Nature Preserves and Tourism in East Asia

Social Change in Asia
Clark W. Sorensen
April 10, 2019
Weller’s Two Walks

- **West Mountain in Guiping Guangxi (1985)**
  - Scenic mountain
  - People lighting incense in front of rocks and trees because of “divine potency” 神灵（靈）
  - Lunar 2.19 Guanyin’s (Avalokiteshvara) Birthday, mountain temples, spirit possession 跳神
  - Combination of “nature tourism with religion”

- **Taiwan Toroko National Park (name comes from the indigenous Truku tribe)**
  - Originally established by the Japanese in 1937, but abolished with reversion in 1945
  - Reestablished 1986
  - Signs of economic exploitation
  - Park director believes in “wilderness and natural preservation for its own sake”
  - Painter Chiang Hsun thinks of interaction of water and rock
Three competing views of nature

- Traditional view of a landscape full of qi (energy) and spiritual animals
- "disenchanted" world of commodities to be sold for profit
  - Nature object of analysis that needs to be controlled through science for industrialization and power
  - Shared by both Communists and Nationalists, and Western originated
- State-sponsored conservation areas and nature parks
  - Tension between preservation for its own sake or for tourism and exploitation of resources
United States Model—Bird Watching

- *Birds of America* by John James Audubon printed between 1827-1838
- George Bird Grinnell founded the Audubon Society in 1886 during a period in which large-scale harvesting of birds was leading to extinctions (i.e. Passenger Pigeon)
- Disbanded in 1888, but refounded in 1896 and worked for conservation laws and established wildlife sanctuaries
National Parks in US

- Yosemite

- Yosemite valley inhabited by Ahwahnee tribe, but when whites entered the mountains of California during the Gold Rush (1849 on) Indian Wars began

- Lafeyatte Houghton Brunnell of the Mariposa Battallion first named and described the valley of 1851 in an 1880 publication

- What impressed them most were the glacially carved valley, and the groves of huge Sequoia trees that attracted tourists from the 1850s

- Concerned about the effects of commercial exploitation the Yosemite Grant was passed and signed by President Lincoln in 1864 setting aside this federally-owned land for a state park

- Agitation by John Muir, who wrote poetically and spiritually about Yosemite, led to a larger Yosemite National Park in 1890
Yosemite Valley in 19th Century
Yellowstone

- First established national park in 1872 “as a pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people” and to preserve it from those who would “make merchandise of these beautiful specimens”
- Local residents initially opposed arguing the local economy would be harmed if the environment cannot be exploited
- Native residents excluded, and tourists came initially by stage coach, later by rail, and then by car
Yellowstone National Park
National Park Expansion

• Other individual parks established
  • Mineral springs

• National Monuments, 1906
  • Theodore Roosevelt—to protect antiquities and objects of scientific interest (by Presidential declaration)

• National Parks Service 1916
  • Woodrow Wilson

• Consolidated into a single system 1933
National Parks in Europe

- Swiss National Park 1914
  - This is a strict nature preserve in which fires and trails are excluded, and overnighting allowed only in a single mountain hut
  - This is now recognized as a UNESCO Biosphere Preserve (IUCN 1a Strict Nature Preserve – see below for IUCN classifications)

- Elsewhere in Europe national parks and nature reserves are recent, relatively small, and often include human habitation and private property
Swiss National Park
Japanese National Parks

- Initial city parks were expanded when the shrines and forests of Nikko 日光 were placed under public protection in 1929
  - Buddhist temples, shrines, sacred forests are considered National Treasures and are run by religious organizations

- 1931 National Parks Law (国立公園法) passed as part of Japan’s quest to be regarded as an advanced and civilized society (cf Shapiro)
  - 1930s 7 parks in Japan, 3 in Taiwan (and probably some in Korea)

- By 2016 more than 34 parks
  - While protected, the state owns only about half the land in the Japanese parks
  - Many include sacred Shinto and Buddhist sites (Nikko, Ise-Shima)
Nikko and Toroko Gorge
Taiwan

- 1937 Governor General set up three parks
  - Daiton (Yangmingshan)
  - Nitaka-Arisan (Yushan, Alishan)
  - Tsugitaka-Taroko
- After 1945 neglected, then new law in 1972 and reestablishment in 1984
  - Mostly striking and scenic landscapes
  - A few have aboriginal people living in them
  - One on Jinmen has historic battlefields
Taiwan Forest Management

- Different management than national parks that are more US influenced

- Japanese trained forest managers
  - Dedicated to preservation, but tolerate swimming, barbecuing, set up “courses” for exercise, or therapeutic interaction with nature (walking barefoot on stones)

- Japanese language skill rare in central government (dominated by mainlanders), but more common among provincials
  - Among native Taiwanese nostalgia for the colonial period is not uncommon
South Korea

