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Perceptions and Destinations

“BEIJING PEOPLE are very warm-hearted. In Beijing (北京), I saw people treat beggars not only to food but also to old clothes,” one said. Someone else added: “Shanghainese (上海人), though, are money-seeking. In Shanghai, once I asked somebody for direction and was lead to my destination, but I was charged for the privilege...”

This conversation, which is the opening of a fictional novel, takes place in a train station waiting hall where it is overheard by two rural migrant workers. Two migrant workers determined to search for a new career in Beijing and Shanghai respectively. On hearing this dialogue while waiting for the train, they both had a change of heart, arousing a dramatic change in their destinations. The one who wanted to go to Shanghai suddenly thought: “Shanghai is such a difficult place, and Beijing sounds so friendly. As a newcomer, even if I could not find a job, I would probably not be starved there”. While the one who wanted to go to Beijing thought: “In Shanghai you can make money even by giving a person directions, it would be impossible to fail to earn money there!” So they decide to exchange their tickets. The story ends with the one who went to Shanghai becoming an entrepreneur, and the one who went to Beijing becoming a beggar.

I read this story 20 years ago and I was so deeply impressed with and inspired by how much one’s perception directs one’s destination. From that moment on, I have especially enjoyed observing different people’s perceptions of the same facts or information and I always try to perceive one thing from different perspectives. I have gotten so much joy and inspiration from that. It is actually one of my missions and one of the reasons for my initiative to share various perspectives on China via Global China Insights.

I have conducted a number of interviews with different people for this issue, and many times I just could not help but think about the story, and I was impressed by a lot of my interviewees’ insightful perceptions: Mr. Daan Roosegaarde perceived the smog of Beijing as an opportunity for his business in China, and he achieved an innovative solution for the project (Feature interview); Mr. Huang Nubo (黄怒波) equated entrepreneurship to climbing a mountain as one needs to challenge the uncertainty during the process (Business China); Mrs. Xia Hua (夏华) was determined to renovate the men’s clothing field when other people competed in lady’s costumes and did not think there would be any demand for men’s fashion in China (Made in China).

I believe it is an art in life to perceive things from different angles because it provides people with an open vision to many possibilities and directions. If you follow a new direction, you might suddenly become aware of it and take the appropriate action: a rewarding destination might be waiting for you. In that sense, we can say that perceptions determine destinations.

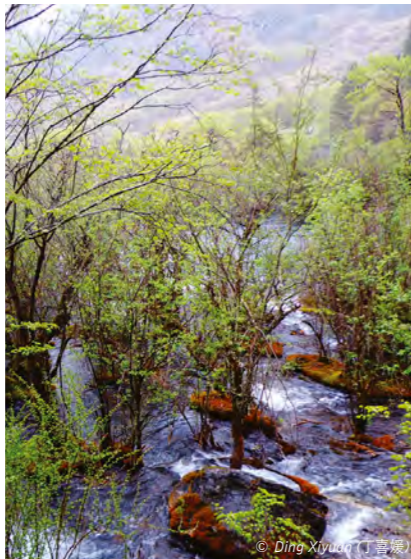
Liu Jingyi
Editor-in-Chief

On the Usefulness of Uselessness

Luo Xuan (罗璇)

Pragmatism has been at the heart of modern society in which the seemingly useless things are simply out of place. But actually, there is no such thing as absolute uselessness, Taoist philosopher Zhuang Zhou (庄周 ca. 369-286 BC), better known as Chuang-Tze (庄子), argues in the parable of the useless tree. The story goes: A wandering carpenter, called Stone, saw on his travels a gigantic old oak tree standing in a field near an earth-altar. The carpenter said to his apprentice, who was admiring the oak: "This is a useless tree. If you wanted to make a ship, it would soon rot; if you wanted to make tools, they would break. You cannot do anything useful with this tree, and that is why it has become so old."

We live in a world of ever increasing speed. People want results and they want them now. In fact, they wanted them an hour ago. Our society, therefore, tends to be governed by short-term pragmatism and efficiency. Anything requiring too much time, money or effort will quickly be deemed 'useless'. As a result, our educational systems, industry and society at large have all become standardised to a high degree. They provide a constant stream of model employees to the factories producing commodities for the masses. However, something valuable is lost in that process. Something we may not be able to afford in the long term. And something that might be regained if we take this lesson from Chuang-Tze to heart:



That same evening, when the carpenter went to sleep, the old oak tree appeared to him in his dream and said: "Why do you compare me to your cultivated trees? Even before they can ripen their fruit, people attack and violate them. Their

branches are broken, their twigs are torn. Their own gifts bring harm to them, and they cannot live out their natural span. That is what happens everywhere, and that is why I have long since tried to become completely useless."

What Chuang-Tze illustrates with the parable of the useless tree is not that the tree is actually without use; rather, the usefulness of the tree is lost on the carpenter because of his limited perspective. He looks at the tree as a carpenter typically would: raw material that must be turned into a ship or a tool. For the old oak tree however, it is a different story altogether. Being turned into a ship is not necessarily such a great thing from its perspective; instead, it chooses to preserve itself by becoming 'useless' in the eyes of the carpenter.

This principle of relativity is a recurring theme in the philosophy of Chuang-Tze. And it does not only apply to usefulness. The same goes for aesthetics (what is beautiful or ugly), ethics (what is good or bad) and even knowledge (what is true or false). Most essentially, Chuang-Tze argues that all of these perspectives are equally valid: One is not necessarily better than the other.

In the case of usefulness, Chuang-Tze's sceptical view has been applied by modern scholars as well. By the well-known

educational scientist Ken Robinson for instance, who presents it as an argument against uniform education. By putting all our students into the same educational straitjacket, special talents will easily get lost because these individual talents may not be perceived as useful. The students are instead forced to study more 'practical' skills, which may not be quite suitable for them.

Their own gifts thus not only bring harm to themselves, but possibly also to the society at large. As some of these unique talents are wasted this way, it might prove essential in the long run. For instance, when facing the great (ecological) challenges of our time: overpopulation, the depletion of natural resources, the reduction of natural habitats and biodiversity, and deforestation. These challenges will require innovative solutions, requiring in turn special skills and talents. Man can no longer afford to rely on the system which created these problems in the first place to also provide these solutions. Nor can people rely on

mere serendipitous discoveries to alter our existing paradigms. Instead, the realisation of personal potential and the development of the individual's special skills and talents – useful or useless – should be at the heart of the education system, if not at the heart of society in general.

The carpenter woke up and meditated upon his dream, and later, when his apprentice asked him why just this one tree served to protect the earth-altar, he answered: "The tree grew here on purpose because anywhere else people would have ill-treated it. If it were not the tree of the earth-altar, it might have been chopped down."

Current educational systems are not designed to develop any of the seemingly 'useless' skills that may be required to provide solutions to the great challenges of our times. In order to protect the 'earth-altars' of our own life-world, some wise lessons could be taken from an ancient Taoist Master. Like the apprentice in the parable, may we admire people and things

for what they are and not merely for their apparent usefulness. Like the carpenter, may we learn not to judge these 'useless' people and things too quickly, but realise that our own perspective is always limited to some degree. And finally, like the oak tree, may we as a society grow old and 'useless' and live out our natural life span.

Luo Xuan (罗璇) has a Master's degree in Religious Studies from Sichuan University (四川大学) in China and is currently doing a Research Master in Religion and Culture at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Groningen. Her research orientation is primarily focused on Chinese Taoism and its negotiations with Chinese Buddhism, Confucianism and folk religions.



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Globalising China

Part 2: Fast Foreign Economic Expansion¹

Rien T. Segers

As discussed in the *Domestic Market of the People's Republic of China* in the previous edition of this magazine, the staggering economic growth of China has garnered a lot of attention and, in many cases, the rise of China is perceived by governments and companies of many other countries alike as a threat to national security, domestic economies and the overall business climate. What are the hallmarks of the Chinese domestic economy and how has it achieved such rapid growth through trade and OFDI? This section gives an overview of the current state of Chinese OFDI, its development and the events and policies influencing its growth.

China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment (OFDI)

In combination with its attractiveness as a production location, China today has become a very busy home for multinational activities. In 2009, China received a total FDI inflow of USD 95 billion (€68.95bn), which was actually a drop of 12% with respect to 2008 (UNCTAD, 2011). Nevertheless, this amount makes it the second largest recipient of FDI behind the United States, which suffered a decline of 59% in 2009. In contrast to its inflows, OFDI flows from China are a more recent phenomenon and have amounted to a considerable size in a relatively short period (see Fig. 1).

In spite of the global trend of decline in OFDI seen over the past two years, Chinese OFDI actually managed to increase during this period. Especially in the last five or six years, Chinese OFDI flows picked up quickly (see Fig. 1). Total flows of Chinese OFDI reached USD 56.53 billion by 2009, making China the fifth largest investor worldwide behind the United States,

Germany, France and Japan for that year (see Fig. 2).

China has built up its foreign OFDI stock at a breathtaking pace around the world. Unsurprisingly, the centre of gravity of Chinese OFDI stock lies in Asia (see Fig. 3). Accounting for 89% of Chinese OFDI stock in Asia, China's Asian OFDI stock is concentrated in Hong Kong (香港 Xiānggǎng), Singapore and Macao (澳门 Àomén). Strong cultural links, diplomatic ties and quickly developing economies make Hong Kong, Singapore and Macao attractive destinations for Chinese OFDI. Quite striking is the high rank of Pakistan on the list. Apart from Chinese assets in mining and infrastructure, Chinese investments in Pakistan seem highly driven by regional security as both countries share a rivalry with neighboring India.

¹ Part 1: The Domestic Market of the People's Republic of China was published in Issue 2 of Global China Insights (GCI).



To what extent do Chinese companies become transnational corporations?

The intentions to invest abroad are clearly present among Chinese companies and the amount of foreign assets is increasing. As Chinese companies are relative newcomers to cross-border investment, the question arises: To what extent do they become transnational corporations? Many Chinese companies with large foreign assets have significant state involvement. According to UNCTAD's transnationality index, which determines the largest emerging market companies by foreign assets, overseas sales and employment, only two Chinese companies have more assets abroad than

in China: Beijing Enterprises Group (北京控股集团 Běijīng Kònggǔ Jítuán) and TPV Technology Limited (冠捷科技集团 Guànjié Kējì Jítuán). The other companies may have a lot of foreign assets but have scores under 50% on the transnationality index. Chinese state-owned resource companies, such as CNOOC (中国海洋石油总公司 Zhōngguó Hǎiyáng Shíyóu Zǒnggōngsī) and China National Petroleum Company (中国石油天然气总公司 Zhōngguó Shíyóu Tiānránqì Zǒnggōngsī), have very low transnationality scores of 9.4% and 2.7% (UNCTAD, 2011). Foreign assets of large Chinese companies are



Figure 1: Chinese outward FDI flows from 2001-2009 (USD millions)
Source: UNCTAD, 2011



Capability Constraints of Chinese Firms in the Global Market

Although Chinese firms have implemented various expansion strategies successfully and have built up firm-specific advantages, they do reveal some weaknesses that can affect growth and international expansion. For instance, for some industries and products, the Chinese domestic market, or any other emerging market, is relatively small or non-existent compared to the global market (Williamson et al., 2010). Certain Chinese firms will have a hard time establishing sizable production volumes for domestic or peripheral markets before building up cost advantages in foreign markets.

growing quickly but the low transnationality scores underline that the majority of enterprises are still in an early stage of internationalisation.

The most influential stage of Chinese OFDI policy development is definitely the implementation of the 'go global' policy. The state gradually stepped away from its interventionist role and increasingly assumed the role of facilitator. Outward investment was no longer restricted to state-owned enterprises, but since 2003 privately owned enterprises have been able to invest abroad. Their involvement in OFDI has received extra encouragement since 2006 (Rosen et al., 2009). Under the 'go global' policy, administrative approval procedures for foreign investments projects have been simplified and standardised and guiding catalogues have been set up directed at special regions and industries. In its monitoring activities, the government has started to emphasise on performance rather than quantity as it used to do.

Another limitation to Chinese corporate expansion strategies is the immaturity of its industries and technologies. Insufficient knowledge and strength in base technology and the lack of international experience can hamper development of Chinese firms. As the pace of technological change and evolution is rapid, Chinese firms may struggle in keeping up with developments and to put out reliable products. Acquiring foreign technology can become a cost burden when product life cycles outrun firms. Chinese companies are still quite inexperienced at managing and coordinating a complex, interrelated global value chain. Especially in fast-moving consumer goods industries and pharmaceuticals, the value chain is intricately sliced and requires a systematic approach. For Chinese companies, it is often unclear in which part of the value chain they can apply their cost-innovation advantages, or how to distribute these advantages over various activities, without

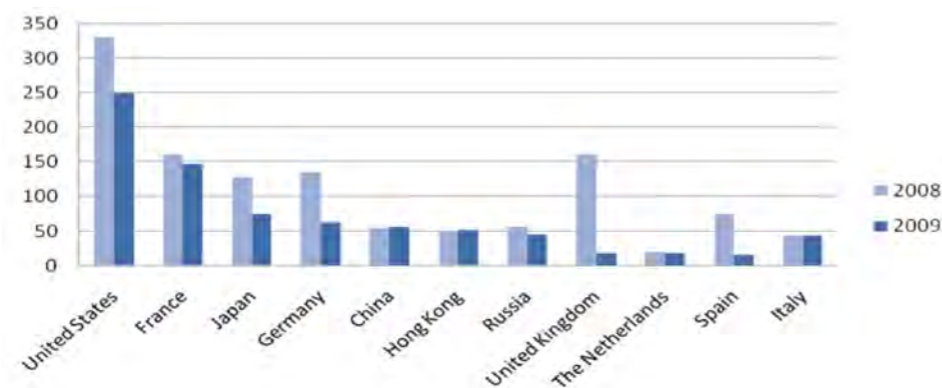


Figure 2: Largest investors by OFDI flows in 2008 and 2009 (USD billions)

Source: MOFCOM, 2010, UNCTAD, 2011

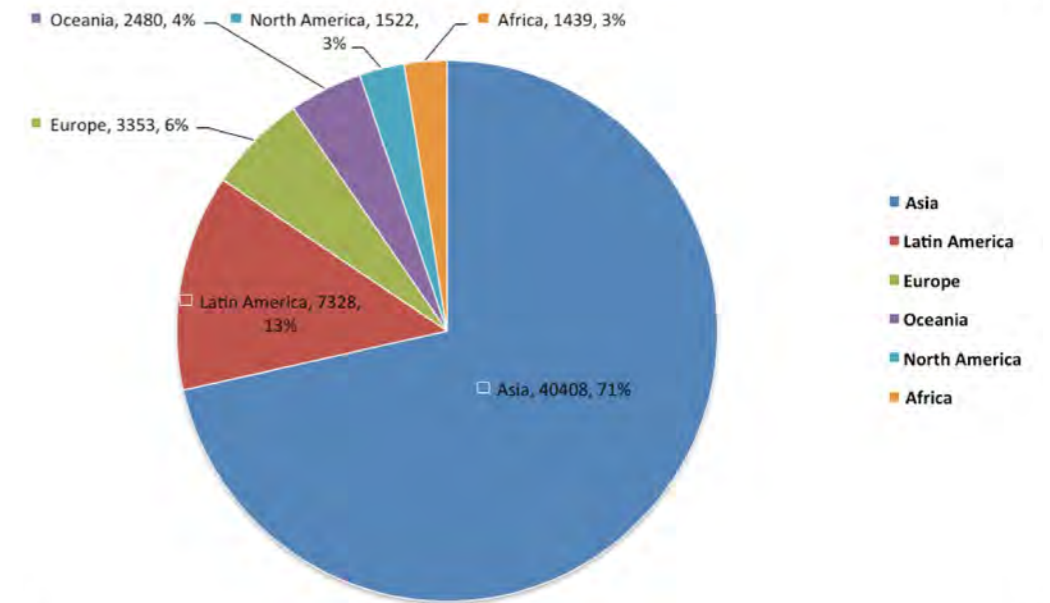


Figure 3: Destinations of Chinese OFDI flows in 2009
Source: MOFCOM, 2010

Although Chinese firms have implemented various expansion strategies successfully and have built up firm-specific advantages, they do reveal some weaknesses that can affect growth and international expansion.

jeopardising the value of a product or service.

Intangible assets, such as brand names and technology, are important factors when engaging in overseas activities. As latecomers, Chinese companies have not yet had the opportunity to build up these assets and are disadvantaged. High technology, variety or specialty products at a low price may not be convincing enough to break into markets where end customers display a high degree of brand loyalty (Williamson et al., 2010).

Conclusion

Over the last 30 years, the Chinese economy has experienced immense growth. China has become an economic and political force to be reckoned with and is bound to increase its influence even further. The startling domestic economic growth is promising, but China will face multiple challenges to sustain a certain growth while stabilising its institutions, averting possible social unrest, rebalancing its regional socio-economic disparities, diversifying its economic structure and addressing environmental and other civil society issues in the process. It is a gargantuan task to complete, but the Chinese people, corporations and government seem ready to push the country into a new stage of domestic consolidation and broader economic development.

For a long time, Rien T. Segers was Professor of Asian Business Culture at the University of Groningen. Now he is Director of Asian Strategy of the three Northern Dutch Provinces. In addition, he serves as Professor of Asian Business Strategies at the Hanze University of Applied Science in Groningen and as Research Fellow at the International Institute Clingendael in The Hague. Currently he is a visiting professor of Asian Studies at the Department of Asian Studies, University of Maryland Baltimore (UMBC), USA. This article is adapted from a book which recently appeared: Asia: Reshaping the Global Economic Landscape (Aix-la-Chapelle: Shaker, 2013), which he wrote together with Trevor Stam.

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Partner or Rival?

The Narrow Margins of Dutch Policy-making Regarding China

Jan van der Harst

The recent visit of China's president Xi Jinping (习近平) to the Netherlands is seen as a milestone in the diplomatic relations between the two countries. Since the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, no Chinese president has ever set foot on Dutch soil until Xi's arrival at Schiphol Airport on 22 March 2014. His visit was a clear manifestation of growing goodwill and understanding in the bilateral sphere. At the same time, it was the confirmation of a longer existing tendency in Sino-Dutch contacts to focus almost exclusively on the pursuit of mutual economic benefit – visible most notably in the presence of strong business delegations on either side – while simultaneously avoiding the more thorny political issues. In the course of time, the Netherlands has developed into an important trading partner for China, ranking only second to Germany out of all EU member states. Also, mutual investment levels have recently undergone vast improvement. The focus on 'low politics' issues is caused by these rapidly intensifying economic contacts, but it may also be explained as the logical consequence of a power shift in bilateral relations, with China evidently in the driver's seat nowadays and with the Netherlands in a subsidiary position. The trend towards depoliticisation (by removing the sensitive political 'sting' out of bilateral relations), as preferred by China, as well as the continuing process of Europeanising Dutch policies, has affected the margins for The Hague's policy-making regarding Beijing (北京).

CHINA HAS BECOME A FOCAL POINT of international relations in the 21st century. The country is home to a substantial part of the world's population and in the past thirty years, its standard of living has grown faster than anywhere else in the world. During the most recent decade, Beijing – with an average of 10% GDP growth per year – has achieved unprecedented economic development

and managed to lift a large part of the population out of extreme poverty. The increased weight of China – and the wider Asian Pacific – in the global economy has manifested itself in the strengthening of economic and trade relations with the rest of the world. As a consequence, free movement at sea and political stability in the Asian region are no longer purely regional-Asian concerns, but have developed into a matter of

global relevance, also affecting the countries of the European Union, including the Netherlands.

In December 2013, the Advisory Council on International Affairs (Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken, AIV), an authoritative advisory body of the Dutch government on issues of foreign and defense policy, published its long-awaited report on the expected strategic implications of the rise of Asia in global politics.¹ The Rutte government had asked for this advice because of increasing concerns about the consequences of growing Asian power for the position of Europe, and the Netherlands in particular. The government also wanted to know what the so-called US pivot towards the Asian Pacific, proclaimed by the Obama administration in 2011, actually signified for Europe. With its pivot strategy, US foreign policy aims to veer away from its traditional focus on the Atlantic area in favour of a new orientation on China and neighbouring countries in Asia. The AIV's advisory report was meant as a sequel to the Council's advice of 2007, then published under the title *China in the balance: Towards a mature relationship*. The 2007 report had provoked considerable discussion and contention in policy-making circles in The Hague, because of the explicit recommendations it contained, most notably the call for lifting the EU arms embargo

imposed on China after the Tiananmen riots in 1989.

