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The Gendered Resistance and Adaptation to the Neoliberal Globalization

**Based on a qualitative case study in Mosuo
matrilineal communities**

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| ABSTRACT..... | 1 |
| 1. Introduction..... | 2 |
| 1.1 Research Questions | 3 |
| 1.2 Background | 3 |
| 1.3 Related Researches and Discourses | 5 |
| 1.4 Brief Introduction to Mosuo Matrilineal Community | 9 |
| 2. Methodology | 11 |
| 2.1 Cross-national research (comparative study): | 13 |
| 2.2 Discourse analysis: | 13 |
| 2.3 Fieldwork: participant observation..... | 14 |
| 2.4 Interview: | 15 |
| 3. Data Collection and Analysis..... | 16 |
| 3.1 A glance at Mosuo on the forestage | 16 |
| 3.2 Connection to the backstage of Mosuo identity | 20 |
| 3.3 The Grandmother’s House Left the Homeland | 25 |
| 4. Discussions | 30 |
| 4.1 Preservation measures of Mosuo matrilineal cultures..... | 35 |
| 5. Conclusion | 38 |
| REFERENCES | 41 |

ABSTRACT

Women gain less advantage than men in the history of neoliberalism. In this thesis, the author reviews the influence of neoliberal globalization on local women in the comparison of Swedish and Chinese context and discovers their different ways of doing gender. In order to examine the impact of neoliberal capitalism and globalization upon Chinese indigenous women, the author reviews a Mosuo documentary film *The Grandmother's House Left the Homeland* and conducts a field study in Luoshui Village, a Mosuo matrilineal community in Yunnan Province. The findings reveal that since the tourist development in the 1990s, the neoliberal capitalism and globalization have increased the income of local women but weakened their matrilineal cultures and “walking marriage” system. Correspondingly the author proposes measures on a scale of community planning to preserve and adapt Mosuo matrilineal cultures and the “walking marriage” system under the threat of neoliberal globalization.

KEYWORDS: neoliberal globalization gender Mosuo matrilineal

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1. Introduction

According to David Harvey (1990), globalization has altered our comprehension of time and space in the most essential ways. In terms of time-space compression, he argues, “I use the word ‘compression’ because a strong case can be made that the history of capitalism has been characterized by a speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seem to collapse inward upon us.” The rapidly advancing ways of transportation and communication have reduced the time-space distance between places. People are now benefiting from the scientific progresses and economic growth. But by using of the general term “people”, it implies the privileged white male. Usually the discursive and material construction prescribes determined roles for men and women. Within a patriarchy paradigm, women bear children while men protect their territory and women against invasion. While gender is fundamental to the understanding of global inhabitants and feminism, while necessarily political, at the same time must be centrally concerned with method, truth, and epistemology. When Sandra Harding (1987) argues that studying women from their perspective, recognizing the researcher as part of the research subject and acknowledging that the beliefs of the researcher shape the research is what makes feminist research feminist, she states, ‘They can be thought of as methodological features because they show us how to apply the general structure of scientific theory to research on women and gender.’ As a consequence, this thesis is about the contentious debates over “global versus local” and it is intended to reflect upon the relationship between feminisms and neo-liberalism in the context of international development, to discover and share experiences and perceptions arising from individual and collective struggles both in Swedish and Chinese communities, in particularly in a Mosuo matrilineal community where the friction has been magnified, to rethink neoliberalism and western feminism in contrast with traditional Chinese thoughts as complementation and to provide inspiring guidelines for planning a Mosuo

matrilineal community other than current ways according to relations between neoliberalism and gender.

1.1 Research Questions

What is the impact of neoliberal capitalism and globalization upon Chinese indigenous women?

How could western feminist ideology learn from Chinese culture?

What are good constructive measures to preserve and adjust local cultures to the neoliberal globalization?

1.2 Background

Neoliberalism has promoted the free flow of both goods and capital. But not only does it has no interest in requiring free movement of labor, the third most important factor of production, but it has also been actively trying to control the labor's flow. Neoliberalization effectively has swept the world like a vast tidal wave of institutional reform and "discursive adjustment". While neoliberalism has had a limited impact as an engine for economic growth, it has succeeded in channeling wealth from secondary classes to the dominant and from poorer to richer areas. (Harvey, 2006)

Neoliberalism along with globalization has allowed a handful of private interests to control as much as possible of social life in order to maximize personal profit. It has poisonous effects especially in the Third World, where women are further repressed and have a multiplier effect. Women workers are becoming scapegoats in the global capitalist system. Neoliberal globalization has paved the way for increase in migrant women workers, international trafficking and enforced sex work in the Third World. As an instance, contemporary globalization processes have been accompanied by a serious of deterioration in the health of many women all over the world. Jaggar (2002) has discovered that particularly disturbing is the extremely violent decline in the health conditions of many women in the Global South, and some the situation also has influenced women in the Global North.

After the economic reform and opening-up policy has been carried out by Chinese central government within the post-Mao context, China is undergoing a rapid development, especially in urban areas. As the economic development is in the

same process which interacts with the environment, many influences are exercised on the environment, but with different forms and intensity in different sub-regions, and resulting in different consequences. However, the influence is not always positive or negative. Thus, it comes out the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens through class and through gender.

This is not a matter of merely that women are affected 'more' - we must look at the mechanisms of neoliberalism that has been operating in a gender biased way. Indeed, neoliberal globalization survives on sex discrimination and it effectively uses traditional patriarchal values that exploit women more.

Cultures are great creation and cherish heritages from our ancestors. If cultures of current people are able to pass on till future generations, they will also be future heritages from us. And the heritage as a tourism commodity in our neoliberal market has raised expectations about the profits that it can potentially bring. We are actually living in the creation and passing of cultures. Imagine what it would be if our actions, our thoughts and all kinds of efforts shall not participate in the passing of human history. We may lose the meaning of life and become thoughtless. Since the evolution history of Homo sapiens, people's becoming the dominating species on the earth is highly relevant to our cultures carrying down from generation to generation. Once the passing chain breaks at certain segment, once our creativity becomes exhausted or unitary, it would be the catastrophe of the whole human society.

Ecological degradation and extinction of species also pose a threat to the survival and development of human. Human relies on the Mother Nature. The nature provides us suitable living conditions, magnificent mountains and streams, vast forests and jungles, boundless savanna and grassland, pure white snowy mountains and glacier, splendid oceans and islands, and birds, beasts, insects and many other species that make us not alone. Those are all God-given divine treasures, and also made use of by humans and become the heritage of the nature. The gift of nature and creation of human are also complementary and depend on each other. The environment affects cultures, and the culture acts according to circumstances. And therefore the places where people live were chosen because of the climate pattern. The diversity of cultures comes from and depends on the diversity of climate and topography and the diversity of ecological environment. When we talk about "globalization" to this extent and relate the local cases under the global context, then this kind of concept and perspective of "globalization" and world system become more useful.

1.3 Related Researches and Discourses

Many scholars have shown interest in forestry systems and social structures as well as power relations in these systems. (Ingemarson etc., 2006; Keskitalo, 2008) Among these historically constructed social problems, gender inequality and process of feminism have gained more and more attention. (Agarwal, 2009; Lidestav 2010; Andersson etc., 2010) In their research, Brandth and Haugen (1998) critically analyzed discourse from magazine 'The Forest Owner' produced by Norwegian Forest Owners' Federation from 1976 to 1996 with 10 year's time interval. And in their interpretation, in the 1976 volume the absence of women in forestry was not addressed as problematic at all but only in one occasion a woman was presented in a position of being assistant to the male forester; in the 1986 volume, women were only pictured in positions connected to forestry such as rural tourism, handicraft; even in 1996's volumes women were only focused only because they had broken the taken-for-granted images by doing "men's work" in forestry. Bethany Boyer-Rechlin (2010) reviewed existing researches and evaluated the Green Belt Movement led by Wangari Maathai in Kenya and Nepal's government-sponsored Community Forestry Program, which both attempted to involve women in forestry projects and she illustrated the information that she accessed has already been colored by the biases and objectives thus the literature on the GBM in Kenya was quite positively evaluated but Nepal's FUG system received a wider variety of perspectives. These biases indicate that although cases regarding women or gender related cases have been studied all over the world, many researchers exclusively neglected local feminist ideas in indigenous cultural contexts. In other words, the west-originated feminist philosophy tends not to have the same mechanisms and development in the periphery of the world system (Fung, 2000). The next part will review the situations of gender relations in concerning of forest communities in Sweden and in China in recent decades along with the history of neoliberal globalization, also attempt to critically evaluate the generalized western feminist philosophy as the "only" way of doing gender, and try to integrate a specific Chinese history and Chinese culture into ideologies of feminism.

Gun Lidestav and Annika Egan Sjölander (2007) have analyzed job advertisements for supervisors and rangers in a major Swedish forestry magazine, and written texts and images about the forestry professions published in the national forestry press from 1990/91 to 2000/01. Similar situation has been revealed as the Norwegian case. They conclude still there are too few evidences in forestry profession record that they studied to confirm any form of degenderization to have taken place in this masculine-dominated industry. An

increased number of female professionals have not changed the main process of gender coding within the forestry field, which means when women enter the field of forestry, they have to act less feminine and be used to adopting more masculine habits, otherwise women would be considered less competent.

In their survey about forestry education and self-estimated safe working and forestry skills among private forest owners on “forest day” in Sweden, Patrik Häggqvist etc. (2010) found though 37% of the forest owners are women, they received much less chainsaw education (7% women compared to 34% men) and were more tend to estimate themselves as not skilled (36% women compared to 4% men). Furthermore, since all professional communicators and experts on “forest day” were men, masculine hegemony around forestry and forestry culture in Sweden was reproduced by generations. Their suggestion was to focus on the communication and interaction among participating forest owners, both male and female, and therefore also could reinforce communications between experts and participants.

When Seema Arora-Jonsson (2005) conducted her fieldwork in Drevdagen, Sweden, she noticed that the women there said that they preferred to start from where they thought they could make a difference in the forest question for the village. A woman named Karin said that although she had tried to work with the men in the association, her efforts had been disregarded:

The men don't let anyone in. I sit in the municipal council in the kommun [...] but nobody cares about that. [...] I am interested in working in the association but nobody has taken it seriously. Men are afraid of strong women [...] It's not enough just to invite women to the meetings. More is needed. The men must show interest in letting them in (släppa in kvinnor).

