7 Qingdao International Beer Festival

Place identity and colonial heritage

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Introduction

Tsingtao Brewery opened in 1903 as the *Germania Brauerei* and was part of the German colonial enterprise on the Chinese coast. It is now the second largest brewery in China, claiming about 15% of domestic market share and selling beer in over 50 countries worldwide. Almost a century later, in 1991, the Qingdao International Beer Festival was launched. The festival was conceived to promote beer sales domestically and internationally. However, the local authorities, who supported the festival, recognized the opportunity this festival offered to brand the city as well. Since 1991 the beer festival has expanded into the largest of its kind in Asia and is now a major tourist attraction for Qingdao (Rogerson & Collins, 2015). The festival is modelled after the archetypical Bavarian beer festival: the Munich Oktoberfest. The Qingdao festival lasts a fortnight and is hosted at six different sites dispersed throughout city of Qingdao (Figure 7.1), attracting over 4 million visitors. The majority of these visitors come from China, but international tourists find their way to the festival as well. The slogan of the event "Ganbei (Cheers) with the World!" reflects its international aspirations.

Festivals and hallmark events like the Qingdao International Beer Festival have been implemented as part of larger marketing and branding efforts. Events and festivals are recognized as opportunities to draw visitors, redevelop/regenerate cities, and reimagine the brand of a city (Getz, 2008; Richards & Palmer, 2010; Smith, 2012; Wise & Harris, 2017). Apart from the expected economic benefits and improvements in infrastructure, events offer the possibility to reframe the narrative of the city. Black (2007) describes events and festivals as "unrivalled place promotion opportunities"; this is also true for Qingdao International Beer Festival. The present city of Qingdao was known in the early twentieth century as Tsingtao, which is still the name of the brewery. The whole German concession was known as Kiautschou. In this chapter, Qingdao is used to refer to the city, and Tsingtao for the brewery.

However, the transformation of local celebrations and traditions into festivals that can accommodate many tourists, has come with concerns about commodification of the local culture, with questions around the authenticity of the
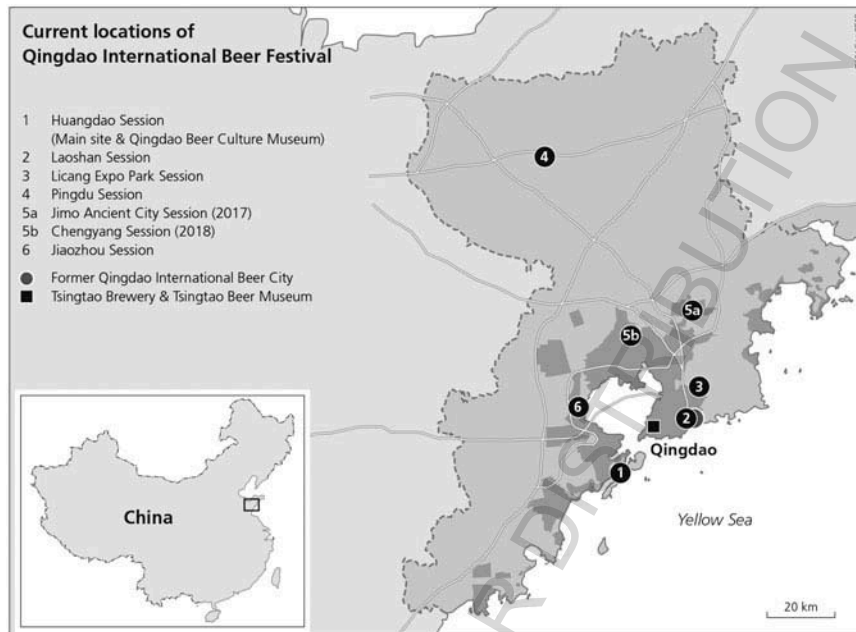
Figure 7.1 Map of the city with the locations of the festival, brewery, and museum.
(Map created by Margot Stoete, Faculty of Geosciences, Utrecht University).

