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Deciphering the Myths about China

Dick Cavett: You had quite a trip. Can you, uh, tell us, uh, what was China like?

Forrest Gump: Well, in the land of China, people hardly got nothing at all.

John Lennon: No possessions?

Forrest Gump: And in China, they never go to church.

John Lennon: No religion, too?

From the 1994 film *Forrest Gump*

TWENTY YEARS AGO, the Hollywood blockbuster *Forrest Gump*'s memorable dialogue had struck a chord with many Chinese people about the West's perception of China. The words of the somewhat mentally-challenged character Forrest Gump resonated with many superficial ideas held by some Westerners. Gump's description of China indeed surprised and also impressed many Chinese students in the late 1990s. It reflected a humorous but uneasy commentary on China, the communist country, easily associated with a 'myth' created and perpetuated by Western media.

"The media are disseminating perceptions about China that the general public assumes to be true. Which of these are just that – myths – and which are indeed reflections of reality?" These were the stimulating opening questions of a panel session at the 10th Horasis Global China Business Meeting, which took place on 13-14 October 2014 in Italy. In my capacity as Editor-in-Chief of *Global China Insights*, I was invited and honored to chair this particular session titled *Deciphering Myths about China*. Amazingly, each panelist approached the topic from a very different perspective and understanding that ensured a lively discussion on a variety of points. The five panelists, business elites from Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Australia and China all had their unique story and insights to share. Yet they agreed on one point: there is a certain gap between what is depicted about China in the Western media and what they themselves have observed and experienced in the country.

This naturally prompted the participants to raise key questions: why does the gap exist and how to fill this void between media reporting and the reality in an attempt to better understand China? These are persistently relevant questions in my mind. Disregarding fake content or distorted media reports (another important discussion topic in its own right) and presenting objective news remains a major challenge. Even when the media strive for objectivity, subjectivity is unavoidable—from the decision about what event to cover to choosing the angle from which to tell the story. Besides, news media reporting on the latest news and events cannot alone feed people's need and interest in understanding a foreign culture. Assigning newsworthiness to more typical and common aspects of Chinese life may also contribute to this purpose.

The ever-increasing worldwide curiosity to understand China definitely encourages us at *Global China Insights* to continue our unceasing efforts to offer a balanced coverage in sharing knowledge and revealing typical, up-to-date and multidimensional facets of China, hopefully to help close the gap and understand the real China.

Liu Jingyi
Editor-in-Chief

Confucianism and Buddhism: The Most Tolerant World Views

It is generally agreed that religion strongly promotes social cohesion. But, from a historical viewpoint, it looks unavoidable that religion can lead to human conflict, discord and intolerance between different groups and tribes with different religious traditions, particularly during times of hardship. The recently published book *Religion, Intolerance, and Conflict* (Clarke et al., 2013) contains a thorough scientific and conceptual investigation of the relations between religion, intolerance and conflict. One of the main findings is that a lack of tolerance for other beliefs, other cultures and other social groups is the key factor that causes conflict between the different religions.

Jan B.F.N. Engberts

no human-like figures or objects are used to represent these concepts.

- *Spirit Finitude*. The supreme supernatural beings can be person-like but do not possess omnipotence and omniscience nor are any all-loving, all-good. Also there is no punitive, creator God.

Confucianism and Buddhism are perhaps not religions as defined in the Abrahamic cultures. Confucianism originated in a largely agricultural society and developed a deep feeling and worship for nature. The natural forces are often expressed as heaven (天, the structure of the universe) or the mandate of heaven (天命), and followers of Confucianism often lead an impersonal lifestyle which is based on a natural teleology. The gentle human being of high morality (君子), educated by extensive studies of the sage kings, is the ideal person to govern the country. Following Dao (道), the way of heaven, is a moral law in which morality involves one's personal choice to live and behave according to the following major virtues:

- Humaneness, benevolence, reciprocity (仁);
- Filial piety, respect for elders (孝);

Let us first look what tolerance means. A good, but rather academic, definition of tolerance has been provided by Andrew Cohen (2004): "An act of tolerance is an agent's intentional and principled refraining from interfering with an opposed other concept or activity (or their behaviour, etc.) in situations of diversity, where the agent believes that she or he has the power to interfere". In other words, tolerance is when you are in a situation that you do not like, or that is not your favourite one, but you do not take action and just let it happen, in cases where you have the possibility to change a situation. Of course, everybody has to make their own choice how far his or her tolerance can be extended.

Although there is a clear link between religion, intolerance and conflict as exemplified in the book mentioned above, there are religions and world views that exhibit remarkably tolerant behaviour. It was argued by Flanagan (2013), based on

extensive investigation of religious beliefs over a long historic period, that Confucianism (at present about 1.5 billion followers) and Chinese Buddhism (about 400 million followers) are more tolerant, less conflict prone and less warlike than the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). This conclusion applies particularly to China and perhaps less to Japan and some other neighbouring countries.

Daoism and the Chinese folk religions can be placed in the same category as Confucianism and Buddhism. All four traditions have different customs and beliefs, but share the following features which are essential for their religious tolerance and larger respect for other world views (Flanagan, 2013):

- *Impersonality*. The supreme concepts, such as Dao (道) and Ren (仁), are conceived impersonally. This means that



■ The White Horse Temple, Luoyang, Henan Province

- Respects for rituals, customs, good manners (礼);
- Honesty, justice, righteousness (义);
- Discernment (keen insight) and prudence (智, practical wisdom).

These ethical qualities are the basis of Confucian morality and involve the assumption that all people have the same good human nature, which automatically leads to considerable tolerance in dealing with other people.

Buddhism was first introduced in China in the first century BC and was well received. Shakyamuni (释迦牟尼), the later Buddha, saw the human beings go through an endless series of lives, better and worse, depending on their karma and constantly suffering because of their attachment to everything around them. The Buddha taught people how to reach liberation from the cycle of sufferings and how to realise the ending of rebirth, called Nirvana (涅槃). These teachings found a fertile soil in China,

and the first Buddhist temple (白马寺, the White Horse Temple) was built by Emperor Ming of the Eastern Han Dynasty (东汉 25-220) in 68 AD close to the capital Luoyang (洛阳). Many Buddhist scriptures were translated into Chinese, and, particularly after the arrival of the monk Bodhidharma (菩提达摩) from India in the fifth century AD, there was a remarkable growth of Chinese Buddhism, also in the surrounding countries. The new Buddhist world view had a tremendous influence on the entire Chinese culture, including philosophy, poetry, painting and architecture. Different schools were developed, the most popular being the Chang Pure Land (净土宗), now better known as Zen (禅宗). In the year 500 AD, there were about 80,000 Buddhist temples in China.

A poem written on a wall by a Chinese monk found in the Big Wild Goose Pagoda (大雁塔) in Xi'an (西安) expresses how Chinese and Buddhist thought influenced each other

in a beautiful way (Engberts, 2010):

古塔 曙光 新。
Gǔtǎ shǔguāng xīn

Literally, it means: (Standing on) the ancient pagoda, (you can feel) the first light of dawn is brand new. We have reformulated that into the following English interpretation¹:

My permanent home is in
the ancient pagoda,
where every puff of existence
is tenderly renewed at dawn
in the glorious sunshine.

We can see in this poem the Buddhist withdrawal into a monastery to seek enlightenment of the mind and the idea that no beings and phenomena have an intrinsic existence but are in a process of continuous

¹ Translated by Yajiang Yang and Jan B.F.N. Engberts



■ Big Wild Goose Pagoda, Xi'an, Shaanxi Province

change, coupled with the Chinese love of the beauty and harmony of the nature around us.

An important Buddhist concept is the 'void' (空), which is rather close to the Daoist wu (无, non-being), not to be understood as nihilistic but as a new state of consciousness of complete fullness, but nevertheless in complete rest. Everything in the universe has a relational origin. There is continuity, no integrity, which means that there is a continuous process of change but no personal self. Chinese Buddhism also developed ideas that were rather close

to Confucianism, such as tolerance of and respect for other world views and a strong emphasis on universal compassion, comparable with the Confucian concept of ren (仁).

However, already just before the glorious Tang dynasty (唐朝 618-907), learned Confucianists started to criticise Buddhism for several reasons, the main one being that Buddhism was not suitable for governing a large country like China. There was too much emphasis on meditation and asceticism instead of on study of the moral behaviour of the ancient sages. In later times it was emphasised that government was neglected and morality became chaotic. Since the start of the seventh century, many temples and monasteries were closed (Chu His & Lu Tsu-Chien, 1967; Ivanhoe, 1988). But, it is most relevant to note that, even though this criticism certainly had serious consequences, it did

not lead to armed conflict or other severe violence as we know from religious conflicts between Abrahamic religions in other parts of the world as most recently dramatically demonstrated by the conflict between fundamentalist Islamic groups and Judaism and Christianity.

In China, private sympathy for Buddhism inspired a stimulating and creative dialogue, with the understanding that the Chinese state should not suffer from certain Buddhist concepts. The mutual respect for and merging of Confucianism and Buddhism had another important

consequence. The major issues of Chinese education had for many centuries been based upon Confucian ethics, lacking a clear metaphysical basis. Buddhism had shown the significant importance of a convincing metaphysics. The Buddha taught, among other things, that everything in our world is interrelated; that the world is governed by natural laws; and that following the Eightfold Path (八正道) leads to the end of suffering. This inspired a further development of Confucianism which was enriched in the Northern and Southern Song dynasty (宋朝 960-1279) by metaphysical concepts as mainly provided by Zhu Xi (朱熹 1130-1200) and laid down in the *Jinsi Lu* (《近思录》) Chu His & Lu Tsu-Chien, 1967; Ivanhoe, 1988), the most important Chinese philosophical text written in the second millennium. In Neo-Confucianism (新儒家), a metaphysics of process, Qi (气) is the vital force, the dynamical principle of natural change and plurality that provides form and existence to Li (理), the great principle of



■ The statue of Confucius in Guozijian, Beijing

order and creativity. No heaven or hell, no punitive God. Ancestors are worshipped, but there is no belief that they are alive now here or somewhere else. Cheng Hao (程颢 1032-1085), another Neo-Confucian sage said: "The laws introduced by the wise monarchs were all based on human nature and in accord with the order in the nature around us".

In recent times, conflicts between different religions seem to be increasing, in particular the devastating attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 9/11 have drawn worldwide attention to the severe problems of hostility and violence between the various religions and world views in our world. But looking back over the long history of mankind, it becomes clear that religious conflicts are, as it looks, almost unavoidable between different social groups with their own specific cultural values, which are most strongly expressed in their religious beliefs. But both Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism have no supreme being like Yahweh, God, or Allah, which according to the ancient scriptures, puts disbelievers into hell, or less badly, outside the leading religious community and society.

These differences in cultural heritage can be observed in daily life. When visiting Tai Shan (泰山), one of the four holy mountains in China, I noticed that a Confucian, a Daoist and a Buddhist temple were situated close to each other. I was moved to see that Chinese visitors entered the three temples with equal respect. It remains a dear memory. Flanagan's suggestion in his thoughtful chapter (Flanagan, 2013) looks justified; Confucianism and Buddhism possess the most tolerant world views.

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Chinese Dream: A New Window of Opportunities

Xu Wenjia (续文嘉)

From 1776, generations of Americans deeply believed in “the American dream, that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement” (James Truslow Adams, *Epic of America*, 1931). Everyone deserves the opportunity for prosperity and success as long as they earn it through hard work. Just like the Statue of Liberty, the American Dream is an icon of the American spirit.

On 18 September 2014, the Alibaba Group (阿里巴巴集团) was floated on the New York stock market with its initial public offering (IPO) raising USD 21.8 billion for the company and its investors, making it the biggest IPO in US history. Only 15 years ago, the founder of Alibaba, Jack Ma (马云), was just an English teacher, earning 20 dollars per month, currently Forbes ranks him the 36th richest person in the world. His story sounds like a typical American story, achieving the dream through his own ability and hard work; and yet it is a Chinese story.

In November 2012, the Chinese President Xi Jinping (习近平) articulated a vision for the nation's future: the Chinese Dream described as “national rejuvenation, improvement of people's livelihoods, prosperity, construction of a better society and military strengthening.”¹ The term became a hit with the Chinese media and has gained popularity.

Xi inspired young people to “dare to dream, work assiduously to fulfil the dreams and contribute to the revitalization of the nation.”² Having a better life than their parents is most people's dream, and going beyond just purchasing daily necessities for everyday living is one of the many ways to improve the quality of life. Consumption preference can reflect living attitudes of the individual. Thirty years ago, even a TV was a luxurious appliance for most Chinese young people, but now in China, the sought-after objects of the younger generation are a home and a car. These priorities led to a 50 percent increase of SUV sales in China in 2013. (BrandZ™, Millward Brown Optimor, 2014). To fulfil dreams, people will take action in different areas of their lives, such as get a better education, or work harder at their present jobs. In the economic area, dreams can encourage people to consume, and they also drive the development of the economy.

Realising the power of dreams, WPP, the world's largest communications services group, conducted research, and published a report titled *The Power and the Potential of the Chinese Dream*. After analysing the data, the WPP group gives insights about the power of the Chinese Dream and its potential impact on brands.