This time, early in 2014, reactions to the AIV's new Asia report have proved to be much less agitated. This is mainly caused by the Council's deliberate choice for cautiously worded positions and conclusions. Contrary to 2007, balance and nuance are the main ingredients of the report; yin (阴) and yang (阳) prevail, clear-cut recommendations are difficult to find. Misleadingly, the report's title suggests a focus on the region (East) Asia, but the major part of the text is devoted to one country: China. In the AIV's view, China is a threat but also an opportunity; the Chinese are partners but also competitors; the Chinese government has no ambition for leadership, but its assertive policies may very well lead to (regional) conflict and war, etc. With such emphasis on differentiation and modification, everyone can find something to his own liking in the report. Sometimes this way of arguing confuses the reader, for example, when the AIV posits that the Netherlands should pursue multilateralism in the relationship with China, but, if necessary, not refrain from

In the AIV's view, China is a threat but also an opportunity; the Chinese are partners but also competitors.

¹ Advisory Council on International Affairs, *Asia on the rise. Strategic significance and implications*, AIV-advice no 86, The Hague, December 2013.



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Particularly for a smaller country like the Netherlands, the margins for an explicitly formulated policy strategy regarding China and the Asian Pacific are extremely narrow.

bilateral action. What might also be confusing is when the report's strongly worded desideratum that Europe and the US should team up together in their Asia policies is followed by the assertion that the Obama administration is not really interested in what the EU really wants. The AIV's preference for (over-)nuancing sometimes makes reading the report a rather tedious task.

It is tempting to criticise the report for this apparent lack of focus. At the same time, one should sympathise with the drafters that overly assertive statements concerning relations with present-day China and East Asia are just not opportune. Particularly for a smaller country like the Netherlands, the margins for an explicitly formulated policy strategy regarding China and the Asian Pacific are extremely narrow. China's current successful attempts at depoliticising the bilateral relationship have limited the Dutch government's space to manoeuvre. Moreover, most of the Dutch economic policies regarding the Asian region are embedded in the larger EU framework and have to a substantial degree become 'Europeanised'. Hence, seen from the national perspective, a certain degree of modesty and caution seems justifiable.

The AIV report reminds us that Europe is particularly concerned with economic and trade relations with Asia, much more than with security issues. In this respect, EU and US policy approaches are vastly different, as is

shown by Obama's 'pivot to Asia' strategy (later rephrased as 'rebalancing to Asia' because of the potentially aggressive meaning of the former term). The defense strategic guidance presented by the Obama administration confirms the desire of maintaining American leadership in the world, also in military terms. European stakes are different. Illustratively, an EU official once observed that "the US will be an Asian power and we [the EU] will be an Asian partner". The EU and the individual EU states consider Asia primarily in terms of (rising) markets and not particularly as a region where national security interests are at stake. This makes the relationship between the EU and China less explosive than the Sino-American one. What the AIV report does very well is to give a clear exposé of strategic developments in China and the East Asian region and a survey of possible consequences of these geopolitical changes.

One of the AIV report's main recommendations concerns an element of trade policy: In the Council's view the Dutch government should strive consistently for a joint EU stance on trade relations with China, even if such a position might sometimes conflict with Dutch national interests. In this respect, the AIV points to the widely existing but harmful bilateral trade practices between individual EU countries and China interfering with the common trade philosophy of the Union. EU member states

tend to look for short-term advantages and gains in their economic dealings with China, with the likely risk of long-term damage for Europe as a whole in the shape of increased protectionism and the corresponding loss of a level playing field. Recent intra-European divisions on the import of solar panels from China are a case in point here. For a country like the Netherlands with its open economy, its function as a logistical centre in Europe (the port of Rotterdam) and its intensive trade relations with China, such protectionist tendencies could be particularly hurtful. Hence, the AIV's understandable plea for an extension and strengthening of the EU common market and a clear-cut mandate for the European Commission to act as a central negotiator on behalf of the member states. From that perspective, the guiding line for the Commission should not be protectionism or blind trust in liberal trade, but rather a strategy based on 'economic realism': Openness where possible, but with room for restrictions. The general tenor



of the report is that mutually binding agreements with China are only possible if the EU member states manage to speak with one voice.

With its focus on 'low politics' issues, the EU indeed is more a partner than a power rival to China. However, despite the lack of a sharp political edge, the relationship between China and the EU has encountered serious problems, recently. Negotiations between Brussels and Beijing about a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement have arrived in difficult straits

since 2008. This has mainly to do with internal divisions within the EU, caused by the financial crisis. Since the start of the crisis, quite a few EU member states facing the problems of rising public debts and falling income are in search of attracting Chinese investments to stimulate their own economic performance without asking China for reciprocity in the opening of markets for European companies. Opposite to those is a group of EU countries less hit by the crisis and more inclined to confront the Chinese government with demands of reciprocity in trade and investment. The Netherlands belongs to the latter group. Before the start of the crisis in 2008, it was easier to bring member states on one line regarding trade matters with China. The fact that this has changed considerably in more recent time, has been an extra motive for the AIV to emphasise the importance of a common European stance.

From the AIV's report it becomes clear that the Netherlands perceives present-day China more as a partner than as a rival. The report also confirms the notion that the room for independent Dutch policy-making towards China has become extremely narrow. This is caused by two main factors: China's preference for depoliticising diplomatic relations and the enduring process of framing Dutch policies into the overarching EU framework. European multilateralism limits Dutch autonomy, but also provides chances: It offers the Netherlands the possibility to hide behind the EU shield in stormy times, being less exposed to China's policy ambitions than would be the case in a purely bilateral setting.

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An Emerging Stratum: China's Entrepreneurs

Liu Jingyi (刘婧一)

Global China Business Meeting is the foremost annual business meeting on China, open to entrepreneurs of leading companies from China and around the world. 2013 Horasis Global China Business Meeting took place in The Hague, the Netherlands from 10-11 November 2013. During the meeting, Dr. Liu Jingyi, the Editor-in-Chief of Global China Insights, had a featured interview with Mr. Huang Nubo (黄怒波), the President of Zhongkun Investment Group, China (中坤投资集团) and Mrs. He Zhenhong (何振红), President of China Entrepreneur Magazine (《中国企业家》) on the emerging stratum of Chinese entrepreneurs.

Mrs. He, I have been a loyal reader of your magazine and I am very much impressed by the position of CEM: the business and life of a stratum (一个阶层的生意和生活). Could you please tell our readers what the stratum of China's Entrepreneur is like?

He Zhenhong: China Entrepreneur Magazine was launched by Economy Daily Group in 1985 and it was the first magazine given the name 'Entrepreneur'. With the core idea that "the competition of national strengths lies in enterprises, while

enterprises' in entrepreneurs", we advocate the spirit of Chinese entrepreneurs, and give them a reputation as the most respectable people and the mainstay of the society. If you want me to depict what the stratum is like, I think, a vivid model is just sitting here: Mr. Huang Nubo. To give a collective profile, I think, first, Chinese entrepreneurs have made great contributions to China's economic development. This contribution lies not only in the gross economic growth, but also in the fact that they are the main

force in transforming China into a market-oriented society, which is huge contribution in my view. Meanwhile, the entrepreneurs are making efforts to promote the social development leveraging their own sense, reflection and advocating action. They do not restrict themselves in enlarging the scale of the enterprises, but tend to spend a lot of energy on environmental protection and other social responsibilities. Their spirits and social concern are leading and molding the social culture, which empowers



He Zhenhong, President of China Entrepreneur Magazine (CEM), President of China Entrepreneur Mulan Club (木兰汇), Director of the Organization Committee of China Entrepreneur Summit, Director of the judges of CCTV annual Top 10 Economic Person. Active as a journalist and news editor, she is considered an expert in macroeconomics, industrial economy and corporations. She was awarded the title of Top 10 Best Journalists, Top 10 Best Editors by the Economic Daily Group and had the honour of being National Distinguished Media professional.

transformation of the society, bringing it to a new level. They are also a group of people who are bringing China's culture into the international arena.

I think that is rather an important point regarding China entrepreneurs' cultural mission and efforts. Could you tell me more?

He Zhenhong: As you just saw in the award ceremony of China's business leaders of the year, the prize winner Mrs. Xia Hua (夏华), President of Eve Group (依文), took Chinese costume design to the Opening of London Olympics Games and shared the story of China's brand internationally. Mr. Huang Nubo is extremely respectable for his great action to reach the summit of Everest three times and I understand it not just a sport for him; it is a process in which he ponders over the significance of life by challenging himself. The project Faces of Humanity Initiative, which Mr. Huang launched recently, is another one of his impressive actions. Its aim is to reserve the world's culture heritage, which shows the pursuit, spirit and efforts of China's Entrepreneur to communicate with the rest of the world.

Thank you, Mrs. He! Right on this point, Mr. Huang, I would like to hear from you: What is your definition of the spirit of a

Chinese entrepreneur?

Huang Nubo: I think Ru Shang (儒商), which stands for Confucian Businessmen, would be a suitable concept to explain the spirit of Chinese entrepreneur. It combines traditional Confucian ethic and modern entrepreneurship. I just had a conversation with Professor Tu Weiming (杜维明), a professor of Peking University (北京大学) and Harvard University, about what Ru Shang is, details of which have been given a full-page spread in the *Economic Observer Newspaper*. You know, the Western economist Joseph Schumpeter placed an emphasis on innovation in his definition of entrepreneurship; he pointed out that it is the entrepreneur, and no other, who disrupts the monotonous equilibrium of the economy and who is the prime cause of economic development and increases societal wellness. By taking high risks, entrepreneurs create high opportunities. I think his concept is one side of Ru Shang, who are innovators in the market environment. The opening-up of China in the late 1970s released the spirit of Chinese Entrepreneurs, which in my opinion is the greatest significance of this policy. It became possible for entrepreneurs to innovate by disrupting the certain equilibrium to create wealth

and promote social development. Then back to the concept of Ru Shang, the other side of this concept, I think, is the Tianxia Qinghuai (天下情怀), the high regard and concern for the world or the society. It's different from the Western enterprise ethics, which, according to Max Weber, is the Protestant work ethic, including engagement in one's work, accumulation of wealth for investment, fulfillment from the work and also being thrifty in life. While the spirit of Chinese entrepreneurs can be traced back to Confucian advice: to be rich and benevolent (为富且仁), to be rich and honorable by highly respecting and nicely performing the norms and rites (富而好礼).

This reminds me of the dialogue between Zigong (子贡) and Confucius in the Analects.

Huang Nubo: That's right. You know, Zigong is the greatest Ru Shang in history and one of Confucius' students. He asked for the comments from Confucius on his beliefs of "Poverty without flattery, rich but not arrogant (贫而不谄, 富而不骄)," and Confucius said that is not enough. You should achieve a higher status: "Being poor in life, but enjoy learning the Dao (道); Being rich in wealth but also honorable in manner (贫而乐道, 富而好礼)." Actually, these ideas developed into my concept Tianxia Qinghuai, the high regard and concern to

Huang Nubo, Founder and Chairman of Beijing Zhongkun Investment Group, which is the only private enterprise in China that operates a world cultural heritage site - Hongcun (宏村) - a famous scenic ancient village in southern China. Listed by Forbes as a billionaire, Huang Nubo has given over one billion RMB (€0.12bn) to charity. He is known as a famous Chinese entrepreneur, poet and mountaineer. His poems have been translated into ten different languages, and during the last ten years he has reached the highest summits of the seven continents of the world, and successfully arrived at the North and South Poles.





the world. Chinese entrepreneurs need to follow the advice of Fan Zhongyan (范仲淹): *One should first be concerned about the world and enjoy oneself after the entire world has become fine* (先天下之忧而忧, 后天下之乐而乐). Entrepreneurship is a reflection of concern to the world; entrepreneurs want to contribute to the country and to the world by increasing the scale of the enterprises and paying more taxes to the country and being more charitable to the society. You can also see the entrepreneurs keep working so hard on innovation, even when they seem very successful already, for example, Liu Dongsheng (刘东升), Liu Chuanzhi (柳传志) and Ma Yun (马云). As they have surpassed the personal wants or self-demands, they concern more about the rest of the world. They would like to do their best to improve the world in a way they can manage. So Chinese entrepreneurs are a group of people who have the highest regard and greatest concern to the world and are also very brilliant at innovation in the market; that is the Ru Shang, Confucian businessmen.

That is a very classic annotation!

Huang Nubo: It seems the very topic of your Confucius Institute: The mission of

Confucius Institute is to promote Confucian thoughts, right?

That's right one of our missions. And I do hope we can invite you to give a lecture on Ru Shang in Groningen someday.

Huang Nubo: My pleasure. Thank you!

I read the news that you have sponsored Beijing University (BU) with a number of funding projects, including Chinese traditional culture and Chinese poetry.

What is your initiative about these funding?

Huang Nubo: I graduated from the Chinese Language Department of BU and it is natural to think about something I can do for my Alma Mater. The reason that I specially sponsor poetry is based on my own passion for poetry. I think Chinese poetry is a perfect carrier of Chinese culture, history and philosophy. I found in the recent decades of development in China, we are too materialistic. We cannot build our lives without poetry, the world and the society cannot stand without poetry. But how are we going to get poetry back? I think BU is a good resort since Chinese new poetry started from BU and I think it should resume and be promoted by BU

as well. This poetry foundation has really successfully promoted the development of Chinese poetry in recent years. The number of poetry centres has increased from 10 to 600 in China since 2006 when I started funding BU. I think it is really worthy and significant as this is a way to restore the aesthetic value and aesthetic sense of a nation. I am very happy and proud of my decision to donate 30 million RMB (€3.54 million) for the development of poetry instead of buying a house for myself. It is easy to spend such an amount of money on a house nowadays.

I have heard that you describe yourself as a first-class mountaineer, a second-class entrepreneur and a third-class poet. Climbing mountains, managing a company and writing poems are all interesting things. Is there synergy among these three roles of yours?

Huang Nubo: Definitely. The reason that I regard myself as second-class entrepreneur is that I believe there is always something that I can learn from others. If you think yourself first class, you do not have the capacity and potentiality to go further. Third-class poet is a modest name I gave

myself. I will not be humble at all when it comes to climbing the mountain. I can say I am a first class mountaineer. I, four times, have climbed and reached the summit of the Everest and that is a great challenge for my will and spirit. But, as you said, these roles are interactive and mutually enhanced. For instance, as an entrepreneur, one needs to challenge the uncertainty, which goes the same for climbing a mountain; an entrepreneur also needs to have great concern and affection, which can be cultivated from poetry. On the other hand, climbing a mountain serves the goal of improving your enterprise; one should always be aware that you can go beyond the current status. There is no such moment that you are really perfect or never need to surpass your current status. So never be arrogant, something that is easily learned from the experience of climbing great mountains. Many entrepreneurs feel self-changed after the climbing experience, like Wang Shi (王石) and Yu Liang (郁亮); they both turned to being more gentle, humble and easy. And poetry is a way to purify your mind. So sum up, you will naturally pursue to become a Ru Shang, not a Jian Shang (奸商), profiteering merchant.

At this point, I actually would like to ask Mrs. He as I know you are also a personal friend of Mr. Huang. Based on your observation of more entrepreneurs, do you think Mr. Huang is a typical China entrepreneur or an untypical case?

He Zhenhong: I think in the beginning, he was not typical but special. But in recent years, he has become more and more typical.

Huang Nubo: I am curious about your explanation.

He Zhenhong: When Mr. Huang started climbing mountains and writing poems, many entrepreneurs were struggling to make money and to manage companies. Gradually, Mr. Huang's action has become a leading force and is greatly influencing other entrepreneurs. The pursuit of Mr. Huang and his passion to experience human life and constantly surpass himself became trendy in the circle of China's entrepreneurs.

Great comments! To some extent, China Entrepreneur Magazine has also contributed a lot to the growth of China entrepreneurs in the last 28 years, right?

He Zhenhong: I dare not say CEM has contributed greatly to the growth of China

entrepreneurs, but our significance is to accompany and record the growth of the stratum. We are very honoured to have experienced 28 years after opening-up, together with a lot of entrepreneurs. As you may realise later in your life, what is most precious is that somebody who has accompanied you and shared all of your experiences and has progressed with you. CEM has witnessed the history of a lot of enterprises and also anticipated the promising future of China's entrepreneurs.

Regarding the future, what do you think is the key factor to nurture the next generation of China's entrepreneurs in terms of education or other social systems?

Huang Nubo: Education is very important for a nation. I recall the growth of myself, the experience of the Cultural Revolution was a disruption of the regular education, but on the other hand it created certain opportunity for our generation to protect the entrepreneurship by avoiding the tame of education. I mean our current education has to be reformed to release the spirit of entrepreneurs and to encourage the innovation and creativity. Currently too many students are working hard for a good score, that is not beneficial for cultivating entrepreneurship. Another problem is the unfairness of education. If there is not a thorough change, Chinese society will encounter big problems.

He Zhenhong: I think the reform of the education system is very important but challenging. China's education system did not do well in stimulating the potentiality and creativity of the students. But I think it is difficult just to depend on the education system alone to nurture this new century's entrepreneurs. I think if there can be open opportunities for the other social forces to join in the education, it will naturally change the ecosystem and the practice will dictate what the right way is.

Eve Group: The Fashion Story of a Chinese Brand

Hao Cui (郝翠)

In July 2012, at the opening day of the London Olympics, a special fashion show under the theme of 'harmony' from the Chinese brand Eve Group (依文集团 Yīwén Jítuán) lit up the Olympic event. Not only 30 hot and spicy world famous super models, but also Chinese business leaders, champion athletes and renowned artists performed at the fashion show. The show consisted of four parts, including seed and land, water and sunshine, fruit and harvest and all in one, symbolising the harmony and coexistence of man and nature, and expressing humans' awe for nature and life. The Chinese 'harmony' culture was demonstrated to the world once again after it was illustrated at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, but this time by the Chinese brand Eve group, which also attracted the world's attention. In February 2012, at the invitation of the Chinese embassy in the UK, Eve Group had already become the first Chinese men's clothing brand to march into London Fashion Week and their wonderful Chinese fashion show raised the curtain for the fashion week. Because of their success in these big events, Eve Group made their voices heard to the world. That made people curious to find out the stories behind this Chinese brand.



ESTABLISHED IN 1994 by Xia Hua (夏华), Eve Group integrates design, production and sale, covering fields, such as clothing, jewellery, business suits and creative gifts. The company holds five famous high-end men's clothing brands, including EVE de UOMO, EVE de CINA, Kevin Kelly, Notting Hill and Jaques Pritt, and it acts as an agency to famous international brands, such as Versace, Kenzo and Fendi. After being in business for nearly 20 years, Eve Group now has over 500 stores across China. Initially, the founder Xia Hua determinedly gave up her teaching career at university and switched to the apparel industry when she realised the gap of Chinese men's clothing field after conducting a State Council Research Survey. She found that the styles and colours of Chinese men's clothing were extremely boring and monotonous at that time, so she expected to change the life style of Chinese men in particular. This kind of entrepreneurial motivation makes Eve Group persist in considering men's feelings and shaping the fashion image for Chinese men.

Nowadays, people's requirements for clothing are not only about the clothing's functions, but



also about expressing their individuality. From this kind of background, Eve Group launched the so-called 'Fashion Steward' service, which was originally aimed at catering for Chinese entrepreneurs. The Fashion Steward service is actually a group of managers who provide follow-up service to Eve Group customers. They will design and produce personalised clothes according to different themes and occasions of the various business activities their customers will attend. They can also meet the clothing needs for their customers over a period of time or even for the whole year because they recognise that many entrepreneurs have very busy schedules and cannot spend a lot of time on selecting and purchasing clothes. This kind of service differs from European customisation, where service is provided to customers only at a certain time and in a specific location. Eve Group, on the other hand, is at the customers' beck and call which allows for a lot of flexibility to accommodate the customers' timetables. The Fashion Steward Service Customers Group has expanded to include people from various social backgrounds at present. Up to now, Eve Group has 880,000 VIPs, including many famous Chinese entrepreneurs, such as Ma Yun (马云),





She is ambitious to realise the revival of the traditional Chinese clothing craft, not only in the Western world but also in China.

the founder of Alibaba Group (阿里巴巴) and Liu Chuanzhi (柳传志), the founder of Lenovo (联想 Liánxiǎng).

