Another characteristic of ritual that is useful to distinguish it from things that we call habits, is that rituals tend t
demarcate the domain of the sacred. And that means that ritual actions are important, they matter to us. And if somebody interrupts our rituals, we then get stressed, we then get upset. So they seem to be very meaningful, very important.

Can a ritual itself feel uncomfortable while its interruption also feels uncomfortable? Is familiarity different from comfort?

ation, or a wedding, or a funeral. There's always this element of repetition to ritual.

Is repetition only a feature of ritual, or is it also what gives ritual authority? Does something begin to feel "right" simply because it has been repeated many times?

ds: What happens if your son held a gun to your head and said, "You will drink this every morning?" I'm

Whatever may have been the causes, there is no denying a renewed curiosity about the nature of the connections between culture, cognition, and perception, as these connections are revealed in symbolic forms.

And at what point does a repeated symbolic action become a social expectation or rule?

If people repeat a ritual without consciously thinking about its meaning, is the ritual still functioning symbolically?

Elliot and Maier (2012) have proposed color-in-context theory, which draws on social learning, as well as biology. Some responses to color stimuli are presumed to be solely due to the repeated pairing of color and particular concepts, messages, and experiences. Others, however, are presumed to represent a biologically engrained predisposition that is reinforced and shaped by social learning. Through this social learning, color associations can be extended beyond natural bodily processes (e.g.,

If a color acquires meaning through repeated associations, might people eventually forget how those associations were formed and begin to see that meaning as inherent to the color itself?

Western conception of the elementary individual. The relational conception of personal identity is more fluid, as it is based on the flux of social relationships. [14] The rituals depicted in *Raise the Red Lantern* and *Judou* govern interpersonal relations and reinforce social hierarchies, highlighting how power is exerted through everyday social practice.

The characters in *Raise the Red Lantern* are strictly controlled by ceremonies such as the raising of the red lanterns, and also by "family customs." Liyan Qin notes how, "Zhang makes the phrase 'old rules' (*lao guiju*) a recurring theme." [15] The spatial confinement of characters is defined by custom (each wife has a separate house within the compound) and emphasised at the level of cinematography, constantly framing characters within architectural structures. Customary forms of address in the film ("First Mistress," Second Mistress," and so on) serve to remind the wives and the audience that characters are defined by their position in the family, reinforcing position within a hierarchy.

① When people continue performing a ritual, are they also reproducing the social hierarchy embe within it, even if they do not consciously support it?

ow, "Zhang makes the phrase 'old rules' (*lao guiju*) a recurring theme." [15] The
d by custom (each wife has a separate house within the compound) and em-

② Does describing a rule as "old" or "traditional" give it authority, even when its origin is uncle or invented?

How, then, does citationality work in the invented rituals in *Raise the Red Lantern* and *Judou*? It does not. The rituals in these films are performed assuming the pattern of citationality of all rituals. However, because they are invented, they in fact have no precedent. This means that these rituals are references without referents, or, to use Jean Baudrillard's term, simulacra. [32] Invented rituals cite nothing. I contend that the invention of ritual in *Raise the Red Lantern* and *Judou* deliberately disrupts the citationality of performativity. Rituals are so prominent in *Raise the Red Lantern* and *Judou* because they form the basis of Chinese cultural identity. James Watson notes that the performance of ritual played an integral part in unifying Chinese identity. [33] In addition, the co-editor of the *Journal of Ritual Studies*, Donald Sutton, suggests in his discussion of Zhang's films that "ritual, it can be said, embodied the unity and diversity of China – Chineseness in all its complexity." [34]

appearance of historical

invented ritual → repeated representation → cultural familiy → new precedent

oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed

Step 5: maintenance the rule, repair is possible, but replacement feels dangerous.

the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when

Step 6: system update

Conclusion

Does inventing a ritual make the structure of ritual more visible?

The invention of ritual in *Judou* and *Raise the Red Lantern* disturbs the citationality of the performative form. In the context of cultural representation, this disturbance has significant implications. It can be read as a disavowal of concep-

From Repetition to Intervention

① (Social Science Bites, 2023)

Even when a ritual feels uncomfortable, people may still hesitate to break it, repetition creates familiarity, and this familiarity may gradually make the rule feel normal and taken for granted.

② (Social Science Bites, 2023)

③ (Turner, 1969)

Repetition may not only maintain the form of a ritual but also make its meaning feel familiarity. Even when participants no longer actively ~~make~~ think about why a ritual exists, they may continue to follow its established pattern.

④ (Elliot, 2015, p. 2)

Rituals can be repeated ~~out~~ without people consciously thinking about their meaning.

Similarly, colors may gradually acquire cultural meanings through repeated associations with certain concepts or contexts. This makes me notice how socially assigned meanings can sometimes be seen as inherent to things themselves.

⑤ (O'Meara, 2018)

The meaning of a color also depends on the context in which it is used. In Raise the Red Lantern, red lanterns become associated with status and power within the household through specific rituals. Repeated ~~rituals~~ participation in these rituals may also reinforce the social hierarchy ~~and~~ the lanterns repeated.

⑥ (O'Meara, 2018)

When these rituals are seen as traditions, tradition itself may become a reason to keep following them, making the power relations within them less likely to be questioned.

⑦ (O'Meara, 2018)

However, traditions are not necessarily ancient. Even when a ritual is invented, repeated performance and representation may gradually make it familiar and give it a sense of natural authority.

⑧ (Jackson, 1948)

As a ritual comes to be seen as a tradition, people may begin to preserve the objects and procedures associated with it.

⑨ (Jackson, 1948)

However, preserving a tradition does not mean that every detail must remain unchanged. Small changes do not necessarily challenge the overall structure of a ritual and may even help it continue.

(O'Meara, 2018)

⑩ Design could intervene by challenging existing rules through adjustments, modifications, or even the creation of new rules, making the process of how rules gain and maintain authority more visible.

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