rather, members were either from the "middle-higher" middle class. Many had secured long term positions in Hong Kong in various companies, or created they own. Over half of the "core" members were part of the Academic world, either teaching or as part of the administration in local universities.

Second, compared to the homogeneous crowd of the Saint Andrew Reel Dance, the participants of this group showed more diversity. Indeed, within the "core", only five members are Scottish. The rest of the members are all "non-Scottish" with only three of them "related to Scotland" through marriage. The non-Scot majority is composed of both "Westerners" from countries like Malta or France and even included "Sassenach" (a Scottish Gaelic loanword which means "Saxon" and is used in friendly jest to talk about British people). The Asian members are mostly from Hong Kong or the Chinese mainland.

A Different Reality: It is interesting to notice that the reality of those weekly sessions does not meet their advertised ideal. According to the Reel Club website, "Regular Monday night meetings took place from 8.00pm to 10.00pm. The first hour

focuses on easier dances and after the break we go on to more challenging dances." Furthermore, regular classes are offered "on Monday nights from 7.00pm to 8.00pm" Reality however is quite different from this.

Walkthrough of the Event: The "Beginner" classes at 7pm do not exist anymore. When I asked why, I was told that the club had severely diminished in size since the website had been created and there were no more reasons to offer beginner classes anymore.

In practice the classes followed a fairly specific pattern:

Sometimes, a few members sometimes meet before class to have dinner at the Club. There, they discuss various topics, including their jobs, the weather (literally) or upcoming plans for the vacations. Despite the supposed "Scottish" nature of the Reel Club, there is a singular lack of "Scottish" topics within the discussions. Furthermore, it is unusual for any of them to mention dancing at any time.

At 8pm, the dance lesson starts. Martin, the Scottish Dance teacher, will select a Reel and explain the steps to the members who will in turn repeat the pattern. The actual feet movement is not repeated, which means that if there are eight people dancing, it is not unusual to have 8 different "form" of the same footsteps, or 8 different rhythms. "Mastery" is not the focus of this class; rather than learning one Reel, the dance is merely explained once and practiced another time before changing and trying a new one. Overall, interactions with others and wholesome entertainment are more the focus than the Scottish dance itself. This has for consequence that despite attending classes for many months, only a handful of members are able to dance properly any Reel or even remember them. This is however not a problem for anyone since the group is aimed towards "fun" rather than professionalism.

At roughly 9pm, the lesson stops for 10-15 minutes. Once again, the Scottish identity is nowhere to be found and socializing is king during this break. The discussions are mostly about the common life of the participants, catching up or planning other activities during the rest of the week. The drinks and food available also lack any Scottish flavor and people tend to either drink a Heineken or tea.

After the break, the lesson resumes but unlike what is advertised on the website, it is difficult to notice any level difference. Eventually, at 10pm, the lesson ends and participants return home, often sharing cars.

Composition of the Hong Kong Highlanders and its Reel Club

While the Hong Kong Highlanders records a large number of members, it is hard to determine the precise number of "active" numbers. Indeed, the number of participants may vary greatly depending on the activity. Furthermore, because of the international and expatriate nature of many members, it is not unusual for them to only attend the few activities that interest them most or to find themselves unable to attend a given event.

The following data are based on real life observations collected during Participant Observation rather than on the records of the Society. While those would have provided easily quantifiable data, it would not have reflected the reality of the groups' dynamics.

Preliminary Observations

I have had the chance to be in contact with up to a hundred Hong Kong Highlanders. Their age ranged from the early thirties to the advanced sixties (myself excluded). Far from the "FILTH" ("Failed in London, Try Hong Kong") immigrants from the nineties, all the members are relatively successful coming either from the business or academic sector.

It seems that the younger members, in their early thirties, tend to be "posted" in Hong Kong by their companies for short periods of time before being sent somewhere else. On the other hand, the older members tend to stay longer; either until retirement, or permanently. This is generally the case because they have earned an executive position in their organization, founded their own company (for example, one founded his own design company) or gained job security in Hong Kong.

Among the Hong Kong Highlanders observed, I argue there are three categories of members that can be discerned based on their relation to the Scottish Culture and identity.