They wanted to see more immediate changes in the village. They felt that they needed “something that would bridge differences between us”. But due to social structures and power relations in the village, most women felt themselves outside of the discussions within the association and they wanted to work with problems that they saw as urgent needs in the village and to take action in new ways.

The situation of feminism concerning forest communities in Sweden shows though few signs for any degenderization, number of female participation and their will to take part in forestry have increased. And the obstruction in their way mainly comes from men.

In Ninglang County of Yunnan Province, a group of indigenous people with a population of about 15 thousand called Mosuo preserve the only matrilineal society in China. Mosuo people's lineages are determined by matriarchs, couples are not likely to get married and a system of *zouhun* (walking marriage) between women and men is implemented. In a matrilineal Mosuo family, the mother dictates everything and women have an exalted status. Daughters and granddaughters live their lives in the mother's home while male family members spend their nights at their lovers but come back in the morning to work in the mother's home. Thus because of their special folk custom as well as beautiful natural scenery in Ninglang County, tourism has rapidly developed into Mosuo Matrilineal Society.

After his study of the Mosuo matrilineal system, He Zhonghua (2001) discovered tourism development provided a better livelihood and thus helped protect local forests, which in turn benefits tourism and therefore livelihood but displacing forest degradation to other areas. And where tourism had more interacting with villagers has rapid economic development and less division of labor between women and men. And therefore some negative influences were discovered in people's relationships with the forest and in the relationship between women and men in particular. And the negative influences could be concluded in four aspects. 1) Building materials and firewood are consuming a vast quantity of wood. In the past, the matrilineal system did not split big families into smaller ones; hence people did not want to build more homes. And even if some did, the consumption of timber was not substantial. Since 1992, the villagers have begun to build more and more new houses each year, both for splitting big families and tourist purpose, all in the traditional wooden style, which requires a great quantity of timber. 2) The gender division of labor tended to be equal in the past, but the power of men is now being consolidated and strengthened. An example is that while women usually plant, weed, and fertilize apple trees, it is not the women but the men who receive technical training for this activity. 3) The development of tourism has ushered in the pornographic sex trade. 4) The pollution of the environment caused by tourism may have a devastating effect on local inhabitants.

Not only tourism but other projects among forest zones in China have also intervened between the relations of gender and forestry. Jianying Xu et al. (2006) examined local people's knowledge, attitudes and perceptions towards Wolong Biosphere Reserve for Giant Panda (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*) conservation, in Sichuan Province. They indicated that the function of Giant Panda protection was effective, but the functions of environmental education, social development and economic development were marginalized. There is a risk that if local people's interest were marginalized for a long period, they might adopt actions detrimental to the goal of conservation. In their research, male respondents have more supportive attitudes

than females. A possible explanation is that being housewives, female respondents paid more attention to living conditions. The policy of switch from fuel wood to Electricity brought more inconveniences to them than to males, which implies that females in Wolong Biosphere Reserve are more reluctant towards change.

Together with case reviews, discourse analysis can be very useful in understanding how gender is linked to forestry and how that linkage in turn can reproduce women's subjected position within the forestry field (Brandth and Haugen, 1998). On the official website of Chinese State Forestry Administration, foresters' images are displayed in the form of photography. These photos are valuable sources of interpreting how women are characterized in official discourses. Among 25 photos under the category of "foresters' style and features", there are only three where females show up. If only numbers are examined it would appear not all women are absent, but after we analyze how these three pictures are constructed and what they present, a clearer inference could come out. All of these three images are women putting on performances in a Chinese New Year Festival evening show. All of them are in evening gown and put on heavy make-ups. No image of females on working position is displayed under this category. Correspondently, what may be surprising is that under the category of "old pictures" before or in early 1990s, five in 20 pictures have images of women in them. And not only do the number and percentage overpass that of nowadays but those images have also shown higher level of females participating forestry occupation and production. In a photo taken in 1961, two female foresters in Yichun Timber Processing Factory stood by the side of former national chairman Liu Shaoqi and they looked to be in a pleasant conversation. Another photo displayed central figures of three female foresters in the field and was titled with "Forestry *jinguo* (heroines) in Their Working Site". The discourses from State Forestry Administration demonstrate women in forestry are marginalized through time in sharp contrast with their positions before 1990s.

Comparing cases in a developed European country Sweden and those in the developing East-Asian China, we are probably able to see much more optimistic situations about gender issues within forest communities in Sweden than in China according to a western feminist perspective. So it should be said that Chinese process of feminism in forestry is not in a way of "the norms". Norms are generally defined as socially shared expectations, understandings or norms for appropriate behavior for actors with a certain identity (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). But Keskitalo etc. (2009) also illustrated that the way in which a norm can be seen as developing through its emergence among norm actors, who use existing organizations and norms as platforms to name and shame non-adopters. Thus it is not of importance to negatively name and shame Chinese ideology for its feminist

process but people should understand the mechanisms covered behind the phenomena. The seemingly ever-increasing genderization and setbacks of attempt to gender equality do not disappear or decline along with the process of modernization and women have less motivation to change the unequal situation. It looks like the western way of doing feminism has encountered a failure in the Chinese context. And the failure will prompt us to inspect and respect Chinese and the abundant East-Asia cultural contexts and Chinese history of women, providing a possibility of intercommunication between western and eastern feminist philosophies under the neoliberal globalization.

1.4 Brief Introduction to Mosuo Matrilineal Community

It has shown that, in a national census of the population in 1991, on both sides of the border of Sichuan and Yunnan Province live about 40,000 Mosuo people. They mainly concentrate around the beautiful Lugu Lake, which is one of the highest inland lakes in China with the altitude of 2,670 meters (Mansfield and Walters, 2007). Lugu Lake is like a shining pearl inlaid in the primeval forest on the Northwest Yunnan plateau. On the north shore of Lugu Lake is situated Mount Lion, where it is said to be the resident place of the main Mosuo mother goddess – Gamo Goddess. It is worth noting that there were no road connecting Mosuo people around Lugu Lake with the outside world, which makes them more mysterious to the outsiders. So to speak the unveiling of mysterious Mosuo cultures is accompanied with the history of Neoliberalization around the world.

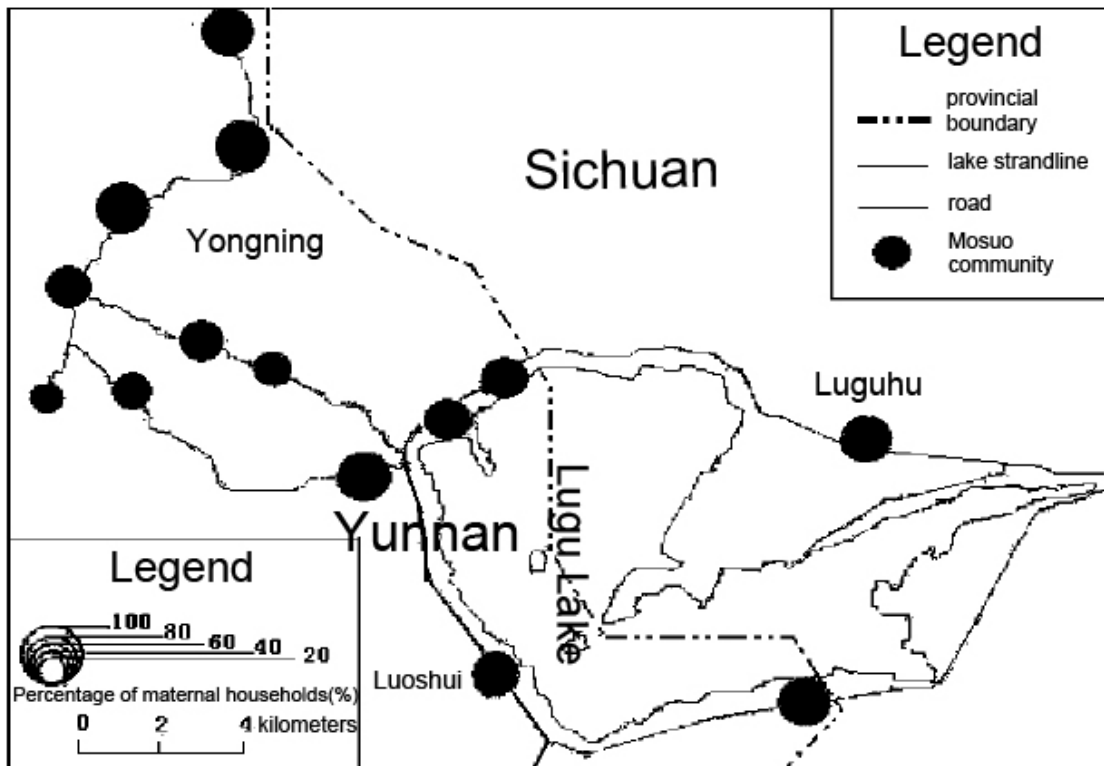


Figure 1. Proportion of matrilineal families in Mosuo communities around Lugu Lake in 2005. Modified from source: Wang, etc. 2009. Mosuo matriarchal culture “isolated island” in Lugu Lake area and its cultural ecological perspective - also on the Lugu lake Mosuo matriarchal culture protection in *Yunnan Geographic Environment Research*

Many scholars have garbled Mosuo and Nasi people and mention them all together as if they are the same. Actually the mistake should attribute to the former classification of Mosuo people in history. For a long period of time since the socialist revolution, indigenous Mosuo people do not have an official identity until 1990. Those Mosuo people living in Ninglang County, Yunnan Province were classified as Nasi people and those Mosuo who live in Sichuan Province were classified as Mongolian.

Other than the “standard” husband and wife style of small families, Mosuo’s big families stick together to one or several grandmothers and never divided. As Zhang (2002) describes in his book:

Some believed that the Lugu Lake area is the last paradise in the human world because the people there are always in love but never get married. Others said that the Mosuo tribe is a romantic minority group. Men ride horses in the evening to visit

their lovers, casual and romantic, while women wait at home with tender affections. Still others said the area is the most ideal place for people to look for the feeling of home return because the people there have never left their mothers. They always live with their mothers just like the stars that move around the moon.