Eve Group is committed to preserving and exploring Chinese traditional culture and craft, for which they even set up a Chinese culture research office. The brand EVE de CINA is specifically positioned for the attention to Chinese culture, reshaping Chinese traditional culture with an international vision on fashion. It is the grafting of traditional civilisation and contemporary life as well as the intersection of East and West. It was this concept that made Eve Group step onto the world stage. Xia Hua said that she was trying to introduce and reveal Western aesthetics to Chinese people for the first 20 years of her career, but now she is hoping to influence the Western world by demonstrating and depicting Chinese aesthetics. However, her dream is even more than that. She is ambitious to realise the revival of the traditional Chinese clothing craft, not only in the Western world but also in China. On 26 August 2013, Eve Group together with Wang Chaoge (王潮歌), the core director of the Beijing Olympics opening ceremonies, produced a Chinese national music show *Impression of Chinese Music* (《印象·国乐》) which was performed by the China National Orchestra (中央民族乐团 Zhōngyāng Mínzú Yuètuán). The show was said to be not only an unconventional concert, but also a visual feast. All the elaborate costumes and accessories for all 108 musicians were designed and created by Eve Group, completely altering people's prejudices about national music shows. It generated quite a

buzz after its debut and is expected to lead to a musical revolution in China.

Eve Group's Chinese name 依文 which has two Chinese characters but is made up of three elements - people (人 rén), clothing (衣 yī) and culture (文 wén) - reflects the pursuit and mission of the company. The brand's Chinese name is clearly displayed in every Eve fashion show to indicate that this company is always dedicated to providing excellent service, producing delicate clothes and passing on Chinese culture. Because of the beauty and the implied meaning of the name, Xia Hua, even named her daughter 依文. Xia Hua herself now has emerged as a successful entrepreneurial leader with notable achievements in Chinese business. She was awarded 'The Chinese Business Leaders of the Year' at the 2013 Horasis Global China Business Meeting held in The Hague, The Netherlands in November 2013. During the meeting break, Global China Insights had an interview with her, in which she shared her stories of building the brand and mentioned her two success factors "persistence" and "innovation", which are also the spirit of Chinese entrepreneurs in modern China.

As one of the representatives of Chinese fashion, Eve Group is trying to set up a new image of Chinese brands for the world by presenting their unique creativity, superb technology and profound cultural values. This is also the goal that many other Chinese brands are making efforts to achieve. Eve Group, together with many other Chinese enterprises, is working on their own inspirational stories for audiences at home and abroad.

Smellscapes of China

Gerlinde Pehlken



A fragrance of jasmine flower wafts into my nose. I close my eyes and see blossoms in full bloom. It is spring time, the time of prosperity. Opening my eyes again, I see a mountain of rubbish placed across the street. My new nose plugs which I have just bought in the supermarket are certainly effective.

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Calligraphy:
Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈)

Last month, I was in Zhuhai (珠海) which is located at the Pearl River delta (珠江三角洲 Zhūjiāng Sānjiǎozhōu) near Hong Kong (香港 Xiānggǎng). A friend suggested I should get these scented nose plugs that were regularly advertised on Hong Kong TV channels. They would make my stay in China much more pleasant, he told me. So I bought not just one, I also chose some special scented plugs of daffodil, bergamot and cedar wood.

Zhuhai's smell is heavily influenced by the breeze that brings the sea air to your skin and also your tongue. Standing at the shore, the taste of salt was present in my

mouth, but in my nose I had the odour of the jasmine flower. I took the plugs out of my nose and put them in my pocket. A deep breath of the salty air brought me a feeling of peace. I decided that I needed one more nose plug for my journey to northern China: beach aroma.

On the way back into town I passed the fruit market. One of the main fruits on offer was the stinky durian fruit. The vendors cut the fruits in small pieces and hold them out to my face. Nearing the meat market, live animals added their odour to the smell mix. But the durian fruit really stood out in my nose. So I put the plugs in again.

Some weeks later I arrived in Beijing (北京). I immediately noticed the difference. For one thing, the air here is much drier, and also the area is much more populated. The huge crowds of people create the base for a really unique city smellscape composed of small street vendors offering fried or baked goods, antique sellers with musty books or silks, and even the garbage men wandering the streets with their tricycles, gathering up the refuse of the city's inhabitants. On entering a temple, though, this scent disappears under a layer of incense that permeates the whole area. It has soaked into curtains, pillows, and even the wood of the buildings, giving these places of worship a unique atmosphere that you take in - from an olfactory perspective - unconsciously.

One night in Beijing when I explored a Hutong (胡同), a small street with traditional buildings in one of the oldest part of town, I felt transported into another world, the China of the past. To my left, there was a tea shop offering exquisite varieties of tea from all over China. To tempt the passing customers, some glasses with brewed teas were placed at the foot of the front door.

A few steps further there was a shop selling steamed buns where people lined up to get their lunch. The smell of the freshly baked buns mingled with the perfume of the women who came to buy them. In front of

a shop offering silk scarves and clothing, a street vendor set up a mobile kitchen, frying skewered meat for his customers: beef, chicken or pork. Charcoal and roasted meat combined to create a scent that interacted with the taste buds, making my mouth water.

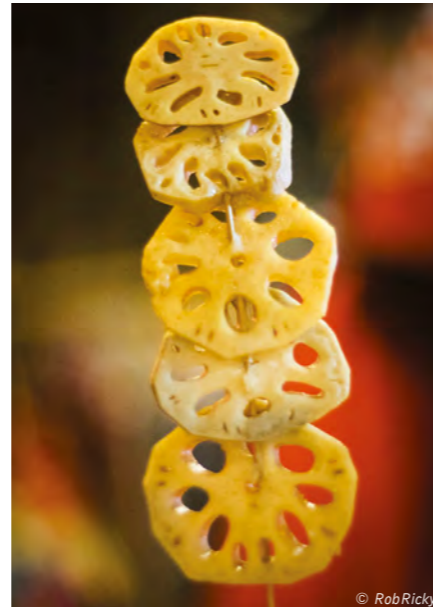
Further along I saw a shop offering soups and jiaozi (饺子), the traditional Chinese dumplings, and I decided to sit down and try some. Opposite me sat a young Chinese man who told me that his father could actually hear the flavour of the jiaozi. If he wanted to test if they were ready to eat, he would hold his ear over the bowl. The young man found out that he inherited this habit from his father.

"Did you know that the character wén (闻) means both: to hear and to smell?" he asked me. Without waiting for an answer he dipped one of his chopsticks in the teacup and then he drew the character 闻 on the table: an ear in a door.

Back on the street, an unpleasant whiff came to my nose when a garbage man passed me by. He had collected some of the neighbourhood's trash. After a few days, the things I miss most in Beijing are the scents from the South China Sea (南海 Nán Hǎi) and I remembered the nose plugs in my pocket.

The beach aroma with its certain smells transported me immediately back to Zhuhai. Now I wore those plugs every day, no more smell of garbage or from the clouds of car exhausts in the narrow streets or the smell of the stinky tofu which the vendor wanted to sell from his tricycle.

Once I pass a flower vendor, and that is when I realized that I smelt nothing but the beach aroma of my nose plugs. So I took them out and I was hit by a wealth of smells: the flowers of the street vendor, the sweet potato a child being eaten nearby, the paint from the work being done next door.



Somewhere in the neighbourhood someone had already started cooking dinner; and the roasting meat and spices reminded me that it was time for me to get back to my hotel. This was the moment that I realised how much all the artificial aromas had been manipulating my nose. The use of the nose clips covered up the natural smells and it transformed my perception of each city. The original scents with all their different nuances which would normally come into my nose were lost to me.

On my way back I saw a trash can, and on an impulse I threw the nose plugs away. I decided that I do not want this kind of aroma therapy. I would never again miss the stimuli that hit my olfactory sense. It is better to sometimes experience a bad smell than to miss all the good ones.

Gerlinde Pehlken is a writer and Chinese cultural expert. Having lived in China for eight years, she studied Chinese and researched historical China, focusing on the Yuan (元朝 1271-1368) and Ming (明朝 1368-1644) dynasties. She has published a book about the Ming Dynasty tombs and several short stories about Chinese life.

Visibility of Religion in Contemporary China

Stefania Travagnin



Modernity and new technology permeate China and Chinese culture today, and religion, too, has been transformed and is now manifesting in a way that fits the renewed Chinese reality.

For instance, in late 2007 the city of Nanchang (南昌) in Jiangxi province (江西省) was covered by posters of Confucius (孔子 Kǒngzǐ) and Lao-Tze (老子 Lǎozǐ) wearing western suits with ties. It was the advertising of a local company that wanted to sell western clothing at the same time as conveying spirit and values of Chinese civilisation. In 2010, the movie theatres in China were alternating the screening of Avatar with the local new movie titled *Confucius*. Directed by Hu Mei (胡玫), it was the famous actor Chow Yun-fat (周润发 Zhōu Rùnfā) who played the role of the Master. Another example of Chinese culture meeting modern technology is the young Buddhist monk Dingkong (定空), who lives in a small village in southern Fujian province (福建省), and has created a blog where he posts photos from liturgies, short comments on Buddhist scriptures, and interacts with believers. Many Buddhist monasteries also

run their own websites, updating the community about their activities and also allowing followers to visit 'online' Buddha halls and conduct traditional Buddhist rituals. From offering of incense to ancestor worship – all this can be done online nowadays. If you turn on the TV, you can easily find a few channels where Daoist priests or Buddhist monks are preaching scriptures, or TV series that clearly portray Confucian values and virtues. These are just a few examples of how religion manifests itself in modernising China.

Another example of the visibility of religion in China today is the concurrent worship of a plurality of traditions, a revival of public ritual activity, and at the same time the increase of the so-called 'religious tourism'. In summer 2012, I spent two weeks at Mt. Putuo (普陀山), a mountain island in Zhejiang province (浙江省) that is recognised as the sacred site where the

Bodhisattva Guanyin (观音菩萨 Guānyīn Púsà) resided and practiced. This is one of the four 'sacred mountains' of Buddhism in China, the other three being Mt. Wutai (五台山), which is associated with the Bodhisattva Wenshushili (文殊师利菩萨 Wénshūshīlì Púsà); Mt. Emei (峨眉山), which is associated with the Bodhisattva Puxian (普贤菩萨 Pǔxián Púsà); and Mt. Jiuhua (九华山), which is associated with the Bodhisattva Dizang (地藏菩萨 Dìzàng Púsà). I was impressed by the number of Chinese visiting the island everyday: some of them were there on vacation and thus merely for touristic purposes, some others wanted to pay homage to Guanyin, but they all burned an impressive amount of incense sticks! I also joined a tour to the nearby Luojia island (珞珈山), and after the pilgrimage to each temple, and the collection of the 'compassion water' from a fountain just next to a statue of Guanyin, the visitors were reminded by a Buddhist monk resident on the small island to also worship the local Earth God (土地公 Tǔdì Gōng) and burn incense and paper money for him as well. I then visited Beijing (北京), and the Confucius Temple (孔庙 Kǒng Miào) was not less



crowded. Students who were about to take high school or university exams knotted wish-cards or wish-tablets on the trees surrounding Confucius's statue.

When did all these religious traditions appear in China and how did they develop? The great 'sages' that form the roots of Chinese civilisation, Kongzi and Laozi, are both thought to have lived in the sixth century. It was around that time that Buddha is said to have lived and preached in India. Buddhist practitioners and material objects (such as books and statues) reached China around the first century B.C., and within a few centuries cross-tradition dialogue and borrowing became key features of China's religious landscape. For instance, Chinese Buddhists adopted Daoist terms in their early translations of the texts that arrived from India. Daoist monks

known in the whole of China and some others important on a local level - also populated private houses and public sacred sites. The integration and diversity that religious leaders and intellectuals were creating and proposing was not reflected on the official level where different groups were indeed competing to have the ruler's favour. On the other hand, inter-religious appropriation was well reflected in the daily expressions of religiosity and expanded among the common believers. On top of this, the so-called Abrahamic religions, namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam, also entered China through missionary activities and people's immigration, and underwent a process of sinification.

After two thousand years, we can see a similar scenario, which is a clear index of continuity throughout Chinese history.

of inclusion that can be seen among the masses. Indeed, the average Chinese person visits Daoist and Buddhist temples, burns incense in the sacred sites of different religious traditions, has ancestors' tables at home and gives offerings to the deceased, and also remembers folk deities on special occasions. It is not just common people who put religious diversity into practice; indeed, it is not difficult to see Buddhist monks offering incense or lighting a candle in front of a Daoist deity, or to find a Buddhist monastery built next to a temple of local folk religions and the believers and the priests of both the sacred places living and worshipping together. In other words, different to Western countries where the average person claims membership to one religious tradition, in China people are less concerned with sectarian affiliation and more inclined to remember and venerate any manifestation of the divine, and consequently alternate rituals according to specific situations.

In conclusion, we see that religion in China today takes on many faces and voices. It is clear that the new policies on religion, implemented by the government in the 1980s, brought a revival of rituals and public religiosity. We can see continuity with the religious landscape of the past, and on the other hand, religions certainly transformed in line with the waves of modernisation that reshaped all the other sectors of Chinese society, and as a result today we can also surf religions' websites and watch religions' TV channels.

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© Beijing Longquan Monastery (北京龙泉寺)

started living in monasteries and began organising scriptures in a Canon off of the blueprint of what the Buddhists had done previously. And finally, Neo-Confucians in the Song dynasty (宋朝 960-1279) decided to integrate their system of thought with Buddhist and Daoist meditation. As Daoism (道教 Dàojiào), Confucianism (儒教 Rújiào) and Buddhism (佛教 Fójìào) formed the so-called 'three religions', san jiao (三教), a large pantheon of popular deities - some

The san jiao, folk pantheon and Abrahamic religions all co-exist in the daily ritual life of the Chinese, and again practice of this religious diversity on the institutional level is different from the one that characterises the daily life of the population. In fact, on the governmental level, religious traditions have to respond to different offices and official associations, and are thus treated each in a specific way. This policy of distinction is contrasted by the practice



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A Ballet Teacher in China Annika Höglind

I never planned to live in China. To me, China was a country with delicious food, amazing acrobatic ability, vibrant colours, interesting architecture, but it was so far away. Still I came to China to teach ballet, that was my goal. Young and having only just graduated from the Hungarian Dance Academy with a Ballet Teaching degree, I scanned websites looking for dancing teaching jobs applying for different vacancies, including one in China. I was rather shocked when I opened my inbox to find that I had been offered a job in Handan (邯郸), China! To be honest, when I applied I never thought about going to China. It was just one of a few jobs on a website and I had not given it a second thought when I sent off my Curriculum Vitae. After reading the email, I wrote to my family saying only "I got a job in ..." then had them scroll all the way down to the bottom of the email where I wrote "China." I then got a call from my dad who asked: "So when are you going?" It was as simple as that. There was one main reason why I decided to go: I thought "if I don't go to China, I will always wonder what it would have been like." With that thought in mind, I packed up my suitcase and went.

When I arrived in China I was met by a little old lady holding up my name on a sign, and a man in his 40s. They did not speak a word of English. They took my suitcase and we were off onto a bus, then off and onto another bus, then off again until we got to the biggest train station I had ever seen in my life: Beijing West Train Station (北京西站 Běijīng Xīzhàn). It was the first of my many adventures in China. The train ride was four-and-a-half hours on a hard seat after what had already been a nine-hour flight. But eventually I arrived in Handan, which would be my home for six months. Handan is not a place where one would expect to

find a foreign ballet teacher.

I spent three days at the home of the little old lady, not knowing when I would start working, or where, or who would be my students. The lady only spoke Chinese, and I was learning a few words each day. Finally, after four days in her flat, I was taken to the main building of Handan Lilac Education Group (邯郸莱克教育集团) and introduced to a lot of directors. Of course, I did not understand anything, but I was welcomed and told that I would be teaching four hours of dance and 16 hours of English. That was when I put my foot down and through a translator said: "I didn't come to teach

English, I am a ballet teacher. If you need an English teacher, then you shouldn't have invited me." They rearranged my schedule to teaching 16 hours of dance.

Then my new life started. I moved into the dormitories where I had my own flat in a building where all the foreign teachers lived as well as Chinese students studying at Handan Polytechnic College (邯郸职业技术学院). I was scheduled to teach dance in the morning at two different kindergartens, and in the afternoon at Lilac Primary School. At Lilac Education Group, there were about 13 other foreign English teachers, but I was the only dance teacher.

My first day of teaching would be my first challenge. I was taken to one of the school's kindergartens. In the West I had been used to entering a ballet studio and finding little girls in pink leotards and pink ballet shoes running around the ballet studio before their teacher came in. In Handan, I was led to the dance studio and there were 40 four-year-old kids all dressed in their everyday clothes standing in line like soldiers, looking at me. Their teachers were also looking, waiting to see what I would do. I put on some classical music and taught them the positions of the arms and the first two positions of the legs. I then tried to teach them the basic 'chassé' step, which required them to open a leg to the side in preparation, then jump with their legs together moving to the side, and land in the same preparatory position to go again. That is when chaos happened. These 40 kids were disciplined as long as they stood in their spots which were marked on the floor. Once they got the chance to move, then like most kids they started to laugh and moved all the way to the other side of the studio. Luckily, their teachers were there and were able to keep them under control. I had three groups of children that first morning, and I did not try to do the 'chassé' step again until much later. I stuck to teaching them the basic positions of arms and legs, and did lots of stretching exercises. After that first day I would quickly learn to control them and eventually I was able to teach them a few dances.

At the primary school I got to pick students to be part of a dance group. I was excited by just how many talented girls there were. I found that in China the bodies are more naturally supple and flexible than they are in the West. Other than my dance group, I also taught dance to various different grades, all of whom were dressed in their everyday clothes. Not only were my students learning, but I was also learning. I was studying the Chinese language with a private teacher and I learnt how to say the positions of the arms and legs in Chinese. I got so excited when one student came to me and said "duzi teng" (肚子疼) (tummy hurts) and I actually understood! I let her sit

down, then suddenly all my students raised their hands and started saying "duzi teng".

My days were spent teaching, but during my free time I studied Chinese and rode around on my bike. During holidays I travelled to different parts of China. Christmas was spent in Xi'an (西安), and for Chinese New Year I was on top of one of the five holy mountains Tai Shan (泰山). Watching TV was also interesting for me, and I loved the Chinese New Year programme and was so excited to see dances from different Chinese minority groups. After eight months in Handan, I was offered a job in Beijing to teach ballet at Danz Centre (丹安芭蕾舞培训中心). While Handan had been a unique experience, I realised it was time to move on. I was after all a ballet teacher, and teaching dance in Handan to kids in ordinary clothes was not quite the same thing. So I moved to Beijing, and was greeted with the familiar sight of little girls in leotards running around the ballet studio before I arrived.

Ballet was first established in China in 1954 with the founding of Beijing Dance Academy (北京舞蹈学院 Běijīng Wǔdǎo Xuéyuàn). But there are still only a few ballet schools in the whole of China. Unlike Beijing Dance Academy which prepares students for professional dancing careers, anyone is welcome to take a dance class at



Danz Centre. I had the privilege of visiting Beijing Dance Academy after a year in China. It was wonderful for me to find a whole area of Beijing dedicated to dance. There were so many dance shops around the academy selling ballet shoes, pointe shoes, costumes, fans, CDs, DVDs, books, etc. I entered the Beijing Dance Academy with a fellow foreigner who was also a dancer. We thought we would not be able to get past security, but they let us in. We visited several different floors with about six dance studios on each floor. In every dance studio there was some kind of class going and we stopped at each and glanced through the windows. Behind one we could see twelve-year-old girls working on their 'frappés' (beats) at the barre. Another studio had girls doing gymnastic flips. In one, boys were jumping double 'tours en l'air', and in another they were performing a traditional Chinese dance while holding drums. Walking the halls of the Beijing Dance Academy and glancing into all the dance studios I felt at home. It was wonderful to see everyone working and so dedicated to dance.

I came to China to teach ballet, but I think I was the student in China. Those first days of teaching in Handan were a real challenge, but gave me experience in teaching in any kind of situation. Then to move to Beijing and see with my own eyes that ballet has a special place in China. I never regretted answering that email with a yes and moving to China. Ten years later, I am now teaching ballet in Russia, and I can say with honesty that those days in China led me here.

Born in Lebanon, **Annika Höglind** is a choreographer and ballet instructor currently living in Russia. She graduated from the Hungarian Dance Academy in 2004 as a Pedagogue of Ballet and has since taught ballet and master classes in Sweden, Denmark, China, Japan, Russia and Lebanon.