rituals performed on stage. This concerns issues of ownership and economic exploitation of cultural events (Hall, 2005). Ma and Lew (2012) highlight that concerns raised by the increasing festivalization are particularly acute in China since every city in China hosts several events as parts of their marketing efforts. Despite the popularity of festivals as marketing and branding instruments, not all festivals in China are actually successful. After government involvement ceases, many festivals fade away. Ma and Lew (2012) explain the success and failure from the perspective of contextualization: to what extent is a festival rooted in local history and local sense of place? Local roots and local atmosphere are what makes a festival unique and also provide opportunities for branding a city (Hernández-Mogóllon et al., 2018). From this perspective, the Qingdao International Beer Festival proves an interesting case study on city and place branding. On the one hand, the beer itself is rooted in local history; on the other hand, although the beer festival is slowly receiving the status of a tradition, it is still an invented tradition – copied from beer festivals elsewhere in the world (notably Germany).

Questions about the suitability of a festival as a branding instrument may be heightened when the product celebrated has an unmistakably colonial history. The brand, the custom of drinking beer and the beer festival all

relate to the history of Qingdao as a former German colony. During the First World War, when the colony changed hands from Germany to Japan, so did the brewery. The brewery thus reflects the colonial histories of Germany and Japan in Qingdao. Ongoing research by the authors makes it clear that in Qingdao the era of Japanese colonization evokes stronger and more negative feelings than does the German period. Moreover, in the past the "German-ness" of the beer has been used as part of its brand, as a quality measure. The historical connection with Germany can therefore be used as a unique characteristic of the city – something that has shaped not only its drinking culture (beer) but also the landscape of the city. Still, the colonial nature of the connection between Qingdao and Germany can also be seen as part of a past that is unwanted, and therefore discarded.

Combined, these issues, from dissonant heritage to lack of authenticity, make the Qingdao International Beer Festival an interesting case to study, since the festival has been successful in attracting huge crowds. This chapter focuses on several questions, concerning how the beer festival is represented and the degree to which it is seen as part of the Qingdao brand. It looks at how the colonial origins are negotiated in projected images, and will analyze the way the festival is officially promoted on the festival's website and in policy documents. This study will also consider how visitors describe the festival in their reviews. The main method that will be applied is textual analysis, combined with fieldwork and desk research. The chapter starts with an introduction on the themes of city branding and the role of festivals in this context. It then continues with a brief description of the colonial history of Qingdao and the Tsingtao Brewery. This is followed by an introduction to beer tourism and an analysis of the Qingdao International Beer Festival as a part of the city's branding strategy.

Place branding and festivals

City marketing became increasingly popular since the 1980s. Boisen et al. (2011, p. 139) note that "the marketing and branding of cities, regions and countries is positioned firmly on contemporary policy agendas". They further claim that in Western Europe rising entrepreneurialism and re-scaling of statehood has led to a quest for marketing-driven development strategies for cities (see Boisen et al., 2011, 2018). Policy-makers and consultancy firms alike perceive place marketing as instrumental in attracting tourists and investors to achieve economic growth (Maheshwari et al., 2011). Similarly, branding has increasingly been applied to places, as a consequence of the increased (or at least perceived) competition between cities.

Marketing and branding policies are aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of a place on regional, national, and global scales (Boisen et al., 2011). Although strongly associated with promotional activities, marketing is more than just advertising. It encompasses a variety of initiatives aimed at improving the competitiveness of a city, such as urban planning and

design, regeneration schemes, infrastructural improvements, restoration of heritage, and the hosting of mega-events and cultural festivals (Maheshwari et al., 2011; Wise & Harris, 2017).