What outsiders take an interest in are not their origin or consanguinity, but their distinctive customs and social structures. In official and propagandist discourses, the most distinctive and frequently mentioned characteristic of Mosuo culture is matriarchal or matrilineal. (Figure 1.) It means that Mosuo people implement maternal parent system, and the children follow the mother's surname. And the "zouhun" (walking marriage) institution of marriage means that all of the property would be inherited by the youngest daughter from the mother by the means of maternal inheritance. "Zouhun" (walking marriage) namely dropping-in marriage, is one of the most remarkable parts in Mosuo cultures, and also is a part publicized more frequently and followed with more interest by outsiders. In fact men and women do not get married in "walking marriage", unless a clan is in need of a female as an inheritor or lacks in male labor. They mostly live in their own matrilineal family all life. Usually young men and women gather to carry out group activities during the day. And they express love to the person of their heart through singing and dancing. When they both have feelings for each other and both agree with each other, the "zouhun" will begin. When they do "zouhun", they male has to furtively slip into the female's room, and after having sex and sharing a bed with the female, he has to leave and go back to his own matrilineal family. This kind of "walking marriage" completely relies on love and affection, having nothing to do with external factors such as economic or social status of two families. If they give birth to children after "zouhun", sons and daughters will be raised by the female's family and the male can be as free of responsibility. Of course the father and the child both know their relation of consanguinity. Men and women both have the right to end the relationship of "zouhun", and they are free to look for a new partner after they break up. It is needed to point out that "zouhun" is not disorderly or unsystematic, let alone promiscuity or communal marriage. There are certain principles for instance forbidden men and women related by blood to "zouhun" and forbidden to have an affair with several lovers at the same time.

2. Methodology

The study will implement a series of qualitative approaches supported by the theory post-structuralism. Qualitative methods (such as intensive interviewing,

participant observation, recording of women's personal narratives, etc.) are often applied because they can explicitly document the social power relations affecting gender and sexuality, and they can epistemologically create the gendered construction of knowledge. Post-structuralists have argued that the author's intended meaning is secondary to the meaning that the reader perceives. There is a "primacy of the signifier" (Grossberg, 1989), from which meaning is constructed by an individual. In post-structuralism, the reader replaces the author as the primary subject of inquiry, in other words "decentering" of the author.

According to Conley (1997), Lévi-Strauss was thoughtful to show that these all-powerful male subjects are actually nothing but a 'living species'; thus, he argued, they are enmeshed in nature as well as culture. Nevertheless, while Lévi-Strauss recognized that 'man' is embedded in nature, he also bemoaned modifications of nature by this same 'man'. In particular, he was concerned about the destruction of non-Western cultures and environments by the expansion of advanced industrial societies. He saw the spread of Western culture and associated economic practices as undermining the viability of non-Western cultural forms. This was to be deplored, he argued, because non-Western cultures tend to nurture their environments rather better than cultures in the West.

When it comes to the scale of communities, traditionally or in a spatial approach, the planner had to develop a new and optimized spatial order on his paper, much like architects and engineers constructed buildings and machines, which is regarded as a structuralist work. As Gare (1995: 51) argues, structuralism involves the analysis into elements and their combinations, and. Today planning is not understood exclusively as a purpose-oriented process of construction. It is not regarded as a silent and isolated process of optimization. Rather, it is an act of balancing between conflicting interests, and quite often it is a task of mediation and, a communicative work, or post-structural planning. And therefore post-structural planning involves infinite temporal processes in the whole economical, environmental and social context. (Gare, 1995: 51) Accordingly, post-structural planning is an inclusive process which integrates the general public into decision-making process for their fate in the future.

Thus, while humans generally have to bear responsibility for their environmental actions, it is a particular version of humanity that must bear the greatest responsibility because it tends to cause the most damage: the Western self and its accompanying ego.

2.1 Cross-national research (comparative study):

On the condition that neoliberal globalization has effect all over the world, comparative cases are needed to illustrate multilateral responses towards it. Emile Durkheim (1895) argued in *The Rules of Sociological Method* that all sociological research was in fact comparative since social phenomenon are always held to be typical, representative or unique, all of which imply some sort of comparison. My intent is to comparatively study people's attitudes towards neoliberal globalization and their acknowledgments in degenderization under the context in two different countries: China and Sweden. I have compared researches and discourses about women and forestry in these two countries. I will collect data through interviews and participatory observations in China. The key investigated area is Mosuo matrilineal communities around Lugu Lake in on the border of Province Yunnan and Sichuan, China. And as a comparison, cases of Sweden will be mainly retrieved by the means of literature reviews.

2.2 Discourse analysis:

In order to answer the research question, I consider Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as one of the appropriate ways to proceed.

In CDA, discursive practices, through which texts are produced and consumed, are seen as an important aspect of social practice which aids in the construction of identities and social relations (Jørgenssen & Phillips, 2002:61). For CDA, discourse constitutes the social world and is in turn constituted by other social practices. It does not just change the social but is in turn shaped by it (ibid: 61). Unlike other methods such as Discourse theory, for CDA, everything is not discourse. In CDA it is argued that discursive practices contribute to the production and reproduction of unequal power relations between social groups, for example ethnic groups (Jørgenssen & Phillips, 2002:63). An important aspect of Fairclough's CDA is that texts can never be understood in isolation but must always be understood as a part in a web of other texts (*intertextuality*) and the wider social context (Jørgenssen & Phillips, 2002:70). The way I understand how gender and neoliberal globalization are integrated is that when I analyze my material it will not be seen as an isolated instance, but rather as a part of something bigger, the social context. My chosen discourses include a wide range of materials such as articles from newspaper, photographs from governmental websites and a documentary film made by an indigenous filmmaker.

2.3 Fieldwork: participant observation

The reason why I will observe as a participant is that it gives a realistic picture of human social behavior. And I will try to stay with a group of forest communities for a period of time, and therefore participant observation allows me to study the whole process around their activities. And all thought and action of human beings is, or can be, framed in systems of meanings and symbols (Stein, 2006).

Participant observation can be regarded as both a humanistic and a scientific method. While producing effective, positivistic knowledge that could affect others, participant observation also produces experiential knowledge that makes the objective knowledge unique because of the researcher's subjectivity (Bernard, 2002: 342). The fieldwork part of my research would be based on my visit to the Mosuo matrilineal community by Lugu Lake. As an outsider from forestry communities and from Mosuo, with limited resources to apply, my intent is to conduct my fieldwork in a touristic way of seeing. Favero (2007) explains 'touristic way of seeing' as follows:

I will speak of 'touristic ways of seeing', addressing through such term the contemporary practices for representing (and consuming) cultural otherness in the 'habitats' of the world touched upon the global flows of communication. These flows bring people in touch with representational practices that are highly aestheticized, technologically informed, influenced by speed (little time is at individuals' disposal for capturing them) and characterized by 'perspectival seeing' (with this I intend that individuals in these settings exercise their agency primarily in the capacity to choose the perspectives and angles from which to see things). The 'touristic ways of seeing' are, in other words, particular strategies for exploring the world. They correspond to particular modalities for 'enframing' reality and, thus, to particular world views. Rather than a matter of 'seeing things' while physically 'touring', I approach the touristic ways of seeing as much wider practices deployed in activities belonging to the everyday life of the inhabitants of those parts of the world that are involved in the global flow of images and communication. They are connected to wider representational practices linked to the consumption of films, television and advertisement and present us a world knowable by seeing and enjoying it.

The most practical reason for me to apply this fieldwork method is that as an outsider from Mosuo matrilineal communities, the most practical way to approach

them is by means of tourism. And I was a tourist to Lugu Lake in the year 2009. Travelling around Lugu Lake and participate in their everyday lives can also accompany with their images that I can acquire from newspaper, television and the internet. As an outsider from a forest community, the most valuable piece of the “tourist way of seeing” may be the gradual understanding and adjustment process, so that my relatively “modern” way of thinking could make a difference in the traditional rural agricultural context.

2.4 Interview:

Semi-structured interview is another way for me to collect my primary data. According to Longhurst (in Clifford and Valentine, 2003: 121), Semi-structured interview “can be used for a range of research”, is “reasonably informal or conversational in nature” and “can be used in conjunction with a variety of other methods and theories”. So interview as a supplement for fieldwork enables me to directly share experiences and perceptions with my interviewee. I would first briefly abstract my topic and make a list of subjects and questions to ask the interviewees. In this case my central questions are

- a) Have they been influenced by the impact of globalization?
- b) What are the changes like since the economic reform and opening up policy?
- c) How have women’s social and domestic status changed?

But I will not necessarily ask these questions strictly as the order of the list. In a conversational way, it allows the discussion to reveal those chances for them to tell issues they feel important (Longhurst in Clifford and Valentine, 2003: 121). The Chinese part of my research depends mainly on this method. However due to the time and financial limitation, I choose to adapt the in-person interview to interviews through telephone. Although telephone interviews are relatively less frequently used in qualitative studies than quantitative researches, and they are often under estimated as an interview method which is also easy to neglect contextual details, to some extent telephone interviews are able give respondents a more unrestrained situation for them to give an account of more sensitive information to a stranger (Novick, 2008). And therefore with thanks to the software Nonoh® which enables me to call Chinese landlines for free, I choose to conduct telephone interviews to collect complementary data.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

3.1 A glance at Mosuo on the forestage

My visiting to Lugu Lake was not a well planned happening but started from my visiting to Lijiang the old town in the summer of 2009. Long before I went to Lijiang I had heard from a friend from Yunnan that Lijiang has the most extreme fashion style of petty bourgeoisie. By that time I took his opinion exceptionable because I took it for granted that an old town cannot be more sophisticated than a modern metropolis. However, when one intimately embraces the commercialized old town, the real world and the illusion have become beyond one's recognition. By "illusion" I mean that TV, Internet and publications describe a variety of Lijiang, which these descriptions are full of fantasy and mystery as for the people in our real life outside. They describe about architectures in the old town, about their wood carving and handmade bells, about the ancient Nasi music and Xuanke and other elderly singers, and also about romances among the street of romantic adventure bars.

It is said in Lijiang there are tons of recluses who have been weary of the secular affairs so any one you confront, for instance a shopkeeper, can also be an artist or a writer. Many of them chose to settle down here on their travel by the old town. To some extent the statement confirms the power of enticement of Lijiang. The old bluestone paved roads are also recounting a feeling of half dream and half awake to the tourists. All people in Lijiang seem to idle about. One is either basking in the sun or drinking in a bar, or on the way to a bar. And this phenomenon provides a detailed statement about the situation that tourist industry replace the traditional workload as the main income to the old town residents.