DOING
BUSINESS
WITH CHINA



Lecture by Dr. Victor Yuan: Victory in the Chinese Market

Ingrid Fischer

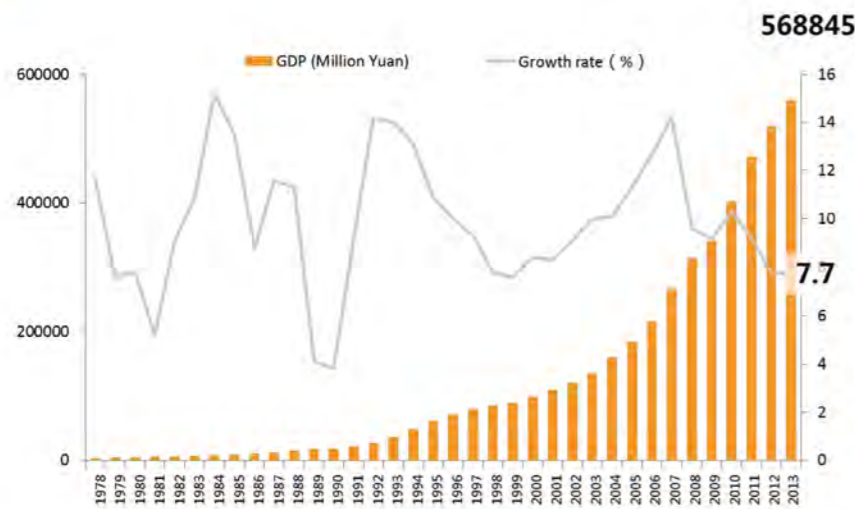
On 17 and 18 February 2014, the International Business School of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen and the Groningen Confucius Institute co-organised a lecture by one of China's leading entrepreneurs, Dr. Victor Yuan (袁岳). In his lecture entitled *Victory in the Chinese Market*, Yuan shared his experience in marketing data and gave suggestions to European business people on how to make it in the Chinese market.

Big Data: Data Collection in China

In commercial terms, China is a huge market with an abundance of business opportunities. At the same time, it is also a market with millions of competitors. Therefore, in order to succeed you need intimate knowledge and a clear understanding of China's economic data. Unfortunately, as Yuan points out, it is not that easy to acquire the necessary data. To begin with, the government does not supply a lot of data. In addition to that, for many years, Chinese companies did not see the significance of collecting market data. About twenty years ago, when he was a government official working for the Minister of Justice, Yuan had to write all kinds of reports full of terminology

like "everybody of the Chinese people agree that". When he asked the minister, "we never even asked one person, how do we know everybody agrees that?" The minister replied: "We never needed to ask people because we represent the people". This made Yuan think, and made him want to start doing research. Unfortunately, the idea of 'we represent the people' had been standard practice in China for many years, so it was not easy to start up a research company; he was not allowed to register a data collection business. At that time, the Chinese did not do any research into public opinion. Companies just assumed they knew what the public wanted; after all, they were the public too. Also, companies had quite a limited

GDP



Source: National Bureau of Statistics Source: National Bureau of Statistics
资料来源：国家统计局

represent reality. That is why Yuan decided to start collecting his own data. Yuan does point out that this kind of strategic data is slowly becoming a thing of the past. Because of all the new technologies, it is becoming increasingly difficult to report different figures to different organisations without getting into trouble. Because of that, China today is moving towards more reliable data. It is not reliable yet, but Yuan is very optimistic about the improving quality of government data.

Big Market: Economic Development in China

Although the Chinese government does not really play an important role in market research and data collection, it does play an important role in driving the economy in the form of government

investments. Yuan reports that because of the contribution of government investments, China's GDP grew over 50% last year, which means the Chinese market is driven by the government, not by market force. That makes Chinese economic development different from economic development in European countries, and that should be taken into account when thinking about doing business in China. Government investment plays a very important role in driving the economy.

Unfortunately, Yuan says, there is still quite a lot of corruption in China. It is not the same as several decades ago when people could be bribed by giving them some money. Yuan claims that today there is a lot of indirect, project corruption. He explains by giving an example about the national freeway network. It was decreed by the government that there should be a highway to every village in China's rural area. The national requirement for how wide these roads should be was three metres. But, the officials involved in building these highways, made the roads 2.7 metres instead, thus saving on expenses and making some money. The people are satisfied, because a 2.7 metres wide highway is still better than nothing, and the corrupt officials are also satisfied with the profit they made. And now, driving to the Chinese

view on doing business: you have a product, you sell the product and you make a profit. So, no one really felt the need to do research and collect all kinds of data. But then in 1992, when Deng Xiaoping (邓小平) called for reformation in China and improvement of public administration, Yuan's data research and data collection company was allowed to be registered, making Yuan a real pioneer in marketing research in China.

Nowadays, the Chinese government does provide some official data in the form of general figures from the National Bureau of Statistics of China (中国国家统计局 Zhōngguó Guójiā Tǒngjì Jú) (NBSC), such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, according to Yuan this data cannot be trusted because the figures provided to the NBSC are often adjusted. Yuan claims that companies adjust their data depending on the individuals and groups to whom they are reporting. If a company reports its annual revenue to the tax bureau, the reported numbers are lower so they have to pay less tax to the government, but if they have to report to someone from the National People's Congress (全国人民代表大会 Quánguó Rénmín Dàibiǎo Dàhuì) (NPC), the numbers would be higher because that might give you a chance to become a member of the NPC. He calls this strategic (or reported) data, and that is the reason the NBSC data does not always

China today is moving towards more reliable data. It is not reliable yet, but Yuan is very optimistic about the improving quality of government data.

countryside is much better than driving in any big city in, for example, India.

Despite the indirect corruption, things do get done in China. This is because most projects are government driven and not driven by private companies. And because the government owns almost all of the land, the logistics are highly efficient. This high efficiency also attracts many more foreign investors. Before, international investors were investing in the coastal areas only, but now they are also investing in Sichuan (四川), in Chongqing (重庆) and western China. Given these highways, it has become so easy to do business anywhere in China, opening up an even bigger market. So currently there is a lot of economic development in China which is to a great extent government driven, but is also driven by international investors who are

becoming increasingly interested in the Chinese market.

Big Decisions: Decision Makers in China

This development is especially welcomed by the young generation because it allows them to have a certain quality of life. As Yuan puts it, young people nowadays are very materialistic; they really value having a lot of nice and convenient things. Yuan has noticed that as a result of the one-child policy (计划生育政策 Jìhuà Shēngyù Zhèngcè) (introduced in 1979), Chinese culture has changed tremendously. The family now does whatever they can to help the child. Traditionally, Chinese culture was all about respect for the elders, and the older people in the family had the power, they decided everything. But now, because of the one-child policy, biologically the child has become the centre of the family. Yuan calls it the phenomenon of the panda; rare species will receive more power and more resources. The same happens within a family: When you only have only one child, the family will do whatever it can for the child. Interestingly, this translates largely into consumption. For example, the average house buyer in China is 27 years old. In other countries, the average age is about 45 to 46 years old (Germany 43, US 40, Japan 46 and Brazil 43). But, Yuan points out that for 70% of them, the first payment is made by the parents, and for the other 30% it is partly paid by the parents. And if they want to buy a car, 35% is bought by the parents and then given to the children. According to Yuan, that is why the younger generation is the key decision maker nowadays. Even though many young people feel that they really do not spend that much, they are the driving force behind family expenditure. The young generation dominates the family needs.

Paradoxically, research has shown that in China there is a lot of ageing. According to MillwardBrown (华通明略 Huátōng Mínglüè), 36% of the Chinese population will be 55 years old and above by 2030. Yuan has noticed that many companies have tried to focus their business on this segment of the population, but so far nobody has proved successful in that area. According to Yuan, this is because the older generation is used to a simpler and sober life style and instead of spending money on themselves; they spend it on their grandchildren. That means if you want to be

Mobile Internet 移动互联网

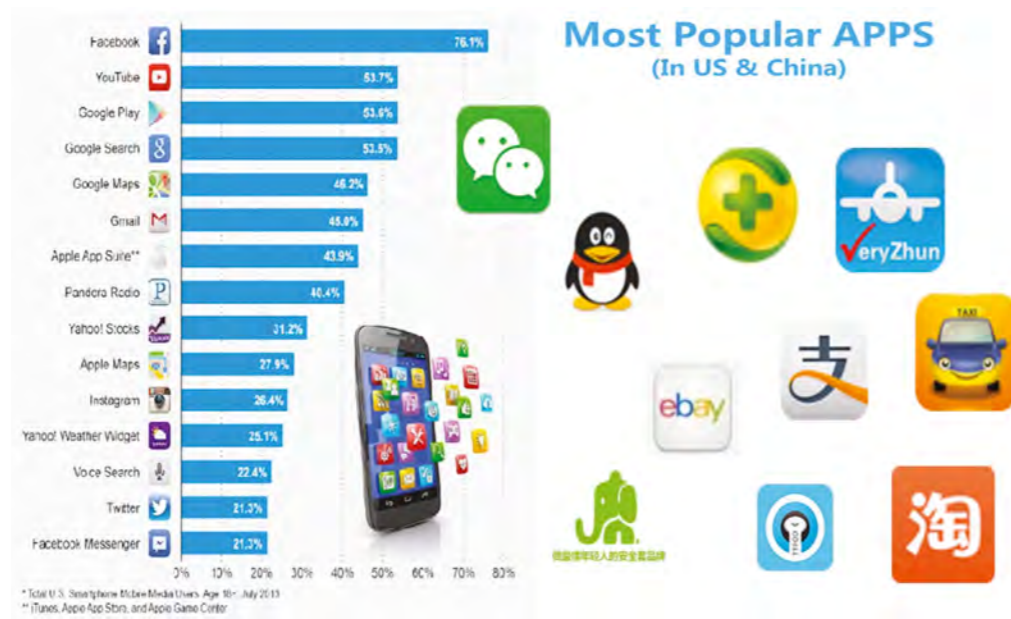


Data sources: Erell Advisory
资料来源：艾瑞咨询

Express Delivery 快递



Data sources: Chinese State Post Bureau
资料来源：中国邮政总局



Yuan points out that Western entrepreneurs should be aware they should not blindly follow all the Western world's business rules if they want to succeed in China.

successful in the Asian market, you need to find out what the children want. If you only consider the older generation, you will not succeed. As the main purchasing power is in the hands of the young generation, this demographic dominates the market, and they have quite extensive consumption needs. In addition to wanting their own cars and apartments at the lowest possible prices, they are also very active in buying products and fashion items on the internet. And most of these children have two parents, four grandparents, sometimes even eight great-grandparents, and all these generations will help the children in their pursuit of material things. From a consumption perspective, that is a good development. It also means that if you can catch young people, you can catch the market. So, if you want to be successful in the Asian market, consider what the children want.

Big Opportunity: Cell Phone-Based E-commerce

Yuan goes on to explain that as a result of the dominance of the younger generation, there is a clear movement towards E-commerce in China. The young generation is basically the internet generation: they find friends, gather information, buy things and pay for anything via the internet. Today, there are 50 million webstores on a huge number of different E-commerce platforms. China's online shopping transactions in 2013

were \$2 trillion (€1.44 trillion), a 42% increase compared to the year before. According to Yuan, E-commerce is currently the most interesting business market in China. At the same time, there is also clear move away from PC-based E-commerce towards cell phone-based E-commerce. Alibaba (阿里巴巴) (an online business-to-business trading platform for small businesses) is the biggest PC based E-commerce platform in China, and its chairman Ma Yun (马云) has voiced concerns that WeChat (微信 Wēixìn) (a mobile text and voice messaging communication service developed by Tencent) is well on its way to pushing Alibaba from its number one status. The reason for that, as Yuan explains, is WeChat is cell phone based, while Ali Baba is PC based. And on a cell phone, people can purchase anything, anywhere, anytime. Yuan advises people who ask him what kind of entrepreneurship they should do in China, to aim at cell phone based E-commerce.

Yuan also points out that Western entrepreneurs should be aware they should not blindly follow all the Western world's business rules if they want to succeed in China. For example, over the last five years there has been a tremendous growth in local express delivery companies in China, mostly delivering small E-commerce items that only cost a few Renminbi (人民币) (RMB). In Europe, they would not use express delivery for such small articles

because the costs could never be covered. But in China, it is possible because of the scale on which people are using E-commerce. As many people buy so many different items, the costs can be covered. That is the unique quality of the Chinese market.

Big Innovation: China is a Good Experimental Market

So there are many opportunities for Western entrepreneurs in the Chinese market, but, Yuan points out, you must be innovative. China is not a conservative country, contrary to what many Europeans might think based on their ideas of Confucianism. The Chinese believe in many different things and are also very open to many things. As Yuan puts it, you could never imagine Korean fashion being very popular in the Netherlands, or in the US, because they are not used to it and not open to it. In China, any type of fashion can be popular, be it Korean or French, or American because the Chinese can accept and are open to anything. Because the Chinese are so open, China is a good experimental market to try out innovative and experimental things.

It also means you have to be innovative and you have to be able to make changes quickly to survive in the Chinese market. Chinese consumers really appreciate the quality of European brands and products, but in order to compete with everything else on the market, you



have to stand out, especially on the cell phone-based entrepreneurship platform. According to Yuan, if you develop an app, you have to innovate every four months because information and competition changes quickly. So, you need to have a new vision every four months to stay

ahead of the competition. Nevertheless, cell phone-based E-commerce is the most promising business field in China today. As Yuan puts it, the big difference between the Dutch and the Chinese is how we look at our cell phone. The Chinese are 'glued' to their cell phones from morning to evening. So, they have a constant source of information that they can and do access anywhere, anytime. So to succeed in business in China today, you need to be very quick; otherwise you cannot provide what the market needs because the market constantly changes from being stimulated by so much different information.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Dr. Yuan's lecture demonstrates that when it comes to doing business in China, there are many interesting opportunities for Western entrepreneurs. He pointed out that Western entrepreneurs need good, clear insight of China's economic data to succeed: it provides them with a better understanding of the market. Given the development of the internet and of independent private research and information sources, such as provided by Yuan's own research company, people now have access to reliable market information. Yuan pointed out one of the most interesting market phenomena in China: Children dominate the family's needs and they act as decision makers nowadays. Companies should, according to Yuan, focus their marketing efforts specifically on this group. Another important development in China which Yuan addresses is the speed of growth of E-commerce, in particular cell phone-based E-commerce, which is actually changing consumer behaviour fundamentally. These rapid changes, and the apparent openness of the Chinese consumer towards new developments, are what make the Chinese market an interesting market, good experimental ground and a great place to try innovative, experimental things. At the same time, that is also what makes it a challenging market because you need to be able to respond to and move along with these rapid changes. But, according to Yuan, as long as you keep in mind that success in the Chinese market is based on being innovative, then China can prove to be a very rewarding business environment indeed.

WeChat: A Lifestyle

Sun Yuhong (孙玉红)

Nowadays in China, in the streets, in restaurants, subways or parks, people can be seen using mobile phones as walkie-talkies, or constantly sliding and tapping their phone screens. In all likelihood, many of them are probably using WeChat (微信 Wēixìn), one of the hottest instant messaging apps in China. "WeChat is a lifestyle" is the slogan of WeChat. Today, WeChat really has become a lifestyle for many modern people, with more and more people relying on it to communicate.

WECHAT IS A FREE MOBILE application launched by Tencent Technology Company Limited (腾讯控股有限公司 Téngxùn Kònggǔ Yōuxiàn Gōngsī) in January 2011. By the end of March 2012, the number of WeChat users exceeded one hundred million. By the end of November 2013, the amount of users surpassed the six hundred million mark, henceforth commanding the largest user group in Asia in the area of instant messaging.

Compared with ordinary cellular text messages, WeChat is a whole other world. WeChat is not only free and sends text messages, but it also transmits voice, video, pictures, a wide variety of emoticons and group chat messages. If users do not want their hands constantly tied to their screen having to type laboriously away just to send a message, then downloading WeChat is the way to go for them. It has considerably more convenient functions that will be able to free your hands from only being able to type. These benefits, however, do not appear to be particularly life changing, but in many subtle ways WeChat has impacted many people's lives. Two Chinese people, Xiao Chen (小陈) and Xiao Li (小李), reveal how WeChat plays a role in their modern lives.

Xiao Chen is an ordinary university student. Every morning, the first thing he does is to check out the 'Moments' of his 'Circle of Friends' (朋友圈 Péngyou Quān) on WeChat. He is eager to read some interesting or useful information, as well as share some information. He can do this by reposting 'Moments' from his friends. And he

often saves useful information to his 'Favourites'. By leaving 'Comments' or 'Likes' (赞 zàn), he can then interact with his friends. Besides looking at what others have posted, he is also anxious to see the 'Comments' or 'Likes' from his friends on the information he shared last night. Along with the popularity of WeChat, the term 'Circle of Friends' has become a hot buzz word in China. Similar to microblogs (微博 Wēibó), text, pictures, shared essays or preferred music can be published. Differing from microblogs, the audience is familiar with and trusts each other. That is to say, 'Circle of Friends' has become a reliable source of trusted information from an individual's closest friends. Every member can create a stream of photos journaling daily life, share thoughts, essays and pictures, life experiences, commodity information, music and games. Messages from some friends in the circle can also be forwarded. Lots of useful information is broadcasted from one circle to another. WeChat has become one of the better means in interpersonal communication because of its high credibility and high efficiency.

Xiao Chen's WeChat also has many chat groups, such as his Class Group, an Elective Course Group, and, as a member of a student association, he is also a member of the Association's Group. In his Class Group, he can communicate with the class and share information on in-class activities with classmates. Through the Elective Course Group, students from different subject areas or classes can discuss homework, and the teacher can share some useful articles; or recommend books, audio



The Public Platform is a very important feature of WeChat. Nearly every user follows several Public Platforms.

or video files. In the Student Association Group, students can communicate progress on their work with each other. Group Chat gives great convenience for communication of individuals from different social Groups.

In addition, Xiao Chen also gets a lot of useful information from his university's WeChat Public Platform (微信公共平台 Wēixìn Gōnggòng Píngtái). A Public Platform is a platform for government, media, enterprises, individuals and other organizations to improve as an extension of service. The focus of these platforms is to provide useful information users are interested in, and these platforms will regularly publicise text, pictures or voice messages. Users can share some messages that they like in their 'Circle of Friends'. Any friend who is interested in that particular public platform can add it to their focus list. This is how platforms gather more and more followers. The Public Platform is a very important feature of WeChat. Nearly every user follows several Public Platforms. For example, The Communication University of China (中国传媒大学 Zhōngguó Chuánméi Dàxué) has many platforms for students' services. Xiao Chen follows the Platform of CUC Comprehensive Service Hall. He can get information about his school's calendar, tuition, transcripts, examination arrangements, classroom management and employment information. This

is more efficient than a website or advertisement on a wall. Another platform of CUC which also gives Xiao Chen quite a bit of help is called Lecture Published. It constantly publishes information about important lectures, ensuring that he no longer misses valuable lectures. Another platform that is also very important for him is Campus Life. It informs the user about places that offer fine dining or places that offer take out, along with many other convenient life services. This particular Public Platform has greatly improved the quality and convenience of his life. This is just an example, the Public Platform is not only used by universities and some departments; it is also being used in various other fields.

Nowadays, more and more merchants regard WeChat as a new marketing tool, and will set up a Public Platform. There are millions of Public Platforms currently in existence, including ones for the government, the media, enterprises, famous people or just common individuals. CCTV News Center, China Unicom (中国联通 Zhōngguó Liántōng) of Guangdong, Merchant Bank, China Southern Airlines (中国南方航空公司 Zhōngguó Nánfāng Hángkōng Gōngsī) are just a select number of examples. Xiao Li is a business manager of a bond investment company. For her, WeChat plays quite a vital role in her life. Many of her friends in her 'Circle of Friends' are in the financial industry and they often share professional financial analysis articles with each other. She can make full use of her spare time by reading articles that she knows are reliable and reputable. She also pays attention to WeChat's



financial functions, such as WeChat LiCaiTong (微信理财通), a financial managing tool that Tencent offers in cooperation with other financial companies. This particular financial function is a great example of WeChat cooperating and working with other third party companies and institutions in order to create a new tool for its users. This is a highly convenient function for users to use because it allows for them to bind their bank card to this financial tool. As a result, a managing function for their money exists alongside a payment function for products and services. Xiao Li makes full use of this tool and its functions during the course of her working life.

Another app that is equally useful to Xiao Li is DIDI Taxi (滴滴打车 Dīdī Dǎchē), an App for voice calling a taxi; it is a useful tool for when you need to go somewhere urgently. The user tells the location and destination of where they are and where they want to go. Any taxi driver nearby with this app will receive the message and the driver who would like to take the offer will call her. Payment can also easily be completed through WeChat. This service is increasingly popular in some big cities these days and many times a discount will be given if the payment is through WeChat. This is incredibly convenient and cheap for its users. WeChat has become a new kind of mobile wallet.