In the report, they compared the national dreams of China with those of the US and the UK.³ After comparing the answers from respondents in these countries, they found that the awareness of the national dream in China is the highest. Over half of the Chinese respondents say they are quite familiar or very familiar with their national dream, compared with 43 percent of the



Americans, and only about 8 percent of the British.

The research group also compared the consumer behaviour of people from these three countries. They drew the conclusion that the Chinese are both enthusiastic customers and dreamers. Encouraged by dreams, people tend to seek higher quality of life; for instance, many Chinese are not satisfied by only travelling domestically, a substantial amount of them wishes to travel abroad. In fact, many Chinese have

already done so. China is expected to rank fourth in the world in outbound travel by 2015, according to the World Tourism Organization. In 2013, two of the major international carriers in China's flight market, Air China and China Southern Airlines, added new international routes. Air China increased the number of routes to Europe, including a flight between Chengdu (成都) and Frankfurt, the first direct flight between a southwest city of China and Europe. China Southern also expanded its flights to Europe, Australia and New

Zealand. Especially in the rising middle class in China, people seek to improve their personal well-being.

Every brand has a personality. In the Chinese Dream research, customers describe every brand based on the 20 characteristics from the BrandZ™ research. They also use the same approach to identify the characteristics of the Chinese Dream. After analysing the data, they found that some Chinese brands share the same characteristics with the Chinese



■ Alibaba founder Jack Ma interviewed at the New York Stock Exchange

1 Osnos, Evan (March 26, 2013). Can China deliver the China dream(s)? *New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/>

2 ibid

3 The British Dream is not really a familiar term. As mentioned in the report, only eight percent of British people are familiar with their own national dream. In the report, the WPP research group did not provide an official source of the British Dream, but perhaps selected these three countries on the grounds of their economic dominance in the nineteenth (Great Britain) and twentieth century (United States).

Dream. These brands come from a wide range of categories. Some brands from the area of technology, like Baidu (百度), Alibaba or Tencent (腾讯), represent the emerging industries of Chinese brands. In contrast, some brands have a long history in China, e.g. Tong Ren Tang (同仁堂) and Yunnan Baiyao (云南白药). They represent the traditional Chinese brands and share the characters of stability with the Chinese Dream. Both of the two kinds of brands have enjoyed sustained development in the last several years, for instance, Baidu's income in the second quarter in 2013 increased to RMB 7.6 billion (USD \$1.2 billion), up 38.6 percent from the same period in 2012; Tong Ren Tang's net profits rose 29 percent to RMB 330 million (USD \$53.9 million) in 2012.

According to the report Top 100 Most Valuable Chinese Brands, most of the brands that Chinese customers associated with the Chinese Dream increased their brand value in 2014. What other opportunities will the Chinese Dream bring to brands? In the second part of the report based on these findings, five possible implications for brands are provided: bridge the gap; believe the dream; relieve the concern; understand the expectations; and realise the development. These key points might be inspiring for emerging market players who would like to develop in China's market.

Bridge the Gap

Compared with the US and UK, the personal and national dreams do not always coincide with each other in China. The Chinese Dream is more top-down compared with the American Dream or the British Dream: the Chinese version is published by the Chinese government. About 53 percent of Chinese people agree that being a "powerful country" is a part of the national dream, but only 19 percent add "powerful

country" to their personal dreams: they feel the prosperity of the country is beyond the control of individuals.

Over two-thirds of Chinese people believe that the recognition of a Chinese brand overseas can represent the increase of China's influence on the global market. Alibaba's success will make the Chinese more confident in their national brands. The products and services of Alibaba allow millions of customers to enjoy a more convenient life. For example, its online shopping website, which is called Taobao (淘宝), provides its customers with a wide range of goods that are significantly cheaper than in ordinary stores, hereby helping people to improve the quality of their lives. Alibaba is helping Chinese people realise the development of China's economy, and make the Chinese dream more relevant to individuals' lives. Brands can help bridge the gap between the Chinese personal dream and the national dream.

Believe the Dream

Improvement of people's livelihoods is one

of the major goals within the context of the Chinese Dream, thus Chinese people tend to believe the national dream for practical reasons. The remarkable economic growth of China over the past 30 years has lifted over 200 million people into the middle class. This new middle class would like to improve their lives by buying goods, like cars, that they were not able to afford a generation ago. Now cars have become a common sight, even in smaller cities and rural areas. In 2013, the growth rate of car ownership in smaller cities in China exceeded 30 percent.

In fact, 70 percent of the respondents believe it is important to achieve the Chinese Dream. Chinese people believe that the national dream can improve their lives in practical ways, so it can have real opportunities for brands.

Relieve the Concern

When interviewed, Chinese people expressed their concern about pollution, food safety, education, health care and the retirement system. Brands have an opportunity to help improve the quality of



Galaxy SOHO, Beijing

life of Chinese people by offering products and services focused on these concerns, or at least by not causing any further concern. The Yili Group (伊利集团), which ranked 6th in the list of Trusted Chinese Brands in China, and top of the food & dairy category (BrandZ™, Millward Brown Optimor, 2014), launched its European Research and Development Centre in cooperation with Wageningen University & Research Centre in the Netherlands. Food safety is one of the three main research priorities of the centre. Pan Gang (潘刚), the CEO of Yili, said that even though it is a huge challenge for the centre to figure out what's the better dairy food for the world, it is still a chance they will not miss. In the Chinese Dream report, Yili is in the top 10 Chinese brands that match the Chinese Dream. For the first half of 2013, Yili's net profit was RMB 1.7 billion (USD \$285 million) and revenue was RMB 23.9 billion (USD \$3.9 billion).

Understand the Expectations

Over one-third of respondents in the research say that the US currently is the most ideal country. But this percentage changes dramatically when the question is asked which country will be ideal in ten years. Then, only 14 percent of Chinese answered the US, while 42 percent answered China. Meanwhile, the Chinese have the most optimistic view on their economic growth: 39 percent of Chinese people have the expectation that over the coming 10 years China's economy will expand 7 percent or more annually, while only 6 percent of Americans and 7 percent of Britons expect the same growth rate for their country.

During the research, a substantial amount of respondents expressed that they expect China to become a much more powerful and flourishing country in ten years. By understanding the expectation, brands can find some opportunities from the change that China is going through.

Realise the Development

In this report, most Chinese people say that the Chinese Dream is about shifting the essence of the Brand China (品牌中国) (the overall reputation of Chinese products and services) from "Made in China" to "Created in China". Huawei (华为), a leading technology company in China, has earned a grand total of 36,511 domestic and international patents up until the end of 2013. It now is the third largest Smartphone maker in the world, after Apple and Samsung, according to *the Wall Street Journal*⁴.

Many Chinese people who were interviewed by the research group believe that Chinese brands, which have influence on the global market, can contribute to their nation's reputation and power. Brands should realise that the development of the Brand China is a part of the fulfilment of the Chinese Dream, meaning that Brand China and the Chinese Dream are positively correlated.

Dreams are like windows showing dreamers an exciting new world. In the report, 79 percent of Chinese interviewers have a belief in the idea that dreams will make life better, and over half of them said that they are familiar with their own national dream. Material wealth is correlated with personal happiness; brands can, therefore, provide the ideal products and services to help Chinese customers to fulfil their personal dreams and bridge the gap between the national dream and the personal one. For brands, the Chinese Dream is also a window showing a perpetually growing China. Opening the window is like opening China's endless opportunities market.

4 Juno Osawa and Yun-Hee Kim (August 24, 2014). Huawei is Shaking Up the Smartphone Market. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <http://online.wsj.com/articles/huawei-is-shaking-up-the-smartphone-market-1408908924>

Huawei: A Global Chinese Brand

Guo Xin (郭新)

Arriving in the Netherlands, I suddenly realised my urgent need to buy another mobile phone for my contacts both in China and in the Netherlands. In two minds as to whether I should choose an iPhone over a Samsung, I suddenly spotted the black phone that my Dutch colleague was using; its display took up 80% of the front panel with the following white letters at the bottom: HUAWEI (华为). "How do you like your mobile phone?" My interest was aroused; for she was using a Chinese brand in the Netherlands. "It recognizes your fingerprint," she said, setting out to enumerate the features of her newly bought phone to me: "six inch screen, eight cores, 13MP lens, power saving", while my thoughts just lingered on the question: "Is Huawei popular outside of China?"

ACTUALLY MY VERY FIRST impression of Huawei came to me twelve years ago in China when one of my best friends excitedly asked me to congratulate him on his success of becoming a Huawei Ren (华为人), which employees of Huawei proudly call themselves. Since then I got to know that for graduates who major in Information and Communication desiring to work in a global and innovative company, Huawei is the place to be. Mr. James Dai (戴民), the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Huawei Technologies in the Netherlands confirmed as such in an interview with Global China Insights on 21 October 2014. Joining Huawei in 1996 when he graduated from University, Mr. Dai is very proud of his career at Huawei.

According to Mr. Dai, the most representative feature for Huawei to attract young elites is the culture and mechanism, both of which encourage and guarantee one's initiative. Original ideas, he added, should always be valued and rewarded; people are promoted not according to their seniority but based on their contribution to the group. Also, Huawei's philosophy of team work is really what drives their great strength in technological innovation and in other developments: Huawei Ren always get the most cordial congratulations from their team on their success and the most sincere help from their coworkers when in difficulty.

Huawei is still a young company; it was established 27 years ago with a start-up capital of only 20,000 Chinese RMB (€2,620), but this was enough for the Huawei people to work miracles. In the course of a little over two decades, they have transformed into a multi-billion company. On 31 March 2014, Huawei released its 2013 annual report, revealing another great year with sales revenue of USD 39.4 billion (€31.6bn), surpassing Ericsson's revenue of USD 35.3 billion (€28.48bn) and making it the world's No. 1 telecommunications equipment provider.

Even though Huawei has been well known for years in the business market as one of the world's largest telecommunications equipment providers in China, individual consumers are not yet that familiar with the brand. As Mr. James Dai explains, Huawei's business was mainly focused on the operators' side prior to 2010, and as early as the end of 2007 Huawei became a



■ HUAWEI Ascend P7



■ Huawei Netherlands signs a partnership agreement with Ajax and the Amsterdam Arena stadium (from left to right: Michael Kinsbergen, Edwin van der Sar, Wonder Wang, Henk Markerink)

Huawei brand has been continuously stimulating the interest and passion of domestic consumers in this national brand and at the same time changing the intrinsic concept of overseas consumers of 'Made in China'.

partner to all the top operators in Europe. From British Telecom (BT), Deutsche Telekom (DT), France Telecom/Orange (FT) to Vodafone and KPN, millions of people in Europe rely on the company's equipment every day. It was only since Huawei decided to make and sell its own mobile phones in 2010 that private users are gradually getting to know this name brand.

Ever since 2010, Huawei has been making consistent efforts to build its brand recognition within the consumer's market instead of just among industry insiders. Mr. James Dai explained the developing trace of Huawei's strategy in the users' market: To ensure sales volume in the initial phase, Huawei focused on producing low-cost customised mobile phones for major operators in China. Since 2011, it has adjusted its marketing and positioning strategies and started to march into the middle and high-end markets by launching its self-owned 'Huawei' brands. From Huawei Vision C8850, the world's first 'cloud' smartphone; to Huawei Honor U8860 featuring a 'Cloud +' network drive to Huawei Ascend P6 the only 6.18mm (0.24in) thick mobile phone, Huawei brand has been continuously stimulating the interest and passion of domestic consumers in this national brand and at the same time changing the

intrinsic concept of overseas consumers of 'Made in China'.

In 2013, to promote brand awareness for Huawei mobile phones, the company conducted a series of branding campaigns worldwide, including sponsoring football games and clubs, such as Spain's La Liga, Italy's A.C. Milan, Germany's Borussia Dortmund, and the Netherlands' Ajax Amsterdam.

According to the newly released smartphone market statistics by the International Data Corporation (IDC), Huawei shipped 12.7 million smartphones in the third quarter of 2013, a 4.8% share of the market, making it one of the top three smartphone makers after Samsung (31.4% of the market share) and Apple (13.1% of the market share). Those numbers prove that Huawei is no longer solely well known among telecom operators, but it has also begun to win its 'smart' place among individual consumers.

All these achievements stemmed from just a small sales agency established in 1987 in a residential building in the Nanyou New Village in Shenzhen (深圳南油新村) by the current CEO Ren Zhengfei (任正非), a former engineer in military's Engineering Corps, together with five other investors who each put in 3,500 Chinese RMB (€459). Nobody expected that this humble



■ Mr. James Dai, the COO of Huawei Technologies in the Netherlands

business born in a shabby workshop would rewrite the history of the telecommunications manufacturing industry both domestically and worldwide. On some occasions, people have called Ren Zhengfei and Huawei the Chinese version of Bill Gates and Microsoft.

In 27 years, Huawei has grown from a humble beginner to a global leader in the ICT industry: from 6 to 150,000 employees; from a registered capital of 20,000 Chinese RMB (€2620) to a yearly revenue of USD 39.4 billion (€31.6bn); from a seller of foreign telecom equipment to the world's biggest telecommunications company serving telecom providers, enterprises and consumers from over 170 countries and regions. In the 15th annual Best Global Brands Report unveiled by Interbrand on 9 October 2014,



■ Huawei headquarters

Huawei was listed No. 94, making it the first Chinese company to break into the top 100.