We young fellows were full of yearnings for the romantic adventure bars, where there are a small river, the old buildings with red lanterns on both sides, the moon, the tourists from all around and a variety of exotic bars. I wonder whether it is true that this is the most attractive place in the old town. Every bar along the street is with different ambience but all alike. Guests order a glass of locally produced beer with the brand "Sentimental", watching the floating lotus lights in the river. If one likes, he or she can lay a lotus light for oneself and meanwhile make a wish that is secret to oneself. However, all kinds of everything about the romantic adventure bars make no big difference from those in the metropolises. No wonder the original residents complain about the excessive commercialization of the old town brings them troublous livelihood and some of them starts to move to rural

areas.

But adventure bars always are the place where adventures begin. Here began my first contact with Mosuo. While I was having a chat with tourists from everywhere about our journeys, two girls wearing ethnic minority's costumes entered. In our conversation at a later time we started to get acquainted and I got to know that they are two Mosuo cousins from a village in Ninglang County. They both seemed to be around age 25 or so. One girl told me her name is Binma, which means "blooming flower". Her voice was beautiful and she was very talkative while the other girl was pretty introverted and quiet. Their visiting to Lijiang was far distinctly different from ours. Ironically, Binma told us they were on their short vacation from the Mosuo hotel they worked for, and wanted to "experience the complicated and uproarious urban surroundings". I drank beer and listen to Binma telling us about stories, legends and customs, and of course about the matrilineal traditions about Mosuo. It was the first time I heard about the existing "Women's country" in the contemporary age. And therefore I expressed my longing for visiting Mosuo communities to Binma. Without a hesitation, she invited us to the hotel they worked for in Luoshui Village. The other visitors' urgent pursuit for Lugu Lake was as plain as daylight. Beautiful place becomes even more unusually amazing when there are mystic cultures. Other than the natural sceneries, the "women's country" beside the plateau lake, and the Mosuo matrilineal clans who take the unique "walking marriage" customs, made the together travelling young lads more eagerly to discover them. With the passage of time and mood, at the time we said farewell we promised to travel to Lugu Lake the next day.

When I talked to Binma and her cousin the other day, she had told me if I wanted to experience the real "walking marriage", I had to rent and ride a horse to the villages deep in the mountains so as to look for the Mosuo girl that I like. She emphasized that "you must scratch her palm of the hand for three times to express my love, and if she scratches back, then it would indicate she also feels congenial with you, and you are allowed to follow her to her room after the nightfall." So with the imagination of how would the situation be like when scratching a Mosuo girls palm and full of expectation, we followed a tour group to travel to Lugu Lake. Our guide Egoma is half Yi and half Mosuo. Her father is Yi and her mother is Mosuo. She was the offspring of "walking marriage" and her upbringing and education were borne by her maternal uncles other than her father. Egoma told us if we wanted to find "asha" (the appellation for each other by women and men having a love relationship in Mosuo) that night, we had to pass the barrier of dancing and antiphonal singing. She said Mosuo are also famous for their good at both singing and dancing. Their proverb says "Mosuo who just learned how to speak can sing, just learned how to walk can dance." Egoma then lead us a bunch

of lads in the bus singing “Lugu Lake Love Song”:

*Step over numerous mountains and rivers I come to see you
First time to meet we are not acquainted with each other
I am only afraid of the white crane laughing at the black pig
Missy, missy, madami (I love you in Mosuo), madami ...*

With the antiphonal singing with Egoma and the accompanied by Binma and a bunch of guys, the journey all the way to Lugu Lake became not boring any more. The bus was driven along the meandering Jingsha River for about five or six hours. And being surrounded by hills and mountains, among the greenness everywhere, finally a pool of blue water, the Lugu Lake, was presented in front of us. We held all views in sight that the magic and gift from our mother nature. The 52 square kilometers of glassy surface of the lake condensed the essence between the sky and the earth, and astonished every visiting person. According to Egoma’s narrative, the water surface of Lugu Lake is presented in different colors at different times of day. And in April and May, tens of thousands of yellow mandarin ducks, which are the symbol of conjugal affection and fidelity in Chinese culture, gather on the lake. Besides the Mosuo the ethnic group as the semiotics of loving, and hence Lugu Lake collected the love both from the nature and the humankind. The tiredness of the journey was suddenly washed away by the limpid lake. Embarking on a boat, I put my hand in the ice cold and transparent water, while a Mosuo girl sang the “Lugu Lake Love Song” in high spirits. The water and the singing were also washing away all my worries from outside. We landed the boat by a small island in the lake. I could not recall the name of the island, but its beauty and purity are completely integrated into the lake and the mountains around the lake. In the Lama temple on the island, lived there an old Mosuo man, and he was elected by the village for guarding the island. He had eight sons or daughters who are all brought up by their maternal uncles. As for us who come from the “modern” cities, we could not imagine such a life. Through our conversation, he said that he had done “walking marriage” for about seventy times and he had three steady partners to whom he often go and live with.

At that time, I still knew quite little about the Mosuo cultures apart from those printed on tourist brochures. In fact, Mosuo people have a special “taboo of shyness”. Publically they seldom talk about any vocabulary that is related to sex. Even words like “asha” “walking marriage” that imply sex relationship are not allowed to say. And that is extremely impolite to the elder people. However, one of the main interests of tourists is their culture about “walking marriage”. So in order to please the tourists and also keep their own secret, Mosuo people have learnt to utter falsehood when asked about his or her “walking marriage”. As a

result, information about “walking marriage” that an unacquainted Mosuo resident tells is probably unauthentic.

After dinner we drank a few cups of Mosuo homemade spirits, it was getting darker and darker. We visitors who were longing to get “Mosuolized” gathered by the Lugu Lake round a campfire. Here the everyday dancing and antiphonal singing of Mosuo would begin. The moon and stars were dimmed by the bright campfire and also by the beautiful Mosuo girls and boys. By the lake the Mosuo dancing made everyone could not help to dance along with the Mosuo girls and boys. In the dancing, everyone was also looking for their “asha” (lovers). Without exception my fellows and I took each other’s hands and dance into the whole dancing crowd, though we could not keep up the dance steps with Mosuo girls and also did not dare to stand out and challenge their singing voices. The guide Egoma pulled me into a dancing team and purposely arranged me by the side of a beautiful Mosuo girl. And the Mosuo girl immediately took my hand and started dancing with me. I felt my heart beat wildly and saw Egoma constantly made hand signals to imply me to scratch the girl’s palm. But after all I only had all these emotions for Mosuo in mind and dared not to offend the girl when I really took her hand. Until the end of the evening I dare not to scratch the girl’s palm only had to watch her disappearing in the crowd. For the whole night I felt chagrined at my timidity and the accompanied tourists also laughed at my shyness.

After the campfire party, we entered the hotel and bar where Binma worked. She served us with more spirits and snacks with Mosuo ethnic characteristic. To our surprise, apart from the tourists, the Mosuo boys who were the leading dancers on the campfire dancing were also guests to the bar. With their stern appearance, dark skin, tall and straight body, dressed in colorful national costumes and sitting at the bar, they captured many female tourists’ eyes. Noticing that I was observing these Mosuo guys, Binma told me that they take dark skin as beauty in Yunnan, so they call a typical Yunnan guy as “dark man on a purple horse”. My thoughts wandered: a group of “dark men” inhabit in the mysterious “women’s country”, which is romantic and full of imagination in any of the stories.

The day by Lugu Lake ended with the carnival of the bar and the quietly sitting by the lakeside. When the sunlight through the early morning’s mist waked me up, I sobered up but wonder where I was for an instant. The sun reflected by the lake was warm and gentle. Under the sunlight I rented a “purple horse” which is suitable for the mountainous path and rode it to the parking lot of the bus and consummated the journey of “walking marriage” to Lugu Lake. Mosuo seems like an illusion because of its extreme beauty, and it become more refined because of

its ancient history. The journey to Lugu Lake put me deeply lost in thoughts: Is marriage the universal need by people in love or we just need to have a share of the heart? What has Mosuo and “walking marriage” brought to our world and what do we bring to theirs? Will their cultures become extinct confronting the enticement of modern world? These questions might not have answers for sure, since we are in two different paradigms and they have just begun to interact.

It is not the outsiders alone using Mosuo identity, the local people themselves are heavily involved in the process of projecting Mosuo as matrilineal to gain economic advantages. Of the many hotels that I noticed when I visited Lugu Lake, more than half of them had names like "Daughter's Kingdom", "Daughter's Garden", "Female Goddess House", giving tourists the impression that Mosuo society is not only a paradise of daughters, but also a country of free and beautiful women. The fact is that the actual situation of Mosuo women is far from what the tourists induced by the images fancy. As the cognizance of matriarchy, the Mosuo women also make use of their identities increasingly not only as a means to improve their incomes, but also to consolidate their position in the larger society.

Even the village committee does not refuse to cash in on this. In an apparent effort to maintain the tourist flow and discourage unhealthy competition within the community, the Luoshui village authorities collectivized tourist activities. The Committee makes it mandatory for each family to send at least one member to the three major entertainments: the ferry boats, leading horses, and attending the evening shows that the village offers to tourists. Operating revenue is divided equally between the families' members; however, villagers are governed by a strict dress and behavior code: only traditional Mosuo costumes can be worn and “walking marriage” is the norm to be followed. These codes are critical not only to display and sell Mosuo culture to visitors but also to preserve Mosuo identity that is under serious threat from the influence of Hans, Pumi and Yi, which are the more numerically and politically dominant nationalities in the area. The complex interplay between matriarchy, gender and ethnicity as they interact with the forces of change is triggered by the agents of "modernity", namely the state, market and the dominant "other".

3.2 Connection to the backstage of Mosuo identity

One and a half years later in 2011, when I recalled the experience of the visit to Lugu Lake and wondered how Mosuo's circumstances and attitudes have changed, I tried to contact Binma through the hotel and search for help from her. On a weekday afternoon, when my phone call first put through to the hotel, I was told

that Binma was guiding a group of tourist paddling a boat in the Lake. It was the landlady Durma who picked up the phone. Durma heard about my study and expressed approbation to my research. She politely told me her hotel was busy at that time but Binma and she usually might be free in the morning, so she asked me to call again another morning if I was still interested. And afterwards she helped me to contact the village Communist Party secretary who was the highest official in village.