Although place marketing and place branding are often used in combination, the two differ. Place marketing is defined by Maheshwari et al. (2011, p. 199) as "the strategic planning procedure undertaken by a place's brand developers with the main aim of satisfying diverse needs of target markets". Place branding is an element of place-marketing strategies that aims at adding value to the brand, in this case: the city. It attempts to influence the perceived qualities of the city (Boisen et al., 2011). The perceptions that target audiences hold of a city are important – as these influence spatial behavior (whether people visit or not) and how one experiences a place. Kavaratzis (2004, p. 66) adds that "all encounters with the city take place through perception and images". As a consequence, place marketing and branding should revolve around planning and managing the image of the city (Vanolo, 2015). Of course, places are different from consumer goods, and therefore branding a city is not the same as branding shampoo, beer, or cars. However, many scholars in the field of place marketing and branding have explained how place branding can apply insights from product branding (Runyan & Huddleston, 2006). A brand consists of two elements: its image and its positioning, or how it is communicated to target audiences such as stakeholders and customers (Runyan & Huddleston, 2006). Image, meanwhile, comprises the overall impression and is what differentiates a city from other places (Runyan & Huddleston, 2006). Brand image is thus represented through positioning statements such as symbols, slogans, and logos, all meant to communicate the uniqueness of a place (McDaniel & Gates, 2010).

Kavaratzis (2004) distinguished three types of communication through which the image of the city is communicated: primary, secondary, and tertiary communication. Primary communications result from landscape strategies, infrastructure projects, the city's governing structure, and what he termed the city's behavior: the vision and strategy of the city's leaders and the resulting services provided by the city. Image communication is the effect of whatever measures the city thus takes. Events and festivals are part of this primary communication. Secondary communication refers to the intentional representation of the city through promotion by the formal (destination) marketing organization. Here one would expect to find the positioning statements mentioned above. Tertiary communication, on the other hand, relates to all "unintentional" communication – image communication that is not controlled by the formal marketing organizations such as news media representations, tourism guidebooks, and word-of-mouth. Increasingly, internet and social media (in particular blogs, vlogs, and reviews), play a part in these tertiary communications.

As part of the primary communication, events and festivals have become a prominent instrument in branding and marketing strategies, to such a degree that some authors speak of "event strategies" and "the festivalization of city politics" (see Preuss, 2015). Events and festivals are organized and supported

to attain dual goals: attracting tourists and fostering a positive city (place) image (Richards & Palmer, 2010; Smith, 2012; Wise et al., 2015). When carefully planned, events and festivals can yield intangible legacies such as enhanced reputation, opportunities for community building, shared memories, and strengthened cultural identity (Getz, 2008; Preuss, 2015; Richards et al., 2013). However, using events and festivals as development, urban regeneration, or marketing strategies are not without problems. Upscaling events to host larger crowds can lead to (temporary) displacement, overcrowding, excess noise, and pollution. Furthermore, transforming local cultural festivals into tourist attractions may lead to commodification of culture and change traditions and rituals into staged performances that lose local meaning (Backmann, 2018).

Ma and Lew (2012) distinguish four types of festival, based on how they rank on a spatial and temporal scale. Their question is the extent to which a festival is based in local tradition or history and in local (sense of) place. Their framework then discerns four types of festival, which each score differently on local identity and uniqueness, authenticity, and liminality: local heritage festivals; local modern festivals; national heritage festivals; and global modern festivals. The Qingdao International Beer Festival is considered a "local modern" festival: "being local, these events still contribute to local identity, but instead of focusing on authentic replications of traditions, there is more of a focus on entertainment and the experience of fun or liminality" (Ma & Lew, 2012, p. 5). As with many contemporary festivals in China, the development of the Qingdao International Beer Festival mainly relied on the sponsorship of national and municipal authorities (Ma & Lew, 2012). This raises questions about the sustainability of festivals, and particularly the extent to which they can connect to the local population. In this case of an event with German roots and a beer drinking culture, Ma and Lew (2012) claim that the festival is only loosely related to sense of place – as there was no prior tradition of a beer festival. The festival may simply be a clever attempt to increase sales and secure a spot in the growing international market of beer tourism (Rogerson & Collins, 2015). This case therefore raises questions of how the festival is perceived by locals and tourists alike, and how it is embedded and received by the local community.

Colonial Qingdao and Tsingtao beer

Today, Qingdao as a brand is associated with beer and German architectural heritage, and a clear example of German architecture can be seen in Figure 7.2. Ji (2011) analyzed the projected image of the city in 2009 and found that the main ingredients of the Qingdao brand were natural scenery, urban landscape (both the modern skyscrapers and the European architecture), and events. These associations come together in the positioning statement used for several years to promote the city: "red roofs of buildings, surrounded by green trees with green sea and blue sky as natural backdrop"

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Figure 7.2 The original site of the Tsingtao Brewery.
(Photograph by Jichuan Zang).

