Gender, Class, and Migration at Play: Training Affect in China's Golf Courses

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Abstract

By framing golf as a socially constituted leisure activity rather than focusing on the technicalities of the sport, this project acts as a lens through which to view a number of complex issues located at the forefront of the anthropology of China: issues such as gender, class, and labour. This thesis takes the example of caddies as a micro-exploration to enable macro-analysis. Though often seen as on the fringes of society, the golf industry has seen growth despite governmental moratoriums. This has caused golf in China to be in a period of 'spring': of growth, transformation, and adaptation. Indeed, as the golf industry has adapted, so too have caddie employment practices reacted to the unsteady position of golf in China and responded to recruitment issues caused by the one child policy and vocational education. The result has been a reluctant shift from an industry which only employs young women, to one which predominantly employs interns, and thus has been forced to employ an increasing number of men. Despite this, affective labour remains central to the role. This thesis argues that by expanding definitions of what it means to be a professional, affective labour emerges as a type of professionalism. It is something which is actively trained and is regulated in accordance with the company's specifications. This thesis is based on a year of fieldwork, predominantly training to work as a caddie at Golden Valley, and two years of pre-field interviews, and time spent at multiple driving ranges.

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Glossaries

Glossary of Chinese Terms and Phrases

Many of the terms below are complex so will be problematised and a given more expansive and nuanced definition, where they are used in the text:

Bu da bu xiangshi (不打不相识)- Out of blows, friendship grows, or no concord, no discord

Chengjia liye (成家立业)- To marry and embark on a career

Chiku (吃苦)- eat bitterness

Chuiwan (捶丸)- literally 'ball-hitting', a dynastic Chinese game with similarities to golf

Dagongmei (打工妹)- Female worker (usually referring to a rural to urban migrant)

Danwei (单位)- Work unit

Dapang (大胖)- Big fatty

Dazhuan (大专)- College for professional or vocational training

Enwei-bingyong (恩威并用)- To make combined use of favour and disfavour. To employ both kindness and severity

Gaokao- (高考)- University Entrance Examination (UEE)

Guanxi (关系)- Connections, relationships

Guguai (古怪)- Strange or eccentric

Guizu (贵族)- Noble, aristocrat

Jieji (阶级)- Class, rank

Junzi (君子)- Man of noble character or virtue, gentleman

Laowai (老外)- Foreigner (especially a non-Asian person)

Liyi (礼仪)- Ceremony and propriety, etiquette

Nanfang weidao (南方味道)- Southern taste

Nannü dapei ganhuo bulei (男女搭配干活不累)- When men and women are together, work is not tiresome.

Pang pang (胖胖)- fat, fatty

Renqing (人情)- human relationships, favours

Shanzhai (山寨)- Copy

*Shehui jieceng (*社会阶层)- Social stratum

Shunu (淑女)- Fair maiden, quiet and gentle girl

Suzhi (素质)- Quality, character

Suzhi jiaoyu (素质教育)- Quality-oriented education

Wenhua shuiping (文化水平)- educational or cultural level

Waiguo ren (外国人)- Foreign person

Yī bái zhē bǎi chǒu, yī hēi huǐ quánróng (一白遮百丑, 一黑毁全容)- your one spot of white skin covers all the drawbacks on your face, whereas a tiny fraction of dark skin ruins your countenance.

Youqian (有钱)- Well-off, wealthy, literally to have money

Xiaopang (小胖)- Chubby or little fatty

Z*hiye (*职业)- profession, occupation, vocation

Zhiye gao'erfu qiu xiehui (职业高尔夫球协会) Professional Golfers' Association (PGA)

Zhiye zhongxue (职业中学)- Vocational high school

Zhongdeng jiaoyu (中等教育)- High School education

Zhongdeng zhuanye jiaoyu (中等专业教育)- Technical middle school education

Zhongkao (中考)- High School Entrance Examination (HSEE)

Zhongzhuan (中专)- Secondary specialized/polytechnic school

Zhuanye (专业)- specific field of study, specialized trade or profession

Zuoren (做人)- Conduct oneself, behave, be an upright person

Glossary of golf terms

Driver- A golf club, designed to be the one which produces the most distance

Fairway- The area of short grass between the tee and the green

Fore- A warning that a ball has been hit

Green- The area at the end of a golf hole. Called a green because it is where the grass is kept shortest. The green contains the final destination, the hole

Par- The number of strokes that a proficient golfer should require to complete a hole

Play through- When a group of players move ahead of the group in front, i.e. overtake them

Rough- The area that borders the fairway, where the grass is usually kept long

Sand Bunker- A shallow pit filled with sand. If the ball lands in it, it is particularly difficult to play from.

Tee- The place where you first hit the ball

Tee box- The place at the start of each hole where you take your first swing

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In the autumn of 2015, in the midst of searching for a topic for my PhD application I reached a dead end. I knew I wanted to explore gendered labour in China and after weeks spent in the library had yet to find an anchor. Exacerbated, I went to visit my mum to clear my head. She has a habit of tenaciously recording every television programme about China as a way of demonstrating support. On this trip home, she suggested a travel documentary. At that moment, seeking distraction, it was the last thing I was interested in watching. But, not wanting to seem ungrateful, I obliged. Amidst standard clips of Tiananmen Square and the Great Wall, there was a short scene at a golf course. As the chirpy young British presenter joked about what she perceived to be an odd situation to find herself in, behind her stood a line of caddies. All conventionally attractive young women. This image stuck in my head and was all I could think about when I returned to the library. Eventually, unable to shake it, I began searching for information about golf in China. I learnt that it has had a tumultuous political history. It was banned under Mao Zedong, and though the door was opened to golf during Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening-up, since it has operated in a liminal space of legality. And, crucially, I discovered that caddies have predominantly been young women. Thus, at the outset of this research, I intended to explore the commodification of certain feminine traits, and the relationship of this to production.

However, the reality of the situation was much more complex than I had imagined. What I found during my fieldwork, at a golf course called Golden Valley, was an industry in a state of transition. Women are still very much the desired employees, but because of broader economic, social, and political factors, Golden Valley was struggling to find enough women to work as caddies. Consequently, they were increasingly recruiting interns from vocational schools and colleges. And as a result, albeit reluctantly, employing more men. In 2012 70% of new recruits were women. By 2019, when I did fieldwork, 70% of new recruits were men. However, this has not meant that the importance of affective labour has decreased.

This thesis will explore the reasons behind this shift, and what happens when a previously feminized industry begins employing men. Based on extensive participant observation, spent training as a caddie, this thesis will argue that affective labour is something which is actively trained. Accordingly, this work will demonstrate that by expanding definitions of what it means to be a professional, affective labour can be viewed as a type of professionalism.

1.1 Golden Valley

This thesis offers an ethnographic insight into caddies working at Golden Valley, a large, upmarket golf complex in Southern China. Set within driving distance of the city centre, the lush tropical vegetation, and dusty roads strewn with the wandering cows of local farmers is sharply disrupted by the imposing European-style guarded gatehouse you must pass through to enter the complex. Stepping into the grand marble entrance, you are met with an open-plan chandeliered bar. To the left, golf pro shops selling expensive Japanese and 'Western' golf paraphernalia and Golden Valley branded clothes and accessories. Golden Valley is a very specific type of space. The functions and the form of interacting and socialising are starkly distinct from the kind of cultural logic described by Adam Yuet Chau (2008). So too is the atmosphere devoid of the usual types of tactile intimacy that he writes about. Golden Valley is decisively not a "hot and noisy" space (Chau 2008:486). It is instead heavily restricted, curated, and calm. At Golden Valley, most of the noises are natural, the chirping of crickets, bird song, and trickling fountains and streams. This creates the peaceful feeling of being in nature, without having to deal with the messiness of it, and while walking on heavily manicured non-native grass. Though you may hear guests in conversation as they pass, given the need for silence to focus on your swing, this is always intermittent.

The clubhouse and course at Golden Valley are markedly and intentionally not crowded. There is a large team of staff, but their offices, breakrooms, toilets and changing facilities are sequestered in the basement, where there is no need for guests to go. Thus, rendering this large labour force near invisible. Their accommodation, while still within the walls of the complex is on the periphery, and completely out of sight for guests. The golf course at Golden Valley is private, and not open to the public. This was most starkly demonstrated one afternoon during caddie training. As we approached the end of the hole, one of the caddies in training noticed some figures on the green. This was not

unusual, as guests would often be playing during training hours. However, when one of the figures lay down it became clear they were not golfers. As the caddie training teacher was preparing to hit the ball onto the green, we shouted "*kanqiu!*" (fore!) at them but they did not budge. We all hurried towards them to investigate. They were a couple, roughly in their 50s, who from their clothing did not seem to fit the usual type of clientele. All the teachers approached them to ask what they were doing, leaving the rest of us excitedly trying to eavesdrop. As we craned our necks to listen, I heard one teacher explain to them, exacerbated: "you can't walk or lie there!" The couple was indignant but eventually left. It transpired that they were just taking a walk, not knowing this was a golf course, and thought that the grass on the green looked like a nice place to rest. Technically, they were not wrong. The course is definitely a beautiful place to walk, and the green presumably a comfortable place to nap. But it was not a space they were welcome in. Golden Valley as a social space derives its significance from exclusivity.

Golf courses in China are often parts of larger leisure or tourism complexes. They boast shopping malls, hotels, restaurants, spas, and more. Though these other facilities at Golden Valley were technically open to the public, in practice they were also generally quite desolate. What struck me at many of the golf complexes I visited was the contradiction between ornate club houses and quiet, empty facilities. These spaces have the capacity for many people, but often I felt as if I were wandering through a post-apocalyptic ghost town. On lonely evenings at Golden Valley, I would position myself at the bar, slowly sip a beer and hope someone would strike up a conversation. Alas, regularly I was their only customer all evening. It is worth noting that the bulk of my fieldwork, understandably, took place during the off-season. Most of the time, caddie training took place on the course, so this is the best time to minimise disruption while training several large groups of caddies. However, when I visited during peak season, the facilities were still far from capacity. Practically, they are not easily accessible by public transport, and financially the services on offer are prohibitively expensive.

The lack of people is surprising given the large number of apartments many golf complexes have. Often several tower blocks as well as villa options. These are highly sought after. Toby Pearce, a British golf consultant working in China, explained this to me. Just before he started working at his club, construction had finished on a residential project. The total cost of the units was over one billion RMB (approximately 100 million

pounds)[1]. They were all purchased in the first 50 minutes, and all paid for in cash, with more potential buyers than properties. Toby explained, "for each one person who bought a home, there were four more waiting to buy." However, the majority of these homes are not for regular use. Rather people purchase them as investments, or solely for the purpose of vacation.[2]

On my first visit to Golden Valley, I arrived a day earlier than my meeting to explore the facilities. I began simply, by spending some time sitting on the veranda of the clubhouse restaurant. Shortly after I had ordered a club sandwich, which cost about my usual weekly spending on food, a group of caddies arrived at the tree lined parking space nearby. Clearly on break they reclined in their golf carts, chatting amongst each other, then quickly retreating into their phones. They were instantly recognisable as caddies because of their brightly coloured uniforms. Not dissimilar from many Chinese school uniforms, they consist of long tracksuit trousers, a polo shirt, a zip up fleece and a cap. Blue for men and purple for women. For those unfamiliar, a caddie accompanies the golfer, carrying their golf bag, recommending which club to use and generally providing tips and advice to improve play. In most of Europe and North America the use of caddies is primarily reserved for competitions and professional play. However, at the vast majority of courses in China, the use of caddies is mandatory, and the focus of the job is cultivating experience, alongside providing golf specific advice. While caddies work at a golf course, their job falls within the larger parameters of elite leisure, which is central to the company's business model for both economic and political reasons. Due to their role in facilitating a predominantly homosocial space of leisure, women are viewed as the desired candidates.

This uniform image of the brightly dressed caddie, particularly the women in purple, has become synonymous with Golden Valley, and is regularly employed in their social media and marketing content. Yet while this idealised image of an attractive, young, and female workforce persists, the contemporary reality is quite different. However, this focus on producing leisure has not declined with the new predominantly male workforce.

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[1] Conversion is based on the exchange rate in September 2023, and the figures provided are approximate.
[2] For a detailed study on gated golf course communities in China see: Giroir, 2007.

1.2 Literature Reviews

1.2.1 Golf

One of the joys and trials of this project is that very little academic literature exists on golf in China, and much of what is written is quantitative. The politically precarious position of golf, and that it is an incredibly elite space, makes it very difficult to do an ethnographic study. The majority of literature on golf in China addresses: environmental concerns (Choi and Kwon 2003; Dong et al. 2022; Hildebrandt 2003; Puyang, Gao, and Han 2015; Zhang et al. 2021); tourism (Park et al. 2018; Song, Kim, and Yim 2017); urban planning (Niu 2019; Wu, Chen, and Liu 2020); and economics, management and business studies (Jiang 1998; Song, Zeng, and Yim 2022; Zhang 2014). Aurélien Boucher writes on golf trainers in China, with a lens on precarity (Boucher, Li, and Shao 2021; Boucher and Shao 2020).[3] Again, with a primarily quantitative scope. Guillaume Giroir has explored gated golf communities in China (Giroir 2007). Dan Washburn, an American author and journalist published *The Forbidden Game: Golf and the Chinese Dream* (2014). The book is a gripping portrait of three men whose lives have been changed by, and intertwined with, golf in China. Though a brilliant account, as a journalistic piece, the aims, methods and conclusions, are different from this thesis.

Outside China, Cerón-Anaya's account of the history of golf in Britain and the United States of America offers an analysis of the contemporary class dimensions so intrinsic to golf (Cerón-Anaya 2010). Drawing on Foucault and Bourdieu, he situates the transformation and privatisation of golf- previously a popular game among the lower classes in Scotland- in the period following the industrial revolution. The exclusion of the lower classes occurred alongside, and as a result of, an increasing frequency of rules regarding the etiquette of the game. Positioning his work within Foucault's (1988) perception of selfhood, Ceron-Anaya sees this as the imposition and acquisition of certain cultural attitudes. The concurrent privatization of clubs, necessity of expensive equipment, and its increasing association with business culture meant that golf, as Bourdieu might argue, became a site of distinction (Bourdieu 1984). Cerón-Anaya has also published the most extensive ethnographic account of golf yet, titled *Privilege at Play*

[3] Here, it should be noted that Dr Boucher and I met over the course of my fieldwork, and he was incredibly generous with his time and contacts. I have served as a reviewer for one of his publications, and editor for another.

(2019).[4] This work explores golf in Mexico, with a focus on class, gender and colonialism. Waldman (2022) has taken a similar approach in his article about golf in India. Angus Lockyer (2012) has written about the history of golf in Japan, situating it amidst economic change and business homo-sociality.[5] The works listed above have been of great utility in writing this thesis. However, space remains for an in-depth ethnographic exploration of golf in China, and particularly of caddies. This work, however, is not just about golf. Rather, the golf club is the setting in which larger issues unfold. This research also builds on, and fills gaps within, literature on gender and work in China, affective labour, and professionalism.

1.2.2 Gender and work in China

Much has been written on gender and work in China. Wolf charts how the revolution was contingent upon women's labour. She sees this as particularly important during the Great Leap Forward, which relied upon the mobilization of 300million women (Wolf 1985: 22). Yet she argues that this did not lead to a reformation of gender. Women were still primarily responsible for domestic work, and as urban youths returned to the city, women were again required to take a backseat. Across a number of works, Elisabeth Croll (1978; 1984; 1995) explores feminism and socialism, and women's labour and position within society. Lisa Rofel (1999) analyses three generations of women working in a Chinese silk factory. She draws links between their attitudes in their professional and personal lives and changing meanings of modernity in official discourses.

Henderson and Entwisle (2000) in their multidisciplinary edited volume describe how in post-Mao reforms gender roles have been redefined amidst economic and institutional changes. Jieyu Liu (2007) draws on the voices of ordinary women workers of the 'unlucky generation'. She contests the idea of a causal relationship between the mobilization of women into the workforce and their liberation. In recent work, Liu (2017) offers an ethnographic account of 'white-collar beauties', young, professional, and highly educated women. Pun Ngai (1998; 2004) has worked extensively on *dagongmei*, Chinese

[4] The title of this PhD was decided before this work was published, the similarity in titles is entirely coincidental, or perhaps the was pun too tempting.
[5] Dr Lockyer was my third supervisor before he moved institutions, and his help was invaluable.

female migrant workers in the cities. She has also explored dormitory regimes and gendered understandings of labour in China (2003; 2004; 2005; 2012).

With regards to service work in particular, Amy Hanser (2008) has written a vivid ethnographic account of sales clerks working at department stores. She demonstrates how different types of femininity are tied to status and institutional image. Eileen Otis describes the way in which emerging forms of service sector labor are impacting women's social standing. Through a study of 'Olympic misses', Hongmei Li shows how performance of gender types comes to represent broader national ideas. Tiantian Zheng (2007; 2009) in her work on KTV hostesses and sex workers, demonstrates the complex gendered power dynamics at play. John Osburg (2013), explores both masculinity and femininity, and the relationship between them in his exploration of businessmen and their time at the highly gendered space of KTVs, saunas, massage parlours, and banquets.

The above, of course, only represents a small portion of the existing literature. Yet, even still there exists a gap. This concerns the consequences of men beginning to work in a service-facing job traditionally, and preferably, done by women.

1.2.3 Affective labour

Another key area of importance to this research is affective labour. Emotional labour is also of relevance. However, as the terms have often been incorrectly conflated, a clearer view is enabled by separating the two and focusing on affective labour. Though there has been less focus within the social sciences on affective than emotional labour, a great deal has still been written. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have offered a theoretical grounding (Hardt 1999; Hardt and Negri 2009). So too has Andrea Muehlebach (2011). Building on this, James Thomas and Jennifer Correa (2015) through multi-sited ethnography tie affective labour to social justice movements.

Of course, much work has been done on affective labour and gender (Wissinger 2007; Ouellette and Wilson 2011; Hansen and Gygi 2022; Dutta 2023). Penn Tsz Ting Ip (2017) explores the affective labour of rural migrant women working in beauty parlours in Shanghai. They argue that the aesthetic and affective labour required of these women shapes their sense of self, and their value in the marriage market. Based on fieldwork with Asian and Latin American women working in the affective economies in Italy and France, Winnie Lem (2022) illustrates how intimate work is transnationalized.

Within research on affective labour and gender, healthcare (Lopez 2012), and hospitality (Threadgold, Farrugia, and Coffey 2021; Farrugia et al. 2023) have been two major sites of exploration. In recent years, particularly in work on China, there has also been a growing focus on the affective labour of social media personalities, content creators, and fandoms (Raun 2018; Tan and Xu 2020; Tan et al. 2020; Zhang and Wu 2022; Wei 2023; Yang 2023).

Much attention has been paid to the results of affective labour, and affective labour as a result. This work does not disagree with the explorations above, but rather takes a step back and explores the processes in place before. Accordingly, in its exploration of affective labour as something which is trained, this work fills a gap in existing literature.

1.2.4 Professionalism

The study of professionalism has yet to find a stable home within anthropology and has classically been within the domain of sociology. Chapter Seven explores ideas of professionalism and feminization in depth. Arguing that while the there is tension between the two, they are not incompatible. Utilising this concept of training affect, the thesis makes a contribution to understandings of professionalism. In doing so, it builds upon an emergent body of literature which problematises and breaks down what it means to be a professional (Dingwall 2008; Hull 2017, 2020a, 2020b; Schubert 2022; Bolt 2022). I introduce the concept of affective professionalism. This not only modernises and expands definitions of professionalism, but addresses the theme of professionalism with an anthropological lens.

1.3 Methodology

Given this project's focus on filling a gaps in ethnographic literature, it is first worth demonstrating why this topic is suited to ethnography. In *Writing Culture*, James Clifford and George Marcus outline six ways in which ethnographic writing is determined (Clifford and Marcus 2010:6). By exploring how this project corresponds to each, caddies working at a golf course emerges as a strong site for ethnographic study:

1. "Contextually (it draws from and creates meaningful social milieux)" The applicability of this trait is hinged upon the definition of "meaningful". The coming and going of players, tourists, and guests, and the high turnover of caddies makes the golf club a porous social milieu. However, the community created is both imagined (Anderson 1991), drawing on the connotations synonymous with golf, and actual due to permanent management staff and the consistent training caddies undergo. Moreover, the golf club as

a social milieu is perhaps most meaningful considering its creation of a 'type' of person. Golf clubs can be considered significant sites of 'class' reproduction and production. This is particularly the case in China, where golf has historically been framed as 'bourgeois' and 'western'. These social meanings attributed to golf have had a distinct impact on its legality.

2. "Rhetorically (it uses and is used by expressive conventions)" Caddies' interaction with each other and with golfers will be a central focus. Consequently, expressive conventions such as: dress; manner of speech; bodily control; comportment such as posture; and choice of language, are crucial. This work also explores how these expressive conventions are regulated and trained.

3."Institutionally (one writes within, and against, specific traditions, disciplines, audiences)" This thesis is situated within three anthropological traditions; the anthropology of class; the anthropology of gender; and labour studies. Literature on these areas will be employed critically and comparatively. As explored in the literature reviews above, this work builds on, challenges, and expands pre-existing understandings.

4. "Generically (an ethnography is usually distinguishable from a novel or a travel account)" Many explorations of golf have been popular, be it journalistic, travel accounts or novels. There have been few concrete or extended attempts to explore golf academically. Golf, as an activity many are familiar with, is certainly well suited to more popular genres of writing. However, it is also a fertile site for academic exploration. To fulfil this potential, this project will not simply recant stories from the golf course and clubhouse, rather it will employ the methods of participant observation to analyse these experiences reflexively.

5. **"Politically (the authority to represent cultural realities is unequally shared and at times contested)"** This reflexivity will also be crucial in attempting to legitimise efforts to represent culture. Through intensive participant observation and by recounting the variety of ways golf in China has been represented historically, the current position of caddies emerges through long-term, intersubjective engagement and research.

6. "Historically (all the above conventions and constraints are changing). From a British standpoint, golf might seem archaic or statically steeped in history, the only change perhaps being a decline in popularity. However, in China this is far from the case, by demonstrating how golf has been politically in a state of flux for the past century, and continues to be, the keys themes of gender, class, social stratification, work and leisure will also be presented as subject to ever-changing conventions and constraints.

1.3.1 Access

A golf course is not an easy place to gain access to neither practically, socially nor culturally. This was never more apparent than during a failed research visit to a golf course In Beijing. Having already spent a lot of time in Southern China visiting golf courses, conducting interviews, and training with caddies, I thought it would be good to visit some courses elsewhere as a point of comparison. Armed with recommendations

from caddies about which courses would be appropriate, I headed to Beijing. Unfortunately, I had been unable to utilise my networks for introductions, so decided to employ a strategy which had been fairly successful during my early fieldwork; simply showing up, introducing myself and asking if anyone might be interested in speaking with me. Or, if this was not possible going to the driving range and chatting to people between swings. This did not always work. It never worked as poorly as at one golf club I visited on this trip.

Golf courses are usually in places which are very inconvenient to access without a car. After riding the metro to the end of the line, taking a couple of packed buses, and a long walk along the side of a motorway, I arrived, very flustered, at what my map told me was the location. There was no immediate sign that it was a golf course, just a large walled area off the busy motorway with the national flag and the flag of Hong Kong flying in front. A well-dressed man with a suitcase was waiting for a taxi outside, and a van full of workers entered. I followed behind. Once inside the golf complex, it was no easier for someone on foot. I walked for about ten minutes, passing signs for private houses, a coffee shop, a judo club, a playground, a small lake, and some large Aspen-style homes adorned with timber and brown brick. Somewhat surprisingly, I did not encounter any security guards, who were usually present at the gates, and then various points within.

As I approached the small clubhouse, I encountered a small stray but friendly dog. I briefly stroked him and continued into the clubhouse. Unbeknownst to me, the dog had followed me in. Suddenly, I was being shouted at by the receptionist: "No dogs allowed!" I shooed him back outside and apologised. I told her that he was not mine and I had not seen him come in. She calmed down and became more friendly. I explained that I was a PhD student researching golf in China and asked her if I might be able to use the driving range, and if possible, would she be able to pass my contact information on to the caddie manager. At this moment, the dog ran back in and straight to my side, the mood shifted.

> "No dogs!"
> "I'm so sorry, he's not my dog, he's a stray."
> "It's not convenient for you to talk to anyone, but you can ask me a few questions."

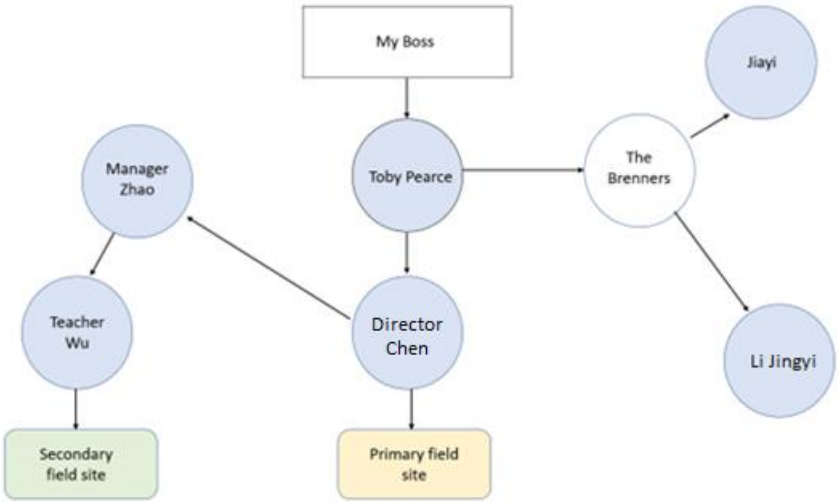
She told me that the club was members only and had about 2,000 members and a couple hundred caddies. The dog returned. "The driving range is for members only." I thanked her and gave her my contact information. As I left, deflated, the dog obediently followed

me out as if he were my own. The receptionist watched with scorn, presumably as if catching me in a lie. I never heard back from them.

Indeed, during my fieldwork I encountered several barriers to access. In China, the majority of golf clubs are private. This in combination with historic and ongoing governmental hostility means that they are usually heavily regulated and guarded spaces. I was often met with suspicion. In order to ameliorate this, I slightly altered my dress in order to fit in. As the above vignette about the dog indicates, ease of access can be facilitated or hindered by the immediate impression given. When not visiting the driving range I would try to dress formally. Where possible, I would have manicured nails and light make up. Though many young people I encountered at golf clubs had a more casual style of dress, their clothes were often designer and expensive looking. A curated casual beyond my budget.

Another factor which impacted access relates to the importance of introductions when doing research, particularly in China (Heimer and Thogersen 2005). Most of my ethnographic research stemmed from one introduction made by my boss, which then bred others. During the first term of my PhD, I met with a friend from my undergraduate degree who was working for a Japanese sports charity with a particular focus on golf. As they were recruiting, the next day he took me to a golf course just outside of London to meet his boss at an event. She then gave me a job working as her part time executive assistant. A role which involved travelling with her to various golf courses across the world. At the time I began my fieldwork, having worked with her for over two years, she offered to put me in touch with her contact, Toby Pearce. Toby Pearce was a British consultant at a golf course in China. He kindly took me to dinner and agreed to be interviewed. After the interview, he introduced me to several people, including Director Chen, who managed the golf side of business at Golden Valley. After a long lunch and interview with Director Chen, he agreed to let me observe caddie training at Golden Valley for two months. This would later be extended. Director Chen then introduced me to Manager Zhou, who worked in a similar role at a golf course in a different province. After an interview with Manager Zhou, she introduced me to Teacher Wu who gave me permission to observe caddie training there. Alongside these more formal routes, I was also able to conduct interviews with other participants, met through the Brenners. I was introduced to the Brenners, an American couple, by Toby Pearce, as they lived in the city I

was based in at the time. Mr Brenner worked in the golf industry, and was incredibly helpful, but did not want to be interviewed, or for our conversations to be on the record. However, they did introduce me to contacts who were willing. Alongside this, I met others through WeChat groups.



[Figure One: Fieldwork introductions. Circles with blue fill indicate people I also interviewed.]

The conditions I established with Golden Valley dictated that I was not allowed to speak with guests at the golf club during training times. The aim of this thesis has never been to focus on guests, so this was a very happy compromise. The limitations put in place by Golden Valley prevented in depth data collection around caddie-guest interactions, as I was not allowed to sit-in on rounds of golf. Being on the course during training, I was able to observe short snippets of interactions, however, my understanding overall is firmly from the perspective of caddies. Technically, of course, I was still allowed to interact with guests after hours. I was living within the larger Golden Valley compound, so in theory this did not seem like it would prevent me from talking with guests. But I quickly learnt that this type of interaction was limited. During my entire time at Golden Valley, I rarely saw another woman around the facilities on her own. Furthermore, it was unusual to see a woman of my age, at the time I was in my mid-twenties. This was further entrenched by the fact that there were very few foreigners, let alone foreign women. Given my complexion, and the region, which attracted a lot of Russian and Eastern European women, I was often read as Russian. To the extent that people would begin conversations with me in Russian. In the region, lots of Eastern European women were employed to

dance in nightclubs or work as models. While unqualified to be a model or a dancer, this complicated the process of talking to guests where I was allowed.

One evening, while having dinner a guest approached me. I told him about my research, and he had an interesting and related job. Both of us intrigued, we agreed to have dinner the next night. I met him in the hotel restaurant, and over dinner we discussed golf, Golden Valley, and he asked for advice on his daughter's plans for graduate studies. We moved onto the veranda, a change in scenery which I naively thought would give me the opportunity to delve into my research questions. The waiter poured us each a glass of wine, and the guest leaned closer towards me. "This is my first time having an affair," he whispered breathily. I got up and wished him a pleasant evening. Knowing the staff quite well, I explained the situation, and they offered to delay his exit until I was gone. I found the best format to talk with guests was on the shuttle bus. Riding on it at least twice a day, I quickly befriended the driver. We got on incredibly well, often it was only me and him on the journey, and we both had quite a dark sense of humour, and an interest in history. He seemed quite interested in setting me up with his son, so acted in a fatherly way towards me, in a manner which was clear to guests. This facilitated some conversations with guests, but in short, sharp bursts.

Despite the aforementioned access issues, being able to train as a caddie was beyond what I had imagined possible when I began this research. The structure of training enabled me to spend significant amounts of time with my participants and get to know them very well. In addition, as various more senior staff members would come in and out of training, I was also able to meet lots of people in different roles at Golden Valley. Overall, this gave me a strong sense of Golden Valley. And, more so than would have been possible by only interviewing caddies, an idea of what exactly caddying consists of.

1.3.2 Fieldwork Timeline

The structure of my ESRC PhD funding allowed for a year of language training before beginning fieldwork, this was supplemented by a further 5-month language extension. For most of this time, I was a full-time language student at two universities in China. However, I was also able to conduct a couple of interviews, attend a related conference, visit several golf courses, and otherwise prepare for fieldwork. When fieldwork proper began, the structure was as follows:

February- June 2019: Participant observation at two driving ranges, semi-structured interviews, and visits to golf courses

During this initial period of fieldwork, for reasons related to my visa, I was required to attend Mandarin classes at a university every weekday between 9am and 1pm. However, as many afternoons and weekends as possible were spent gathering initial data through participant observation at driving ranges. This began by taking lessons at a public driving range once a week. During this time, I would also go to practice at least two or three times a week. Driving ranges in China are generally arranged so that they are semi-covered, with benches or chairs behind the mats for people to rest between swings. Here, people will drink tea, play on their phone, or chat with friends. This makes them an ideal site for both observation and informal conversations, and I got to know some of the staff and regulars quite well.

Unfortunately, due to an incident I had to abruptly withdraw from the initial driving range for my own safety and wellbeing. Following the incident, I began golf lessons at a private golf course where I practiced a similar mode of participant observation. Concurrently, during this period I was visiting golf courses in the region, and where possible conducting semi-structured interviews with managers and staff members.

June- September 2019: Participant observation at Golden Valley

This period was the most crucial time of my fieldwork. Golden Valley invited me to train with new recruits. My time there was also the first day for the group of 30 students I was accompanying. I stayed with them for the entirety of their three months of training, bar the final week during which they took their exams. Unfortunately, I had to go to another province to renew my visa. These exams determine whether the caddies in training go on to get a job. So ethically I also would not have felt comfortable attending, in case my presence made them more nervous. Among this group of 30 students, Teacher Huang was the lead teacher and was there virtually every day. He was usually accompanied by one or two other teachers, a rotating cast of predominantly three people. There were other groups training at the same time, though start dates were staggered. I occasionally accompanied other groups but wanted to prioritise depth of interaction with participants over breadth of participants, so spent the vast majority of my time with my original group. Training was between 7:30am and 12:00, then there was a lunchbreak until 2:30pm to avoid the midday heat. The day usually wrapped up around 6:30pm.

My intention was to be with caddies all day. I managed to find accommodation in one of Golden Valley's apartment complexes. However, the only transportation from the complex to the golf course was a shuttle bus which began at 9am. It would take an hour to walk, but at that time it was still dark and the route along the busy road had no traffic lights or pavement. If guests were being dropped off at a nearby hotel from an early flight, there would sometimes be a taxi around. So, every morning I would wake up early and assess my options. Unfortunately, most mornings it was not possible to get in before they left the clubhouse at 7:30am, so instead I would take the first shuttle bus and join them a couple of hours late. Training was Monday to Friday, and if there was a competition or event at the weekends, I would join the teachers who would often work these. Otherwise, I spent weekends exploring the facilities, hanging out at Golden Valley (Rosaldo 1994), or visiting other golf courses in the province.

Training was standardised. In the first few weeks there were golf cart driving lessons in the mornings, then on-course training in the afternoons. During on-course training, students would take turns acting as caddie for one of the teachers while they played a round of golf. After the first few weeks, both morning and afternoon were occupied by on-course training. During time spent training with caddies the methodology was very much participant observation. I decided against formal or semi-structured interviews with them for risk of disrupting the flow of interaction but would often come in each day with a particular question on my mind.

September- November 2019: Secondary fieldsite, travel and interviews

Almost immediately after my first stint at Golden Valley, I went to observe caddie training at Manager Zhou's club. It was only possible to spend a week there. However, they were less strict about caddies using their phones, so I was able to stay in touch with many people who I met. Moreover, I was very familiar with caddie training by this point, and the method was similar in this location. Consequently, it was much easier to adapt, adjust and know what kinds of questions to ask. As a result, though my time there was short, it was incredibly productive. During this period, I also conducted interviews and travelled to visit golf courses in other provinces for the purpose of comparison.

November- December 2019: Return to Golden Valley

In November, I returned to Golden Valley to spend some time with a new batch of recruits. These were caddies on a seasonal loan from northern golf courses, or new hires from a nearby course which had closed down. As they were already experienced, this training was less intensive, and more casual. This time enabled me to talk with many caddies who had been working before the shift towards employing interns. The casual nature of this training, and that I was already close with the teachers by this point, also meant that the conversations during this time were much more open.

January 2020: Library work and interviews

In my final few months of fieldwork, I made use of the books on golf in the library of a university I was affiliated with. This was particularly useful for my chapter on the history of golf. I also conducted one final interview with a former caddie.

1.4 *Ethics*

Before fieldwork, my project passed first and second stage ethical review. However, unexpectedly some of my participants were 17. One was listed as 16 on his documentation. However, he was actually 18. His parents could not afford to pay the fee for breaking one-child policy legislation, so delayed getting his birth certificate. As a result of interacting with participants who were 17, I brought this to the SOAS Research Ethics Panel (REP) who issued retrospective approval. I undertook the relevant safeguarding training as recommended by the REP. However, ethical practices should not just be a box-ticking exercise, and though there are things which would be interesting to include, protecting participants especially in such a bounded fieldwork setting is infinitely more important than interest. Hence, I would like to share the practices I undertook, both including and beyond the recommended standards.

Safeguarding and informed consent were of tantamount importance.

In terms of consent:

1. I gained consent from their employer, the golf course, and from every individual who I interacted with at length. It was explained to the group who I was and why I was there. When first interacting with a caddie in training, I would explain my project to them, and that I would be publishing on this topic. Everyone I spoke with gave consent, many were very enthusiastic. These are the participants who I reference most frequently. Those who consented with less excitement are framed as background characters. None did not consent, though there were of course a couple of conversations or comments which at participants' request were 'off the

record'.

2. I made very clear that participants could withdraw consent at any time. I also made clear that I was doing research, as a reminder to them. Rather than writing fieldnotes at the end of the day, I did so in situ. I always carried my notepad with me and would very openly write things down. My participants would often tease me about this, and would also sometimes write things on my behalf where I encountered a phrase I was unfamiliar with.

3. Following discussion with the director of golf, we agreed on heavy anonymisation. This includes assigning the golf course a fake name and giving all participants a pseudonym. This was explained to all my participants.

In terms of safeguarding:

1. I did not ask any sensitive questions, and no sensitive topics were raised while with the cohort containing seventeen-year-olds. Caddies have historically encountered sexual assault or unwanted sexual advances. From what I could gather this was now less common. However, I only discussed this in separate interviews with older caddies.

2. I remained alert to any potential issues of abuse or mistreatment of minors, though did not encountered any drastic examples of this. One teacher's style was very firm, and I saw him make a student cry. I am, however, mindful of cultural differences in teaching (and childrearing, which the teacher compared it to in his justification of the event). Where this has been referenced in this thesis, both parties are heavily anonymised.

3. In my initial research plan, I intended to do a visit to the dormitory caddies live in, which are provided by their employer. However, on discovering some were 17, I decided this would be inappropriate. All contact with the younger ones was in a group setting.

4. More generally, as a rule the safety and wellbeing of participants was the priority of my research. Where one caddie-over the age of 18- sustained an injury, I paused all research to ensure their wellbeing, and followed up with them to ensure that the incident had been handled appropriately by their employer.

The final point to note ethically is the importance of researchers not just taking. I made clear to management at Golden Valley that I was happy to lend any skills if they were useful. Consequently, I was tasked with translating and editing training material, and they also asked me to run a workshop on 'Western' customer service etiquette at a guest facing branch of their facilities, which was looking to attract more tourists, and at one of their restaurants.

1.4.1 Anonymisation

Golden Valley agreed to my research on the provision that the club was anonymised. As there are still relatively few golf courses in each province in China, if I were to say the province, size and type of golf club, it would likely be identifiable. Consequently, I decided not to discuss where Golden Valley is more specifically than Southern China. This is because the size and type of golf club is of greater significance to the work of caddies than the region. The names of all participants have also been anonymised. In all typed up versions of my fieldnotes, pseudonyms or nicknames are also used. To strengthen this anonmysiation, I have merged my primary and secondary fieldsites under 'Golden Valley', many people I met at my second fieldsite are presented as at Golden Valley.

1.5 *On Covid*

In 1976, Nina Simone covered Janis Ian's song 'Stars' at the Montreux Festival. Janice Ian later wrote in the comment section of the YouTube video. While she acknowledged the brilliance of Nina's version, she notes that many of the lyrics have been rewritten. She speculates whether this rewriting was adlibbed or because Nina had forgotten the words "we always have a story".[6] What Nina changes this to is "the latest story that I know is the one I'm supposed to go out with." This song, in its original form strikes me. As anthropologists our methodological grounding is that everyone does have a story. But Nina Simone's addition complicates things. "The latest story that I know is the one I'm supposed to go out with." We work within a bounded time. This has of course changed with technology, I can and do still message participants when a question occurs, to check in on them, their children, and their lives. However, there is always a disjuncture politically, socially, and emotionally, between fieldwork and writing. The pandemic has accentuated this. I pre-booked my flight back to the UK six months in advance. It happened to be that my flight departed two days before China went into lockdown. In fact, I was on one of the last flights from China to the UK which was not quarantined. Consequently, the latest story I know enough to write about is before this massive rupture, and that is the story I am prepared to go out with. Things have of course changed, as a result of Covid-19 the mandatory use of caddies was paused, and thus some caddies allegedly protested outside golf clubs as their income is dependent on tips, which

[6] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKoB9FXU72A&ab_channel=CharlesJJM

they were no longer receiving. While the situation with caddies seems to have returned to usual, we do not yet know the impacts it will have. But, in many ways, this work is perhaps more relevant than before; the pandemic has demonstrated the value of service work, affective, and emotional labour.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Though the focus of this PhD is caddies, they are of course firmly situated within the broader ecosystem of golf in China. No long-term ethnographic study, or critical history of golf in China exists within English language academic literature, and indeed there have been very few explorations of golf internationally in the social sciences. Consequently, a significant amount of this PhD must be spent describing the field and context. Put simply, there is not much literature available to cite as shorthand for larger discussions, so this thesis needs to do a lot of heavy lifting in terms of background before arriving at specifics. As a result, many of the earlier chapters serve as the foundation upon which the exploration in the following chapters can be built. What follows is structured in accordance with the chronology of working as a caddie. First recruitment is explored, then training, and finally the social position of the caddie, career expectations and advancement. A PhD thesis enables a different kind of narrative than a book or an article. Leaning into this, the thesis is structured as a journey, where each chapter builds on the last and takes a step towards the overall story. Following chapter one, this introduction, the chapters are organised as follows:

Life of a Caddie

To provide a broader grounding for later more detailed exploration, the second chapter, which is heavily ethnographic, explores what being a caddie consists of professionally, personally, and financially. This chapter is structured around the working life of a former caddie, Jiayi, and will also introduce several key participants and the fieldsite. It also introduces the idea that caddies offer a different perspective on migrant labour and vocational education than the types of workers most commonly written about within the anthropology of China.

Between Fairway and Rough: The History of Golf in China

The third chapter charts the complex history of golf in China. It draws out central themes from four key periods, beginning with the Maoist era. Under Mao, golf was branded

bourgeois and Western, so consequently banned. In detailing this period of history, this section demonstrates how these class connotations which under Mao were so dangerous, have now come to be an asset. Next, the chapter explores China's reform and opening, a period which saw the growth of golf. With the Maoist bans lifted and an influx of capital to Special Economic Zones, the industry flourished. Yet, many clubs were built without proper governmental approval, sowing seeds for future restrictions. The next section, through the lens of sentiment around land use in China, charts the causes and consequences of the 2004 ban on the construction of new golf courses. Here, the strategies employed to circumvent restrictions also help to understand the dual role of the caddie. Next, the chapter explores Xi Jinping's rise to power and the impacts of his anti-corruption drive on the industry. This chapter concludes by demonstrating that as a result of this history, golf in China is firmly situated as a site of leisure. This impacts conceptions about who is the ideal caddie.

Recruitment: Becoming a Caddie

The fourth chapter introduces the shifting patterns of caddie recruitment. Previously, the industry predominantly recruited young women, many of whom were migrant labourers, with no knowledge of golf or higher education. However, due to shifts in the Chinese labour market, caddies at Golden Valley are now predominantly interns drawn from vocational schools and universities, and are increasingly men. Potential reasons for this shift, including the one-child policy, vocational education and internships are explored and historically situated.

Movements of Golf: Against 'Chinese Characteristics'

The fifth chapter looks at the specificity of golf in the Chinese context, and how this impacts the nature of play and the role of caddies. However, arguing against the concept of 'Chinese characteristics', which has become a common framing in academia, this chapter asserts that the nature of golf is different in different regions of China, and has developed in a larger international context. Accordingly, the type of affective labour required of caddies is contextually situated.

***Xian Zuoren*: The Social Creation of the Caddie**

Chapter Six explores the social creation of the caddie through their training. Just as caddies are taught the technicalities of the profession, they are also taught how to engage

in appropriate affective labour. In this training they are provided with scripts to be followed in interaction with guests, but a large part of their dialogue is improvised. This chapter employs work on jazz lead sheets and improvisation as a means of understanding how affective labour can be trained and professionalized. The chapter introduces a key theoretical contribution of the work, the idea of training affect.

Between and within: Feminization and Professionalization

Building on previous chapters, Chapter Seven establishes a theoretical underpinning for the dual role of the caddie as producer of leisure and sport. Drawing on and challenging definitions and of feminization and professionalization, this chapter applies them practically to the context of caddies in China. Thus arguing that as typically 'feminine' characteristics become commodified in the workplace, their utility and application in turn become part of the process of professionalization. Consequently, the chapter suggests that feminization and professionalization can be understood as two sides of the same coin, rather than as separate processes. This occurs through what I term affective professionalism.