When asked about Huawei's secret to success, Mr. James Dai said that 'customers first' has long been the core value of Huawei and innovation centred on customer needs has been and will always be Huawei's priority. Huawei consistently invests over 10% of its revenues on Research and Development (R&D), with its R&D employees comprising 45% of the total workforce. Thanks to its integrated services and enormous investment in customer-centric innovation, Huawei's enterprise business, which just started in 2012 in Western Europe, has become the fastest growing section among Huawei's three business units, namely carrier network, enterprise business and consumer business.

The success of the Huawei brand does not come by accident. Nor are people using Huawei smartphones outside of China, like my Dutch colleague, isolated examples. It is true that the company still has a long way to go in building its brand recognition, especially in the overseas markets, but its persistent efforts have paid off. In the face of new opportunities and challenges, Mr. James Dai added, Huawei is endeavouring to become a world-renowned brand leader by delivering a consistently superior customer experience.

Lights in the Sky: Observing Characteristics of Modern China

Kilian Evang

My first visit to China was in May 2013, when my girlfriend took me on a three week round trip of the places where she had grown up and gone to school.

When I think back on the trip, one of the first images coming to mind is that of Wenhua plaza in Changchun (长春) after sunset. The park then fills with people who, after spending long hours at work or at school, come to relax and have a good time. Couples take romantic strolls, groups set up boomboxes and turn various corners of the park into open-air dance floors, and some play with their dogs or electronic flying toys. As we joined the crowd one night, we saw sky lanterns (天灯) rise above the buildings surrounding the plaza.

Sky lanterns are small hot air balloons traditionally made of paper that people in China launch to wish for good fortune, adorning the night sky with bright orange dots. That night, their peaceful ascent was suddenly disrupted by a humming noise. One of the flying toys, a miniature drone with neon red lights, started circling the lanterns. Apparently, some mischievous youngsters controlling the drone were trying to take one of the glowing little paper balloons down. Skilled as they were in handling the remote operated drone, they could not land a hit for a long time, and an entire group of half a dozen lanterns disappeared into the night sky, undisturbed. As a second group was released some time later, the drone came back, 'scored' and sent one lantern



■ Wenhua Plaza in Changchun, Jilin Province

from a slow ascent into a rapid descent amid cheering from the drone pilots.

It is tempting to attach a symbolic meaning to the clash between the drone and the lanterns, to read it as a bad omen for Chinese culture in the age of technology and rapid modernisation. After all, living in the 'global village' one might think that national characteristics are disappearing in favour of an increasingly global culture dominated by technology and widely known brands like Starbucks, KFC or Apple, which are currently hugely popular in China.

Yet the longer I stayed in China, the more I realised that this 'typically Chinese' versus 'modern' opposition is a false one. I found many characteristics of everyday life in modern China to be as rich and interesting as those rooted in tradition. For example, I witnessed large masses of people gather in parks in the morning to practice Taijiquan (太极拳) or popular dancing under guidance in the evening. What struck me as characteristic of how the Chinese socialise is that meals play an important role. The food is always shared from bowls



■ Tianjin Eye Ferris Wheel

in the middle of the table, and it is always easy to find a restaurant in cities, large or small, that serves delicious, varied and affordable food. Another noticeable aspect of socialising in China is the unceremonious goodbye. When Chinese people part, there is no hugging, stalling, drawn-out exchanging of social network nicknames or even crying, such as I sometimes experience in Europe. The goodbyes happen so quickly that you almost miss them.

Another area where certain characteristics caught my attention is the modern architecture in cities like Beijing (北京) or Dalian (大连). Some modern public buildings appeared unwieldy and colossal, with what seemed like twice the amount of concrete that would have been required to build them. Conversely, details of certain high-rise buildings were quite attractive, such as the lantern-like pavilions or empty frame structures above the top floor, which seemed to anchor the buildings in the sky. Such details even made a large cluster of identical blocks of flats a sight to behold. Finally, I took delight in noticing little instances of the traditional and the modern combined in surprising ways: two guardian lions placed on either side of a former palace entrance turned out to be made of

plastic and used as dustbins!

The Chinese Summer Camp in Beijing in July 2014^{*} was my second visit to China, an opportunity to practice acquired language skills and deepen my knowledge of Chinese culture. Being a bit further advanced in Chinese than most learners in the group, I did not profit as much from the language lessons. These nonetheless provided useful refresher training. However, when going out to town with other students, the task of communicating with taxi drivers and waitresses usually fell to me, which was



■ Kilian Evang, Summer Camp 2014, Communication University of China, Beijing

valuable real life practice. And being the only German in a group of Dutch students, I could practice two languages at the same time! The intensive programme of the camp was impeccably organised by the teachers and highly enjoyable. Besides the language courses and culture courses on Chinese calligraphy, knotting, music and film, we visited many Beijing attractions and surrounding sights. A special highlight that springs to mind is the weekend high-speed train trip to a city called Tianjin (天津). We enjoyed the relaxed ambiance and varied skyline a lot. During a boat cruise on the Hai River (海河), we observed the Tianjin Eye Ferris Wheel, which was built on top of a bridge, competing with skyscrapers in a most playful contribution to the city lights. It was this view – again: lights before the night sky – that became my most vivid memory of the trip.

Travelling in China for three weeks and participating in the Summer Camp gave me such a wealth of experiences and observations that to relate more than a tiny fraction of them would fill many pages (which I did in a travel diary sent to friends and family). But there is so much more to experience and observe, and deepen our understanding of Chinese culture. In Beijing International Airport, as I was about to return to Europe, I bade China a short and unceremonious, but nonetheless cordial goodbye: "See you soon!"

Kilian Evang is a researcher in computational linguistics. After graduating from the University of Tübingen (Germany) in 2011, he came to Groningen as a PhD student. Interested in the Chinese language both as a linguist and personally, he has taken several classes, most recently at the Groningen Confucius Institute.

* The Summer Camp was organised by the Groningen Confucius Institute in cooperation with the Communication University of China, and sponsored by Hanban.

Hong Kong: City of Life

Maartje Schreijenberg

First impression

This September I went on holiday to three big Asian cities, the first of which was Hong Kong (香港). I was really excited to go and my anticipation was immediately rewarded when I exited the airplane after an 11-hour flight. The first sight was of forest covered mountains and sunshine. I couldn't help but smile, it was so impressive.

When I stepped out of the subway an hour or so later, I had a completely different experience: I got washed over by a tsunami of people, shopping, talking and checking their mobile phones. I was surrounded by a jungle of department stores, small boutiques, restaurants and food stalls. Everything was so bright, not only because of the sunshine. The buildings, the people: it was like a colour explosion.

Big city, lots of nature

Although Hong Kong is a modern city of millions, there is also a lot of nature to be seen. On my second day there, I went to Hong Kong Park (香港公园), where I saw and heard exotic birds and enjoyed the shade of tropical trees. Right after visiting the park, I took the Peak Tram (山顶缆车) to the top of Victoria Peak (太平山), one of the highest mountains in Hong Kong. The views of Kowloon (九龙半岛) and Hong Kong Island (香港岛) were stunning. You could see dozens of tall buildings and skyscrapers on both sides of Victoria Harbour (维多利亚港), but also a lot of green, the sea, islands and mountains.

Nature and city seemed to seamlessly blend into each other, which I really noticed

on my third day. After walking past a big shopping mall, I took an uphill path right through a bamboo grove to reach the Ten Thousand Buddha's Monastery (万佛寺). The view from the monastery was magnificent: a mixture of department stores, buildings and the surrounding green hills of the Sha Tin (沙田) area.

Overwhelming experience

The combination of nature and city life is not the only feature which makes Hong Kong so appealing. What I loved about it is that it has just about everything: next to mountains, forests and skyscrapers, there are islands, beaches, fishing villages, giant shopping malls, lively market streets, museums, and the longest covered escalator system in the world.

I did so many things and saw so many places! I laid on the beach at Repulse Bay (浅水湾) on the southern side of Hong Kong Island, with on one side an open view of the South China Sea (南海) and on the other a landscape of big hotels. I hopped on a cable car to go see the biggest outdoor Buddha in the world and after that took a tiny bus, swaying over hairpin bends, to the romantic fishing village of Tai O (大澳). There, I took a boat trip to see the famous pink dolphins. A ferry brought me to the tropical island of Cheung Chau (长洲), where I hired a bike to explore the waterfront. I visited the Cheung



■ View from Victoria Peak of Kowloon and Hong Kong Island

Po Tsai pirate cave (张保仔洞) and battled my way through the small streets full of tourists. In the afternoon, it was time for a cold drink at a beach shack offering a brilliant view of the sea and the island.

The amazing Hong Kong Museum of History (香港历史博物馆) was also well worth a visit. The exhibits showcase the entire history of Hong Kong, from 400 million years ago to the colonial age, to the present day. After my cultural visit, I went shopping in the Langham Place shopping mall (朗豪坊商场), and afterwards equally enjoyed wandering through the small market streets filled with tiny shops and market stalls. But riding on the trams – also called 'ding ding' by the locals – was my all-time favourite activity. They are very convenient, as long as you are not in a hurry. You could really see a lot of Hong Kong Island that way... and get windswept hair.

And oh... the food

What I always appreciate about travelling is the opportunity to try all kinds of foods you would never find at home. The great thing about Hong Kong is that not only the city itself, but also the food is exceptionally varied. You could try dishes from about

every culture you could think of. Although I ate a lot of Western food while I was there, I mostly liked eating Hong Kong bites. I tried pineapple buns (菠萝包); devoured the famous fried fish balls (鱼丸) on Cheung Chau; gained some extra weight eating Hong Kong Style French toast (港式西多士), which is deep fried toast with peanut butter inside, butter on top and lots of honey to top it off; Portuguese egg tarts (葡式蛋挞); steamed buns with red bean paste (豆沙包), and potatoes on a stick. Delicious!

Crowded but lively

Hong Kong is a very lively city, but overwhelmingly crowded at times. At nine o'clock in the evening, thousands of people stroll down the busy streets and shop like their lives depended on it. Sometimes you just had to go with the flow, as it felt like swimming in waves of people. I was staying in Causeway Bay (铜锣湾), one of the busiest shopping areas in Hong Kong, which may have clouded my judgment a little. Of course, the fact that the streets are so packed has something to do with the limited amount of space. Although Hong Kong as a whole is quite big, the city is squeezed between the sea and forested mountains



■ Traffic in Causeway Bay

and feels crowded everywhere you go. Most buildings in the urban areas are skyscrapers or tall residential buildings. The city also felt like a 3D maze as I got constantly lost, not only in Hong Kong's labyrinth of streets but also inside the buildings.

Colourful Hong Kong, with its masses of people, shopping malls, lit up towers at night, tropical islands and nature next door, is truly like Jackie Chan (成龙) once said in

his 2001 documentary *Jackie Chan's Hong Kong*: "Hong Kong is the city of life".

Maartje Schreijenberg studied Archaeology (Bachelor of Arts) and Journalism (Master of Arts) and graduated in 2011 from the University of Groningen. She started learning Chinese in September 2012 in preparation for her trip to Beijing in the spring of 2013. Subsequently, she kept on studying Chinese.



■ View from Ngong Ping Plateau



■ Chinese President Xi Jinping and wife Peng Liyuan with Belgium's King Philippe and Queen Mathilde at Pairi Daiza zoo in Bruges

Panda Diplomacy

John Goodyear

Away from the intense negotiations at the recent G20 summit in the Australian city of Brisbane, a handful of leaders' spouses were taken on a trip to a wildlife sanctuary. On the two-hour visit around the sanctuary, the spouse of the Chinese president, Peng Liyuan (彭丽媛), was pictured holding an animal synonymous with Australia: the koala bear. The world's media spoke of 'koala diplomacy', the use of this cuddly marsupial to strike up a friendship with others. But it is not just Australia that practices diplomacy using cuddly animals native to their country. China has long been engaged in this fine diplomatic art with carnivores native to south central China: the giant panda.

Panda diplomacy, as it is known in diplomatic circles, is China's way of striking that friendship chord with other nation states. The gift of a panda has gained diplomatic credence since the formation of the People's Republic of China, but where did this tradition come from? How has panda diplomacy evolved over time? And where does panda diplomacy go next? Such questions have interested me, as a wannabe diplomat, ever since the giant pandas Tian Tian (甜甜) and Yang Guang (阳光) arrived in my native Britain in 2011 to rolling live TV coverage and widespread public attention.

You have to go back over 1300 years,

though, to what is thought to be the first recorded instance in Chinese history of panda diplomacy. Two bears and seventy pieces of fur were sent by the Empress Wu Zetian (武则天) of the Tang Dynasty (唐朝 618-907) to the 40th Japanese emperor in 685 AD. It is generally agreed today that these two bears in question were, indeed, pandas; and with it, the first known instance in Chinese political history of these creatures being used as a diplomatic gift. In more recent times, Japan—not necessarily known for its strong ties with China—received two pandas from China in 2008. On a state visit to Japan three months before the start

of the Beijing Olympic Games, the former Chinese president, Hu Jintao (胡锦涛), was quoted as saying: "Giant pandas are very popular among the Japanese, and they are a symbol of the friendly ties between Japan and China."