First Group

Definition:

First are the "Scottish" members. The Hong Kong Highlanders society calls them by the appellation of "Ordinary Members". This status is "confined to persons of predominantly Scottish descent. Applications for membership must give details of their Scottish descent, e.g. place of

birth (or parents), place of upbringing, etc." (HK Highlanders)

Life Stories:

The Scottish dance teacher Martin, probably one of the oldest members of the Hong Kong Highlanders, is part of this first group. He joined the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Reel Club at the same time in 1989 and has been a member ever since (except for a hiatus during the 2000's when he was working in South East Asia). He was also the President of the association during the Hand Over, in 1997, and has followed professional training as a SCD teacher in Saint Andrews, Scotland.

While he acknowledges the relational nature of identity, and in this sense echoes Roosens (1989), (“[T]he individual prefers one or the other identity, so that there is a hierarchy of identities for each person [...]”); if "left alone" Martin would define himself as first a Scot, then as a Westerner and finally as a citizen of the United Kingdom. This strong sense of being a Scot is anchored in its active participation in SCD.

This is due to various factors. Born and raised in Scotland, Martin has practiced SCD ever since he was a child. This was not only restricted to performing with his family during social events. Rather, Martin, like every single other child educated in the Scottish System enjoyed SCD classes as part of the Physical Education curriculum. (MacLean, 2007) Then, when Martin graduated from high school, he went to university in the south of England and started his life as a long term expatriate. Since then, he has lived abroad for over twenty years in half a dozen countries. This international life is another factor that pushed him towards SCD. Frequently changing location forced him to create a new network in every single new location and SCD was the easiest way to do so. Consequently, Martin has developed a strong bond towards SCD which is one of the variables of his life he has a control over. This is further exacerbated by the current lack of life partner as Martin is now divorced and therefore relies on this "bond" to give him a sense of belonging.

Brody, just as dedicated to the Scottish culture has also joined the Reel Club as a way to reconnect with its own culture. However, unlike Martin, Brody has taken a more holistic approach to the matter and has also joined the Hong Kong St. Andrew's Pipe Band. He came to Hong Kong over thirty years ago and has settled there with his local wife Amanda. Through participating in those cultural activities, Brody is able

to preserve bond with the culture he had to leave behind to establish himself as a long term resident of Hong Kong.

Martin and Brody are just two of the members of this big category. This first category is the biggest of the Hong Kong Highlanders, and a minority within the Reel club. Through joining the Hong Kong Highlanders, those members acquire a new way to express, and live their identity as Scottish. They are normally the kilts-enthusiasts during the events.

Second Group

Definition:

In the second category are the "spouses". While not of Scottish descent themselves, they eventually married a Scottish husband or wife. Because they do not have a direct link to Scotland, the association considers them to be "Associate Members". Accordingly, they may "participate to all events except the position of president.

Life Stories:

Amanda is Brody's wife. A Hong Kong local, she met Brody while they were both working in the same company. Compared to Martin and Brody, she does not feel Scottish. Instead, she decided to join the club because it is both a "good exercise" but also an opportunity to spend more time with her husband and better understand and learn about his culture. Retired from the Hong Kong administration, her location depended career appeared during the interview to be one of the reasons why the couple decided to settle in Hong Kong. Accordingly, joining the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Hong Kong Reel club might have been a way for her to help her husband adapt to the city.

Mary, however, is the protagonist of a very sad story. Similarly to Amanda, Mary does not consider herself Scottish. She was still a child when the Chinese revolution of 1949 took place and her family decided to leave and install themselves in Hong Kong. She grew up in the city and eventually married a "gweilo" working in the Colonial administration, a Scottish man. Sadly, as he was coming back from a trip, his vehicle crashed and he died. Since then, she has been living alone. It seems that she has decided to join the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Reel Club in an attempt to connect with her defunct culture and his identity.

Despite not being themselves Scottish, Amanda, Mary and the other non-Scottish spouses are joining the association of the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Reel Club for similar purposes as their spouse of the first group. Through the participation in those events, they are able to cultivate a link between themselves and Scotland which carries a deep personal meaning.