The Social Position of the Caddie

Following on from the previous chapter, Chapter Eight shows the limits of professionalizing. It looks at the social position of caddies in their workplace and their career progression. In doing so, the chapter demonstrates how the hierarchies at Golden Valley are mediated by pre-existing social inequalities. It argues against seeing *suzhi* as a way of talking about class without using the word class and demonstrates the multi-faceted nature of social organisation in China. Ultimately through the study of caddies, class emerges as a manner of organising and understanding overlapping social determinants such as *suzhi*, economic and cultural capital, and workplace hierarchy.

CHAPTER TWO

Life of a Caddie

> To work as a caddie, you have to be able to eat bitterness. If you can't eat bitterness, then you can't do this job.
> -Jiayi, a former caddie

Eating bitterness (*chi ku*) is a regularly employed phrase which can be understood as enduring hardships, often associated with strenuous labour (*xinku*). This expression of bitterness as struggle is situated in broader ideas, and can be a means of linking individual struggles to wider ideas of the nation (Farquhar 2002), to obligations of parenting (Kipnis 2011), and migration (Loyakla 2013). As Farquhar outlines, this "ordinary word is strongly invested with a historical sense" (Farquhar 2002:62). Under Mao, people were encouraged to 'speak bitterness' to air past suffering and cultivate class consciousness. As He outlines "[t]he communication of bitterness, however, does not necessarily have an intrinsic or performative relationship with political action; it has a social life beyond political governance" (He 2021:1016). There can be a sense of pride or morality within this concept of laborious sacrifice. Language of eating bitterness, encountering struggle, feeling homesick, exhausted, and exacerbated, was not uncommon amongst my participants. However, to frame life as a caddie solely in this way would be a misrepresentation.

Caddies and former caddies I spoke with certainly described caddying as a difficult job, but also one with many instances of joy. Amongst the caddies in training who I worked with, the majority of whom were in their late teens or early twenties, this time in their life was tough. But it was also one of adventure, filled with new friends, an opportunity to live away from their parents, and explore a new region. For many, it was also a chance to make more money than they ever had before. Tanya explained this to me quite succinctly. She was a bright and engaging trainee, who liked me to call her by her English name. She was studious and worked hard during training. But she was also friendly and ambitious in a calmly quiet manner. She described how most of her friends had got married right after high school and remained in her hometown. For her, life as a caddie was an alternative. Though not a complete break, a disjuncture. She still wanted to

get married at around 24 or 25 years old: “If I’m not married by the time I’m 25, my dad has told me I can’t come home. I’m not entirely sure if he’s joking,” she laughed.

This combination of struggle and levity is best captured in a moment of rupture during training. A thunderstorm had been raging, meaning we had to move our morning training inside. Following the lunchbreak, despite the still inclement weather we ventured out to the course. After a few holes, the wind picked up speed, and the rain intensity. Windswept and drenched we all crammed inside a small pagoda. A feeling of discontentment hung heavy in the air. Sensing this, Teacher Huang suggested we play a game. He would test students on their knowledge of golf, and if they got the answer wrong, they had to do something to entertain everyone. This quickly descended into a quasi-talent show. Jian, a jovial and humorous young man strutted into the middle of the circle and began singing. At first sincerely, then, gradually increasing the volume and level of sincerity to absurd and comical levels. As the rain died down and we slowly abandoned the pagoda, the mood was decidedly lifted. Though a break in the usual pattern, it perhaps best encapsulates the time spent training. Arduous and bitter, certainly, but simultaneously fun and exciting.

This chapter will provide an ethnographically grounded introduction to the typical professional, personal, and financial lives of caddies. In doing so, giving a feel for the rhythm and space of Golden Valley, acting as an anchor for exploration in following chapters. This will predominantly be told through the story of one former caddie, Jiayi. She represents a good entry point not least because distance from the career gave her an interesting descriptive oversight, but also because her experiences are fairly typical. However, as will be explored in the final section, in one crucial way Jiayi differs from the caddies I trained with. In 2013, she was recruited informally through kinship networks. The majority of caddies recruited to Golden Valley in 2019 were instead interns sent from vocational schools and colleges.

I first met Jiayi in a mid-range shopping mall in Yunnan following a few weeks of messaging. After some trouble working out which of the various entrances the other was outside, we finally greeted each other enthusiastically and she led me to the basement food court. She was as friendly as she had seemed in our previous communication, constantly smiling and light on her feet despite being heavily pregnant. We lingered, discussing food, for a while. Having discovered we both enjoyed spicy food, we settled on

hotpot. She insisted on paying, so I gingerly selected only a few things to add. In response, she heaped items onto the order, especially eagerly if I said it was something I had never eaten before. In return, I bought us some milk tea. We focused on our food, and some light conversation until our bowls were empty. Once they were, I took out my notepad and began asking her my standard set of questions. Slowly at first, and then with an increasing pace, the conversation unfolded as the crowds from the lunchtime rush dispersed and an impatient waitress cleared our plates and wiped down our table. She recounted her life as a caddie, life since, and gave me advice on what type of questions to ask future participants.

2.1 The road to work

Jiayi started working at a golf club in 2013 at the age of 18. She was from a small town in the Sichuan province, where her mother was a housewife and her father worked for an electrical company. During high school she had not taken the *gaokao*, China's notoriously tough National College Entrance Examination, so after graduating could not attend university. She had a family member from her hometown who was working as a caddie. Though Jiayi had never played golf and knew little about it, she was an active person and enjoyed running, so thought it might be a good fit. She had an interview, which she said went particularly well as they were pleased that she could speak some English. Soon, she was on a flight to the golf course. Her training lasted for three months, a time during which she was unpaid. While this was a standard amount of time at Golden Valley also, many smaller clubs had a shorter training period. This shorter training period was often appealing to potential caddies, as the first pay cheque came sooner. During her training she said the most important things she learnt were how to drive a golf cart, a good service attitude, and golf. In terms of the latter, she told me: "it doesn't matter if you can't play. You just need to be able to assist guests in choosing clubs, advise them on how to improve their swing (e.g. keep your head centred, and the power should not come from your hands), and be able to understand and watch the game."

Training was rigorous, roughly 80 recruits joined with her but by the end there were only 56. However, there was also a lot left to be learnt post-training by doing:

> The issue is that new problems always arise with different types of guests, so you also learn a lot on the job. Often you are out alone with a guest, so cannot ask a colleague or superior for help. You just have to figure out on your own how to solve problems.

However, Jiayi enjoyed this problem-solving element of the job. Despite the independent work of the caddie, and the variety of service dependent on the type of guest, for caddies this training is fundamental. As will be argued in Chapter Six, and as is alluded to in Jiayi's focus on service attitude, training encompasses not only the technicalities of golf, but also a specific and dictated type of affective labour.

2.2 Working schedule

With training complete, Jiayi began work as a caddie at the end of summer. The average working day varied: "the earliest you could start would be around 4:30 in the morning, and on occasion guests would keep caddies until 4:30am… The guests do not care if you are tired or must be up for work the next day." Each guest would take somewhere between four and five hours, and she would normally work for between two and four guests a day. This was a slightly higher number of guests than was standard. Manager Zhou had worked for two years as a caddie at a large golf, before advancing to caddie trainer, then to manager of the caddie training department. She described how the average working hours depend on the guest: "There are three shifts, morning, afternoon, and evening. Generally, caddies get one day of rest a week. Every day, caddies work eight to nine hours, usually taking one guest, sometimes two." Golden Valley also operated on shift work, with one day off a week. Though Director Chen, the head of the golf club at Golden Valley, informed me that during particularly busy periods it was not uncommon for caddies to swap their days or evenings off for additional shifts. This paucity of free time was exacerbated for caddies selected to be teachers during caddie training. Many of the teachers would teach during the week and then caddie at weekends. Teacher Huang, who became one of my closest participants at Golden Valley, was in this situation. He only had half a day off a week. However, this was often subsumed by other work. Over a particularly busy period, where several new groups of recruits arrived and there was a large competition taking place at the course, he did not have any time off for two weeks. By the end of this period, he was visibly exhausted. When he returned from his delayed half day off, I asked him how he had spent it. He gleefully told me he had caught up on sleep.

2.3 Distance from family

In addition to the immediate effects of long working hours, as with many migrant workers, this intensive schedule also impacted familial relations. For example, initially, Teacher Huang told me that he went home twice a year. However, after further discussion and calculation of dates, he realised that he had not actually been home in around two years. His hometown was in a province in Northern China. As it was a long journey from Southern China, there had rarely been enough time for him to make the trip back. Moreover, he explained that the times where people would usually visit their families, such as Spring Festival,[7] were particularly popular times for guests to come to golf courses. Accordingly, it is difficult for caddies to take leave around these periods. Teach Huang elaborated: "even if we did [get time off] around then, the plane tickets are too expensive, and train tickets sell out very quickly." The long periods away from home were particularly difficult for those with children.

Fenfang was a caddie on exchange from a club in Hunan for the winter. As the holiday approached, I asked her how she found life as a caddie. She told me that she was happy, and though the hours are long, it would be the same if she were working in a factory. However, she had two young children who were in still in Hunan with her husband and his parents. Her husband worked in HR at the golf club where she normally worked. He would usually use his connections to ensure that she never had to work over Spring Festival, even though all the other caddies had to. However, this year she would be at Golden Valley until the end of February, with no one to pull strings. This would be her first time working over the period. I asked her how she was feeling about spending so long away from her children, especially over such an important holiday, and she said she was used to it. Her and her husband were once away from them for two years. Our conversation came to a natural end, and she walked away to join the others. As she left, I faintly heard her sniffling, as if she were crying. I gave her space for the rest of the morning. In the afternoon we spoke again, and I apologised for asking these questions which had upset her. She said it was not a problem, there were also many good things

[7] Spring Festival celebrates the start of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar. In Anglophone countries, it is often called 'Chinese New Year'. Many people travel home during this period. As a result, it has been referred to as the largest annual human migration in the world (Bristow 2009; Wang and Cripps 2019).

about the job, and being in a new region. For example, she loves seafood and "here it is cheaper and tastier than in Hunan."

2.4 Food

Yet unfortunately, the busy schedule of a caddie may leave Fenfang with little time to enjoy seafood. Jiayi explained how often there was no time for her to eat. Caddies were given a small pack with biscuits and tea for the guests. In times of need, when the guest was not looking, she would sneak a biscuit or two. When there was time for a full meal, the food in the canteens was a regular cause for complaint. This was particularly the case for caddies from places where culinary traditions and preferences are different from that in the region, which was comparatively light in flavour.

In my first week training with caddies, we sat around a cordoned off section of the large car park, taking it in turns to practice driving the golf cart. As there were fewer carts than trainees, there was plenty of time to talk. In these early days before the caddies had become used to my presence, food was a common topic of conversation. Caddies would switch between testing me on whether I had tried certain specialities from their region, describing the food where they were from, and complaining about the food in the canteens. One caddie from Sichuan told me that he really does not like, and has not got used to, the food in the region or the canteen: "There's nothing spicy! It's far too light." A few weeks later as he was rummaging through his bag, his friend pointed out to me, chuckling, that inside was a jar of laoganma, a popular brand of chili oil. He admitted he always had it with him to liven up his meals. On another occasion, a caddie from Qingdao told me that the canteen was okay, but had a "*nanfang weidao*", a Southern taste. At first, she had liked it a lot but now found it boring: "In my hometown, even KFC will give you hot sauce!" Besides having a designated bottle of on-the-go hot sauce, caddies embarked on other creative strategies to have a taste of home. One told me that she and her roommates had decided to have a hotpot party in their dorm. Though there were no kitchens, they had purchased a large pot, and made a makeshift hob out of some combination of tinfoil and fire I could not quite get to the bottom of but sounded unsafe. They had then purchased whatever ingredients they could from the small shop and spent the evening eating DIY hotpot.

In addition to different culinary habits, many caddies not from the region were also encountering unfamiliar ingredients and nature for the first time. One afternoon, when

the teachers were walking further ahead, I dawdled with a group of young women. As we walked, we remarked on the surrounding trees and bushes, and speculated what they might be called. One of the young women found a bush with some small berries. She ate one and offered them around. I hesitated then declined, suggesting it was not a good idea, but not wanting to ruin their fun. At first, they all enjoyed the berries. But, after a few minutes, began to complain of a strange taste in their mouths. It seemed 'eating bitterness' had taken a more literal meaning. Shortly after, they were panicking. Their hands had started to itch, and their tongues hurt. Noticing the commotion, another girl who had been walking ahead marched over and demanded everyone stick out their tongues so she could inspect them. Though I personally could not see anything unusual, she declared them red. As their almost playful worry increased, they said they did not recognise the berry, as they were not 'local'. So, we hurriedly went in search of a local caddie in training. The first, a young man, said he also did not recognise the berry: "Yes, I'm local but I don't recognise everything! Would you recognise every type of berry where you are from?" Eventually, another caddie who was local stepped forward and identified the berry: "it's edible, but not good for you."

2.5 Romance

As well as a time of new gastronomic experience, most caddies I encountered at Golden Valley were teenagers living away from home. This period also represented a taste of freedom. With this came the potential for romance. I heard rumours about guests acting inappropriately towards caddies or flirting with them. Jiayi explained to me that while she was caddying, guests would sometimes ask them out for dinner "if they thought we were pretty." But she never went with any of them. Li Jingyi, the manager of a caddie training centre, who had herself begun working in the industry as a caddie nearly three decades earlier, told me this used to be much more common than it is now. One caddie she used to work with had in fact married a guest. I asked if people ever wanted to work as caddies so that they could meet rich men, and she said occasionally, but not often.

Amongst those I met who had been working more recently as caddies, there were fewer of these types of anecdotes. Huiying had been working as a caddie for a number of years before she arrived at Golden Valley. She loved to gossip about relationships. On one occasion, I asked her whether guests had ever acted inappropriately or amorously towards her. She seemed confused by the question, but eventually told me: "no, never." A friend of

hers standing nearby overheard, she seconded Huiying's response: "The guests are mainly too old… Actually, the young ones don't either." She concluded it was because they "didn't see caddies like that," implying that the difference in social status between caddies and guests was too wide a chasm for romantic ideation or feeling to cross. "Could you ever see a caddie in that way?" She asked me, as if to prove her point.

The main source of romance was not with guests, but with other young people working at the facility. Though Jiayi met her husband on a trip home, and indeed many caddies arrived with partners already, she told me that "some caddies would begin relationships with workers, having met them in the canteen or elsewhere." Some caddies I met had indeed begun romantic relationships with other caddies. However, with shared dormitories and long working hours, this came with a distinct set of problems related to a lack of alone time. Over my time training with caddies, I witnessed a lot of clumsy teenage flirting, whispers, and giggling. Jokes were made about who fancied who. This interest was piqued upon the announcement that a new group of recruits from Sichuan would be joining us halfway through training. This news constituted a major topic of conversation for days before their arrival because of a stereotype of women from Sichuan being particularly attractive (Osburg 2013:18). Similar to Osburg's explanation, a group of women caddies told me that the temperature and geography of Sichuan meant people there were able to stay pale, something considered attractive, and that spicy food was good for the skin. However, despite all this talk, the new recruits from Sichuan were met with relatively little fanfare. They lived in separate dorms, and overall kept to themselves. Much of this youthful talk of romance came to resemble a school disco, where after a lot of big talk before hand, boys and girls stand nervously on opposite sides of the dancefloor.

2.6 Workplace hazards

Beside the potential for youthful heartbreak, there were many quite serious workplace hazards. Jiayi found life as a caddie tough, not only because of the long days, but also due to these hazards. Long term, she explained: "It can be bad for your health. If it rains you must give the guest the umbrella and then stand in the rain. Many caddies have problems with their health, especially their elbows due to the physical strain." This is something which is discussed in online caddie circles. The image below shows a meme posted on such an account called Caddies' Home. The text which accompanied the meme can be summarised as:

> I was very happy today until the guest shouted at me "Are you sick? You're walking so slowly!" I was not angry, because I *was* sick! I often rush without having eaten, which gives me stomach problems. He was right, I was sick, and there are all kinds of occupational illnesses for caddies.

The text then goes on to outline how caddies can prevent or treat occupational illnesses.

[Figure Two: Caddies' Home WeChat post. 13/10/2017. "Are you sick? How did you know?"] [8]

In addition to the cumulative physical impacts, there were also risks related to single incidents. Jiayi highlighted that caddies "can get hit on the head with a golf ball, or often if you are standing near the guest when they swing, they might hit you with their club." Thankfully neither of these happened to her, she says she was lucky. Over the course of my time training with caddies, I saw this happen once. It was on a Saturday. Though caddies would work on Saturday, for the new recruits training was usually Monday to Friday. However, training on the previous Thursday had been cancelled at the last minute due to a large typhoon and rescheduled. Though the worst of the typhoon had passed, there was still the occasional downpour. In a period of respite from the rain we were waiting for a guest to play through[9]. A ball flew through the trees and hit Tanya on the shoulder. She instantly fell to the ground due to the pain and the force of impact. A few seconds later, came the first rumblings of a storm. One of the teachers directed everyone except Tanya to run up a hill to some trees by the roadside where we could stand and stay dry. The teacher called over the guest and his caddie to tell them what had

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[8] This panda with human facial expression is a popular meme template in China. The face is taken from Choi Sung-kook in the film *Three Kims*.

[9] This means pausing to let a faster group of golfers pass you if you are playing slowly. During training, guests took priority, so whenever we spotted one training would halt to let them pass.

happened to the ball. He firmly reminded the caddie of the importance of yelling 'fore!' to warn people when a ball was coming. He then drove off with Tanya. The next day, Tanya returned to training. She said she had been to see the doctor, and while her shoulder was still sore, she was feeling better.

Another hazardous element of the job Jiayi outlined relates to golf carts. "The guests can choose to drive the cart if they want, but often they don't know the terrain very well, or will go too fast so the caddie will sometimes fall out and hurt themselves." Where guests drive, caddies will perch precariously on the back of the golf cart, leaving them vulnerable to injury. A few months after my interview with Jiayi, news of such an incident was doing the rounds amongst caddies on social media. The guests, rumoured to have been drunk had been driving recklessly, and the golf cart tipped over. One caddie broke his leg, and the other fractured her tailbone.

A final thing Jiayi highlighted as dangerous was snakes. She told me that snakes are fairly common. They are particularly attracted to the long grass on the perimeter of the course, where caddies will often search for lost balls. They have also been known to come into the dormitories caddies live in. She had heard stories of caddies being bitten and having to be rushed to the hospital quickly. Though she had fortunately never been bitten, she had seen snakes on a couple of occasions, once on the balcony of her dormitory.

2.7 Caddie and guest

It was uncommon for caddies to be bitten by a snake, but it was very common to suffer the wrath of a guest. At virtually every golf club in China, the use of caddies is mandatory. If playing in a group, each player will have their own caddie. At Golden Valley guests were randomly assigned a caddie, though regulars could co-ordinate with preferred caddies to ensure that they were together. Jiayi explained:

> Sometimes, they'll add you on WeChat[10] and then you'll organise with them when you both have free time so you can be their caddie next. Sometimes if they don't ask for your WeChat or to use your services again you feel a bit disheartened.

[10] WeChat is a Chinese social media platform, with a chat function similar to WhatsApp, and the ability to share pictures and statuses like Facebook. It is used for both business and pleasure. It also has an integrated payment system, which is commonly used across a number of areas. For example, I would pay for my groceries, meals out, and electricity bill using WeChat. Though in some regions, Alipay is more popular for payment.

Caddies serve a role which is both technical and affective. They are responsible for ensuring the outing goes smoothly, so are required to tidy and ready the golf cart before play, and once on the course they respond to the guests' needs. Be it recommending clubs, helping the player with their swing, advising on the layout of the course, carrying the golf bag, providing water and snacks, or making conversation. "If they were nice, [we would talk about] things like where they were from, good places to visit there, how the food is, their life, my life, and where I'm from." Though this would vary depending on the guest: "It's always different. Some are very friendly, and they become friends by the end. Others are not very nice." She told me that the very rich people were usually plesant, but:

> It's the people who are only slightly wealthier than usual who are the problem. Some guests will verbally abuse/criticise the caddies. This is especially if they have had a bad game. Some people will be really mean if their game isn't going well, they'll blame the caddies.

While this upset Jiayi, she tried to just let it go in one ear and out the other. "At first, they were all very rich, but now so many people play that there are loads of different types. Not all are *guizu* as often they are newly rich and don't know how to act, not too civilized." *Guizu*, can be translated as aristocracy or nobility. However, as Osburg describes since China's economic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s "it is not uncommon to hear people frequently refer to the ruling elites and their families as 'nobility' (*guizu*)" (Osburg 2018:164).

The changing demographic of guests and their perceived quality, or *suzhi*, was a conversation I had with many in the industry. One man name Guangli, an HR manager who had been working in golf for 20 years, linked this discussion to generational shifts:

> People of our parents' generation can be quite rude and treat caddies poorly because their *suzhi* is very low. They got rich very fast [as a result of reform and opening] but didn't go to university so their *suzhi* is low. The younger generations are generally better.

A direct translation of 'suzhi' is 'quality' or 'human quality', though it also implies a level of civilization, and has thus been tied up in internal debates over whether or not China is a 'civilized' country. As will be discussed in Chapter Six, caddie training creates a kind of person. Through training, the professional *suzhi* of caddies is raised. Chapter Eight will explore how this creates a tension whereby the *suzhi* of some caddies is higher than that of some guests.

2.8 Money

This relationship between guest and caddie is fundamental. Not least because of the potential financial ramifications. While working as a caddie Jiayi's base salary was 1600RMB a month (£175), this was "very low, making it tough to survive". However, this base salary only constitutes a small percentage of caddies' total income, the bulk of which is derived from tips. This practice of tipping is very unusual in mainland China. The only other times I encountered it was at a high-end spa, and on a guided tour aimed at foreign tourists. The expectation to tip caddies is likely the result of early investment and patronage from Hong Kong, where tipping is more common. This will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Five.

Jiayi outlined that "some guests will tip around 200RMB, which is very high. Others who have criticised the caddies or had a bad game will tip as low as 20RMB." I asked if it helped to be young and pretty:

> Appearance is slightly a requirement, if someone is hard to look at then guests obviously won't want them, but the influence of appearance on selection isn't too big. Work experience and attitude is more important. However, if you are pretty, you can earn more tips.

Manager Zhou described how the monthly income of caddies varied, "depending on how good they are", and thus how much they received in tips. She said that the average of salary and tips would be about 6,000RMB a month (£672.96), though the better ones may reach 10,000RMB (£1121.59).

At Golden Valley, both intern and non-intern caddies were paid 1,300RMB a month (£145), but could usually expect to take home between 4,000RMB (£437) and 5,000RMB (£547) including tips. Yanmin, who worked in HR at Golden Valley, explained that this was higher than the average salary in the region, which she estimated was between 3,000 and 4,000RMB a month. The salary caddies receive may be higher than in other professions they may be eligible to enter. Several trainees told me they had chosen this job because they could earn more than in other service sector jobs. I was also surprised to hear that when Teacher Huang was promoted to a permanent teacher, his salary bump did not really increase his overall income. As a caddie, he had been doing well and making a lot of money in tips.

Before becoming a caddie, Hualin had worked in some hotels and shops. She had been working at another golf course and came to Golden Valley when it closed. Working as a caddie, the pay was a higher than when she had been working at the hotel. For example, at the hotel she would earn 5,000RMB (approximately £550) a month, whereas working as a caddie she can earn between 8 or 9,000RMB. In her previous job, she would do at least 40 rounds of golf a month with about half of the guests tipping 100RMB, and a good percentage tipping 200RMB, sometimes more if their gambling has gone well. This salary meant she had been able to travel a lot for fun. She proudly shows me pictures of her trips to Hunan, Hangzhou, and Shanghai.

However, this tip-based income presented its own challenges. Not least, it leaves caddies heavily reliant on their guests. Director Chen explained to me that "caddies live on tips." This can work in their favour, for example if a guest returns to the same caddie regularly, "he knows the caddie well, he knows the caddie can help his game a lot. Then he'd give a much larger tip." Rumours circulated about the largest tips caddies had heard of. One teacher told me he had once heard of a guest tipping a caddie 10,000RMB (£1,100). While the standard amount to tip is 100RMB (£10) per game, it is an unspoken rule. As Director Chen saw it:

> We assume all the players know how much they have to tip their caddies. Maybe their friends tell them, but we don't inform the customers "Okay, you have to tip this much..." No. This is not mandatory. We always say tips are not mandatory, we don't even suggest [an amount]. It's just... you know, a common... I can't say it's common sense, but it's a rule.

As a result, just as caddies could end up making more than the average tip, in turn they could also end up shortchanged. For example, Director Chen explained that many foreign guests did not know about this unspoken rule and would not tip their caddies.

Manager Liu echoed this. She had started her career as a caddie and worked her way up to caddie manager. While she had been working as a caddie, she had the opportunity to caddie for a famous European golfer. She was very excited, but nervous about her English ability, which was fairly low. She was with him every day for five days. Working for him was particularly difficult because his golf bag was so heavy, and she would stay up late every night after work learning English phrases to say to him the next day. On the final day, Liu saw his assistant give him some money to give her as a tip. But first the assistant asked her if tipping was compulsory. "I felt it would be rude to say yes,

so I said no. The assistant pocketed the money and gave me a small gift. I would have preferred the tip." A more common reason for no, or a low, tip was based on the guest's perception of their caddie's performance. This was especially the case if the guest was playing with friends and gambling. Indeed, as will be discussed in Chapter Five, gambling made the stakes higher for the caddie also, who could be in for a much larger tip if their player won. However, if a player did poorly, particularly while gambling, and saw the caddie as a contributing factor the amount could plummet.

The unpredictable financial situation created by a dependency on tips also creates problems with budgeting. This was exacerbated by the relatively young age of many caddies, and an inexperience in financial planning. I heard about one golf club which ran budgeting classes for caddies, but generally this was not a common thing for a club to do. This precarious position intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic. After full lockdown ended for a while many courses operated without caddie service in order to or to ensure social distancing. While caddies still received their base salary, they were left without tips and consequently on a drastically reduced income.

2.9 Accommodation

> During the past two decades, China's position as 'the world's factory' has been sustained by its unique dormitory labour regime." (Pun and Yu 2008:124)

It is commonplace for caddies, as well as other golf club workers- such as shuttle bus drivers and even some managers- to live in dormitories. This is likely unsurprising to those familiar with labour in China, where dormitory regimes are standard for internal migrant labourers (Goodburn and Mishra 2023; Pun 2005; Pun 2007; Pun 2012; Smith and Pun 2006).

Goodburn and Mishra (2023), arguing against Pun Ngai and Chris Smith (2006), suggest that dormitory regimes are not unique to China. Yet in their case study of labour dormitories in India, they concede that there are some crucial differences. Namely, that in India workers are housed by intermediaries and the "state is not directly involved in restricting other residence options for migrants" (Goodburn and Mishra 2023:18). Indeed, Pun Ngai acknowledges that:

> China's dormitory labour system is not a new arrangement under capitalism; the provision of dormitories for workers has a long history

> both in Western and Eastern contexts of industrialization (Hershatter 1986; Smith 2003; Smith and Pun 2006). However, the Chinese dormitory labor system is unique in that dormitories, located on the factory compound or close by, are available to all workers and industries. (Pun 2007:240)

They also represent a break from the Maoist past. During this period, the state-owned work unit (*danwei*) "conferred greater status upon an individual worker" (Pun 2007:245), and provided accommodation to the family members of workers also. By comparison, the contemporary dormitory system only houses workers and has coincided with "[t]he shrinking of the government's role in labour welfare" (Smith and Pun 2006:1459). This has resulted in "no social provisions and labour protection, particularly for the rural migrant workers" (ibid.). Consequently, "[d]eprived of their rights to stay in the city, there is almost no long-term planning on education, training, housing, medical care and social welfare to contain this new working class" (ibid.). This dormitory system has given employers extensive control over the lives of their employees. Yet, Pun and Smith argue that this lack of separation between work life and non-working hours has opened up space for resistance and struggle (Pun 2012; Smith and Pun 2006).

For this new working class of migrant labourers, gender plays a crucial role:

> For the past three decades, among the exodus of internal migrant workers into the industrial cities, young rural women are among the first to be picked up by the new export-oriented industries. As with Lowell Mill girls in the United States a century and a half ago, their gender, in addition to their youth and rural migrant status, is an integral part of China's export-led industrialism facilitating global production for the world market.(Pun 2012:179).

These women migrant workers are often referred to as *dagongmei,* meaning female workers and usually referring to a rural to urban migrants. It replaces the more gender-neutral terms for workers used under Mao. The phrase signifies not only gender but also that someone is unmarried, young, and "often of lower status" (Pun 2007:241). However, as will be explored in Chapter Eight, caddies wholeheartedly reject affiliation to *dagongmei* status. Instead, as Chapter Seven explores, they view themselves more as professionals. This is also, to an extent reflected in their lives at dormitories. At Golden Valley, what was surprising was how quickly the caddies and caddies in training adapted to their living arrangements. Indeed, many of them who had lived in similar dormitories for school, college, or previous employment this was nothing new. The conditions of their

accommodation were nicer than those described in the aforementioned texts. Moreover, as interns are sent to Golden Valley in a group from their schools and dormitories were organised as such, many will be living with friends. Yet, the situation still reflects the lack of separation between work and private life which characterizes dormitory regimes.

The dormitories at Golden Valley lay on the periphery of the complex, though there was a small shop on the ground floor, compared to the centre of the complex there were fewer amenities, and no reliable public transportation. This left staff who lived there reliant on the Golden Valley staff coaches to get to and from work, with little space away from the job. The tight coach schedule meant it was not uncommon to see caddies sprinting to catch the bus to get back to the dormitory in time for lunch or dinner.

Overall, during that period of her life Jiayi enjoyed living in the dormitory, where she had seven roommates. This was a substantially lower number than those in the dormitories Pun Ngai has researched, which housed between eight and 20 workers (Pun 2007; Pun and Yu 2008). I had heard whispers, always about 'other' golf courses, where there had been issues with sexual assault. To blame were men of a lower *suzhi*[11], working in custodial maintenance, or landscaping jobs. However, Jiayi said she felt very safe in the dormitories. The dormitories also seemed to be of a higher standard than those in other academic explorations. Jiayi commented:

> I liked it, there were places to exercise and a small library. I like to read so really enjoyed the library. But obviously with so many people living together there can be problems. It can feel crowded. Getting ready for work in the morning there was often so many people, all trying to use the bathroom.

These were common complaints about dorms. Others included that as tower blocks without elevators the journey up to the room could be a tiring one. That the AC was old meaning the rooms were very hot. Or, interpersonal issues bred from living in close quarters. One caddie I met from Qingdao had been working for many years, taking a break to have children, and returning once her youngest child had started kindergarten. Over the years, she had mixed experiences of the dorms. At Golden Valley she shared a room with five other people, and it had been going smoothly as they all had a "similar

[11] Suzhi is an historically and culturally loaded term, which can loosely be defined as quality. Suzhi and its implications will be discussed in depth in Chapter Eight

outlook." However, she recounted another experience in Qingdao where she had been living with women significantly younger than her. This age gap had caused many disagreements, as she found them to be immature and disrespectful of her personal space, noise, and hygiene.

In spite of living with many people, opportunities for socialising seemed few and far between. Jiayi explained to me that she did not really have time off, maybe four days a month if she did not pick up any extra shifts. She was so tired after working that on days off would usually just rest in the dormitories. However, the caveat was that she is just that kind of person. For her, it was "just start work, finish work. Work was my life." But she explained that some other more sociable and energetic caddies would "go out to eat, or have fun, or go to KTVs [karaoke bars] in their free time." Each Monday, I would ask the caddies in training how they had spent their free time over the weekend. Like Jiayi, their answer was usually that they were so exhausted, they had just "played on their phones." There were of course exceptions. "These young ones spend too much time on their phones!" lamented an older caddie, who enjoyed playing golf in her free time. Another exception was Jinhai.

Jinhai was from the local region, and his parents, who were farmers, lived very close to Golden Valley. He struck me as a slightly different character from the other caddies in training. Unlike most of his colleagues, he was recruited 'from society', meaning that he was not an intern from a school or university. On the second day of my time training, we had just finished golf cart driving lessons, and most of the students were milling around chatting. The shuttle bus which took them back to their dormitories for lunch was not going to arrive for a while. However, Jinhai and a friend sauntered off towards a new looking car, got in and drove off. Curious, I later asked him, and he told me this was in fact his car. He felt very fortunate not to be dependent on the restrictive shuttle bus schedule to and from the dormitories, and poor public transport links to the city. He was incredibly confident, in part stemming from the fact that he was slightly older. In his mid-twenties, he was in fact older than most of the teachers. He warmed up to me much more quickly than some of the others. He was easy to talk to and very opinionated. One Monday morning he confided in me that he was quite tired as he had been out for seafood with friends the night before and they had been drinking more heavily than he anticipated. Unlike the migratory position of many caddies formerly

recruited 'from society', like Jiayi, and indeed many of those now sent from schools, Jinhai was much more embedded within the locality. Compared to the intern recruits he also had more work experience, and a detachment from the life of a dormitory regime where little happens beyond work.

2.10 Since Jiayi

In most areas, Jiayi is a good example of life as a caddie. However, in one fundamental way, she no longer represents what being a caddie entails. As explored in section 2.1, Jiayi began working as a caddie as it was recommended to her by a family member. She knew nothing about golf before starting work. This was more common in 2013 when she began. By the time I did my fieldwork in 2019, these routes to work were becoming less common. Instead, the vast majority of caddies I trained with were interns drawn from vocational schools, colleges, and some from universities. Of the 2019 cohort of new recruits, excluding those who already had experience working as a caddie, 96.64% were interns. Just as caddies do not quite fit into existing academic work on dormitory regimes, they also offer a different view of internships and vocational education.

In terms of internships, research on interns at Foxconn is significant (Smith and Chan 2015a; Chan 2017; Pun and Chan 2012). Foxconn Technology Group is a Taiwanese multinational, specialising in electronics. It has 12 factories in Mainland China (Lau 2010), which produce goods for a range of companies, notably, Apple, Blackberry, Xiaomi, and PlayStation. In 2010, Foxconn fell under international scrutiny following a series of worker suicides (Hua 2018; Lucas, Kang, and Li 2013). Examining Foxconn, Chan highlights how internship systems and customs are susceptible to abuse. This is both in terms of the quality and relevance of internships, and the way they have in many spheres become a vital source of underpaid labour (Chan 2017). The view from Golden Valley offers a different and more positive perspective.

As Chan describes, internships have become big business in China, particularly at Foxconn:

> During the summer of 2010, according to the company's own public statement, 150,000 students were interning at Foxconn. Interns thus made up 15 percent of the company's million-strong workforce across China (Foxconn Technology Group 2010a:2) This means that Foxconn dwarfed Disney's College Program, often cited as one of the world's largest internship programs, which received more than 50,000 interns cumulatively over thirty years from college partners

> in the United States and abroad (Perlin 2012:6). In a large Foxconn business group that exclusively serves Apple, 28,044 'student interns' from over two hundred schools were working on the assembly line in 2010, a six-fold increase from 4,539 such interns in 2007. (Foxconn Technology Group 2010b:23). With the loss of their capacity to control the timing, location, and training content of the internships, a student interviewee expressed his pent-up anger by condemning the program as "fake internships" and "forced internships" (Chan 2017:89).

Like Foxconn, at Golden Valley interns make up a large percentage of the workforce. Also similarly, both the Foxconn interns and those at Golden Valley were doing the same work as regular employees. In fact, due to the high number of caddie interns, it might be more apt to say that non-intern caddies were doing the same work as interns. However, in other ways an internships at Golden Valley disrupt some of the trends established in work on Foxconn.

As Smith and Chan highlight, internships in China are supposed to be pedagogically grounded in a 'theory into practice model', whereby material learnt in the classroom is put into practice through an internship closely aligned with the student's major (Smith and Chan 2015a:308). Yet at Foxconn where students are often doing work unrelated to their studies, this has largely not been the case. In contrast, at Golden Valley many interns have golf as their major, with others majoring in related fields such as physical education or hospitality. Their internships are thus an opportunity to put what they have studied into practice. Golden Valley also provides an extended period of both affective and technical training, applicable to their majors and future career plans.

Anther criticism of internships in China is that a focus on the acquisition of skills has the potential to obscure exploitation present within intern labour (Chan 2017; Rodino-Colocino and Berberick 2015; Smith and Chan 2015a; Terry Woronov 2016). Accordingly, value can thus be placed on learning rather than on financial compensation. Chan highlights how at Foxconn's Chengdu 'iPad City', at the time of her research interns and regular workers were paid the same amount per month, but interns were not entitled to the 400RMB a month skills subsidy. This was justified by reference to the somewhat opaque legal requirement of 'reasonable' pay for the labour of interns (Chan 2017:91). Interns at Golden Valley are paid the same amount as those recruited 'from society'.

This new intern workforce at Golden Valley, drawn from vocational schools and colleges, also offers an alternative view on vocational education. In her extensive work on vocational education in China, Woronov has outlined the difficult position of these students, they are deemed failures in the popular consciousness, yet simultaneously largely ignored:

> These young people are largely invisible in daily discourse about adolescents in China, and they are rarely portrayed in studies of Chinese youth; they are neither participants in spectacularly rebellious punk subcultures (deKloet 2014) nor the stressed and studious youth focused on exam scores and memorization (e.g., Fong 2004) Instead, they struggle to get through school and through their lives in a system that is a complex, messy combination of socialist and capitalist, old and new, within the gritty reality of working-class lives against the background of the rapid economic development of urban China (Woronov 2015:3)

Yet, they constitute a large proportion of China's youth. Data from the Ministry of Education (2021), shows that between 2013 and 2020 vocational education students (*zhuanke*) represented between 39.4% and and 42.2% of all higher education enrolments.[12] Vocational students in secondary education were between 39.5% and 45.9% of secondary enrolments.[13] Though on the popular level vocational education students have been largely dismissed as underachievers, their role in the broader economy is fundamental. As is the case with the caddying industry, they have often been utilised to compensate for labour shortages (Farrell and Grant 2005).

Vocational education represents an alternative to mainstream education and is hinged upon two important examinations, the *gaokao*, China's notoriously tough University Entrance Examination (UEE), and the *zhongkao*, the High School Entrance Examination (HSEE). Students in China sit the HSEE in the final year of Junior High School, and as Woronov explains:

> Students who fail the HSEE have a few different options. Some drop out and enter the job market as unskilled laborers. Students from wealthy families can purchase admission into an increasing number of private academic prep schools, which focus on university admission (Donald and Zheng 2008).

[12] This excludes postgraduate degrees, online degrees, and adult higher educational institutions.
[13] Though in China it is more common to call secondary education high school when translating *Zhongdeng jiaoyu*, here I follow the language employed by the Ministry of Education.

> Students who wish to stay in school but cannot afford private prep schools choose some form of vocational education (Woronov 2015:6).

Students who enter vocational senior high school will be ineligible to take the UEE, and thus have very slim chances of attending university. Woronov thus argues that "At the most basic level, their futures will always be limited as nonprofessional workers who have attained only a vocational school credential" (Woronov 2015:6). However, as Chapter Seven will argue, the caddie industry is in fact in the process of professionalizing, in part as a result of vocational education. Far from being limited as non-professional workers, many caddies already see themselves as professionals.

Internships and vocational education have often been framed negatively. Be it in the public perception that those in vocational education were simply too 'lazy' to remain in mainstream education, or in the idea that internships are solely exploitative, and at worst dangerous. For the caddies I worked with, neither were true. Far from the vocational students falling asleep in class Woronov observed (Woronov 2012:779), they were engaged and hard-working. Unlike the example of Foxconn interns, underpaid and not doing work related to their major, caddies have a comparatively good salary and are generally learning relevant and transferable skills.

2.11 Conclusion

Because of the strenuous nature of life as a caddie, Jiayi decided to retrain as a masseuse in the club's spa, so was transferred to that department. Around this time, on a trip to her hometown she met her husband. After working as a masseuse at the club for some time, doing long distance with her now husband, and far from her own family in Sichuan, she decided to move to Yunnan to be with him. When I met her, she was still working as a massage therapist and expecting her first child. Reflecting on her time spent as a caddie, she told me her favourite part was "struggling together with other caddies, talking about our day, what we've faced. The sense of community." At the end of the interview, as we said our goodbyes and slowly left the food court- much to the relief of our waitress- I asked heavily pregnant Jiayi if she would encourage her child to work as a caddie. She said that if she has a daughter, she definitely would not.

However, since Jiayi was working as a caddie, there have been some quite drastic changes. As will be explored in Chapter Three, the industry is now struggling to recruit young women like her in the manner she was recruited. Consequently, golf clubs like

Golden Valley have employed other methods of recruitment, such as employing vocational education interns. Accordingly, they are now reluctantly employing more men. However, the mechanism which brought men to work as caddies has also put the industry on a path to professionalizing. Li Jingyi started working as a caddie before Jiayi had. She remained in the industry, and was very successful, eventually opening her own training school. She acknowledged life as a caddie was difficult and arduous. However, in part because of these changes to recruitment, she saw it as a good career path. She told her students that working as a caddie was a great opportunity, not just because of the relatively high salary but also as an investment in their future. I asked her if she would want her own daughter to work as a caddie, she said she would, and she would be well suited to it. Unfortunately, she had other career aspirations. The next chapter will explore the history of golf in China, and what this has meant to the role of caddie, before proceeding to explore shifting patterns of recruitment in greater depth in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER THREE

Between Fairway and Rough: The History of Golf in China

> A puzzle has been solved. Despite their intense interest in sports, no golf courses exist in the socialist-communist bloc. Why is golf solely in capitalistic societies? Because it is not merely a sport. It is an activity, a lifestyle, a behaviour, a manifestation of the essential human spirit. Golf's ethics, principles, rules, and procedures of play are totally capitalistic. They are antithetical to socialism. Golf requires self-reliance, independence, responsibility and trust (Alchian 1977).

Writing for *The Wall Street Journal* in 1977, Armen Alchian- an American microeconomic theorist- proclaimed that golf was inherently linked to the "capitalist spirit." That the responsibility and consequence are in the hands of the player alone, and the golfers' main opponent is themself. Consequently, he concluded that golf and socialism were by nature incompatible. What may have surprised Alchian is not just the rapid growth of golf in China, but also how firmly it would become synonymous with the curated sphere of leisure. As a result of its history, golf in China today is marked by large golf complexes with facilities such as on-site malls, hotels, and restaurants. In this context, somewhat ironically, Alchian's idea of golf as a "lifestyle" is central.

In 1983 there were no golf courses in China, now it is estimated there are 617 (R&A 2021:11). This makes China the country with the 10th highest number of golf courses in the world (R&A 2021:4). However, this growth has not followed a simple trajectory, and many of the conflicts which have complicated this journey are still simmering. This chapter will draw out four thematic periods and then demonstrate the continued impact of each on the position of golf today. First, in exploring Maoist policy, golf emerges as a sport for the rich, this perception has continued. This has shaped the golf club as a useful space for business and for demonstrating social class. Accordingly, impacting the affective role of caddies. This has increased its appeal, yet simultaneously limits its growth to the small section of society who can afford to play. Second, under Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening-up golf grew at an unprecedented rate. Yet, the speed of growth led to many illegitimate and illegal course being quickly constructed, ultimately triggering reactionary policies to limit growth. Third, between 2004 and 2012, these restrictions were intensified, but never fully realised. This has encouraged creative avoidance of regulations, meaning

many golf courses are now built as leisure or residential complexes. Finally, golf's reputation as a site for *guanxi*, or building relationships, has made the sport a target for Xi Jinping's fervent anti-corruption campaigns. This has necessitated a cleaning-up of the industry, while leaving it volatile and precarious.

What further complicates analysis of golf in China is that there exists no clear binary between factors that limit and those which encourage growth. Indeed, as Washburn outlines: "There are alternate realities in China…One day you'll read headlines about a war on golf, and the next you'll hear about China's future Olympic golf stars" (Ramzy 2015). Tracing the history of golf in China is not an easy task, in part due to a paucity of source material, and the unreliable and sparse nature of the existing statistics[14]. However, it is crucial to do so. Golf has been greatly influenced by, and shines a mirror on, the central movements in Chinese history. The purpose of this chapter is not primarily historical, but instead to understand golf in the present day. In order to understand the complex ecology in which caddies are situated, an historical turn is necessary. This chapter will argue that because of its turbulent history, golf in China is squarely situated as a site of leisure. Because golf is framed more as leisure than as sport, the role of the caddie is predominantly in customer service. Accordingly, as will be explored in the next chapter, women are perceived to be the ideal candidate.