But is there perhaps a bit more to modern day panda diplomacy than just popularity and symbolism? The author of *The Way of the Panda: The Curious History of China's Political Animal* (Profile Books, 2010), Henry Nicholls, seems to think so: "China's expansion across the globe—and its use of pandas—has become more obvious and the motivation for the loans has become muddled," he said. "They are no longer just about conservation, but become increasingly bound up with political and economic ambitions." It would appear more than a coincidence that shortly after Tian Tian and Yang Guang arrived at Edinburgh Zoo in 2011 numerous billion-dollar trade deals were signed by China and Scottish firms, including for Land Rover vehicles, Scottish fish and green technology. A year later, in 2012, two giant pandas were on

their way to Canada after multibillion-dollar deals to export uranium to China were secured. And most recently in spring of this year, the new Chinese president, Xi Jinping (习近平), and his wife visited Belgium to inspect the giant pandas Xing Hui (星徽) and Hao Hao (好好) during an EU-wide tour focusing on trade deals in France and Germany.

Very much linked with improved trade relations, post-2008 panda diplomacy has been deemed by some political and diplomatic commentators as a type of 'guanxi' (关系), a term that individuals doing business in China are most likely to encounter. It refers to a personalised network of influence, loyalty and commonality. Interestingly enough, since 2008, pandas have been received by some of China's main trading partners, predominantly members of the G8 – now G7 – leading industrialised nations. Pandas are, therefore, bestowed on countries based on mutual need, providing China with much-needed technology and resources to fuel its expanding economy.

The first two countries to be presented with a pair of pandas were Russia in

1957 and North Korea in 1965. Although economic and trade considerations may have played a role in motivating Chairman Mao (毛泽东) to send these 'goodwill ambassadors' to these respective countries, it is more likely to have been an expression of political solidarity, not least because Russia and North Korea shared many of China's own communist principles at the time and also belonged to the same sphere of influence.

It was not until the early seventies, however, when pairs of pandas were sent to the West, doing much to bridge the East-West divide at the time. In 1972, US president Richard Nixon became the first president to visit the People's Republic of China. Soon after that visit, Ling Ling (玲玲) and Xing Xing (兴兴) arrived in Washington D.C. with more than three million visitors coming to view the pandas in the Smithsonian's National Zoo every year thereafter. Within a two-year period, Japan, France, Germany and Great Britain all received pairs of pandas, proving to be an instant hit among the zoo-going public in those respective countries. For the Chinese, they had hit upon a means of extending the

hand of friendship at the height of the Cold War through an animal native to its wild, with endearing looks and behaviour. For the recipient nations and the zoos in which the pandas were housed, it meant bringing a symbol of the Chinese nation to the West, widening understanding and awareness of China and its animal culture.

China is known for its ancient traditions and customs and even something such as the exchange of pandas as a diplomatic gift goes back more than 1300 years. But it was soon after the founding of the People's Republic of China that pandas were deployed on the global stage for China's own diplomatic ends. From a political and diplomatic gift in the mid-twentieth century to a type of symbolic trade gift at the start of the twenty-first, the differing use of the panda as a diplomatic tool is a true reflection of China's shifting international priorities over the past 60 years. Given China's current proactive approach of establishing new trade ties, it goes without saying that Xi Jinping and Peng Liyuan will be visiting many pandas gifted to strategically important foreign trade partners in the months and years to come.



Volunteers to recruit Chengdu Giant Panda Guardian Ambassadors, Berlaymont building, Headquarters of the European Commission, Brussels



Wujiaochang Shopping Mall, Shanghai

Smart Sourcing in China

Lijuan van der Harst-Yi (衣丽娟)

In the past decades, 'Made in China' products are becoming a commonly accepted and preferred choice of purchase. Nowadays, China sourcing—meaning to purchase materials or products from China for production needs and sales on the domestic or global market—is an almost unavoidable trend in all different kinds of industries and business sectors. Smart and effective sourcing in China could generate the opportunity for direct cost savings, which becomes visible in a bottom line improvement for Western companies who follow this sourcing strategy. It is important to be well aware of this trend. In business reality, the truly amazing fact is not necessarily how big China has become, but how little it is understood.

Every year, tens of thousands of new businesses start purchasing directly in China. Significant numbers of big-scale international companies incorporate a 'low cost country (China) sourcing percentage' in the set of key performance indicators. However, many of

them have an initial bad experience. The key to successful China sourcing is not a black-and-white list of rules or set of tools; it is primarily an adaptation of mental models.

Textbooks can elaborate on Chinese culture: how to bow; how to pass on business cards;

DOING
BUSINESS
WITH CHINA



■ The Bund in Shanghai

how to dress for negotiations; and how to choose expensive gifts for building up relationships with Chinese counterparts. A superficial understanding and obedience of the etiquette might bring a certain amount of return. However, without understanding business behaviour resulting from the essence of Chinese culture and values, a business relationship could easily burst. Delay in delivery or misinterpretation in communication could have a negative impact on securing supply and jeopardise the Western company's performance.

Smart sourcing in China requires a basic understanding of representative business behaviour in China. Therefore, the general principles of doing business with China are also applicable for Western companies' sourcing activities and for their dealings with Chinese suppliers in China. Meanwhile, there are also some practical and operational concerns in choosing the right Chinese supplier. Finding a suitable Chinese supplier is an art more than a science.

Most Western business people may encounter the following business behaviour traits in their Chinese counterparts at the other end of the

negotiating table:

- Personal Connections

Personal connections in China have a different meaning compared to 'networking' in the Western world. Western business relies heavily on the internet, information and systems. The Chinese focus more on friends, relatives, partners and so-called "social capital".

Personal connections are also determined by creating win-win mechanisms in business. Chinese mentality is as such that the 'benefit' created is not necessarily immediately exchanged. Western negotiators normally have a list of negotiation factors in hand and expect that when taking a step back, the Chinese counterpart should also take a step back at the same place for exchange. However, the return could actually come at a later phase if the Western negotiators allow more time for further discussion and keep encouraging their Chinese counterparts by emphasising the different benefits through cooperation.

A long-term win-win mechanism is the lasting cornerstone for personal connections.

- The Intermediary

A capable Chinese intermediary who has good

The intermediary rather than the interpreter of the language is actually the interpreter of culture, bridging the differences between the parties involved.

personal connections with the Chinese business partner is essential in the trust-winning process and business success. Chinese businessmen normally would not directly express their opinion; instead, they would change subject or remain silent, or give subtle hints, such as "seems not bad", "seems fairly all right", or "let us study it". Only Chinese embodying Chinese values could interpret this mood, tone, facial and body language. Normally, the intermediary determines the process of the business in question. It is rather the intermediary instead of the negotiators, who first raises the business issues that need to be discussed. The intermediary rather than the interpreter of the language is actually the interpreter of culture, bridging the differences between the parties involved.

- Social Status

Social status plays a very important role in Chinese business culture. Prior to negotiations, the rank and position of the Chinese counterpart needs to be investigated with equivalent personnel sent to the negotiations. A Chinese manager would have negative feelings, even ones of shame, while seating with a relatively young and lower ranking sales representative on the other end of the negotiating table. Thus, the sincerity of the Western company can be questioned in the first instance.

- Interpersonal Harmony

Chinese value the importance of interpersonal harmony between business partners. Trust and harmony are more important than any contract on a sheet of paper. For the Chinese, the lack of building sufficient interpersonal harmony and directly moving to the 'subject matter' in business is irrational and churlish. While

necessary, interpersonal harmony could facilitate business development and solve conflicts with regard to contractual issues for the long-term benefit of both parties involved.

- Time is the best negotiation tool

Time is the best negotiation tool, especially for commercial negotiations. Chinese negotiators are more concerned about methods than results, more about process than targets. The best compromise can only be obtained through routine haggling. This process cannot be shortened. Threatening does not work effectively against Chinese on business. At the same time, Westerners often feel threatened by two-handed preparation from the Chinese counterpart. This means that Chinese often indicate that they also talk to your competitor in parallel, especially when you disclose that you are under time



■ Communication University of China subway station, Beijing

Being patient plays a key role in building a long-term business relationship with the Chinese partner.

pressure. It is just a part of the haggling culture in business.

- Holistic Thinking

While negotiating with Chinese, preparations need to be made to discuss all of the issues simultaneously, and sometimes, even repetitively. The Chinese tend to 'forget' the pre-defined discussion sequence in the perception of Western negotiators. Nothing is solved until everything is solved. This holistic way of thinking is a challenge to the Western way of thinking, which is more focused on sequences and individuals. Signals for good progress can be, for example, when more senior managers become involved in the discussion; when questions start focusing on the more concrete issues; when involvement of the intermediary is being asked; or when more meetings are required.

- Endurance and Relentlessness

The endurance and relentlessness in Chinese culture can also be reflected in business negotiations. Exerting tremendous effort in the preparation stage of the negotiations, the Chinese expect an even longer time for the haggling process. A Western negotiator who shows a similar level of endurance and relentlessness may gain the respect of the Chinese partner. Some useful tactics can be,

for example, asking the same question on different occasions to find out the weakness in the opponent's argument, or bringing research results into the discussion and carefully presenting the competitor's situation to the Chinese opponent.

Being patient plays a key role in building a long-term business relationship with the Chinese partner. It is hard for Chinese to make immediate compromises due to the collective decision-making process and the social status background. Chinese are good at using procrastination as convincing tactics.

On top of business behaviour in the negotiation phase, Western companies should also focus on the challenges in the operational phase.

Finding a suitable Chinese supplier is an art more than a science

A number of considerations should guide the search for a suitable Chinese supplier:

- Significance

If your orders take up only one percent of the factory's capacity, you will normally be the last priority. You will suffer delays as soon as another customer pushes for a quicker delivery. Therefore, knowing your relative significance

is one of the key research points at the initial phase. Continuous monitoring on changes in significance is a must.

- Internal competencies

Professional Western companies usually have standard audit checklists. However, in order to get a better understanding of the internal competencies of the Chinese supplier, reliance should not just be placed on the checklist; instead, more concrete questions need to be raised and decisions made on whether there is a need to outsource a certain competence, for example, checking 100% of the products in a third party warehouse before packing.

- Seasonality

Production patterns at the Chinese supplier should be investigated and the ordering pattern at the Western buyer side should be adapted accordingly, if possible. Some Chinese suppliers run their production only at limited occasions during the year. Time pressure leads to poor quality and frequent delays.

- Intellectual Property (IP) risks

Large manufacturers tend to be better at protecting their client's IP. However, they might already be present on your market. Trust and interpersonal harmony are essential on tackling IP-related issues. For Western companies on the Chinese market, enhancing overall competitiveness is very necessary. Although facing the challenge on IP, competitive advantage comes from deeper understanding of the market and risk mitigation, not risk escape.

- Thorough understanding of the business strategy of your Chinese supplier

Third party auditors generally do not have in-depth experience in the production of your product. They would not necessarily be aware if the machinery is adapted to your production; if the operators are precise enough for your quality expectations; or if your standard is different from that of the factory's current customers. In order to gain a complete insight into your Chinese supplier's business operation, purchasing personnel and supplier quality assurance or technical personnel are recommended to join the supplier audit.

- Nature of the Chinese supplier

Finding a suitable Chinese supplier also involves some questions about the nature of the

supplier company. There are plenty of trading companies dealing with similar products from different manufacturers. The Western buyer could benefit from price competitiveness through direct contact with the Chinese manufacturer. However, does this manufacturer possess export rights? What suits your company's goal the best? Different companies may have different preferences because of their own past experiences.

The potential of China sourcing for optimised cost structure remains huge. The economic benefit through cost optimisation and business globalization is infinite. Though there are quite some challenges on understanding the Chinese suppliers bearing a different cultural background, smart sourcing in China is often a rewarding experience as long as Western buyers overcome obstacles and adapt to the rules of the game. Both the Western buyer and the Chinese supplier could learn from each other's business practices and different ways of thinking, leading to mutually desired outcomes. With a well-selected Chinese supplier and a steadily formed business relation, the Western buyer could obtain a stronger competitive advantage along the value chain as well as an easier entry on to the global market. The efforts required for smart sourcing in the Chinese market should not be regarded as light-hearted; thorough preparation, flexibility and especially adaptation of mental models are really needed. Moreover, it is vital to possess an open-minded attitude towards understanding what makes the Chinese different, learning their culture and corresponding business behaviour. Aim high and adapt quickly!

Lijuan van der Harst-Yi (MBA) is the owner of OrientTide, a dynamic consultancy bureau specialised in purchasing and procurement management as well as Sino-Dutch and Eurasian business support. Lijuan is a skilful executive with years of Sino-European professional experience at Philips, Johnson & Johnson and DSM. Contact information: lijuan99@gmail.com



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■ Shuangjing, Beijing



■ Casa Milà, Barcelona, Spain

Travel, a New Lifestyle for Chinese People

Hao Cui (郝翠)

As the 2015 Spring Festival (春节) is approaching, also known as Chinese New Year, 38-year-old Mr. Qin from Beijing (北京) is making plans for the upcoming seven-day holiday. He finally decided to take his family to visit Thailand, after longing to visit that country for some time, especially after seeing the very popular movie *Lost in Thailand* (《人在囧途之泰囧》) released in 2013. Actually, Mr. Qin is not a first time traveller on this holiday occasion. Last year, he travelled with his entire family to the provinces of Yunnan (云南) and Guangxi (广西) in the southern part of China for the Chinese New Year. They enjoyed the warm southern winter, the different atmosphere as people celebrated the Spring Festival there and had a wonderful time.