Through his phone, Secretary Cao introduced their village Luoshui, which is one of the most popular tourist destinations around Lugu Lake. He said almost all the 73 households in Luoshui had shifted from agriculture to tourism, and the whole village continued to take the “walking marriage” custom. And starting from 1991, Luoshui Village had regulated and standardized the services of boating, horseback riding, dancing and other travel services, and the village had laid a good foundation to enhance the quality of tourism services. He claimed there were 69 hotels and according to the requirements of tourist administration bureau, all the hotels had been constructed on the basis of traditional Mosuo architectural style so that all the buildings were in timber structures and the construction and maintenance consumes a lot of labor and wood. But on the bright side the original appearance of ancient villages and Luoshui Matriarchal culture as the greatest charm of the village tourism resources, deeply attracted domestic and foreign tourists and as a result for example the revenue of the village increased dramatically every year. At last when I asked him how the economic reform and tourism had altered Mosuo cultures and the women’s status in the village, he assured me that nothing has been changed.

Secretary Cao selectively introduced to me the favorable aspects of the development of tourism in Luoshui Village and tried to give me a perfect representation of the village. But he chose to avert the side effects brought about by the economic development. For instance historically, Mosuo culture has encountered three main impacts from dominant outside cultures. It is recorded that as early as about AD 800, around 10,000 Mosuo households (approximate 50,000 – 60,000 people) were forced to migrate from Yongning and Yanyuan district to Dianchi Lake district due to causes of war. The small amount of leftover Mosuo people chose to popularize the syndyasmian marriage in order to reproduce and protect themselves. However, the syndyasmian marriage resulted in the problem that the populations of male and female were imbalance and men were overpopulated. And then Mosuo solved the problem with the matrilineal family structure and “walking marriage” and lasted until the present day (He, 2000). The second impact happened in the Maoist Cultural Revolution period in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Mosuo people were mandated to end their “backward”

behavior and were forced to adopt monogamy – one husband, one wife. In order to effectively implement the reform policy of marriage, the government also had corresponding economic measures. They required the allocation of land by the unit of family and stopped the food supply to those who did not implement. Helpless Mosuo people had to establish patriarchal nuclear families in a short time. But fortunately, with the ending of Cultural Revolution, the former patriarchal families dismissed themselves one after another. Even in those who remained to be patriarchal families, most of their children chose to implement “walking marriage” again according to their own wishes and needs. And the third time of cultural impact comes from the neoliberal globalization. Capitalist economy, the variety of media and cultural diversity are posing challenges towards the matriarchy. The matrilineal culture and its core systems are facing a more severe test.

However, the influence from the outside may also in turn reinforce the social structure of Mosuo people. It is not the outsiders alone using Mosuo identity, the local people themselves are heavily involved in the process of projecting Mosuo as matrilineal to gain economic advantages. I noticed the many hotels when I visited Lugu Lake. More than half of them had names like "Female Goddess House" "Daughter's Kingdom" or "Daughter's Garden", giving tourists the impression that Mosuo society is not only a paradise of daughters, but also a country of free and beautiful women. The fact is that the actual situation of Mosuo women is far from what the tourists induced by the images fancy. As the cognizance of matriarchy, the Mosuo women also make use of their identities increasingly not only as a means to improve their incomes, but also to consolidate their position in the larger society.

Even the village committee does not refuse to cash in on this. In an apparent effort to maintain the tourist flow and discourage unhealthy competition within the community, the Luoshui village authorities collectivized tourist activities. As I have noticed, the Committee makes it mandatory for every family to send at least one member to ferry boats, leading horses, and attending the evening shows which are the three major entertainments the village offers to tourists. And the income is divided equally between the families' members; however, villagers are governed by a strict dress and behavior rule that the village committee only allows them to wear traditional Mosuo costumes and to follow the “walking marriage” system. These codes on one hand are critical because they require villagers to display and sell Mosuo culture to visitors but on the other hand, although commercialized, they are effective to preserve Mosuo identity that is under serious threat from the influence of Hans, Pumi and Yi, which are the more numerically and politically dominant nationalities in the area. The complex interplay between matriarchy,

gender and ethnicity as they interact with the forces of change is triggered by the agents of "modernity", namely the state, market and the dominant "other".

Several days later, I telephoned Durma's hotel again. This time I got in touch with Binma, but she could hardly have any remembrance of me. She was still talkative and strongly willing to present "the real" Mosuo cultures to me, and she was cynical towards those "fake Mosuo" who performed matrilineal and pretended to carry on "walking marriage" from outside so as to please the tourists. Then she explained thoroughly in details.

Binma: A few years ago, there were usually domestic and European, American and Japanese television stations coming here to film folk scenes. Many people have misunderstanding towards Mosuo people. They were mainly interested in our "walking marriage" and they thought we are like primitive people, doing "walking marriage" with random people. Actually our "walking marriage" is quite single-minded. Many "walking marriage" are life-long partners. Those bosses from the town find it profitable to invest here. They open big hotels and nightclubs. It seems we have made much money from tourism, but most part is taken by those bosses.

I: So you think they are the "fake Mosuo"?

B: Yes. And the "girls" they hire from other places. They dress Mosuo clothes and perform for tourists. And they take bath and sleep with men for money. But in their nightclubs' advertisement, they say those are Mosuo's customs "together bathing" and "walking marriage". They take our traditions and defame our culture, but ironically they make more money.

I: Maybe they don't feel happy deep inside. But how do you feel as a woman since tourism has flourished in your village?

B: We of course have more money to spend and more knowledge about outside, but I am so tired that there are always many things to do. When the men have money, they become lazy and go to play with the "girls" or sleep with female tourists. We women have to run our homes and also work in the field. Some of the men go to the town to find a job and the others in village don't help at all.

From Binma's statement, I conclude several focus points that cause her dissatisfaction: 1) Outsiders misunderstand Mosuo's "walking marriage" and defame Mosuo as primitive. 2) Most of the tourist profits are taken by investors in other ethnic groups from the outside. 3) Female sex workers take their identity and ruin Mosuo's reputation. 4) Mosuo men sleep with sex workers and female tourists and do not help domestic work. These phenomena are all in the company

of the commercialization of the Mosuo culture, in which the commoditization of sex is one of the most unfavorable changes to the matrilineal culture.

In their small village far from metropolises, sex has become an increasingly important commodity under the influence of new form of economy. Luoshui's entry into the tourist industry and the global economy has promoted the pressure on Mosuo women to correspond to the market's demands of female "beauty" as commodities and compete with those from outside. David Harvey (2007) is aware of that the pressure on women can be easily found in temporary China:

All of the trappings of Westernization are there to be found, including transformations in social relations that have young women trading on their sexuality and good looks at every turn and cultural institutions (ranging from Miss World beauty pageants to blockbuster art exhibits) forming at an astonishing rate to create exaggerated versions, even to the point of parody, of New York, London or Paris. What is now called "the rice bowl of youth" takes over as everyone speculates on the desire of others in the Darwinian struggle for position. The gender consequences of this have been marked. [Harvey 2007: 147-148]

After that, I also talked to Binma and Durma for several times. Once when we talked about her family and their difficulties, Binma told me about her mother's agricultural activities and obstacles. She said,

"Pesticides and fertilizers are polluting the Lugu Lake ... which has caused the decrease of fishes in the lake. The government may have the purpose to protect the lake, regulates that less than one kilometer along the lake cannot plant fruit trees, and if it is true the households throughout Luoshui village is not allowed to plant fruit trees. The superiors considered the livelihood of the villagers and they have no funds to compensate us, so the policy has not been implemented yet. ... Places along Lugu Lake have beautiful landscape of water and mountains, and the superiors are not willing to engage in agriculture. ... And people who rely on agriculture are becoming fewer and fewer. In our village, most people younger than 50 have opted for work for tourism or find a job in town. And the old ones (older than 60) have agricultural insurance for them to provide for subsistence. Only villagers between 50 and 60, like my mother, they don't know the tourists' language, and they are totally dependent on agricultural income to support their families. But more and more of them just stop working in the field anymore. Although my mother keeps on working, we in the family all advise her to just enjoy life at home."

With the development of tourism, there also has been an increased demand for firewood by local villagers. However, this has not led to excessive cutting of forest resources in the local area because of the prohibition in Lugu Lake Reserve. Instead, villagers manage the demand of firewood by buying waste and used building materials from nearby wood storage and plant timber, with the help of electricity and hay straw as substitutes to fuel wood and they also adapt the more expensive firewood-saving stoves. They also purchase firewood from the Yi people living in the hills and timber from the nearby villages which are not within the nature reserve. It is obvious that the latter two methods of fulfilling the demands for wood only shift the consumption of firewood and building materials to the surrounding communities, who cannot eventually solve the ecological problem of the preservation of the forest. Besides, Luoshui villagers have to spend more on buying timber and this becomes the major concerns for the low-income families. (He, 2001)

In Binma's opinion, people in the village of Luoshui who "think we are better than other Mosuo people" have already "lost our tradition and been assimilated by Han people." And at the end of my interview with Binma, she recommended me to watch a documentary film *the Grandmother's House left the Homeland* made by her Mosuo friend Erqing.

3.3 The Grandmother's House Left the Homeland

There have been literatures and multimedia resources telling stories about Mosuo people since ethnographies and documentaries brought Mosuo matrilineal cultures into the mainstream Chinese consciousness in 1980s. An example among these is the famous Chinese writer Bai Hua's (1988) novel *The Remote Country of Women* in 1986 which makes the Mosuo much better known to the masses. Bai's story actually gives a rough framework for much of the tourism that has happened in the Lugu Lake area, both with respects of gender differences around interactions between Han and Mosuo and the Han people's expectations of romance and seclusion.

But the documentary film *The Grandmother's House Left the Homeland* is the first film made by Mosuo people themselves. We are now able to obtain images and attitudes that Mosuo themselves wish the outsiders to see. The background of the film is that in 2007, the German artist Mathilde ter Heijne bought a 200-year-old Grandmother's House – a central meeting place for the family clan, from a Mosuo village and had it reconstructed for her exhibition "Mosuo Fireplace Goddess" in Beijing. The exhibition has the view of presenting Mosuo's

matriarchate and criticizing the developments destroying traditions in the Mosuo's environment in order to protect the Mosuo cultures. However, the film *the Grandmother's House left the Homeland* does not focus on this artist, but is from the Mosuo lad's perspective, who has sold his mother's Grandmother's House. And the film tries to express Mosuo's rethinking: what should we do when so many outsiders begin to notice us? How should we express and protect our cultures to and from the outside?