The Scan QR Code (扫一扫 Sǎo Yī Sǎo) is also a very important function of WeChat. One time Xiao Li went to a car wash where they offered a promotion activity. By scanning the activity's QR code and following their public platform, she was able to get a free car wash. Other times if you share promotion information in your 'Circle of

Friends', you can get a free product. As a young modern person, Xiao Li likes shopping, and more and more shopping malls have their own public platforms with QR codes. Xiao Li follows several shopping malls she likes, and can get a lot of promotion information; this gives her more help on her shopping wants. Nowadays, the Scan QR code function is becoming more prevalent. Not only can QR codes be scanned, but barcodes, and even words can be scanned and translated.

With the development of WeChat technology, its use can be extended in many ways. The Public Platform can be a good instrument for garnering public awareness and support due to the fact that there are over 600 million users on WeChat which is a huge advantage of WeChat. For a comparison illustration, microblogs is like a person giving a speech to hundreds of people, and then waiting for the information to spread. While WeChat is more like a group of good friends surrounded in a room of mutual companions all actively discussing with one another their interests and hobbies, it is more personal and in-depth. WeChat can be used on iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, Symbian, and BlackBerry, to support cross communication. The information in a 'Circle of Friends' can be shared with not only one another, but friends can also share on Tencent microblogs whilst foreign users can share on Facebook.

WeChat now can support more than one hundred countries' mobile phone numbers. Not only Chinese like Xiao Chen and Xiao Li, but also users from other countries, like Mary or Mike, are enjoying the WeChat life. WeChat is steadily garnering more international users, and its positive impact has now steeped deeper into the daily lives of all those who are using it. WeChat really is becoming a lifestyle.

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THE CLASSIC CHINESE POETS

experienced the world sensitively, perceiving its essential qualities, which led to an expression of deep insights translated into poetical language that over the ages evoked deep meaning and beauty. The change of seasons is conceived as a creative harmony originating from the constantly changing and transforming interactions between yin (阴) and yang (阳). It is a song of life and speaks of the dynamic processes of nature and life.

Spring is the natural season of life pregnancy, of promise, of beauty and of renewal. Flowers and a gentle breeze or rain are the soul of spring. The beauty of springtime is that it can offer the possibility to harmonise human experiences and feelings, either happiness or sadness, as coming up unavoidably in the reality of becoming and change.

Li Bai (李白 701-762), perhaps the greatest poet of the Tang dynasty (唐朝 618-907), brilliant, free-spirited and insouciant, spoke about such feelings in an evocative poem about the *Laolao Ting Pavilion* (《劳劳亭》 Lǎoláo Tíng):

Lǎo lǎo tíng
劳劳亭
Laolao Ting Pavilion

Tiān xià shāng xīn chù,
天下伤心处,
Which place under heaven most hurts the heart?

Lǎo lǎo sòng kè tíng.
劳劳送客亭。
Laolao Ting Pavilion, for seeing visitors off.

Chūn fēng zhī bié kǔ,
春风知别苦,
The spring wind knows the sorrow of parting,

Bù qiǎn liǔ tiáo qīng,
不遣柳条青。
The twig of the willow will never again be green.

The poet might also experience the spring as a tender companion who understands his feelings of longing, saying goodbye, and being alone. The spring wind might absorb all human noise and music, as expressed in Li Bai's poem *Hearing a flute on a Spring Night in Luoyang* (《春夜洛城闻笛》 Chūnyè Luòchéng Wéndí):

AESTHETIC
CHINA

Spring Time in Chinese Verse

Jan B.F.N. Engberts

Chūn yè luò chéng wén dí
春夜洛城闻笛
Hearing a flute on a Spring Night in Luoyang

Shuí jiā yù dí àn fēi shēng,
谁家玉笛暗飞声,
From whose home secretly flies the sound of a jade flute?

Sàn rù chūn fēng mǎn luò chéng.
散入春风满洛城。
It is lost amid the spring wind filling the city of Luoyang,

Cǐ yè qǔ zhōng wén zhé liǔ,
此夜曲中闻折柳,
In the middle of his nocturne I remember the broken willow,

Hé rén bù qǐ gù yuán qíng!
何人不起故园情!
What person would not start thinking about home?

The final poem has been written by Du Fu (杜甫 712-770) also a great poet from the Tang dynasty and a good friend of Li Bai. He is known as the 'Poetry Sage' (诗圣 Shīshèng), full of Confucian wisdom. He spent many years living in poverty, wandering through the country. The poem describes a quiet drizzle, so characteristic of a spring night, which is symbolic for the most precious virtue of mankind. The spring rain falls quietly during the night when people are asleep:



China Sounds More Classical Than Ever

Fatos Vladi

Chūn yè xǐ yǔ
春 夜 喜 雨
Spring Rain During the Night

Hǎo yǔ zhī shí jié,
好 雨 知 时 节,
The spring rain, full of goodness,

Dāng chūn nǎi fā shēng.
当 春 乃 发 生。
Knows that she is needed

Suí fēng qián rù yè,
随 风 潜 入 夜,
When, during the night, with a gentle breeze,

Rùn wù xì wú shēng.
润 物 细 无 声。
She is touching the earth tenderly.

Yě jìng yún jù hēi,
野 径 云 俱 黑,
The paths in the fields are hardly visible,

Jiāng chuán huǒ dú míng.
江 船 火 独 明。
Only the lights on the riverboats are shining.

Xiǎo kàn hóng shī chù,
晓 看 红 湿 处,
The next morning, everything is drenched and vibrant,

Huā zhòng jǐn guān chéng.
花 重 锦 官 城。
Jin Guan is blanketed with fresh flowers.

Translated by Xiaoling Liu and Jan B.F.N. Engberts

Professor **Jan Engberts** is a retired professor of Physical Organic Chemistry, who has been working for University of Groningen since 1967. Officially retired in 2004, he held an honorary position until 2009 and is still highly active in the academic community, occasionally teaching and publishing papers (so far he has published about 500 papers in peer-reviewed journals).

“THIS IS THE BIGGEST music conservatory in the world, but in China, this is a small one.” Composer Hu Yongyan (胡咏言) points to the sixteen-storey tall building of the Central Conservatory of Music (中央音乐学院 Zhōngyāng Yīnyuè Xuéyuàn) in Beijing. The conservatory is the best education institution in the field of Western classical music in China, the home country of at least 40 million piano students.

What is the story behind the attributes ‘big’ and ‘best’ in the world of the classical music in China, where, as I used to think, everything is made, except for music? I searched for answers to this question during a recent trip to China. I was commissioned to produce a radio documentary for Dutch Public Radio. “In Holland you may have 5000 kids in total learning to play violin. In Beijing alone, we have 100,000 children learning the violin,” says Hu, a passionate composer and conductor who initially graduated from the same Central Conservatory and later studied at Yale University and Julliard School of Music in the United States of America. “If you come here at the weekend, you will see thousands of kids. They come to take exams for some kind of music certificate. The traffic police has to come onto the campus to direct the traffic...” The face of maestro Hu looks

amazed. “You have never seen this before?”

I have never seen such a boom in classical music as I have seen in China. If you listen attentively, then you will hear classical music almost everywhere. I heard it in the metro, and on the street. I never thought I would hear a part of Beethoven Ninth Symphony in a Chinese pop song. Turn on the TV, start zapping, and in less than a minute you will hear that Western classical music is harmoniously mixed into everyday Chinese life. Smooth piano music accompanies a washing detergent ad and a little kid playing violin is ‘smart’ because he drinks milk from a certain brand. Piano is cool, violin is smart and classical music is fresh and trendy. This would be the dream of anyone involved in the classical music business in Western Europe.

“Rock ‘n’ roll, jazz, even Beethoven and Bach, they are all new in China,” says composer Tan Dun (谭盾), trying to find an explanation for the classical musical revival. Maestro Tan is widely known in the West for the movie scores of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (《卧虎藏龙》 Wòhǔ Cánglóng) and also for his organic classical music. In his compositions, he uses ‘organic’ sounds from materials like water and stones. Tan is one of the best examples of a success story. Born in the village of Changsha (长沙), Hunan province (湖南省), he had never heard of Bach or Beethoven

before he visited Beijing. He could not even believe what a friend told him: “Bach is the father of classical music.” In April 2014, Tan will be in Holland and Germany conducting his own work *Water Passion* based on Bach’s Saint Matthew’s Passion.

Both Tan and Hu witnessed the period of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976 文化大革命 Wénhuà Dà Géming). “It was a horror for intellectuals,” says Hu, at that time attending the elementary school in his home town Shanghai (上海). “During the Cultural Revolution, it was still possible to learn the piano or the violin, but it went more or less underground. Talking in public about classical music could lead to punishment. If you were promoting it, then you could even get imprisoned for that.” Hu, a son

of professional musicians, also could see some light at the end of the tunnel. “The government produced some kind of combination between the Peking Opera (京剧) and symphony. So they still needed the western instruments and professional musicians to perform that.”

For me, it is hard to believe, that this is the same country where only some 30 years ago, during the Cultural Revolution, Western Classical music was forbidden and many classical music artists were sent to the countryside to join the working class. Since that time, nothing has remained the same in China, even the working class.

“With the growing of the Chinese economy, more and more people have big apartments with enough space for a

piano,” says Xiao Wei (肖巍), Vice General Manager of the Pearl River Piano Company (广州珠江钢琴集团有限公司), the biggest piano company in the world, in Guangzhou in the south of China. “Also at this moment, most young couples have only one child and they are willing to pay a lot for their education.” This is the department where the piano keys are made. Most of the keys will be elegantly touched by Chinese fingers, but the factory also exports pianos to more than 80 countries around the world. Still, the Chinese market remains the key to their success. Some 85 percent of the pianos are sold in China itself. This means 100 thousand pianos out of 130 thousand which they make each year. But this is by far not enough for the thirsty classical music



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market in China. Some three hundred thousand pianos are sold every year in the whole country. This means one piano every 20 seconds.

The sound of the high-tech machines in the factory resembles the sound of handmade European wall clocks. Every second is worth a thousand sounds and the sounds reflect craftsmanship. This is not just a mass production. The factory has been increasingly raising its quality standards. Although most of the pianos they make are first entry level, the Pearl River factory is also producing its own pearls: high-end pianos such as the Ritmueller and Kayserburg brands. These pianos have the same quality as the high-end pianos made in Western Europe.

Not only the pianos but also Chinese artists have become the new brands of classical music in the world. "Every child who learns to play the piano wants to be like Lang Lang (郎朗)," says maestro Hu

with a smile. Suddenly the expression in his face changes. It is no longer the face of the enthusiastic music fan. It is the face of the rigorous teacher. "Most of those who have learned piano or the violin have no experience playing for an orchestra. It is the orchestras which form the backbone of the culture," says Hu, radiating modesty. Maestro Hu is a man of deeds. He founded the Orchestra Academy at the Central Conservatory of Beijing. He may be too modest, but he is strongly determined to bring classical music to a higher level.

Ever since the ban on Western Classical Music was lifted, China has, perhaps surprisingly, fully embraced this style of music and has made it their own. China's booming economy has meant a significant increase of the numbers of parents who have the financial means for their children to receive instruction on a musical instrument associated with the classical music genre, such as the piano or violin.



Idolised by many youngsters in the country, classical musicians have become icons to which these young people aspire to become in the future. I believe the future of China will not only be seen in 'made in China' but also more and more in 'played in China'.

China sounds more classical than ever.

Fatos Vladi was born in Albania. He holds a Master's degree in Literature and Linguistics from Tirana University and a Master's degree in Broadcast Journalism from the University of Groningen. In the last 20 years, he has been working as a journalist and media producer for various media organisations in Europe. Vladi has won the Best TV Idea Prize (2007) and the Forgotten Stories Prize (2009). In 2006, he was nominated for Prix Italia. He was nominated for Prix Europa (2012) in the Innovation category and in 2013 he was shortlisted for Prix Europa in the category Radio Music.



Chinese Cuisine: Edible Artwork

Teng Jiaqi (滕嘉琪)

THE FIRST TIME I paid attention to the beauty of food was brought about by a friend. Before then, when selecting food at the market I always first thought of the taste of that food. But my friend said he first looked whether the food was beautiful or not. Only if he thought the food was beautiful enough then he would buy it. Ever since then I have started to notice the aesthetic aspect of food.

The emphasis on the aesthetics of dishes is a distinguishing feature of Chinese cuisine. Chinese people call delicious food 美食 (Měishí). Měi (美) means beautiful, shí (食) means food. In Chinese culture, the beauty of food not only refers to the taste but also indicates the colour, shape, aroma and texture. The harmony of all of the elements, which is essential in Chinese food, makes a Chinese dish beautiful food.

Colour and shape are especially important staples of Chinese cuisine. The colours in Chinese dishes originate from the natural food colours. One dish should have a main colour and supporting colours used for highlighting the main colour. For example, 'Chicken slice with lotus' (芙蓉鸡片 Fúróng Jīpiàn) has a white chicken slice as the main colour; the supportive

colours are green from green vegetables and red from red sausages. It makes the dish colourful and harmonious. Colours can be divided into warm colours and cold colours. Warm colours like yellow and red make people excited, stimulating the eater's appetite, which also helps to add a festive atmosphere. When the Miao minority people celebrate the Sister's Festival (姐妹节 Jiěmèi Jié) in Guizhou province (贵州省), white rice is dyed into rainbow coloured rice with local herbs, making the food look as happy as the people's mood is. Cold colours like green, blue and purple usually function as supporting colours.

The beauty of food shapes is that it brings visual pleasure, increases the eater's appetite and inspires people to appreciate the beauty of life. With the development of Chinese cuisine, the skill of shaping Chinese dishes has also improved. There are several ways to shape Chinese dishes, for instance, food carving (食雕 Shídīāo), piecing cold food together (冷拼 Lěngpīn) and dough modelling (面塑 Miànsù). Food carving is the art of carving food to look like different things, such as flowers, birds and scenery. Piecing cold food together is the art of shaping different colourful

food materials into vivid patterns, which resembles children's playing blocks. This dish is usually the first course which has the function of highlighting dining themes. Dough modelling is a festival custom in the northern part of China. It has thousands of years of history in China, and it is quintessentially beautiful and delicious. In Shandong province (山东省), on wedding days relatives and friends of the young couple usually make fried dough models as wedding presents. Common shapes are dragons, phoenixes and other lucky animals, representing good wishes. In the south of Shanxi province (山西省), grandmothers usually make round steamed dough models for their grandchildren on their birthdays. There are various different patterns for the round dough modelling, such as flowers, Chinese zodiac animals and Chinese characters, representing wishes of the children's good health.

The names of Chinese dishes are even more beautiful than the shapes and colours. Chinese people pay close attention to the names of dishes and their meaning. Names of Chinese dishes are interesting and meaningful because they not only show the features and meaning of dishes but are also full of Chinese wisdom. Some names are derived from the colours of the food materials, e.g. 'Pearl and agate jade soup' (珍珠玛瑙翡翠汤 Zhēnzhū Mǎnǎo Fěicuì Tāng) is the beautiful name for a kind of Chinese soup made of tofu, tomatoes and green vegetables. People can imagine the beauty of the soup just from the name. Some names come from Chinese idioms or folk legends, e.g. stir-fried squid and chicken is called 'Dragon playing with phoenix' (游龙戏凤 Yóulóng-xìfèng) which is a romantic folk legend, making the dish full of with cultural connotations.

A delicious Chinese dish can bring various enjoyments in spirit and physicality, which is also the harmony of all visual, acoustic, gustation and olfactory senses. Chinese cuisine is more than the food meeting the essential physiological need, it is the edible artwork containing harmonious Chinese culture and neutralising aesthetic ideal.

A Dutch Artist's Mission to Clean China's Smog

Interview with Daan Roosegaarde

All photos by Daan Roosegaarde

Liu Jingyi (刘婧一)

Dutch artist and innovator Daan Roosegaarde (1979), is the founder of Studio Roosegaarde, the social design lab with a team of designers and engineers based in the Netherlands and Shanghai (上海). Now Roosegaarde and his team are developing a safe, energy friendly installation to capture smog and create clean air in Beijing (北京) and they are also working in China (中国 Zhōngguó) on other intricate designs, such as Smart Highways which are roads that are more sustainable and interactive because of the use of interactive lights, smart energy and road signs that adapt to specific traffic situations. Daan Roosegaarde has gained international recognition with his social designs, connecting the world of imagination with innovation.

Nowadays, one of the top keywords about China is smog. When I googled Studio Roosegaarde, I saw the remarkable project name, Smog Project. And many Chinese people know you are the Dutchman who has the mission to clean the smog of Beijing. That is very impressive. How did you get yourself so much associated with smog?

Roosegaarde: We have had some cooperation with China from the day we started the first studio which was based in the Netherlands, but quite soon we started the second studio in Shanghai. What we always appreciate and like a lot is, on the one hand, we are working on a design for the future, to think about what is

coming; and on the other hand, we have the great desire to use technology to get there. And when we showed our project DUNE in Hong Kong (香港 Xiānggǎng) and mainland China, people were very enthusiastic about it. DUNE is a public interactive landscape that interacts with human behaviour. This hybrid of nature and technology is composed of large amounts of fibres that brighten in response to the sounds and motion of passing visitors. Chinese people are very open to that. So we did a lot of exhibitions and public art works in China. But one day I was looking out of the window from my room in Beijing and on Monday I could see the city around me, but on Tuesday and Wednesday I couldn't see it anymore because of the problem of smog. And I was thinking maybe we should design and create a solution to fix that problem.

Great thinking! I read that the Mayor of Beijing city is really supportive of the Smog Project. Did you initiate the communication with the city?

Roosegaarde: Yes, the project itself was self-commissioned by our studio. We teamed up with some experts in the Netherlands, but also in China, who are specialists in smog because we needed to work together to create the cleanest park in Beijing as part of the Smog Project

On the one hand, we are working on a design for the future, to think about what is coming; and on the other hand, we have the great desire to use technology to get there.

itself. You must also have seen the smog rings, the jewellery that is made out of actual smog. We suck up the smog particles and compress it and make it into a diamond. So when you donate or buy the ring, you give about 1000 cubic metres of clean air to the city. And we think Beijing, as the capital and as one of the most serious smog afflicted cities, is a good place to start to give something to the people. And it has been great to work together with Beijing, not only with the government, but also with the artists from the Beijing Dashanzi Art District (大山子艺术区 Dàshānzi Yìshù Qū) (also known as the 798 Art District), to actually make this happen.

So how did the procedure go with you approaching the Mayor of Beijing city; did it take you a long time to get the support from the government?

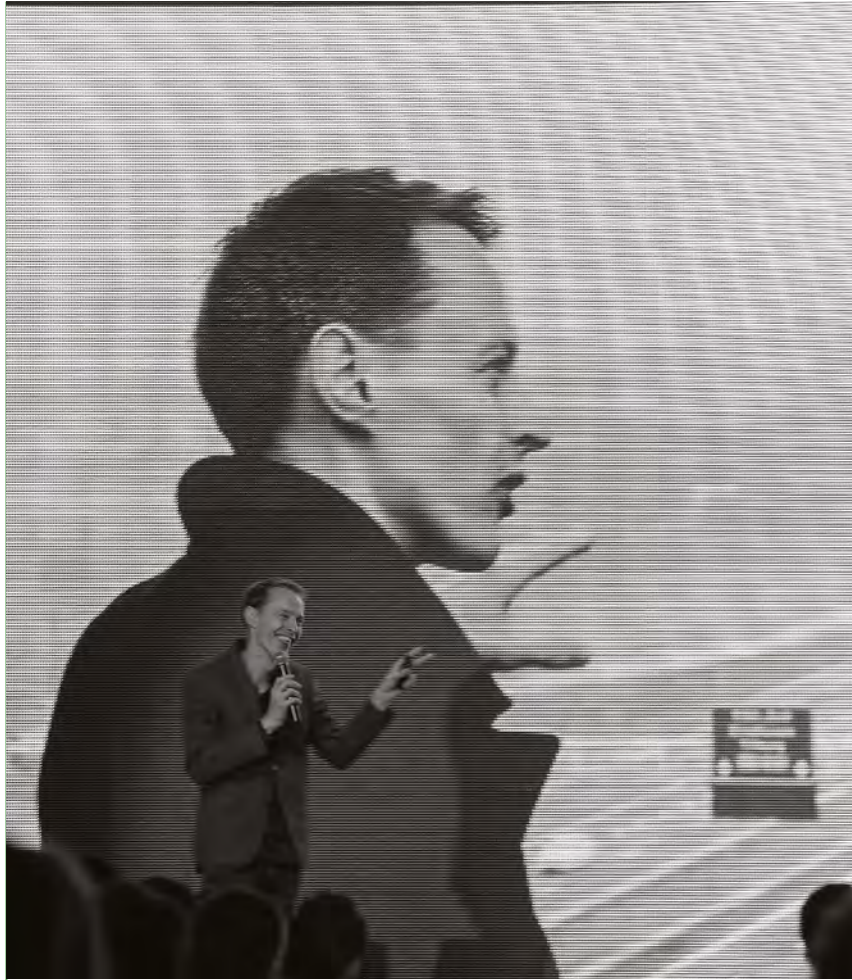
Roosegaarde: We met the Vice Mayor for the first time during the last Beijing Design Week (北京设计周 Běijīng Shèjì Zhōu) in October. And four weeks ago, I met with the President of China in the Dutch palace in Amsterdam during his state visit to the Netherlands. We had eight minutes with him and his wife, and we signed a MoU (Memorandum of Understanding), a sort of

letter of intent, with Dutch Minister Bussemaker of Education, Culture and Science and China's Ministry of Culture (中国文化部 Zhōngguó Wénhuà Bù) to make sure the project actually happens. It is going to be a co-creation, and of course, it's very important that the government supports the project and that they are open to it. We are working together with the creative industry to make sure it actually gets realised.