HOWEVER, MR. QIN IS ONLY ONE OF many taking part in the Spring Festival travel rush. According to a report by the China National Tourism Administration, there were 231 million tourists during the 2014 Spring Festival, an increase of 14 percent on the previous year. Travel has become a new trend for Chinese people during the Spring Festival holiday in addition to the traditional family reunion dinner, purchasing festival items, watching the Spring Festival Gala (春节联欢晚会) on television and visiting neighbours and relatives. Even more interestingly, travelling abroad during the Spring Festival is increasingly popular. A record 4.5 million Chinese people were estimated to have travelled overseas during the 2014 Spring Festival, a rise of 12.5 percent on 2013. South East Asia and North America were among the most popular destinations for outbound trips. Many countries hosted abundant celebration activities, thanks to local Chinese communities. Some even created better festival atmospheres than in China. No doubt experiencing different customs overseas is also a fashionably attractive way to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

After more than three decades, on account of the fast economic growth and rapidly rising incomes, China has now become one of the world's most attractive and hottest inbound and outbound tourist markets.

Surprisingly, travel was not on the mind of most Chinese people prior to the 1978 economic reform and opening-up policy. Up until then, China had been tackling essential needs like food and clothing. But during the 1980s, people in China became increasingly aware of travelling possibilities with the rise of tourism and as living conditions improved. As American psychologist Abraham Maslow suggests in his hierarchy of needs theory, when people's basic material needs are satisfied, they seek to achieve spiritual needs.

After more than three decades, on account of the fast economic growth and rapidly rising incomes, China has now become one of the world's most attractive and hottest inbound and outbound tourist markets. Chinese people consider henceforth travel as a new lifestyle. Today, China's soaring population faces steadily more pressures from work, family and society. Travelling can offer a temporary escape, a welcome relief to a stressful environment in order to refresh tired souls. There is also an old saying in Chinese, 'Travelling thousands of miles is better than reading thousands of books'. Travelling can help acquire the knowledge that one cannot get from books, so it is another

method of learning. These are the reasons why Chinese people are so keen on travelling.

The Spring Festival and The National Day (国庆节), also called Golden Weeks, are the two longest public holidays in China. People enjoy seven-day breaks for each of these two holidays. There are some other small official holidays such as May Day (劳动节), Mid-Autumn Festival (中秋节), and Dragon Boat Festival (端午节), during which Chinese people can have three days off work. Since the opportunity to travel is limited to these official holiday periods for a majority of Chinese people, most famous scenic spots become very crowded during the holiday seasons. It was reported that people visiting the Great Wall (长城) could barely move as it attracted tens of thousands of tourists during the Golden Weeks. With overcrowded domestic tourist attractions and consequent unpleasant internal travel experiences, a large number of mainland Chinese travellers, especially high-income earners, favoured overseas destinations. This not only affected China's inbound, but also outbound tourism. As soon as the 2014 National Day Golden Week (1-7 October) ended, Chinese media reported that domestic travel had declined



■ Chinese Spring Festival celebration in Paris, France



■ A Chinese traveller in Lhasa, Tibet, China

while outbound travel had grown eightfold. The huge growth of outbound tourism over the past few years has had an impact on the global travel industry. It was estimated that the number of outbound tourists from mainland China would exceed 115 million people in 2014.

A leading provider of hotel accommodation worldwide, Hotels.com has launched in 2012 the Chinese International Travel Monitor (CITM) to examine the enormous increase in outbound tourism by Chinese travellers and its impact on the global hotel industry. According to the third report published in 2014, the majority of overseas Chinese travel has been for leisure reasons, while business or education purposes ranked second. Travelling with family or friends remained the most popular choices amongst Chinese international travellers. The report listed Asian countries including Hong Kong (香港) and Taiwan (台湾) in China, Japan, South Korea, Thailand and Malaysia, European countries like France, Italy, the UK, and also the USA as the top 10 international destinations chosen by Chinese travellers in 2013. A survey in the report showed that Chinese tourists' favourite activities when abroad were sightseeing, dining and shopping, and that they spent the most money on shopping. In fact, China became the largest spender in international tourism globally in 2012. The sky-high luxury taxes at home impelled Chinese tourists to shop overseas more than others. Many businesses introduced specially designed services and products for their Chinese guests, a non-negligible consumer group. For example,

the world famous Hilton Hotels group has its Huanying ('Welcome' in Chinese) hospitality programme, proposing front desk team members fluent in Chinese, hotel room amenities and traditional Chinese breakfast items. The Galeries Lafayette in Paris, one of Chinese travellers' favourite department stores, not only offers store maps in Chinese but also Chinese-speaking guides to assist Chinese shoppers.

With people's enhanced travel awareness and the development of technology, new travel trends and behaviours have emerged. The CITM reported that Chinese travellers used many online sources, particularly mobile devices, throughout their travels to research and book their trip and share photos and experiences via social media. Hoteliers around the world confirmed that young Chinese guests are particularly more self-assured and worldly-wise, with improved linguistic skills, either in the local language or in English. Two-thirds of the Chinese consumers questioned for the report prefer independent travel rather than group travel. However, the reality is much more complex than that. Many Chinese tourists wish to add a deeper meaning to their travels. They have abandoned the traditional hop-on hop-off sightseeing tours for new self-service travel models like backpacking, self-drive tours and RV (Recreational Vehicle) travel, in search of more significant travel and life experiences. In addition, many themed leisure vacations are being developed, such as rural tours, forest tours, mountain tours and marine tours, which the Chinese travellers appreciate more and more. This reveals a switch in China tourism, from sightseeing to leisure tourism.

Travel as a spiritual comfort is an accepted new trend in the Chinese lifestyle, and the rising popularity and fast development of tourism in China attests to the transformation of this lifestyle. In turn, Chinese tourism is also undergoing a revolution because of the changing behaviour of Chinese travellers. Ultimately, all these will shape into the elements affecting the global tourism industry.

The Cheongsam - the Mirror of Beauty

Zou Ying (邹颖)

In May 2010, the famous Chinese actress Fan Bingbing (范冰冰) appeared at the 53rd Cannes International Film Festival in her fascinating cheongsam, which is a body-hugging one-piece Chinese dress for women, also known as Qi Pao (旗袍). There was a dragon and auspicious clouds on her dress. The main colour, golden yellow, was the colour of Chinese royalty in Imperial China. After this news was reported, a growing number of female Chinese stars have shown greater interest in the cheongsam.

THE JOURNEY OF THE CHINESE

The cheongsam began in 1644. The emperor of Qing Dynasty (清朝 1644-1911), Shunzhi (顺治 1638-1661), led his army to the south of The Great Wall and set Beijing (北京) as its capital. As the Qing Dynasty consolidated its power from Ming (明朝 1368-1644), they imposed a reform on the dress. Manchu (满族) women wore a flat and straight cheongsam, its skirt long enough to cover the ankles and the collar was high as to hide the cheek and touch the ear. The long gown had wide piped sleeve and front cloth. During that period when two different costumes came into conflict with one another, two different



■ Actress Fan Bingbing wearing a cheongsam

cultures started to have an impact on each other. The result was a combination of costumes between Manchus and Han (汉): the cheongsam became loose and had larger sleeves and its jacket became longer.

Although the cheongsam came from the gown worn by women in the Qing Dynasty, it developed a characteristic of its own and became distinct from the original gown. In 1911, the Chinese Revolution overturned

the last feudal Qing dynasty. This revolution made it possible for the West to influence Chinese dress. The cheongsam enjoyed a free change towards a popular and international style. At that time, Shanghai was a centre of fashion; the most open-minded female students in Shanghai (上海) were the first ones to wear an up-to-date cheongsam. Students were considered cultivated, civilised and the leaders in

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■ A Chinese girl in a cheongsam

fashion. As a result, celebrities also took pride in wearing cheongsams.

In the period between the 1920s and the 1940s, cheongsams had become the expression of Chinese women's dress. In the 1920s when the cheongsam was catching on, the design began to purposefully showcase the beauty of women's figure. In the 1930s, the cheongsam had changed totally from its original form into a distinctly modern style. The style was well rounded, perfectly accentuating the shape of a woman's body. It made little allowance of change for the new cheongsam designs afterwards. Changes could only be made in length, size or accessorial ornament. In the 1940s, almost all the popular calendars, posters as well as advertisements were printed with pictures of beautiful women wearing cheongsams.

The cheongsam has mainly two types, the Shanghai style and the Beijing style. Upper-class women in Shanghai enjoyed a luxurious life and were after fashion. The international trend of the clutched waist style contributed to the appearance of tight-fitting and high slit in the Shanghai-style cheongsam. Different from the modern Shanghai-style cheongsam, the Beijing styles were relatively more classical. Their designs followed the traditional cheongsam style: straight, loose and large fronts. The cloth was mainly silk and satin. A famous Beijing brand of cheongsam is Rui Fu Xiang (瑞蚨祥).

There is a long history of one hundred years behind the Chinese cheongsam. It has evolved with the times while keeping its original beauty. Nowadays, people would put on their favourite cheongsam to attend pageants or other important events. During a wedding, Chinese women always first wear the Western white wedding dress. After the ceremony, the bride will put on the beautiful captivating red cheongsam and propose a toast with the bridegroom to their families and friends. In Figure 3, my friend is wearing the red cheongsam on her wedding day. As a little girl, I would always long for my mother's cheongsam. Many times I have furtively dressed up in her cheongsam with matching high heels. I was one of the girls who always dreamed of wearing the pretty cheongsam at my own wedding.

Since Fan Bingbing's famous appearance in Cannes that summer of 2010, I remember the cheongsam reaching another high point. Chinese women, young girls as well as middle-aged women, started to wear this traditional dress in daily life. Instead of the exquisite cliché, designers have developed different kinds of reformative modern cheongsam for those trendy women. They made it conveniently shorter and lighter to wear. As a result, women enjoyed the new cheongsam which could make them look more charming, even sexier.

Cheongsams are frequently presented in contemporary movies, such as Lust, Caution

(2007 《色·戒》), The Message (2009 《风声》), In the Mood for Love (2010 《花样年华》), The Flowers of War (2011 《金陵十三钗》), and The Grandmaster (2013 《一代宗师》). The heroines in these movies have the chance to wear delicate cheongsams. Besides the movies, we can also see some airline stewardesses wearing cheongsams, such as Sichuan Airlines (四川航空), Hebei Airlines (河北航空), Kunming Airlines (昆明航空) and West Air (西部航空).

The cheongsam is like a mirror: it reflects the mysterious beauty of the Chinese woman and witnesses the vicissitudes of recent Chinese history. A woman's pride, confidence, sorrow, or regret—all of these are part of the emotion closely connected with their cheongsams. Secrets are concealed under the dress; it drives you to seek inward into a woman's heart. The cheongsam not only shows their beauty, but more importantly, it also enables exquisite women to express every emotion. Besides reflecting the beauty of woman, the cheongsam witnesses the recent history and reflects its own development. From a dress for the Manchu, an ethnic minority, to a popular dress throughout contemporary China, the cheongsam experienced many changes over the years. From a conservative gown to a formal dress or even modern dress for daily wear, it enables innumerable women to enjoy the beauty of the cheongsam.

Zou Ying (邹颖) is currently studying International Economics and Business as a pre-master student at Groningen University. For her bachelor's studies, she enrolled in a double degree programme offered in collaboration between Jiang Han University (江汉大学) in Wuhan (武汉), Hubei (湖北), China and Groningen Hanze University, the Netherlands.

The Beauty of Kunqu Opera

Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈)

IN 2004, THE YOUTH VERSION Kunqu opera (昆曲) *The Peony Pavilion* (牡丹亭) was performed successively in major universities in China, such as Beijing University (北京大学) and Fudan University (复旦大学). Wherever it went, it triggered a wave of enthusiasm on campus and became well known among the young students. Since its first staging, it has been performed in public on no less than 200 occasions in eight years. In 2006, it came to the United States and made its first debut overseas. The oriental opera caused a sensation on distant shores. Experiencing a 600-year historical development, Kunqu opera had once been a romantic stage for literati to describe the joys and sorrows of life, but it almost disappeared. As an ancient art, why does it have such glamour

in modern life? What is the beauty of Kunqu opera?

The prominent feature of Kunqu opera is its extraordinary and unique tune. Kunqu originated in the late Yuan Dynasty (元朝 1271-1368) and was created in the Kunshan (昆山) region, near Suzhou (苏州) in today's Jiangsu province (江苏省). At the time, the tune was called *Kunshan Qiang* or *Kunshan Tune* (昆崙腔). During the Jiajing period (嘉靖年间 1522-1566) of the Ming Dynasty (明朝 1368-1644), Wei Liangfu (魏良辅) who was proficient in melody, borrowed some features from other melodies and initiated a brand new singing genre. It was dubbed the *Shuimo Qiang* or *Shuimo Tune* (水磨调), a melody as exquisite and smooth as water. The *Shuimo Tune* not only boasted its subtle and elegant words pronunciation but was a

refined and attractive tune. Simultaneously, the 'one word, three sighs' style developed a breathtaking mellow voice and soon swept the country. In the Wanli period (万历年间 1573-1620) of the Ming Dynasty, the most fashionable lifestyle was to appreciate Kunqu. European missionary Matteo Ricci arrived in China during this period and saw that food, clothing and luxury goods were abundant. What he found more surprising than wealth was the attitude towards life of Chinese people. They are rich in cultivated manners and know how to enjoy life. What Ricci witnessed was the spiritual fulfilment and tranquillity that Kunqu opera brought to people. When people enjoyed the soothing and calming opera music, they would enter an affectionate emotional world. Each Mid-Autumn Festival (中秋节), when the



■ Live university performance of The Peony Pavilion



■ Live performance of The Peony Pavilion at China's National Theatre

annual Opera Joint Performance was held in Huqiu Mountain (虎丘山), the whole town would turn out to listen to Kunqu opera.