(Ji, 2011). Not part of this slogan but definitely part of promotional materials analyzed by Ji (2011) were the events the city hosted: the sailing competition in the 2008 Olympics and the International Beer Festival.

   Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the association of the city with beer is its colonial connection. Qingdao was founded by the German navy as part of the efforts to bring the unified German state in line with its European competitors by building a colonial empire. Arriving late to the game at the end of the nineteenth century, Germany had to build its colonial empire from a few dispersed parts of Africa, some islands in Oceania, and a concession on the Chinese coast. Searching for a foothold on the Chinese coast, the German government followed the advice of the geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen, who had travelled widely in China and had written a standard reference work in four volumes on the country (see von Richthofen, 1882). He was particularly interested in exploitable resources such as coal, but in the meantime also had a keen eye for possibilities for a German colony and pointed to Kiautschou Bay as a good location (Schrecker, 1971). The bay provided an excellent harbor and was close to exploitable (but disappointing in quality) coal reserves (Conrad, 2016). It gave Germany a foothold on a coast that during the final decades of the

nineteenth century gained importance for international trade and, hence, for European expansion. Kiautschou might be seen as the German reaction to the British foothold in Hong Kong (Schrecker, 1977). The navy was interested in a supply harbor for its increasingly world-wide ambitions and used the bay as a home base for their East Asia Squadron.

The navy was determined to develop Kiautschou into a model colony. The earlier village of Tsingtao was developed into the administrative centre of the concession. The village was rebuilt with wide streets, solid housing areas, government buildings, electrification throughout, a sewer system, and a safe drinking water supply. Schools were founded by the German state as well as by Protestant and Roman Catholic missions (Schultz-Naumann, 1985). Germany invested more in Qingdao than in any other of its colonies. The town developed quickly and so did the harbor. However, the German colonizer itself derived little profit from its investment (Conrad, 2016). Moreover, the German period was full of conflicts between the German government and the local Chinese population, worsened by continuous tensions between the Catholic missions and Chinese civilian authorities.

In November 1914, after Japan's declaration of war on Germany, Japanese troops conquered Qingdao. In the Versailles Treaty (1919), the old concession was not restored to Chinese rule but left to Japan. The city reverted to Chinese rule (the Republic of China) in December 1922, but Japan maintained its economic dominance of the railway as well as the brewery. Japan re-occupied Qingdao in 1938. In 1945 the town returned to the Republic of China and in 1949 became part of the People's Republic of China.

Today, Tsingtao beer is seen as quintessentially Chinese, but its roots are colonial. In 1903 a German-style beer brewery, operating as the Anglo-German Brewing company, started to produce German-style beer called Germania, or Qingdao Beer in Chinese (Matzat, 2003). The brewery mainly catered for Germans and other Westerners living in Qingdao and other Chinese cities (Yang, 2007). The factory was originally equipped with German machinery, and even the brewing process followed the German *Reinheitsgebot* to ensure the quality and taste of the beer. As a consequence, ingredients were brought in from Germany (Yang, 2007). According to Yang (2007, p. 32) the beer was adopted by the German colonial authorities "as part of their effort to promote the city of Qingdao".

Yang (2007) has demonstrated how over time the meaning of beer was renegotiated to attract Chinese customers not used to drinking beer. After the First World War, the German client base had dwindled, so the new owners of the brewery had to find new markets for the product. These consumers were partly found in Hong Kong. However, the new Japanese owners of the brewery also attempted to brand the beer as Asian to attract Chinese customers. When the brewery was handed over to Chinese management in the aftermath of World War II, it became even more important to brand the beer as "Chinese". The source of water used to brew the beer (Laoshan mineral water) became an

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important element in the advertisements, although the German origin was also still mentioned as proof of its authenticity (Yang, 2007).