Third Group

Definition:

Finally, the last category is composed of the "International members" of the club, who are neither Scottish nor married to a Scottish member. Similarly to the second category of the "spouses", they are "Associate Members". While many are from Hong Kong this is not exclusively the case. For example, it is in this category that fits the numerous Sassenach members. I am myself part of this category.

This third group, in contrast to the first two, does not actually behave nor participate to the group's activities for the same reasons and many differences can be observed. By far the smallest minority within the Highlanders, it actually composes the majority of the Reel Club.

Life Stories:

In her late twenties, Kat is by far the youngest active member of the Hong Kong Highlanders and Hong Kong Reel Club. One of the most recent regular members, she joined the club only a year and a half ago. Yet, nothing in her background presaged she would ever be part of such an organization. Indeed, as a local Hong Kong student, she remained within a "local" environment most of the life and had a typical Hong Kong childhood. Nonetheless, she was eventually introduced to the association by a friendly "Spouse" (Group 2) co-worker who knew Kat was interested in dance. This friend has since left Hong Kong; yet, Kat appeared to quickly enjoy herself within this small community and decided to stay. In stern contrast to the previous two categories, the Scottish identity of the club has value for her, rather she joined the club for its socializing possibilities as well as its relation to dance.

This "openness" is the reason why many non-Scottish members decide to join the Reel Club. This is the case for Susan, a "Sassenach" who had never participated in SCD until Martin invited her to give it a try.

Initially afraid of not having a partner, her doubts were quickly assuaged as many participants come alone. She has attended most meetings since then. It appears that it is this specific openness that makes it as popular as "world" organizations. According to Susan, who is now planning to return to England, she has already attended the local SCD group who were "just as friendly" as the Hong Kong one. This is further echoed by Martin's international experience of different International Scottish Country Dance clubs. When thinking about it, Susan says that it is this possibility to meet new people easily that interested her in joining the club, the dancing in itself did not have much to do with it.

The Reel Club is unmistakably aware of this reputation and advertises it on their website (Reel Club) by addressing on an informal tone various questions prospective members might have: if one is worried about not having a partner: "No problem. Many of our members leave their partners at home. In SCD, it's customary to change partners for each dance and for women to dance together if there aren't enough men." Also, if one is afraid of showing up alone with no friends, the club addresses that fear by saying that "[They]'re a pretty friendly bunch - after [being there] a few times [one] will have a whole new set of friends."

This contrast with the members of the first two categories, Kat, Susan and the rest of this group are not trying to establish a cultural connection with Scotland itself. What interests them instead is the potential this "open" and "friendly" activity has to offer them to meet new people and find new friends in a foreign place for expatriates or within a "foreign" subculture for Hong Kong locals

Two Paradigms

Paradigm I:

The first paradigm consists of the Scottish Highlanders and Reel Club as "Scottish ethnic groups". According to Barth (1969), an ethnic group is a type of social organization within which members use cultural traits from their putative history. Later, Martin Bulmer (1986) expands on this concept stating that: "An "ethnic group" is a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, [...] and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements which define the group's identity, such as [...], shared territory, nationality or physical appearance. Members of an ethnic group are conscious of belonging to the group."

In the case of the Hong Kong Highlanders, the importance of kinship and a shared "ancestral home" is visible in the distinction between "ordinary" and "associate" members. Furthermore, various cultural traits are exhibited and reproduced during the "Scottish" events, such as the Reel Saint Andrews, Hogmanay or Ceilidh. Those traits include but are not limited to the presence of the symbolic elements presented earlier as Scottish flags, Scottish food, etc.

While it is evident that the life expatriate live in Hong Kong has little if nothing to do with the way they would live in Scotland, participating in the club's activities helps them preserve a sense of Scottishness. Even though it might involve subjecting that same identity to changes, and re-creating it and reinventing it over time in a similar process described by Bakalian (1993) as described by Miri Song (2003). Through this process, those members "can find psychological security in this identification, a feeling of belonging, a certainty that one knows one's origin that one can live on in the younger generations of one's people who will carry on the struggle and so on." (Roosens, 1989) This is further echoed by Jeffrey Weeks (1990) who remarks that: "At its most basic, [identity] gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core of your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships, your complex involvements with others".