You mentioned the agreement signed by the Dutch minister. What is the significance to your studio? What does this agreement mean for your studio?

Roosegaarde: We think it's an important project to create incentive, to create a project for the future of the city, the future of a 'smart city', which is good for the people, good for industry and good for the economy. And we do it by making it very tactile, by building it. We know how to do it. We have the technology. We





have an idea how to realise it. But of course it should always be a collaboration with the local government to work together to choose the park. Where should we do it? When should we do it? What's the story? How can we make sure that people understand the right message? The smog-free park is not the solution, but an incentive to work together to make a whole city smog-free, for instance by cycling more. So it's very important to get recognition and support from the official level, especially in China where government is very important. When the government is supportive, people will accept it as a valid and important project. That is why creating common understanding and getting official support is part of the design process for me. It's great to learn and to exchange ideas. It's a lot of fun and I told them that I was inspired by their smog. That was a funny joke, of course. But they understood that. And we have also met with the President and the Dean of Tsinghua University (清华大学). They are very interested in

promoting high-tech innovation, promoting this kind of science and making the city better again. So we are not saying that we know everything. Absolutely not. I am trying to say: Let's work together to make the city even better. We cannot do that alone.

Sure, that is a great point. I also noticed in your CV you have a long list of awards. Among them is China's Most Successful Design Award. Which project brought you this award? Is it the Smog Project?

Roosegaard: I think it was for the oeuvre, so for the whole series of projects that we've done. There are twelve projects we are working on right now. And one of those projects is the Smart Highway project about interactive and sustainable roads.

You have the Shanghai studios, with projects like the Smart Highway and also the Smog Project. How do you like the business environment in China so far?

Roosegaard: You know, it is different from Europe, for sure. I think in Europe, there is a tendency to spend a lot of money, time and energy on Research and Development, on the idea. And then we spend ten to twelve months working on an idea before we can realise all the details. In China, things go much, much faster. Which means, sometimes you just start, you launch and learn, and then you go back and you update. I am not saying it is better or worse, but there is a different rhythm at play. You have to accept that. While for me the most important thing is quality; quality of how people experience the quality of materials; that you make something that works, and it remains working. So I love the brightness, the speed of China, and the scale: very fast, very big. But at the same time, I sometimes try to slow it down a bit in order to make sure it has the quality that I have in my brain. That is sort of a creative process, a creative struggle. And I think that is very cool.

Based on your past experiences, how do you define the opportunities in China?

Roosegaard: There are great opportunities in China. In Europe, they take a lot of time for Research and Development. But sometimes Europe is too slow. You have to find the balance

We are saying: No, we should reset and make something completely new, because the old things don't work anymore. I think the new generation in China is ready for that, absolutely.

between the fast and the slow. So that's what I love about China: that there is this incredible desire for the future, especially in my generation, like 30 to 35-year-olds. It's a new generation of Chinese people who are becoming bosses of their companies. And they have been abroad, they have been to London, they know the world a bit. And they are very, very open to new ideas. They invite me to their homes to eat and to hang out and to learn. And I think that's incredibly fun to make new friends and, based on that, start to realise new projects. But it takes some time to get to know each other, and to build up trust because the stuff we do is also very radical. It's radical innovation. And we are not optimising an old system. We are saying: No, we should reset and make something completely new, because the old things don't work anymore. I think the new generation in China is ready for that, absolutely.

You have given lectures in many universities in China. How do you like the experience?

Roosegaard: University students in China are very eager, incredibly eager. They ask a lot of questions and they do their homework quite well and they are familiar with all the projects. They are also very interested in the process, like how do you go from idea to realisation. I think I as a Dutchman, as a westerner, I have really been trained to always ask why. Why is it like this? I always question things. Maybe in the beginning, Chinese people are sort of shy. When I say something, they always say: "Yes, it's okay, because you are the tutor, we believe you." And I say: "No, no, you have to be critical yourself!"



Maybe I am wrong, I don't know, let's have an open conversation." What I want is not me telling them what to do, but I want a dialogue. I want an interaction. In the beginning, Chinese students are not really used to that, but if you give them a chance to learn, they learn really, really fast.

I know you just had a trip to China in March accompanying the delegation with the Dutch minister Bussemaker of Education, Culture and Science. Do you have any new observations on China and new ideas from this trip?

Roosegaard: I am getting to know it much, much better. I have been travelling in China for the past four or five years intensively. But right now we are building these things, so it is important to have a group of people who believe in you and to choose the right client who is really interested in the concept, the story, not just in it for the money, but also believes in the project. So I will go there in five or six weeks to talk about the first production of the smog rings, and to meet some Chinese manufacturers, to make it happen. You know, it is a city with so much potential, and so many great challenges. And I think, it forces us to be creative to survive.

I heard about your impressive lecture on the future of the world. What is your anticipation about the future of China?

Roosegaard: Well, I think it's very clear that we cannot keep on going like this. We cannot keep on growing and growing, you know, it will eat everything up. So in a weird way, we should not do less, but we should do more, and maybe invest more in creativity, in new ideas and new innovation to deal with the challenges and poetry of today's China. So, we should think about an energy-neutral city which is based on good energy or about making parks where people can enjoy the weather and just enjoy themselves. That is, I think, as important as economic progress. So, this balance between commerce and creativity is important. And I think if China does that, there is a bright future. If it ignores it, you might hit a big concrete wall. But I think China has conquered many, many challenges before, so I am sure a new balance will be established. And I think China's new president is really good at finding that balance.



Harbin: The Harmony of Diversity

Huang Kuo (黄廓)

Located in Northeast China, Harbin (哈尔滨 Hā'ěrbīn) is called 'the bright pearl on the bridge of Eurasia land' or 'the pearl on the swan's neck'. With its long winter and snow and ice-related activities, it is also known as the 'Ice City'; and its architecture conjures up the names 'Oriental Moscow' or 'Oriental Paris'. Harbin has earned all of these names, not least because the city perfectly integrates the Orient and the Occident, the classic and the modern, calmness and vitality.

The name Harbin sounds more foreign rather than Chinese: it comes from the Manchu (满族 Mǎn Zú) word for 'flat'. The first signs of human activity in the area appeared 22,000 years ago, and the history of the city can be traced back to 800 years ago when the Jin Dynasty (金朝 1115-1234) was established, later followed by the Qing Dynasty (清朝 1644-1911). Today, 47 ethnic minorities live in the city, of which the Manchu population is the largest group. Harbin was the birthplace of ethnic minorities, but later it turned out to be location with the largest Han (汉) majority. Integrating different ethnical cultures, Harbin formed its own unique characteristics. The city's character was reinforced by Russia's construction of the Middle East Railway junction centre in late 19th century, which facilitated relatively large-scale



immigration: more than 160,000 foreigners from 33 countries moved to Harbin, promoting the development of a market-oriented economy and diverse city culture.

Harbin created its unique and exotic cityscape through assimilating external culture, and through its vivid representation of being a 'united nation of religions'. Travelling through the city, the visitor can expect to see the Orthodox Eastern Saint-Sophia Church (圣·索菲亚大教堂) in the Dao Li District (道里区 Dào lǐ Qū), the Chinese monastery Ji Le Temple (极乐寺), a Christian Church and a Harbin Confucian Temple in the

Nan Gang District (南岗区 Nángǎng Qū), and a Harbin Great Mosque in the Dao Wai District (道外区 Dào wài Qū). These religious institutions not only present the distinctive architecture of Baroque, Byzantine, Gothic, classical Chinese and Muslim buildings; but these building are also the very expression of these very diverse religious cultures. Buddhism was introduced in Harbin during the Jin Xi Zong period (金熙宗 1119-1150); Taoism spread through Harbin about 800 years ago; Islam appeared in the Qing Qian Long time (乾隆 1711-1799); Christianity came in the mid-19th and Catholicism in the late 19th century; and lastly Orthodoxy was introduced in Harbin in the early 20th century. Harbin and its residents hold very tolerant views of different religions; there is little evidence of conflict along religious lines in the city.

Harbin has eight administrative districts, and Nan Gang, Dao Li and Dao Wai are representatives. Dao Wai District is where the old town is located, and it is the ideal venue to find the most native and indigenous flavours of Harbin. It is said that a family named Tian (田) moved to this area in about 1805 and founded a winery there, after which, in about 1900, a family named Fu (傅) came to set up a caravanserai, and the city has spread out from that. Today, the tradition of living on craftsmanship and small business is still carried on in Dao Wai District. The best example of this industrious and vibrant lifestyle can be found in the third North Street Bazaar (北三市场 Běi Sān Shìchǎng). This market place satisfies almost all of the people's daily needs from food stands and drapers' shops, to public baths and theatres. Similar market places and local communities help to preserve the relatively simple and easy life in Dao Wai District.

The Dao Li and Nan Gang districts tell a totally different story. Being the centres for city administration, finance, commerce, education and entertainment, the two districts share a similar upmarket character of fashion, and the hustle and bustle of a metropolitan culture. Central Street (中央大街 Zhōngyāng Dàjiē) is the landmark of the Dao Li District. It was originally built in 1898 under the name 'Chinese Street' and then renamed to Central Street, although local people prefer to call it 'Stone Street' since it is covered by precious built-in square stones.

Ice and snow are natural gifts to Harbin, and the city uses them to its fullest advantage.

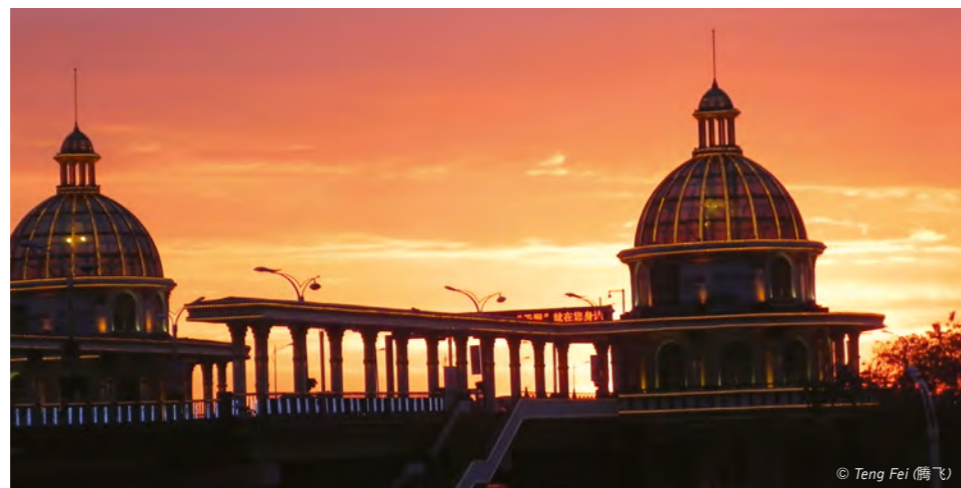
Now, the 22-metre-wide, 1450-metre-long street is for pedestrians, thereby protecting the roadbed as well as the historical and cultural buildings, mostly shops and restaurants that flank the two sides.

Dao Li District has the most beautiful natural scenery in Harbin, which is found along the Songhua River (松花江). Three joint parks on the south side of the river form the longest park region in China. On the north side of the river, the Sun Island (太阳岛 Tàiyáng Dǎo) - named after its shape - has been developed into a tourist zone, which is unique as it is the only riverside wet grassland ecology in a central city in the whole of China. People can access it either by crossing one of the three bridges or by taking a river cruise. In 1980, the popular song *On the Sun Island* spread the name of Sun Island far and wide and made it the pride of the locals and a popular tourist attraction for visitors. The river sides are ideal places for sightseeing, boating, fishing, swimming as well as picnicking.

Harbin has a diverse and rich dining culture. Harbin cuisine is strong and rich in both taste and colour. The tradition of ancient local nomadic food mingled with the influence of modern imported European dishes combines to form Harbin's famous culinary characteristic of 'appearing beautiful in being sincere, containing quintessence in being rough'. Harbin dishes predominantly contain Chinese northeastern

flavours, typified by heavy sauce, deep-fry and mixed stew. The most popular dishes include Guo Bao Rou (锅包肉) (a form of sweet and sour deep fried pork), Eight Hearty Stews (八大炖 Bā Dà Dùn) (eight dishes of stewed meat and vegetables, including chicken braised with mushroom, stewed spare-ribs with green-been, braised pork with vermicelli, braised catfish with eggplant, stewed fresh fish De Mo Li style) and Fried Pork with Pickle and Vermicelli (猪肉酸菜炖粉条 Zhūròu Suāncài Dùn Fěntiáo).

Besides traditional Harbin food, Western style food is also popular in the city. Walking along Central Street, the long queues waiting at the authentic Russian-style restaurants will definitely draw in the visitor's attention: it seems Harbin people never get tired of Hua Mei's (华梅) borsch and Madieer's ice cream (马迭尔冰棍儿). There are two reputable bakery shops in Harbin: one is Lao Ding Feng (老鼎峰) in Dao Wai District, famous for cakes mixed with Chinese and Muslim characters. The other is Qiu Lin (秋林) in Nan Gang District, well known for its sour and chewy big bread Palestine (大列巴 Dà Liěba), weighing 2.5 kilograms each. Tourists find Harbin's main specialty particularly interesting: smoked savory red sausage (红肠 Hóngcháng), famous for its European flavours. Visitors' stomachs are never disappointed in Harbin.



© Teng Fei (腾飞)



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Seasonal activities cultivated art and culture in Harbin. Harbin has four distinct seasons, and the activities in both summer and winter are world famous. Harbin was recognised as a 'Music City' by UNESCO in 2010 not only because China's oldest symphony orchestra and first music school were both established in Harbin, but also because it has hosted the Harbin Summer Music Concert (哈尔滨之夏音乐会) every two years since 1958, assembling artists from all over the world. Ice and snow are natural gifts to Harbin, and the city uses them to its fullest advantage. From December to March, the whole city is decorated by various styles of ice and snow sculptures. The annual Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival, started in 1985², is one of the four worldwide ice and snow festivals along with the Sapporo Snow Festival in Japan, Quebec City Winter Carnival in Canada and the Ski Festival in Norway.

Ice lanterns and snow sculptures are predominant at the Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival. The ice lantern in Harbin can be dated back to when fishermen used ice and candles for lighting. In the early 1960s, Harbin ice lanterns developed into a form

² It was an annual event until 1966, then stopped and restarted in 1979.

of art, which uses gardening skills, architecture technologies, sculpture techniques and lightening equipment. Ice lanterns are colourful and bright at night, making Harbin a fairyland at winter nights. The Ice Lantern Fair in Zhao Lin Park, which is part of the Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival (哈尔滨国际冰雪节), attracts domestic and international tourists every year.

Harbin is a city with multiple cultural origins and influences. It adopted the cultures in a way like separating the wheat from the chaff, and united them to make something with Harbin characteristics. Harbin is not a city to be glanced at over a couple of hours, its sheer diversity, plurality and richness make it a place of experience, enjoyment and enlightenment for endless reasons.

Huang Kuo (黄廓)

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Wild China: Beautiful China

John Goodyear

From record-breaking growth rates to the smog of Beijing (北京), China often makes the headlines for its economic rise and its environmental problems. But the country is rarely considered for its highest mountains, hot deserts, cold terrains, sceneries of outstanding natural beauty as well as plant and animal life on which China and the Chinese so greatly depend. The nature documentary series *Wild China*, a pioneering series capturing China's spectacular array of creatures which inhabits the country's most beautiful landscapes, aims to put that right.

Wild China is a six-part nature documentary co-produced by the British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC) and Chinese Central Television (CCTV). It was first aired in the United Kingdom in May 2008, just three months before the opening of the Beijing Olympic Games. The timing was intentional on the side of the Chinese authorities, who granted permission for the documentary to be made: It wanted to showcase China as a tourist destination of outstanding natural



© Li Shujun (李树军)

beauty in that memorable Olympic year. For Phil Chapman, the series producer, the documentary was just as much for internal as for external consumption though: "We want the Chinese to feel proud of their countryside and wildlife, to care about it and to seek to ensure its survival," he wrote. Chapman would go on to add: "We also hope to redress the negative view of China's environment propagated in western media."

Because of the unique collaboration between the BBC and CCTV, the six episodes went further than any other nature documentary beforehand in presenting China's lesser-known natural history to the widest possible audience. Unprecedented access was given to the BBC to film in remote parts of China. The film crews painstakingly filmed a number of creatures using a blend of traditional filming techniques with special ones, such as time lapse sequences and the use of the thermal imaging cameras. Never before seen on film, viewers witnessed on their television screens the spectacular sight of Rickert's mouse eared bat catching a fish in the dark and the rare primates Francois' leaf monkeys entering their caves at night in the first episode entitled *Heart of the Dragon*.

As the country with the world's largest population and third biggest in terms of landmass, the documentary filmmakers

faced a herculean task in choosing the kinds of species to capture on film, especially as China is home to some of the rarest primates, over 3000 unique plant species as well as animals on the verge of total extinction, such as the wild Asian Elephant. In a tour de force, the documentary cleverly took commonly associated aspects of Chinese geography as well as Chinese animal and human culture, using them as titles for each episode and enticing potential viewers to learn more about *Tibet* (Episode 3), *Beyond the Great Wall* (Episode 4) or *the Land of the Panda* (Episode 5). Instead of focusing purely on animals or solely on human culture or physical geography, the documentary blends them all together into one. It tells of an interaction between humans and animals in the varied environs which they both inhabit.

Geography plays a key role in the documentary as a whole: It pinpoints animal and plant life to a particular place and conveys in an easy-to-understand language explaining why specific locations are favourable to certain species. In the second episode entitled *Shangri-La*, for instance, viewers learn of the special meteorological conditions in the south-western Yunnan province (云南省) that stem from the Indian Ocean and force monsoon rainclouds further north than usual. The result is spectacular:

a unique tropical biodiversity that boasts some of the rarest plants on earth, something that the documentary likens to that earthly paradise and home to mythical Himalayan (喜马拉雅 Xīmǎlāyǎ) utopia: Shangri-La.

Just as physical geography plays an important role in the documentary as a whole, so does human geography and the impact of human behaviour on the wild. It would be far-fetched to say that the documentary presents a one-sided, overly positive view of the Chinese environment. It does not. Instead, it speaks some truths about the lack of care, conservation and



© Li Shujun (李树军)

consideration in protecting endangered species. One of the reasons why, for example, the freshwater turtle is close to extinction is because these animals along with 25 other freshwater species are considered gourmet delicacies in China. In a rather matter-of-fact tone, the narrator puts it like this: "Some animals are rare, even close to extinction because the Chinese are accustomed to eating them."

Although rarity of endangered species is a recurring theme in *Wild China*, the documentary does highlight examples of animal conservation projects that seek to protect species from total extinction. It shows how the Chinese, often with government assistance, have pursued a policy of direct intervention to save species from absolute extinction. The fifth episode *Land of the Panda* elaborates on the examples of the Chinese alligator and crested ibis. The same episode also contrasts the more enlightened approach to conservation of endangered species of recent governments compared to mismanagement during the Mao administration.