While in the early days of the brewery the survival of the brand had been at stake a number of times, today Tsingtao is a major brand selling over 7 million kilolitres of beer annually to local, national, and international markets. The subsequent owners of the brewery have found ways to spur Chinese consumers to drinking beer and have also established a position in the international beer market. The brand even withstood allegations of poor quality in the 1990s, when the barley cultivated in China was said to contain unsafe quantities of fertilizers and pesticides. Tsingtao has become a global brand that has a high level of international familiarity and is seen as an ambassador of China (Ille, 2009). This international recognition of the brand results not just from the export of the beer to over 50 countries, but also from sponsoring mega-events such as the Olympics in Beijing and other events such as the Asia-Pacific Economic cooperation (Finance People, 2017). The International Beer Festival is another important platform to showcase the brand.

The Qingdao International Beer Festival

Beer tourism

Tsingtao beer has more than a century of history in Qingdao, and part of the production is still at the original location of the Germania Brewery. A beer museum opened in 2003 to mark 100 years of beer brewing in Qingdao – tapping into the new niche market of beer tourism (Rogerson & Collins, 2015). According to Plummer et al. (2005) beer tourism fits in the broader development of food and beverage tourism, which allows tourists to get a taste of local culture, for a unique and authentic experience (see also Chapter 8 by Gillespie & Hall). Bujdoso and Szucs (2012) distinguish between beer tourists that travel to taste specific beers and beer tourists that travel to places connected to brewing and drinking beer. Whereas the first group will join in beer-themed meals, beer routes and beer tastings, the latter will visit breweries, beer museums, and brasseries to get a taste of local culture or heritage. The museum and the Qingdao International Beer Festival mainly seem to cater to this latter group of beer tourists.

The first beer festival in Qingdao was hosted in 1991. Its aims were to market Qingdao, promote the brewery's products, explore potential markets, increase sales, foster relationships with customers, and attract tourists (Du & Qu, 2011; Yang, 2007). The first edition of the Qingdao International Beer Festival hosted several Chinese brewing companies and organized beer tasting and drinking contests. The success of the first edition of the festival led to the decision to turn it into a yearly event. The city immediately recognized the festival as a way to communicate its image to its target audiences. The latest tourism plan states that the beer festival, together with the sailing festival and large international conferences, can be used to attract (Western) visitors to the city. The International Beer

Figure 7.3 Qingdao International Beer Festival by night in 2017.
(Photograph by Ruizheng Gao).

Festival has grown to become the largest beer festival in Asia. Figure 7.3 shows an image of one of the main gathering points at the festival. According to Ille (2009) the festival received 3.4 million visitors in 2005. Between 2010 and 2013, the number of out-of-town visitors to the festival increased dramatically and the festival also attracted relatively more overseas tourists (Travel Sina, 2013; Yu & Fu, 2010). The large number of visitors are said to have generated the city a revenue of 3.8 billion Yuan, and according to estimates this contributed to a GDP growth of 0.52% (Travel Sina, 2013). The success of the festival has also resulted in the development of International Beer City – a permanent theme park in the Laoshan district (Yang, 2007). In recent years, the festival has moved to the Huangdao district, to a site of 1,115 acres, (Xinhuanet, 2018) to accommodate the increasing number of visitors. On the site of the Huangdao theme park, a second beer museum was opened showcasing architectural settings resembling a small Bavarian town (QDGJBEER, 2017).

German roots, international standing, local flavor

The Qingdao International Beer Festival was modelled after the famous Oktoberfest in Munich. Several "traditional" activities were adopted from Munich Oktoberfest, such as tapping the first barrel of beer, beer tents with long tables where people sit in rows, barbeques, and a carnival. For those who want