3.1 Mao and golf: a 'sport for millionaires'

Chuiwan, a stick and ball game with some similarities to golf was played in China as early as 1000 AD. Consequently, Ling Hongling has argued that golf actually finds its origins in China (Ling 1991), though this theory has been largely discounted. Golf as we know it, with a distinct system of rules and handicaps, first arrived in China through Treaty Ports. Most likely via the British army in 1890 (Giroir 2007). The first modern golf course in mainland China built was in Shanghai in 1917 (Zhang 2016; He 2012; Han 2011; Cui and Xiang 2006). However, its early history was short-lived. In 1949, it was banned and branded 'a sport for millionaires' by Mao Zedong (Wei 2017; Phillips 2016; Ramzy 2015; Giroir 2007). As a result,

[14] Wei outlines how the government's official list has "some inconsistencies" because some golf facilities in China may go by various different names. Moreover, many will not register as golf courses due to restrictions. "Even with the use of satellite imagery, China remains the most difficult market to track among the 208 countries with golf courses" (Wei 2017).

all pre-existing golf courses were dug up and repurposed. What was the Hongqiao golf course, for example, is now the home of the Shanghai Zoo (Washburn 2014).

The perception of golf as an activity reserved for the wealthy continues today. After a golf lesson one afternoon in the spring of 2019, I got talking to my taxi driver. He was a migrant from Northern China. After the initial conversation about where we were both from, and the food in his hometown, he asked me if I worked at the golf club he had picked me up from. I told him that I did not but was having a golf lesson there. I then asked him if he played golf. "No," he laughed. "Golf is an aristocratic (*guizu*) sport." Outside golf clubs, most conversations about golf I had with people in China, and indeed often in the UK, were similar. This perception of golf is not baseless. Golf in China is very expensive. The cheapest membership at Golden Valley is roughly 400,000RMB (£44,000). In 2021, the per capita disposable income of residents in China was 35,128RMB (£4,000) (National Bureau of Statistics 2022). Moreover, unlike in much of Europe and North America, virtually all golf clubs in China are private.

During my fieldwork, golf appeared in several unexpected settings, in each instance utilised to reflect or reinforce a certain message about social standing. I saw pictures of golf, alongside images of glasses of wine, French cuisine, and well-dressed white foreigners, plastered on the sides of soon-to-open upmarket apartment complexes. I encountered a mini-putting range used as a marketing tool in an expensive jewellery shop. Just like photographs with wads of cash, sports cars, and expensive alcohol, golf too is used as many men's choice of profile picture on mobile dating apps. These associations have done much to promote golf. Greg Gilligan, head of the China Tour[15] frames golf as something aspirational: "Think of someone moving up in disposable income. I think about the woman walking down the street, with the Prada purse, the Gucci shirt, the Starbucks in one hand and iPhone in the other. What's next?" (Cendrowski 2016).

The idea that golf is a sport for the rich and elite of society has worked as a double-edged sword; people want to play golf as a means of enhancing their social standing, yet the idea that it is beyond the reach of the average person impacts the growth of the sport by shrinking its potential client base. Indeed, as Zhang Xiaochun, the Dean of Shenzhen

[15] The China Tour was a professional golf tour operated by the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA), first held in 2014. Following cancellation due to the Covid-19 pandemic it has not yet returned.

University's College of Golf, outlines: "golf was called too many things like 'exclusive', 'luxurious' and 'an elite sport' by people who were overzealous to promote it." He continues, "I've been telling them to make it less ostentatious and to say that golf belongs to everyone. But they wouldn't listen" (Shi 2011). Golf in other countries has followed a similar trajectory, starting beyond the reach of many, then gradually becoming more accessible. For example, in the United States the clientele were also drawn from the upper echelons of society "during the gilded 1920s, just before the pastime caught fire" (Cendrowski 2016:119). While golf in Europe and the United States has maintained many of these connotations, cheaper public courses have done much to expand participation. However, in China these perceptions have made golf a political target, encouraging the governmental restrictions imposed on golf, to be explored in the following sections.

Overall, during the Mao era, bans on golf brought the industry to a complete halt. Yet since, golf, a sport previously banned due to its associations with bourgeois ideals, western thought, and luxury consumption, has become a means of demonstrating, solidifying, or acquiring status. This is precisely due to the associations which had previously made it so politically dangerous. These associations have also become central to the job of caddies. The golf course as an elite space, as will be explored in chapters five and six, dictates the kind of service required of them.

3.2 Reform and opening-up: a period of growth

Following this period of restriction, golf in China underwent a renaissance period during Deng Xiaoping's leadership. In 1978 Deng broke with the Maoist past and ushered in a period of reform and opening-up. Through the creation of Special Economic Zones, the encouragement of joint ventures with foreign investors, land reform, and measures allowing development of individual enterprises, fertile ground was created for the growth of the golf industry. In 1984, with the help of renowned American golfer Arnold Palmer, the first golf course following Mao's ban was opened in China, Zhongshan Hot Springs Golf Club (Shao 2013; Xiao 2007; Wang 2011). In 1985 the China Golf Association (CGA) was established in Beijing (Shao 2013). Then, in 1986 Beijing opened its own golf course (Giroir 2007). By 1994, there were an estimated 13 golf clubs open in China (Shao 2013). This growth continued relatively unchecked after Deng's retirement in 1992; by 2003 there

were roughly 219 clubs in China (Shao 2013).[16] According to my contact at the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA), this led many in the international golf industry to look to China as the next big market. A lot of these early clubs were the result of external investment, frequently from Hong Kong and Japan. During this period, the "central government made nine agreements for the establishment of golf courses across China and planned 10 areas for tourism zones, which included golf course projects." (Zhang 2016:46–7) This was bolstered by policies encouraging foreign investment and allowing golf projects to use agricultural land without taxation (Zhang 2016:47). Though this period of growth created a golf industry from the ashes, it also sowed many of the seeds for the problems golf in China would go on to face.

One of the key advocates for the growth of golf in China, and a keen player himself, was Zhao Ziyang. As Party General Secretary between 1986 and 1989 he led many of China's economic reforms. However, he was considered too sympathetic to the Tiananmen Square protesters and was ultimately deposed. His love of golf was at this time used against him. In the 29th April 1989 dialogue with authorities, students held up a photograph of him playing golf, "as an example of the decadence of top officials" (Manion 1990: xxxvi). And, on July 6th, Chen Xitong- then Mayor of Beijing- speaking to the Standing Committee criticised Zhao, claiming:

> In the face of the increasingly grave situation, many comrades in the central leadership and Beijing Municipality felt that the nature of the matter had changed, and repeatedly suggested to Comrade Zhao Ziyang that the central leadership should adopt a clear-cut policy and measures to quickly check the development of the matter. But Zhao kept avoiding making an earnest analysis and discussion of the nature of the matter. At the end of the memorial meeting for Comrade Hu Yaobang, comrades in the central leadership again suggested to Zhao that a meeting be held on April 23 before his visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Instead of accepting this suggestion, Zhao went golfing as if nothing had happened (Chen 1990:65).

After his deposition, while under house arrest, he was occasionally allowed out to play golf. These trips to the club were for a long time his only reported sightings (Poole 1995). Just as the fate of Zhao Ziyang, the path for the development of golf was not completely clear.

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[16] This figure includes golf courses under construction.

As the golf grew, so too did governmental suspicion. From 1994, many of the privileges previously enjoyed by the industry were gradually stripped back. The power to grant authority to build golf courses shifted from local to central government, sales taxes were increased, and restrictions were placed on foreign investment (Zhang 2016:46–7). Aside from its prime source for governmental support losing political clout, golf during this era also became a kind of 'wild west'. Clubs were built without following government legislation on land use, or without the correct permissions. This paved the way for the bans and closures which would come to characterise the following period.

3.3 2004- 2012: "Closed for Business"

Following the rapid, and unchecked, growth outlined in the previous section, came swift reform. This period marks a hardening of official governmental attitudes towards golf. These restrictions are bolstered by Chinese land law, which does not allow private freehold land ownership. Instead:

> All urban land in China is owned by the Chinese government and is commonly referred to as 'state-owned land.' All rural and suburban land is owned by rural collectives (ie, local groups of farmers) and is commonly referred to as 'collective land.' (Baker McKenzie 2021).

As Cui Zhiqiang, former vice-president of the CGA explains: "In foreign countries where the land is privately owned, you can be against golf, but you can't make a law forbidding the construction of golf courses… In China, golf developers run into obstacles because of that basic difference" (Shi 2011). This has enabled a large number of golf courses to be closed rapidly. Many of the reasons for the closure of golf courses are directly linked to issues of land use, and thus food security. These strict restrictions started, and were perhaps most intense, following a central government notice suspending the construction of new golf courses in 2004 (Office of the State Council 2004). Yet ironically, despite these severe restrictions, the following six years were actually the fastest period for the growth of golf in China. By 2010 there were roughly 400 more golf courses than there were in 2004.

In the spring of 2019, just before I began training at Golden Valley, I met with someone in the industry who told me they had heard rumours that many golf courses in the province I would be conducting this research were due to be closed. Apparently, they had broken land law regulations and committed permit violations. Once I began

participant observation, during the weekdays, I was training with the caddies up to 9 hours a day, and at weekends often socialising with some of the managers I befriended or exploring Golden Valley's facilities. However, one weekend I found the time to visit the city which saw the brunt of these closures.

Visiting places which are closed is not an easy task, made more difficult by the fact that an official list of courses closed had yet to be released. Based on word of mouth I identified a couple of courses which I suspected might have been recently closed. One was part of a hotel. When I arrived and asked them if I could go to the golf course, they seemed confused and said there had never been one. I got in a taxi and began the journey to the next course. After a long drive though farmland, often having to pause to let chickens pass, we reached a construction site where the building of golf villas has seemingly halted completely. As I approached the attached golf club, there was a sign up simply saying "closed for business" (Figure Three). The taxi driver, who by this point I had been with for over an hour spent in friendly conversation, was wary. I explained to him what I was doing. He told he would wait outside for me, he said it was to ensure I could get back from this very remote area, but I suspected it was also a concern for my safety. The door was open, so I went inside. There was still some furniture, but the place was desolate apart from one middle-aged employee drinking tea from a large flask. I greeted him and asked if the club was closed down, he said it was. I asked him why it closed, he said he did not know and started to walk away. I asked him if they would open again soon, he laughed and again said that he did not know. As he seemed very suspicious of me, with that I left. Though my fieldwork began significantly later than the period in question (2004-2012), the closures which this section deals with still are occurring, and the impacts of these restrictions have shaped the nature of golf in China.

[Figure Three: "Closed for business"- A sign at a golf course I visited which had been closed.]

3.3.1 Land use and food security

A large reason for the spate of closures, and the according restrictions placed on golf, is related to land. Land use has long been a cause of concern in China due to a direct connection to food security. From the dynastic idea that barren fields and empty granaries were an indication that the emperor had lost the mandate of heaven (Zhang 2018), to Lester Brown's prediction that by 2030 China's grain production would have declined by at least 20% (Brown 1995). Golf, by nature, requires a large amount of space, and has thus become a target of the Chinese government's preoccupation with land and agriculture.

In the years following the Revolution in 1949, China's 'cultivated land'[17] increased substantially due to Mao's focus on Land Reform. Large amounts of land abandoned due

[17] Cultivated land can be defined as "land used for planting agricultural crops, including regularly cultivated land, newly exploited land, reclaimed and consolidated land, fallow land (including shifting fallow land and shifting cultivated land). Cultivated land is mainly used for planting crops (including vegetables), scattered with fruit trees, mulberry trees and other trees; cultivated land also includes (a) cultivated sea-beaches with at least one harvest per year; (b) ditches, canals, paths and field banks with the width of less than 1.0 meter in the south of China, and 2.0 meters in the north of China." (Mao, Yang, and Zhao 2012:1)

to the upheavals of war was re-cultivated, with the help of the army. The state "set up many state farms and army reclamation farms, and encouraged young intellectuals to migrate to rural areas to participate in voluntary reclamation of wasteland" (Mao, Yang, and Zhao 2012:9). An estimated 5.4765 million hectares of land was reclaimed (ibid.), creating a total of 111.83 million hectares of 'cultivated land' in 1957 (Zhang and Wang 2005). However, the impacts of mismanagement during the Great Leap Forward, and three years of natural disasters lead to a severe decrease in the amount of cultivated land "from the peak of 111.83 million hectares in 1957 to 104.86133 million hectares in 1960" (Mao, Yang, and Zhao 2012:10). The resulting three years of famine has since haunted China's relationship to food security and attitudes towards 'cultivated land'.

Though there are questions about the reliability of relevant statistics, especially between 1960 and 1980, the decades before the 2004 Land Administration Law (Standing Committee 2004) can generally be characterized as witnessing a steady decrease in 'cultivated land' (Mao, Yang, and Zhao 2012). This has led to a situation where "China has 10 people to feed per hectare of arable land- more than twice the world average of 4.4 persons per hectare"(Gale 2002:7). For a long time, in response to food security issues, the Chinese government aimed for self-sufficiency. However, in December 2013 at the Central Economic Work Conference, "China's central government introduced a new food security strategy" (Zhang 2018: "Lester Brown's Question", paragraph four).[18] This new strategy did not neglect protection of the redline, nor basic self-sufficiency but also stressed that "China must be more active in utilizing [the] international food market and agricultural resources to effectively coordinate and supplement domestic supply" (ibid.)[19]

As Hongzhou Zhang notes, in the early 2000s, due to a significant drop in grain output, the central government took action. They initiated an overhaul of the tax system, abolished the agricultural tax, provided agricultural subsidies to farmers and "promulgated the 120 million hectare redline to prevent the large conversion of farmland to commercial usage" (ibid.). Around the same time crackdowns on golf intensified. Governmental restrictions on golf were reinitiated on the 10th January 2004, when the

[18] Unfortunately, this book was only available as a restricted access eBook through the Electronic Legal Deposit [ELD] at the University of Cambridge. Page numbers were not available in the ELD version. Thus, ELD citation guidelines have been followed.
[19] For more work which problematises ideas of self-sufficiency, see: Ash 1997; Schneider 2011.

Office of the State Council issued the 'Notice on Suspension of New Golf Courses'. This notice gives four key directions:

1. Suspension of construction of new golf course
This first regulation has become a synecdoche for the notice, and indeed shorthand for governmental policy towards golf in China. It demands that no local government or any department of the State Council can approve the construction of new golf projects. Crucially, construction on projects which commenced without the relevant approvals, and even on those which had the relevant planning procedures and approval were to be "suspended without exception"(Office of the State Council 2004).

2. Clean up the golf course projects that have been built and are under construction
This required local governments to immediately conduct inspections of existing golf courses, to ensure they were constructed with the correct approval, that they conform to land use regulations, and are in compliance with the 'Circular of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Further Strengthening Land Management and Protecting Cultivated Land Effectively' (Zhongfa [1997] No. 11).

3. Regulate the operation of established golf courses.
Separate from cleaning up golf courses, this begins to look to the future: "Local people's governments at various levels should take effective measures to strengthen management." This involves controlling the consumption of water, and "supporting environmental protection facilities for golf courses" (Office of the State Council 2004).

4. Strengthen supervision and inspection and guidance
Finally, a timeline was established. Local governments were required to submit the results of inspection and handling to the State Council by the 15th February, just over a month later. Though this document has been hailed as a moratorium for the Chinese golf industry, it does end with a glimmer of hope, stating that: "The Development and Reform Commission should work with the Ministry of Land and Resources, the Ministry of Construction, the State Environmental Protection Administration, the General Administration of Sports, the Tourism Administration and other departments to pay close attention to research and put forward suggestions on measures to guide the healthy development of golf and facilities construction" (Office of the State Council 2004).

This document explicitly ties golf to issues of land use and food security:

> In some places, the construction of golf courses has been excessive and occupying a lot of land; some in violation of regulations occupy peasant collective cultivated land, and have done serious harm to the country and the interests of the peasantry; some use real estate as a pretext to build golf courses (Office of the State Council 2004).

This concern was also echoed in several government notices following 2004. For example, in 2006 golf courses were included in the "List of Prohibited Land Projects" by the Ministry of Land and Resources and the National Development and Reform Commission, 2011 saw the 'Notice on the Comprehensive Clean-up and Remediation of National Golf Courses' jointly issued by the National Development and Reform Commission (National Development and Reform Commission et al 2011). Then, later in 2011 the State Council ordered checks on all golf courses to prevent illegal land use, and to ensure no loss of farmland in China (Zheng 2011).

Primarily, golf courses were viewed by many as taking valuable land away from farming. Moreover, golf course maintenance requires a large amount of water, and can result in hazardous chemicals polluting surrounding areas. As one golf club manager who I interviewed commented on recent closures:

> The government cares a lot about the environment. Especially golf courses on land which could be used as farmland as there's already very little available, or when there are issues with a water source, or water pollution. Clubs have to go away and fix this before they can reopen.

When I asked him whether his club maintained a good relationship (*guanxi*) with the local government, he told me that this course was built on land which was previously unusable, and that it took a great deal of time, money, and labour to make it viable. The result has been an increase in "ecological diversity" in the region. "It's not the relationship that's important" he said, "it's following the rules. This course was not built on land that could be used for farmland." As following sections will explore, this may be a somewhat optimistic view of an industry which has benefitted from local officials ignoring central directives. This already contentious issue is amplified by the perception that golf, as explored earlier, is a 'sport for millionaires.' Thus creating the view that plots of arable land which could be beneficial to the general populace have become enclaves for wealthy elites.

Alongside land use, stand concerns about the amount of water used by golf courses. Though the required amount varies depending on the climate of the region, it is estimated that an 18-hole course will use approximately 400,000 tons annually (Zhang and Gao 2014). This is equivalent to the amount of water in roughly 134 Olympic size

swimming pools. This situation is not unique to China. As water becomes one of the world's most valuable resources, it is a problem the golf industry is aware of and claims to be taking measures to address (The R&A 2020). In China, this has not escaped the eyes of the government, nor of state-run media outlets, where rumours about golf course water consumption circulate. For example, in 2014 a staff member at a Beijing course "revealed" to *Xinhua* that when water prices had been high in the past, the club had stolen water from the local well in order to reduce costs (Zhang and Gao 2014). A cause for further concern later in the article is the issue of pollutants. Quoting Yin Qing- an environmental researcher- they estimate that:

> An 18-hole golf course covering an area of 1,000 acres of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium fertilizers, fungicides, and pesticides is applied at least 13 tons per month, and less than half of these chemical fertilizers and pesticides are absorbed by the lawn, and most of them follow the rain. From the gutter to the nearby reservoirs and rivers. (Zhang and Gao 2014)

One golf course closed for violations related to water was CTS Tycoon Golf Course in Shenzhen. A document issued by the board outlines the course was closed because:

> [T]he Bao'an District Government of Shenzhen, the PRC (the "**District Government**") issued a reminder (the "**Notice**") to CTS Tycoon (Shenzhen) Golf Club, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Company, and demanded it to close down the CTS Tycoon Golf Course and related facilities which was built in the drinking water source protection zone in Tiegang reservoir, within ten days from the issue date of the Notice. (CTS Board 2017)

Overall, the use of large amounts of land, water, and the potential for pollution have worked against golf's reputation in China. China Daily reported that in the first six months of 2011 group petition cases provoked by land acquisition and relocation drastically increased, including 34 reports of illegal golf projects, an increase of 31% compared to 2010 (Zheng 2011). One might imagine that all this would signal the death knell for golf in China. However, despite these harsh restrictions, golf grew at an unprecedented rate during this period. This is surprising given it was illegal to build new courses. Growth was in part because of the creative use of a legal loophole, hiding a golf course as a leisure or tourism complex.

3.3.2 "Don't call it a golf course": continued growth despite restrictions

Despite the ban on building new golf courses, by 2010, there were roughly 400 more golf courses than in 2004 (Shi 2011). This growth in the face of limitations not only created hundreds of courses operating illegally, spurring future restrictions, but also demonstrates the ineffective nature of these restrictions. Governmental attempts to limit golf were unsuccessful primarily because of two key factors: the ease of hiding a golf course and corruption. Here, I will explore the ease of hiding a golf course, before proceeding to address corruption in section 3.4.

What I term 'hiding' a golf course is composed of two separate elements, both related to land use: the geographical and physical nature of the golf course, which can enable them to go unnoticed; and the practice of registering courses as 'gated communities', or 'sports parks', thus skirting bans. The former is perhaps an unintentional side effect of topographical conventions, such as lining courses with large trees or shrubbery, and of the space required to build a golf course. Of the courses across China which I visited, most were either on the outskirts of metropolitan areas, or in otherwise empty areas of the city. With a keen eye it might be possible to spot a golf course, in particular when driving from an airport to the city, as airports share similar space requirements. However, generally speaking, it is not easy to happen upon a golf course.

Simply put, due to their seclusion, golf courses can fly under the radar. This is highlighted in a 2011 *China Daily* article which discusses Firestone golf course in Shenzhen:

> Golfers at Firestone may be able to notice the 58 villas that stand on the course's grounds. But to do so, they must have sharp eyes; most of them are hidden by trees and thick foliage. It is those buildings, which the course owners are suspected of putting up without first acquiring the appropriate permits, that have raised the government's hackles.
>
> And that is not the only reason inspectors are paying a little extra attention to the course. Also of concern to them is the fact that the land at Firestone was never officially designated as a golf course. It was instead set aside in 2002 for a project named The Guangming Public Sports Park.
>
> "It somehow turned into a quasi-exclusive golf club three years later," said an anonymous Shenzhen resident (Shi 2011).

As explained in this article, a more deliberate way in which golf courses are 'hidden', is by masking them as other projects when applying for land and planning approvals. As the Dean of Shenzhen University's College of Golf explains: "Nobody's going to yell out, 'I'm going to build a golf course'– it would be foolish to do that" (Shi 2011). This sentiment is echoed by Zhu Maoyuan, a partner at a Beijing law firm: "I have never seen developers and local governments use 'golf course' as a project name or for land use purposes when seeking approval" (Jim and Shao 2014). In this practice, golf courses are often veiled as, and in turn used to enhance the appeal of residential projects (Giroir 2007). Or, are officially registered as sport or leisure parks. Creative use of a legal loophole in this manner has enabled the continued growth of golf courses, and as will be explored in depth in the final section of this chapter, has shaped the nature of golf facilities in China, situating them firmly within leisure. However, golf courses have not skirted these bans alone. Despite the central government's hostility towards golf, for many local officials, golf has become space for *guanxi,* a means of bolstering their region economically, and of course, a favourite pastime. This local support has helped the golf industry to thrive.

3.4 'To forge iron, one must be strong': Xi Jinping, golf, corruption and *Guanxi*

With Xi Jinping's new political era, came a new focus for golf course restrictions. Though many leaders before Xi in the post-Mao era have initiated anti-corruption drives, Xi's have been the most intense in quantity, duration, and reach (Keliher and Wu 2016; Miller 2013; Wedeman 2014; Yuen 2014). One of the targets of Xi's anti-corruption campaigns has been the golf course. This is for two interlocking reasons. First, the continued growth of golf despite restrictions is in part a result of local officials either turning a blind eye, or having an active involvement in new, often illegal, golf projects. Second, golf has become a site for, and means of, bribery. As a result, Xi Jinping placed restrictions on officials playing golf.

As may be expected, this was the most difficult part of this topic to research. Amongst those I spoke to in the industry a simple narrative emerged; corruption is something that happens elsewhere. The most concrete discussion I had about corruption was with a staff member at a club, who though not connected to the golf side of the industry had worked at the club for decades. He told me that officials used to come, but following Xi Jinping's ban on officials playing, there have been significantly fewer. A

fiercely patriotic person, he was pleased that the issue of corrupt officials was being addressed. Despite the difficulty connected to people's reluctance to discuss golf and corruption, rumours circulated. I was told by a number of people that illegal clubs would have a government contact who would warn them when inspections would be happening, so they would simply turn off the lights and chain the gates that day, creating the illusion they had closed down. Also in circulation were rumours about courses turning off CCTV cameras when high ranking officials came to play.[20] This section will begin by providing an overview of Xi Jinping's policy on corruption for context, before proceeding to demonstrate how these campaigns have impacted the golf industry, why golf has become a target, and how nonetheless golf has continued to grow.

3.4.1 Xi Jinping and Corruption

As Andrew Wedeman (2014) outlines, in November 2011, British businessman and Beijing resident Neil Heywood was found dead in a Chongqing hotel room. The initial police report attributed his death to alcohol poisoning, but what followed became one of the largest Chinese political scandals of the decade. Shortly after Heywood's death, the head of Chongqing's Public Security Bureau, Wang Liqun, went to the US Consulate in Chengdu to try and apply for political asylum. He allegedly told them that Gu Kailai, the wife of Bo Xilai, the Party Chief in Chongqing, had murdered Heywood, and that Bo himself was involved in a number of corrupt dealings. Many within the party believed that Zhou Yongkang, a powerful force within the party, had been pushing Bo as an alternative to Xi Jinping to succeed Hu Jintao (Wedeman 2014). This led some to argue that corruption became a political weapon deployed to remove challenges to Xi. Either way, this scandal set the tone for Xi to make anti-corruption "a centrepiece of his agenda right after he came to power" (Yuen 2014:41). This is apparent in his first speech as Party General Secretary. Using language which would not go amiss on a golf, course Xi declared:

> To forge iron, one must be strong. Our responsibility is to work with all comrades in the party, to make sure the Party supervises its own conduct and enforces strict discipline, effectively deals with the prominent issues facing the Party, earnestly improves the working style of the Party and maintains close ties with the people. (Yuen 2014:41)

[20] Golden Valley was built with the proper permits and is not implicated in what follows.

Xi was far from the first to initiate this kind of anti-corruption drive. Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao before him had campaigns of their own, though these were significantly less intense. As Wedeman comments on earlier attempts:

> Many are also convinced that although the CCP claims to be engaged in a "war on corruption," the fight is a form of Beijing Opera— what Monty Python called "Bad Red Guard Theater"—in which actors frantically run about the stage amidst a great din and occasionally drag out a "villain" for a public pillorying. But for all the sound and fury, it is just a show, and the only corrupt officials who get caught are the small fry, the unlucky, the clueless, and those without political allies. (Wedeman 2012)[21]

Xi Jinping's measures against corruption have sustained for a longer period of time, and targeted higher-ranking members of the party than before, going after both 'tigers' and 'flies'.

Xi moved to give the Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) greater autonomy from local government and increased the number of inspection offices. He also gave investigators a formalised set of administrative regulations detailing the six conditions for which a leader can be removed "including disrespecting and exploiting subordinates and violating Party regulations, and five conditions of shirking responsibility that will lead to removal, including nepotism, engaging in factionalism, and violating moral codes" (Keliher and Wu 2016:12–13).

Alongside more obvious areas for corruption, such as banquets, red envelopes, and prostitution, golf has also been targeted. In 2015 Xi Jinping issued a decree banning CCP members from using public funds to purchase golf memberships or accepting them as gifts (Wei 2017; Phillips 2016; Ramzy 2015). Moreover, in Guangdong, party officials were forbidden from playing golf during work hours "to prevent unclean behaviour." The provincial anticorruption agency also established a hotline where citizens could report officials for "playing with people connected to one's job, traveling on golf-related junkets or holding positions on the boards of golf clubs" (Ramzy 2015). This 2015 ban was at best misunderstood, at worst hyperbolised by many anglophone media outlets, who reported that party members were banned from playing in any capacity (BBC 2015; Blanchard 2015; Gray 2015). In 2016, this 'ban' was clarified when the Central Commission for Discipline

[21] Dr Jakob Klein has kindly informed me that this was not Monty Python, but in fact a 1978 Saturday Night Live sketch titled 'Bad Red Chinese Ballet', starring Dan Ackroyd as critic Leonard Pith-Garnell.

and Inspection run newspaper *Discipline Inspection and Supervision News* stated that "[p]laying golf itself is not a wrongdoing" (Beall 2016; China Daily 2016), but that officials simply had to pay out of their own pockets to play.

Though not an outright ban, these regulations made golf more politically dangerous. As Allan Zhang, a course design associate in one of IMG's[22] offices in China comments: "I think a lot of officials who were playing golf are still keeping quite a low profile…Most of them are trying to stay away from golf." (Wei 2017). Moreover, this new focus on golf led to renewed crackdown and closures. This directly impacted the second annual China Tour in 2015, which had to cancel two of its tournaments as a result of closures: "China Tour organizers were left scrambling, not knowing whether the government would wipe more courses off the tournament calendar" (Cendrowski 2016). This uncertainty is also reflected in tournament sponsorship. Whereas most tournaments elsewhere have large sponsors, in China potential sponsors are wary, leaving many competitions sponsored by the course itself or associated real estate developers.

The potential for corruption exists in golf in three key ways: golf club memberships may be given as gifts to officials or they may use governmental money to pay for play; interested parties may take officials to play golf as a means of currying favour; and finally officials may act as a 'protective umbrella', shielding golf courses from closure or restriction. First, I will explore how *guanxi*, the art of making relationships, and corruption can be defined, before continuing to explore these three ways in which golf has been considered a space for corruption.

3.4.2 The art of guanxi, the act of corruption

> "Golf can satisfy some officials' vanity, corrupting their lifestyle, which can lead to damage to the Party's image and the erosion of officials' ability to serve," Su Wei, an academic at a school for Communist party cadres in Chongqing (in China Daily 2016)

Within the study of corruption lies one of the key paradoxes of the history of golf in China: a large part of the appeal of golf has been its utility in forming business

[22] IMG (International Management Group), is an American international sports, events and talent management company. They have a strong presence in the golf industry in golf course design, development, marketing and golf club management. Here, it should be noted that professionally I have worked alongside IMG, but this has never overlapped with my research.

relationships, often with officials, but simultaneously this potential marks it as a prime site for corruption, and thus a target for anti-corruption campaigns. At the centre of this is a question which historically has been a stronghold of the anthropology of China; what is the difference between the culturally-loaded concept of relationship building, *guanxi*, and corruption. By nature, answers to this question are determined by how both *guanxi* and corruption are defined. This section will begin by outlining working definitions for these terms, before proceeding explore the position of golf within this debate.

Though seemingly self-explanatory, *guanxi* has been plagued by a multitude of definitions. Simply, it can be defined as relationships or connections. However, it also implies that the ties created are built upon exchange and reciprocity. Distinct from outright gift-giving, it reflects a complex set of philosophical concerns, formal ideals, and cultural traditions. As such, in order to analyse its relevance to corruption, the parameters of its practice must first be established. Due to the variety of ways in which *guanxi* is viewed, ultimately there is no such solid definition to be found. Rather, the study of guanxi benefits from a flexible approach.

Early scholarly work on guanxi took two distinct perspectives: the first considered guanxi theoretically as a unique element of the Chinese social fabric, which is clear in the work of Liang Shuming, Max Weber, and Fei Xiaotong. This view of *guanxi* is based on Confucian ethics of interpersonal kin-relations, which stress the creation of renqing- which loosely translates as 'personal relationships'.[23] In the second perspective, scholars such as Ezra Vogel (1965) shifted the focus towards particularism and personal interest. Accordingly, framing *guanxi* gift giving as predominantly instrumental. This distinction between the ideal-type, the notion, and purposeful utilisation, the practice, is still visible in more recent work. Guthrie comments that:

> While the institution of guanxi is grounded in the personal relationships and human sentiments that arise from the concept of renqing, guanxi practice is the instrumental manipulation of these relations and sentiments. (Guthrie 1998:257)

[23]Wang and Pak have defined it as such: "Renqing (personal relationship) is the description of the emotional distance between people, a tool to be used, exchanged or even traded, and a basis of judgement on matters and personal interests" (Wang and Pak 2015:107).

This 'notion', or institution, of *guanxi* is often considered quite separate from corruption, instead it might be understood as helping friends, or doing favours. By contrast the strategic deployment of *guanxi* practice could be viewed as similar to corruption.

Overall, the distinction between the notion and practice of *guanxi*, which Guthrie makes explicit, leaves little space for manoeuvre. Mayfair Yang in her critique of Guthrie's analysis outlines an analogy which shows the inseparability of sentiment and gain:

> For Guthrie's state managers to declare that they do not engage in *guanxi* practice, but only have *guanxi* in business just like any other business men in the world makes friends and partners, is like a male Ivy League Alumnus in the United States of the 1950s denying he benefitted from the institutional advantage of an Old Boy's 'network' that an Ivy League experience conferred. (Yang 2002:470)

This example not only demonstrates the obvious; that relationships intertwined with instrumentality are not unique to China, but also shows difficulty in separating the notion of relationships from instrumental manoeuvring. This is echoed in the work of Alan and Josephine Smart, who dismiss Guthrie's distinction between the notion and practice of *guanxi* as an over-simplistic distinction between 'good *guanxi'* and 'bad *guanxi*' (Smart and Smart 2000).

An alternative, and more flexible, framework can been found in Kipnis' concept of 'versioning', which he draws from Hebdige (1987). 'Versioning' was originally employed to refer to the multiple reworkings of a song, theme, or style that occur through continual reproduction:

> There are no single points of origin, and there are no single examples that represent the pure essence of a given song, theme, or cultural practice. Versioning allows one to envision both change and continuity over time and makes psychological essentialism impossible. (Kipnis 1997:121)

By applying the idea of versioning to *guanxi*, a versatile approach is encouraged. Though it does not offer a practical working definition, it offers a flexible understanding through which *guanxi* can be considered in a more porous manner, at times adjacent to corruption, but often far from inherently corrupt. 'Versioning' enables the relationship between corruption and *guanxi* in the golfing sphere to be viewed both contextually and more broadly. For golf, where laws around corruption are quite specific while also tied to broader trends, this flexibility is crucial.

Having analysed the parameters of *guanxi,* the same attention must be afforded to corruption. According to the World Bank, corruption is "the abuse of public office for private gain." (World Bank 1997).[24] As a result, corruption might simply be considered *guanxi* involving state officials. Yet, as observed by Haller and Shore, this definition is over simplistic. Not only does it reduce corruption to a problem of dishonest individuals, but also assumes 'public office' and 'private gain' are fixed entities. In fact, they are far from clear cut (Haller and Shore 2005:2–3). Given the difficulty in definition, Haller and Shore, borrowing a phrase from Levi-Strauss, comment that: "corruption is 'good to think with.'" (Haller and Shore 2005:9). Yet, it is not easy to think with. In every country corruption has a local history and internal variance. China is no exception. Much work has taken a single definition as its starting point; Li (2011), for example, draws from a legal definition, whereas Smart and Hsu take the populist understanding, and thus have a more lenient view of corruption (Smart and Hsu 2017).

Drawing Kipnis' use of 'versioning' *guanxi* into corruption, I argue that corruption, and its relationship to *guanxi,* can only be understood contextually. In the exploration of golf and corruption, definitions are perhaps more straightforward than in other context. This is because the ways in which golf may officially be used as part of corruption has, by and large, been outlined by the government. This includes using public money to buy golf memberships, or receiving them as gifts, playing golf during business hours, and serving on the board of golf clubs.

4.2.i. Giving memberships as gifts

As outlined above, golf club memberships may be given as gifts to party officials to sway favour. With increasing anti-corruption measures many officials have been swept up due to crimes relating to receiving golf membership as a gift or using governmental money to pay for golf. Sun Guoqing- the head of the Ministry of Transport's planning department- was accused of using public funds to pay for golf, Han Jiang, an official in Shenzhen reportedly received over $1million in bribes, the largest of which came in the form of a golf club membership (Ramzy 2015). Liu Chunsong- a former Deputy Mayor in Fujian- was

[24] This definition was established by the World Bank in 1997 and has been employed as the working definition in work since (see: World Bank 2015).

given a golf card worth approximately $2,170 from "people whose interests were under his influence" (China Daily 2016).

Gifting golf club memberships falls under Xi Jinping's anti-corruption measures related to golf, and particularly in the case of Liu Chunsong, would also be classed as corruption under the World Bank's definition "the abuse of public office for private gain" (World Bank 1997). However, as a form of gift giving it could also be considered under the umbrella of *guanxi* formation and solidification. As a business consultant at a large golf course who I interviewed explained, outside of golf memberships, other common gifts for businessmen or officials include golf clubs, equipment and apparel: "During the time it was illegal for politicians to play, the golf industry was negatively impacted, not just as politicians would do a lot of business on the golf course, but also because previously many people would buy golf equipment as gifts/bribes for politicians so many shops suffered too." The utility of such gifts in the formation of *guanxi* is derived from catering to a known hobby, the high cost of membership and equipment, and occasionally the difficulty of access.

4.2.ii. "It is better to invite the leader to play than to invite them to dinner"

> A business owner who is good at golf revealed his business secrets, "It is better to invite the leader to play, than to invite the leader to dinner, an exchange of blows may lead to friendship[25], with a swing, *guanxi* is established. (Ou and Bai 2014)

Another way in which *guanxi* and corruption collide in golf is in the practice of inviting officials to play golf. As expressed in the quote above, playing golf together can be a strong way of solidifying *guanxi*. Indeed, the appeal of golf as a site of *guanxi* lies not only in its position as a site of social and class meaning, but also in terms of the time one is able to spend together. On average, a round of 18 holes will take about four hours. In a survey of 213 golf course managers, designed to assess the 'luxurisation' of the golf industry in China, Congshan Zhang et al. highlight *guanxi* as a key source of golf's appeal:

> Guanxi is frequently mentioned as one of the reasons contributing to

[25] Here the idiom *bu da bu xiangshi* can be interpreted as meaning without discord there is no concord, but da also means to play, as in to play golf. So, the meaning can be interpreted as play on words "without playing [golf], you do not get to know each other."

> people playing golf. As suggested by Kaynak et al. (Kaynak, Wong, and Leung 2013), catering to another's pleasure is one of the keys to building up the Guanxi. Interviewee A expressed: "Many people I know told me people play golf to build Guanxi with others. This may be one of the reasons that differentiate golf in China from other countries. Some people play golf to build a connection with other people. The purpose of this connection is the benefit they could get from each other. Golfers who can afford to play golf must have peers with a similar level of income. It is possible they have the same position in society. The connection between them is more accurate and has more chance for mutual benefit (Zhang, Omar, and Tjandra 2016:25)

Similarly, the caddies and caddie trainers who I worked with explained to me that in terms of doing business, it was best to be a mid-level golfer; if you are bad, no one will want to play with you as you will slow the game down, if you are too good it will not be fun for your companions.

4.2.iii. The 'Protective umbrella' and the utility of golf

Wedeman considers that as the Chinese economy grew, corruption shifted from individual forms to "collective corruption." Thus, allowing corrupt officials to "pursue greater illegal gains and to reduce the risk of exposure by forming protective networks—known colloquially as "protective umbrellas" (Wedeman 2012:6–7). This concept of 'protective umbrellas' has also been applied to golf in China, particularly in Chinese media. "Who is the protective umbrella that helps to protect from the bleach?" (Zhang and Gao 2014) asks one *Xinhua* article. Indeed, this 'protective umbrella' of local government officials is often reported as the reason that golf continues to grow despite various national prohibitions. For example, in Wenzhou in 2014, the media reportedly exposed more than 20 leading officials who had taken jobs or positions at golf courses (Ou and Bai 2014). It is also suspected that in some areas officials may even have invited their development:

> Industry insiders who declined to give their names also said local governments have been known to turn a blind eye to the construction of illegal courses. Many officials see the projects, the insiders explained, as a way to attract wealthy residents to their communities (Shi 2011).

This is in part due to the utility of golf as a strategy for local development. As a result, golf has become a cornerstone of the tourism strategy in many regions, most notably Hainan. But also in places like Qingdao and Shandong (Regional Economic Department 2013). The utility of golf in the promotion of urbanisation and tourism has meant that "illegal courses

in the country have sprung up like bamboo, growing, managing, and expanding" (Ou and Bai 2014).

Conducting business on the golf course is far from inherently Chinese. However, in China this element of golf, combined with class connotations, and land use, have worked to leave golf vulnerable to governmental hostility, creating an industry which has at times operated in a murky space on the fringes of the law. As a result, it is also one which is consistently volatile, flexible and uncertain.

3.5 Impacts

> If you want to learn about golf in China, you have to understand China's development.
> -Interview with Li Jingyi, the owner of a caddie training company.

The complex history of golf in China, which mirrors central movements within China's national history, has drastically impacted the culture of golf in China. And, accordingly, the lives and labour of caddies. As a result of the political and legal scrutiny described thus far, golf courses in China have adapted in a manner which has firmly established golf courses as sites of leisure.

3.5.1 Golf as Leisure

As a result of the 2004 restriction which prevented the construction of new golf courses, they are often 'hidden', built as part of residential, leisure, or tourism projects. Consequently, though golf courses in many countries are connected to different kinds of community practices and the clubhouse is a social hub, in China this importance has been entrenched and expanded. In China it is a question of scale, and scale matters. This is perhaps best illustrated by an anecdote a caddie trainer I worked closely with once relayed to me. He told me about a Chinese man who saw a golf course in the United States was for sale, interested in buying it, he went over to view it before purchasing. He was shocked at what he saw: "the course itself was great but had no real clubhouse or entertainment facilities. The man was so confused and didn't buy it. To Chinese people all this stuff is very important." Whether or not the story is true, or an urban myth is unclear, but its existence demonstrates the entrenched importance of the clubhouse.

On this question of facilities, Director Chen, the head of golf at Golden Valley, commented: "This club started with golf, but now it's a combined leisure business. [There is] much more to do here if you don't play golf. This resort is not just for golf, it's for

everybody." Across the golf courses I visited in China, I saw an array of facilities like spas, hot springs, restaurants, museums, shopping centres, hotels, and even waterparks. Moreover, the way in which these facilities are used is often disconnected from golf as a sport. While living inside a golf complex it was not uncommon to see groups of elderly people being bused in to look around, or children's talent shows with large audiences taking place in one of the courtyards. Indeed, many guests may not even know they were at a golf course.

Once when having dinner with a friend, she told me about a spa she had been to that day. Though she was a health and beauty aficionado, who was born in the city and had lived there most of her life, this was the first time she had been to this particular spa. She described the strange setting, a large western style building with marble columns, surrounded by what she thought were fields. For such a densely populated city, this was unusual. She assumed it was a hotel because of the people waiting by the door to take her bags. She took out her phone to show me the listing on *Meituan* (an app similar to Yelp which offers reviews and discounts). Seeing the name I realised, the spa was in fact part of one of the local golf courses. Similarly, I visited one golf course which also had a series of hot springs. While bathing, other guests struck up conversation. None who I spoke to were golfers, but rather came for the springs. One older lady, for example, was a teacher in a local school, and would come regularly with her friends for health reasons. She spoke me through the various benefits of the different temperature of springs. I tried to shift the conversation towards golf, but she was uninterested. While often fairly empty, both the hot springs, and other facilities function as a 'third place' (Oldenburg 1989), to play board games, drink tea, eat, smoke cigarettes, shop, and see friends.

These additional features not only protect golf courses from the governmental restrictions, but also situate golf squarely as part of the wider leisure industry beyond sports. Between the spas, large pristine shopping centres, and fancy restaurants found at golf courses across China the spaces created are upper class, expensive, and often exclusive. This directly shapes the role of the caddie.

3.5.2 Caddies as producers of sport and leisure

John W. Loy in his definition of sport, establishes three levels of producers. Primary producers are contestants who play a crucial role in the production of the game. He likens them to the production of actors in a play (Loy 1968:13). Next are secondary producers,

people who are not actually competing but who perform tasks which have an impact on the outcome of the game. Under this bracket, Loy considers "club owners, coaches, officials, trainers, and the like" (Loy 1968:13). Finally, tertiary producers may be understood as service personnel who are actively involved, but their involvement has no impact on the game. Caddies do not actually play golf while working, so cannot be classed as a primary producer. Instead, they may be better categorised as secondary or tertiary producers, depending on the requirements of the guest. Where a guest asks for technical advice on which club to use or tips on the character of the course their involvement will fall into the secondary category. Where a guest requires minimal assistance from the caddie, and their role is handing the guest their clubs and keeping score, they may be better understood as tertiary producers.

However, caddies are not only producers of sport. As explored above, due to the history of golf in China, golf courses are not just spaces of sport, but also, and perhaps more importantly, of elite and expensive leisure. Accordingly, as will be explored in Chapter Six, a large part of the training caddies receive is centred not only on the technicalities of golf, but also skills in affective labour. They are trained to make the guest feel at ease, at leisure. As will be explored in greater depth in the following chapter, based on gendered understanding of skillsets, due to this focus on leisure and service, women are considered to be better at caddying.