The diction of Kunqu opera is also elegant and melodic. It carried on the poetry tradition from the Tang (唐朝 618-907) and Song (宋朝 960-1279) Dynasties and expressed emotions with poetic language:

不到园林，怎知春色如许？

Without coming to the garden, how could I ever picture the splendour spring like this?

良辰美景奈何天，便赏心乐事谁家院？

Beautiful scenery on a bright day is of no avail, who enjoys real delight and amusement?

则为你如花美眷，似水流年。

A lady as beautiful as a blossoming flower, whose beauty will fade just as water flows.

The beauty of connotation in Kunqu opera manifests itself in the respect for humanity. *The Peony Pavilion* held extreme significance in the repertoire of Kunqu opera which was written by Tang Xianzu (汤显祖 1550-1616), one of the world's greatest dramatists. He boldly presented an amazing love story between a sixteen-year-old girl, Du Liniang (杜丽娘) and a young scholar, Liu Mengmei (柳梦梅). After appreciating the beautiful spring scenery in her backyard garden, the desire of love was aroused. When she returned to her room,

she had a dream in which she had a love affair with a hero who she never met before. Afterwards she languished

with lovesickness and was gradually consumed with grief. Three years later, on his way to the capital for his imperial examination, Liu Mengmei became ill and stayed in house of Du Liniang. The soul of Du Liniang was back to reunite with Liu Mengmei and eventually rose again from death. People were enthralled by the opera's bizarre plots and mysterious dreams. The heroine died from passion which in turn brought her back to life. It manifested that the passion (*qing* 情) transcended the principle (*li* 理) which dominated in society of the day; such bold depictions rebelled against orthodoxy at the time. It was the most genuine feeling (*zhiqing* 至情), as the inscription of *The Peony Pavilion* said: "I have no idea where the passion arouse but be passionately devoted. The living chooses to die while the dead survives. If the living cannot die, the dead cannot be resurrected, it would never deserve to be called the most genuine feeling".

Another fascinating feature of Kunqu opera is the poetic imagery beauty. Kunqu's ancient stage was always a square. Audiences watched the show on three sides, giving the artists opportunity to display their performing talent. The traditional stage was simple and virtual, so it needed audiences to use their imagination. Sometimes only with a folding fan, the colourful scenery of springtime would appear, delivering a complete setting or atmosphere of the

season. Actually, it was a space of integrity to present a graceful real world. Except for the stage, the make-up and costumes of Kunqu opera also contributed to create an aesthetic atmosphere. The opera actresses and actors showed their charming and refined appearance by distinct facial make-up. The costume of Kunqu opera decorated with delicate southern Chinese embroidery and superior silk fabric embodied the poetic beauty of Chinese ink painting. Performances with swirling sleeves required different techniques, such as sleeves shaking, folding, stacking, throwing and turning. The audience could not appreciate its beauty until immersed in the broader aesthetic atmosphere encompassing the stage, the costumes and imagery.

Due to this inner beauty, Kunqu opera has never stepped down from the stage of history after experiencing its own ups and downs over centuries. In 2001, Kunqu opera was listed in the first batch of UNESCO's Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, an honour which helped the traditional opera regain its vitality. In 2009, the Kunqu Opera Succession Planning was officially launched to deliver in the next five years a Kunqu public elective course at Beijing University, hold opera culture weeks, including performances, exhibitions and lectures. The aim is to protect Kunqu opera, bring in fresh blood, especially the highly educated young adults, into this genre of opera and to promote a cultural renaissance. The loyal guardian for beauty in China restores and revives the ancient art of the Kunqu opera.

Romance in Chinese Verses

Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛)

LOVE ENRICHES HUMAN experiences and feelings, either happiness or sadness. It is one of the common themes of literature, including Chinese ancient poetry. Ancient Chinese poets were very sensitive to the feelings of affection or longing.

The beauty of Chinese ancient poetry lies mainly in its musical rhythm and expressions. The former makes poems sound like songs, evocative of emotions and feelings. The latter, especially imaginative, profound or unrestrained expressions always catch the reader's eye and strongly strike a responsive chord in their heart. Even the poetry with simple language is also always full of wisdom and philosophy that prove enlightening.

The classic Chinese poets experienced the world with a sensitive soul and a substantial proportion of Chinese verses about feelings of love is preserved by means of writing on bamboo slips or books. Love enriches poetry with soul and life; poetry, conversely, with symbolic and romantic imagery, relieves the poets of the inmost feelings of love. The classical Chinese poem, which expresses the feelings of love or longing, is full of romance, beauty and charm. The following



■ Red beans

poem was written by Tang Dynasty (唐朝 618-907) poet Wang Wei (王维 699-759), one of the most famous men of arts and letters of his time:

Xiāng sī
相思

Hóng dòu shēng nán guó,
红豆生南国，
Chūn lái fā jǐ zhī?
春来发几枝？
Yuàn jūn duō cǎi xié,
愿君多采撷，
Cǐ wù zuì xiāng sī.
此物最相思。

LOVE SEEDS

Red beans grow in southern land,
In spring how many tree buds put forth?
Gather them till full is your hand,
For they, symbolic of love, would make you think of me.

The poem describes red beans, which are seen as 'love seeds' in China. The ancient legend goes that there was a woman who wept bitter tears under a tree over the loss of her husband who had fallen on the battlefield. This sorrow-stricken woman died from being in overwhelming mourning for her beloved, and her tears turned into red beans at last. That is why Chinese ancient people like to wear accessories inlaid with red beans.

By means of giving symbols, providing literary allusions and describing natural phenomena, the poet always means more than he says and leaves imagination to readers, especially in pursuit of love or when conveying feelings of loving and longing for, instead of conveying love to others by frequently saying "I love you" or "I miss you" directly. Chinese people are more

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likely to express feelings of love in a more roundabout or symbolic way. This poem conveys a deep feeling of yearning in an ingenious way, letting the beloved one think about oneself through gathering red beans, symbolic of love and longing.

Nothing is sweeter than love. However, it seems that love appears not as the seeds of happiness but sources of grief in Chinese ancient poetry, for poets always sing about it in all their deep sadness and depression. Su Shi (苏轼 1037-1101), also known as Su Dongpo (苏东坡), a great poet and essayist in the Song Dynasty (宋朝 960-1279), gave such feelings in an evocative but miserable Ci (词), a type of lyric poetry in the tradition of classical Chinese poetry and a poetic form developed in the Tang Dynasty, about the *Tune: A Riverside Town* (《江城子》):

Jiāng chéng zǐ
江城子
(Yǐ mǎo zhēng yuè èr shí rì yè jì mèng)
(乙卯正月二十日夜记梦)

Shí nián shēng sǐ liǎng máng máng.
十年生死两茫茫。
Bù sī liang, zì nán wàng.
不思量，自难忘。
Qiān lǐ gū fén, wú chù huà qī liáng.
千里孤坟，无处话凄凉。
Zòng shǐ xiāng féng yīng bù shí,
纵使相逢应不识，
chén mǎn miàn, bìn rú shuāng.
尘满面，鬓如霜。

Yè lái yōu mèng hū huán xiāng.
夜来幽梦忽还乡。
Xiǎo xuān chuāng, zhèng shū zhuāng.
小轩窗，正梳妆。
Xiāng gù wú yán, wéi yǒu lèi qiān háng.
相顾无言，惟有泪千行。
Liào dé nián nián cháng duàn chù,
料得年年肠断处，
míng yuè yè, duǎn sōng gāng.
明月夜，短松冈。



© Xinhua

■ Wu Gorge, Yangtze River, China

TUNE: A RIVERSIDE TOWN
(A DREAM ON THE NIGHT OF THE 20TH
DAY OF JANUARY 1075)

For ten long years, the living and the dead
have been kept apart and blank.
Though try not to think about you often,
How can you be forgotten?
Your lonely grave, a thousand miles away,
To whom can I my grief confide?
Even though we met again,
Could you recognise me?
For my face is pinched and drawn, and
frosted is my hair.

Last night I dreamt of returning home,
By the window, you were waking up with
grace,
Each looked at the other without uttering a
word,
From our eyes tears gushed.

Which place most hurts the heart?
Your grave clad with short pines, where only
the moon shines!

This tearful ci poem, which was
composed after the poet dreamt of his
deceased wife in the night in Mizhou
(密州) (present-day Zhucheng 诸城),
graphically describes the sharp contrast
between a vivid dream and harsh realities
of life, catching the mood of profound
melancholy. In deep yearning and
mourning for his beloved wife, the poet's
heart was full of distress and loneliness.

The following well-known verse, also a
memorial poem, has been written by Yuan
Zhen (元稹 779-831), a great poet and
writer of the Tang Dynasty, to lament his
wife Wei Cong (韦丛 789-809) who died
years ago.

Lí sī wǔ shǒu (qí sì)
离思五首 (其四)

Céng jīng cāng hǎi nán wéi shuǐ,
曾经沧海难为水,
Chú què wū shān bú shì yún.
除却巫山不是云。
Qǔ cì huā cóng lǎn huí gù,
取次花丛懒回顾,
Bàn yuán xiū dào bàn yuán jūn.
半缘修道半缘君。

THINKING OF MY DEAR DEPARTED
(THE FOURTH OF FIVE POEMS)

No water's spectacular enough when you have
seen the Sea Cang;
No clouds majestic enough after seeing that
crown, the Mt. Wu's peak.
I pass by the flowers without deigning to look
back,
Partly for Tao I seek, partly for the sake of
thee.

The poem depicts the poet's unwavering
loyalty to his wife, with whom nobody can
be comparable in his heart. His love for her
was as deep as the water of vast Sea Cang,
as impressive as the clouds which crown the
lofty Mount Wu peak, a mountain in which
the immortal dwells according to Chinese
ancient legend. So heartbroken was the poet
after his wife's death that he retired from
the world in accordance with the principle
of Taoism (道家), which emphasises on
moderation and less desires, so the poet was
no longer attracted by beautiful flowers,
metaphors for charming women.

As a glimpse of these poems indicates,
the classic Chinese poets sensitively
experienced the world and they translated
the expression of their observations,
insights and feelings into poetical language.
The perceptions and intuitions of them
about human feeling of love were so
fascinating and inspiring that their poems
evoked beauty, sympathy and deep meaning
over the ages.

FEATURE INTERVIEW



■ Dr. Frank-Jürgen Richter

A German Expert's Global Vision on China

Liu Jingyi (刘婧一)

Dr. Frank-Jürgen Richter is Chairman of Horasis: The Global Visions Community, an independent international organisation committed to enacting visions for a sustainable future. Prior to founding Horasis, Dr. Richter was Director of Asian Affairs of the World Economic Forum. As a leading analyst of international business and emerging markets, he speaks globally and influences major business and governmental decisions. Dr. Richter is also an active scholar and has authored and edited numerous bestselling books on global strategy and Asian business, including *Six Billion Minds: Managing Outsourcing in the Global Knowledge Economy*; *Global Future: The Next Challenge for Asian Business*; and *Asia's New Crisis: Renewal through Total Ethical Management*.

Dr. Richter, thank you for granting us this interview. As for previous issues of our GCI journal, we are always looking for people who have a connection, a story with China, an extensive experience, influence or insights to share with us. We are thrilled to have you as a guest for this Feature Interview. Could you share with our readers your very first story with China?

Richter: I travelled on the Silk Road (丝绸之路) for a few months during the early 1990s, after having lived and studied for my PhD in Japan, a period during which I learned to speak Japanese. Towards the end of my trip, I spent three months in China and explored the Chinese western provinces. I couldn't speak one word of Chinese, but I was able to communicate by writing down



© Dr. Frank-Jürgen Richter

■ 10th Horasis Global China Business Meeting, Opening Plenary

“China is looking to innovate more, focusing on a faster economic development pattern while looking for social stability.”

the Chinese characters I had learned in Japan. The people I met along the way were thrilled by my way of communicating. I decided during this trip to learn Chinese properly and focus my attention on China. It was this particular trip – virtually a survival trip – that triggered my decision to return to China.

Later, after joining a German multinational firm and having worked at their headquarters for two years, I was sent over to China at a rather young age – I was one of the youngest expatriate managers the company ever had - to work as the firm’s Chinese Chief Finance Officer (CFO). Before moving to China, I judiciously took a one-month intensive language course at Nanjing University (南京大学). My task in Beijing (北京) was to establish a holding company for the firm’s various joint ventures and to pursue investing in new joint ventures. It was a great time for me. When I came to Beijing in 1996, China’s economic boom was gaining momentum: this was the age of the ‘Chinese gold rush’ with double-digit growth. I absorbed Chinese culture during my stay of four years, which convinced me that China would become the world’s economic superpower.