The film *the Grandmother's House left the Homeland* came out in the December of 2009. It is the first work by the Mosuo cameraman Erqing. Erqing is also from the village of Luoshui, Ninglang County in Yunnan Province. Since his childhood, he has a keen interest in images and videos. He indulges in the local natural scenery and shot records of their unique culture. And He founded a local folk museum – Mosuo Folk Museum, collecting and exhibiting the unique Mosuo culture. A few years later, Erqing constantly contacts and discusses with photographers outside and gradually grow into a well experienced photographer.

The film is about the happenings after the guy Pinchu agrees to sell their own Grandmother's House. The buyer is a Chinese American Ms Tang. She wants to help an artist to transport the house to exhibit it in Beijing and to preserve Mosuo cultures. Ms Tang and her assistant have preference for an old village Lijiazui, which is relatively a remote and poor place along Lugu Lake. Firstly, none of the villagers agree to sell their Grandmother's House to Ms Tang, because the Grandmother's House is deemed extremely important to a household. The old grandmother lives here and the children are born here, and every ceremony, sacrificing and godliness happens here. And Mosuo people worship fire, so they believe the ancestral spirits inhabit on the top of the fire place in the Grandmother's House. Before every meal, food should be placed on the stone “*ranbala*” (the fireplace goddess) to offer sacrifices to the ancestors. Only when Ms Tang comes for the second time, does Pinchu, who has worked outside of the village, agree to sell theirs to her. The price is 100,000 RMB yuan, which is enough for Pinchu's family to build three or four new Grandmother's House. Pinchu says with a self-mockery: “I am the first Mosuo in history to sell our Grandmother's House.”

At first Pinchu's mother is not willing to sell the house, and they have quarrels with each other for times. And finally the mother cannot help herself, agrees and cries in front of the buyers. When asked why, she says she misses her mother and uncles – they are all born in the house. But the house is sold eventually. When Pinchu and other villagers disassemble the Grandmother's House, they remove the wooden joist from the ceiling and the dust that has been accumulated for years

rustles down. In order to extinguish the fire, mother has to pour a bucket of water on the sacred fireplace, begging and apologizing towards the air, “You have been smoked.” And she mutters to herself, “The goddess blessing my family shall follow the Grandmother’s House to a place far away.” Pinchu’s family members do not want to give away the antelope horns of exorcism to outsiders and keep those most important things. Fortunately the buyers think they are not worth much money and they can replace it with new ones.

The Mosuo people by Lugu Lake regard fire as the symbol of light and prosperity, and the fireplace as the sign of sustenance. The flames of a fire are therefore vigorously stoked with wood each day. It is said that the fire in the fireplace of some families has been maintained for generations. A nicely burning fire with bright flames and sparks flying from the fireplace is considered to be auspicious, symbolizing good luck in the future, plentiful harvests, and healthy animals. Conversely, if the fire is feeble and full of smoke, it forecasts bad luck. (Yang, 2001)

In Mosuo villagers’ eyes, selling the Grandmother’s House is a rather unfortunate deed. Pinchu gradually hears more and more gossips about him. He starts to feel regretful before he set off to reconstruct the house in Beijing. He even tries to make an excuse so he can revoke the deal, but the agreement has been signed and the house has been torn down. Pinchu has no choice but go to Beijing with a few villagers and reconstruct the house in an art district. In their village, a home of the Mosuo is constituted by a group of houses. Apart from the Grandmother’s House, there are scripture hall, the daughter’s flower houses, cattle-shed, and other bedchambers as well. The houses are very harmonious with the surrounding environment in the countryside. However, the exhibition hall in Beijing Huantie Art District is rather high and hollow. The isolated Grandmother’s House appears to be quite low and undersized (Figure 2.). By the side of the house, a bronze statue is placed there. The statue is sculptured by the German artist according to the appearance of herself, and she asks Pinchu to dress the statue up with traditional Mosuo folk costume. When they clothe the statue, the carpenter from the village whispers to Pinchu, “I feel like touch a dead body. The situation is exactly the same as we wash and clothing a corpse.” While the villagers dress up the statues, the artist puts a pair of modern-style boots on its feet and wears make-ups on its face.



Figure 2. Mathilde ter Heijne (2007). Installation Mosuo Fireplace Goddess
Source: Contemporary Chinese Art site: <http://www.chinesische-gegenwartskunst.de>

On the day of exhibition opening, visitors who know very little about Mosuo cultures keep asking Pinchu embarrassing questions about “walking marriage”, for example, “Can such marriage form of Mosuo last for a life time?” After Pinchu gives a positive answer and says “walking marriage” can last till he couldn’t walk, the visitor is not satisfied, “So will she look for a new partner after you cannot walk?” Besides domestic visitors, many westerners also come to the exhibition, and they have a lot of communications with Pinchu as well. An instance is that a female westerner who speaks fluent Mandarin gets to know that Pinchu can never regain his house, and then she says as if deep in thought, “Well, you still suffer discomfort.” “A little bit.” Pinchu replies and walks away from the camera with a gooey expression.

After the exhibition, Pinchu receives his money and returns to his homeland with wistfulness. At the end, his family builds a new grandmother’s house similar to the old one in the original position. In the new house, the family again offer sacrifices to the ancestors before they eat, but Pinchu’s family seems a little disconsolate except for the children who are joyful because of the abundant food.

In his postscript of the film, Erqing tells about him showing the film to the Mosuo villagers. Spectators feel their cultures are suffering from erosion. Pinchu has no

comment to the film, which makes Erqing feel like his film has a kind of prejudice against Pinchu. He says, “In fact his case has intractability itself, and my film may be overly critical.” Erqing also gives the buyer Ms Tang a copy of the film. “She believes that she is protecting our Mosuo cultures. And this is a phenomenon of cultural diversity.” After several months’ time, the buyer telephones and asks about countermeasures when the timber house grows worms in the wood. Erqing says, “There would be no bugs if there were fire in the fireplace. Mosuo families cook our every meal in the Grandmother’s House. The heat from the fire makes the wood hard and solid. The wood has proof from the moisture and the bugs, and is able to uphold the house for hundreds of years.” Finally Erqing says, “Only that circumstance engenders our cultures.”

The film *The Grandmother’s House Left the Homeland* has succeeded in questioning the neoliberal impact in Mosuo communities, reshaping their values and their family relationships from an ethical perspective. The indigenous Mosuo are vulnerable when exposed to the market of “equal exchange”. One of the villagers makes a comment on Pinchu’s selling of the house, “The foreigners are not robbing the house from him. They use money to buy it.” It seems that the fixed and agreed market prices have automatically guaranteed justice. But whether in terms of the unequal transparency of information or considering the unexpected loss of reputation, the indigenous seller Pinchu belongs to the adverse position in this “equal exchange”. And the film is also successful in indicating another form of cultural assimilation that has happened in Mosuo communities, incorporated by the capitalist market, other than affected by tourism. And after analyzing the film as a text, I can conclude that the matrilineal family has the tendency of shifting from the female-centered structure to an income-centered structure. As the grounds of the argument, Pinchu has the authority to sell the Grandmother’s House even his mother and his sisters object to him. His authority has relation to his providing of more contribute to the household due to his work in the town. Since more and more youngsters start to leave for jobs bigger cities where patriarchy and neoliberalism guarantee more income to the privileged men, they are probably able to compete for a more authoritative position in the family.

However, my critique of the film is that the male filmmaker mainly neglects the importance of women in Mosuo communities. The leading character is an educated Mosuo male and the camera always follows his male friends who are fully in charge of this business deal. The absence of female makes the film a nondescript masculine film in a matrilineal community.

4. Discussions

Many of the researches on how tourism affects the women in a destination in traditional societies have used a developmental framework (Gibson, 2001). This framework argues that tourism offers women a starting point for generating revenue. In turn, they could create economic independence which is generated through tourism potential pathways for women and communities to eradicate poverty. By making women more visible in the public sphere, the developmental framework is based on the hypothesis that: 1) women's social, cultural, political and economic status would be improved and 2) women would be able to carve out new roles for themselves and their families. But a major criticism of the developmental framework is that it focuses on access to income as the primary cause of social change. The frame has neglected views of other important contextual, historical or cultural factors that can determine the relationship between the sexes in the host communities (Gibson, 2001). As an instance development framework ignores the context of tourism frequent appropriation of female images of youth, beauty and sexuality. Moreover, the framework ignores that in many traditional societies, women see tourism as a window to other cultures. In these societies women often live isolated from contact with outsiders, since their responsibility is usually focused on managing the household while men are responsible for trade and travel.

Traditionally, Mosuo matrilineal society is an excellent paradigm provided for Chinese feminism. In the first place, Mosuo matrilineal families have the belief that neither the women are superior to men or the other way around. The Mosuo women's centered status in social life is established by the leading role they play in stabilizing and passing on of the households. For example they possess female fertility and maternal temperaments which are fundamental to the households. Besides, women are the main producers in Mosuo's agricultural economy and organizers of social life activities. While the men are in charge of religion and ceremonies, they also have authority under certain circumstances. And Mosuo mode of matrilineal big family is constituted of simple and intimate relationships between family members, which tactfully avoid conflicts between husband and wife, father and son. The matrilineal families have the function of reinforcing the intensification of land use, concentration of labor, harmony and happiness of family members and justice in communities. Compared with Mosuo paradigm, my critique of western feminism is that being influenced by the individualism-rooted cultural tradition western feminism has a too strong sense of female community, as it is the opposite of the male population. The liberation of women only has the meaning of liberating women from patriarchy and liberal development of female

individuals, which ignores the significance of feminism to liberate the male population. And the western feminist philosophy is represented in form of confrontation, resulting in the resistance and disregard from men, putting feminist movement into an isolated situation. On the country, Chinese women's tradition has always been integrated with the collective culture, and Chinese women's destiny has been closely linked with their family, their class and their nation. Chinese feminists argue against seeing males as their contending opponents due to the culture of coordination of *yin* (feminine) and *yang* (masculine). And therefore there is a superficial tendency of women showing their weakness and being protected by men in China. In fact, men probably have more responsibility to assure the end of the patriarchal oppression towards women because men have been the main delinquent of that oppression. Protective way of doing gender might be another alternative, and Chinese men are taking actions to end that the oppression and search for gender equality as the best ally of Chinese women. (Dong, 2007) For instance, it is prescribed by law in China that professions as felling, piling and rafting in forestry cannot employ women. The rule of law may seem rather discriminatory in a western context. But it is high praised in China for its protective significance for females (Guo, 2009). It may elicit another question about credibility of Chinese academia and its relativity to Chinese politics, (Wang, 2001) but more relevant studies are desiderata.