3.6 Conclusion: the spring of golf in China

The restrictions and obstacles to the growth of golf in China detailed above might leave the impression that golf has a bleak future, but many inside the industry have a sense of optimism. Though golf in China has been plagued by governmental restrictions, this may leave room for the industry to develop in a more regulated and legitimate way. Indeed, on hearing that the government had shut down a total of 111 golf courses, Richard Walne, the President of the Asian Golf Industry Federation, said: "It came across as negative, but I actually thought it was positive" He continues, "My mind went to the (approximately) 500 courses that are officially legal" (Wei 2017). The Manager of a large course told me that he felt "positive" about the future of golf, and that "the government is supervising this business and they don't want it to be out of control." Toby Pearce commented: "this clamp down was a good thing, as many courses were being built without the right permits, relying on corruption and bribery. Now the industry is cleaner and more regulated." As

outlined, it is a series of paradoxes which work to both grow and limit golf's development in China, and perhaps the greatest irony is that during a period where golf has been consistently limited, it has also grown astronomically. I discussed this recent history and the future of golf with Li Jingyi, the manager of a caddie training centre, who had herself begun working in the industry as a caddie nearly three decades ago. When I asked her what she thought the future of golf would be, considering the recent closure of many courses, she told me that she had the same conversation with some of her students the day before. She relayed to me the metaphor she had told them to describe the situation, and future of golf:

> Say you have a tree in your garden. Your first thought is what? Quickly grow big. What will the tree be like when it grows? Do you know? You don't know, you just hope it grows quickly. The start of the golf industry in China was the same. Then from one golf course grew 10, 20, 100, 200, 300, until in 2014 there were more than 600 courses in China. Just like the tree it grew big incredibly fast. You're happy right? But you suddenly discover the tree has become overgrown, the shape isn't what you wanted it to be. So, you must grab the shears. You must use something to straighten it. Golf is undergoing the same kind of process.

When I asked her who was undertaking this process, she told me it was the government. As important as this sense of optimism is that this caddie trainer had been having this discussion with her students.

Golf continues to grow in China, and the history of this growth impacts the contemporary position it finds itself in. Golf's history in China has led to the pruning and reshaping of the metaphorical tree, which has in turn shaped the nature of golf in China, and thus the type of person imagined to be best suited to the role of caddie. Building on the work in this chapter, the next chapter will establish why women are considered the ideal candidate, and in turn explain why Golden Valley is now struggling to recruit young women. In Chapter Seven, the insecurity due to restrictions will be examined and I will argue that as a result, the industry is professionalizing.

CHAPTER FOUR

Recruitment: Becoming a Caddie

> "Previously it was easier to find pretty girls [to work here], but now it's getting harder."
> -Interview with a Manager

4.1 Introduction: the shifting ground of recruitment

Day One of caddie training: From the moment you drive under the large stone archway and up a wide palm-lined broadway, the highly curated tone of Golden Valley is set. On the way to my first day training with caddies I sat on the shuttle bus looking out of the window at the fast-approaching clubhouse and hotel. It was the start of summer in Southern China and the temperature had already begun to rise. As I got off the bus, I was simultaneously hit by the near 40-degree heat and the sound of a grandiose fountain in front of the entrance, interspersed with the chirping of birds and faint hum of insects. Stepping inside the air-conditioned lobby this sensory experience is tempered. The tall room is peacefully quiet, and the smell of sweet perfume hangs in the air. This cool marble lined, gold-detailed, foyer is where I would be meeting Liu, the caddie training manager at 9am. But it was not yet nine, so I stood anxiously watching well-heeled guests walk past. Liu's photograph on WeChat is not very clear, so I worried that I might miss her. I gingerly made eye contact with everyone passing just in case. There was little cause for concern, Liu recognised me instantly and strode over.

We made small talk as she walked me to the caddie management office. As we descended lower into the basement of the complex, luxurious dark wooden furniture and crystal chandeliers were replaced with concrete walls and posters with information for staff. Notably, a board with the number of guests booked to play that day, photographs of employees who had recently won accolades, and a poster of Xi Jinping. The office itself is a large room with several rows of desks, most were empty but scattered with personal items thrown down as if in haste. After going through some admin, we got into a golf cart and Liu drove me over to the course to meet a group of caddies in training. The caddies were grouped in a semi-circle around the tee box where a teacher stood, driver in hand. Approaching, what struck me first was how many men there were. In a preliminary

interview with Director Chen some weeks earlier, he had informed me that like many others, Golden Valley was increasingly employing young men. However, as I approached this group of caddies in training, the reality that this was not the solely women workforce I had anticipated struck me properly for the first time. Caddies are given different colour uniforms based on the gender listed in their documentation, with women wearing purple, and men wearing blue. What I saw was an unexpected sea of blue.

Final day of fieldwork: During my final week in China, I received a friend request on WeChat from Li Jun. He had seen a post I had written in a group for caddies: "I see that you want to chat with caddies." He then explained that he had worked as a caddie for two years, but recently had been unable to find work. He suspected this was because of his gender: "Ultimately, [golf courses] don't want to hire men, so I'm out of a job." We made plans to meet two days later. He had invited me to his house where he would cook, or to go for a run. For safety reasons, and fear of being too out of breath to ask questions or listen to their answer, I suggested we get a soft drink instead. I decided on a Starbucks near his house, having learnt that participants would only let me pay if we were at a 'Western' establishment. I bought us both a cup of tea and we started chatting. He told me that he had majored in computing at university, and his parents had urged him to get a job in this sector, but as an active person he did not like the idea of an office-based lifestyle. He had, however, worked in HR, then for a start up after graduating where he was earning very little. Around this time, he had a friend who was working at a golf course in Zhejiang province. There were no "good jobs" in his hometown, and he liked the sound of caddying as he would get to work outside. The salary was okay, and he thought that he could learn about business from wealthy golfers, so he got on a train to Zhejiang. After three months training, where most of the other trainees were interns, he began work.

He worked there for two years and was then let go. He decided to move to Shenzhen, where there were lots of golf courses so he thought he could easily find another job as a caddie. Unfortunately, after four months he had not managed, so started working as a security guard. He told me that in Shenzhen "clubs weren't hiring men." He had spoken to the HR manager of one golf club who had said this to him explicitly. Moreover, Li Jun highlighted that: "Shenzhen is a high-pressure city. Salaries are not that high but rent is really high and lots of people have to travel for an hour or two to get to work." He had heard that because the weather was worse in Xinjiang, Beijing, and Hebei it was easier

to get a job as a caddie in these regions, so he might move there. There were rumours that there was a course in Jiangsu which was known for hiring many men, so that was a possibility too.

Though he enjoyed working as a caddie, he also did not see it as an entirely good fit for other gendered reasons: "Men have to marry and embark on a career (*chengjia liye*), the pressure is higher. To get married men must have a house, car, and steady job. [As a caddie] the tips and salary aren't high enough." Ultimately, he wanted to return to his hometown and open a milk tea shop. I asked him why he thought so many clubs preferred to hire women. Surprisingly he understood and agreed with the reasons. He said that women are better at service, and that men's temperament is not that good. Though Li Jun was slightly jaded, and certainly I met many working caddies who were men, this idea that women were better suited to this service facing job was one I heard repeatedly elsewhere.

The two examples above, which bookend my fieldwork, may seem at first to be at odds, pulling in different directions. However, they are in fact two sides of the same coin. The first tells the story of an industry which increasingly employs men. The second suggests that men are not the desired employee. Both are true. This contradiction lies at the heart of this research. The caddie industry which has been dominated by women has had to adapt to decreasing availability of young women interested in doing this kind of arduous, outdoor manual labour. Simultaneously, associations of perceived femininity being ideal for this service facing job persist.

This chapter, through a focus on recruitment, will explore this central tension. First, explaining that women are seen to be better suited to the role because of gendered conceptions of service ability. Then, will address why despite this, there are now fewer women working as caddies. Next, taking a macro approach, the chapter will situate shifts in recruitment practices within the larger Chinese context, explaining that this shift has become necessary not only because of industry specific factors, but larger trends such as the one-child policy, and vocational education. Finally, the chapter will show how these movements have impacted recruitment methods. In doing so, demonstrating that the case study of caddie recruitment reinforces Woronov and Hansen's findings that vocational education in China has enabled flexibility amidst fluctuations in the labour market (Hansen 2012, 2015, 2018. Hansen & Woronov 2013. Woronov 2012, 2015, 2016). However, flexibility in recruitment in this context also diminishes the employer's potential for

choice of applicant. Ultimately, as the young people from rural areas previously recruited to work as caddies are absorbed into vocational education, Golden Valley has become dependent on the recruitment of interns from vocational schools. In turn, the gendered nature of the selection of vocational majors means that the pool of applications Golden Valley is sent by these vocational institutions is predominantly male.

4.2 Who?

4.2.1 Conceptions of Gender

Who is considered the ideal employee for a role is dependent on how the role situated. As shown in the previous chapter, golf courses in China are elite spaces of leisure. The role of the caddie is thus inherently customer focused. The customer at Golden Valley is imagined to be a man. This image of the customer is not baseless. While training at Golden Valley, whenever guests passed by, I would note down their gender. Of the 206 guests I saw, less than ten percent were women. This informal observation was supported by Director Chen, who had a similar estimate. I often heard the phrase "*nannü dapei ganhuo bulei*." This roughly translates as: "when men and women are together, work is not tiresome." It relies on ideas about gendered balance. Alongside this preference for women to accompany male guests, exist ideas about gendered characteristics. Caddies who are men were perceived as having different abilities to those who are women. The table below includes quotations from caddies, caddie trainers, and managers which demonstrate the prevalence of this view:

With a woman caddie, guests are looking for temperament:	**With a man caddie, guests are looking for ability:**
-When the guests play casually, they would want a woman. -Their temperament is better. -Women can take better care of the guests. -When a woman speaks it is nicer to listen to them. -Women are not very good at math, which can affect their ability to calculate distance. -Women tend to be slower. -It is hard work, so women do not want to do it. -The impression is that women have better service attitudes. -Women caddies are part of the experience, they are purely there to look after the men.	-When the guests are playing a tournament, they would want a man. -Men have a bad temperament. -Men may get mad. -Men caddies can play golf, which makes it easier for them to know what the guests want. - Men caddies often practice a lot, because they see a career in golf as a good way to make money. Many go onto work as golf teachers. -Men are faster. -Men can handle the physical exertion of being a caddie better.

These imagined set of attributes are likely unsurprising for those familiar with gender in China, and indeed in many other contexts. But crucially, they feed into ideas about who makes an ideal caddie. The above demonstrates that men are considered better in terms of physicality and knowledge. However, for the casual play which dominates work as a caddie, this is trumped by women's perceived service ability. This was perhaps best explained to me by Zemin.

After training with caddies during the height of summer in 2019, I returned to Golden Valley that winter to meet a smaller batch of new recruits. On my first day back, Teacher Feng offered to take me to the HR Department, where some new caddies had arrived that morning. When we got there, the new caddies were filing into the room, with their suitcases in hand. Teacher Feng introduced me to Zemin, a manager in the HR department. Zemin was a tall, smartly dressed, and friendly man. Teacher Feng explained who I was and what I was doing. Zemin told me that he had been working with caddies for 20 years and if I had any questions, I could ask him. He told me to take a seat while he gave a brief introduction and provided the caddies with their contracts. While the caddies looked over the contracts, he took me out to the hallway to chat. I mentioned that I was particularly interested in gender. "Because the guests are men, they like to have women accommodate them," he told me. "In China people think that men and women together in that context is better. A man and a man in that context is not very suitable." This is not necessarily new information, indeed there have been many explorations of the gendered nature of service work in China (Zheng 2007, 2009; Hanser 2008; Otis 2012). However, what is different here is that it is no longer possible to meet the idealised, and gendered, workforce.

4.2.2 Gender in practice

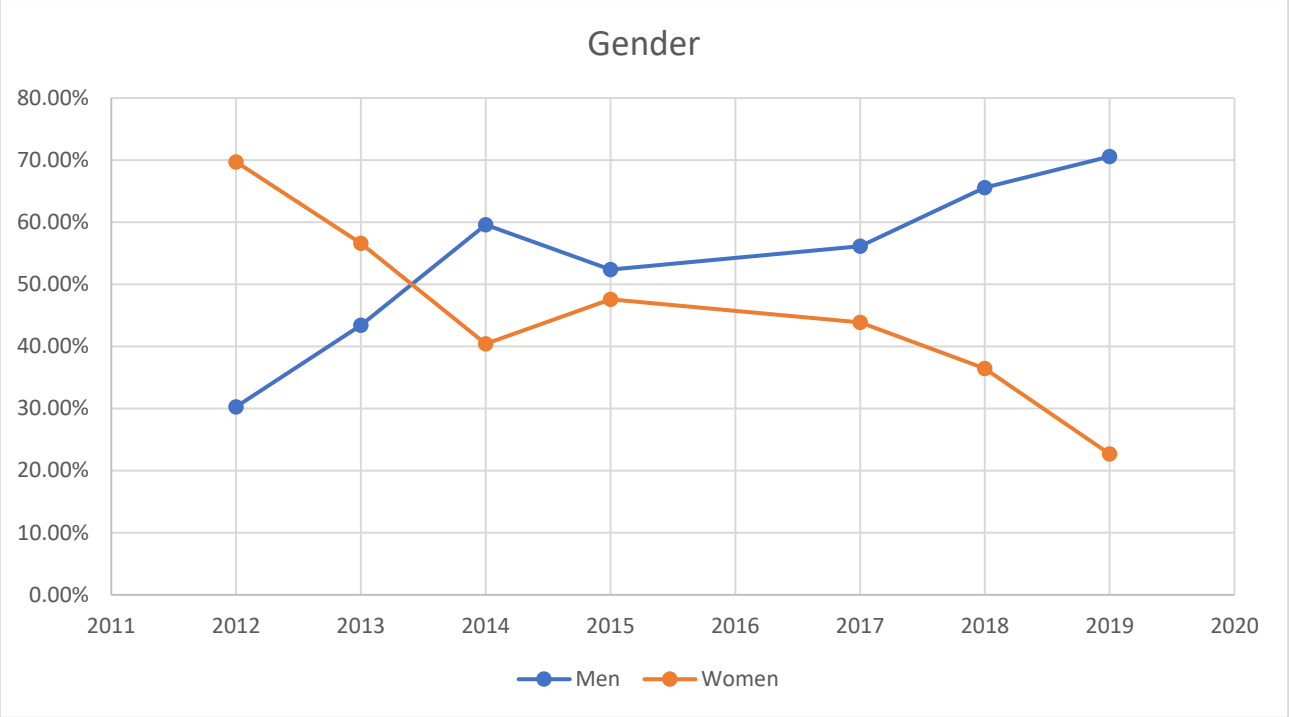
The idealised image of a recruit did not materialise at Golden Valley. The increased employment of men has become a necessity, albeit a reluctant one. As Director Chen explained to me:

> Less and less young, youngsters want to join this job. This is not just for the golf business, but for other business as well. It is very hard to hire, to attract these youngsters to do a labour-focused job. It is hard everywhere, for hotels, for restaurants. This is the problem, especially here. Because this place relies a lot on outside labour sources…Before, many [golf clubs] were strictly only hiring women for some reason, you know I do not want to talk too much about

> that. But now they are starting to hire boys, men, as well, because of a lack of resources.

Another manager put it more bluntly: "Previously it was easier to find pretty girls, but now it's getting harder." Alongside confirmation gathered during participant observation and in interviews with former caddies, golf instructors, caddie trainers, and managers, who had been in the industry long enough to observe this shift, I was also able to access recruitment data from Golden Valley. The available records go back to 2012, up until my fieldwork in 2019 and include 2,051 new recruits.

The dataset is not perfect, and there are three unseen areas. First, the gender of 27 recruits not listed. However, as this represents only 1.3% of the total dataset, the impact is marginal. Second, it should be noted that this data pertains only to new recruits, caddies who began working before 2012 are not captured. This group likely includes a higher proportion of women. However, as caddies generally do not stay beyond their late 20s, with some exceptions, this group is decreasing. Finally, it does not include temporary, seasonal labour exchanges from clubs in Northern China. From what I observed training with these northern recruits there were more women. However, they are only working at the club over the winter months. Finally, the switch may be more visible at Golden Valley, where the struggle to recruit is increased by its remote location. Nonetheless, the data available demonstrates a stark shift. As Figure Four (below) shows, in 2012 70% of new recruits were women, by 2019 70% of new recruits were men.



[Figure Four: Recruitment Data from Golden Valley 2012-2019]

A second, and interlocked shift in recruits is that previously young women with no prior experience of golf were hired, often from rural areas. I heard of some instances where golf club managers would go to schools to hold recruitment assemblies. Many former caddies I spoke to had found their job through informal networks. In many instances they had been encouraged by a friend who was already working as a caddie to apply. However, by the time I came to do my fieldwork, most new recruits were interns studying at vocational schools or colleges. Of the 2019 cohort only four out of 119 were 'recruited from society', meaning they were not interning but rather drawn through other channels.

When I asked Zemin his opinion on the shift away from solely women caddies. He told me there were a couple of reasons. First, "women do not really want to do it because it is hard work, they will get a tan, which is ugly. It is hard on their skin. They do not want to eat bitterness."[26] Second, "women are just in it for the job. Men do it because they love golf. After work they may want to go and practice. This means they are more likely to stay in the job longer." There is a dual tension, it is not only that fewer women now apply for this kind of work, but also that this decrease in available women has led to a

[26] As explored in Chapter Two, eating bitterness (*Chiku*) can be translated as enduring hardship.

diversification of recruitment methods towards interns. Of these vocational students studying golf, more are men.

The second factor Zemin raised, that men are more interested in golf also arose in my first encounter with Xiaoling. One afternoon between training a group of us sat in the musty breakroom, Xiaoling handed round nuts for everyone to eat. As we cracked them, slowly making a pile of discarded shells, she told me about her life as a caddie. She had been working at Palm Bay golf course and, like many others, following its closure had been hired by Golden Valley, where she was currently undertaking training. She was the oldest of the group, in her 40s, and had worked as a caddie at several clubs in the province. She had two children, and had taken a break from working while pregnant, but happily returned as she liked her job and loved golf. As we talked, she showed me videos of her and her friends playing, she had a very good swing. I told her that some people I had spoken to had suggested that caddies who are men like to play golf, but that women did not like it as much. I asked her if she thought this was the case. She said not necessarily, she for example really enjoyed golf and would often play after work. At previous clubs where she had worked, Xiaoling would regularly take part in golf tournaments for caddies. She thought that often younger caddies worked so hard that the girls just wanted to rest after work, whereas the boys may still have energy, but that overall, regardless of gender, "to work in the industry you have to have some interest in golf."

Some of my participants enjoyed golf, others did not. This did not divide neatly along gendered lines. Moreover, the gendered shift in recruitment at Golden Valley was stark. Consequently, interest in golf seems an unlikely explanation. What follows will propose potential reasons the golf industry, and in particular Golden valley, now struggle to find "pretty girls" to work as caddies.

4.3 Why?

> Lots of women do not apply to this major because it's considered quite a difficult profession, but lots of male guests still want a woman. When they have a caddie who is a man, they're looking for ability, with a woman caddie they're looking for a good temperament…when a woman speaks it's nicer to listen to them. **Conversation with a caddie**

> We were struggling to find enough women to do the job. It is hard work, so lots of women do not want to do it, it can be physical, and [women] do not want to tan. **Interview with a golf club manager**

The shift to employing a greater number of caddies who are men has not been an entirely active choice made by those hiring, but rather one which has become necessary due to larger movements in China. It is not possible to track the exact cause of shifts in recruitment practices. No one at Golden Valley could pinpoint when interns came into the equation, nor when men began to be hired. Moreover, no one could definitively explain why these two things happened, but many believed they were linked. However, there were various suggested reasons, which this section will explore. Here, there are three key and interrelated areas worth interrogating in greater depth. The first is the one-child policy both culturally and demographically. Second, vocational education, which is absorbing the type of person previously employed from rural areas to work as caddies 'from society'. This in turn links to the final element, the shift towards employing interns. These factors combine in a way that means the socio-economic background of caddies has largely remained similar, but the means of employment and gender ratios have shifted. In addition to these broader movements are industry and site-specific reasons which compound macro-level factors. Thus, further impacting the potential of employing women. This section will first address these industry specific factors, before proceeding to analyse broader national trends.

4.3.1 Industry Specific

Tanning

> **Beauty blogger**: I use Giorgio Armani 6.5, which is the colour number.[27] In Mainland China, most of the time if you go to the mall, or even buy on TianMao[28], [on] the official shop, the maximum you can find is five. You cannot find more than five. Sometimes you can find 5.5. But you cannot find six or 6.5. I buy overseas, or I buy it from Hong Kong or Macao. When I go there, I buy two bottles of foundation, two bottles of this, two bottles of that. As a beauty blogger, often when doing press, they'll have a machine to whiten your skin, a product to whiten your skin… Most brands will have a product to whiten your skin. Olay, Channel, Dior…

[27] This brand of foundation starts at 1.5 ('very fair') and gets darker as the number gets higher. 5.5 is described as 'medium, cool', and 6.5 'medium, warm'.
[28] Tmall (formerly Taobao Mall), is business-to-consumer online retail website operated by the Alibaba Group. Whereas on Taobao anyone with a valid Chinese ID can sell, on Tmall only verified businesses can.

> **Hannah:** It's so surprising, because all their marketing in the West is like love everyone, every skin colour, and then they come to Asia, and all of that is forgotten…
>
> **Beauty blogger:** It becomes standard, if one brand releases a product line [in the West] and they're not concerned with the colour of the skin range, you would probably be considered racist. But in China, it's a totally different story. Nobody will call you a racist… In China you can't find anything more than [skin tone] five.

Having repeatedly heard that a core reason it was difficult to employ women caddies was the fear of tanning, I decided to speak with a friend and successful Chinese beauty blogger about the matter. She had naturally darker skin than is considered conventionally attractive in China. She discussed with me how this impacted her growing up, and her motivation to showcase alternative standards of beauty. To her, it was no surprise that the prospect of tanning was an off-putting element of the job for young women. For many caddies, the question of tanning was inherently linked to romantic prospects. She echoed this, saying that growing up:

> No boy was interested in me at all. We were more buddy-buddies. They all more liked girls with white skin. If you asked them why, you can hardly get any answer, they just say 'because it's pretty.' Where did this pretty come from? Who taught you this is pretty?

She guessed that it might be an old perspective, based on labourers spending long amounts of time outdoors, and accordingly fairer skin was inherently linked to wealth. She considered this perpetuated not just amongst contemporary Chinese actresses, but also reinforced in K-pop, and Korean and Japanese beauty standards and products.

It was not uncommon for caddies in training, who were now spending large amounts of time outdoors, to discuss tanning. This was always in a negative manner. Sleeves were rolled up and skin colours compared. Many of the women bought face coverings to protect themselves from the sun. In one of these conversations, I asked a young woman why she thought this was such a common topic of conversation. She just said that she was afraid of getting a tan. When I asked her why, echoing the boys the beauty blogger encountered in school, she simply said it was "ugly." It was not only the young women who had this concern, but also the young men, although this was to a significantly lesser degree. Rumours circulated that one young man had left because he feared he was getting too tanned. One of the teachers joked that he did not know why this

young man was so scared, because he was from the local region. The implication being that he already thought him very dark. I decided to discuss this with Yuxuan, a particularly frank trainee. He told me that "*Yi bai zhe bai chou, yi hei hui quanrong*" which roughly translates as "your one spot of white skin covers all the drawbacks on your face, whereas a tiny fraction of dark skin ruins your countenance." The focus of this work is not on colourism, and indeed much has been written on the topic in the Chinese context, as well as in Asia more broadly (Khanna 2020; Yu 2021). However, here it is crucial to note that this is a large obstacle to caddie recruitment, particularly the recruitment of young women. These are of course older norms, but the fear of tanning compounds with other factors to explain the shift towards more men working as caddies.

Pregnancy

Caddying is physically hard on your body. Speaking personally, while training with caddies, I got heat stroke twice, and was regularly walking over 30,000 steps a day. In addition, while caddying there is very little space or time for bodily autonomy. For example, in the approximately four hours with a guest it is not possible to go to the bathroom or eat. This makes it an inhospitable landscape for working through pregnancy. Indeed, many caddies and caddies in training also struggled while menstruating. Huiying, now in her forties, had begun working as a caddie in her early twenties and took to it with a professionalism and high level of expertise. When I asked her about how guests treat caddies, she said that they can be quite critical, proudly adding that she personally was never criticised because she did not make mistakes. She left caddying when she got married and became pregnant. After getting a divorce, out of necessity, she returned to caddying to support herself and her by then teenage daughter. Indeed, I met a few caddies who left caddying to have children, and returned when their children were older. This came with its own challenges, including being away from them for extended periods. More still left and never returned. This physical element not only makes caddying more unappealing for women but also, for many, puts a time limit on their working lives as caddies.

Golden Valley specifically

The trend towards employing interns and more men is heightened at Golden Valley because they have encountered particular difficulty attracting recruits. For example, the manager of another golf course told me that there, they had only started employing men

in 2018, finally feeling the weight of the struggle to find women. Many of the caddies in training had elected Golden Valley as their first choice, because it has a good reputation for golf. However, they spoke of friends who were not interested in working there. There are three main factors which make recruitment especially difficult at Golden Valley: its location; the period of training; and its exacting standards.

Golden Valley is located remotely, and the nearest city has a relatively small population. While there is a vocational school nearby where some recruits came from, there is not a large local pool from which to recruit. Similarly, while it is common for caddies to move away from their hometown for work, transportation to Golden Valley is not easy, making the distance from home feel further. Secondly, at Golden Valley training is over a three-month period, time during which caddies in training are not paid. I heard that many potential recruits chose to go elsewhere, in order to receive their first paycheque sooner. This is in part because of the third factor, Golden Valley is renowned for having exacting standards, which makes it appealing to some eager recruits, and unappealing to others looking for an easier time.

Hualin explained this to me. She had been working as a caddie for around 15 years, at a club called Palm Bay. Once it closed, her and many of her colleagues were immediately employed by Golden Valley. I told Hualin that I was surprised she had been working for a caddie so long, as my impression was that many caddies only stay a couple of years. She told me that at smaller clubs like Palm Bay this is not the case. Working at Golden Valley is much harder, so people do not stay as long. Whereas at Palm Bay the course is surrounded by trees, providing some shade from the heat, at Golden Valley there is no such respite. Moreover, Palm Bay is predominantly flat, whereas Golden Valley is bigger, with lots of hills meaning it is more tiring. Finally, the number of guests at Golden Valley is higher, meaning that there is less time for rest.

4.3.2 Broader factors

In combination with the industry and site-specific factors making recruitment difficult, are broader factors which work in tandem to shape the type of recruit available. The purpose of this section is not to chart China's modern economic history, an area on which much has been written (Ash & Ho 2006; Chai 2011; von Glahn 2016; Howe et al. 2003; Ma & von Glahn 2022; Mühlhahn 2020). However, it is worth detailing some of the movements which function as a backdrop to these employment difficulties, and the reaction of

employing interns. Essentially, the increased focus on vocational education has been more pronounced for young people from rural areas. In turn, when selecting vocational education majors, women are less likely to select golf. Thus, vocational education has absorbed many of the young women previously recruited 'from society', while simultaneously funnelling more men towards the sector.

One-Child Policy

The one-child policy was introduced by the Chinese government in 1979 to address "the country's explosive population growth" (Lee 2012). Though, referencing Lee and Wang's work on Malthusian myth (Lee & Wang 1999) and Foucauldian ideas of governmentality (Foucault 1990), Greenhalgh argues that while this idea of overpopulation has "had the status of self-evident truth," it is in fact an active fabrication (Greenhalgh 2003: 166). 'One-child policy' is also a misnomer. Even before 2015, when families were encouraged to have a second child, various exceptions were made including for those in ethnic minority groups, those who lost children in natural disasters, in rural areas where the first child was a girl, and for families where there are children with disabilities. Nonetheless the one-child policy has impacted Chinese society in myriad ways, including a transformation of practices in old-age care (Liu 2023; Tu 2016), educational attainment (Beal-Hodges et al. 2011), employment prospects (Chen et al. 2023), marriage (Lee 2012), and the empowerment of urban Chinese daughters (Fong 2004, 2015). Jieyu Liu has also suggested that amongst 'white-collar beauties', ideas created through lived experience as an only child are in tension with ideas received from company management and contained within workplace gendered assumptions (Liu 2017: 55). In the case of caddies, there also exists a tension, but it operates in a different manner.

While at Golden Valley, I had the opportunity to attend a recruitment fair with Yanmin, who worked in HR. Recruitment fairs were no longer a real tool of caddie recruitment for Golden Valley, but at the booth caddie positions were advertised alongside hotel work. Expressing a common criticism of those born at the time of the one child policy, Yanmin explained how many young people may not want to do a job as strenuous as caddying but nonetheless expect a high salary. At one point, near the end of the day a young woman came to our booth expressing interest in a front desk job. She presented Yanmin her C.V. and proceeded to ask if she could see a picture of the staff dormitories, whether they had air-conditioning, and what they were like. Putting me to

work, Yanmin asked me to test her English. Feeling sorry to ambush her, I gently asked her a few basic questions which she struggled to respond to. After she left, Yanmin asked me how she had done. Not wanting to risk impacting her chance of getting the job, I deflected by asking what Yanmin thought of her. She said that while she had hotel experience, she had only been in each job for two to four months. For Yanmin, this was not a good sign: "she was like one of the one-child policy generation who were spoiled by their family and now expect a good job and high salary, but their experience is not good, and they are not hard working." She saw this as evidenced in her perceived fussiness over the dormitories. Yanmin told me that it is not hard to find a job in the region, but it is hard to find a good job. "More people are going to university and expect a 5,000RMB salary but are reaching beyond their grasp."

Many of the caddies in training I met were not only-children, and those who were did not fit the type outlined by Yanmin. One afternoon, Shengjie and I were dawdling behind the others, ever the gentleman he held an umbrella over us to protect from the sun while we meandered chatting. He was soft and caring in nature, calm, and in his interactions with others convivial and selfless. Almost a caricature of a good friend. The topic of our conversation that day naturally unfurled into gender. He explained that unlike a lot of men he was a good cook. He attributed this to being an only child, leaving him as the sole pair of hands to help his mother around the kitchen. He explained to me how no one believed him when he said he was an only child, because his "attitude wasn't that of a little emperor." He laughed that once he had gone to visit a friend, and his friend's parents flat out refused to believe that he did not have brothers or sisters because his temperament was so un-stereotypical.

Like Yanmin, many within the industry, pointed to the one-child policy as a contributing factor to recruitment difficulties. This was both quantitatively, in terms of there being fewer young people, and qualitatively because they believed that because of 'little emperor' syndrome there were fewer young people who wanted to do this kind of difficult labour, or who were well suited to a customer facing role. It is, of course, common for people to be critical of generations below them. Having met many young Chinese people during my time spent training with caddies, I do not want to fall into that narrative, as they were all incredibly hard working and humble. However, it is worth noting that these are the people who were interested in working as a caddie. While it is

not possible to speak of people who I did not meet because they had no interest in this type of work, it is plausible that the one-child policy may be one of multiple overlapping factors which contribute to troubles in recruitment.

Vocational education and internships

Of greatest significance to recruitment trouble are vocational education and internships. The history of vocational education has been overtly political and reflective of the aims of China's leadership. As Woronov argues, vocational education has- since its inception- been used as a tool to redirect surplus labour in favourable directions. It has, however, in turn absorbed human capital in a manner which leaves caddie recruitment reliant upon it.

Previously, as we saw in the example of Jiayi in Chapter Two, caddies have been recruited 'from society'. During this time, they were more commonly women. Recruiting 'from society' takes many forms, including informal networks, job advertisements, job fairs, and occasionally recruiters visited schools in rural areas. By 2019, when I came to do my fieldwork at Golden Valley, of the 119 caddies recruited so far that year, only four were recruited 'from society'. One, Jinhai, was in the group of caddies I was assigned to. Jinhai was from the local region, and his parents, who were farmers, lived very close to Golden Valley. After graduating from high school, he had gone to a vocational college, where he studied hotel management. He had then gone to work in Thailand. Jinhai spoke of this time fondly, it was his first time going overseas and he really enjoyed the food and learning bits of the language, which on occasion he tried to teach me. He worked there for a year and a half, earning somewhere between 5 and 10,000RMB a month. Unfortunately, his mother did not want him so far from home, so he reluctantly returned to China and applied to work at Golden Valley. Working life seemed more familiar to him, and where most caddies in training would spend the weekends playing games on their phone, or catching up on homework, as he had a car and friends locally, he would often go out for dinner and drinks. He was, however, in the minority amongst his intern peers.

Vocational education in modern China finds its origins in the Republican era (1911-1949). During this period, it was established as a response to a set of problems not dissimilar to those today. With China rapidly industrializing, and a large rural to urban population movement, Republican leaders strove to elevate the quantity and quality of China's industrial production, and to placate this new group of migrant workers in urban areas, who were deemed to have revolutionary potential. Thus, "[o]ne possibility

promoted by the more conservative national leaders in the ruling Guomindang (Nationalist Party) government was vocational education, which was seen as a way to raise both individuals' industrial skills and their moral probity" (Woronov 2016: 29). Under Mao Zedong, vocational education underwent many changes. Woronov outlines how while the republican-era vocational schools remained largely intact:

> [I]n the mid-1950s, however, new "workers' training schools" became popular in urban areas. Designed on a Soviet model, these schools were administered by local government bureaus, and other large work units opened their own worker training schools to train skilled workers, midlevel managers, and midlevel party cadres (Luo 2013; Thøgersen 1990; Unger 1982). (Woronov 2016: 31)

During this period, vocational education was deeply rooted within the work unit (*danwei*) system. Post-Mao vocational education has adapted to meet an increasingly stratified labour market, and was greatly expanded in the 1960s and 1970s, with the aim of economic development, and plugging labour shortages (Wang 2003; Woronov 2016). Vocational education thus has a long history, deeply intertwined with nation building and industry.

This has continued in recent decades. In 2002, the State Council "decreed to reform and to develop employment-oriented vocational education" (Yu 2010: 315). Since, the central government has invested a lot of money in, and put increased focus on, vocational education as a means of addressing China's economic development (Hansen & Woronov 2013). As Yu describes, this has also become wrapped up in ideas of a "socialist harmonious society" (Yu 2010: 315). The promotion of vocational education has also become an important tenant of "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" (General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council 2023). In 2022 the CCP changed the Law on Vocational Education, thus upgrading the status of vocational institutions (Minzer 2023). In 2023, the National Development and Reform Commission announced that in an interim adjustment of the 14th five-year plan, China planned to build around 200 more vocational colleges and application-oriented universities (Liu 2023). The way vocational education is unfurling in similar regions from which young women caddies have traditionally been recruited has drastically impacted caddie recruitment.

Rural and Urban

> On 12 June 2009, the New York Times reported almost hysterical conditions surrounding the national university entrance exam (*gaokao*) in Beijing,

> Tianjin, and other large cities (Lafraniere, 2009). Students were under extreme pressure. Tears were shed by children as well as parents, some of whom promised extravagant gifts to their offspring provided they passed the exam with satisfactory results. Everybody seemed to agree on the ultimate goal: entrance into one of China's key universities. At this time, I was doing fieldwork in a rural high school in an economically average township in the southern part of China. More than 500 students in this school (out of a total of 10.2 million in the whole country) took part in the national exam, and they were anxiously waiting for the results. Yet, the atmosphere was far more relaxed and hardly comparable to what the New York Times described. Why this difference, and why does it still make sense to talk about a rural– urban divide in the field of Chinese education?" (Hansen 2013: 165)

As with many other facets of life, a young person's educational trajectory and experience is largely influenced by whether they are from a rural or an urban area. In service of the expansion of education detailed in the previous section, rural regions have become prime targets for this educational reorientation. In turn, many rural parents and children have a more favourable attitude towards it. As caddies have traditionally been recruited from rural areas, this has meant that the impact of vocational education on recruitment has been drastic.

As Koo and Zhan (2023) highlight, much research on vocational education in China has focused on urban areas (Ling 2015; Pun & Koo 2019; Terry Woronov 2016). An underlying theme in much of this research is that, as the title of Ling's article explicitly outlines, "Bad students go to vocational schools." Certainly, there is still a huge stigmatisation of vocational students. Many of my participants would frame their journey to vocational education as the result of not being good in school, or not doing well in exams. As Hansen outlines, vocational education is praised by industry and government, however is for the most part "regarded as second-class and a last option only by the general public" (Hansen 2018: 12). This is also reflected in practice. While government officials may speak highly of vocational education they- alongside other elites, intellectuals, and those with proximity to power- "will do almost anything to ensure that their own children make it into a regular or, even better, an elite class or school" (Hansen 2013: 170–1).

However, the stigmatisation of vocational education is more pronounced in urban areas. For many rural families, vocational education is framed as a good route to financial stability, and a step away from a career in agriculture (Hansen & Woronov 2013; Koo & Zhan 2023). As Hansen and Woronov outline:

> According to our research, rural families tend to see vocational education students not first of all as 'academic failures' like in the city, but rather as part of a majority of 'unfortunate' people who do not manage to get a higher status education, and have to settle for the less desired and less face-giving option of vocational education. In spite of its weaknesses, the vocational education their children receive does help them to improve their chances of getting a job outside agriculture, which is probably the least desired occupational sector of them all" (Hansen & Woronov 2013: 256).

This more favourable attitude to vocational education in rural areas combines with governmental policy to mean that the type of students in vocational education skew heavily towards rural. Indeed, "to ensure a large and growing enrolment, the state targets the poor rural youths as a new source of vocational college students and has policies to increase subsidies for them" (Koo & Zhan 2023: 264). The result has been that the "the urban-rural gap in university attendance has widened sharply as higher education in China has been severely marketized since its expansion" (ibid.). Consequently, access to academic educational opportunities are more predominant in affluent urban areas, and "[r]ural students, especially females, are overrepresented in the short-cycle programs in vocational colleges instead" (ibid.) Indeed, while Koo and Zhan conducted their research in an urban area, 80% of the vocational education students they worked with either came from nearby villages, or their parents were rural migrants (Koo & Zhan 2023: 266). Amongst my participants existed similar patterns, most were from rural backgrounds, and many had boarded at vocational institutions in urban areas. The result for the golf industry has been that many of the young women they used to recruit from rural areas, are instead now enrolled in vocational education. This has left Golden Valley reliant on vocational institutions to send over recruits. The resulting shift towards male recruits is also a product of vocational education.

Gendered educational choices

Much work has been done on the empowerment of young women through a reorientation of priorities due to the one-child policy, and the impact of education on prospects, most notably by Vanessa Fong (2004, 2015). Yet, as Koo and Zhan observe, educational choices for rural women are still gendered choices. Women students, when deciding their vocational major, seldom make choices based on "internal passion, personal interests, or self-fulfilment" (Koo & Zhan 2023: 269). They also emphasize that although pursuing education is associated with autonomy and economic independence, it is often

contextualized within a desire to fulfil the role of "valuable daughters" (Koo & Zhan, 2023: 272–3), which can entail remaining close to home to provide care for their parents.

Here, two significant factors contribute to the diminished appeal of golf and golf-related majors for young women. Firstly, golf courses are primarily situated in affluent urban locales. Consequently, the geographical dispersion of these courses often requires caddies to work far from their families, presenting a barrier to maintaining close ties associated with being “valuable daughters”. While this certainly impacted men working as caddies also, with many expressing homesickness and/or an interest in returning to their hometowns in the future, at the point of selecting a major this was not an insurmountable deterrent. Secondly, golf could certainly be framed as a passion based or aspirational major. While there are, in fact, lots of opportunities to find work as a caddie- especially for women- this may not be clear to students upon their entry to vocational education. A few of the young men amongst my participants had aspirations to be golfers, none of the women expressed this. More men had ideas about becoming a golf trainer. The former is certainly a less practical career prospect. Ideas about men being more interested in golf due to passion for the sport or self-fulfilment are reflected in the graph of gendered perspectives listed in section 4.2.1.

Internships

As is the case with the caddying industry, vocational students have often been utilised to compensate for labour shortages (Farrell & Grant 2005). Students at vocational high schools and universities are required to undertake internships over the course of their study (Chan 2017: 83). Consequently, it is not just after graduating that they serve this role filling gaps, but also before. Yet in filling these shortages, they leave employers such as Golden Valley with less choice in who they employ.

Many in the industry pointed to the fact that with interns, clubs have no choice in candidates, thus while they would prefer to hire women, they largely had to accept who they were sent. Interns were not directly employed by Golden Valley. But rather through middle companies, or directly from their schools and colleges. They are sent as a group. None between 2012 and 2019 were sent alone. The average number of students sent by each school a year was 22.9, with a slight trend towards sending fewer students each year. The period of time they will stay is agreed in advanced. Unfortunately, there is no concrete record of time spent before 2016. However, between 2016 and 2019, 64% were

sent for a year. Second highest is two years, which comprised 21.9%. Generally, once this period of interning is over, caddies will return to their institutions to finish their qualification. It was not uncommon for caddies to return to the same club after they had graduated, although most do not. The recruitment of interns has thus not only changed the gender of caddies, but also made the workforce a more temporary one.

Meiling, who I spent a great deal of time talking to, was an incredibly friendly and hard-working intern. She was particularly interested in speaking to me because she wanted to be an English-specialist caddie[29], so we would regularly practice English together. Her English was by far the best of any of the caddies or teachers who I met, and she was quietly passionate about her training and impressing the teachers. She came from a small town and had five sisters and two brothers. She told me this was not uncommon there, where most people, including her parents were poor farmers. Her uncle, for example had six children. She had never played golf before starting vocational college two years prior and majoring in golf, but now really enjoys it. In China, as in Europe and America, interning is framed neoliberally as an investment for the future (Koo 2016). In much of the United Kingdom and United States interns predominantly come from privileged backgrounds (Perlin 2012). However, as explored in the previous section, in China those who undertake internships facilitated by vocational institutions are predominantly from rural working class backgrounds (Woronov 2016). This was certainly the case amongst the caddies who I worked with. This means that while the lack of choice brought by recruiting interns has drastically changed the gender of caddies, it has not really changed their social backgrounds.

Similarly, Shan did not come from a golfing background. His parents, "like most of China" considered golf "a rich person's sport." Consequently, before taking golf as his major he had never played. Nevertheless, having spent time studying it in school, he was now a keen golfer and enjoyed talking about the technicalities of the sport as well as famous golfers. He was also knowledgeable about and reflected on the history of golf in China. The last time I saw Shan, we were all searching in the bushes for a ball Teacher Huang had hit. Shan emerged triumphantly, not with Huang's ball but with another one.

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[29] At Golden Valley, some caddies are selected as Japanese, Korean, and English specialists and will be assigned to guests who speak these languages. All caddies are provided with English lessons, but the level is low and limited to learning some key golf related phrases.

He told me proudly that this was a very expensive brand of ball, so he was going to keep it. He showed the other boys, then stashed it away in his sandbag. Indeed, as will be explored in Chapter Seven, another change brought by these new intern recruits was a prior knowledge of, and sometimes passion for, golf.

4.4 Other forms of recruitment

Besides recruiting interns or 'from society', the final forms of recruitment employed by Golden Valley also limited choice in candidates. Some caddies were also employed from golf courses which had recently closed or were on temporary exchange from Northern courses closed over the winter. Both these groups were older than the average age of interns, mostly in their 20s and 30s, with a couple in their 40s. Some had been to college and studied golf, many had not. While there were some men, overall, the proportion of women was higher than amongst the original Golden Valley trainees, and many of these women were mothers.

Hualin was one of the caddies who had come from a closed club, Palm Bay. Though no one was clear on the specifics, Hualin was under the impression that Palm Bay would reopen within a year. She believed that once construction had been done to ensure that the facilities met regulations, she would be able to return to work there. Others had a bleaker outlook, believing that it would never reopen. Teacher Huang, for example, told me that the situation was "very serious", and that the club had shut down because it went against several governmental regulations. As of March 2021, just over a year after I met Hualin, Palm Bay had yet to re-open, and sources told me it never would.

Unlike Hualin, Fenfang would certainly be returning to her club as she was on a seasonal exchange from a club in Hunan. She had attended a vocational college, but golf was not her major. She was working in something else, but her friend who had been working as a caddie encouraged her to apply. Unlike many of her peers who were sent to Golden Valley every winter, this was her first time here. Due to the low temperatures in large parts of China over winter, many clubs close for the season. Clubs in Southern China tend to be busier around this time, when the weather is milder but not cold. So, they will temporarily employ Northern caddies. During this winter high season, Golden Valley requires almost double the number of caddies as during the low season. This is facilitated not only by training new caddies during the low season so that they are ready to start when winter comes, but also through this intranational movement.