This is a much welcomed feeling because, as Wang Xiaoyun (2002) puts it: "when expatriates enter foreign countries/culture, their previous social networks fade away and their psychological well-being is threatened by the uncertainty in the new local environment (Kuo and Tsai, 1986)" This is due to the fact that "social resources, such as social, instrumental or emotional support, are embedded in the individual's social network." (Lin; 1982, 1983)

I believe this is possible because as Roosens (1989) states "One is aware of belonging to these groups, networks and categories, *and is so recognized and identified by others*, members and nonmembers, in terms of this belonging." (Emphasis mine).

This "recognition" granted by others offers a great opportunity for newcomers to approach the group while giving the group a reason to accept them. This explains, in my opinion, the demographic difference between the many short terms expatriates Hong Kong Highlanders and the longtime members of the Reel Club's core.

This paradigm is shared and adopted by most of the members of the

categories I and II presented earlier. Through activities such as the Reel St Andrews, Brody, Amanda, Kat, and Martin are able to access and produce their own Scottish selves.

Paradigm II:

This second paradigm consists of seeing those same organizations as an opportunity for "Social networking". In contrast to those using the First paradigm, users of the Second paradigm are not interested the Scottish identity. Accordingly, instead of joining the "Scottish themed" activities they will instead join the more neutral ones such as the Pool Side BBQ, the Chinese Year Walk or the Reel Club. Members of the Third Group are the most likely to behave in such a way. Indeed, through participation in those activities, they are able to socialize and create or reinforce bonds with the other members.

It is important to notice that those two paradigms, while different are not contradictory. Indeed, a handful of members adopted both paradigms. This is the case of Martin, Kat, Amanda and Brody who join both "Scottish events" and "Social events". Indeed, unlike "short-term" expatriates, the core members present in the Reel Club all have reached a certain stability and desire to stay in Hong Kong for a longer time. Accordingly, it is not a "quick fix" they are in need of, but rather long and established relationship that can last longer than a year or two (like it would for most expatriates). Forming a smaller but more interconnected group allows them to benefit from a long term social network without having to invest in new relationships every few years.

Nonetheless, the great majority of the members from the groups I and II will stick to the Scottish identity generators, while the III groups will prefer Social non-Scottish gatherings.

The Handover

Those two paradigms did not always exist, however. Indeed, I would argue the Hong Kong Handover in 1997 is the cause of this change.

Before the Handover, both the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Reel Club were perceived as part of the same, first paradigm. According to Martin, even though there were already a few British, those were largely outnumbered by the Scots. The Group III mentioned earlier was a real minority and included almost exclusively non-Scottish westerners. It

appears that both clubs were also much larger at the time. The various events that took place during the years could have over two hundreds participants and members had to be careful to reserve seats well in advance as everything could be quickly be sold out. Also, rather than being in the Recreation Union, events would take place in "some of the bigger hotels near the Harbor" says Martin. Lastly, learning SCD was also more popular and the Reel Club actually had classes as advertised on their website.

Colonial History:

For more than a century, Hong Kong was under the British Colonial rule. After defeating China during the first Opium War, England won Hong Kong Island and leased the New Territories. Eventually, the hundred year lease came to an end and on the 1st of July 1997, Hong Kong's sovereignty was transferred back to China.

During the years preceding the Handover, a wave of emigration, intensified by the events of the Tiananmen Square, started. It is estimated that between the beginning of the negotiation and the actual Handover, close to 1 million people emigrated. (Fosh, Chan, Chow, Wilson, Westwood; 2000) This was not merely limited to the Hong Kong "locals". Indeed, as a result of the decolonization of Hong Kong, the British Colonial military forces and administration staff were also pulled from Hong Kong.

Consequences of the Handover:

This had dire consequences for the Hong Kong Reel Club and the Hong Kong Highlanders. Both clubs suffered terrible losses in numbers and by 1998 they were nothing more than the shadow of their old selves. According to Martin, during the colonial era, many of the members were part of the colonial administration, the military presence or the academic world. He believes it is the convivial and almost-free nature of the club that drew civil servants to it. However, with Hong Kong back in Chinese hands, they had no reasons to stay consequently left the clubs deserted.