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a keepsake to remember their time at the festival, a variety of curiosities are on sale, including Bavarian-style stone mugs and a pet rooster in lederhosen. On closer inspection these items present an interesting mixture of Bavarian and Chinese signs and symbols. The pottery may be Bavarian in its shape and size, but the landscape depicted on the mugs is Chinese. Similarly, wearing the lederhosen is a semblance of Bavarian traditional wear, while the rooster wearing it represents the Chinese year of the rooster (2017). References to Oktoberfest can also be seen in pictures from TripAdvisor reviews and on the festival website. Images show festival sites with several beer tents, each from different (inter)national brands. The front entrances of the tents are decorated with brand specific logos and symbols and Chinese characters, with neon lights and laser beams lightning up the place. Bavarian elements are evident in the decorations. The Paulaner tent, for example, is themed in Bavarian style, with the Paulaner logo and Bavarian blue and white flags. The decoration of the event site also evokes a Bavarian atmosphere, for example though the *Maibaum*, which is placed on a green between the tents. A *Maibaum* (in English: a maypole) is a central European symbol for spring (a fertility symbol) that is usually put on the village green around the 1st of May each year. The relation to beer is unknown, but the tradition of maypoles is very strong in Bavaria, and so this symbol has made its way to Qingdao for the event.

Looking at TripAdvisor and Mafengwo comments, one entry literally compares the two festivals: "touted to rival the one in Munich. While it isn't necessarily the same, the venue is great!" and also notes the visible references to Oktoberfest: "Everything, lookswise, is German styled". Another reviewer also makes the comparison, but feels the comparison falls short: "it is not like Octoberfest, just a pearl chain of big tents with stages and seatings on benches". Few Chinese reviewers also mention that the festival is a copy of the Munich Oktoberfest. One reviewer draws a connection between the Oktoberfest style arrangements and German colonial rule: "the colonial German culture still embedded in the Qingdao Beer Festival as the festival imitates traditions from the Bavaria Oktoberfest". Few other reviewers (Chinese or international) mention this connection in their reviews. "Beautiful German architecture still found in this part of Qingdao, which was used to be a German enclave until 1919" and a "Nice place to visit. To know the history of Germany and Japan who started their beer business in Qingdao".

Although the German connection seems to be present in the decoration of the festival, it is a superficial hotchpotch of generic Bavarian stereotypes and not local German colonial history that is expressed in this way. However, the colonial history of the beer is mentioned on the official website of Qingdao International Beer Festival. From the perspective of branding, it becomes clear from the review entries that people associate the beer and the festival with the city. One reviewer claims: "if you want to visit Qingdao city, you have to visit the May Fourth Square and the Beer Festival". Other reviews see Qingdao as the birthplace of beer: "Qingdao beer is authentic

beer" and "Qingdao as original place of Chinese beer". The brand Tsingtao apparently has international recognition and international visitors: "finally saw the place where Tsingtao beer is brewed, which my friends in China enjoyed so much in drinking".

Some reviews even go as far as comparing the people of Qingdao with the Tsingtao beer: "We took pleasure in the Beer City, and admired to the great-hearted and straightforward Qingdao people as the same as the cold and refreshing beer". Such local connections linking beer, festival, and city are strengthened by the opening show performed every year. This huge spectacle narrates the history of the city. Some local reviews even express an attachment to the festival and the beer: "I am a native-born Qingdao people. I visited the Beer Festival every year ever since I can remember. […], I feel a very strong personal attachment with the beer festival".

The above comments show how the festival contributes to the image of the city. However, it is important to explore not only the associations made by reviews, but also how they evaluate the festival. Overall reviews are positive and recommend others to visit: "if in China definitely a must do if you can make it in the area by august" or "Well it is one of those places that is really compulsory". Other reviewers would not recommend an adjustment to the traveling schedule with the sole purpose of visiting the festival: "it is fun in a way and worth to visit once, but not worth to come to Qingdao only for that". Domestic tourists mainly express a desire to experience the festival in their reviews: "Qingdao is my dream destination. […] I want to visit the beer city" or "I have been to Qingdao festival out of the festival, it was interesting. I can imagine how lovely it would be during the festival". The opportunity to taste different brands of beer, the entertainment (singing, dancing, and acrobats) and the overall atmosphere are praised: "it was amazing overall because of the atmosphere" and "at night though EVERY-THING is lit up like the Northern Light".