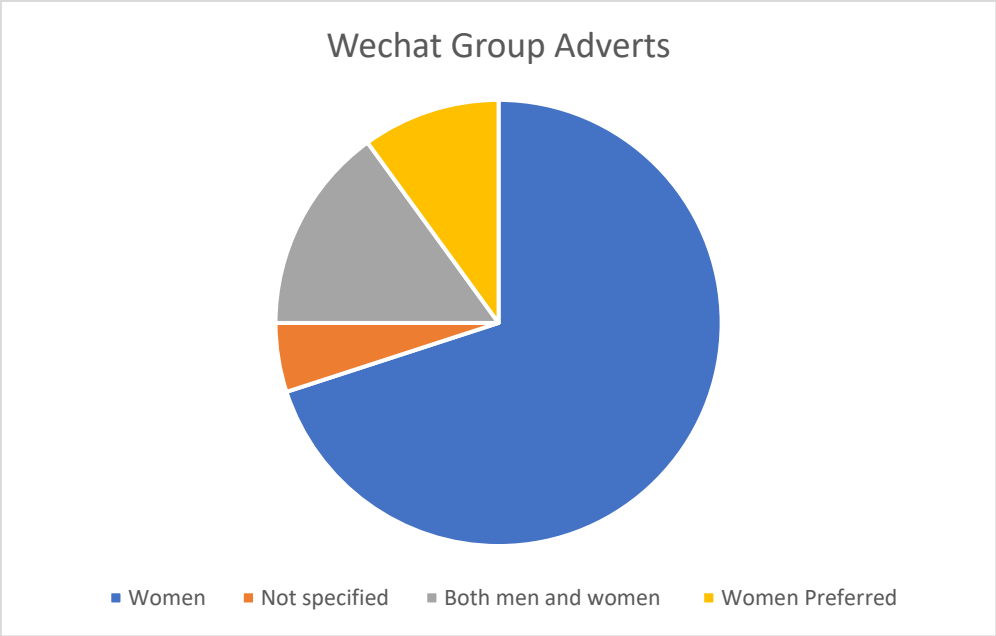
The aforementioned broader and industry-specific factors have combined in a way that means the employment of interns both a cause of, and a solution to, the problem of recruitment. Unable to recruit enough women 'from society' as they used to, Golden Valley has become dependent on recruiting interns. However, this brings them further away from recruiting women. In turn, many of the type of woman they used to recruit have been funnelled into vocational education, but as a result of the gendered selection of major, are not studying golf. This means that while recruitment methods have shifted, the background of caddies has not undergone any drastic changes. However, as a result of increasingly employing interns, Golden Valley has less control over who it employs. Thus, more men now work as caddies.

4.5 Mediations

"No one will ever say it straight out, but [caddies] are also employed based on their appearance."
-Interview with an industry professional

The employment of interns, caddies from closed courses, and labour exchanges all function in response to and mitigation of recruitment difficulties. They also enable seasonal flexibility. Ultimately leaving Golden Valley with very little choice over who it employs. However, at Golden Valley and many other golf courses there are still some ways in which unideal recruits may be filtered out. Though women are still considered by many to be the ideal caddie, discriminatory recruitment based on gender is illegal in China under the Labour Law, the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests, the Employment Promotion Law, and the Provisions on Employment Services and Employment Management (Human Rights Watch 2020). As a result, I did not encounter any job advertisements on official websites which specified gender. However, advertisements recruiting caddies in more informal settings circumvent regulations to sustain gendered ideals about caddies. In a study of 34 advertisements recruiting caddies, none of the 14 posted on official job websites listed a preferred gender, or limited employment by gender. By contrast, in the 20 adverts shared on WeChat, 70% specified they were only looking for women, and a further 15% said women were "preferred" (See: Figure Five). In addition, some of these adverts also had requirements for weight and age, and many height. As one advert posted in a WeChat group in August 2020 specified: "Female, height above 160, good facial features, cheerful personality, strong sense of responsibility, able to bear hardships and stand hard work, educational background above

technical secondary school, age 18-30 years old." Another from September 2020 asked for women, 158cm tall or more, with a weight of no more than 65kg, and a: "good image and good temperament."



[Figure five: Gender specifications on WeChat job adverts]

Once recruits have arrived, the process of mediation is more personalised. Many interns did leave over the course of training. For some, this was a choice, one girl for example left to take care of a sick family member. Others left because they were not enjoying it. However, some were also fired for multiple infringements, such as being late often. That the schools, or middle agencies, send candidates may at first seem to undermine the club's capacity for selection. However, the parameters placed around maintaining an ideal caddie type are upheld, to an extent, through both formal and informal methods. On the formal end, expulsion due to rule breaking, and on the less formal side, deciding who does and does not pass examinations and get to be a caddie. The starkest example of this type of professional ringfencing I encountered related to weight.

My first interaction with the group of caddies in training worked I with, took place in a section of the facility's parking lot which had been roped off for golf cart training lessons. It was not only my first day of fieldwork, but also their first day of training. Before we could get to driving lessons, first some basics had to be covered. For this Manager Liu led the lesson. She talked the students through the basics, how to wear the hat and

helmet, how to load the golf cart, and other minutia which may seem trivial but are crucial elements in ensuring a uniform standard of guest experience. While Liu instructed, two young men caught my eye. Both were of larger stature, neither were wearing the uniform caddies are all given at the start of training. The larger of the two drew Liu's attention too. She interrupted the class, and in front of everyone asked him if he wanted to lose weight. The teachers decided that he should go to the office to sort out the issue with his kit, so one accompanied him there. He returned later and re-joined the lesson, and the students all began practicing loading and unloading the carts in the way Manager Liu had instructed. While they did so, she asked me if I would accompany her to the office to proofread some text for the English lessons the students would do later during their training. While we made our way back to the office, I asked her about these two young men. She told me that they were both "too fat" to fit into the uniforms they had been issued, which come in a set of standardised sizes. They had both been asked if they would be willing to lose weight, the smaller of the two had said no, so would be transferred to another department to work. I asked what the other, Wei Yuan, would do, and she said he had told them he wanted to lose weight in the three months of training so that he could become a caddie. I asked if that was enough time to lose a significant amount of weight, and she gestured in a way that indicated she did not think so. Liu told me that it is "not good for the guests" to have a fat caddie, and that you must do a lot of exercise in this job, so it is not suitable for overweight people. I asked why he was chosen, and she said that the school just sent him, she had no say.

Over the course of my fieldwork my interactions with Wei Yuan were not as successful as with many other students. He was clearly very hard working, he was never late, never misbehaved, and always paid attention in class. However, he was very shy and did not spend much time speaking with the other caddies or me. In the few conversations I was able to engage him in I learnt that he was originally from another province and his parents had moved to the local area when he was a child. As training went on, the others came to know him as *pang pang*, meaning fatty, or *dapang,* meaning big fatty, which distinguished him from another young man, little fatty, *xiaopang*. The teachers would summon him by these names, and he would come when they called. By the second day of training Wei Yuan had been given a sandbag, which like a bum bag, clips around the waist, and is used to carry sand. Teacher Huang noticed that he was carrying it rather than wearing it and asked him if it fit around his waist. Wei Yuan told him that it did not.

Teacher Huang responded, “if that doesn’t fit, your uniform definitely won’t, so you definitely need to lose weight.” Eventually, he was given an official sweatshirt like the other caddies, but it was clearly very old, so the colour was faded. He continued to wear a pair of black jogging bottoms, rather than the regulation khaki trousers the other men wore. Finally, one day, late on in training he came in wearing something similar to, but not the same as the uniform trousers. I complimented him on them, and he told me that finally the previous weekend he had the opportunity, and money, to go into town to buy a pair trousers that were similar to the uniform provided to the other caddies. He seemed very pleased, but unfortunately the trousers were not great quality and over the course of training he had continued issues with them.

When I returned that winter, I ran into some of my previous group, who were now working full time as caddies. However, they told me that not everyone passed the training, including Wei Yuan. Most people were given the chance to re-train and re-sit the examinations. I later saw Wei Yuan working behind the desk which was responsible ensuring that guests’ golf bags were transported back to the hotel or to their cars after finishing play. He had not lost the required amount of weight, nor passed his exams. He was not re-training, and his aspiration to work as a caddie was over.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that while women are still the ideal recruit, both industry and site-specific factors, in combination with broader movements, have meant that this ideal is no longer possible in practice. While there are some mediations in place to ringfence caddying, as we saw in the example of Wei Yuan, Golden Valley has had to adapt to less choice in recruitment. Though it is possible to filter people out, the large number of male interns Golden Valley receives means that it is not possible to meet gendered perceptions of the ideal recruit. Amidst this complex situation lies a contradiction in terms of vocational education and internships. Internships, and thus vocational education, are both a cause of and solution to recruitment difficulties. As vocational education unevenly expands, targeting rural regions more than urban, it encroaches on caddie recruitment territory. Simultaneously, young women are less likely to chose golf- or golf related majors- thus funnelling them away from this career path. Consequently, the study of caddies supports Hansen and Woronov’s work on vocational education, and its utility in plugging gaps in the labour market, while also moving beyond.

It is not just that these movements in education support labour fluctuations, but they also shape the kind of labour available. This begs the question, what happens when men enter a feminized role. Chapter Six will answer this, in doing so challenging assumptions about affective labour. Foregrounding this, the following chapter will explore what form golf in China, and at Golden Valley takes, and thus what type of affective labour is required of caddies.

CHAPTER FIVE

Movements of Golf: Against 'Chinese Characteristics'

My first meeting with Director Chen took place during the off hours at a high-end restaurant in Golden Valley. Having taken several local buses, then a Golden Valley shuttle bus, I met him in the foyer of the clubhouse. I had spent days formulating how to appear professional in this setting. There was a dual pull, academic and respectable, so formal. Yet simultaneously the need to fit seamlessly in with the effortlessly chic elite clientele golf courses attract, thus not overdressed. As I entered the lobby, what I thought was a flawless designer impersonation handbag suddenly seemed to disintegrate before my eyes. As if from nowhere, Eileen Otis' description of entering a high-end hotel for research rang in my head:

> As I walked into the hotel I was suddenly aware that my bags didn't match. I pulled a pirated version of a Samsonite carry-on that my friend purchased for a dollar in Beijing. Other guests ported perfectly matching bags and suitcases....When I pulled my old money belt out of the recesses of my backpack to give the front desk agent my American Express card, I realized the fabric was a bit grimy. The accoutrements that went unnoticed on the streets of urban China were now a source of embarrassment (Otis 2012:69).

Feeling shrouded in faux-pas, I made my way to Director Chen. He was wearing a suit, but in a way that seemed almost to drip off him with casual ease. Director Chen came from a wealthy family. He had studied in the United States, and afterwards spent time there working at a golf course in a managerial capacity. On his return to China, he became the director of golf at Golden Valley. He escorted me to a beautiful dining space and began to order in a delicate yet controlled manner. Already feeling out of place, I tried to eat my food with the most decorum possible. As I did, Director Chen described the way in which golf is inherently linked to *liyi*, ideas of ceremony, propriety, and etiquette. Suddenly, I wished I had spent more time on my swing. This style of connecting golf to Chinese concepts was also expressed by one of my golf teachers, Luo Wu. I first met him at a presentation he gave for potential new members of the golf club where he taught. What

was meant to be an introduction, then promotion for the club's golf simulation suites[30], quickly turned into a spontaneous and unprompted metaphysical lecture on the benefits of golf for the mind and body. Intrigued, I signed up for lessons with him. Our first lesson was spent with him chastising my technique. After much practice between, during the second lesson I was able to better hold my own and thus delve into his philosophy of golf. Quoting his impromptu lecture, I asked him if he could elaborate on why he had compared golf to kung fu. He retracted his statement and said he thought it was actually like taichi, or more specifically like shaolin kung fu, because of the smooth movement of the arms. He grew up near Shaolin so had studied it when he was younger. He felt these skills had ameliorated his swing.

There are three types of voice present in the discussion of the 'Chineseness' of golf. The first is those working in the industry in China, who rightly highlight the different meanings they attribute to golf, and the form golf takes in the context. The concept of imbuing a sporting practice with ideas of culture and locality is by no means novel (Appadurai 2015; Domingos 2007; Li 2011; Lockyer 2012; Morris 2001; Pearson 2012). The difficulty comes when the cultural object, here an international sport, is presented in a way which flattens multi-cultural, and intra- and international dimensions. Or makes it seem like an echo of a firmer object located elsewhere. This happens within the second type of voice, foreign accounts of golf in China. Western media coverage of golf in China has been culpable of this flattening, often in an orientalising manner:

> *The Independent:* The 14-year-old golf club is a secluded oasis of evergreen jungle, immune to Shanghai's grey haze, where pure oxygen is reserved exclusively for the rich. The course is lined by 60,000 trees, each with pride of place in Chinese mythology like a neo-Oriental nirvana. (Kershaw 2018)

> *Golfweek:* U.S. and Chinese golf courses certainly share similarities, but also some eye-opening differences. None more obvious than caddie culture. Dressed in colorful coordinated outfits complete with matching hats and gloves, the Chinese caddies – mostly young women – look after a player's every golfing need. Distances measured, clubs cleaned, and putts read are all standard caddie functions. Coring and skinning an apple, chauffeuring you in your cart, serving you spiced tea or protecting you with a sun umbrella are also offered, services decidedly not standard. (Klein 2017)

[30] Golf simulation suites are indoor devices which enable the user to play a full round of golf by hitting the ball against a projection. They are often used for practice, or when weather is too severe to play.

As these quotations demonstrate, in Western media golf in China is often discussed in a whimsical tone, as something of an oddity or an anomaly. The differences are highlighted, as is a sensationalised version of the history. This work is not immune to foregrounding these differences given the dramatic history of golf in China.

The final voice exists within broader academic trends beyond golf. Often, things which begin happening in China, particularly after reform and opening-up, have been branded as transformed with 'Chinese characteristics'. The idea of 'golf with Chinese characteristics' is appealing due to the seemingly unique nature of golf in China. But understanding it through the lens of 'Chinese characteristics' encourages the view that it is an imitation of 'real' golf. The actual history is ultimately the product of porous international exchange. Certainly, as explored in Chapter Three, there have been movements within China which have impacted most golf courses, such governmental restrictions leading to a focus on leisure. However, golf should not be understood as having a standard type and character, which has been translated and transmuted in the Chinese context. Other movements impact different regions and different courses in distinct ways. By disrupting the idea of Chinese characteristics, the details of Golden Valley become clearer.

A move away from broader ideas of what form things take in China also encourages a more detailed exploration of what work entails for caddies at Golden Valley specifically. Much has been written on the service sector in China, and it is a sector is comprised of different types, scales, and desired outcomes. Accordingly, the way that caddies act is not how you would expect to be treated by a salesclerk in a mid-tier shopping mall who may try and upsell a product (Hanser 2008). It is also distinct from the behaviour and affect demonstrated by a hostess in a KTV bar (Osburg 2013; Zheng 2009). The style of interaction expected from a caddie at Golden Valley perhaps has most in common with a concierge or front desk clerk at a high end hotel (Otis 2012). However, there are still differences in technical knowledge and affective presentation. Hanser, Osburg, Zheng, and Otis highlight that for salesclerks, hostesses, and hotel workers respectively, different establishments will have different requirements. The same is true for caddies. This research is on Golden Valley specifically. There are trends and themes which can be extrapolated and applied to service work in China and beyond. But the details are firmly situated at Golden Valley. Indeed, an exploration of a lower-end club in

North China, for example, would likely look different. To fully understand the type of affective professionalism caddies at Golden Valley are trained and required to do, international and local movements which impact the nature of Golden Valley need to be understood.

First this chapter will survey and critique literature which uses the term 'Chinese characteristics'. Then, will explore the form golf takes in China, how this relates to Golden Valley specifically, and the impact on caddies. Finally, arguing against broader ideas of 'Chinese characteristics', this chapter instead will highlight how golf in China has been constructed around ideas of three intertwined regional understandings: ideas about 'the West'; the transnational regional level, namely the Asian sphere of golf; and finally the local level below the nation state. Working in the service sector, caddies are a reflection of the image the club is looking to portray. Before proceeding to address how caddies are trained in the following chapter, this chapter will situate this in the image caddies are required to represent.

5.1 'Chinese characteristics': everything and nothing

> Within China, 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' normalizes new forms of inequality, new ways to value human activity, and new ways of 'worlding' China, of placing China in a reimagined world." (Rofel 2007:111–112)

At the 12th National Congress in 1982, the Chinese Communist Party began to stress its alignment to 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. While this was certainly a watershed moment, it should not be viewed entirely as a disjuncture. Rofel has described this as a phrase which is "the official portrait of these transformations as a coherent whole" (Rofel 2007: 111). She argues that 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' is distinct from Maoism. Yet, "its manner of attempting to fasten together economic policies, moral evaluations of social life, and the emergence of new kinds of persons closely resembles the earlier socialist articulations of power, knowledge and subjectivity" (ibid.). Within academia, the phrase 'with Chinese characteristics' has, since 1982, been a common post-colon titular strategy. The temptation has been to co-opt this turn of phrase as an umbrella under which to group a myriad of trends, including but not limited to: unemployment (Gold et al. 2009), white-collar work (Duthie 2005), cosmopolitanism (Rofel 2007), alternative food movements (Klein 2014; Schumilas 2014), innovation and high-tech research (Jakobson 2007), hacking (Lindtner 2015), smart cities (Wu et al. 2018), right-wing populism (Zhang

2020), supermarkets (Hu et al. 2004), real estate booms (Glaeser et al. 2017), minority rights (He 2005), and capitalism and entrepreneurship (Huang 2008).

Sometimes this is done in a way which problematises and justifies use of 'with Chinese characteristics'. For example, Rofel "playfully" uses 'cosmopolitanism with Chinese characteristics' to discuss the way in which ideas about cosmopolitanism are being "being embraced, digested, reworked, contested, and resisted in China" (Rofel 2007:112). Lindtner draws on her participant David Li's description of "a hackerspace with Chinese characteristics" (Lindtner 2015:856–7). [31] She demonstrates how through initiatives such as the sharism manifesto, language of new work units (*danwei*), and tying ideas of copying (*shanzhai*) to Confucianism, Chinese hackerspaces "initiate Chinese digital culture by shaping and remaking (largely Western) principles of openness and freedom of expression" (Lindtner 2015:862–3). Meanwhile, in her research on alternative food networks, Schumilas explains how her interpreter highlighted that slogans such as 'with Chinese characteristics' "mean everything and nothing" (Schumilas 2014:172).

However, more commonly the phrase is deployed without actually explaining what it means in the context or questioning underlying assumptions about what constitute Chinese characteristics.[32] In surveying the aforementioned 13 texts which use 'with Chinese characteristics' in their titles[33], very few directly address and justify use of the phrase. However, several key themes emerge which may constitute a working definition: the idea of newness; of a trend which has grown quickly; and cultural forms or practices which started in, or are more commonly associated with, other countries, especially 'the West', but have been shaped by the Chinese context culturally, socially, politically, legally, or economically.

Of the texts above, many outline that the object of study is something new, and often rapidly growing. For example, in their exploration of 'supermarkets with Chinese characteristics', Hu et al outline that:

> [O]ver the past decade, the supermarket sector in China has risen from its initiation in a few metropolitan regions in 1990 to a $55 billion industry

[31] David Li is one of the founders of China's first hacking space, XinCheJian.
[32] Here, it should be noted that indiscriminate deployment of this term is, I believe, the result of a publish or perish mentality, which encourages the use of buzzwords, rather than poor academic practice.
[33] These texts were selected in order to represent a range of subject matter within the social sciences.

> today – with 53,000 units in 2002 and 30% of the urban food retail market (Hu et al. 2004:557).

They divide this into five different periods and explain how comparatively the rise of supermarkets in China has been characterised by extremely rapid growth due to urbanization, rise in incomes, and an increase in access to a range of assets. Similarly, Duthie (Duthie 2005) explores the new white-collar segment in urban China, which has emerged as the result of economic reform and foreign direct investment. This focus on newness necessitates an historical turn to understand the origins of the phenomenon, or the practices it replaced. Every one of the 13 texts had some reference to history, almost all point to Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening as a turning point. This focus on newness is drawn from the idea that things described as 'with Chinese characteristics' are often those which are not viewed as historically, or traditionally Chinese. For example, it would be strange to think of *guanxi*, mah-jong, or calligraphy 'with Chinese characteristics'.

Indeed, most of these texts take as their focus something originally associated with, or which happened first, somewhere other than China, most commonly 'the West'. Consequently, comparison emerges as a key feature of this body of work. 'Chinese characteristics' are illuminated through difference. For example, in their analysis of smart cities, Wu et al describe how "Western countries are the [frontrunners] and have obtained a series of achievements" (Wu et al. 2018:62). However, as the phrase implies, something with 'Chinese characteristics', by definition, needs to be imbued with inherently 'Chinese' qualities. Here, Lindtner argues that:

> What counts as a "Chinese characteristic" depends on the context of use, but often refers to what might fall under the category of cultural heritage and tradition. In contemporary discourse, politicians often invoke Confucianist values and belief systems to represent what they describe as "core cultural values." If an idea, practice, or thing is labelled "with Chinese characteristics," it is portrayed as in line with Chinese culture and traditions. A "hackerspace with Chinese characteristics" implies that hacking and making practices are inherently Chinese, in line with China's core cultural values, and something that Chinese people already identify with and practice (Lindtner 2015:873).

In a similar sense, He frames 'minority rights with Chinese characteristics' as a "complex combination of various intellectual inheritances", combining "echoes of Confucian ideas", with "echoes of Marxist/Leninist ideas of ethnic autonomy, mixed with echoes of liberal ideas of minority rights and affirmative action policies for minority groups" (He 2005:79).

Zhang views growing right-wing populism in China as influenced by the "vocabulary and style of right-wing populisms in Europe and North America" but rooted in "previous forms of nationalism and racism in Chinese cyberspace" (Zhang 2020:88).

While these texts delicately address what exactly these Chinese characteristics are, others do not, and instead simply describe something taking place in a Chinese context. In either case, the idea of 'with Chinese characteristics' may flatten Chineseness. China is after all a vast country with innumerable internal variances. At the 2023 Association for Asian Studies conference, Tansen Sen called for the need to contest the idea of the fluid and shifting nations of China and India as fixed (Sen 2023). Moreover, the term functions to solidify national cultural borders, in a manner that mutes the importance of porous multicultural and international exchange and interplay. At worst, ascribing something with 'Chinese characteristics' can make it seem inauthentic.

This has particularly been true of work on consumption. As Rey Chow describes, this 'ethnic qualifier' encourages a type of exoticisation through which China is viewed as a divergent other (Chow 2000). Indeed, as Tapp outlines:

> There is a kind of irony in thinking about consumption 'with Chinese characteristics', as if consumption with Chinese characteristics could not, somehow, properly be consumption as 'we' express and understand it in post-industrial societies, just as Chinese socialism could surely not be the real thing (Tapp 2006:208).

Returning to golf, it easily fits within this body of literature. It finds is origins in Scotland and following reform and opening-up it grew exponentially. Golf in China is certainly distinct from golf in other countries. However, if we look closely at what characterises these differences, the situation becomes hazier. First, golf is different in different regions in China. Second, these differences are often the result of international influence, and finally many of the 'Western' elements are not simple facsimile, but rather are reflected and refracted through Chinese ideas about what 'the West' represents.

5.2 The form of golf in China

It is now worth considering what exact form golf in China takes. A small number of participants, such as golf club managers were foreign, had worked, studied, or travelled abroad, so had references for comparison. However, the vast majority of caddies I worked with had not left mainland China, and for most I was the first foreign person they had

spoken to for an extended period, if at all. Consequently, they were very interested in asking me questions about life in the UK, including golf. As a result, over the course of fieldwork I had many conversations about the character of golf in China through a comparative lens. In these conversations, several key areas emerged as central to golf in China: the mandatory use of caddies; gambling; the appearance of courses; and the importance of the clubhouse and facilities, as explored in Chapter Three. These may at first seem like elements which could be described as 'Chinese characteristics'. However, upon further exploration, the reality is much more complicated. What follows will describe these elements of golf in the Chinese context, before explaining that to view them simply as 'Chinese characteristics' would be a disservice to a much more elaborate and complicated state of affairs.

5.2.1 The mandatory use of Caddies

The greatest feature of golf in China outlined by most people I spoke with, and the factor of greatest significance to this thesis, is the use of caddies. Indeed, when I asked Director Chen what typifies golf in China, he immediately responded: "the biggest difference is the caddies, in other [countries] they have self-service." He explained that this also made for a larger workforce at golf courses in China, creating the need for greater management. In Europe and North America, the use of caddies is primarily reserved for competitive, or professional play.[34] In China, at each club I visited, except for one which had a single course where guests were allowed to play without caddies, the use of caddies was mandatory. The importance of caddies in mainland China has largely been drawn from Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong, through investment in and custom of golf courses from these regions during the reform and opening period.

In professional and tournament play, the role of a caddie may be more restricted to technical advice. The mandatory use of caddies in casual play, regulations which have pushed golf towards leisure, and the influence of Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan shapes the role of the caddie to that of a producer of leisure. However, this role is not monolith. Golden Valley is decidedly high end, and this is reflected in its caddies. At the less distinguished courses I visited, there was less focus on aesthetic labour and appearance.

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[34] High end clubs may have caddies, but their use is significantly less widespread than in China, and their role quite different.

Caddies were older, their uniforms scruffier, and their accents less standard Mandarin. For example, at one lower end course I visited the experience was starkly different. The clubhouse was furnished with plastic faux wicker chairs and run down carpets. At the entrance, I was greeted by some caddies. They were all significantly older than my participants at Golden Valley, most seemed to be in their 40s. They were all women, wearing bright pink uniforms which looked as if they had seen better days. Caddies at Golden Valley are trained in greeting, but at this other club the impact was different. Whereas the caddies at Golden Valley would greet in unison, this was more of a trickle of good afternoons. Their posture was also much more casual, almost slouched. The effect of this affective work was a much more informal, less present, and without the an air of an elite experience.

5.2.2 *The quality of courses*

There is indeed a fairly broad spectrum in terms of standard in China, but this spectrum skews towards the higher end. As Toby Pearce, a British consultant who had worked at a course in China for several years, commented: "The quality of courses is very high. Generally speaking, investors have paid a lot of money." However, he also noted that there is very little variety in course design. This lack in variety can make play across multiple courses less interesting. Golf is not like swimming where the size of an Olympic pool is standardized, nor like football where associations such as the FA implement laws to standardise the pitch (The Football Association 2023). While of course there are rules, and Par 72 is considered standard, there is generally variety between courses. This a common complaint about courses in China. But aesthetically, the quality of courses is generally very high. As I worked freelance for a company which sponsors international golf tournaments, I have been fortunate enough to visit some of the best kept and most televised courses across several continents. However, having spent my teen years in suburban England, I do also have some familiarity with local golf courses on the opposite end of the scale. Largely speaking, the Chinese courses I visited were closer to the former. Though there is still variety in quality, in particular at driving ranges which are often significantly less ostentatious. For example, one which I regularly went to for lessons had an array of farm animals such as goats wandering across the green.

While training as a caddie, one week I resolved that the following weekend I would take the train to a nearby city to visit some of the golf clubs there. I was discussing this

with Shengjie, a young caddie in training who I had become particularly friendly with. Though only in his early 20s, he was an old soul and I particularly enjoyed talking with him because he liked to discuss the social and cultural pressures young people face. As we walked over the perfectly manicured grass under the late afternoon sun, surrounded by well-kept plants and flowers, I told him about my weekend plans. "Don't expect the courses there to be like this," he said gesturing towards our picturesque surroundings. This prompted a group conversation about the varying quality of courses. One of the other boys told me that he had previously worked at a course in the city I was visiting, and warned me that there were lots of divots- which are pieces of turf which have been torn up by a player's swing or shoes- and it was not as beautiful. Indeed, many of the caddies in training I spoke to had chosen Golden Valley because of its reputation for being maintained to a high standard. Overall, however, the quality of courses in China is very high, and golf very expensive. This impacts the type of guest who comes to play, and accordingly the kind of service required. Golden Valley's position as a high-end golf club was not only mirrored in the quality of the course, but also in interior and exterior design, the quality of food in the restaurants, the shops, and of course caddies. The high-end position Golden Valley occupies means that guests are spending more money. Not just on play, stay, and tips, but also on gambling.

[Figure Six: A well-manicured course. Photograph taken by author]

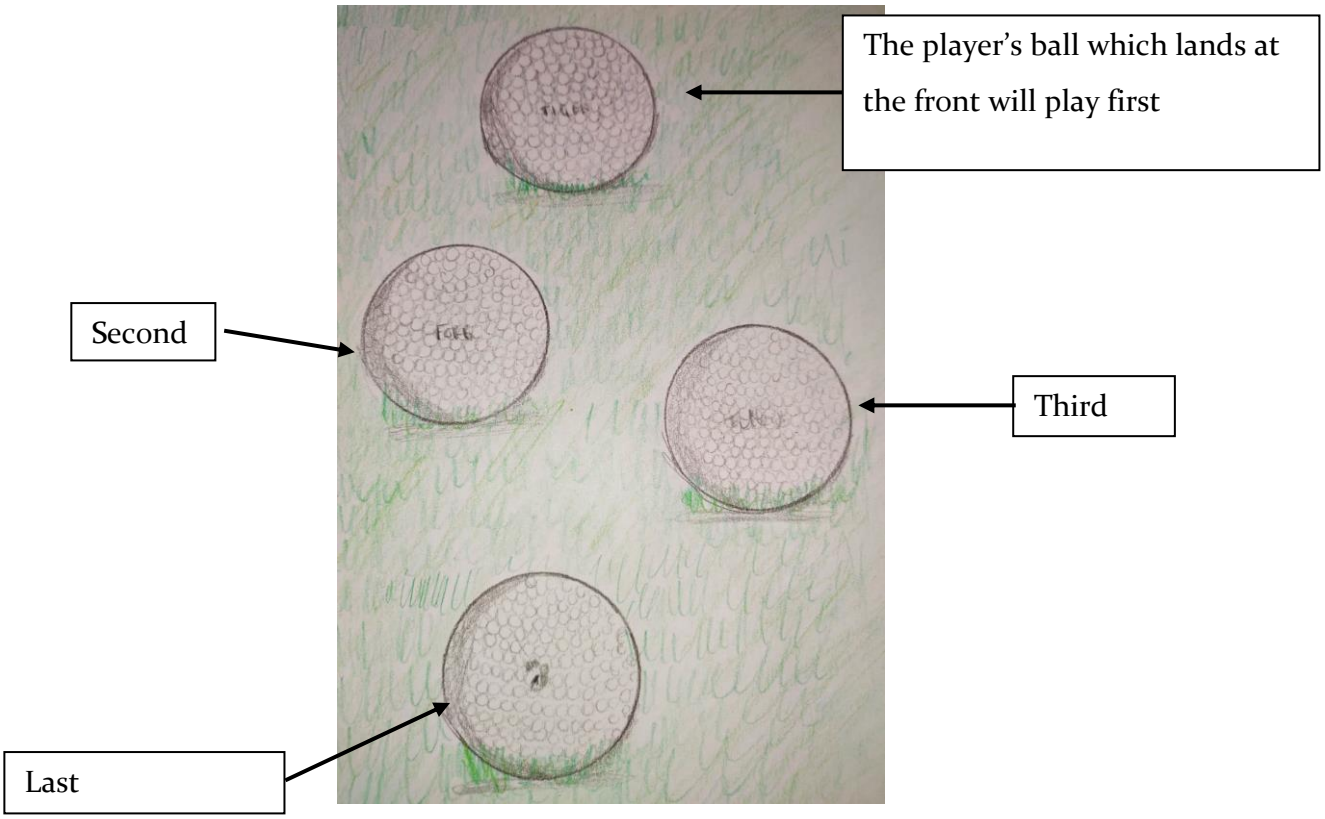
[Figure Seven: A driving range with wild cranes, photograph taken by author]

5.2.3 Gambling

In terms of play, one trend many participants highlighted was the practice of gambling. Though gambling may be a common feature of golf in many places, in China it is taken very seriously. Director Chen commented: "In the U.S. they have golf carts driving around selling beers, but not here. While playing, [Chinese] people like to gamble, but they don't like to drink so much." This concept of drinking vs gambling was reiterated by a former caddie and current caddie trainer: "people don't like to drink when they play golf because they want to stay focused to win money." Often the amount paid to the winner will be staggered, for example in a group of four the looser may give 500RMB to the winner, third place would then give 400RMB, and second place 300RMB. It is not uncommon for the winner to the put this money towards the green fees. Players will often gamble while playing in groups of more than two people, and if you know the signs gambling is easy to spot.

While doing on course training, the guests would take priority so a lot of time was spent waiting for guests to play through so we could continue. This meant there was frequently the opportunity to watch guests at play. One afternoon early in my fieldwork the caddie manager, Liu, joined us, to check on progress. She was amongst the stricter and firmer of the teachers, so when she was around the students were always on their best

behaviour. As I was outside the hierarchy, I was also able to see her backstage character. A cheeky, fun, and caring woman only a little older than me. We bonded very quickly. The afternoon in question while waiting for a group of guests to tee off I sat with her in the golf cart chatting. "They're gambling", she interjected with her eyes on the guests. I asked her how she knew, and she explained that it was because they had thrown their balls down to decide who goes first (see: Figure Eight) "when not gambling it doesn't matter as much who goes first".



[Figure Eight: How to decide who goes first when gambling.]

In China gambling, while illegal, has indeed become part of the ritual of golf, impacting interaction between players themselves, and players and caddies. One thing which stood out was that often guests did not watch their companions play. While the first player was teeing off, the others would usually sit in their golf carts smoking cigarettes and/or looking at their phones. Once the first person had played, they would go immediately back to their cart and drive off, without staying to watch the others. One day while chatting with one of the teachers we watched a group of Australians play, this was quite a rare occurrence and when foreigners came there would be a lot of talk about it. Watching the Australians tee off, all staying to watch each other play, I asked Teacher

Huang why Chinese people playing golf in a group do not watch their friends, they just leave after their turn. He told me that he had noticed that too and that he did not know why. He guessed it must be something to do with the fact that they are gambling while playing, so they "only care about their own ball."

Gambling also influences interactions between guests and their caddies. While discussing gambling with one caddie, I told her that I had visited Macau recently and gambled for the first time and did not really like it. "Caddies like gambling!" she exclaimed, explaining that if a caddies' player wins while gambling, they are likely to receive a much larger tip. However, for caddies gambling is a double-edged sword. One day during training, the club was short on caddies. So, some more experienced caddies still in training were asked to miss training one afternoon to work as caddies instead. The next morning when they returned everyone was eager to hear how it had been. One girl told the group that her player had shouted at her for standing too close to him. She explained that the group was gambling, and her player was doing very badly. Many caddies reiterated this idea that when gambling the caddie is more likely to be criticised or blamed for poor play. At Golden Valley, membership is expensive, and the amount of money being gambled can be in the thousands. The stakes are thus higher. This means that caddies' knowledge of the particularities of the holes has to be extensive. This is enforced through repetition of the holes during training and a significant amount of homework and revision.

5.3 Against 'Chinese characteristics': the three movements of golf

As these elements demonstrate, golf has adapted to the Chinese context, but to describe these elements as 'Chinese characteristics' undermines internal variance and international interplay. At play are three types of movements, which coalesce to give shape to the form golf takes in the Chinese context: ideas about 'the West'; the transnational regional level, namely the Asian sphere of golf; and finally the local level below the nation state. Here, the missing movement is at the national level, which was explored in depth in Chapter Three.

5.3.1 Golf, Whiskey, and Adam Smith: Ideas about 'the West'

> "I love Scotland because of three things: golf; whiskey; and Adam Smith."
> -Guest at a driving range

Driving ranges in China are generally arranged so that they are semi-covered, with benches or chairs behind the mats for people to rest between swings. Here, people will drink tea, play on their phones, or chat with friends. However, they also serve as the perfect arena to observe other people. Though the purpose of my time spent at driving ranges was to learn and practice golf, it was also a form of participant observation. But, ironically, a lot of the time I found that it was not me doing the bulk of the observation, but rather I was the one being observed. Generally, this centred around the benches. The attention I received was in part because I was a woman. On a good day women would constitute 10-20% of the guests. Sometimes I was the only woman there, and I was always the only discernibly 'foreign' woman. Indeed, the bulk of curiosity was derived from the fact that I was white, and thus visibly a 'foreigner'[35]. Over several months spent at the driving range on a nearly daily basis I only heard of one other 'foreigner', who came one afternoon and never returned. I would often spend time sitting on these benches and chatting to guests, and staff members who I had grown familiar with. Interest was often piqued when I told them I was English, with a Scottish father- the birthplace of golf. Many assumed this meant I would be good at golf and were thus sorely disappointed to see me play. Indeed, recently in conversation with a Chinese colleague, he told me about a golf club in the city in China where he went to university. He outlined how the club was doing poorly, so recruited western students to come to the club bar to increase the status of the club, and the perceived 'quality' of the establishment. One golf teacher even joked with me that I had to get good at playing as "as golf is to the United Kingdom what ping pong is to China."

Golf Diplomacy

Most, like the whiskey and Adam Smith loving university professor were aware of the origins of golf. This has driven much Chinese tourism to St Andrews.[36] To accommodate this, many of the expensive shops there have all the signs translated into Mandarin, and often employ Mandarin speakers. This relationship is a bilateral one. As Scotland's

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[35] Here, the idea of 'foreignness' should be unpacked a little. Though there were occasionally Koreans, they were not understood as 'foreign' in the same way. As Mao explores, ideas of *laowai* or *waiguo ren* can become interchangeable for 'white' (Mao 2015)

[36] The Old Course at St Andrews has become known as the home of golf. There are older courses, but St Andrews has become synonymous with the standardisation of the game. The Society of St Andrews Golfers, was the precursor for the central regulating body, the R&A.

cultural export, golf, grows in China so too has Scotland been courting Chinese tourism utilising golf as an asset. In 2005, following the relaxation of visa regulations, the tourism group Now Executive Golf and Leisure began offering golf specific packages for Chinese tourists visiting Scotland (The Herald 2005). In 2010 Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond visited Shanghai for the launch of tour operator China Holidays' first Scottish golf brochure, designed to make booking a golf holiday in Scotland easier (Golf Business News 2010). Later, in 2015 a delegation from the Highland Golf Links network attended the China golf show in Beijing, to make a "pitch for more Chinese golfers" (Ramage 2015). This push and pull of tourism, is of course not just one way. Many Chinese golf clubs also compete for international guests. Here, Toby Pearce commented that when marketing internationally, clubs are "wearing the China hat and promoting China rather than just the golf club." Though he noted that, as was explored in Chapter Three, because of the numerous facilities golf clubs in China offer, there is "not really any direct competition, because there is nothing really like it… It's not just golf but shopping centres, restaurants, spas…"

The European origins of golf are visible within the architecture of golf complexes. Though many Chinese golf complexes draw on classical European design, the importance of this imagery is perhaps best understood by reference to Tiger Beach Golf Links in Shandong. Founded by Beta Soong, a Taiwanese financial investor and real estate developer, Tiger Beach acts as a replica of a British Links. According to one golf consultant, Soong had been to Scotland, and loved the golf courses there. So, he "copied the layout exactly, even growing thistles and releasing goats." He also built a replica of St Andrews' Swilcan Bridge (see: Figure Nine). Unfortunately, Tiger Beach has since closed.

[Figure Nine: A replica of Swilcan bridge at Tiger Beach. Posted on the Tiger Beach Facebook page on the 22nd of November 2013.]

This does represent an extreme example, but most golf courses I visited were influenced by an imagined 'western' style. From the large columned gate houses situated at the entrance of the complexes, to the grand clubhouse, often furnished with marble and gold, the aesthetic of the majority of golf courses I visited in China drew heavily from Palladian architecture.[37] This was, however, in a manner which is not really in vogue in Western Europe or North America. Though the bulk of the gated communities are high rise apartments, many complexes also have European villa-style accommodation. These are, of course adapted to suit not only the severe climate in South China, meaning there is more marble, but also to suit Chinese aesthetic taste. This melding of architectural influence is perhaps best, and most playfully, represented by a small detail at one golf course I visited. One of the grander and more elaborate of the clubhouses I experienced, the bar and adjoining piano lounge had a large balcony overlooking the course. Men would sit there and smoke, and people would come to take photographs against the picturesque backdrop. The balcony was lined with a large balustrade, heavy stone columns, topped with marble. At regular intervals atop the marble sat miniature pagodas,

[37] "Characterised by Classical forms, symmetry, and strict proportion, the exteriors of Palladian buildings were often austere. Inside, however, elaborate decoration, gilding and ornamentation created a lavish, opulent environment." (National Trust n.d.)

made out of smaller versions of the columns below. This image of 'the West' also reflects back, demonstrating a type of Chinese person. Namely, a wealthy one, who is interested in and has access to certain spaces within 'the West', elite ones. This is clear in terms of the aforementioned preference towards large and lavish golf courses. As Toby Pearce told me: "They like the courses to be very manicured. This is perhaps because golf course owners have only ever seen golf courses on TV or been to tournaments, both of which will usually be held at the world's best, very manicured venues. They don't go for the Links style look."[38]

5.3.2 The Asian sphere of golf

Though Scotland, and more generally ideas about 'the West' hold an important position in the imagery of golf, golf in most instances in China following reform and opening did not come directly from this mythical origin. Speaking with Luo Wu during a lesson, he explained to me that the impetus for the growth of golf in mainland China came from Japan, then also from Hong Kong. For example, in 1993 Japanese developers put in 20 separate applications to build golf courses in mainland China (Wilson 1993). As well as international investment, the early years of golf's re-emergence were also characterised by a lot of foreign guests. Luo Wu told me that originally there were a lot of Korean and Japanese players in China, but as the Korean economy has got worse, and the Chinese economy has grown this has ceased to be the case. Nonetheless, this early influence heavily impacted the nature of golf in China and is still visible today. For example, one club I visited in Southern China had a calendar at the front desk in Cantonese detailing Hong Kong public holidays, while another had all the signs in Mandarin, English, Korean, Japanese, and Russian. Given there were very few foreign guests, this may also have served the purpose of making the golf club look more 'international'.

The mandatory use of caddies, and the preference towards women caddies, is likely due to this transnational regional movement. In Japan and South Korea, caddies have traditionally been mandatory, and have largely been women.[39] However, there is a growing trend in each away from using caddies (Lee 2020; Lockyer 2012). For caddies, one

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[38] "The major difference between a links course and a parkland course is that it is far less manufactured. Links courses are all about being at one with nature and are mostly found on the coastline. The courses are fashioned out of the sandy, windswept terrain, with few "man-made" additions." (BBC Sport 2006)

[39] This is also very common in Thailand.

of the most significant impacts of this early multi-national history is the concept of tipping. Caddies are generally paid a very low base salary, with the bulk of their income earned through tips. By and large, tipping is not a custom in mainland China, with the exception of high-end masseurs and caddies. Yet, neither Japan nor South Korea really have a tipping culture. Many within the industry hypothesised that the necessity to tip came from the influence of Hong Kong investment and early patronage. The form caddies take is thus an assemblage rather than adaptation. It is not that women caddies are exclusive to China, but rather this is based on international influence. However, tipping is not common practice in several of these national spheres, but rather becomes more common in certain settings through a process of cultural osmosis.

5.3.3 Below the Nation State

This transnational regional influence also impacts the form golf takes at a local level. This was explained to me by Li Jingyi, manager of a caddie training centre, who had herself begun working in the industry as a caddie nearly three decades earlier. One afternoon over tea, we began discussing the varying teaching philosophies caddie trainers employ. Her own was one which encouraged the caddies to be jovial with guests and blurred the line between assistance and friendship. I contrasted this to some other caddie trainers I had encountered, who encourage a more formal and subservient relationship between caddie and guest. "This is a difference between who opened the golf course" she explained to me. Referencing a previous conversation we had on WeChat, but had not yet discussed fully, she told me how different regions of China had different 'golf cultures', based on which international influence had been strongest in the post-reform period:

> The first person to enter Beijing, the first person to enter Shanghai, the first person to enter Guangdong and open a golf course were not the same person. Do you understand? There were people from Japan, people from Europe… For example, in 1996 a British person came to open a golf course, I knew him, when he opened the golf course, he brought with him British customs and understandings of golf. When Japanese people open golf courses [in China] they bring with them Japanese culture.