Wild China also tells the story of transformation processes over given periods of time, some of which encompass the lifespan of animals and humans; others are much broader, spanning eras, even

geological epochs. The sixth and last episode entitled *Tides of Change* focuses on transformation in terms of migration. Human migratory flows in China have had a massive impact on urban centres, the majority of which are located on the eastern coast. Now home to half of the country's population of 1.3 billion people, the eastern coast from Shandong (山东省) in the north to Guangdong (广东省) in the south does not just play host the migration of humans though; it is an important migratory route for birds. But the last episode, just like the six before it, gives a mixed picture of the impact of these and other transformations. On the one hand, people and animals (including birds) coexist alongside each other in harmony and have done so for centuries; and yet, the documentary reveals instances of an uneasy relationship between the wildlife and humans in modern China.

This unique joint BBC-CCTV documentary journeys through a country of spectacular national beauty, revealing to the unsuspecting viewer a plant and animal kingdom which they might not have initially associated with China. Through exceptional camera work, plain-speaking and, at times, witty narration as well as its wide geographical reach, *Wild China* succeeds in painting a picture of the diverse Chinese animal kingdom and natural environment, of which its human citizens can feel a great sense of pride. The series also counterbalances this projected, positive image with the vital importance of conservation and protection of this special environment so that future generations can respect, admire and enjoy it as well. Highly recommendable viewing, the six-part *Wild China* documentary leaves the viewer with a readjusted perception of China that is considerably more diverse, more varied, even more exotic than the image generally portrayed of this country elsewhere in the media.



© Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛)

Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China: A Book by Ezra F. Vogel

Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛)

According to former US President Jimmy Carter, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* is “an impressive and important biography of one of the most important men of the twentieth century”. It is a comprehensive and informative biography, written by Ezra F. Vogel, one of Harvard University’s top China scholars. The book was published by Harvard University Press in 2011, entered the 2011 National Book Critics Circle Awards ‘finalist’ list, and won the 2012 Lionel Gelber Prize, which is described

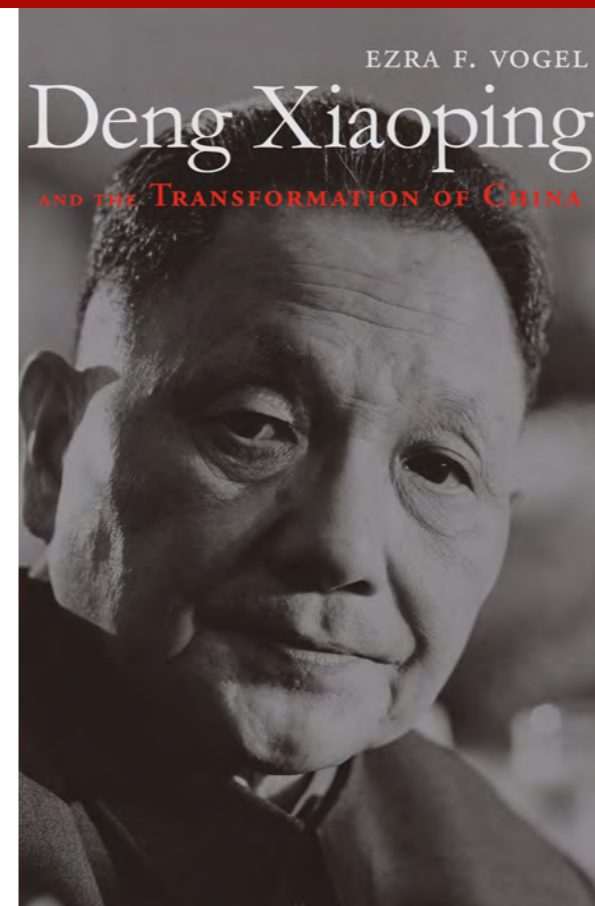
as “the world’s most important award for non-fiction” by The Economist. The Chinese mainland simplified Chinese edition was published in January 2013 and this edition was commonly regarded a huge breakthrough in the release of sensitive information. The book is, as the subtitle indicates, about Deng Xiaoping (邓小平) and the political and economic revolution that China has experienced in the past 30 years. Deng Xiaoping launched China’s market-oriented economy and developed China into one of the fastest growing economies in the

world over the past 30 years, raising the standard of living of hundreds of millions of people.

“Deng could be tough, but he was direct and engaged. He played an extraordinary role, bringing the world’s most populated nation into the modern world,” said Mr. Brent Scowcroft, who served as Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs in the Nixon and Ford administrations. “We are fortunate that Vogel, one of our foremost China scholars, has now brought the man alive



© Du Yongle (杜永乐)



Even now, according to Dr. Feng Keli (冯克利), a professor at Shandong University (山东大学 Shāndōng Dàxué) who translated this book into Chinese, the Chinese people are still living in Deng Xiaoping’s time to a great extent. To understand China today, you must understand Deng. Mr. Vogel’s prodigious biography offers a sweeping overview of Deng’s background (1904-1969), recounts his tortuous road to the top (1969-1977), provides accounts of his vision, courage, political and organisational skills in modernising China and opening it to trade with the West (1978-1989), and also collects challenges to the Deng era (1989-1992). The book is, to a great extent, a detailed chronology of Deng’s roller coaster career.

Vogel’s book supplies plenty of impressive details about and extensive insights into Deng Xiaoping. It offers an enormous amount of material about Deng’s leadership and struggles within the elite power circles in China over several decades. Howard French from the Wall Street Journal said: “The book is at its best in portraying the tense interplay of personal relations and ambition among Mao’s many lieutenants.” Deng was a master of administration and diplomacy. The comprehensive description of Deng’s skills when dealing with foreign affairs, like facing the Soviet-Vietnamese threat or opening up to the United States, is also one of the highlights of this book. This massive biography also details how Deng triumphed over repeated setbacks, overcame the seemingly insuperable obstacles to transform China from the oldest civilization into a modern, leading industrial nation. It is worth mentioning that this fascinating book *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* also touches on many potent and sensitive issues in China, like the

establishment of Sino-American diplomatic relations, the historical evaluation of Mao’s chosen successor Hua Guofeng (华国锋), the rocky road to economic reform, the relations between Deng Xiaoping and Communist leader Chen Yun (陈云), the demonstration on Tiananmen Square (天安门广场 Tiānānmén Guǎngchǎng) and the issues of Hong Kong (香港 Xiānggǎng), Taiwan (台湾 Táiwān) as well as Tibet (西藏 Xīzàng).

The author Ezra F. Vogel, who worked on this book for a decade, spent one year to learn the Chinese language in order to study *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*. His volume is not only enormous but also well researched. He interviewed dozens of Deng’s colleagues and acquaintances, China experts as well as Deng’s family and he did exhaustive documentary research. Vogel also visited a lot of places in China, like Deng’s birthplace in Sichuan Province (四川省) in the southwest of China, Jiangxi Province (江西省) where Deng was exiled during the Cultural Revolution (文化大革命 Wénhuà Dà Géming), as well as special economic zones in Guangdong Province (广东省) in the south of China. “With this book, I thought I could write something new that would educate Americans about China,” Mr. Vogel said in an interview. From the perspectives of Chinese people, the author also educates the Chinese about Deng Xiaoping and China reforms as well as about what China is facing and where China is going right now.

This is an important book on one of the most influential leaders in the late 20th century who was the driving force behind China’s transformation. Generally speaking, it is essential reading for anyone who wants to know more about Deng and his life, wants to understand how China went from being an impoverished country to a great power today, or wants to understand China today more deeply.



Where Are We Going, Dad?

Wang Qing (王青)

Some clean clothes, two big suitcases, a dad with his child having no idea about life, not knowing what the destination is, without mum, cannot bring the Teddy bear... All this is the start of a fantastic journey. When the first episode of *Where are we going, dad?* (《爸爸去哪儿》 Bàba Qù Nǎr), a TV show imported from South Korea, appeared on Chinese TV, no one could have imagined that such an unknown reality show would become a legend of Chinese entertainment programmes in the future.

I can still remember on a Sunday morning. I had just woken up and my mother came to me and cheerfully told me about a TV reality show she watched last night. The programme is about several Chinese male stars who take their children,

without the mothers, to live in unfamiliar places which are mostly villages with beautiful sceneries that are rarely known to the contestants. From the moment she first saw it, my mother was fascinated with the show and continually talked about the 'characters', like the always crying girl Cindy, the charmingly naive Angeles, the girly boy Kimi and a group of overwhelmed fathers. It sounded interesting, so I waited in front of the television for the rerun that afternoon.

I found that this ninety-minute TV show presents a clear story: five father-and-child couples go to a strange place, which is usually a rural area on the outskirts of a city with beautiful scenery or a plain native village, to experience life there for 72

hours. During this period, the contestants have to complete several missions, such as catching loach (a kind of fish) in the field together and then cooking it, or fishing in a pond and then selling the fish to cover travelling expenses. The audience can easily be attracted by the plot: the fathers are household names and fans know everything about them, but they have been placed in a context where they have to demonstrate their less familiar parental side. Also, the challenges presented by the show's creators often create big problems for the famous fathers. For example, all the fathers were requested to teach their kids a very old song although most of the children could not focus on that for more than ten minutes. I was immediately fascinated by the premise of the show and I wanted to know more about the programme, so after the first episode I began to search for information, collecting and analysing data and news about *Where are we going, dad?*

My research on *Where are we going, dad?* mainly resulted in information about the show's economic aspects and influence. What surprised me most is the huge profit it makes, which should be described as a 'win-win' situation or 'killing two birds with one stone'. There is no doubt that via this reality TV show, the first beneficiary, Mango TV (Another name for Hunan TV) has got a lot of applause and support from Chinese audiences and sponsors. Also, the sponsors have benefitted tremendously from the show because the show's popularity has increased the sponsors' products' brand value. So as a result, at the tender meeting for Season 2, the final yield was 312 million RMB.

The show not only increases the sponsors' profit, but also the familiarity of villages and the beautiful locations where the episodes were shot. These locations now attract numerous tourists from all over China - the locals say they have never before

seen such an endless stream of fans and visitors. Ticket prices and accommodation fees in the show's locations, such as Shapotou (沙坡头) in Ningxia Hui autonomous region (宁夏回族自治区), Puzhehei (普者黑) in Yunnan (云南), Snow Kingdom in Heilongjiang (黑龙江) have risen by about 50%. Not only the show, its sponsors and its locations are successful, but peripheral products like *Where are we going, dad?* video games and movies are also real best sellers. The economic ripple effect of *Where are we going, dad?* is immeasurable and can be noticed everywhere. The total revenue of the same-name movie *Where are we going, dad?* has surpassed 460 billion RMB (€54.5bn) after it was released; online games' downloads rank in the top ten lasting for one week; peripheral products, such as clothing, have become big online stores' best sellers.

Besides the economic effect, *Where are we going, dad?* has also given Hunan TV a huge competitive edge in the 'battle' between the Chinese TV stations. Before *Where are we going, dad?* aired on Hunan TV, the different platforms of China's entertainment TV were battling for ratings, but after the show aired, Hunan TV undoubtedly won. From the second episode,

Where are we going, dad? has been firmly in first place, and is drawing in the biggest audience according to statistics from CSM Media Research (索福瑞媒介研究有限公司 Suǒfúrui Méijiè Yánjiū Yǒuxiàn Gōngsī) - a Chinese research centre dedicated to TV & radio audience measurement research. All ten episodes rank first among other TV shows that air at the same time. Based on data provided by CSM Media, more than 40 million viewers are watching Hunan TV at the same time on Friday evening at 10 o'clock, making *Where are we going, dad?* the most popular TV show in China. I can also see the show's popularity among my own friends and relatives, who are all in different age groups. I often see many of my friends and relatives write something on WeChat (a mobile text and voice message communication service developed by Tencent) about the show.

Of course, the participants in the show also benefit: the adult contestants shoot to the top of the stars' A-list and the names of both the children and the fathers regularly appear in the headlines of the daily newspapers. The five fathers in the show are actors or sportsmen, and the difference between them is their popularity: some have already been famous for a long

time; others have rarely been seen before or are even unknown. Guo Tao (郭涛), Lin Zhiying (林志颖), Wang Yuelun (王岳伦) and Tian Liang (田亮) are extremely famous show business stars and are all well known in China. For them, participating in this programme is like adding wings to a tiger: it just makes them more popular. Zhang Liang (张亮), who is less well

known, is undoubtedly the one who benefits most from this show. He experienced his 'boogie nights' after this reality show. After the first episode, a lot of people had no idea who he was. However, ever since episode four, Zhang Liang's popularity suddenly sky rocketed. The number of fans he has on Sina Weibo (Chinese Twitter) rose from 110,000 to 2.2 million, and it is now more than 17 million. Twenty years ago, he was nobody with an income of only a few thousand Yuan every month. Today, he spends millions buying a house in Beijing (北京). As a young father, Zhang is surely the biggest winner and he deserves it because he is delicate and gentle and has a lot of humour and personal charm. *Where are we going, dad?* gave him a chance, provided a platform for him to really take off.

Also, the five children learned a lot from this programme. They learned how to get along with their peers, which can seldom be taught in the classroom by their teachers and is especially important for 'only children'. They learned how to deal with problems, getting rid of some of those bad habits along the way: it is obvious that in the end Cindy cried less than ever before and Kimi was able to be less dependent on his daddy. All five children now have 'child star' status; they took part in the same-name movie shooting, advertisement endorsements and various TV shows. They enjoy the bright spotlight much earlier than others.

A final group that also benefits from the show's popularity is the audience. *Where are we going, dad?* has definitely brought its viewers joy. Laughter erupted when the awkward dads could not find a place to put their hands when cooking; the audience was in stitches when the children expressed themselves in very strange ways; all the week's pressure from studying or working is easily relieved by those two hours on Friday



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evening. In addition, watching the show is not only a nice way to relax and laugh after a busy week, but it is also a casual way to learn more about family ethics and child care. Some situations in the programme reflect the dilemmas faced by millions of fathers and sons. In China, the father has long been a spiritual mentor who fulfilled the role of guide in the relationship with their children, rarely involved in the daily care for the very young boys or girls. At the same time, what I appreciate most is that the organisation of *Where are we going, dad?* provides educational experts who review and provide feedback on the behaviour of the fathers and the children in the TV show, as well as explaining how to handle similar problems to the audience. Because of the scientific approach of *Where are we going, dad?*, the show offers vivid lessons to both parents and children.

Where are we going, dad? has led to a development of an entertainment industry, which is impressive for most people because

in China not one TV show has had so much influence and made such a difference as this one. However, such success also raises some questions, such as why has China not developed its own original programme? As a TV show imported from South Korea, people can easily associate it with other popular entertainment shows, such as *The Voice* imported from the Netherlands, *The Super Brain (Deutschlands Superhirn)* imported from Germany, etc., for they are all imported from overseas. Perhaps, in addition to importing, how to make a better original programme should be a main concern for producers today.

Another question the show brings up is about children, is it reasonable to put children in the public eye, prematurely exposing them to public attention? It is still to be carefully considered whether we should encourage these fledgling birds to participate in the games of the adult world.

The show has become a brand or a symbol. It has had a positive effect on

business, education, and even culture in Chinese society. With so much positive feedback and little media criticism, no wonder that Zhang Tingting (张婷婷), the media critic, once said “*Where are we going, dad?* is a programme with no negative evaluation.” Today in China, the majority is speaking highly of *Where are we going, dad?* For it has brought profit to the Chinese entertainment industry and joy to Chinese society. And most of all, it had made viewers re-think the relationship between parents and their children, as well as how to teach children. It is certainly an enlightening TV show since it has raised questions and has made the audience think; undoubtedly a product with huge economic benefits, for it has already generated millions of RMBs for the local TV, film makers and sponsors; a science education film with realistic appreciation, because it teaches many young parents how to treat their kids properly; and a show that really makes you continually keep eyes on it.

Wang Qing (王青) graduated from Communication University of China (中国传媒大学) with a Master’s degree in Teaching Chinese as a Second language. He is now a Ph.D. student at the College of Education, Purdue University in the United States of America. His interests and research areas include multicultural education, minority student educational issues and communication.



GCI Calendar

GCI OVERVIEW

Groningen Confucius Institute

The Groningen Confucius Institute (GCI, 格罗宁根孔子学院) is a partnership between the Communication University of China (中国传媒大学 Zhōngguó Chuánméi Dàxué) and the Groningen Confucius Institute Foundation, which consists of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, the University of Groningen and the city of Groningen. GCI is part of a wide network of Confucius institutes all over the world and is supported by Hanban (汉办) China. Our goal is to strengthen mutual ties between China and The Netherlands and north-western Germany. By combining our strengths and knowledge at GCI, we offer services in the areas of language (Chinese courses, HSK Tests and English/Dutch-Chinese translations), culture (cultural courses, tailor-made training and cultural events) as well as business (business training, networking activities and consultancy).

GCI EVENTS

DECEMBER 2013 TO MAY 2014

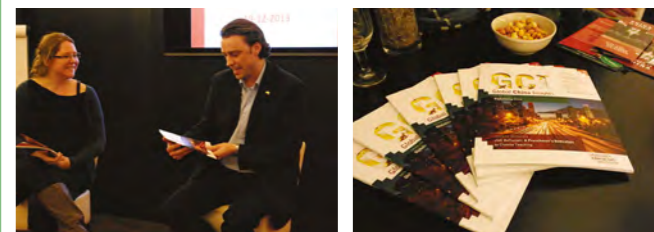
GCI’s Annual Graduation Ceremony in 2013 and the Launch Ceremony of the Second Issue of *Global China Insights*

On the evening of Thursday 19 December 2013, Groningen Confucius Institute (GCI) held the 2013 Annual Graduation Ceremony and also launched the second issue of *Global China Insights* at the Van Swinderenhuis in Groningen. More than 60 guests, including student representatives, Chinese teachers from GCI as well as GCI’s *Global China Insights* Senior Editor John Goodyear and Editor Ingrid Fischer were in attendance at this ceremony.



Hosting the event, Hao Cui (郝翠), a GCI Chinese teacher, opened the ceremony by expressing gratitude for the students’ efforts in learning Chinese, after which she reviewed events organised by GCI in 2013. The launching ceremony of the second issue of *Global China Insights* involved an interview about the journal between Hao Cui and the editorial team, John Goodyear and Ingrid Fischer. They introduced the journal’s goals, ideas and originality, and shared their own personal China experiences with the audience, which was well received.

For the graduation ceremony, GCI issued certificates to those who completed their Chinese language courses at GCI. It started with GCI’s youngest student, 7-year-old Alexander, who also delivered a speech in Chinese on behalf of all the students. Afterwards,





all the other students were called up one-by-one to receive their certificates.

After the official ceremony, three of GCI's Chinese teachers treated the audience to some traditional Chinese entertainment: Li Yunxuan (李韵璇) performed a beautiful traditional Chinese classical dance, Hao Cui very gracefully performed 24-style Taijiquan (太极拳), and to close it off Zhang Di (张笛) expertly performed the traditional Chinese tea ceremony.

First Dutch Conference on China and Chinese Language in Secondary Education *Inspiration, Information, Interaction*

Rosanne Severs, Pieter Hetteema

On 28 January 2014, the first Dutch Conference on China and Chinese language teaching took place in Leiden. More than 200 participants, mostly principals and teachers of Dutch secondary schools, took part in this lively conference. The conference was initiated and organised by Jialei&Co (嘉蕾) and Public Leadership in cooperation with Groningen Confucius Institute, the Confucius Institute at Leiden University, the Dutch European Platform, Leiden University (ICLON), the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development and networks of school leaders and Chinese teachers. The conference was opened by Mrs. Anke Buiteveld, the Director International Policy of the Dutch Ministry of Education, who explained that from 2015 Dutch schools are allowed to start with Chinese Language as an official examination subject. Her speech



was followed by a dual keynote speech, jointly delivered by two China experts: sinologist Mrs. Tabitha Speelman and researcher at the Clingendael Institute Mr. Jan Melissen. They emphasised the importance of Sino-Dutch relations.

After the plenary session, the conference offered a nice range of Chinese cultural elements and a variety of workshops on Dutch-Chinese cooperation and Chinese language teaching and testing. A poll among the participants made clear that the number of Dutch schools who intend to offer Chinese language as an option to their students will double from 35 to 75 over the next two years. The participating organisations considered the conference a great success and intend to repeat this initiative in the future.

Spring Festival Reception

On Friday 31 January 2014 Groningen Confucius Institute held a Spring Festival Reception to celebrate Chinese New Year at Hotel Corps de Garde in Groningen.