As a contrast to the development framework, I focus more on the potential change in the matrilineal systems other than the improvement of women's incomes. One argument among the Mosuo believes that the globalization and modernization will not change the present matrilineal family structure and the "walking marriage" system. The process of modernization and change, far from contributing to the dissolution of matriarchy in fact, has improved and strengthened the system. This is especially true in Mosuo communities where the entry of tourism has not only strengthened the matrilineal and associated practices to "walking marriage" but also transformed them, along with their dance, music and fashion into marketable products for consumption by city-bred tourists who long for the different and exotic cultural (Tiplut, 2010). Inevitably, this does not come without a price. The commoditization of culture and representation of matriarchy as an exotic and institution for Mosuo society consisting of free and beautiful women have helped Mosuo to overcome the perpetual shortage that reinforced their economy of subsistence. But meanwhile the process has deepened the oppression of women. In order to derive the best from tourism, the female is not only simply reduced to a symbolism, her sexuality has also been altered to a commodity of exploitation, by both ethnic group and the non-ethnic groups equally. Even this situation raises pertinent questions about the status of women in matrilineal societies, it points out the vulnerability of ethnic minorities in the social, geographical and political

peripheries struggling against poverty and discrimination by the state (see denial of Mosuo nationality status by the national and regional government) and the dominant population. Faced with being overwhelmed by the power of globalization unleashed by tourism and the growing influence of the general values and ways of life, Mosuo have to rely on the only resource they have - their rich culture and tradition. The process of both cultural and ethnic identity being reinterpreted and redefined is another question. The important point is that cultural transformation is not only possible for them to maintain a monopoly on tourism but also for maintaining the border between them and other nationalities.

However, more evidences has shown, tourism will increase prosperity and opportunities for cultural assimilation (Mattison, 2010). And tourism along with cultural assimilation is an important driver of social change. It is difficult to insulate the social impacts of marketization in particular ethnic tourism that are opposed to all the economic profits. The representations of cultural difference also have the function that absorbing money and the material wealth from tourists in exchange of the ecological resources such as timber, primary products and biodiversity. Mosuo culture has been commercialized so that Mosuo economic aspirations are inescapably connected with others' perceptions of their culture. In fact, the cultural influences of tourism on Mosuo's family structure and marriage system are likely to be particularly strong, because tourism is partly based on perceptions of Mosuo as "exotic" and Mosuo people has to keep their "traditions" to attract tourism. On the one hand, tourists can promote and reinforce Mosuo's adherence to traditional practices because of the expected Mosuo "exotic" customs, but on the other hand, tourists can also see Mosuo customs as "backward" or "primitive", encouraging Mosuo to adopt more mainstream customs from the outside world. Therefore, even if it is clear that they are facing an exchange of economic wealth for cultural diversity, it is not clear whether tourism will promote the maintenance of Mosuo culture or stimulate Mosuo to adopt the mainstream value.

Understanding the relationship changes in societies where family structures plays an important role in organizing and directing the production and livelihood requires an inspection of market factors affecting both individuals and larger scale of picture where they are members. Those self-interested individuals can sometimes have conflict against with the larger group of people because the latter focus on social stability and continuity (Mattison, 2010). Groups who have the need for a major affinity are likely to be crucial in situations that are conducive to cooperation in general. However, if the resources are scarce or difficult to monopolize, for instance, individuals prefer to by participate in mutual exchange between relatives so as to reduce risks. Conversely, if the government institutions

are willing to provide support and resolve conflicts over property rights, we can expect different roles of family structures to be released. In such situations, the decisions to increase the individual's welfare result in resistance or even changes in group norms. Among the Mosuo, the market economic institution emerges that every individual family members become more self-sufficient if they want to contribute to the household. But on the contrary this kind of self-sufficient shall ease up the link within the family structure. If this is true, we can expect an increase in the number of households who are divided from bigger families among Mosuo living in tourist areas, where the incomes are more adapted to the market economy and relatively stable.

Besides changing the succession rules, men's acquisition of status and wealth could affect one of the best known cultural practices of the Mosuo: "walking marriage". At first glance, it is not clear that the men of relative wealth should prefer marriage or cohabitation to less restrained marriage systems like "walking marriage". However, cohabitation gives men (and also women) a greater degree of control over their reproductive partners. If wealth is exchanged and paternity is insured, the men would rather choose to invest capital in their partners' households than expend money on their mothers and other relatives. In Luoshui Village, cases of cohabitation which is not associated with labor or sex exchanges can be seen as a sign of transition from matrilineal norms so that men stay with their partners' and biological children and invest relatively more intense there.

Tourist economic assets among Mosuo has led to increased opportunities for men, and that such facilities will contribute to more bilateral inheritance practices and more stable partnership between men and women. Evidence for the bilateral inheritance actions appears in the marriage practices differ among the residents of tourist-impacted villages like Luoshui as opposed to traditional areas, while the evidence for the former is indirect, for instance differences in household composition in relation to the neighborhood. These inferences are consistent with other studies that show that changes in accommodation, and predict changes in inheritance practices that men who lack the resources and those who conduct business away from their homes may fail to invest in their families, resulting in the matriarchy in which females are depending on distant relatives for support. One of the evidence is that men start to share some of the alimony for their children. Affected by the patriarchal people and according to the Chinese law, Mosuo women now have the right to ask their children's biological father to provide half of the expense for the upbringing of the children. And in turn the children also have an obligation to take care of their fathers when they are old. As a result, many of the children are having more close relationships with their biological father than before. And this phenomenon has a tendency to weaken the

matrilineal family structure.

For the Mosuo people in Luoshui Village, tourism has materialize their culture as a gendered commodity detrimental to the community's own practice of gender and culture, as well as its use of "tradition". In Luoshui, people started to get hold of a Mosuo identity adopted on the built stage of tourism, but they have their roots in decades of Maoist rhetoric. During 1950 and 1960, the state investigation team described Mosuo as an ethnic group in which "children who do not know their fathers' (Yunnan Ethnic Investigation Team, 1964: 1). The recommendations of early work teams and the Communist ethnographers' framed state policies are dedicated to help the Mosuo "evolve" out of their primitive sexual relations and household structures; they were intended to be developmental of the people and the infrastructure by encouraging Mosuo to have male-centered nuclear households. In the early 1970s, the pressure from the government force Mosuo to get married is pretty strong, and those who refused risked from losing their grain rations. The Luoshui villagers remember the mandatory "a husband and a wife policy" as a policy of "breaking up their families", and points out that those who are forced to live together are tend to cause domestic discord and violence.

Tourists of both male and female come to Luoshui and they all make jokes about and investigate Mosuo sexual relations. Yet the visiting men are the primary goals of representations of Mosuo. Pictures of young Mosuo women are everywhere, letting the tourist feel like experiencing at the "Women's Country". Before 2004, both tourists and locals expected that it would be Luoshui women who would be sought out by tourists (Walsh, 2005). Most tourists come from a major Chinese context where, in general, women are passive and not the initiators of sexual encounters and in which elite male identities are built around ideas on consumption, especially the consumption of women. This larger context has an effect on how Luoshui residents interact with the outsiders, as well as the expectations that outsiders have of seduction and sexual relations. In the touristic frame and imagination, the many ways to imagine Mosuo territory, as a country of women and a country of sex, merge into a country with women for sex.

The Maoist state marked Mosuo as a primitive matriarchy and tried to help Mosuo "evolve" from their chaotic sexual relations and an economy status held back by the women's control. During the economic reform era, the state changed to tolerance and even celebration of Mosuo's difference while adamant continuing to require "development" from its people through media, education and migration. Under the condition that tourism, and particularly domestic tourism, came in by its own as a growing sector of the Chinese economy, the government rehabilitated cultural differences as a source of economic development and increasingly opened

the ethnic areas and made them available to tourists. And only since then Mosuo has received the largest impact, from dominant cultures, capitalist economy, and from the neoliberal globalization.

4.1 Preservation measures of Mosuo matrilineal cultures in community planning

4.1.1 To ensure a steady growth in Mosuo population as a prerequisite of the protection of matrilineal culture

None of the living cultures can be independent of the people. So it is well known that ethnical cultures are jointly created, developed and heritage by the people of this ethnic group. And therefore as the main body of the Mosuo matrilineal cultures, in order to protect and pass on their ethnical cultures, firstly the sustainable development of the ethnical population should be ensured, otherwise the ethnical cultures would become water without a source, and a tree without roots. However, according to the Development Report of Yunnan Ethnic Regions 2007, Mosuo population in Yongning County, which is one of the main habitations of Mosuo, has merely grown for 13% within the period of 47 years, with an average growth rate less than 0.3% every year. What is far from good is that since the year 1998, Mosuo has suffered from negative population growth in Yongning County, which has become a potential threaten to the sustainable development of Mosuo communities. (Table 1.)

Table 1. Number of Mosuo population in Yongning County

| Year | 1958 | 1982 | 1990 | 1998 | 2005 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Population | 5975 | 5957 | 6174 | 8840 | 6765 |

Source: Development Report of Yunnan Ethnic Regions 2007

The main factors that constraints Mosuo population growth are the specific Mosuo matrilineal family ethics that provided resources and responsible alimonies are equally shared among the children. Secondly, the “walking marriage” system which thinks highly of the emotional link and undervalues the importance of fertility is not the best way to reproduce. Third, the increasing cultural integration results in that more Mosuo women marry men from another ethnic group and live with the husband as well as youngsters find jobs in cities away from home and migrate out. They bring about the outflow of Mosuo people to the urban areas. Forth, China’s current one-child policy among Han people also has influence to

young Mosuo people who have received the same education as Han. Fifth, the regulations of allocating opportunities of participating in running a tourist industry in the tourism-affected areas also have certain effects on the limitation of population growth. Key solutions to the problem of population lie in the collective understanding of the importance of the passing on and sustainable development of the whole ethnic group, which as I discussed is opposed to the individual families economic profit. The governors and the scholars have the responsibility to offer corresponding education to the Mosuo population. Besides, the tourist-affected areas should also implement appropriate policies and economic incentive measures to encourage population growth. One instance is that matrilineal families should be able to enjoy a variety of beneficial opportunities allocated according to the number of family members.