In an earlier conversation she had told me how the Japanese style was more polite and formal, I asked her if this is what she meant. She responded:

> Correct! In every golf course, in every region, the south, the north, Shanghai, why is their golf culture different? This is the very important reason… In Guangdong it was people from Hong Kong. In Shanghai it is

> more European/North American, because in the early days there were lots of American schools, international schools, so lots of foreigners came there. In Beijing there's a little more Japanese influence, because when Japanese people were first investing money in China it was often in Beijing. So, it changes like this. In Shandong, Korean people came to build golf courses. In this place, many Korean people live and work, so there are more Korean people playing golf, so the culture came to resemble Korea.

This demonstrates not only that we cannot understand golf in China as homogenous, there are regional differences and each club has its own history, but also that golf did not develop in China in a vacuum. Golden Valley, like most courses in Southern China, was set up by investors from Hong Kong. Moreover, many of those in important roles have studied in the United States. As a result, the style of caddie interaction with guests was slightly more informal than courses in Beijing, but caddies were still more in the 'server' role than those in Shanghai. International influence is not a simple act of transporting a cultural form to a different location. Here, the process is one of osmosis not transplanting, and reveals as much about perceptions of origin as it does the Chinese context. Golf in China did not arrive in a block. It came through porous borders and has been influenced by multiple cultural understandings.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated the often obfuscatory role of the phrase 'with Chinese characteristics'. This is not to say that all uses of the term are invalid, but rather to encourage more considered use. As is evident within golf in China, it has certainly adapted, and meanings have shifted within the region. However, what could be referred to as 'Chinese characteristics' are actually part of a much more complicated process of international cultural exchange, and as a result create intranational variance. This chapter has explored three regional understandings, the international which is composed of images of the imagined 'West', and the Asian sphere of golf, as well as the regional differences within China.

Without the term 'Chinese characteristics', a focus on context is encouraged. In the service industry, context is crucial. Affective labour does not work unless it suits the professional context. The next chapter will explore how affective labour is trained and contextually determined, rather than indiscriminately applied. This becomes clear at Golden Valley where despite the shift in the gender of caddies, similar affective qualities remain central.

CHAPTER SIX

Xian Zuoren: Training and the Social Creation of the Caddie

> **Hannah:** What kind of young people do you look for?
>
> **Director Chen:** From my standard, only one, and it is most important: nice. Nice people. For all the service business, any business involving service you must be a nice person. This is very important. I do not need you to be very professional, to be an expert, to be very good looking. It is not necessary, but you have to be a nice person. You must smile, always smile, just like you. [When you are with a stranger] if you smile, it feels so good. The distance between two people could be very short because he knows you are a nice person if you smile a lot. Other than that, just leave [it] to me. We have training programme, we have very good training programme. I can make you become more professional and more like an expert, but you must be a nice person to join our team. This is my only standard, and it is the most important, I never compromise on that. Sometimes you are born with it, it is personality. Sometimes [recruits] are not very open. Sometimes I give them opportunities. I tell them we can train you, you have to be more open, more smiley with customers, but there is a time. Otherwise, I cannot put you [to work] because I am responsible for all the customers. I have to make sure they are happy, they feel good. If you cannot provide this kind of service, sorry, I cannot let you stay here. I tell human resources, try to have nice people, you can tell sometimes, first impression, you can whether people are nice or not. They are open, they talk with you.

I first met Jian in a roped off section of the parking lot at Golden Valley during his first week of caddie training. We were meant to be practising driving golf carts, but he had other ideas. He stood leaning against the back of his assigned cart, having attracted an audience of other students. He effortlessly held court, using his quick wit to bounce jokes off what the others were saying, and stimulated spirited conversation amongst this group of young people apprehensive about their first week in a new job. Initially, I was wary of Jian. Ethically, he was a difficult person to navigate as he was prone to flirtation. When I explained my project to him, he responded with a wry smile: "when you write your book, make sure you describe me as the cutest caddie." I do not remember whether he winked, but it would not have been out of character. However, having kept some distance from him, and having got to know him better from afar, I realised I had miscategorised his effervescence. He was cheeky and charming with everyone but this was never inappropriate or with any real romantic intent. Rather, he just had a very friendly and outgoing personality. We later bonded over food from his region. "You haven't tried this?"

He would ask. “You’re a foreigner you probably can’t handle spicy food,” he would tease. He would gasp, “Oh, you’ve eaten this dish there? No, you have to come to my hometown. That’s where we do it best!” He quickly drew the attention of the teachers, in a negative way at first. He liked to make jokes and would often distract his classmates. He represented a kind of wild-card figure. Initially, when the caddies were taught to stand in a well organised line when a guest or more senior employee passed, he would joke, “Everyone look forward! Stand up straight! Get in line!” said very much in jest, pulling faces and spanking the other male caddies when they did not comply. As training went on, this jest remained but was transformed. He quickly became one of the enforcers of the rules amongst the caddies in training. “Everyone look forward! Stand up straight! Get in line!” now barked without any sense of irony. He did, however, maintain his sense of humour, lightness, and interpersonal skills, now channelled into the type of affective professionalism expected at Golden Valley. By the end of the three months of training, he was highlighted to me by many of the teachers as one of the caddies with the most potential.

Meiling came from a quite different starting point to Jian. She was timid and reserved, and did not speak much to the other caddies, but she was incredibly clever and everything she said appeared thoughtfully considered. She had been learning English and was easily the best at it amongst the caddies in training and their teachers. Albeit this was quite a low bar, but one which she drastically surpassed. We bonded over novels, languages and history, and on my final day she gifted me a book of Chinese poetry that she thought I would enjoy. This was a somewhat different style of bonding than I had been used to with most of the other women caddies, with whom I enjoyed gossiping, and they were eager to talk about what features they found most appealing in men. When I was with them we would lightly mock each other, make silly jokes, and stand at the back chatting during particularly boring lessons. With Meiling, conversations usually had an emotional or intellectual gravity. Just as Jian did not seem like the best potential caddie at the beginning, neither did the shy and quiet Meiling. However, just as Jian learnt to tone down and utilise his cheeky attitude, Meiling learnt to be more outgoing and engaging. She had quickly picked up the rules of golf, despite having minimal prior experience of it. Her main struggle was learning how to charm guests and how to create affect. She worked very hard at this, and eventually became very personable, albeit in a different, more muted and respectful way than Jian.

On first meeting, there was nothing about either of these caddies in training which would suggest they might be ideal recruits. However, they each had their own set of skills which could be easily moulded in the right direction. Not necessarily a maximisation of their natural abilities but, rather, their distinct skills were made to conform to the set of characteristics required of them by Golden Valley. Certainly, there were recruits doing affective labour, but in a way that did not match the type of affective professionalism valued by Golden Valley.

Yuxuan was another of the caddies in training who struck me as quite distinct from the beginning. He was incredibly talkative, and in fact, would monopolise a lot of my time to the extent that I occasionally had to try to extract myself from conversation with him. There were indeed many days I predominantly spent talking with him. He would go off on tangents and tell long and winding stories. These skills, such as being able to maintain a conversation, may seem like good attributes for a caddie. He was certainly engaging, knew a lot about the local area and, and to some extent, he learnt a lot about golf. However, his style of engagement was quite overwhelming, and his delivery outside the standards of Golden Valley. He spoke quickly and in a heavy accent, often making him difficult to understand. At first, I thought this was the result of my Mandarin level, but it soon emerged that others also struggled. He spoke a lot about himself with a real candour, without asking many questions. For an anthropologist he appeared to be something of a dream participant, but less of an ideal caddie. Rather than eliciting feelings of comfort, fun, or ease in his conversation partner, his style kept you curiously on your toes, and attention focused on him. He was not the most skilled in reading social cues, such as noticing when a conversation had come to a natural end or the topic had become stale. When I returned to Golden Valley, two months after training was meant to be completed, he was still in a remedial course. His character and style of interaction had remained unchanged, and he had failed the initial tests.

This chapter will argue that at Golden Valley during training, the caddie is created socially. Affective labour is something which is actively taught. Moreso, it is a specific type of affective labour which is taught. As will be explored in the following chapter, I term this affective professionalism. The implication of the above is that there are some inherent personality traits which make it easier to transition to life as a caddie, but that these traits alone are not enough. What needs to be done is also a transformation of these

characteristics into the language of Golden Valley. Caddies in training can be doing affective labour, but affective labour is a large term which contains a multitude of different types and forms. It is not sufficient just to be doing affective work; the type done also needs to fit into the requirements of the establishment in question. Indeed, arriving with a propensity towards affective labour may help a caddie be successful, but the process of training is an essential element in the process of professionalization. Becoming a caddie is not about being yourself but, rather, about utilising the elements of your own personality which fit within the larger corporate view. Indeed, even when caddies are improvising, it is done so in a manner that is in accordance with a basic type. Training affective labour involves the creation of personhood.

6.1 Affective Labour

> There is no single, generalizable theory of affect: not yet, and (thankfully) there never will be. If anything, it is more tempting to imagine that there can only ever be infinitely multiple iterations of affect and theories of affect: theories as diverse and singularly delineated as their own highly particular encounters with bodies, affects, worlds. (Gregg & Seigworth 2010: 3–4).

As Gregg and Seigworth outline above, there is no solid and irrefutable definition of affect. Affective labour is similarly evasive of singular definition. Thus affective labour needs to be understood contextually and the context is the domain in which that labour is being carried out. Broadly speaking, affective labour is a subcategory of immaterial labour. This is a term coined by sociologist, philosopher, and activist Maurizio Lazzarato. He defines immaterial labour as something which "produces the informational and cultural content of the commodity" (Lazzarato 1996: 133). To illustrate material labour, Hochschild uses the example of a child working in the wallpaper factory. At the end of the working day, they will have produced a solid, material object, in the form of wallpaper (Hochschild 2012 [1983]: 5). Immaterial labour, however, produces something immaterial, something we cannot touch. Instead, immaterial labour is produced from affective and cognitive activities. Here, it should be noted that critics of this term argue that this process of producing emotion or experience is always embodied and rooted in the material world (Dyer-Witheford 2001; Lanoix 2013; Virno 1996). But, as Hardt argues: "This labor is immaterial, even if it is corporeal and affective, in the sense that its products are intangible: a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement, passion-even a sense of connectedness or community" (Hardt 1999: 95–6). In the instance of caddies, although

their work is incredibly physical and often strenuous, the main output of their production is immaterial.

Though affective labour is similar to Arlie Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labour, there are some crucial differences. Increasingly, the terms have been incorrectly conflated, as has the concept of emotional labour become, in Hochschild's words, "very blurry and over-applied" (Beck 2018).[40] Hochschild defines emotional labour as labour which "requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (Hochschild 2012 [1983]: 7). Charting the differences and similarities between emotional labour and affective labour is not a simple task. Not least because in various definitions of emotion and affect they overlap, cause friction, and interlink in different ways. Even going no further than the writing of my colleagues- Fabio Gygi, Jieyu Liu, and Naomi Leite- from the anthropology department at SOAS, a multitude of definitions emerge. In contrast to emotional labour, Hansen and Gygi suggest that "affect is that which comes before emotion and is both more visceral and less contained" (Hansen & Gygi 2022: 2). Jieyu Liu, by reference to Deleuze and Guattari, describes affect as "a material intensity that emerges via the 'in-between' spaces of embodied encounters, circulating power not primarily as a mode of discursive regulation but rather as the potential to 'become otherwise' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994)" (Liu 2017:113). By contrast, the definition Leite uses reveals a different relationship between emotion and affect. She argues that affect is "the communicative register in which emotions, feelings, and subjectivities take shape and gather force in relations between individuals" (Leite 2017:8). In her exploration of fashion models, Wissinger defines affect as "a condition of emergence of emotion, and emotion as the capture, closure, and naming of affect" (Wissinger 2007: 260). Drawing on this, I view affective labour as that which produces or conditions affect, and emotional labour as the personal delineation and moulding (or hiding) of affect. Or, put simply, in the case of

[40] While I do not believe that terms should always retain their original meaning, I would agree with Hochschild, interviewed by Beck, that the term has become overstretched: "It is being used to apply to a wider and wider range of experiences and acts. It's being used, for example, to refer to the enacting of to-do lists in daily life—pick up the laundry, shop for potatoes, that kind of thing. Which I think is an overextension. It's also being applied to perfectionism: You've absolutely got to do the perfect Christmas holiday. And that can be a confusion and an overextension. I do think that managing anxiety associated with obligatory chores is emotional labor. I would say that. But I don't think that common examples I could give are necessarily emotional labor" (Beck 2018).

caddies, whereas affective labour revolves around producing affect in others, emotional labour is more concerned with producing or modifying one's own emotional experiences.

The reality of both terms, however, certainly cannot be contained by this simple definition, which merely represents a jumping off point. The work that Arlie Hochschild's airhostesses do is not just around management or containment of emotions, but is ultimately in service of "the product", namely passenger contentment (Hochschild 2012:20). Consequently, it is inherently linked to producing affect. In a similar sense, the work that caddies do is also underpinned by emotional labour. Though the two terms are inextricably intertwined, to the extent that it is impossible to fully separate them, doing so- even if artificially- enables a clearer focus. Indeed, as Hochschild has argued:

> Many social psychologists give emotion short shrift by subsuming it under some conceptual umbrella. For example, in an otherwise informative study of soldiers' attitudes toward the Women's Army Corps in 1950, Suchman and colleagues subsume emotion under the concept of affect: "Affect toward an object can be very generally classified as either positive or negative. For our purposes, however, annoyance, anger, distrust, and fright are all shadings of negative affect, and these shadings we shall ignore" (cited in Newcomb et al. 1965, p. 48). When emotion is subsumed in this way, the interesting dimension of emotion becomes the "how much." What precisely there is "a lot" of or "a little" of is unclear. We lose the distinction between a fearful dislike of the Women's Army Corps and an angry dislike of it. We lose a wealth of clues about the various definitions of reality that people apply when adopting an attitude. We lose the idea that emotions reflect the individual's sense of the self-relevance of a perceived situation. We lose an appreciation of what the language of emotion can tell us (Hochschild 2012:140).

Certainly, the work done by caddies and the airhostesses Hochschild explores are in fact very similar. Thus, just as a study of caddies could focus on emotional labour, so too could the terms affective labour and affective professionalism be applied to airhostesses. However emotional labour is not the focus of this work, which is instead concerned with the affective and symbolic role caddies play in immaterial production.

Here, it is also worth noting the emic term, *ganqing*. This can be roughly translated as "sentiment," "emotional attachment," and "good feelings." *Qing* encompasses these three translations, and *gan* "means to feel, to experience, and to be moved emotionally. The combination of these two characters implies that *ganqing* exists only when sentiment, emotional attachment, and good feelings are felt by people involved in social interactions" (Yan 1996:150). As such, it is potentially important to both affective and emotional labour,

but especially the latter. While my participants would on occasion use the term *ganqing*, the language employed was most often that of *fuwu*, of service. This is perhaps in line with the separation of personal, and professional relationships outlined by Mason:

> [B]oth my male and female informants used the word *ganqing* more often to describe their relationships with romantic partners than their relationships with *guanxi* partners. This was in keeping with broader trends among female and male Chinese who desired greater self-determination as well as greater intimacy and agency in the context of personal relationships (Mason 2013: 132–3).

In the case of caddies, this focus on service, rather than the more emotionally attached language of *ganqing* also serves to further emphasise affective rather than emotional labour as the appropriate framing.

6.1.1 Gender and affective labour

Work on affective labour has often gone hand in hand with gender. Indeed, as Weeks highlights, "[f]eminist theorists have long been interested in immaterial and affective labor, even if the terms themselves are a more recent invention" (Weeks 2007: 233). Hardt also outlines how, in his utilisation of the term, he does not mean to imply that affective labour is new, nor is the idea "that affective labor produces value in some sense." He continues, "[f]eminist analyses in particular have long recognized the social value of caring labor, kin work, nurturing, and maternal activities" (Hardt 1999: 96). As the graph of imagined gendered traits in Chapter Four demonstrates, many of the skills associated with affective labour have been associated with femininity. Indeed, "affective labor is gendered—it is in an important sense feminized labor—but it is important to acknowledge that is not performed exclusively by women" (Oksala 2016: 285). As has been demonstrated in earlier chapters, because of these gendered understandings, caddies in China are ideally woman. However, due to the movements explored in Chapter Four, they are increasingly men.

In their edited volume on service, gender, performance, and fantasy in Japan, Hansen and Gygi offer the example of the theatrical tradition of cross-gender performance. They argue that onnagata- male actors who play female roles in kabuki theatre- are "signifying femininity rather than becoming female" (Hansen & Gygi 2022: 9). Drawing on the work of Morinaga (2002), they argue that these men do not replace women, nor do they aim to pass as women, but rather the goal is "an enhanced imitation"

(Hansen & Gygi 2022: 9). By comparison, in the case of male caddies at Golden Valley, they were not trying to emulate women. When discussing or presenting my research people often try to link male caddies to, for example, stereotypes about male hairdressers, and thus ask if they are particularly effeminate. They are not. Mills, in his study of the American middle classes (1951), emasculates men working in white collar professions because of perceived connection to affective femininity and women workers. Consequently, "to the extent he recognizes a shift in the gendering of work he represents it as a matter of de-gendering not of re-gendering" (Weeks 2007: 241). In essence, as a result of their work, he considers their masculinity removed. For male caddies it was neither a process of de-gendering or re-gendering. Their masculinity was not in question. They were, by and large, treated the same as their women counterparts and trained in the same affective skills. What follows will argue that affective labour is actively trained. Moreover, despite very firm ideas about how gender impacts the abilities of caddies, amongst the men and women I worked with neither ability in affective labour nor technical knowledge fell along a gender binary. While much has been written on affective labour, this element of it being a trained ability is less developed.

6.2 Becoming a caddie, becoming a person

The rhythm of training at Golden Valley was overall quite regular: in the first few weeks there were golf cart driving lessons in the mornings, then on-course training in the afternoons. During on-course training, students would take turns acting as one of the teachers' caddie while they played a round of golf. After the first few weeks, both morning and afternoon were occupied by on-course training. However, there were various points of disruption and, in these moments, the role of the caddie was made more explicit. One of these ruptures occurred at the end of the third week of training. Due to dangerous weather conditions, instead of spending the afternoon outside, we were ushered into a small lecture hall for classroom training. Teacher Huang stood at the front of the room with a large projector and an old, stuttering AC behind him. He began by showing us pictures of the founder of the course and his family, then of executives and managers, imploring the students to learn who these important figures are. Next came information about the facilities the complex offered, including the closing times and cuisines of all the restaurants, and images and prices of different tiers of hotel room. The students all gasped at the cost for one night and discussed the grandeur of the décor in hushed tones. "You'll

be with guests for hours," Huang interjected, "they may want recommendations about where to eat and relax." Next, Huang quizzed the students on different high end golfing brands and famous golfers. Finally, we ran through a history of golf in China, which did not include any of the governmental restrictions on golf and breezed through more turbulent periods. After a ten-minute break, we returned to specifications more directly linked to the comportment of caddies, beginning with dress code. Teacher Huang explained the various rules and regulations, supported by several PowerPoint slides which, amongst other things, instructed the following:

> -Maintain clean teeth. Men and women caddies should not smoke while at work or eat bad smelling foods.
> -No rings should be worn except wedding rings. Women can wear one pair of earrings of the same style, men cannot wear earrings.
> -[Women must wear] Light make-up, must trim eyebrows, and use red lipstick.
> -[Caddies] must bathe frequently, maintain a fresh body odour, do not use perfume with too strong a fragrance.
> -Wash your hair frequently and keep it clean, no dandruff. Do not dye your hair or have a strange (*guguai*) hairstyle. Women's hair should not be longer than the face, and no split ends, men's hair should not exceed the ears.

Next, we were shown images of correct and incorrect hairstyles, shoes, and name tag position to reinforce the above. These uniform requirements quite literally created a uniformity amongst caddies and there was little space for personal embellishments to imply character. At times this uniformity made it difficult to tell caddies apart. Indeed, as was explored in Chapter Four, recruits who varied drastically like *dapang* were filtered out and, in informal recruitment, elements of appearance were specified in job advertisements.

As well as these physical requirements, Huang also outlined the importance of immaterial qualities. "It's all about the relationship with the guest," he said, comparing receiving bad service from a caddie to going out for dinner and the meal being ruined by bad service from the waiting staff. However, he highlighted, golf is much more expensive than dinner. "If the motivation is earning good money", he continued, "this can only be done through good service," adding that small touches- such as spending a bit of money on a portable phone charger for guests to use or having some snacks and tissues available- would make all the difference. Ultimately, the needs of the guest are tantamount. Huang highlighted it was important to ask if the guests would like an umbrella, cigarette, or rest. He ended the lecture: "If you want to make money in this business first (*xian), zuoren.*"

Here, *zuoren* can be understood as conducting oneself. However, the verb *zuo* invites word play: it can mean to do, make, produce, or work. Combined with person, *ren*, this implies the creation of a person, or personhood. This is compounded by the setting. As Director Chen told me: "I tell kids you can learn from this game, it's also about rules, how to be a gentleman, and be kind to people." There exists an idea that golf shapes personhood.

Indeed, the training of a caddie not only comprises technical knowledge, but also the cultivation of a type of person. As outlined above, this includes both physical presentation and character. This ideal type is created parallel to assumptions about another figure, the guest, who is usually assumed to be a man. Over the course of training, it was often reiterated that the best service will be dependent on the needs of the guest; whereas some may want a talkative caddie, others will prefer a caddie whose presence is minimised. Thus, while there were scripts about how to introduce yourself to the guest and what to say on approaching the green, for example, there was no set script dictating how to fill the full four hours with the guest. Instead, there were rules and recommendations to be learnt and then reconstructed depending on the type of guest a caddie finds themself with. Here, the best caddies will be able to improvise based on these rules.

6.3 Discipline

The style of teaching I saw over the course of training was varied, with some teachers having very firm attitudes and others being more lax. However, given the potential for rupture in the delicate social relationship between caddie and guest, and to prepare caddies for the physically difficult life of a caddie, at times training could be tough. Here disciple was crucial. Though teachers had different styles of teaching, all those I encountered did some disciplining. Even soft spoken, affable Huang at times lectured sternly, though his appropriation of this role was less convincing than others. The most convincing was Teacher Wu.

Teacher Wu had not particularly enjoy school, nor did he do very well, but he had got grades just about high enough to attend a local university. He started caddying because he thought that the salary for other kinds of service jobs was too low. He had been working as a caddie trainer for eight years and estimated that, over this time, he had trained approximately 10,000 caddies. Amongst his students was Chenguang. Chenguang

was feeling unwell one morning. She had slept very poorly the night before and the heat and humidity on this day was unrelenting. She was normally incredibly chatty, but today was silent. The previous day, some of the students had been using handheld electric fans but Teacher Wu had since banned their use; caddies were prohibited from using personal accoutrements while on the job. Wu was the most disciplinarian of all the teachers I encountered. He made trainees run behind him in the golf cart as he drove between holes. On several occasions, I saw students gagging as if about to throw up from running so much, or otherwise struggling. Though always strict, on this day Wu was particularly volatile. He told me that the night before he had been to dinner with his boss and, due to the nature of drinking in this kind of situation in China whereby toasts are given rather than drinking at will, he had ended up drinking quite a lot and so was quite hungover. Wu normally drunk *baijiu*, a strong alcoholic drink distilled from grain or rice. His boss preferred wine, so he had been drinking wine all night which, he suggested, had contributed to his hangover.

As we neared the end of what had already been a tense day, it was Chenguang's turn to act as caddie for Wu. Things had been going smoothly until we reached the final stretch. As we approached the green, Wu instructed all the students to stand around the edges of the green and observe, as was standard practice. Chenguang approached the ball to begin to line up. As she bent over, her trousers rode up revealing a pair of colourful socks, not the regulation white socks caddies were required to wear. Noticing, Wu began yelling loudly: "You have had days to buy the correct socks. Why haven't you already? What kind of attitude is this to have?" Chenguang hung her head, silent. With all her peers standing uniformly around her watching, she seemed embarrassed. Wu continued, "I have told you three times. Will I have to tell you three more times until you understand?" He then dismissed her and, as she walked to re-join the others in line, he began to address the group about the importance of uniform. As he did so, I noticed that Chenguang was silently sobbing. Shortly afterwards, Wu ushered for me to join him in the golf cart back to the office. He told me that the methods of discipline in China were different and was worried that as a foreigner I may judge him harshly for what had just happened. He asked me if I had seen other trainers hit or yell at students. I told him that I had never seen anyone hit students but had seen trainers raise their voices. I told him it varied, and he was certainly the strictest caddie trainer I had encountered, but that I had also seen him have fun with the students and play games so I did not see him only as

strict. This seemed to reassure him, and he repeated a phrase I had heard him use often: *enwei-bingyong*, a traditional Chinese idiomatic expression often used in the context of discipline in a hierarchical context which may be understood as similar to the English phrase 'carrot and stick'.

Though less explicit in his pedagogy than Wu, Dong was also a comparatively strict teacher. Working with Teacher Huang as the main teacher, the atmosphere overall was more jovial than with Wu's group. Alongside his more overt discipline, Dong would also play games and joke with the students, and occasionally sneak off for a cigarette with the boys. Students were, however, more cautious around him, with one telling me that they did not like when it was their turn to be his caddie because when he did not play well it impacted his temperament. Indeed, he did have a more erratic temper than the other teachers in the group. As will be explored in Chapter Eight, he had also been employed as a caddie trainer through indirect channels as his influential and wealthy father was friends with the owner. Accordingly, some of the rules other members of staff were subject to seemed to apply less to him.

Nonetheless, at times, this temper had practical benefits (intended or not) in helping to prepare students for actual time spent with guests. Huang was normally a good golfer but, on one occasion, however, he had hit the ball particularly poorly. Some of the students and other teachers laughed and made friendly quips. While this was in line with the atmosphere and relationships, for some reason this time it irked Dong. "Do you think that is funny?" he yelled, creating a palpable shift in the atmosphere. "Do you think you could do any better?" he confrontationally asked the students. The next ten minutes were spent uncomfortably, with no talk other than what was necessary. The ice was finally broken by Jian. He always managed to lighten the mood, and this occasion may have been his biggest challenge yet in doing so. He began a light-hearted wager with Teacher Huang, betting a can of Coke on who would get the ball in from the green. With the atmosphere lifted, I approached Shengjie, a good friend of Jian's from university, who though equally as outgoing, had a calmer air. I asked him what he thought of the incident and, though he acknowledged it was uncomfortable, he believed that it was good in preparing them for real work; "if you are with a guest, you shouldn't be laughing like that as it's rude." The range of pedagogical approaches in training affect mirrors the unpredictability of different

guests caddies may encounter. This heightens the need for caddies to be able to think on their feet and improvise based on their guest's temperament.

6.4 Rules: teaching professionalization and feminization

Over the course of training, students are taught a series of rules. These constitute both the formal rules of golf, and regulations related to health and safety and the protection of guests' expensive equipment. These types of rules fall under the domain of overt forms of technical professionalism, as will be explored in the following chapter. In order to work as a caddie, students must pass a written test on these formal rules. The other type of rules that students are expected to learn can, in turn, be defined as related to affective labour. Part of the final examination involves acting as caddie for the examiner, where lacking these affective skills may be grounds for not passing. This section will give examples of each type of training, demonstrating how both the formalities of caddying and expected affective performance are actively trained.

6.4.1 Teaching the rules of golf

My first day doing fieldwork at Golden Valley was also the first day of training for the group of students I was assigned to. Manager Liu, three teachers, including Huang, and 30 students, five of whom were women, stood in a cordoned off section of the car park exposed to the unrelenting sun. The teachers and Manager Liu stood at the front beside a golf cart, facing the students, who in turn stood in front of another row of carts. After inspecting the students' uniforms and chastising any infringements, Liu began her lecture. Today, we were starting with the basics, loading and unloading the golf cart. Liu explained some of the basic rules:

1.) Put the tall clubs at the back of the bag so that they do not obscure your view of the others, thus meaning you do not waste time searching.
2.) Be aware that the guests often keep items such as food, water, or money in the back pocket of the golf bag. Make sure you do not crush them.
3.) Ask the guest which side of the bag they want you to take balls from and which side they want you to put used balls back into. It could be that there are broken balls on one side, or sentimental ones from special occasions which they are saving.
4.) Make sure the bag is always securely strapped into the cart. In the past they have not been properly attached before and fallen off the back.

Here, some key tenets of caddie service are foregrounded: safety, efficiency, attention to the guests' needs, and taking care of guests' often expensive equipment. Manager Liu later told me that if a piece of equipment is damaged or broken because of the actions of a

caddie, Golden Valley will pay a small amount in compensation, but the rest must be covered by the caddie. And, as Liu told the students, a single club may cost the same as their monthly salary and tips, if not more. The next couple of hours were spent with the students repeatedly practicing loading and unloading the golf cart, with the teachers doing inspections, giving warnings, tips, and tricks.

Once play has begun there are also many more rules which caddies must follow. These range from the seemingly small, to the crucial. An example of the former would be raking the sand bunker. On one occasion we spent nearly an hour practicing the precise method for raking with both speed and efficiency. Teacher Huang also demonstrated the exact way to clean the rake having finished, banging it gently on the ground with the non-pronged end downwards. Amongst the more obviously crucial skillsets taught, was the advice to give before the guest makes a shot. The caddie should tell them the distance to the green, the degree of incline, and which side is higher. Here, precision is key. Caddies were often told off for making estimates or using phrases such as "roughly" or "approximately". As a result, knowledge of each hole is of tantamount importance. As with loading and unloading the golf cart, the method of training is repetition. Over the three months, we repeated each hole many times, with students taking notes on maps which they had to revise for homework. They were regularly quizzed and chastised for not having sufficient knowledge. The elements of training above fall clearly within the technical professionalism, and sporting knowledge. This is reinforced by the repetition of these norms not only at Golden Valley, but also in international material designed to instruct caddies (Mull 2018; Professional Golfers Career College 2019; Metropolitan golf association 2019).

6.4.2 Teaching affective labour

The day after Manager Liu's lecture on loading and unloading the golf cart, she returned to give further instruction. This time, while still predicated around a set of rules, the focus was more on producing affect. When talking to a guest, she outlined you must not jump up and down nervously, bite your nails or play with your hair. Instead, you must ensure you make eye contact. You should call them Sir, and their surname, not just boss. This is both affective and practical: "you need to make sure you know their name in case there's a problem later on." For example, they may forget something, and you need to get in touch with them. You should wish them a good game at the start of the first hole, and then not

again so as not to seem insincere. For the first, but certainly not last time, Liu lectured on the importance of smiling. Here, Liu used me as an example: "Look at Hannah, she's always smiling. This makes people feel good!" It seemed the affective qualities I had myself been cultivating as an anthropologist in some ways overlapped with those required of a caddie. One trainee told me that "smiling is such a big part of the caddie's work, but often it's not very sincere." He said that by the end of the day his face would often really hurt from having to smile so much. This is reminiscent of Hochschild's (2012 [1983]) work on airhostesses, the importance of the smile and the emotional toll of being expected to do so.

Outside of direct time spent caddying, Liu told the students that whenever they saw a guest around the facility, even if they did not know them, "you always have to say hello/good morning/good evening. While you are wearing the uniform, you represent the club." Over the course of training, this quickly became a reflex for the students. Whenever a guest played through, they would all stand in a line and, in unison, wish the guest a good afternoon or evening. Often, one student would notice the guest approaching in advance and instruct the others to get in line. The same would happen when Managers or senior members of staff passed by. However, the parameters of this affect were confined, as will be explored in depth in Chapter Eight, section four. The *ayis*, older women who attended to the horticultural needs of the golf course, picking weeds and pruning back shrubs, were never afforded the same welcome. Indeed, they were largely ignored. The only time I heard them referenced was either in the importance of shouting "fore!" to warn people of an incoming ball. "You may think there's no one there, but there could be an *ayi* in the bushes!" warned Huang.

The hierarchical application of affect also extended into the sphere of gender. One constant presence to be navigated, particularly early on in fieldwork, was the umbrella. The first time I did on-course training with the students, Liu introduced me. After she left, one of the teachers instructed a young woman student to carry an umbrella over me. Due to the preference for pale skin amongst many in China addressed in Chapter Four, it is common to carry an umbrella for protection from the sun. Caddies and caddies in training are not allowed to use umbrellas for themselves but are encouraged to do so for guests. They are permitted to wear face coverings, which are worn over the head, under the helmet, and frame the face offering some protection. However, these must be minimal

and white. I offered to take the umbrella to carry myself, but she insisted on carrying it. After another half hour, I told her it was not necessary, I was not too hot, was wearing sunscreen and did not mind getting a tan, not yet realising the complex dynamics at play. Again, she insisted. For the first couple of weeks, despite my protests, a student was assigned to carry an umbrella over me. On one occasion, to my embarrassment, Dong sent a student running back to the cart to fetch an umbrella for me. In these early days of getting to know everyone, I feared, correctly, that having umbrella privileges worked to further mark me as different. In some ways, however, it also enabled me to have one-on-one conversations with the students, and many of my most personal conversations were while walking at the back of the group chatting with the student holding the umbrella. As I learnt about the dynamics of the group, and of caddies' service, I realised that in some ways as a 'guest', I was being used as part of the training. In a similar fashion, while playing 'guest', teachers would often also require the student playing caddie to hold an umbrella over them. Many passing guests did the same, and the teachers and Manager Liu frequently reminded the students of these small but important acts such as holding an umbrella over a guest or offering them water. On one occasion, Huang gave a girl playing his caddie an umbrella to hold. Two of her friends moved towards her and huddled under the umbrella. "Women!" joked Huang. "No!" interjected one of the male students "you have to assist *him*." So she ran over and held the umbrella over Huang.

Indeed, this umbrella play also spoke to dynamics of gender and power. "Only women use umbrellas" one student told me. "Men do not." Later in my time with them, when they had become used to me and saw me less as a 'guest', I was able to have a more in-depth conversation with Dong and two men students about this. "When you go to dinner with a date, who pays?" Dong asked me. I explained that I believed I should pay half and would usually insist on doing so. I told him about some of the problems I had experienced when having dinner with men in China and my discomfort that they would insist on paying. "In China, men are expected to be gentlemen", Dong explained, using the English word. He likened this to him getting students to carry an umbrella for me or offering to let me ride in the golf cart with him while the students walked behind. However, some of the students were women, and they were not allowed to use umbrellas while training or working. Here their professional role and service responsibilities take precedence over gender.

6.5 Learning the language: lead sheet and improvisation

> "Jazz is not just, 'Well, man, this is what I feel like playing.' It's a very structured thing that comes down from a tradition and requires a lot of thought and study.— Wynton Marsalis" (Berliner 1994:66)

In terms of creating affect, language is a key area in which caddies are instructed. This takes a direct linguistic form, with regional slang or accent and grammatical errors being corrected. This was a large part of Yuxuan's ineligibility for the role. Another student was criticised for not clearly differentiating between *si* (four) and *shi* (ten), and another for saying 200 as *erbai,* which is Northern slang, rather than *liangbai.* In addition, the language that caddies are instructed to use is often narrowly circumscribed. For example, on the first day of training, students are provided with short introductory and closing speeches which they are required to memorise. The scripts are as follows:[41]

Introductions

Caddie: Good morning, Sir, I am your caddie today, my name is X. I am very glad to serve you, can you tell me your name?
Guest: Sure, my name is X.
Caddie: Nice to meet you. Have you played here before?
Guest: No, could you give me some advice?
Caddie: Of course, this is the first hole of Mountain View, par 5, 372 yards, dog-leg left. You should aim for the right side of the left bunker.[42] Which club would you like?
Guest: Driver, please.
Caddie: Okay, here you are.

(1) Nice shot! Your ball is in the middle of the fairway, very nice!
(2) Fore! The ball seems to have been lost. You may hit again.

Farewells

Caddie: Could you please confirm that you have all your personal items?
Guest: Yes.
Caddie: Please sign your name here.
Guest: Okay.
Caddie: Would you like me to send your bag to the clubhouse or to the hotel?
Hotel: To the Hotel.
Caddie: Okay. Have you booked to play tomorrow?
Guest: Yes.
Caddie: What is your tee time?

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[41] These scripts have been altered slightly to protect Golden Valley's intellectual property. However, not in a manner which impacts analysis.
[42] This will vary depending on which hole the guest is playing.

Guest: 8am.
Caddie: I look forward to seeing you. Thank you for coming! See you later, goodbye!

Over the course of training, students were required to learn these scripts word for word and, when it was their turn to act as caddie for teachers, they were corrected on any mistakes or praised for particularly good performance: "Now I'm in a good mood. It made me feel happy, now I'll play well because I'm happy, and win some money and give you a big tip. Do you see how that works?" As with Huang's lecture, the importance of good service is reinforced with reference to financial implications. Indeed, while training such as the scripts above aim to produce consistency in guest experience, many caddies, former caddies, and those involved in training highlighted that every guest is different. What may constitute good service for one guest may not be appropriate for another. Not only is the temperament of the guest important to consider, but also their golfing ability. Some may need more pointers whereas others will need none. Whether they are locals, or tourists who might need recommendations, and whether they want a silent caddie or someone to talk to, also has an impact. These factors may all be compounded or modified depending on whether the guest is playing as part of a group.

Given the variability of required service and attitude, the scripts and conventions provided to caddies during training are a technical grounding upon which to experiment. Here, musicology provides an appropriate lens through which to understand this process. This comes in the form of lead sheets and jazz improvisation. A lead sheet is a stripped back version of sheet music, which provides the fundamental aspects of a piece of music such as the harmony, melody, and lyrics. This enables improvisation around the scope of the piece. Lead sheets have traditionally been associated with jazz music, where often musicians regularly play with new people and are expected to know a wide repertoire of songs. Ethnomusicologist Paul Berliner notes that:

> It has become the convention for musicians to perform the melody and its accompaniment at the opening and closing of a piece's performance. In between, they take turns improvising solos within the piece's cyclical rhythmic form (Berliner 1994:63)

Lead sheets are similar to the opening and closing scripts caddies are provided with, which will take place under the covered patio of the clubhouse before departing for play and on return, with other caddies, workers, and potentially superiors milling around

nearby. Yet even within this more rigid scripted element, there is scope for some improvisation. Berliner recounts how "subtle embellishment" and imagination may lend a "distinctive character" to a musician's work (Berliner 1994:69). He explains by reference to American jazz trumpeter Lonnie Hillyer reacting to a recording of 'Alone Together', performed by his late friend and fellow trumpeter Kenny Dorham:

> He articulated sustained pitches with soft unaccented attacks before bending them down and drawing them quickly back again, then allowing them to sing with an increasingly wide vibrato. Only once did he interject into the performance a phrase of his own by filling a rest with melodic motion. Seated beside the speakers, Hillyer responded immediately to Dorham. He leaned forward, covered his eyes with his hands, and remained perfectly still until the performance's close. Then, sighing, he shook his head, as if waking from a dream, and softly marvelled, "K. D.! To think he could say all that, just by playing the melody." (Berliner 1994:69)

Here we see that the tone of the piece was created subtly, rather than with drastic deviations from the established melody, yet still it maintained a distinctive feel.

Early on in training with the primary group of students at Golden Valley, they were all given the opportunity to recite the scripts in front of Manager Liu who, in turn, gave each student feedback. Many were criticised for not sticking exactly to the script, something which Liu instructed must be done to maintain uniformity. However, even when reciting the script as written, there were ways to do well and in turn poorly. One student was praised for speaking clearly and naturally, obscuring the arduous task of remembering and reciting, and thus creating a more friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Others were chastised for speaking too slowly. For a caddie, speed is everything, and students were regularly criticised for being too slow in other areas; the guest should not be left waiting. Physically, caddies can also embellish and enhance the script. Liu found fault with one student for failing to provide the golf glove at the right time: "Think of the guest's requirements. Give them the glove first. Once they've put it on pass them the ball, and when ready pass them the club." Others lacked refinement and fumbled with the tee and dropped things. As explored above, of tantamount importance, Liu explained, was smiling.

Once caddie and guest depart in the golf cart towards the green surroundings of the course, they become relatively alone. Here is when more free-form improvisation begins. The first step may be establishing what kind of guest you have, where they are

from, and what their needs might be. This was something Huiying, one of the caddies who had come down for the winter season, explained to me. Huiying was an incredibly talkative and vivacious woman in her late 20s. She enjoyed chatting about romance, relationships, and men. She was fun to talk with because she was prone to light-hearted gossip and at times could be very frank. In my fieldnotes, where I generally anonymise names, I nickname her "J.S. fancying caddie" because once, on a particularly boring day of training, she began a conversation with myself and her friends about which celebrities we found attractive. She immediately named Jason Statham, eagerly showing me photographs on her phone and inviting me to agree. Later on in my time with this group, I asked her what she thought constitutes good service: "it depends on the guest. If they are just there to get some exercise, then your role is to ensure that they are happy and having a nice time. With guests who are gambling, the most important thing is that they win. So you must be really careful when lining up on the green. If you do it wrong, it can influence their game and their chance to win money." She said that, just as there is a mixture of guests, there is also a mixture of caddies, who have different styles of interaction. She was more of a conversationalist. This skill in improvisation is one of the affective aspects of this guest-facing role which is trained.

Hualin, a caddie from Palm Bay whom encountered in the chapter on recruitment, expressed a similarly versatile attitude. She told me she preferred serving local guests. Being local herself, she found it easier to talk to them, to discuss local news and share recommendations. "[Guests] from the North have different styles of life and tastes." However, this local knowledge could also be turned to her advantage when serving guests from other parts of China on holiday in the region. Here, she became more of the expert, advising on local cuisine, things to do and places to visit. Indeed, just as Huiying had skill in conversation, and Hualin her expert local knowledge, improvisation in a musicological sense may also be influenced by and embedded within personal characteristics or individual flair.

People who have been to see amateur improvisational comedy will be aware that, if not properly handled, improvisation has the potential to drastically and viscerally not work. Here, Howard S. Becker offers a useful framework. Becker, both a sociologist and amateur jazz musician, calls attention to the etiquette of improvisation. When done well, musicians listen to each other and develop a collective direction whereby "It feels as

though, instead of them playing the music, the music, Zen-like, is playing them."(Becker 2000:172). But this is not always the case:

> "If, however, the participants are not courteous to each other that way, do not listen carefully and defer to the developing collective direction, the music just clunks along, each one playing their own tired clichés. If the players are experienced and the clichés professional, the result won't sound bad, although it won't excite anyone either; if those things aren't true, it will be a painful experience" (Becker 2000:173).

Though a good caddie, who seemed very apt at interpreting and reacting to social clues, Huiying nonetheless told me of two times when the dynamic between her and a guest had broken down in this way. In the first instance, the guest had veered from this idea of etiquette: "I was once caddying for a man who was gambling and not doing very well. Halfway through he got really angry about it and tried to blame me. He demanded to switch caddies, but unfortunately this was not possible. He got really mad. But everyone knew he was at fault, not me. Even his wife criticised him for acting in this way." Indeed, the cultivation of effective improvisation is not the job of the caddie alone, but rather based off the guest, who can also cause this relationship to rupture. Albeit there are no financial and fewer social consequences for the guest when this happens. In the second instance Huiying described to me, no one was at fault, however the conditions neither enabled talkative Huiying to display her personal talents, nor did they permit the prescribed forms of caddying and technical advice to play out: "Another time I had a Korean guest, he could understand a little Mandarin but not much at all. This meant there were some big issues with communication."

Even while considering affect as something which happens pre-emotion, in the service sector affective labour is not natural and free flowing. In the rigorous training caddies receive, the style and type of affective labour they are expected to do is dictated and actively trained. Where caddies have space to improvise, as if from a lead sheet, this must also follow Golden Valley's standards.

6.6 Conclusions

On my final day training with the cohort of predominantly intern recruits during the summer at Golden Valley, Dong and I sat in a golf cart heading back towards the clubhouse. The sun was slowly setting over the verdant peaks and troughs of the golf course. The following week, the caddies in training would embark on their exams and it

would be decided who would stay and work as caddies, and who would be put into remedial training or transferred to other departments. Discussing this, I asked him who he thought would be the best caddies. Without hesitation he said Jian and Meiling.