Your name, Frank-Jürgen Richter is always directly associated with Horasis. What does

Horasis mean? What is behind your initiative to organise the Horasis Global China Business Meeting?

Richter: Horasis in Chinese is 欧亚思: Ou (Europe) Ya (Asia) Si (thoughts). Or in other words: connecting the East with the West. This is my present driving force: to be able to get East and West to communicate and to change their thinking.

I worked for the World Economic Forum for a couple of years, after returning from my assignment in Beijing. As Director of Asian Affairs, I was in charge of the Forum’s Asia-related activities, including their annual China Summit held in Beijing. When I left the World Economic Forum in 2004, the China Federation of Industrial Economics approached me and asked if I could organise a meeting similar to the World Economic Forum’s China meeting by using a mirror-image format. The gathering was not intended as a service for foreign firms entering China to invest or to understand the Chinese regulatory and business environment, but rather as a service for Chinese firms wanting to enter Europe, to understand what’s happening here, and to start investing in Europe. This gave birth to Horasis and its guiding principle of exchanging knowledge. Our first Global China Business Meeting was held in Geneva in 2005. It was an immediate success.

On 13-14 October 2014, you held the tenth Horasis Global China Business Meeting in Italy. Was this annual meeting fruitful? What was the outcome of this meeting?

Richter: I think that my overarching impression after this meeting is that China knows where it is going. The delegates were not dismissive of the media’s remarks about border skirmishes, but confident that these aspects would be resolved. Importantly, it was observed that China had spent huge sums on infrastructures over the past years – new safer roads, high speed passenger railways – and had not ignored its freight routes by rail and river.

The delegates came to an overall unanimous conclusion that China’s economic growth is robust, but slowing down. This, in a sense, echoes the recent International Monetary Fund (IMF)

global meeting, which downgraded most of the world economies except China (and as they stated: ‘not yet!’). Clearly, China is entering a new phase of its development towards greater internal consumption while currently, the rest of the world is demanding less Chinese goods. It is also clear that China is looking to innovate more, focusing on a faster economic development pattern while looking for social stability. Finally I noted that China and the world need to deepen their policy exchanges to share expertise, to learn from each other and build greater global cooperation.

Looking back over 10 years of development, how do you describe the changes in China?

Richter: In essence, the last ten years have seen a transition from headlong growth to a more nuanced development promoted by the Chinese government and its many ministries, as well as regional development fora. If we look at how many people travel by rail during national holidays, it is a massive number. Most people seem to make their journey unscathed; yet in the winter there are delays of course, and the press considers this newsworthy. But now China has

well over 10,000 kilometres of very high-speed rail lines able to transport passengers across the country in twelve hours – an unimaginable feat a few years ago. China has also increased the construction and renovation of roads on a similar scale, making these journeys both faster and safer by separating the traffic into different lanes, and even in some cases creating unique roads solely for coal transport.

The great social experiment is yet to come, I think. Across the world there is a natural urge by people to move from the countryside to the city. There are more attractions in the city for the young and more social care available for the elderly. The government has noted this transition phase and built many new cities, often close to the new rail and road links, and is confident about its ability to manage a shift of 400 million people from their rural abodes to cities within the next 20 years. There is a confidence in their infrastructure development that will absorb population growth and give people a new meaningful life.

At the same time, the government has seen the need to promote growth through port activity. Not only in the coastal regions that are now better connected by new port structures to the rest of the world, but also inland using river and rail links to move raw materials and finished goods effectively to these new ports. In this way, the massive holiday traffic flows will be reduced, costs and travel hardships will be reduced, and many more people will live in far better accommodation than before. It’s about uplifting the quality of life in China. I don’t need to say more!

Every year you choose a different venue for the meeting outside China. Why not organise the meeting in China?

Richter: We usually receive an invitation from a host government to stage the event. We then decide on the location in close coordination with the China Federation of Industrial Economics. It is well known that our Chinese participants want to travel and explore the world, and for many reasons. If the meeting was held in Beijing or Shanghai (上海), the gathering would have a different character. Many Chinese entrepreneurs



© Dr. Frank-Jürgen Richter

■ 10th Horasis Global China Business Meeting, Lake Como, Italy

“A great issue for China – and not only China but for all nations, though more especially developing nations – is to raise education standards of rural students. In fact, all aspects of the rural world need lifting.”

regard the Global China Business Meeting as an important activity in their annual schedule, and many participants come back year after year. One of the primary reasons for choosing a place outside the focus country is that participants can discuss more freely issues from 'back home'. And this provides a neutral ground for others to discuss the potential for joint operations, such as a Brazilian discussing with a Chinese manager in Lake Como (Italy) some form of joint cooperation. What is more natural and easier than that? This is psychology that is very humanly oriented; we all talk more freely to a stranger, even a computer, than to a family member if we wish to discuss personal matters. It is the same with these China-oriented meetings. In fact I use the same rationale in organising my other meetings concerning the Russian and Indian groups: travelling not only broadens the mind, it seems to open discussions in conference panels, during coffee and dinner, even in nearby bars and cafes as people take little discussion trips.

I attended the Horasis Global China Business Meeting in The Hague (2013) and the one in Lake Como Italy (2014) and each year I found that the topics were really cutting edge and challenging for the participants, along with a great balance and wide coverage of different fields and aspects. How do you come up with such wonderful programmes every year?

Richter: Well a lot of brainstorming goes into the programme. I travel to China several times per year, asking our members and participants about the next hot topics. Likewise, I ask our foreign participants about their views. So making the programme is a year-long process. But it can't be finalised until just before the meeting, as I have to ask delegates to be panel members to discuss one of the many raised topics. The difficult balance is in achieving topicality with enough depth, while also resisting the more simple trendy and 'newsy' items. At the same time, some topics deserve repeated airing as they are globally relevant. Let me give an example: education. Many business leaders worldwide complain that the young people are not sufficiently trained to join their businesses.

Even consultants offer the same complaint; among the thousands that apply for a job, only a handful could, in their opinion, be further trained to eventually become global warriors able to help develop multinational businesses and governments. So we see now that China creates millions of graduates per year and few get good jobs. It's a problem that is not unique to China.

And we find many young people on the streets today feeling resentful towards a society that supported their early life, but within which they paid no heed to getting a good education. This is why 'education' is a recurring topic at my meetings, as I invite past and future delegates to suggest new aspects for discussion and to help me gather a panel of discussants. Yes, it is a long process to create the topics for a new conference. Thank you for your observation that the topics were 'cutting edge'.

Speaking of education, I'm very interested in your training background. You also speak German, French, English, Japanese and Mandarin Chinese, which is impressive in my view. Can you share more stories?

Richter: Actually, I speak Spanish and Portuguese too. My formative education took place in several countries. I am German, so my early schooling was at home in German schools and universities. I studied for a Master's programme in France and Mexico, then pursued doctoral studies in Japan. I have learned to always observe people's body language and to listen to their voices – the sounds and intonations of friendship, enquiry, uncertainty or anger – even without knowing the words. This facility has stood me in good stead over the years, especially in my early days in Beijing where I had to really learn Chinese, its nuances and the gestures.

I was always convinced that dialogue (and business) starts with communication, and the mastering of the language of the country I am living in is thus a prerequisite. That's the reason I speak several languages; I lived in many countries and I enjoy absorbing the local culture.

In terms of global vision, what do you expect from China in the next ten years?

Richter: I have already hinted at some of



■ Dr. Liu Jingyi and Dr. Frank-Jürgen Richter

the future developments that may occur in China: further consolidation of the transport infrastructures to open up the more distant regions. This is in keeping with my understanding of their wish to bring more work to the inland regions and thus raise those regions' economic conditions. But also, such changes better align with a more sustainable future as goods and people have to move less far to link fuels, raw materials, manufacturing transformations into finished goods using local people. The new towns are largely placed near raw resources thus minimise transportation of goods and people.

At the same time, both Chinese firms and European firms are increasingly using rail links between China and Europe rather than shifting finished goods thousands of kilometres to the pacific ports. Sending goods in rail containers

makes more sense for speed to market and for sustainability reasons.

What are the challenges that China must face and what are the opportunities for a sustainable development in China?

Richter: A great issue for China – and not only China but for all nations, though more especially developing nations – is to raise education standards of rural students. In fact, all aspects of the rural world need lifting. It is a well-known moan within the professions that their members are getting older faster in the countryside than in towns. By this they mean that towns are more attractive to younger professional dentists, doctors, teachers, lawyers who all resist rural placement. As a result, the country, the people and their children loose out. This is as true in rural China as in rural France or rural America. So perhaps the new larger towns in China will cure this effect by creating a focus and a metropolitan area that will attract young professionals who will still perform a great service to the community without having to reside in a remote town of 20,000 people.

Because of China's rapid growth in recent years, it has accrued vast wealth. These funds are being used to buy the latest equipment for China's developing industries, which will perform well with respect to environmental protection. Again, because of China's large demand for energy, its need to transform raw materials into semi-finished goods and subsequently to assemble these. Chinese companies strive to work to the highest environmental standards and get many scientists and engineers to focus on novel ways to reduce China's environmental impact. Yes, China has the world's largest pollution footprint, but it has the largest task force trying to reduce it. China has not only opportunities to create sustainable development but the will to drive this initiative along as fast as possible.



© Song Yanwen

■ Four seasons at the same time

Chibei: An Irresistible City at the Foot of Changbai Mountain

Wang Jing (王晶)

CHINA
CITY
CULTURE

Changbai Mountain (长白山) has been a mystery since ancient times. The mountain is located in the south-eastern part of the Jilin Province (吉林省), China. The mountain range contains the highest peak in the east of the Eurasia Continent. The three major rivers in the north-east of mainland China, Songhua River (松花江), Tumen River (图们江) and Yalu River (鸭绿江), have their source in this region. And it has been the home to many Chinese ancestors since the later Paleolithic age. During the Qing Dynasty (清朝 1644-1911), Changbai Mountain was venerated as the Holy Mountain—a birthplace of kings and home of dragons. It was referred to as the Forbidden Holy Mountain, ruled by the imperial governments with access to the mountain restricted for 300 years, further adding to its mystery. Today, this mystery has been revealed from the mist as we are now allowed to return. It is a magical place, an ecological paradise which people are reluctant to leave.

The political, economic and cultural centre of Changbai Mountain is Chibei (池北), an appealing ecological city that is livable and an ideal tourist destination. The charming and unique city is packed with the history and culture of this mountainous region. Chibei is 34km away from the North Changbai Mountains Scenic Area (长白山北景区). With convenient transportation, Chibei serves as the gateway to Changbai Mountain, and is an important tourist hub in north-east China. As a crucial ecological tourist city in the Changbai Mountain Characteristic Economic Circle (长白山特色经济环线), Chibei embraces tourists from every corner of the world.

The reason Chibei attracts so many tourists is because it is a city with a rich culture. Dating all the way back to the Tang (唐朝 618-907), Liao (辽朝 916-1125) and Jin (金朝 1115-1234) Dynasties, people started living there, which is proved by the ruins of the ancient city Baoma (宝马) from the Tang Dynasty found in the north-west part of the city. Chibei today remains home to many ethnic groups, such as Han (汉族), Korean (朝鲜族), Manchu (满族) and other nationalities. Different ethnic cultures met and blended with one another, giving birth to the distinct regional characteristics. Here you can get to know agricultural culture, fishing and hunting culture, wood torch culture and nomadic culture and experience the outgoing and passionate personalities of the people in north-east China. You can even feel the regional culture from the names of the streets, such as 'Changbai Mountain Street' (长白山大街), 'Heaven Lake Street' (天池大街), 'Beauty Pine Road' (美人松路) and 'Yangxing (staring at stars) Bridge' (仰星桥) while walking around the streets and squares of the city.

Today, the culturally diversified Chibei continues to enrich itself, seeing the establishments of over 30 associations and organisations, including the Changbai Mountain Literary Federation, Photographers' Association, Artists' Association and Calligraphers' Association, which have attracted all kinds of artists to gather in this city. The Changbai Mountain Goddess of Mercy Temple (长白山观音庙), which echoes the Shaolin Temple (少林寺)

in remote Songshan (嵩山), is under construction. In addition, over ten world-renowned universities, domestic and foreign, are planning to build branch institutions in Chibei, e.g. Repin College in Russia and the Academy of Art & Design from Tsinghua University (清华大学). These establishments recognise educational advantages in Chibei for its high-end tourism management, culture, arts and health. This unique city, blending traditional and modern cultures well, is poised to usher in its brighter future. Chibei is unequalled in terms of culture.

In addition to its unique cultural aspects, Chibei is also a city that respects nature. To counter the increasingly severe ecological problems in mainland China, Chibei has abandoned the development pattern in pursuit of economic growth rather than ecological health. It attaches the highest priority to protecting the environment and has paved the way for the development of unique urbanisation processes, developing itself into an ecologically friendly city embraced by the green of the Changbai Mountain Range.

As a result, what you can see in Chibei is blue sky, clear water and green mountains instead of the common factories in north-east China. Changbai Mountain, the Alps and the Caucasus are the three best-quality water sources in the world. Therefore, the water quality of Chibei has reached national top class status. Besides the water, the air quality there has also reached national top class level, making Chibei a natural oxygen bar far from smoggy cities, where you can enjoy the clean and pure air as much as you like. Chibei is worthy of the name 'a land of idyllic beauty' in modern China. Do not be surprised if you see high trees in the middle of a street, the direction of which having been modified for the purpose of making room for the trees, since respect for and protection of nature is one of the characteristics and a mindset of this city.