The visitors of the reception were able to experience the true culture of China: Li Yunxuan (李韵璇), Chinese language instructor and dancer, started the evening with a brilliant Chinese dance performance. The dance was followed by a traditional tea ceremony performed by Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈) and Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛), both Chinese language instructors, which gave the audience a complete experience of the Chinese culture. Xuefei Knoester-Cao, Director of Groningen Confucius Institute, opened the reception.

During the reception, the King's Commissioner Mr. Max van den



Berg installed the first Student Ambassadors for the Province of Groningen. These student ambassadors, Zhu Yan (朱衍), Jin Jian (靳建), Tang Ting (唐婷) and Wu Di (吴迪), are Chinese students from Hanze University of Applied Sciences. The student ambassadors will become actively involved in promoting the North Netherlands, particularly Groningen, in China, e.g. by increasing name awareness in China or by convincing students to study in Groningen. Once the student ambassadors have returned to China, we hope to establish and develop contacts through their mediation. Their efforts may prove helpful in acquiring apprenticeships, graduation projects or research opportunities. During their stay and studies, these student ambassadors will act as contact people for the province of Groningen at special events, such as the reception of official Chinese delegations.

Opening Confucius Classrooms

In order to be more supportive in developing Chinese teaching and learning in local secondary schools, Groningen Confucius Institute is actively exploring cooperation with outstanding secondary schools to establish Confucius Classrooms. The Confucius Classroom is a non-profit institute with the purpose of enhancing understanding and friendship between the young people of China and the Netherlands by sponsoring the teaching and learning of Chinese language and culture.



Opening Confucius Classroom at Kandinsky College, Nijmegen

The first day of school in 2014 at the Kandinsky College in Nijmegen had a festive Chinese touch. It was the opening day of the Kandinsky College Confucius Classroom. Over the past few years, interest in China, the language and the culture has rapidly grown throughout the Netherlands, but in particular at Kandinsky College. The school's cooperation with Groningen Confucius Institute offers many more possibilities for special activities such as summer camps at Beijing universities. On 6 January 2014, all Kandinsky College students were able to have a taste of China in the form of Chinese cakes that were offered. During the official ceremony in the afternoon many guests attended. The Mayor of Nijmegen, Mr. Bruls, held a motivating speech, as did Dr. Liu Jingyi (刘婧一) of GCI. There were beautiful performances in martial arts and Chinese dance by GCI teachers. Two students of Kandinsky College performed the official opening by striking the Chinese gong. The Confucius Classroom at the Kandinsky College is made tangible by a life-like photo of the Great Wall (长城 Chángchéng) on the wall in the classroom. It is almost as if you are walking up the wall when you see this photo.





Opening Confucius Classroom at CS Vincent van Gogh, Assen

On Saturday 8 February 2014, the Christian Comprehensive Vincent van Gogh opened its doors to future students and their parents. More than 2000 visitors admired the brand new building for the intermediate and upper school years and were informed about the educational choices and possibilities. Many of the visitors also witnessed the grand opening of the Confucius Classroom, a special classroom for Chinese language and literature. The Confucius Classroom is equipped with teaching and learning materials from China which gives the classroom a genuine Chinese outlook. However, the classroom is more than the physical learning environment: it also imparts cultural awareness in that it coordinates museums visits, cultural festivities and exhibitions, including, for instance, a visit to the Ming Exhibition in Amsterdam. The Confucius Classroom will not only enhance the quality and further development of Chinese at CS Vincent van Gogh, but it is hoped to widen the popularity and stature of Chinese as a regular subject among the other languages offered at the school. After speeches held by Mr. A. de Gruijter, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Dr. Liu Jingyi, Chinese Director of Groningen Confucius Institute, a spectacular lion dance rounded off the opening ceremony. The inauguration was covered by both local and regional media.



Opening Confucius Classroom at Theresialyceum, Tilburg

On 21 February 2014, Theresialyceum opened their Confucius Classroom. This large-scale event was a giant leap forward in widening the Chinese language and culture provisions. Mr. van Gastel, Coordinator of the Chinese Section and Mr. Tomas Oudejans, Principal of Theresialyceum opened the event, which was generously sponsored by SAA Insurance, before a real lion dance was performed by the Dutch Wushu Academy Xia Quan (侠拳). Guest speakers Dr. Liu Jingyi, Chinese Director of Groningen Confucius Institute, Mr. P. Eijlander, Rector of Tilburg University, Mr. P. Noordanus, the Mayor of Tilburg, gave the event a ceremonial touch and declared the classroom open. Teachers and students gave a performance, singing: *Moli Hua* (茉莉花) and showing some basic Wushu (武术) routines: Wu Bu Quan (五步拳), Chenshi Taijiquan (陈式太极拳) and Yangshi Taijijian 32 Shi (杨式太极剑32式). The day concluded with the opening by Dr. Liu Jingyi after which the participants were able to get insights into the new Confucius Classroom. As one Chinese guest said, "it all looks very Chinese". For GCI, the classroom provides a conducive environment to teach the Chinese language and culture.



University of Groningen Launches East Asian Studies Programme

Tjalling Halbertsma, CEASG Director International

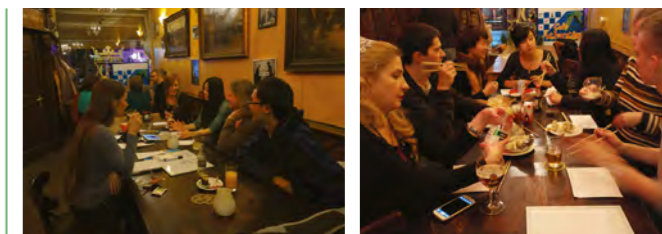


Following the successful establishment of the Groningen Confucius Institute in 2011, the University of Groningen has launched an East Asian Studies programme. The programme is being developed and coordinated by the Centre for East Asian Studies Groningen (CEASG). CEASG was launched as an inter-faculty initiative at the Faculty of Arts to initiate and support inter-disciplinary teaching and research on China, Korea, Japan and Mongolia; and to increase cooperation with partner universities in East Asia. In China, the Centre partners with the Groningen study centres at Tsinghua University (清华大学 Qīnghuá Dàxué) in Beijing (北京) and Fudan University (复旦大学 Fùdàn Dàxué) in Shanghai (上海).

The Centre hosts a monthly lecture series and organises regular seminars and conferences on East Asia, including the recently convened launch conference *East Asia and the European Union: strong Economics, weak Politics?* The conference was attended by a representative from Fudan University and various European scholars working on China.

In September 2014, CEASG will start a new Master's specialisation East Asian Studies, focusing on the political economies and international relations of East Asia. The programme, affiliated to the MA International Relations and International Organisation at the Faculty of Arts, strongly encourages students to study at a partner university in East Asia, particularly in China. The Centre and Groningen Confucius Institute stimulate such student exchange through Hanban's (汉办) new Confucius China Studies Programme (新汉学计划 Xīn Hànxué Jìhuà).

In the long run, CEASG looks forward to the development of a Chinese studies and language programme. To this end, CEASG and GCI have proposed to Hanban the establishment of a Chair



on Chinese Language and Culture at the University of Groningen. Earlier this academic year, the university already established an endowed Chair on East Asian studies at CEASG. The new Chair on Chinese Language and Culture will contribute to the development of CEASG and GCI, and position the University of Groningen as the second university in the Netherlands to develop a Chinese language programme.

For further information, visit the CEASG website www.rug.nl/ceasg or subscribe to the quarterly newsletter of CEASG: ceasg@rug.nl

Chinese Evening

GCI's monthly event 'Chinese Evening' which takes place every third Friday of the month at Café Atlantis in Groningen has gained popularity since its debut on 19 April 2013. This event brings Chinese and local people together who are interested in practicing their Chinese language skills and in tasting Chinese culture in a comfortable and quiet atmosphere. The theme on the evening of 17 January 2014 was Chinese Spring Festival (春节 Chūn Jié). Li Yunxuan (李韵璇) introduced the origins of Spring Festival and the activities that are typically undertaken during that time, and taught participants how to weave Chinese knots. Gineke ten Holt brought delicious dumplings with a variety of flavours, which left a good lasting taste. Hao Cui (郝翠) organised games 'look and guess' and 'shorthand master', which were designed for beginners, aimed at helping them grasp the words or expressions of New Year's greetings. Participants learned how to give celebratory wishes in Chinese, such as Chunjie Kuaile (春节快乐 Happy New Year), Gongxi Facai (恭喜发财 May you be prosperous). The topic on the evening of 21 February 2014 was Chinese celebrities. Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛) unfolded the various lives of the ancient and modern celebrities in China before the participants. After that, Li Yunxuan organised



a Q&A session and 'counting' game. On the evening of 21 March 2014, Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈) told several famous Chinese folktales to the participants, such as *The Cowherd and the Weaving Maid* (牛郎织女), *Legend of White Snake* (白蛇传), *the Butterfly Lovers* (梁祝), and played the violin concerto *The Butterfly Lovers*. Teng Jiaqi (滕嘉琪) organised games which showed how to learn Chinese characters in an easier way. The participants were stimulated to practice and improve their Chinese skills in this relaxed atmosphere. The theme on the evening of 25 April 2014 was regional peculiarities. Hao Cui showed some impressions that exist with regard to regions in China, and Chinese expressions that refer to them. The participants learned about the differences among different regions from the perspectives of geological environment, climate, people's character, food, culture, habits and customs.

Experience Chinese

On **8 May 2014**, GCI's Chinese teachers Hao Cui (郝翠) and Li Yunxuan (李韵璇) gave a workshop at Leon van Gelder Secondary School. They introduced several aspects of China, such as the population growth, Chinese cuisine, the panda and Chinese characters. In addition, they also performed martial art, Taijiquan (太极拳), the lute and classical dance.

On **12 May 2014**, they gave a further workshop at Bladergroen Secondary School, where they also performed Taijiquan and classical dance. After the performances, they taught the children to sing a Chinese song and how to use chopsticks.

These two workshops made a deep impression on the students and their teachers, giving them a sense of Chinese culture.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chinese Language Teacher Training Programme

Date: 19-22 June 2014

Location: Nederlands Interdisciplinair Demografisch Instituut (NIDI), Lange Houtstraat 19, The Hague

From **19 to 22 June 2014**, Groningen Confucius Institute, sponsored by Hanban, is organising the Chinese Language Teacher Training programme in The Hague. Its purpose is to share teaching experiences, improve teaching skills and strengthen understanding of Chinese culture. Mr. Chen Xu (陈旭), the Ambassador of the Chinese Embassy in the Netherlands, will address the event. Professor Joël Bellassen, a renowned French sinologist and Inspector General of Chinese Language Teaching for the Ministry in France, will give a lecture entitled *Teach Chinese from the Perspective of Cross-cultural Communication*. Professor

Jiang Liping (姜丽萍), a senior expert at Hanban, and Zhao Lin (赵琳), Associate Professor at Communication University of China (中国传媒大学 Zhōngguó Chuánméi Dàxué) who has presented on Chinese national TV, will be invited from China to give lectures entitled *How to Design Your Teaching* and *The Art of Chinese Presentation and Practical Skills* respectively. These three experts will also offer comments on teaching demonstrations by Chinese language teachers. In addition to language teaching, the topics of lectures will also cover culture, such as *From Beliefs to Behaviour: A Philosophical Annotation of Chinese Culture* by Dr. Liu Jingyi (刘婧一), Chinese Director of GCI, *Cross-cultural Communication: Circles and Straight Lines* by Ardi Brouwers, owner of the China Circle and programme coordinator for the China Lectures Series. There will be a seminar dialogue between teachers and principals centered around the theme of *The Challenge, Expectation and Opportunities for Chinese Teaching*.

Keynote Speakers:



Joël Bellassen

Professor Joël Bellassen, Inspector General of Chinese Language Teaching, Ministry of Education in France, is a distinguished sinologist in France and works as Professor of Chinese at the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilization in Paris. He is the founder and the first

president of the Association for Chinese Teachers in France and Vice President of the International Society for Chinese Language Teaching.

Ardi Brouwers

Ardi Brouwers, sinologist and expert on cross-cultural management and communication. Besides teaching Chinese Studies at Amsterdam University College and giving the *Emerging China* course for the Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Amsterdam, she is owner of the consultancy company China Circle. She writes columns and acts as a debate moderator on a variety of China-related issues.



Jiang Liping (姜丽萍)

Jiang Liping, Professor at the Beijing Language and Culture University (北京语言大学) and senior expert at Hanban. Her main areas of research include teaching methods and teaching theory in the field of teaching Chinese to foreigners. She has published a few monographs and developed a series of textbooks for teaching Chinese to overseas students. As a senior trainer, she

has been teaching Chinese and giving lectures in many countries.

Zhao Lin (赵琳)

Zhao Lin, Associate Professor at the Communication University of China (中国传媒大学), was a journalist and anchor for China Central Television. Currently she teaches the courses *Radio and TV Presentation* and *Voice and Vocalization* for the School of Presentation Art (播音主持艺术学院) at CUC. She also gives lectures on Language Communication and Public Image at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Air China. She is the author of the book *Arts of Bilingual Broadcasting Presentation*.



Liu Jingyi (刘婧一)

Liu Jingyi, Chinese Director of Groningen Confucius Institute, Editor-in-Chief of Global China Insights, Associate Professor at the Communication University of China. She holds a Master's degree in Cultural Philosophy and Ph.D. in Communication. She was the Research Director of Panmedia Institute, China's first Media Think Tank and conducted research for two years respectively in Media Economics and Political Marketing Strategies at Michigan State University before joining GCI.



Launch of Global China Insights in Germany

On Thursday **19 June 2014**, 7:30 p.m., this third edition of Global China Insights will have its German launch in Groningen's German twin city, Oldenburg. Organised by the Senior Editor of GCI, Dr. John Goodyear, the journal will be launched at the monthly gathering of the *Gesellschaft für Deutsch-Chinesische Freundschaft* (translation: German-Chinese Friendship Society) at the Shanghai Restaurant, Am Damm 22, 26133 Oldenburg. The event will be attended by both representatives from the Groningen Confucius Institute as well as members of the Friendship Society in Oldenburg.

Over forty members strong, the Society was set up in Oldenburg in northwestern Germany in 1979. Its principle aim is to create a bridge between Germany and China, widening understanding and awareness of China and Chinese in Oldenburg. To that end, the Society regularly organises informal gatherings, talks and excursions. It also has a vibrant programme of insightful presentations, hosting guest speakers from China and across Germany, who deliver talks on themes related to China and Chinese



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culture, geography and society. June 2014 marks the month that GCI will launch its magazine at one of Oldenburg's most established intercultural societies.

Summer Camp

Dates: 11-25 July 2014

Location: Beijing (北京), China

After a very successful first Summer Camp, GCI, in cooperation with the Communication University of China and sponsored by Hanban, is organising its second Summer Camp to China. GCI students are invited to join this Summer Camp to learn Chinese and experience Chinese culture in China, enabling them to experience the realities of China. During this Summer Camp, students will take part in Chinese language training and cultural tours and an exchange of ideas between teachers and students from China.



Sino-British Students Exchange Activity Programme

Tri-exchange between Groningen Confucius Institute (NL), Academy of English (DE) and the High Arcal School (GB)

On Thursday 21 July 2014, a group of students from the Gifted and Talented cohort at the High Arcal School in the West Midlands, Great Britain will take part in a one-day programme with teenager journalists from Beijing, China. Spearheaded by the Groningen Confucius Institute, the Academy of English in Germany and the High Arcal School in Great Britain, the event will provide unique opportunities for young people from both Great Britain and China to learn about each other's culture through a range of activities in the Netherlands: tasting Chinese language, calligraphy experience, Tai Chi experience, tea ceremony, Chinese songs, Sino-British team presentation, word guessing game, Q&A session, etc. GCI intends to create more opportunities to expose teenagers to Chinese culture in the future.

Noorderzon: Festival for Performing Arts

Dates: 31 August 2014

Location: Groningen, the Netherlands

On Sunday 31 August 2014, GCI is planning a one-day promotion of its language courses and cultural activities at the Noorderzon Festival. Along the Leliesingel, GCI's workshop will be delivered to a wide audience, and flyers on its courses and the upcoming events as well as planned GCI programmes will be on display. This event shall provide a unique opportunity for those interested in China or Chinese to find out much more.

GCI PEOPLE DYNAMICS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Zhang Di (张笛) worked as a volunteer Chinese teacher for GCI from October 2012 to January 2014. Active and enthusiastic at work, her professional teaching background, extensive expertise and



innovative ideas have been a great contribution during her stay in Groningen. GCI is very grateful for her contribution, especially in teaching Chinese language, co-hosting cultural events and being the lead teacher for the 2013 GCI Summer Camp to Beijing (北京). We would like to wish Ms. Zhang Di all the best in her future career.

NEWCOMERS



Dr. Ruud Vreeman

Zwolle-born Ruud Vreeman has been Mayor of Groningen, the northern Dutch city, since 1 November 2013. He is a graduate of the University of Groningen and Delft, and for several years he worked for the NVV/FNV Trade Union. In 1992, Vreeman was elected Chairman of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA), a function he

fulfilled up until 1997. From 1994 to 1997, Vreeman was a member of the House of Representatives of the Dutch Parliament. After that, he was Mayor of Zaanstad (1997-2004) and Tilburg (2004-2009). In addition, as a writer Vreeman has published on various topics, such as labour and economy, sports, arts, politics, history and the development of towns.



Guo Xin (郭新), English teacher at the Communication University of China. She received her Bachelor's degree in English from the Beijing Institute of Technology (北京理工大学 Běijīng Lǐgōng Dàxué) in 2000 and obtained her Master's degree in English Linguistics and Literature from Nankai University (南开大学 Nánkāi Dàxué) in 2003. Her

academic research is mainly in the fields of language teaching and English-Chinese translation. Up until now, she has been teaching English courses, including English Intensive Reading, English Listening and Speaking and English-Chinese Translation at CUC for more than ten years. She has recently moved to Groningen to build on her teaching career and will be teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language at GCI.



Xu Wenjia (续文嘉) is a graduate student at the Communication University of China, studying Linguistics and Applied Linguistics. She has been working as a Chinese language teacher since October 2011 at the Central China Normal University (华中师范大学) and later at the Beijing International Studies University (北京第二外国语学院). In addition to classroom teaching

(including teaching HSK 4 level), she has co-hosted tours for foreign students to the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square (天安门广场) and other historical sites in Beijing. In the summer of 2013, she completed a full-time teaching programme, Princeton in Beijing, a high-quality intensive Chinese language programme provided by Princeton University. Having a close affinity for her students, she teaches Chinese with great passion. Her expertise includes Chinese knotting, paper cutting and singing.



Chen Bo (陈博), Editor of Global China Insights, is currently doing his Ph.D. research at the Institute of Public Administration of Leiden University. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration (2003), and a Master's degree in Political Science (2008). Prior to his Master study at Xiamen University (厦门大学), he worked

as a news journalist at Henan TV Station (河南电视台) for two years. Chen has been a visiting student at Sciences Po in Paris and the European University Institute in Florence. His academic interests are primarily focused on EU foreign policy, new institutionalism and political liberalism.

THE GCI TEAM



First row from left to right: Teng Jiaqi (滕嘉琪), Zheng Jing (郑晶)
 Second row from left to right: Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈), Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛), Hao Cui (郝翠), Liu Jingyi (刘婧一), Xuefei Knoester-Cao (曹雪飞)
 Third row from left to right: Li Yunxuan (李韵璇), Jasna Ros, Ingrid Fischer, John Goodyear

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Horasis 10th Global China Business Meeting

Lake Como, Italy
 13-14 October 2014

The Global China Business Meeting is the foremost annual business meeting on China. The event is open to the Chief Executive Officers of China's and the world's leading companies. Earlier editions of the meeting were held in Geneva (2005, 2006), Frankfurt (2007), Barcelona (2008), Lisbon (2009), Luxembourg (2010), Valencia (2011), Riga (2012) and The Hague (2013).

The Meeting is hosted in partnership with the China Federation of Industrial Economics and The European House - Ambrosetti. Lake Como is conveniently located 45 minutes from Milan

Malpensa Airport. A programme full of visits to the locations that make up Lake Como's magnificent heritage will help to assure a rewarding stay.

The Global China Business Meeting aims to present an interdisciplinary and systemic view of the major economic, societal and technological drivers currently at work in China. Also, Chinese and foreign entrepreneurs will discuss the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead to achieve China's next step of economic development.



Horasis: The Global Visions Community is an independent international organisation committed to enacting visions for a sustainable future. In addition to the Global China Business Meeting, Horasis hosts regional meetings with focus on India, Russia and the Arab world.

全球中国洞察

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