- National Parks Service set up in 1967
  - There are undoubtedly Japanese roots to nature tourism in South Korea, but Koreans don’t write about it
  - Transportation to scenic spots, Japan Railways promoted tourism in the Empire
- Similar to Japanese system in that Korean parks “preserve the national patrimony” including operational Buddhist temples
- Jirisan (1967) temples and mountains
- Gyeongju ancient capital archaeological, Buddhist, historical site
- Gyeryeong Mountain ancient temples, scenic mountain, lots of folk religious activity

- Mountains source of “essential qi” 精氣

- Recent practice of “tapsa” 踏査—travel to savor the natural and historical essence of Korea
Jirisan & Gyeongju
Other 1960s ROK Projects

- Also Central Government reforestation in 1960s and 1970s
  - Turn to coal for fuel, prohibit logging or agriculture in mountains
  - Active planting of trees
- Periurban Green Belts set up surrounding Korea’s largest cities
  - Zoning limiting development
United Nations Model

- IUCN — International Union for Conservation of Nature (=World Conservation Union)
  - International environmental membership network of both government and civil society organization
  - Created in 1948 in Fontainebleau in cooperation with UNESCO (headquartered in Paris) to focus on sustainable development
    - Initially focused on scientific knowledge about conservation (pesticides, biodiversity)
  - 1964 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
  - 1971 Ramsar Convention of Wetlands
  - 1972 World Heritage Convention
  - 1974 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
  - 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity
  - 1999 granted official observer status at UN
  - 2000s focused on business engagement strategies
China Parks Begin

- 1956 first nature preserve for scientific research but in chaos of Great Leap Forward 大跃进 not much happened
- 1962 move to set up conservation reserves but the Cultural Revolution 文化革命(1966-8) disrupted development of scientific expertise
- 1982 first national parks for tourism
1990s PRC turned to international conservation expertise (IUCN) — six levels of protection

- **1a** — Strict Nature Reserve (protected from most human usage)

- **1b** — Wilderness Area (limitations on human visitation — often prohibiting motorized transport)

- **2** — National Park (large protected area with significant tourism)

- **3** — Natural Monument (small protected area that can include human monuments with significant tourism)

- **4** — Habitat/Species Management Area (relatively small area designed to protect a specific species — like a Panda reserve)

- **5** — Protected Landscape/Seascape (large area with a specific human-nature interaction)

- **6** — Protected Area with sustainable use of natural resources (while excluding large-scale industrial development useful for an area with low levels of human habitation)

In 2000 China had four areas in the 1st three categories
Badaling & Wulingyuan
UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Program

- Since 1971 dedicated to preserving species diversity
- Not nature reserve model exactly
  - Sustainable development—that is, development while sustaining biodiversity
  - Core areas are strictly protected ecosystems
  - Buffer zones surround core areas and are used for activities compatible with preserve core areas
  - Transition area fosters economic and human development “that is socio-cultural and ecologically sustainable”
- Wolong Giant Panda preserve has resident human population of about 4000
China and Taiwan Compared

- Global forces are not unitary
  - United States, Japan, United Nations

- Timing of entry into global flow of conservation ideas important
  - Taiwan earlier followed US-Japan Model
  - China a decade later followed sustainable development model that had just been developed

- Flows of information historically conditioned
  - Taiwan more influenced by US and Japan because of history
Chinese Natures

- Chiang Hsun’s paintings
  - Show the flow of qi through water on rocks
  - Appreciation of strange rocks (qishi 奇石) — that are lean, textured, and pierced
  - Point—even though painting in an American-inspired park, aesthetic view points to older Chinese views of nature

- Division between “sacred and profane” (that according to the French sociologist Emile Durkheim is fundamental to human society) not so sharp in China
  - Might put stones on ancestral altar but *worship* 拜 means to offer respect
  - Gods and ancestors are part of the world of qi
  - Shrines to “stone gods” 石头公 are common
    - Woman worships to get along with her daughter-in-law
    - Patriarch of the Eight Trigrams 八卦祖师 — resemblance of stone to turtle attracted attention
    - They are *ling* 灵 (靈) efficacious [miraculous] — with qi no particular separation of human and natural world
    - *Dream of the Red Chamber (Story of a Stone)* novel about a piece of jade born as a human
  - Nature tourism “paying respects” 朝山 to the mountain, something of the nature of a pilgrimage
Mi Fu paying homage to a rock versus Albert Bierstadt “Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast”
Landscapes, Natures, and National Identity

Chŏng Sŏn 1711 “Hundred Waterfall Bridge”

Hiroshige 1852 “36 Views of Mt. Fuji”
Nature Tourism Markets

- **Taiwan**
  - Oldest sites are historical
  - In 1970s interest in wilderness and scenic sites
  - Later still “humanized activities in parks”
  - People come for excitement 热闹 (renao), and amusements added (especially in private parks)

- **China**
  - Fewer entrepreneurial sites
  - Traditional pilgrimage sites—Mt. Emei
  - Combination of religion and environment
World Heritage Tourism

- China — 16 natural sites
- Taiwan — 0 sites (not a member of UNESCO)
- Japan — 4 natural sites (e.g. Mt. Fuji)
- South Korea — 1 natural site (Cheju Island lava tubes)