There were also more critical reviews recommending readers not to go there, with complaints about the food quality, prices, sanitation, and noise. One reviewer was unpleasantly surprised by the price of beer at the festival and exclaimed: "And Qingdao has a beer factory, so I really don't get how they can have the most expensive beer ever". Others seem to have had an overall bad experience: "loud, irritating and crowding" and "The area is generally crowded and the smells are unpleasant and the atmosphere is no different than a very average county fair". These latter two reviews seem to voice concerns that resonate with potential negative impacts mentioned in the academic literature on festivals. There are several reviews, international and domestic, that feel the festival is overcrowded or too commercial. One review sees this as a recent problem: "before beer festival was quite a nice place. Since last 3–4 years more and more people are coming from all China". From the content presented here in the above paragraphs, we begin to see that the complexities of using festivals to enhance a place's brand become clear when assessing consumer reviews.

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Discussion and concluding remarks

This chapter started with a question concerning how a product deeply con-
nected with its colonial history would be negotiated today. Heritage in gen-
eral has been known to cause dissonance, and colonial heritage in
particular is prone to different readings and meanings for various stake-
holders (Graham, 2002, Jones & Shaw, 2006; Yeoh, 2001). Such issues may
be engraved when they become part of a large-scale commercial festival
catering to outside consumers who may be unaware of local history. This
chapter has demonstrated that the "German-ness" of the beer festival is
clearly present in the way it refers to Oktoberfest. The beer festival mimics
the Munich Oktoberfest both in decoration and activities organized. Refer-
ences to Germany are mainly there to provide a themed experience: invok-
ing a "generic" Bavarian atmosphere by using Bavarian flags, lederhosen,
and symbols like maypoles. The Bavarian stereotypes used to decorate the
beer festival and the theme park are wholly unconnected to the German
architecture and urban planning actually present in the city. As such, the
festival sites are rather placeless, themed areas, not rooted in a local sense
of place (Ma & Lew, 2012).

The original brewery museum is the only clear connection between Tsing-
tao beer, the festival, and colonial times. The museum is housed in the ori-
ginal brewery. In this museum visitors learn about the history of the beer
and the brewery and thus the German and Japanese "occupation" are men-
tioned. Visitors share these insights on review sites, thus creating an aware-
ness of this part of Qingdao's history. However, the reviews hardly evoke
the impression of a contested heritage. On the contrary, the German history
is partly seen as a mark of quality assurance for the beer. Visitors today
marvel at the fact that the original German equipment is, one-hundred
years later, still in operation. In the past, the German original of Tsingtao
beer has been used in marketing campaigns as proof of the beer's authenti-
city (Yang, 2007).

Associations between the colonial history of the city and beer are limited.
There are parallels here with how the city deals with its colonial past. The
German architecture is used in projected images of the city as well (Ji,
2011), and may contribute to what makes the city stand out from other
Chinese cities. Ongoing research by the authors has, moreover, found that
German architecture and urban planning in Qingdao are valued. It is still
clearly present in the historic city. On the other hand, professionals are
somewhat reluctant to deliberately call it colonial heritage. They prefer
simply "German heritage" and stress how objects represent local history
and not some national ideology. The German colonial rule meanwhile is
also described as a rather short interval in a long history of the city. This is
in sharp contrast with the Japanese remains in the city. Factories built
under Japanese rule are abandoned and decaying (Zang & van Gorp, 2018).
Professionals hinted at the national trauma that is still felt with regard to

the Japanese occupations of parts of China. However, the latest tourism development plan does see opportunities for industrial tourism in Qingdao, and calls for an inventory of industrial heritage. Time will tell how this pans out for the textile mills erected during Japanese rule.

To conclude, Ma and Lew (2012) labelled the beer festival as a "local modern" festival contributing to local identity, but clearly focused on entertainment and fun instead of an authentic tradition. The reviews we analyzed confirmed this label for the festival. Locals do feel an attachment with the festival, and several reviewers express a notion of how the festival and the beer culture it represents are part of the local place identity. Events and festivals are increasingly used as part of city marketing and branding strategies. The Qingdao International Beer Festival may have originated in the early 1990s as a Bavarian-style Oktoberfest imitation to promote the sales of beer, but it has since developed into Asia's largest beer festival.

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