4.1.2 To emphasize the importance of ecological protection and matrilineal culture construction in the development of tourism

In their research on non-point source pollution in Lugu Lake, Xue etc. (2008) finds out between 1995 and 2005, the non-urban pollutants has shown a decreasing trend due to the reduction of agricultural activities but urban pollutants such as heavy metal, lead, has increased since the development of tourism. And the water quality of Lugu Lake has been affected by the degradation such as eutrophication that started since tourism developed and became the main industry in the watershed after 1995. And therefore when urban planners try to develop tourism in Lugu Lake area, they should plan the residential and agricultural land far from the waterside and the growth of tourist residential areas should not be increased in the absence of controls. The collection and treatment of waste from residential and tourist establishments should also under instruction. For instance, in order to maintain the water quality, it is eagerly required that the wastewater does not move directly into the lake or surrounding rivers.

The overheated tourism has not only caused degradation in the water quality, and also has overly interfered Mosuo matrilineal cultures. As far as the development of a culture system is concerned, communication with the outside world could neither be inadequate or excessive so that the original culture would be hurriedly subverted. The evolution of Mosuo matrilineal culture in history has confirmed this view to some extent. At present, the impact that globalization and tourism have on Mosuo cultures has been predominantly excessive. For example the inappropriate use of enticing hotel names such as "Daughter's Kingdom", "Daughter's Garden", "Female Goddess House" in Luoshui Village, and a fraction of tourists have misunderstandings about Mosuo "walking marriage" custom and even have uncivil behaviors towards residents. Another example of the excessive

impact is that in order to ingratiate tourists, aboriginal and exterior tourism practitioners carry out some faulty tourist projects such as hiring women to perform as Mosuo girls and do sex work and has ashamed the real Mosuo ethnic group.

In this regard, the proposition is that provinces of Yunnan and Sichuan, which share the Lugu Lake, start to take inter-provincial cooperation in regional tourism planning and accomplish an early implementation of the planning. The supervision and guidance work of tourist industry should also be strengthened. Moreover, the tourism sector should establish visitor education service centers in tourist destinations, which are able to objectively and comprehensively present literary and artistic works that reflect on both the “tradition” and “modernity” of Mosuo matrilineal cultures. In these service centers, through carefully designed specific production and livelihood sceneries, staff can help tourists come to realize the intrinsic Mosuo matrilineal ethics, values and social climate and the social function women have played. In the meantime, it should also be improved that the guidance, education and management of the local tourist industry practitioners and the community residents, making them fully value and cherish their culture as a scarce resource. Only in that way will the local Mosuo people consciously create and maintain harmony and positiveness in the community culture in their communication, work and daily lives. In short, tourism development must be subordinated to Mosuo matrilineal culture cultivation and ecological environment protection needs.

4.1.3 To enhance the academic research about and guidance to the Mosuo matrilineal cultural adaptation and restructure

As implied in the film *the Grandmother's House left the Homeland*, the traditional culture a specific product of a certain natural and social conditions and the specific environment of the culture is one of the necessary conditions for the generation and maintenance of the traditional culture. Involuntarily, given the environment has made a difference, the specific culture will be inevitably difficult to remain unchanging. And therefore in the world system when facing capitalist economy and neoliberal globalization under this specific historical era, there has been modifications made to Mosuo matrilineal cultures. However, to what extent should Mosuo ethnic group adapt and reconstruct their cultures? Is it absolutely rational to give up everything to the regulativity of market?

The answer is negative. Considered the practices of tourist development in Mosuo community Luoshui Village, the matrilineal culture has indeed faced with many contradictions and inconsistencies. From the perspective of landscape architecture,

in their courtyard pattern of houses, the traditional Grandmother's House which is a one storey bungalow and the other guesthouses which are quasi-modern multistorey buildings in the other three directions are not coordinated together. From the perspective of ecological conservation, the wood structured Mosuo houses and the tradition of continuous using of fireplace and firewood result in the over consumption of Chinese deteriorating forest resources. As to from the perspective of tourism, there is also contradiction between the unapparent cultural factors such as matrilineal family and "walking marriage" and the demand of intuitional touristic presentation. In order to solve these contradictions, local relevant functional departments and the government should convene experts and scholars with background in anthropology, geography, folklore, ecology and architecture along with local participants. In that case they may be able to discuss, investigate and research on the evolution trend of Mosuo matrilineal culture and its social significance and therefore provide guidance and suggestions for Mosuo's cultural adjustment and restructure. Experts in each discipline can easily fall into the arrogant way of protecting Mosuo cultures and neglect the local people's aspirations as it has shown by the artist Mathilde ter Heijne. And consequently, in principle these adjustment and restructure of Mosuo matrilineal cultures must comply with the needs of their own subsistence and development, which makes us understand that culture as a tool of an ethnic group to make use of and to modify the object world, possesses the function that enables human to survive as an individuals and to continue developing as an ethnic group.

5. Conclusion

It might seem difficult to find hope and belief in these times. Those who sell the idea of neoliberal capitalism and globalization appear to be success in convincing the rest of the world that there are no other dreams to have or worth having. My attempt to find another paradigm in the Chinese context does not mean resist of the powerful and far reaching globalization and assimilation occurring as inevitable. My purpose is to provide inspiring insight of better interaction or even integration between the west and the Orient. For this reason, I have shown that in Swedish and Chinese context, neoliberal globalization are having different influences on gender relations in forest communities. In discourses regarding Swedish contexts, as a representative of western pioneer in feminist movement, Swedish women are both actively and autonomously participating in the predominantly masculine industry. However, they are also receiving obstacles from the men whose privileged authority are now challenged. Meanwhile, the Chinese women are fading out the forestry industry since the economic reform and neoliberal capitalism swept the country. They are passively "protected" by

laws and regulations which receive domestic commendation from the public and the academia. And unlike the Swedish case, Chinese men are more responsible in the support of feminist movements. The contrast of impacts of neoliberal globalization on the gendered conformation encourages me to examine the specific matrilineal communities of the Mosuo ethnic group in Lugu Lake area.

As the only matrilineal society in China, Mosuo has attracted increasing waves of tourists since 1990s. And the neoliberal capitalism and the impact of globalization are brought about by the development of tourism, which starts to reshape Mosuo matrilineal cultures as a threaten to the identity of the ethnic group for the third time in history since the first due to the wars against ancient China and the second in Maoist Cultural Revolution period. In the forestage of tourism, most visitors to Mosuo communities such as tourists, journalists or anthropologists show an extreme interest in their female-centered cultures – matrilineal family structure and “walking marriage” system and they usually connect these cultures with sex. Visitors to Luoshui have the idea of looking for adventures in mind and in order to please the visitors so the tourism practitioners can gain more profit, local tourism industry starts to attract tourists with enticing hotels and bars. And keen on the tourist revenue, the villagers’ committee orders every household to take part in the services of tourism but fails to adopt a measure to effectively maintain their fame. Learning about superficial phenomena about tourism’s disturbance on Mosuo villages, I have entered the backstage of their cognition by the means of interview. And I have shown that Mosuo women have started to feel dissatisfaction about the agricultural prohibition, larger share of profits taken by tourism practitioners from outside and the commercialization of sex. Besides, unfavorable influence of tourism increases the ecological burden in Lugu Lake area. And tourism on one hand, has reinforced the external expression of Mosuo matrilineal cultures and “walking marriage” system, it on the other hand has weakened the women’s female-centered position. Both in order to preserve and pass on Mosuo matrilineal cultures, Mathilde ter Heijne purchases an antique wooden Grandmother’s House in her exhibition and Erqing records the seller’s life after the deal with his camera from a Mosuo perspective. In the contrast of their works, I have concluded that other than by the means of tourism, neoliberal capitalism and globalization have reached Mosuo matrilineal communities in other ways. And it is predictable that men have more chances gain a more centered status by contributing more to the household when the neoliberal capitalist market enrolls Mosuo communities. Although in history, two times of cultural crises from the power of religion, war and politics have not altered the fundamental structures of Mosuo matrilineal family and “walking marriage” system, the forces from the dominant mainstream of society structures such as political institutions and economic policies nevertheless caused imbalance and unfavorable problems within the Mosuo

matrilineal society. And therefore in order to solve the similar problems aroused by neoliberal globalization and tourism, several trends should be brought to the forefront to preserve Mosuo matrilineal cultures, for instance, the tendency of slow growth and even negative growth of Mosuo population inhabited in the Lugu Lake area, the Chinese one-child policy, more and more migrant workers among youngsters, unconscionable tourist management institution and excessive tourist development. The Mosuo matrilineal cultures and “walking marriage” system are under the potential threats of these trends. Only by facing these threats and tracing Mosuo’s historical backgrounds and respecting Mosuo contemporary needs can we find a way to preserve Mosuo matrilineal cultures under the tendency of neoliberal globalization. The unexpected cultural struggles lead by women over neoliberalism in this community should alert us the importance of preserve a local paradigm of female-centered society and the beauty of cultural diversity.

I conclude with a paragraph translated from Bai Hua’s (1988) novel *The Remote Country of Women*. It uses Mosuo society as a mirror to criticize the modern “civilized” society and demonstrates how the multicultural encounters have brought about unexpected perspectives to those who think they are the “norms”.

What am I still doing here? And therefore, I walked away from their sides. I walked away from their courtyard. I walked away from their village. I walked away from their world. By their sides, in their courtyard, their village, and their world, I no longer existed. I left, as an outsider. What dreadful – as an outsider! I finally did realize what one feels as an outsider. I shall return to the world that I feel tired of, that I detest, that I am also familiar with and I had loved. At least in the cinema I can still sell tickets, check tickets or sweep the floor. And I can occasionally take a glance at the films that I have watched for a thousand times, hearing spectators’ laughter, applause and cheers – in China, no matter how vulgar the movie is, there are people who applaud and cheer. ... I definitely realized that I left a beautiful dream behind me. But what is before me? There is a sun above our heads. Is it possible that the suns above your, his and my heads are the same sun?

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