The Hong Kong Highlanders were by far better off than the Reel Club. Indeed, despite this change of size, many members remained and the existence of the club itself was not threatened. This was not the case for the Reel Club. The drastic reduction of participants forced the remaining members to look in their social circles for friends or colleagues

interested in joining. In doing so, the exclusive Reel Club became part of the Global Cultural Supermarket.

As defined by Gordon Mathews (2000), the Cultural Supermarket is "the array of worldwide cultural forms through which people pick and choose aspects of who they are." Similar approaches exist such as Lyotard's Eclecticism as ground zero (1984, via Mathews, 2000), Forrester metaphor of culture as "dishes on the table" or Stuart Hall approach to identity as a "moveable feast" (1992, via Mathews, 2000) Until the Handover, the Reel club was *de facto* almost exclusive to Scottish Immigrants. Opening up the club to new members (who would eventually become the third group) allowed it to go on and survive to this day. Yet, in practice it also had for consequence to "destroy" its initial Scottish cultural value.

In contrast to the earlier days the Reel Club does not carry any Scottish meaning to the new participants who join it for the "entertainment" and "social" networking it offers. This is even more so the case for the Hong Kong members who could have joined another Scottish Dancing Group, reputed for its professional nature, managed in Cantonese, in Kowloon. When asked, those members tend to answer along the lines of: "I joined because [the person who invited me] comes here." The Reel Club is indubitably more of a "Socializing" good rather than a "Scottish" good.

Nonetheless, while defending that the Reel Club is not a "Scottish Cultural Good", I would admit it does however still carry a broader "Western" significance and value within the Global Cultural Supermarket. Indeed, while the Scottish identity is non-existent, a broader "Western" one can be observed from the Club venue, the "Western" nature of the dance, and the food and drink consumption.

Ethnic Groups as Individuals:

In this sense, a parallel can be drawn between a single individual sense of identity and a group's representation in the Global Cultural Supermarket. According to Eugene Roosens (1989), "each individual always belongs to several social units [...] and belongs to all of them at the same time." For example, the Reel Club belongs to the following "cultural units": Scotland, the UK and the "West". Roosens continues as mentioned earlier that "[T]he individual prefers one or the other identity [...]" In this sense, for a long time the Reel club defined itself as a "Scottish" activity but changed that after the Handover for a broader

"Western" social identity.

This follows what Barth (1969) points out: "ethnic self-affirmation or the ignoring or minimization of ethnic identity is always related in one or another way to the defense of social or economic interests. Many people change their ethnic identity only if they can profit by doing so." In this very context, the Reel Club, which desperately needed more members to survive, "minimized" its Scottish ethnic identity. This successfully led to the admission of a new type of members who according to Martin "were probably too intimidated to join the group before [the Handover]".

Within the same framework, the Hong Kong Highlanders, because of their sheer number (even after downsizing) were not threatened and consequently the Handover did not result in a change of the association's identity which remained "Scottish".

Conclusion

After presenting the methodology of this research, an overview of the history of both the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Hong Kong Reel Club has been given. Then, the St Andrew Reel was shown as representative of a range of activities offered by the Hong Kong Highlanders as activities during which the participants are able to reinforce their Scottish Identity. In contrast was presented the description of a typical evening at the Hong Kong Reel Club during which the Scottish identity was non-existent.

The members of the association were thereafter divided in three categories. First, the Ethnic Scottish expatriate members who are able with their spouses from group II, to cultivate a link to Scotland. The Third Group however has no such bond considering it is, after all composed of non-Scottish foreigners who have different purposes to join the association.

Then it was argued that that there exist within the organization two different paradigms. The first, favored by the groups I and II who wish, through the Hong Kong Highlanders to reproduce and recreate their home culture and find within it a psychological and social security. Then the second paradigm, mostly used by the Group III, will perceive the activities as social gathering and opportunities for networking or meeting friends rather than appealing in any way to its Scottish Nature. Lastly, an historical approach was provided to explain the differences between the Hong Kong Highlanders and the Reel Club, showing the importance of the Handover in the evolution of the clubs dynamics and nature.

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