This chapter has demonstrated how, despite the reluctant increase in the employment of men, the central focus on affective labour has not subsided. Rather, it is a skill which is actively trained and not an inherent characteristic. This is in the same manner it was before men joined Golden Valley. As demonstrated in the introductory example of Yuxuan, whose style not suited to the type of affective professionalism Golden Valley was looking for, a predisposition towards the specific characteristics is important. But, ultimately, these are skills which are curated and moulded, rather than necessarily predisposed. Moreover, as the examples of Jian and Meiling demonstrate, these abilities do not fall as directly under presupposed gendered lines as might have been expected. Chapter Four included a table which outlined women as better at affective labour and men as better at golf. Jian was not the best at golf, but his character and ability to shape his charm and effervescence very quickly into the affective standards of Golden Valley made him the ideal affective recruit. Meiling overcame her introversion to a degree, but it was her studiousness and acquired knowledge of golf which made her stand out. Dong's assessment that they were the most promising recruits came as no surprise. While there is, of course, space for improvisation, this exists within a defined set of limitations, which are also taught.

This chapter has argued how affective skills are actively trained, rather than inherent. While much work on affective labour has focused on women's work, this context demonstrates how affective labour is gendered in that it has generally been done by women and women are socialised to be better at it. However, it is also something men do and this is not in a manner which is emulating women or becoming feminine. The next chapter will integrate this idea into broader literature on feminization and professionalization by arguing that training affect should be considered part of professional training.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Between and Within: Feminization and Professionalization

The aim of this thesis was originally to study an example of the feminization of labour in the Chinese context, in doing so problematising pre-existing work on feminization by re-integrating the value so-called 'feminine' characteristics have in the labour market. This was based on the outdated conception that most caddies in China are young, conventionally attractive women, drawn from rural areas, without a pre-existing understanding of the technicalities of golf. However, the contemporary reality is much more nuanced than I anticipated. What I found was an industry in a state of transition. As discussed in Chapter Four, I quickly discovered that recruitment has been made more difficult due to issues associated with the one-child policy, and vocational university attendance. Accordingly, the industry has, albeit reluctantly, shifted to employing men. Recruits are now increasingly interns drawn from technical universities, for most golf is their major. As a result, of this more educated, less sexualized, and better trained workforce, initially it seemed that a move towards the concept of professionalism, and away from feminization would be appropriate. This line of thought would encourage the view that what once was a feminized industry is transforming into a professionalized one.

However, this idea of a shift is oversimplistic. Seeing the two as separate obscures more than it enlightens. Certainly, issues of supply and demand and the resulting recruitment of interns falls under the umbrella of professionalization and has led to fewer women working in the industry. However, as explored in the previous chapter, the quantitative masculinization of caddies at Golden Valley has not led to the abandonment of feminized traits such as affective labour. The importance of affective labour continues and becomes wrapped up in the creation of the professional. This chapter will define feminization and professionalization, demonstrating how they can respectively be understood in the Chinese context, and how caddies fit into both. It will then show that feminization and professionalization have been viewed as incompatible. Moving against this, the chapter will encourage an expanded definition of professionalism. I will thus argue that what caddies do is in fact a type of affective professionalism. Affective

professionalism can be understood as both a type of feminized affective labour, while also rooted in the professional importance of training, skill, knowledge, and expertise. As the previous chapter demonstrated, caddies are extensively trained and this training comprises not only technical knowledge, but also affective labour. Through their training, caddies are moulded into a type of affective professional.

7.1 Feminization

Feminization carries multiple meanings and has often been left poorly defined. As Riska notes: "it is telling that a recent thematic issue on 'Feminization of the professions' of an international sociology journal did not define the term" (Riska 2008:3). Many simply use it to mean the quantitative increase of women into waged labour (Li 2023; McKay and Quiñonez 2012; Nordgren 2000). This work will employ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's definition. In *Commonwealth* (2009), they outline three key trends in the composition of labour: the trend towards immaterial production; feminization; and "new patterns of migration and processes of social and racial mixture" (Hardt and Negri 2009:134). These trends are, of course, inextricably linked. They define feminization as consisting of three components. First is the quantitative increase of women in waged labour. Here it is worth noting that women have always been in work, but work has been defined restrictively as salaried labour (Federici 2004; Horgan 2021; James 1991). Second, "the feminization of work marks a qualitative shift in the working day and thus the temporal "flexibility" of labor for both women and men" (Hardt and Negri 2009:133). This includes, irregular hours, part time employment, and multiple jobs. Finally, they consider that:

> The feminization of work indicates how qualities that have traditionally been associated with "women's work," such as affective, emotional, and relationship tasks, are becoming increasingly central in all sectors of labor, albeit in different forms in different parts of the world. (ibid.)

As explored in the previous chapter, these affective skills and qualities are fundamental to the work of caddies in China. This is, in a large part, due to the position golf occupies as a site of leisure.

A key site for the exploration of feminization has been medicine. Medical jobs have constituted much of the 'professional' field. Concurrently, those areas considered professions have been dominated by men, because women have historically been denied the right of practice (Adams 2010; Adams 2000; Morantz-Sanchez 1985; Witz 1992).

However, women have, and continue to be, present in this industry but often in areas related to health care deemed less professionalized, such as nursing. In China, much research on feminization has focused on agriculture and has by, and large taken, a quantitative approach (Cai, Guo, and Huang 2023; Zhongcheng Yan et al. 2022; Zuo 2004). Fu has incorporated affective labour in exploring the feminization of teaching, but argues that feminine qualities such as "docility, patience, and generosity" have overtaken the field. While affective labour remains gender-coded, as the case of caddies demonstrates it is not only undertaken by women. Standing (1999) argues that feminization also implies that the working conditions women face are expanded to the rest of the labour force as more women enter paid employment. Indeed, affective labour as a type of feminization has gained professional value, and in the instance of caddies is also a skill required of the new predominantly male workforce.

7.1.1 Women and work in China

Here, it is necessary to contextualise women's participation in the workforce in China, and the history of feminization. This section will analyse the ways in which women's work and representations of femininity in China have long been central to nation building and economic 'modernization'. Given the participants of this work are in waged labour, this will be the primary focus.

Wolf (1985) outlines that a key goal of the revolution was ostensibly to free women of their past oppression (Wolf 1985: 1). Accordingly, to varying degrees across the Maoist period, women were also crucial in achieving the economic goals of the CCP. It is in part through women's bodies that the revolution has been enacted. This is the case symbolically in terms of attempts to outlaw practices such as foot and breast binding, child marriage, and concubinage, all of which are became associated with "old" values (Zito 2006). And, crucially, physically through their labour. Wolf sees this as particularly important during the Great Leap Forward, which relied upon the mobilization of 300million women (Wolf 1985:22). Consequently, the image of women in blue, a strong worker liberated from feudal patriarchy, came to dominate. Hird considers this a kind of female masculinity or socialist androgyny (Hird 2020:357). While more complicated than women being "excessively masculinised", he considers that "[t]o be revolutionary, it seemed, meant to act as a man" (ibid.). Croll (1984) highlights that in practice women embodying this representation did not do so in a uniform manner- there were personal

variations in fabric and colour. However, the image is nonetheless a crucial one. Reshaping of femininity was seen as central to economic modernisation.

Confronted with the question of women's liberation, an orthodox Marxist solution was adopted. Like many other socialist systems, Chinese communism suggests a causal relationship between women's employment and their "liberation" (Robinson 1985:33). The CCP assumed that entry into the waged labour force would improve women's material conditions, and their position in domestic and public spheres. However, as outlined in various works this expected outcome did not materialise (Croll 1983; Jaschok and Miers 1994; Wolf 1985). By and large, representations of femininity did not become reality, this was especially the case amongst rural women. While many steps were taken to create space for women to take on the mantles of the working 'woman in blue', they were simultaneously limited. For example, following the Marriage Law of the 1950s, reform cadres were persuaded to invite women into the struggle against landlords by allowing and encouraging them to speak at public meetings on land reform. However Wolf argues that they were also informed "explicitly not to let women's 'special problems' interfere with the important land reform work" (Wolf 1985:18).

During this period, Mao famously declared that "women hold up half the sky." However, as the Cultural Revolution ended, so too did this fervour. As youths sent to work in the countryside returned to their home cities, a vast surplus of urban labour was created. As a result, women were required to take a back seat. As well as women's labour becoming secondary, women's position in the family was never challenged to an extent that older representations fully lost their significance. In the early 1970s, the Anti-Lin Biao Campaign and the Anti-Confucius Campaign attacked the traditional family structure, which was framed as the cause of women's subordination. Yet, though slogans which embodied ideals of gender equality and the new position of women proliferated, their implicit meanings were never fully adopted. This is evident in Margery Wolf's work. She outlines how her informants seemed to repeat slogans from the Anti-Confucius Campaign, but also felt it was natural for men to rule outside the home and women within (Wolf 1985: 25).

Various explanations have been used to understand why the CCP's aim to liberate women was never fully met. Perhaps most crucially, aside from the communes created following the Great Leap Forward, there was no continued effort to alleviate women of

their domestic burden. While paid work was seen as a source for women's liberation, drastic changes to reproductive labour were less considered. Consequently, though women joined the workforce in increasing numbers (Standing 1999), having worked long hours in the field or factory, most women were still expected to look after the children, and make the food. Judith Stacey (1983) maintains that the revolution women received, was in fact what the revolution had promised them- a stable life in the traditional patriarchal style. However, Wolf argues to the contrary. She instead suggests that while no conscious effort was made on the part of the CCP to keep women subordinated, there was a "consistent failing on the part of an all-male leadership to perceive their own sexist assumptions" (Wolf 1985: 26).

There has, of course, been much debate over the position women occupied during this period, and the extent to which there was meaningful change. Hershatter (2011) has argued that the impacts of the marriage law become clearer if we look at a longer time scale, rather than the months and years following legislative change. Yan Yunxiang (2009) has outlined the huge and long term impact on kinship and gender relations through attacks on Confucianism, collectivization, and the dismantling of lineages. Neil Diamant (2000) has demonstrated that more divorces took place in rural areas than previously assumed. Either way, what is of central importance here is the manner in which women's labour was central to national economic goals. And, accordingly, how ideas about femininity as they relate to labour were part of this.

Following reform, the image of the 'woman in blue' has been replaced by a plurality of juxtaposing images of femininity (Croll 1983). The minimal emphasis on gender distinctiveness since 1949, reaching its peak during the Cultural Revolution, subsided (Hooper 1998: 170). But, representations of femininity have still been encouraged and utilised to show or create broader national sentiments and aims. Hooper describes post-reform China as a time when:

> One of the most visible manifestations of the growth of consumerism in China, set against the decline of state control, has been the recreation and commercialisation of 'femininity' (Hooper 1998: 169).

Though this new type of consumer framing of femininity complemented the aims of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms, they did not go uncriticised, nor did most these images stem from the central government. Instead, advertising resumed a position at the

forefront of the production of feminine ideals. This was not new to post-reform China, and indeed many images draw on older traditions such as pre-revolutionary Shanghai pictorials (Waara 2007; Zhang 2007). In 1992, China's national women's newspaper complained that the country's expanding advertising industry was casting women in two conflicting roles, neither of which were positive in the move towards modernisation of Chinese women's lives:

> [There is] the open 'modern flower vase' type, luxuriously adorned and bejewelled, proponent of advanced consumerism… [and] there is the traditional virtuous wife and good mother who is generally associated with kitchen utensils, washing machines, refrigerators, and other consumer goods related to housework. [Zhongguo funü bao 1992:3 in Hopper 1998: 167]

Both these tropes, if not new, were at least rhetorically omitted under Mao. Where the singular working image of women produced under Mao ignored their still prominent domestic role, so too did the new images of housewives obscure their labour.

In an almost violent rejection of the 'woman in blue', this second type of femininity also erased women's working role. Nonetheless, this image of femininity has been brought into the workplace. This concept has been explored by John Osburg (2013) in his analysis of hostess bars. He identifies how different 'feminine' traits gained value in accordance with a man's relationship to a specific woman: wives were based in the home and disconnected from the man's life outside it, but valued for their loyalty, whereas the hostesses' value is paradoxically drawn from their perceived purity and their skill at flirtation. As was explored in the previous chapter, the affective production of caddies is scripted, with space for bounded improvisation along a trope. The affective traits they are expected to exhibit are closely aligned with the traits associated with femininity, which led many to believe women are better suited to the role. What follows will explore the extent to which despite an increasing number of men working as caddies, the role can still be considered under the umbrella of feminization.

7.1.2 Caddying as feminized

Despite the quantitative masculinization of caddying, in particular at Golden Valley where the shift to male caddies has been stark, traits of a feminized workforce according to Hardt and Negri's understanding are still fundamental. For example, the "qualitative shift in the working day and thus the temporal 'flexibility' of labor" (Hardt and Negri 2009:133). At smaller clubs, I was informed that caddies some caddies worked part-time. Caddies at

Golden Valley worked full-time. However, this idea of 'flexibility' was crucial. They did not have fixed and standardised hours as may be observed in an office. Instead working hours varied depending on the number of guests, their rota, and the season. Many would also choose to work on days off to earn extra money. The first tee of the morning shift was at 7am, and the last at 2pm, for the evening shift the first tee is at 7pm, and the last at 10pm. Caddies would usually work on two games a day, with preparation time before and after.

Moreover, as explored in the previous chapter, and in accordance with Hardt and Negri's definition of feminization, affective labour is of critical importance to the role. This has not changed since the majority have become men. Finally, as explored in the previous section, representations of femininity, though no longer the material reality, are key at Golden Valley. Just as explored above on a broader national level, the type of femininity women caddies are expected to embody become representations of the ethos, modernity, and reputation of Golden Valley. Women caddies still dominate promotional material. In their well-manicured presentation, and cheerful but formal demeanour they speak to the status of the club. But, the kind of presentation and affective labour required of caddies is bounded.

At the time I met Li Jingyi, she had been working in the golf industry for nearly three decades, starting as a caddie, then caddie trainer, finally founding her own caddie training company. She was incredibly knowledgeable and insightful, so our interview lasted almost the whole day. We began with lunch with her husband, then went to a nearby teahouse where we stayed for over three hours. Her daughter eventually joined, then left, then rejoined with English homework questions. As Jingyi walked me to my metro station, feeling well acquainted with one another, the conversation turned more towards gossip and reminiscing.

She told me that when she was a caddie, occasionally caddies and guests would start relationships, but this was less common now. She told me the story of one woman she used to work with who was a "terrible caddie" because she had relationships with some guests. They would give her a lot of gifts, or she would trick them into doing so. For example, she would take the sim card out of her phone, so that when they called her it would not go through. Then she would tell them her phone was broken and she needed a new one, they would buy one for her and then she would sell it. She would then repeat the pattern with another guest. Apparently, she did this about 10 times and made a lot of

money. Jingyi said once a guest who used to be a regular of hers invited her and this caddie out for dinner, and the other caddie was serving the guest and doing things which were more like a waitress than a friend. After that, the guest switched to using the other caddie regularly. She had effectively poached him.

Another time, she was sleeping and got a call from a guest very late saying that this caddie had got really drunk and he wanted Jingyi to come and collect her and take her home. Unamused, she said it was too far and she was in bed. She told me that this caddie "made a lot of money, but had no friends." She stopped being her friend because of all these events. I asked her if the guests liked this caddie, then how could she be a bad caddie? She responded that this woman did not respect the job. It is not just pleasing the guests which matters, but also acting in a manner which fits the company's reputation. This "terrible" caddie clearly had a particular set of affective skills, but they were not professional. She said once a guest fell in love with another caddie, but she politely declined him. When she got married, the guest gave her a lot of money as a present because he wanted to make sure she had a good life. Jingyi, now at the vanguard of caddie training, maintained a lot of respect for this caddie and felt she had handled the situation well. She had acted in a more professional manner than the "terrible" caddie.

7.2 Professionalism

Several key themes have emerged which may be used to define a professional, including: accreditation and training (Roberts and Coutts 1992; Wilensky 1964); attitudinal criteria (Richard H. Hall 1968); performative aspects such as the outward appearance of success (Hull 2017; Mosse 2011b; Stern and Liu 2020); self-identification (Dingwall 2008); expertise and knowledge (Hoyle and John 1995; Hull 2020b; Zhang and Liu 2021; Adams 2010); status (Adams 2010); and autonomy (Adams 2010; Chan, Pan, and Lee 2004; Hoffman 2010b). However, the term is contested and there is an ongoing reformulation of how the term is theorised.

Early academic writing on professionalism idealises and ring-fences it. This has occurred in ways that, implicitly or explicitly, uncritically and even approvingly, conflate it with masculinization. For example, Wilensky has outlined professionalization as characterised by the creation of a full-time occupation, the establishment of a training school, the formation of professional associations, and the institutionalisation of a code of ethics (Wilensky 1964). Hall developed a set of attitudinal criteria to further specify the

meaning of professionalism. This includes the professional organisation as the major point of reference, a belief in service to the public, self-regulation, the idea of a calling to the field, and autonomy (R. Hall 1968:93).

This early literature on professionalism is cautious about the degradation of the concept: "very few occupations will achieve the authority of the established professions… if we call everything professionalization, we obscure the newer structural forms now emerging" (Wilensky 1964:137). Certainly, some rigidity is necessary for the concept to retain definitional coherence. However, much of this exclusion reads as based in sexist and classist roots. For example, Wilensky writes "the professional man adheres to a set of professional norms" (Wilensky 1964:138). Further, he argues that customer or client facing industries cannot be professional: "client orientation undermines colleague control and professional norms" (Wilensky 1964:137). Now, at a time when the professionalism of many essential workers has proved pivotal practically, economically, and culturally during the pandemic, this sits even more uncomfortably. Moreover, it relegates many of the characteristics of 'feminization', such as affective labour, outside the idea of lofty professionalism.

Part of the difficulty in defining professionalism also lies in the fact that it has not yet found a solid home within anthropology. The study of professionals been an under-researched area within anthropology. Due to the early anthropological focus on societies deemed 'traditional', historically many anthropologists "limited their interest in expertise to a focus on 'ritual experts', such as the rainmaker in Livingstone's account" (Hull 2020b). Since, taking lead from sociologists such as Parsons, Foucault, and Durkheim, the frame of discussion has moved onto areas such as power and control as it relates to the colonial context of much early anthropological writing. The lens has also turned inwards, with many analysing how anthropology itself has been professionalized (Darnell 1971; Gómez Pellón 2021; McGrath 2012; Urry 1993).[43] Yet there still exists no distinct school of anthropology dedicated to the study of professionals. Rather, work on the subject is "disparately nestled in a number of different areas, including the anthropology of

[43] This is also exemplified in anthropology courses aimed at teaching anthropology as a professional skill, such as UCL's Anthropology and Professional Practice MSc, and Sapiens' unit on 'Professional Anthropology'.

expertise, science, and technology studies and the study of states, bureaucracies, and corporate settings" (Hull 2020a).

There is however an ongoing, and growing, trend within the social sciences towards breaking down older definitions. Dingwall, for example has argued that:

> The central problem with these attempts to define 'profession' is their assumption that it has a fixed meaning. On the contrary, I would argue, with Wittgenstein (1972), that words do not have fixed meanings and that the attempt to legislate meaning is unavoidably a fruitless exercise. Words do not have fixed and unequivocal uses according to some calculus of rules. Their sense is found by a process of filling in until we can say that we understand….We cannot, then, define what a profession is. All we can do is to elaborate what it appears to mean to use the term and to list the occasions on which various elaborations are used (Dingwall 2008:14).

In contrast to fears about the degradation of professions, Elizabeth Hull in her work on healthcare in South Africa, demonstrates that professional identities may already be "fragile" (Hull 2020b:566). She suggests that professional identity is "necessary but insufficient to meet middle-class aspirations" (Hull 2017:206). Moreover, if professionalism is linked to status, she argues that labour is no longer the dominant site for identity creation. Rather, now people turn instead to "non-traditional forms of value production, including consumption practices as well as immaterial and informal kinds of work" (Hull 2017:207). This all leaves the idea of a profession feeling very vague. However, in the context of health visitors, Dingwall defines profession "in relation to their own or other's behaviour in elaborating 'professional' and 'non-professional' conduct" (Dingwall 2008:15). In doing so, he defines professionalism through his participants' perceptions of it, rather than applying academic definitions to them. Indeed, much recent work sees professionalism as a contingent identity over which power struggles happen, rather than something that can be empirically characterised. As Hull outlines, within academia professionalism is defined with increasing flexibility and contextual nuance:

> Emerging in social processes through time, I understand 'professionalism' to be a category always in the making, rather than as becoming self-evident. The sociologist, Robert Dingwall, shows that professions and the category of the professional come into being through particular configurations of power, information exchange and institutional practice (Hull 2017: 9 referencing Dingwall 2008).

Drawing on this more recent literature, this work considers professionalism as contingent on context and amorphous. Accordingly, it is more useful to think of professionalisms, than a singular and protected sense of professionalism.

7.2.1 Professionalization in China

The two terms *zhiye* and *zhuanye* are used to describe professions in China *Zhiye* may be understood as an occupation, profession, or vocation, with *zhi* meaning duty, post, or job, and *ye* used in various compounds, often denoting line of business, industry, job or school studies. *Zhiye* is often used to denote vocational or professional context, for example *zhiye zhongxue* can be translated as vocational high school, and the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) is translated as *Zhiye gao'erfu qiu xiehui*. In turn, *Zhuanye* is commonly used to denote a specialization, for example you may ask a university student what their *zhuanye,* major, is. It can also be understood as technical, vocational, or professional, with *zhongdeng zhuanye jiaoyu* meaning a technical middle school. Indeed, many of the caddies were interns from vocational schools with *zhiye* or *zhuanye* in their names.

A great deal of work on professionalism in China has been about journalism (Chan, Pan, and Lee 2004; Meng and Zhang 2022; Simons, Nolan, and Wright 2017), teaching (Day et al. 2023; Zhang and Liu 2021), lawyers (Liu 2006; Wu, Lo, and Liu 2020), and medical practitioners (Qian Wang et al. 2022; Shen et al. 2021; Xiao, Wang, and Li 2023). Not only does this give an idea of what might be considered a profession in China, but also in each sector emerges a different understanding of what professionalism entails. Even within an individual sector there are variances. For example, within teaching Zhang and Liu argue "that two contradictory but coexisting forms of managerial professionalism strongly influence teachers: examination-oriented professionalism and quality-oriented professionalism" (Zhang and Liu 2021:1). It thus is more useful not to think of professionalism, but rather professionalisms.

In China, the modern history of labour is distinct from the context many explorations of professionalization are embedded in. Professionalization is intertwined with ideas about urban modernity (Hoffman 2010), and bureaucracy and managerialism (Stern and Liu 2020; Zhang and Liu 2021). Katherine Mason working on the medical profession in Guangzhou demonstrates how professionalism has been linked to modernization and bureaucratization. Following the "international embarrassment suffered by the public health establishment after SARS", Chinese leaders at both national

and local levels believed that "building a reliable network of highly educated public health professionals to replace an older generation of more minimally trained bureaucrats was the key to preventing another pandemic and avoiding further loss of face for China" (Mason 2013:118). Accordingly, attaining high scores in national qualification exams, and post-graduate degrees, became more important in securing a job. Predicated on the modernist assumption, "leaders and newly hired personnel alike pushed to replace the guanxi-based system for accomplishing tasks and granting promotions with a bureaucratized system of professional responsibility based on principles of meritocracy and accountability" (ibid.). Mason, however, demonstrates that this move away from personalism did not diminish the importance of banqueting as a tool for career success and advancement.

The decline of overt Party authority and organisation in the workplace has led to the emergence of new forms of labour and in turn a distinct set of problems. In *Working in China*, across the ethnographic explorations explored in the edited volume, from lawyers (Michelson 2007), KTV hostesses (Zheng 2007), to 'knowledge workers' in Shanghai (Ross 2007), some common contemporary issues were insecurity, non-payment of benefits, and insufficient legislation of workers' rights. In spite of the reform era ushering new opportunities for professionalization, these issues, combined with corruption have simultaneously hindered professionalization in its purest sense (Zhu 2000:1994).

In her pivotal work, *Patriotic Professionalism in Urban China,* Hoffman outlines that post-Mao reforms saw many graduates looking for employment on their own, rather than through a process of state-directed job assignments (Hoffman 2010:2–3). This shift from central planning also allowed for private wealth accumulation, which encouraged new expressions of identity, new social classes, and greater space for leisure pursuits, such as golf. It also led to greater competition for "mobile human capital" and "human resources." Hoffman argues that this post-Mao neoliberal governmentality has meant that the "professional employee, in other words, has emerged in the place of the assignee" (Hoffman 2010:10).

Ideas about work and professionalism are also gendered, and there exists a tension between feminization and professionalization. Through the example of a recent graduate in Dalian deciding between a career in the public sector, and one with a private

international company, Hoffman demonstrates how for this young professional woman, this was also a choice between the security of the 'iron rice bowl', and a risky international corporation. This choice was a gendered one: "Decision making about employment intersected gendered regimes that had spatial components (e.g. distinction between 'inside' and 'outside' spaces) as well as the legacy of, and reforms in, the socialist urban welfare package" (Hoffman 2010:126). Hoffman outlines how this also plays out within the allocation of government jobs, where women are more likely to be given office jobs, than ones which involve travel, socialising, and hours incompatible with family commitments. Jieyu Liu has also demonstrated how her male interviewees "considered women's work to be a simple matter of generating income, or even just a hobby to kill time" (Liu 2017:58).

Hird has argued that following a kind of crisis of masculinity in the post-reform era, a reaction was the cultural 'root-seeking movement'. This sought to "capture the mythological Chinese characteristics that could be used to build a 'Chinese modernity'. The root-seeking movement reflected the idea of a "naturally occurring masculinity, which the root-seekers believed had been perverted" (Hird 2020:358). In the 1990s, a popular counter-narrative was a "Chinese transnational business" masculinity (ibid.). Hird demonstrates how professionalism has become tethered to idea about masculinity. He argues that the Confucian term *junzi*, meaning a man of virtue or gentleman, become linked to professional identity: "Intellectuals and professionals are keen to associate themselves with a reinvigorated junzi masculinity in order to enhance their class and gender interests" (ibid.). Accordingly, as will be explored in section 7.3, feminization has at times been viewed as against ideas of professionalism.

7.2.2 The professionalization of caddying

Lost in theory, and taking inspiration from Dingwall, I decided to reach out to caddies and former caddies to get their perspective. The response to my simple WeChat post asking caddies if they considered caddying a profession was met with essays in response. Li Jingyi simply responded, "it is." When I asked her why, she said she understood a profession as something where you are paid, serve the community, and play an important role in the structure of the institution. This idea of being indispensable in the workplace was firmly reiterated by Zimo, who had been working as a caddie in Hunan for four years when I met him. He wrote to me extensively on the matter. Alongside receiving employee benefits, he considered caddies as crucial to the functioning of the golf course and the experience of

guests. Thus, he firmly believed it to be a profession. He also outlined that various movements had led to the professionalization of caddying: "As early as 2007, many colleges and universities have been teaching caddying. Various things indicate caddies have become indispensable in the Chinese golf industry."

As evidenced in the example of the "terrible" caddie given by Li Jingyi, there are actions in the sector which are considered professional, and actions which are not. Moreover, the kind of salacious stories Jingyi described happening during her time as a caddie over 20 years prior, I only ever heard about as something which happened in the past. Or, sometimes in a vague 'elsewhere'. This becomes entrenched due to the new type of person working as a caddie. There was a feeling that this new intern workforce was different. While at Golden Valley in October 2019, I joined training sessions for caddies on exchange from the North for the winter season. One afternoon, standing on the green as other less experienced caddies practiced, the teacher and I chatted with an older northern caddie, who had been working in the industry for years but still had to undertake a short period of training. The teacher outlined how the new young intern caddies I had previously been training with were much better and easier to train because on arriving at the club they already knew a lot about golf. The experienced northern caddie agreed and lamented how little she knew when she first started working. She had not been an intern, but rather was drawn 'from society'. Similarly, the manager of another golf course told me that the cultural level (*wenhua shuiping)* can be higher in interns. When I asked how she would define this she pointed to factors such as their educational level and the way they talk.

There was a sense not only in their treatment by guests, but also in their ability and knowledge, that this new cohort of caddies were more professional. Lisa M. Hoffman has outlined how ideas of *wenhua shuiping* and *suzhi* "are central to the emergence of the urban professional in China" (Hoffman 2010b:103). This is for three key reasons, first those with high cultural and educational levels are celebrated. Second, because "discourses of *suzhi* and *wenhua* coalesce around ideas of self-improvement and self-enterprise" (ibid.). Finally, these concepts have been linked to urban, modern, cosmopolitanism. This is directly contrasted to rural labourers. For caddies, as will be explored in the following chapter, this differentiation was crucial.

One area routinely considered central to the ringfencing of professionalism is training, knowledge, and expertise. Caddie training has two strands, the training facilitated by a golf club before starting work, and for an increasing number, training while studying at university. At many golf courses the pre-work training is conducted in house. At Golden Valley, training was three months long. If caddies failed to pass the examinations at the end, they were given more training and a chance to re-sit. If they failed, they would be moved to a different department, or let go. At Golden Valley this training was far from a simple induction, rather it was an intensive and well organised process. At smaller clubs training may be done externally and for a shorter duration. This manner of training pre-exists the shift in recruitment practices. One former caddie I spoke with began working in 2003 and also underwent a three-month training period. This was echoed by other former caddies I met.

However, the other growing strand of caddie training is increasingly taking place at their schools or colleges. In 1995, the first golf management major was opened in Shenzhen Higher Career Technical College (Shao 2013). Since, an increasing number of caddies have come up through technical schools and colleges. For previous generations of caddies, most had come straight to the job, not undertaking higher education. Golden Valley records show that in 2019, the year I did my fieldwork, 96.64% of the intake of caddies were drawn from technical schools or colleges college. Of this, 12.17% were undergraduate students, 22.6% were *dazhuan*, meaning they were studying at a higher vocational college, and 65.21% were *zhongzhuan,* meaning they were studying at technical or vocational secondary schools. Here, it should be noted that some do not have golf, but rather subjects like physical education, as their major.

However, for the majority their training began at university as golf majors, where they will already have learnt the basics of golf, a contrast from previously where many caddies had not even held a golf club before arriving. This area demonstrates a solid way in which the caddie industry is professionalizing, a solid training school has been established. This is related to another area of professional development, knowledge and expertise. As explored in the previous chapter, the affective skills and qualities required of caddies are not free form. Rather, they are strictly regulated and part of this extensive process of training. The following section will expand upon this strain between

professionalization and feminization, before proceeding to demonstrate how through an understanding of professionalisms, they are far from incompatible.

7.3 The perceived incompatibility of feminization and professionalism

Michael Hardt considers that the "processes of economic postmodernization that have been in course for the past twenty-five years have positioned affective labor in a role that is not only directly productive of capital but at the very pinnacle of the hierarchy of laboring forms" (Hardt 1999:90). As a facet of immaterial labour, he argues that affective labour has assumed a "dominant position of the highest value in the contemporary informational economy" (Hardt 1999:96). Yet, due to the position of affective labour as a type of feminization and its association with women's work and femininity, it has often been viewed as separate from or incompatible with professionalism.

Beyond being considered as incompatible, feminization has often been viewed as an active threat to professions. McKay and Quiñonez wonder (2012) wonder what will happen to dentistry in Canada as more women become dentists. They question what the impact might be on "practice characteristics and professional ideals" (McKay and Quiñonez 2012:1). Even more directly, Roberts and Coutts describe how as accountancy has long been fighting for professional recognition, it is "particularly sensitive to any process which may threaten this position. Since the position of women in society is a subordinate one, the increasing feminization of accounting may adversely affect this struggle" (Roberts and Coutts 1992:379).

In many medical professions, women were for a time denied the right to practice (Adams 2010, 2018; Morantz-Sanchez 2005 [1985]; Witz 1992). When women have been able to enter professional fields, they have often been 'ghettoized' into occupations (Reskin and Roos 1990), or the profession has seen a decline in status. In terms of the former, "niches are created within professions as a means of removing the threat to patriarchal power" (Roberts and Coutts 1992:383). This has often been within careers that are identified as 'semi-professions' (Etzioni 1969), which are considered to require less training, offering less autonomy and "defined as requiring stereotypically feminine characteristics such as caring, nurturance, sympathy and patience" (Roberts and Coutts 1992:383).

With regards to feminization causing a decrease in the status of a profession, clerical work provides a good example. Referencing Crompton and Sanderson (1990), Roberts and Coutts argue that before clerical work in Britain became feminized, status and wages were high, as were opportunities for promotion (Roberts and Coutts 1992:383–4). Now that clerical work is more associated with women, this has ceased to be the case, and it is no longer a route to a managerial career. The relationship between de-professionalization, has since been shown to be a complicated one. As Riska (2008) highlights, it is often the case that when an occupation's status declines, men leave, thus creating opportunities for women to enter.[44] In China we see this movement happening in the state-owned sector. Before reform and opening, this sector employed substantially more men because it enjoyed "privileged access to resources, such as investments and benefits (Bian, Logan, and Shu 2000)" (Li 2023:2). However, since these privileges have been lost, many men have sought higher wages in privatized industries (Shu 2005), and the sector has an increased number of women (Li 2023).

The overarching theme in much of the incompatibility of between feminization and professionalism is that what it means to be a professional has historically been defined, and rooted in masculine terms:

> When professionalism and competence were defined in accordance with 19th-century notions of masculinity, it was difficult for women to be both feminine and successful practitioners. (Adams 2010: 455)

Riska has also highlighted how during the golden age of a profession "authority and practice of the profession are directly or indirectly portrayed as male-gendered" (Riska 2008:13–14). Professionalism has indeed been tied up with ideas of masculinity, and also class, race, and nationality (Ribeiro 2008). This deep-rooted idea of what a professional should be is reliant on a set of assumed character traits:

> Professional men, like middle-class men, were expected to be distinguished, rational, unemotional, authoritative, physically robust, committed to their jobs, highly educated and broad minded, and especially later in the 19th and early 20th centuries, scientific. Linking professional work with these traits bolstered the professional project pursued by professional leaders during this period and enhanced their drive for authority and respect (Adams 2010:455).

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[44] For further exploration, see: Adams 2005; Coventry 1999; Lindsay 2005; Muzzin et al. 1994; Nordgren 2000

We see the same in some literature about China. For example, Fu laments that most teachers in China are women. He argues that "[t]he feminization of teachers has obvious negative effects on the healthy development of the students' character and even personality, and hence on the competitive type of talented people modern society needs" (Fu 2000:41).

7.3.1 Affective professionalism

However, ideas about unemotional rationality are incompatible with much of the contemporary working landscape, where affective and emotional skills are crucial. For example, Niall Hanlon argues that:

> Emotional nurturance is a fundamental feature of all forms of professional caring. Varying in role and status, a diverse and fluid array of caring, social or helping occupations (Boddy, Cameron, and Moss 2006) are involved in the provision of nurturing whereby the emotional wellbeing of the client is a central objective. As well as delivering expert social, health, education, practical or personal services, good caregivers possess an other-centred disposition, are emotionally intelligent and relationally skilled, and morally caring (Hanlon 2023:441).

Nicole Humphrey has also outlined the way emotional ability is essential for professional administrators in the United States. She suggests "that emotions and professionalism are interrelated—to be professional, an administrator must be skilled in emotional labor. Specifically, professionalism acts as a display rule regulating the emotional behavior of employees" (Humphrey 2021:260). This mutually reinforced relationship is also the case for caddies. To be good at their job, they must be skilled in affective labour. Their job in turn dictates the type of affective labour which is appropriate.

If we expand ideas of professionalism, recognising that a solid and overarching definition is unobtainable, we are able instead to see a plurality of professional types. Here, I suggest the term affective professionalism. Just as emotional labour has been viewed as an important part of work by Humphrey and Hanlon, so too is affective labour. As described by Zimo, caddies are an indispensable part of the experience and practice of golf in China. At the core of what they do is the production of an elite sense of leisure through their affective labour. Here, I consider them to be engaged in affective professionalism because, as evidenced in Jingyi's analysis of good and "terrible" former colleagues, the way in which caddies do affective labour should uphold the professional standards of the company they work for.

Affective professionalism can be understood as the creation of affect which, as explored in the previous chapter, aligns with the requirements of the institution. Thus, not all affective labour may be considered affective professionalism. For example, a lawyer being friendly to a client in a manner which could be read as flirtatious may be affective labour but goes against professional standards. Other examples of affective labour outside the remit of professionalism might include a flight attendant, wanting to make a passenger laugh by joking about plane crashes, a primary school teacher singing an R-rated song to their students, or nurses posting social media content about their patients. Yuxuan, certainly did a lot of affective labour, but his style of doing so did not meet Golden Valley's requirements. Acting in a professional way is not operating without affective labour, but acting in an unprofessional way can sometimes be the result of affective labour wielded in a manner that jars with the professional context.

Affective professionalism can thus be understood as doing affective labour in the correct way for the professional context. Accordingly, it is professionalized through training, and treated as a skill to be taught, developed, and moulded. During caddie training, a type of person is created. As Director Chen commented: "I can make you become more professional and more like an expert." The type of person is one who is skilled not only in the technicalities of golf, but also in affective professionalism.

7.4 Conclusion

As typically 'feminine' characteristics become commodified in the workplace, their utility and application in turn become part of the process of professionalization. Though caddies who are men are, arguably incorrectly, viewed as having different strengths and weakness to those who are women, all are encouraged to embody some of these 'feminine' affective characteristics through their training. It is not that there are two separate factors at play, a waning feminization and a waxing professionalization. Rather, the situation presents as between and within. While there is a shift occurring, it is not one which negates the former. Instead, the industry is both professionalizing, which is arguably a process rather than something with an end point (Mosse 2011a:3), and feminized, where the two are in a state of mutual reinforcement. However, alongside the informalization of labour comes precarity, and indeed precarity globally has come to characterise many forms of labour. The next chapter will discuss the social position of caddies, and the manner in which the

pyramid structure of employment excludes most workers from the more professional rungs.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Social Position of the Caddie

> The social world can be conceived as a multi-dimensional space that can be constructed empirically by discovering the main factors of differentiation which account for the differences observed in a given social universe, or, in other words, by discovering the powers or *forms of capital* which are or can become efficient (Bourdieu 1987:3–4).

Teacher Sun joined our training cohort a little later than other teachers, and immediately brought with him a sense of lightness. He was frank, but his charm displaced any potential rudeness in his often very personal questions. One afternoon, I accompanied him in a golf cart back to the clubhouse. He began teasingly asking questions about alcohol and dating. I quickly changed the topic to guests, a subject which usually got people talking. "People who play golf in China are not just rich," he told me "they are *really* rich." However he said "sometimes they do not really seem rich." He explained that they would talk in a heavily accented way, or would spit and have bad posture, "their *suzhi* can be really low." Yet other guests would "speak really well and hold themselves as if they were rich." He demonstrated by sitting upright, with his shoulders back. The varying level of *suzhi* displayed by guests was something many of my participants highlighted. Moreover, many of the traits associated with high *suzhi*, such as style of speaking, posture, and general etiquette are things cadies are taught during their training. When I asked Manager Zhou what the most important things caddies should learn during their training are, she immediately highlighted "communication and conversational ability, and *Zishen suzhi* [personal quality]."

There are two sets of 'class projects' that this chapter will address. First, class is examined in relation to caddies and guests, and how they mutually shape each other. As explored in Chapter Six, the way caddies behave and hold themselves is dictated and, at times scripted, according to Golden Valley's standards. These standards ensure that Golden Valley remains an elite, and predominantly homosocial, space. Accordingly, the productive role of caddies is inherently linked to a specific and regulated performance of affective labour informed by *suzhi*. The possibility of caddies exhibiting higher *suzhi* than

some guests, and the mapping of ideas about *suzhi* onto conceptions of seeming rich, indicates the complicated relationship between class and *suzhi*.

The second project relates to hierarchy and rank in the workplace, and the relationship to class and social stratification. As the previous chapter demonstrated, caddies may be considered as doing a type of affective professionalism. However, unfortunately, this does not mean that their career progression is unobstructed. Katerine Mason (2013) has outlined that in theory the professionalization of the medical industry post-SARS, has caused a move away from personalism and towards the importance of qualifications and accreditation. Nonetheless, the art of banqueting, and consuming excessive amounts of alcohol, in the cultivation of *guanxi* has remained an obstacle to career progression for many of her women participants:

> One result of the continued importance of *guanxi* was that banqueting continued to hold back women's careers. Banqueting men dominated positions of power, and it was relationships with these powerful men that continued to be most important for women's advancement. Because of this, the consumption of alcohol retained a considerable degree of importance. Those who, like Lu, abstained from drinking entirely, simply did not advance. Those who faked it advanced more, but those like Wu who embodied it advanced the most (Mason 2013:129)

In a similar sense, caddies now are more educated, and their training period extended to their time in vocational education before arrival. One potential outcome of this training is that it may increase their professional *suzhi*. However, broader socio-cultural barriers still influence career advancement, and dictate their social position.

In this chapter, I argue that there are a number of different logics at play at the golf course which dictate social position. Thus, while Kipnis has suggested that *suzhi* "offers a way of speaking explicitly about class without using the word class" (Kipnis 2007: 390), it is also much more than that. In this space of intermingled production and consumption, to reduce suzhi to a metaphor for class would be a disservice. Instead, social position is dictated by multiple, overlapping forms of social differentiation and hierarchy, where having high *suzhi* may help advancement in the workplace hierarchy, but social influence and *guanxi* are often a faster route. The relationship between caddies and guests also shows that the interaction between *suzhi* and social position is not linear. Class emerges not as an entirely separate phenomenon to *suzhi*, nor as the same thing by a different

name, but rather as the culmination of various strands of social being, including *suzhi*. The social world thus emerges as "a multi-dimensional space" (Bourdieu 1987:3).

8.1 Grounding

In any work which deals with social position and class, much is hinged upon how class is defined. This is exacerbated in the Chinese context where there has been an explicit move away from language of class. As explored above, there are a myriad of factors at play which a theoretical grounding must accommodate. Simultaneously, Golden Valley is a site of symbolic and conspicuous consumption. Consequently, a Bourdieusian grounding seems most appropriate. Osburg in his work on the new rich in Sichuan, based on extended periods of research between 2002 and 2006, has argued that "Bourdieu's model provides an awkward fit with the contemporary reality of China" (Osburg 2013:118). For Osburg's participants the whole purpose of consumption was to make visible and legible one's economic, social and cultural capital:

> Entrepreneurs I knew employed what could be called an "audience-based theory of consumption" in which different goods are valuable precisely because they are legible and recognized as such by different groups. Instead of a notion of taste and connoisseurship in which lower-status groups might acknowledge the superiority of a cultural object but lack the cultural capital to appreciate it, entrepreneurs in Chengdu consider the best status-conferring goods to be those that are most widely recognized, famous, and whose exchange value (price) would be the most readily apparent to all (Osburg 2013:119).

He thus suggests that the situation is one of "recognition" rather than distinction (Osburg 2013:118). While recognition certainly continues to have an important role, around two decades later, as will be explored in section 8.3, it appears that both recognition and distinction are in play.

Bourdieu's theory has often been characterised as slippery, or "unusually difficult to grasp" (Weininger 2005:82). However, it is for precisely the same reasons that in this context he is useful to think with. Pierre Bourdieu is hard to place within a canonical tradition. His work borrows from others where appropriate and criticises them where not. His relationship to Marxism, for example, can be viewed as "a mixture of proximity and deliberate distancing" (Pallotta 2015:1). This theoretical flexibility is well suited to a situation where there are multiple logics of stratification in play. Moreover, it encourages a similarly fluid utilisation of Bourdieu himself. This is especially pertinent given his

opposition to the "separation of theory and research- to such an extent that nearly all of his conceptual innovations were developed only in the context of concrete empirical analysis." (Weininger 2005:82). A common criticism of Bourdieu's work is that it is so spatio-temporally specific that its utility beyond 20th century France is limited. However, in this focus on drawing theory from research, rather than vice versa, he provides a toolkit rather than a map for understanding class.

The tools of particular use in this context are: the melding of the economic and the symbolic; the prevalence of hierarchy; the relationality of social stratification; the role class theory wields as a political weapon; and the fluidity of division between the middle-class and proletariat. With regards to the latter, Bourdieu argued:

> While it is true that the principles of differentiation which are objectively the most powerful, like economic and cultural capital, produce clear-cut differences between agents situated at extreme ends of the distributions, they are evidently less effective in the intermediate zones of the space in question. It is in these intermediate or middle positions of the social space that the indeterminacy and the fuzziness of the relationship between practices and positions are the greatest, and that the room left open for symbolic strategies designated to jam this relationship is the largest (Bourdieu 1987:12).

Much contemporary discussion within both academia and public discourse in China about class is characterised by a sense of anxiety. Interwoven with ideas about *suzhi*, a lot of this sentiment is centred around two opposing groups. As Anagnost outlines:

> The discourse of *suzhi* appears most elaborated in relation to two figures: the body of the rural migrant, which exemplifies *suzhi* in its apparent absence, and the body of the urban middle-class only child, which is fetishised as a site for the accumulation of the very dimensions of *suzhi* wanting in its "other" (Anagnost 2004:190).

While certainly these are two important groups, they have become a synecdoche for wider discussions. Moreover, in both instances, unlike for caddies and their guests, the relationship between their *suzhi* and class is more linear. There is less of this "fuzziness". In her work on students at vocational schools in Nanjing, Woronov argues that these students are not part of the oft-written about new working-class, middle-class, or new rich (Woronov 2012; 2016). Instead, she suggests that though students lack class consciousness, vocational classrooms are "a site where a new social class in the Weberian sense may be forming" (Woronov 2012:779–780). Predominantly students at vocational high schools and

colleges, caddies may be considered part of this group. Yet, rather than analytically constructing a new class around them, it may be more appropriate to soften existing divisions. Here, Bourdieu builds on Rapoport, arguing that just as in the physical world, in the social world there are no clear-cut boundaries, instead conceiving of them as like a cloud or a forest:

> [A]s lines or as imaginary planes, such that the density (of the trees or of the water vapour) is higher on the one side and lower on the other, or above a certain value on the one side and below it on the other. (In fact, a more appropriate image would be that of a flame whose edges are in constant movement, oscillating around a line or surface) (Bourdieu 1987:13).[45]

Just as the groups at the extreme ends of the spectrum can offer an enlightening perspective on class and *suzhi* in China, so too do caddies, who would routinely describe themselves as "normal". As will be explored later, *suzhi* is equally as difficult to define and benefits from a lens which leans into the idea of imaginary planes. It is relational, contextual, and subjective. The study of caddies demonstrates that while terms such as class, *suzhi*, and social stratification may be analytically separable, they inevitably come to inform each other in different ways.

8.2 Between Class and Social Stratification

> [T]he *criteria* used in the construction of the objective space and of the well-founded classifications it makes possible are also instruments- I should say weapons- and stakes in the classification struggle which determines the making and un-making of the classifications currently in use (Bourdieu 1987:9–10)

As Bourdieu highlights, social groups are not ready-made, but rather exist "when there are agents capable of imposing themselves, as authorized to speak and act officially in its place and in its name" (Bourdieu 1987:15). Understanding class in China has long been a preoccupation of the social sciences. This is in a large part a result of the centrality class has maintained as a political instrument. While the manner in which it serves has undergone a number of drastic shifts, class has remained a central method for economic,

[45] In classic Bourdieu fashion, he does not provide a reference or further information but according to Strong, these images are borrowed from American mathematical psychologist Anatol Rapoport (Strong 2018:321).

social, and cultural action, and for political transformation (Hsu 2007; Jacka 2009; Jacka 2013; Guo 2016).

Under Mao, to varying degrees in different spatio-temporal frames (Watson 1996; Judd 1994; Whyte 2010), class took the form of a violent struggle. As Cohen (1996) outlines, during the Maoist era the imposition of class status became an administrative act. Based on their pre-communist circumstances, people were assigned class labels such as 'landlords', and 'poor', 'middle' or 'rich' peasants. Children inherited their father's class labels. During various political campaigns, those with undesirable class labels were subject to humiliation, condemnation, and violent repression (Cohen 1996, 157). Though ostensibly working towards a 'classless' society, the rhetoric of class became of paramount importance to daily life, romantic encounters, and prospects.

Another complication inherent within any study of class in China are the shifting parameters of the term 'class'. Bourdieu encourages us to take E.P. Thompson in his canonical *The Making of The English Working Class* (1980 [1963]) literally, and to view class groups: "as a well-founded historical artefact (in the same way that Durkheim spoke of religion as a 'well-found illusion')" (Bourdieu 1987:9–10). Also drawing on Thompson, Sun argues that in China when "the Chinese Communist Party founded the People's Republic of China in 1949, it faced the enormous task of building not only a new national economy, but also a new working class identity" (Sun 2016:109–110). As a result, cultural production and ideological tuition were crucial in promoting the transformation of class identity.

Following Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening, class continued to be important, albeit under a different guise. As the desired social make-up in China has shifted from members of a collective political body to individual progression towards middle class status (Anagnost 2008), the language used to describe the situation and to make social groups has also shifted, from 'class' (*jieji*) to 'social stratification' (*shehui jieceng*). This shift intends to move away from the social antagonism inherent within class, and towards a more comprehensive, modulated understanding drawn from 'social stratification' (Anagnost 2008; Hsu 2007; Watson 1984; Jacka 2009). This change did not simply occur in academia following social change, but rather was shaped by social scientists working in China and finds its origin in governmental rhetoric.

The social sciences, once considered 'bourgeois', were given a platform during the early post-Mao reform era to supply expertise for new projects of social engineering. For example, when in 1998 the World Bank reported that China's Gini coefficient had increased from 0.28 in the early 1980s, to a dangerous 0.458 (Anagnost 2008:498), empirical analysis was mobilized to inform social policy and track the rapidly changing contours of socio-economic differentiation. An underlying normative assumption amongst the resulting work was that the growth of the middle class could function as a stabilizing force (Anagnost 2008). Consequently, the role of the social sciences has not been limited to documenting class but has also extended to shaping how it is produced, understood, and utilized.

In January 1979, the Ministry of Public Service announced that it would remove the 'hats' of landlords, rich peasants, and bad elements (Davis and Wang 2009:249). Thus, "with relatively little fanfare, twenty years of politically defined social stratification disappeared; henceforth, politicized class labels would no longer determine life chances" (Davis and Wang 2009:18). Consequently, 'class' was no longer used in public or official discourse, instead replaced by 'social strata', a term with seemingly less political content (Woronov 2016:181). While a move towards 'social stratification' has been a politically useful instrument for Chinese governance, the idea that class is no longer a useful tool of analysis should not be accepted unquestioningly, particularly when studying golf where language of class has been a central element in its appeal and a key reason it has faced restrictions. But as this complex history demonstrates, class emerges as an analytical and political tool representative of a multi-dimensional social space. This plays out on the golf course in myriad ways, including the relationship between caddie and guest, and career progression.

8.3 Suzhi: Burberry and Barbour

The multi-dimensionality of social position in China is also constitutive of *suzhi*.[46] In the context of caddies and guests, *suzhi* certainly reifies class in that analysis of each term sheds light on the other. A direct translation of *suzhi* is 'quality' or 'human quality', though it also implies a level of civilization, and has consequently been tied up in internal debates over whether China is a 'civilized' country. Distinct from *zhiliang*, which is also

[46] Here, *guanxi* is also of significance, but has been discussed in depth in Chapter Three.

translated as quality, *suzhi* is normally used to describe a person. People can have or lack *suzhi*, however it can also be cultivated or gained through training, hence the phase *suzhi jiaoyu,* meaning a moral or well-rounded education. Though as Kipnis has outlined, "no single English term fully catches the nuances of *suzhi.* By one count, it has been translated into 32 different English terms (Tong 1999)" (Kipnis 2006:296). Neither are discourses of *suzhi* static. In a similar fashion to class, as outlined above, *suzhi* both reflects and reinforces socio-political movements. Unlike during the revolutionary period, where working class identity was placed on a pedestal, following reform "those on the bottom rung of China's class hierarchy are no longer cast in the role of moral leadership; instead, they are often found wanting in *suzhi*" (Sun 2016:116–117). Kipnis has highlighted three ways in which *suzhi* has changed since the late 1970s: first, it is no longer mapped onto the nature/nurture dichotomy; second contemporary usage is limited to "individually embodied, human qualities", now instead the term *zhiliang* is used to describe non-human entities like the military, industry, or education; and finally, "*suzhi* has taken on sacred outcomes. It now marks the hierarchical and moral distinction between the high and the low" (Kipnis 2006:297). It has thus become tied up with social anxiety about quality.

The relationship between *suzhi* and class is also a complex one. Anagnost argues that *suzhi* displaces class because of "the formative power of *suzhi* as an ideological formation that enables the transfer of economic value from one body to another" (Anagnost 2004:191). She contends that "the body that is recognized as baring value is thereby a body to which value has been added through educational investment rather than one through which surplus value has been extracted." Kipnis, responds that while the word *suzhi* has displaced the word class, he believes that the displacement of real damaging significance is that of neoliberal discourse on class, arguing that "*suzhi* discourse reifies rather than elides forms of hierarchical difference; it offers a way of speaking explicitly about class without the word class" (Kipnis 2007:390). However, in the case of caddies, rather than a way of speaking about class, *suzhi* appears as one of many multi-constitutive factors which dictate class position.

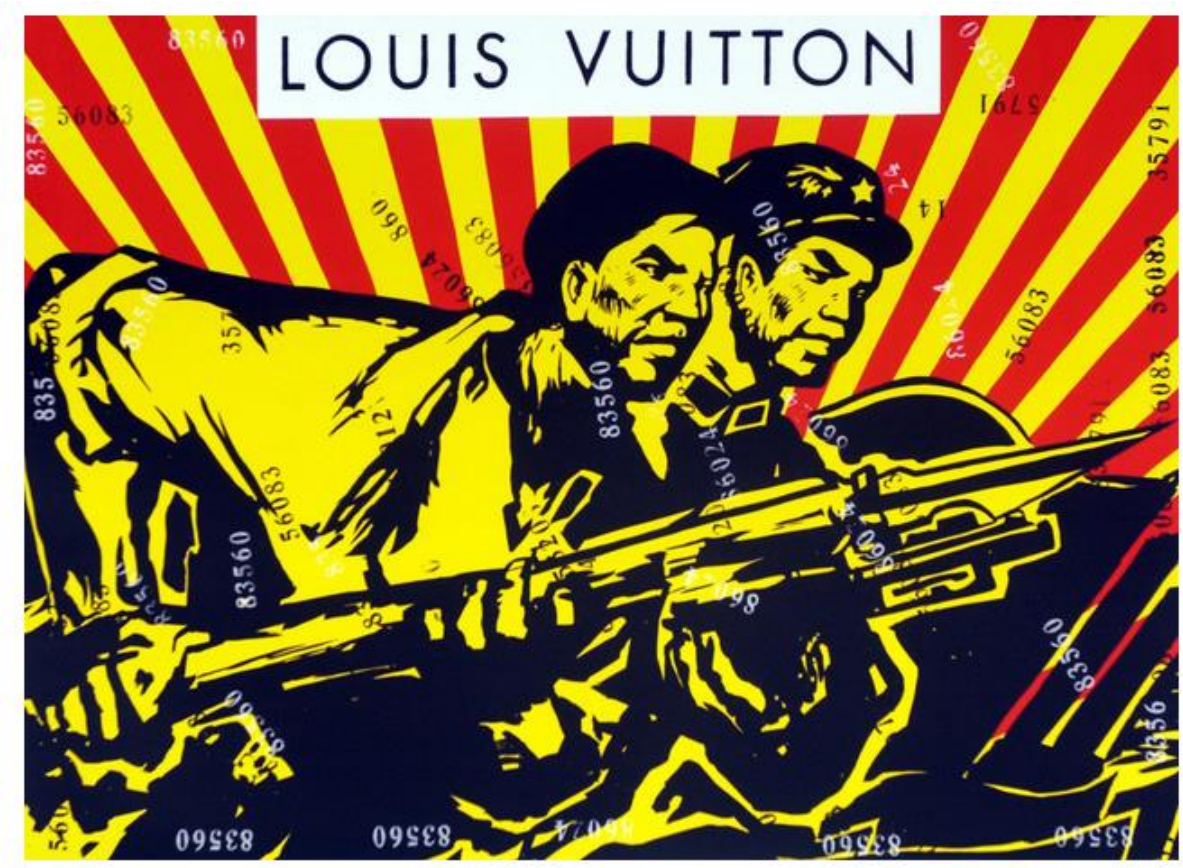
Golf in China is prohibitively expensive, especially at a higher end facility like Golden Valley, so all the guests are rich. A consultant working in Golden Valley management told me that their membership consists of many factory owners and wealthy

businessmen. However, the *suzhi* of guests varies. One particularly rainy afternoon, the teachers decided to do in class training. So, we convened in a large classroom space, decidedly less grand than the public facing parts of Golden Valley. The doddering AC hummed, leaving a heavy heat in the air as Teacher Huang went through a PowerPoint describing the layout of the various holes, and some technical advice on which golf clubs to recommend at which times. All of this was predominantly revision rather than new information, so the students sat idly in their desks, most playing on their phones, some half asleep, and fewer still taking notes. Teacher Dong and I sat in the back of the large room, a few rows behind the closest students. Teacher Huang wrapped up his lecture earlier than expected, so we were given a fifteen-minute break before being allowed to go home for the day. That we were not just allowed to leave fifteen minutes early seemed arbitrary.

Taking the opportunity, I asked Teacher Dong why there was a perception amongst caddies that the *suzhi* of some guests was quite low, as some of the caddies had explained to me in quite an indirect fashion. "They are new money," he said very directly, employing the English term. His English was not strong enough to carry a conversation, but the words he regularly chose to deploy in English were telling; 'new money', 'gentleman', and 'classy'. I asked him if it would be rude to call someone new money to their face and he said yes. Then, went on to clarify jokingly that some 'new money' people might take it as a compliment. "At least they have money!" But in most cases, it would be rude. "They can buy things, but they are not educated" he continued. I asked him if you could tell by looking if someone was 'new money.' He said yes, "they'll have an LV handbag, a Gucci top, and designer shoes."

Louis Vuitton, commonly referred to as LV in China, is a brand often seen in glistening upmarket shopping malls in large urban cities. The handbags seem to be particularly popular, as are counterfeit versions which come in a varying degree of realistic. Arriving in China, I had very little familiarity with the brand or the handbags, having had no prior encounters with them. However, having spent years seeing them on the arms of Chinese women, or their obliging boyfriends, by the time I left had learnt to both recognise them and become used to the sight of them. Teacher Dong equated this to a question of Burberry and Barbour. "Everyone in China knows Burberry, and it is quite new money. Whereas Barbour is a little bit less known and classier." To many, both

Burberry and Barbour are luxury brands, both of which might signify a certain class position. But to Dong, who had more experience with wealthy people than most, the difference between them was crucial. Whereas you might be able to buy a women's Barbour jacket between £100 and £500, women's Burberry outerwear is likely to fall between £650 and £4,500. Here, the implication is that *suzhi* is not about how much money you have spent on something, but instead is situated within a broader ecosystem of taste, knowledge, and refinement.



[Figure Ten: Wang Guangyi. 1998. *Great Criticism- Louis Vuitton*]

This may be understood in relation to Bourdieu's concept of distinction: "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier" (Bourdieu 2000: 6 [1984]). However, as Osburg has highlighted in China there is a tension between distinction and recognition. This is certainly the case in this context also. As one high level consultant working at a golf course relayed to me: "One course designer was designing for someone in Shanghai with very limited space, so suggested a 9-hole course, the investor refused, saying 'If I don't

have a par 72, my friends will think I have run out of money!'[47]" Similarly, on multiple occasions at driving ranges across China, I saw people who could not play golf posing as if about to play, take a picture, then leave. Usually they were dressed impractically, for example in high-heeled shoes, or tight-fitting suits, ready for the photograph, rather than for sport. Here, capturing and sharing the image of golf as a lifestyle, recognition, was more important than distinction. However, Li Jingyi, the manager of a caddie training centre, who had herself begun working in the industry as a caddie nearly three decades ago, highlighted that this practice of using golf for recognition was becoming less common. She explained to me that in the early days of golf, following reform and opening-up, golf became kind of a "fashion." Everyone thought that playing golf was "a good way of making people pay attention to you." They did not understand golf's culture, but they thought "if I go and do this thing, other people will notice me." I asked her if this was because it was considered foreign and elite, she said yes. "They thought, I just have to play golf and suddenly I will become very high and important." She explained that when golf re-emerged in China, a lot of people had become rich quickly. This impacted their consumption practices: "So I have one or two Mercedes Benz. Okay, if you have one or two Mercedes Benz you feel great! But they don't really understand the culture or the brand." She considered early golf consumers to be engaging in golf in a similar fashion.

However, she believed that now it is a very different state of affairs. Now people play because they like, respect, and understand golf. Indeed, as China's rich have been around for longer, their means of expression have changed. While recognition is still a defining feature, arguably this is slowly developing into an expression more closely aligned with distinction. The two may even be compatible through the incorporation of the concept of symbolic capital. Bourdieu has defined symbolic capital as:

> [N]othing other than capital, of whatever kind, when it is perceived by an agent endowed with categories of perception arising from the incorporation of the structure of its distribution, i.e. when it is known and recognized as self-evident (Bourdieu 1991:238).

Accordingly, recognition does play a role in distinction due to the manner in which symbolic capital needs to be recognised in order to be productive.

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[47] A typical 9-hole golf course will have a par 27, whereas an 18-hole course will have par 72.

8.3.1 Training suzhi, performing class

The relationship between *suzhi* and class is a strong feature of Amy Hanser's (2008) work on department stores in Harbin, most notably her time working at Sunshine department store, a semi-public space open to all shoppers, yet clearly orientated towards the wealthy. Sunshine's sense of high *suzhi* was embodied within the sales clerks (Hanser 2008:95). The concept that service sector gender has become a strategic resource for the production of organizational distinction is also echoed in the work of Pun Ngai (Pun 2005). Returning to golf, young caddies are an asset for mapping *suzhi*. That women are still considered the ideal candidate to work as caddies, as was explored in Chapter Four, implies this gendered sense of 'quality' remains central, even if most of the caddies I worked with were men. These caddies work both as markers, and creators of *suzhi*.

Part of what caddies produce is a sense of status for the club, thus they must behave and hold themselves accordingly. Intrigued by this concept of training *suzhi*, and its relationship to training affective labour, I reached out to some participants after fieldwork and asked them what they considered the relationship between *suzhi* and the training caddies undergo to be, and whether training can elevate *suzhi*. Huang responded:

> At the same time as caddie training, we also conduct *suzhi* training. The *suzhi* of a caddie has a certain impact on the results of training. A caddie having high *suzhi* will help them learn better during training. The same high-level training will also have an impact on the *suzhi* of caddies. Improving the service skills of caddies will also indirectly affect the *suzhi* of caddies.

Manager Liu had a slightly more pessimistic view, commenting that training "can improve professional *suzhi*, but not necessarily personal *suzhi*." In each response, *suzhi* appears as multivocal.

8.4 Hierarchy at the club

This sense of *suzhi* plays into the social position of caddies. As explored in Chapter Two, there were material differences between them and other types of migrant workers. Having spoken to Teacher Huang, Teacher Sun, and many of the caddies in training about the concept of class and social stratification, I would always get a similar answer; that caddies were from 'normal' social backgrounds. Above them guests were people with money, and below were other types of migrant labourers. Many I spoke with, for example would

vehemently deny the label *dagongmei.* Pun Ngai has worked extensively on *dagongmei*, defining the term as follows:

> A Cantonese term imported from Hong Kong, its meanings are multi-layered. Dagong means "working for the boss", or "selling labour", connoting commodification and a capitalist exchange of labour for wages. Mei means younger sister. It denotes not merely gender, but also marital status- *mei* is single, unmarried and younger (and thus of a lower status). In contrast to the term "worker" (gongren), which carried the highest status in the socialist rhetoric of Mao's day, the new word dagong signifies a lesser identity- that of a hired hand- in a new context shaped by the rise of market factors in labour relations and hierarchy (Pun 1999:3).[48]

For Jiayi, this was not an appropriate term for caddies. Worse yet, she considered it rude: "this is a very impolite term. Caddies would never describe themselves as this, if people describe them using [*dagongmei*] they are intending to put them down." For caddies, their understanding of their own social standing relates comparatively to others. Here, Bourdieu comments:

> [T]he logical class, as an analytical construct founded in reality, is nothing other than the set of occupants of the same position in a space, these agents are as such affected in their social being by the effects of the condition and of the conditionings corresponding to their position as defined *intrinsically* (that is to say, by a certain class of material conditions of existence, of primeval experiences of the social world, etc.), and *relationally* (that is, in its relation to other positions, as being above or below them, or between them as in the case of those positions that are "in the middle", intermediate, neutral, neither dominant nor dominated)" (Bourdieu 1987:6).

I was interested in Teacher Dong's perspective. As he was from a different socio-economic background to his colleagues, his understanding of what was 'normal' was different from the other teachers. He described the class background of caddies as "not too good". As well as being relational, as evident in the idea of being referred to as *dagongmei* being offensive, this social space is also characterised by hierarchy. For Bourdieu, this concept of hierarchy is fundamental:

> Aspects of a lifestyle such as haute cuisine or an antique collection, on the one hand, are not simply distinct from "hearty" foods and mass produced decorations, on the other. To the contrary, the different forms of the same lifestyle element (furniture, food, etc.) stand in a hierarchical relation to

[48] See also: Pun 1998, 2003, 2004, 2005; Smith & Pun 2006

> one another, and as a result of this, lifestyles themselves are socially ranked (Weininger 2005:128).

This hierarchy is dictated by proximity to culture which is recognised as socially legitimate. This idea of proximity may also be used to explain Teacher Sun's surprise at the low level of *suzhi* of some guests; there is distance between their economic capital, which is high, and their *suzhi*, which is low. For caddies, existing within a workplace hierarchy, there is a similar interplay and mediation of economic capital, social capital, and *suzhi*.

8.4.1 Workplace hierarchy

In 2003 Zhang Lianwei defeated golfing giant Ernie Els and became the first Chinese golfer to win the European Tour. The following year he became the first to play in the Masters Tournament at Augusta National (European Tour 2023). As a result of these successes, he is known as the 'Godfather of Chinese golf'. To caddies, his story has a particular resonance. Born in Zhuhai in Guangdong, the province where the first golf club opened in 1984 following the Mao era ban on golf, he came from humble origins, the son of a rice farmer and one of six siblings (Careem 2020; Yang 2010). Like many of the caddies at Golden Valley, having low grades he attended a specialist sports school, rather than mainstream academic school. While there, he was assigned to work as a caddie at Zhuhai golf course. In quiet moments, he secretly taught himself golf. One day, the manager of the course noticed his ability and became his coach (Yang 2010). This launched his professional career.[49] This Cinderella story was brought up by several caddies I met who had professional golfing aspirations. Others saw caddying as a steppingstone towards other ambitions. For some, the prospect of spending time with successful guests represented an opportunity to make connections and learn about business. Yet, as is the case in many lines of work, these ambitions remained just that. The class of the caddies I met did not change in anywhere near such as stark manner as Zhang Lianwei's, and for most barely changed at all. This is due to the way hierarchy at Golden Valley mediates class and dictates progression.

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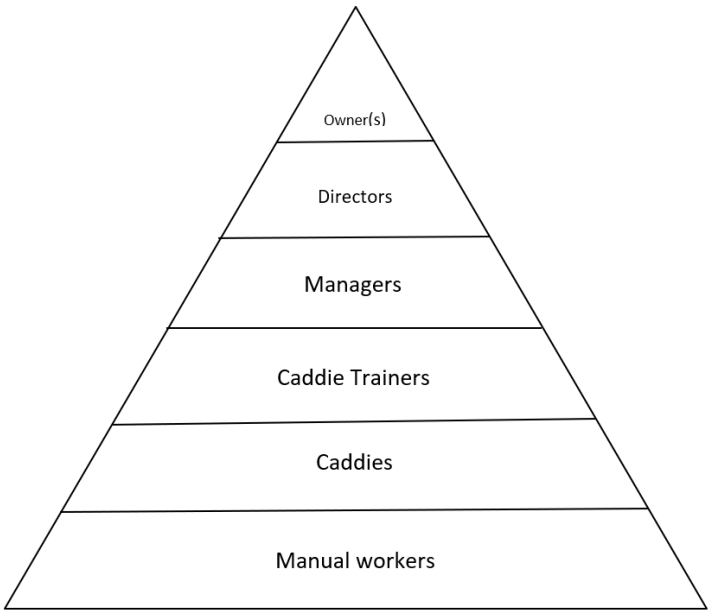
[49] Internationally, Zhang is far from the only caddie to become a professional golfer, other notable examples include: Sewsunker Sewgolum a former caddie who became the first professional golfer of colour to win a provincial open in South Africa; Harendra Gupta; Seenappa Chikkarangappa who began working as a caddie aged nine to support his family; Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson, often cited as two of the best players in the history of the game

The hierarchy at Golden Valley was very clear cut, indicated in uniform, title, geography and etiquette. Figure Eleven represents the social position of various workers at Golden Valley. It predominantly functions to demonstrate hierarchy, with the owners being on the top, and caddies and manual workers in second to last and last place respectively. It is not entirely representative quantitatively. There are approximately 600 to 650 caddies working during the high season, and between 250 and 260 during low season. I do not have data available on the number of manual workers, as I was not permitted access to their department. However, it seemed to be a significantly smaller workforce than caddies, particularly during the high season. There are on average about 10 caddie trainers. Within Golden Valley there are many more people in management positions, but there is only one caddie training manager, Liu. Within the golf department, there is then Chen, the Director of Golf Operations who outranks Liu. At the very top, are the founders, owners, and board members. There is an important type missing within this pyramid, the guest. The position of caddies in relation to guests has been explored in chapters two and six. This section will explain, and outline the nuances not captured in this pyramid through a thematic focus on greetings, titles, uniform, and career progression. Thus, enabling a clearer view of the way in which social position plays out in context.



[Figure Eleven: Hierarchy at the club]

Greetings

One afternoon, we were gathered on the green practicing lining up the ball. A crucial job, which done incorrectly could drastically impact the guest's game. This could mean the caddie could incur their rage or receive a reduced tip. Practicing lining up the ball was an arduous task, involving standing on the part of the course least protected from the sun, often for an hour or two at a time, taking it in turns to practice. Due to the frequency with which we did this and the monotonous nature of the task at hand, a heavy lethargy hung in the air. Playful conversation had slowly subsided, but those waiting for their turn milled around silently in groups, some sitting, all slouching. Suddenly, a golf cart appeared at the crest of the hill behind us. As it sped towards us it became clear that it was a group of directors. "Quick! Stand in line! Straighten up!" the teachers yelled, cracking the previously hazy atmosphere. The directors got out of the cart near us, and the caddies erupted into a chorus of "Good afternoon!" One of the directors explained to the group that they normally worked in the office, but that it was important to come out to the course to check on things. He quizzed the caddies in training, asking them how many of the directors present they could name. Jian, who by this point had begun to establish himself as one of the most promising caddies in training, got most of them right. He had been studying the photographs provided in one lecture.

Indeed, the way the hierarchies at Golden Valley present themselves first struck with the politics of hello. As above, whenever a teacher, manager, or director approached, all the caddies in training were expected to stand in a neat line, and in unison greet them good morning, afternoon, or evening. This also applied to guests who passed by on the golf course. This requirement did not end with the close of the training or working day but was essential whenever caddies were in uniform. As Manager Liu said firmly, when in uniform "you represent the club." The only people who did not receive this greeting were manual workers. These could be maintenance people, coach drivers, or cleaners, but were most commonly agricultural workers who tended the grounds. We encountered them daily, but generally the group walked by them as if they were not there. On one occasion, two of the young men said hello to four older women pulling weeds from underneath a tree. Following the encounter another caddie in training approached and asked if they could understand what the women were saying. They said no, the manual workers all spoke the local dialect which very few of the caddies in training understood. This language barrier was an important differentiating factor, as was the fact that there was little to gain

from greeting these workers. Caddies would not be chastised for not doing so as they would if they failed to greet a guest or more senior staff member. And, unlike with guests and managers, there was no financial or professional motivation to expend affect towards them.

Titles

As Rubie Watson (1986) highlights in her work on naming practices in a village in Hong Kong, naming provides a good insight into how gender and accordingly social hierarchy, are viewed, constructed, and maintained. She argues that where men gain more names over the course of their lives, women lose names and become known by categories. This is also true for naming practices at Golden Valley, where titles create and convey hierarchy. Early on in training, caddies are shown pictures and given the full names of the owners, directors, and managers. They are instructed to learn their names and titles and greet them appropriately. Directors, such as Director Chen, should be called director and their surname. Managers such as Liu should be called manager and their surname, and teachers should be teacher then their surname. Caddies are simply called their forename. Or occasionally just their surname or a nickname. By contrast, manual labourers are simply called *ayi* if they are women, which most were. *Ayi* as a familial term refers to one's aunt but is commonly used to address women of an older generation. There was no commonly accepted term for male manual labourers, and I did not know of any caddies or caddies in training who were on a first name basis with them.

Uniform

It was not difficult to tell these groups of people apart, or where they rank within the hierarchy. As my fieldwork focused on caddies and thus was predominantly 'below deck', I never saw any of the owners around Golden Valley. However, at one conference held at a golf club in China about the future of sport, I did interact with the owner of another club who wore an expensive suit. And in my professional life outside fieldwork met several, who were all similarly dressed. Directors such as Chen would wear business casual clothes, managers wore a specific colour of polo shirt designating them as managers, or business casual if they were more office based. Caddie trainers would wear golf attire, which in itself is already strictly coded, regulated, and classed (Cerón-Anaya 2010; Han and Sa 2022). Caddies would wear caddie uniforms. Purple for women, and blue for men. The

manual outdoor workers wore straw hats and their own clothes, which were usually muted colours and always worn and dusty.

Career progression

Most caddies working at Golden Valley are now interns. As a result, they return to their schools to finish their education after working for between eight months and two years, depending on the agreement with their institution. While many aspired to work in other sectors such as hospitality or physical education, others wanted a career in golf. Some interns do end up returning to the club to work as a caddie after they have finished their studies. Some teachers were also interns who had longer placements so had spent some time working as caddies first. For example, Teacher Fan. Teacher Fan was on placement from a university in Beijing. He struggled with working on weekdays as a trainer and weekends as a caddie. He missed his friends and his girlfriend. He was counting down the days until he could return home. Between my first and second stint at Golden Valley, he was happily back in Beijing studying. Also a longer term intern was Teacher Huang. He was a quiet but powerful character. His style of management friendly and relaxed, but still managing to exude authority. He had been at Golden Valley for two years, first as a caddie intern then as a caddie trainer intern and had intentions to climb the career ladder. By the end of my fieldwork, he had been awarded a permanent position as a caddie trainer, meaning he would no longer have to work as a caddie. He was able to obtain this position as he had experience working as a caddie and had good interpersonal skills as the role, according to him, "involved interacting often with Managers." Indeed, there are barriers to entry at the higher rungs. He had been selected for this role because of his hard work and good relationship with management and informed me that the role was not openly advertised, rather he had been tapped on the shoulder. He nonetheless lamented that "there are very few opportunities at Golden Valley for this kind of development." With hundreds of caddies, and roughly ten caddie trainers, a smaller percentage of whom are permanent staff, career progression is tough. Moreover, this promotion did not necessarily equate to increased economic capital. As Huang told me: "it will be easier than life as a caddie, but the salary isn't really better as I won't get tips." Huang eventually moved away from Golden Valley to be closer to home and for a promotion to supervisor at another golf club.

Above the caddie trainers was Manager Liu. She herself had been a caddie before it was commonplace to employ interns, then a caddie trainer, then manager. She had arrived at Golden Valley from Northern China with no familiarity with golf, and no higher education, vocational or otherwise. She worked her way up the pyramid with tenacity. She had secured a comfortable permanent position and a comparatively high salary, bigger than that of her husband or parents, who she supported. Though Liu's story is certainly one of success, for every Liu there are hundreds of caddies for whom there has not been space to advance. Those in management and director positions had typically never worked as a caddie, and unlike caddies had gone to standard universities rather than vocational ones, with some having had the opportunity to study abroad.

8.5 Mediations and mitigations

Certainly, the hierarchy at Golden Valley, like most workplaces, does not depend on a single entry point, but rather the point of entry is dictated by overlapping factors of differentiation. For many caddies in training Golden Valley, with its fancy hotel and marble floors, was a space distinct from others they had encountered, often in an intimidating way. This was not the case for Teacher Dong. From the outset of my fieldwork Dong struck me as unlike the other caddie trainers. Though I was not necessarily closer to him than the others, our relationship was a different one, as was the way we spoke to each other. Perhaps because he too was somewhat of an outsider. He discussed with me the situations at hand with broader strokes, almost as if he was painting a picture of a scene he was not himself depicted in. I met him on my first day of fieldwork, which also happened to be his first day working at the club. We bonded very quickly in part because of this, but also because, by virtue of being a foreign, funded PhD student, our positionalities were more similar than mine or his to the other caddie trainers or caddies in training. Unlike the others, he had travelled abroad. He used to live in the same decidedly high-end apartment complex on site I was living in at the time, and he was regularly in Hong Kong, as had I been for a time. Sometimes in the evenings after training, I would run into him around the golf complex, he was usually having dinner with a family friend in one of the expensive restaurants or drinking at the Western-style bar. Over my time living on the complex, I never saw another caddie or caddie trainer in these settings.

Even Manager Liu did not frequent the various facilities. On one occasion, I had been at her house for an evening of making dumplings and hanging out with her and her

son, both of whom I became very close to. After this evening, she dropped me off at my apartment, located just beyond the fancy hotels, but still within the Golden Valley complex. The only available drop off point was outside Golden Valley's expensive 'eco' supermarket. She had some groceries to buy, so parked the car and decided to go shopping. A few hours earlier we had been in her local supermarket, a large Chinese chain, and she had liberally placed items in the cart, not only for making dumplings, but local specialties for me, and treats for her son. In this supermarket in the Golden Valley complex, the vibe was different. She looked at the items she had intended to buy but did not put any in her basket. She left with a drink and a few sweets her son had his eye on. I offered to pay but she declined.

My connection with Dong put me in a difficult position. I enjoyed his company, he also enjoyed talking about international politics, and he spoke a lot more frankly on a number of topics than my other participants. Likely because the political ramifications of doing so were muted by his social connections. However, aligning myself solidly with him seemed to be at the expense of other relationships, as the dynamic between him and the other trainers was an unusual and oftentimes tense one. One morning before Dong arrived for work, I asked one of the other teachers where he was, and he said he did not know. He was meant to be working that day, and Golden Valley had very strict policies about arriving on time, whereby for caddies being late three times was sufficient reason to be fired. I told him that Dong seemed a little different from the other caddie trainers. Leaning in, he whispered that Dong was the son of a government official in Beijing and was studying golf at a local university with the aim of becoming a professional golfer. As part of his degree, much like the caddies, he had to do an internship. As the role of caddie is infamously hard, and very physical, his father who had connections with the club, arranged for him to do his internship as a caddie trainer rather than as a caddie. He had never previously, and never would, work as a caddie. Dong himself later told me that he would never work as a caddie as he considered this a career with very little "progression." Guangli, an HR Manager, explained to me that "people who have money and work in golf will not be caddies, they will be trainers or golf course managers." It later transpired that Dong was thirty minutes late, delaying teaching, because of a personal errand he was running. Surprisingly, he faced no ramifications.

By a similar mechanism, just as Dong's social position was too high for him to work as a caddie, for others it was too low. As discussed in Chapter Six, Yuxuan was an outgoing and high energy caddie in training who while personable, due to his comparatively lower *suzhi* did not meet the affective professionalism required at Golden Valley. He consequently failed the examinations. Moreover, as seen in Chapter Three, overweight caddies were edged out early in the training process, as their appearance did not fit the brand. Dong's ability to skip steps in the career ladder demonstrates how the hierarchy is multi-dimensional and mediated by economic capital, *suzhi,* and social capital. It would not have been socially appropriate for Golden Valley to treat the son of a Beijing government official with ties to the owners of the club in the same way as the son or daughter of, for example, an agricultural worker.

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how the hierarchies at Golden Valley are mediated by pre-existing social inequalities and has argued against seeing suzhi as a way of talking about class without using the word class. Overall, what appears is the multi-faceted nature of social organisation in China. This chapter has also suggested that while recognition continues to play a role in demonstrations of class in China, as the new rich are no longer so new, ideas about distinction can be reintegrated.

Class emerges not as an entirely separate phenomenon to *suzhi*, nor as the same thing by a different name, but rather as the culmination of various strands of social being. This is, of course, inherently contextual and relational. Dong was able to supplant the standard career track because of *guanxi* and *suzhi*. Because of his background, and according economic and cultural capital, his class could be considered higher than Liu's, despite the fact she was his boss. Liu did not have the same educational accreditation as the new type of intern caddie. But, because of her position in the workplace hierarchy, and because she owned multiple apartments, her class position is higher than the better educated intern caddies. Yuxuan was attending an institution of higher vocational education, but his *suzhi* prevented him from even entering the workplace hierarchy. Above the whole thing hang guests. Though some guests may exhibit lower levels of *suzhi* than caddies, their class position is higher. Not only are they wealthy, but as the people this labour is in service of, contextually their *suzhi* becomes less important.

This demonstrates that while caddying may be undergoing a process of professionalizing there are still major obstacles to caddies' ability to progress. This is both the result of a lack of new roles to move into, and more intangible reasons such as broader social hierarchies which mitigate and mould the workplace hierarchies at Golden Valley.

CHAPTER NINE

Conclusion

Through an in-depth study of caddies at Golden Valley, this thesis sought to explore what happens when men enter into a job previously done by women. The answer is, simultaneously, not much and also a lot. The requirements of the role have not changed, women are still perceived to be the ideal caddie, and affective labour remains central. Yet, the same mechanism which brought more men to the job, the increasing employment of interns, has also led the industry to a path of professionalizing. Training is entrenched and expanded through vocational education. Accordingly, caddies are more knowledgeable from earlier on. However, due to a myriad of factors which culminate in the class position of the caddie, the path to professional advancement is not unobstructed. Despite this, caddies offer a more positive view of internships and vocational education than has been explored elsewhere. Even where students do not return to caddying after graduation, the skills they have learnt are related to their major, and transferable. Of these skills most important is what I term affective professionalism.

9.1 Labour in China

Chapter Eight suggested that much work on China has focused on either end of the social spectrum, as Anagost outlines:

> The discourse of *suzhi* appears most elaborated in relation to two figures: the body of the rural migrant, which exemplifies *suzhi* in its apparent absence, and the body of the urban middle-class only child, which is fetishised as a site for the accumulation of the very dimensions of *suzhi* wanting in its "other" (Anagnost 2004:190).

Caddies fit into neither category. Woronov argues that amongst vocational education students a new class may be forming (Woronov 2012:779–780). However, this is not really reflective of caddies' own experience of their positionality. They recognize that they are not as wealthy as the guests they work for, though in some cases their *suzhi* may be higher. But most also do not feel that *dagongmei* is appropriate either. Those I spoke to consider their position 'normal'. Their perception is inherently relational. Consequently, it

does not seem necessary to construct a new class around them. But, rather, drawing on Bourdieu to soften existing divisions.

As introduced in Chapter One, in many ways caddies offer an alternative perspective to those most prominent within the study of labour in China. Though certainly, there were moments of anxiety, it did not come to characterise the situation. Which instead, in many ways, felt more like one of opportunity. Caddies live in dormitories and are subject to much of the control and difficulty escaping work demonstrated in literature on dormitory regimes. However, the conditions in which they live are better, with fewer people to each room, and several different facilities such as libraries and gyms. In a similar sense, the chapter explored how although vocational education and internships in China are supposed to be based on a 'theory into practice model', this has, in practice, often not been the case (Smith and Chan 2015b). In many explorations of internships, students are given jobs unrelated to their major, and of little benefit to their career aspirations. For caddie interns, this is not the case. Where their major is golf, interning as a caddie is a direct extension of their studies. In turn their prior education means that this new intern workforce is more expert in, and sometimes passionate about, golf. As explored in Chapter Eight, there are a large number of caddies, and fewer spaces for professional advancement. However, the more general skills which they learn are transferable. Li Jingyi explained this to me succinctly: "They study so many things. In the future they can become a golf trainer or instructor, a caddie manager, go into the sale of golf equipment, work for the membership team." She went on to elaborate that their emotional intelligence is honed through their studies, training, and internships. This also opens up further career possibilities.

In spite of this optimism, Chapter Eight demonstrated that even though caddying is professionalizing, and caddies consider the role a profession, broader structural factors still mitigate and mediate their social position and career progression. Here, class emerges as an overarching means to order and make sense of interlocking factors such as wealth, *suzhi*, *guanxi*, and workplace hierarchy.

9.2 Training affect

Of the skills in which caddies are trained, affective labour is crucial. Chapters Three and Five demonstrated how the appropriate type of affective labour is dictated by context. Taking an historical turn, Chapter Three charted the turbulent past of golf in China to

understand its present. The legally liminal position of golf has meant that the industry has adopted creative approaches to avoid political repercussions. Most significantly, opening new golf courses under the banner of leisure, tourism, and residential projects. This has drastically impacted the role of the caddie. They are not just sporting professionals but situated within a broader ecosystem of leisure. This position dictates perceptions of the perfect caddie, who is imagined to be a woman. While these broader political movements have come to shape golf in China, Chapter Five addressed institutional specificity. In arguing against the concept of 'Chinese characteristics', it demonstrated how the form that golf takes in China is instead the result of three interlocked geographical influences. First, as explored in Chapter Three, the distinct history of golf in China which has imbued golf with a heightened sense of leisure. Second, ideas of 'the West', refracted through Chinese understandings, and also a particular type of Chinese person. And finally, the influence of investment, predominantly from the Asian sphere of golf. All this combines to differentiate the type of work required of caddies from that of employees in other roles within the service sector. As too are these roles different to eachother. Accordingly, so too does the style of affective labour required of caddies depend on the context of Golden Valley.

Building on this, Chapter Six explored what affective labour looks like at Golden Valley. Focusing on the training caddies receive upon arrival, affective labour emerges as something which is actively trained and highly regulated. The chapter employed a transdisciplinary approach, incorporating musicological theory. In doing so, it shed light on the way in which, like jazz and lead sheet improvisation, affective labour even when improvised, can be underscored by a theme and a set of rules. As a result, affective labour can be seen as an acquired skill, certainly one which some may have a greater natural tendency towards, but which nonetheless is actively trained. From this training, emerges a sense of personhood. Much work has been done on affective labour. However, there has not been a consistent and explicit exploration of its training. The significance of seeing affective labour as trained is twofold. First, it enables a keener analysis of the form affective labour takes. Second, affective labour thus emerges as a professional skill, to be honed and developed, while deeply shaped by the institutional setting. This relates to the idea of affective professionalism.

9.3 Affective professionalism

Situating ideas of training affect within wider theoretical debates, Chapter Seven problematised theories of feminization and professionalism. Building on emerging ideas of what it means to be a professional, the chapter highlighted the tension between the two terms. But, crucially, refuted their incompatibility. An understanding of professionalism as plurality, rather than a fixed and closely guarded idea enables different types of professionalism to come into focus. For caddies, the most prominent is affective professionalism. In both China and elsewhere, feminization and professionalism have often been viewed as separate, or explored separately. Affective professionalism is situated between and within. It takes feminized affective labour and ties it to professional processes of training and expertise. As the service sector expands, and becomes institutionalised through vocational education, affective professionalism offers a theoretical grounding through which to understand service work.

9.4 Looking to the future

A crucial grounding of this work has been the need to understand the form things take contextually. Yet concurrently, many of the ideas born from the specifics of caddies at Golden Valley may be extrapolated and used as a tool for understanding broader thematic issues in different contexts. In 2022 the CCP changed the Law on Vocational Education, thus upgrading the status of vocational institutions (Minzer 2023). In the final months of writing this PhD, the National Development and Reform Commission announced that in an interim adjustment of the 14th five-year plan, China planned to build around 200 more vocational colleges and application-oriented universities (Jing Liu 2023). The advancement of vocational education has been a common response in other Asian countries- such as Japan- to youth unemployment, and particularly graduate unemployment (ibid.) Though many in China still do not see vocational education in a positive light (Woronov 2012), it seems as if it will become a reality for many young Chinese people. This entrenches the importance of a positive example of its application.

Looking to broader changes in labour globally, the type of work many people are doing is likely different to that of their grandparents, as is what is being produced and how. Affective labour is a powerful tool. As the tertiary sector expands, and types of work we might not have imagined fifty years ago come to the fore, affective professionalism comes to represent a crucial skill in many of our working lives.

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