Because of these positive attitudes towards nature, Chibei has an incomparable natural charm. Tianchi water (天池) crosses the city through the Erdobai River (二道白河), and you can see people and wild animals getting along well with each other in the unique landscape belts along the river banks. When you watch mallards and mandarin ducks joyfully swimming



■ Car-free road system

© Liu Yanjun



■ Cold fern



■ Wild blueberry

in the river, you might also spot the national Class I protected sea duck, the Chinese merganser. In the Changbai region you will also find the rare tree species of 'Beauty Pines' growing in the city, which has, therefore, acquired the nickname 'Hometown of Beauty Pines'. Each pine is given a unique identity number and is specially taken care of for the purpose of protecting these tall, elegant and rare trees. Changbai Mountain Museum of Natural History in the south of Chibei and Changbai Mountain Wetland Park, which is currently still under construction, will show you the natural beauty of this city and the mountain behind it in a more concentrated and vivid manner.

Chibei city boasts about having the only car-free road system of Jilin Province. This road system is made up of promenades and bicycle lanes around the city with a total length of 50km, connecting important natural and cultural spots within the city. When you walk or ride slowly through the city's streets, you can even feel time slowing down. All the pressure from high-intensity work and rapid-paced life will fade away. Walking freely in nature, you can unload your burden and roam across the green and enjoy the clean forest and water. When you taste the happiness of 'slow life' on the road, or while strolling around the Roller Skating Square (轮滑广场), the Wild Duck Lake Park (野鸭湖公园), the Sculpture Park (雕塑公园) and the stone inscriptions of hundreds of Chinese family names, you will be surprised to find that there are no traffic lights anywhere. Still the traffic is in good order since the roads are reasonably planned and the drivers have adapted to the relaxed atmosphere.

The picturesque scenery, peaceful life and leisurely atmosphere provide rich nutrition for love, making Chibei a city very well-suited for romantic encounters. It is common to see

sweet couples, young or old, in Beauty Pine forests, on the banks of Bai River (白河) and beside Lover's Bridge (情人桥). A series of love festivals and events were generated in this city, such as 'Changbai Lovers' Day' (for the purpose of exploring the legendary side of this mountain regarding eternal love and emotional bond, this yearly festival is held in August and includes thematic activities like dating, wedding photography and honeymoon trips), and 'Love for Lifetime' Changbai Mountain Romance Journal, spreading the blessing of Changbai Mountain of love to everybody there.

Chibei is also a city of special flavour. Everywhere, the city is brimming with the smell of delicious food. Chibei District is a convergence of multi-ethnic food and catering businesses are highly developed. You can have a taste of Korean food, such as delicate and cool cold noodles, spicy cabbage and glutinous rice cakes; steaming hot food of north-east China, such as All in One Pot (一锅出), Dish Pig (杀猪菜) and Braised Dish (乱炖); and gorgeous and rich Manchu dishes, such as Eight Bowls (八大碗) made up of mustard fried tofu, brine shrimp egg tofu, grilled pork, burning frog, chicken mushroom vermicelli, pork with braised vegetables, imperial fish in toona sinensis and Nurhaci Golden Meat (阿玛尊肉). Chibei is worthy of the title 'food paradise'.

Chibei is also permeated with the fragrance of vegetables and fruits. The primitive forests around the city abound in characteristic fruits such as sorbs, wild kiwi, amur grape and blueberry, and nearly 200 kinds of green wild vegetables such as nut-tree mushroom, fern and aralia elata. In the harvest season, the city becomes full of appealing smells as street vendors are competing to show off their fresh products. Chibei is also suffused with the fragrance of herbs. In the local specialty stores across the city, more than 200 kinds of unique Chinese herbs collected from Changbai Mountain are ready for sale, including mountain ginseng (山参), boschniakia (不老草), rhodiola (红景天), gastrodia (天麻), reishi (灵芝),

Chibei is a unique ecological city with rich, diverse cultural influences. Its unique combination of traditional and modern cultures and its deep respect for nature make the city a worthwhile tourist destination.

and schizandra fruit (五味子), all of which are rare health medicines in traditional Chinese medicine.

Chibei also brims with the smell of hot springs. The first hot spring of Changbai Mountain, Jvlongquan Hot Spring (聚龙泉温泉群) located in Chibei, is permeated with a slight smell of sulphur. Containing a great deal of sulphureted hydrogen and various trace elements, the hot springs have high medical value, especially to people with chronic diseases such as intestinal tract disease, skin disease, high blood pressure and heart disease. After enjoying the beautiful scenery and the delicious food, you can totally relax yourself both physically and mentally in the hot springs. Not only can you refresh yourself, but you can also get rid of disease and keep healthy. The inviting fragrance of this city is irresistible.

Chibei is a city full of potential. After years of exploration and research, policy makers have successfully solved the bottleneck problem that hinders the development of ecological towns. They decided to take advantage of the rich resources of Changbai Mountain to actively develop tourism, culture, the characteristic ecological resources and mineral water on the premise that the eco-system and environment are strictly protected. Moreover, Chibei District has won the titles of the Pilot Town of UNDP

'Sustainable Towns of China' Project, the 'National Key Town' of the 500 Comprehensive Reform Model Towns of China, and one of the First Model Towns of Characteristic Urbanization Construction of Jilin Province, gaining many advantages over other regions in China in terms of investment. Chibei is attracting entrepreneurs from every corner of the globe to do business here. The development potential of Chibei is immeasurable.

Chibei is a unique ecological city with rich, diverse cultural influences. Its unique combination of traditional and modern cultures and its deep respect for nature make the city a worthwhile tourist destination. At the same time, because of its continuous development and growth potential, the city is also very attractive to entrepreneurs. Chibei city offers an unequalled combination of natural charm and economic potential.

Wang Jing (王晶) graduated from Baicheng Normal University (白城师范学院) in 2002 with a major in Biology. Local to Changbai, she has dedicated herself in a voluntary capacity for the past 20 years to preserving the nature and cultures around Changbai Mountain. She currently works in the Eco-reserving Department in the Changbai Administration.



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■ Aerial view of Chibei City

If You Are the One

Tong Yan (瞳延)

Living in Beijing (北京) as a 3S woman – this describes the life of a woman who is old enough to marry but still single. 3S means 'single, seventies (1970s) and stuck.' Xiao Zhao is a 35-year-old manager of an independent micro-company who earns good money and enjoys a colourful life. Every weekend one of her most favourite ways to relax is to watch the TV programme *If You Are the One* (《非诚勿扰》). She finds it very interesting to discuss controversial topics raised in the programme with her friends. It is amazing, she adds, to find that "some girl's thoughts in the show are just like her own."

At the beginning 2010, Jiangsu TV (江苏卫视) launched a new love and marriage TV programme *If You Are the One* on Saturday and Sunday evenings. It had a surprisingly great effect on audiences because of its popular love and marriage theme as well as its innovative programme format and hosting style. It lets the female and male guest choose their dating partner after brief verbal account of their life and personal values. From celebrities to the man in the street, if you ask people whether they have watched *If You Are the One*, then the likelihood is that they have: in 2010, it was the hottest TV show in China.

If You Are the One is hosted by Jiangsu TV's famous anchorman Meng Fei (孟非). This game show does not simply aim at providing a platform for single people to meet each other and pick out their dream partner. The dating programme has an innovative format, letting 24 girls decide whether the boy can stay by turning off or keeping the light on before each of them.

The whole process is divided into four sessions, First Impression (爱之初体验), Closer Look (爱之再判断), Last Decision (爱之终决选), and the Boy's Right to Choose (男生权利). In this way, the young people choose their dating partner in half an hour. It creates an intensive mood and provides a brand new way of meeting and falling in love, signalling a big breakthrough compared with the traditional programmes with similar themes. Audiences can catch a good glimpse of today's Chinese young people's ideas about love and marriage, their values and their states of life, especially those of the 1980s and 1990s generation.

Besides, in terms of audience rating, *If You Are the One* has increased its TV audience share since it was first launched, beating all record ratings. In 2010, the audience rating of the episode on 28 March 2010 was 2.82 percent, topping the viewing figure for other TV domestic programmes. In April, the eighteenth episode created a new high record of 3.76 percent reaching 4.15 percent at the beginning of May of that year. *If You Are the One* has become the most watched TV programme in China.

Not only among 'couch potatoes', *If You Are the One* became an instant discussion topic after it premiered. Even 'indoor IT men', who are mostly fans of geographical exploration or military programmes, and business elites whose primary concern is the business and financial news, claim to love the show and wouldn't miss any of the weekly episodes. Why does the show, then, enjoy such popularity? What is the hidden secret behind its success in such a highly competitive environment?

The primary reason for the popularity of *If You Are the One* is the creative design of the programme format and the new images. In today's society of sensual appeal and over-advertisement, it is no surprise to see that most people welcome this new programme design of 24 beautiful single women on the stage showing their beauty and wisdom, as well as their

different personalities and tastes. Dressing variously, they come from different family backgrounds and of different professions such as the beautiful model Na Di (那笛), the business executive Shen Si (沈思), the academic elite Zhang Xiaochen (张晓晨) and the sports champion Xu Yaping (许亚萍). These girls ask direct questions, make pungent comments, and even argue violently with the host and observers, all of which make the programme more interesting and entertaining. This greatly satisfies the audience's various aesthetic standards and psychological needs. People feel pleasantly entertained. The contrast between delicate and charming women and their sharp outspoken opinions provides visual, auditory and psychological enjoyment to a wide audience.

The second reason why *If You Are the One* is welcomed by so many people from different social classes is the grace and sensible talking style of the host and commentators. The show's host Meng Fei is a long-time news anchor. His previous career dealt with serious social issues and people's livelihood, giving him a broad knowledge base but also a comprehensive understanding of life experiences. His



■ *If You Are the One* (photo collection 1)



■ *If You Are the One* (photo collection 2)

outstanding control ability always enables him to catch the audience's excitement at appropriate times, which he uses to maximum effect. Furthermore, the programme invites China's renowned psychological expert and colour character analysis inventor Le Jia (乐嘉) and Professor of Social Psychology Huang Han (黄菡) from Nanjing University (南京大学) as observers and commentators on the show. Le Jia is well known for his sharp tongue and his direct criticism and appraisal. He often pierces into the heart of the matter and his straight comments of the guests usually make them feel embarrassed, which the audience loves. This, along with Professor Huang's sensibility and intelligence, adds a psychological dimension to the programme rather than being just shallow entertainment. In this way, *If You Are the One* successfully distinguishes itself from the usual programmes that centre on love and marriage, breaking into a new kind of TV audience: elite people with higher tastes for TV programmes.

The last and the most important reason for the show's popularity is that it reflects today's Chinese young people's ideas and values. It is not an overstatement to say that *If You Are the One* is a mirror of Chinese contemporary society. Looking into this mirror, a lot of big changes in people's thinking become apparent. Traditionally, Chinese people attached great importance to marriage. In ancient times, people arranged their children's marriage according to the 'rules of propriety'

(《周礼》). The whole process of marriage included decision making, asking the girl's name and birthday, proposing the marriage, sending marriage presents, selecting the auspicious day for the wedding itself (纳采, 问名, 纳吉, 纳征, 请期, 亲迎). This is called *Liu Li* (六礼, Six Manners of Marriage). Besides, all marriages should follow the rules of hierarchy, as the Chinese saying goes: "People from different social classes can't get intermarried" (良贱不婚). But today, Chinese people's thoughts about love and marriage have evolved tremendously: most of those traditional patriarchal thoughts and male chauvinism have been replaced by greater openness and freedom. People become more tolerant and more understanding towards today's diversified values.

What's more, *If You Are the One* not only successfully catches the hot topics of dating, love and marriage, but also explores the deeper underlying social issues. It further breaks down the topics into a number of subtopics, e.g. how to distribute money after marriage; how to raise children and support parents; how to deal with the gap of different social classes and different educational levels; and whether the female should work after marriage. As individuals have to face and deal with these issues at some point in their lives, they can get some inspiration and advice from this reality show.

All in all, with its popular theme, innovative programme design, controversial topics and new hosting style, the TV

programme *If You Are the One* has successfully gained mass popularity in China. The high audience ratings show that it is one of the most watched TV programme over the last few years, with its host Meng Fei winning the best TV host of the year in 2012. Apart from that, many interesting issues are raised in the programme, serving as a form of entertainment, with people identifying themselves with the participants in the show. Their values, concerns, and expectations are reflected in this programme. But in this fast-changing modern world, where people are used to always chasing the newest things, the question remains: Will *If You Are the One* still keep its edge and survive in the competitive market? Can this programme beat another TV record rating in the future? In order to keep its attractiveness, more thought and effort would be required to sustain the popularity and success of the programme in the long run.

Tong Yan (瞳延) graduated from the Communication University of China (中国传媒大学) with a Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature. She is now pursuing a Master's degree at Capital Normal University (首都师范大学) in Beijing, majoring in English and American Literature.

Book Review

1421: The Year China Discovered the World

Author: Gavin Menzies
Reviewed by Alicia Kern

*In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue...
...but Columbus wasn't the only one who
sailed to the East away from the sun,
The Son of Heaven sailed that way too...
...in 1421.*

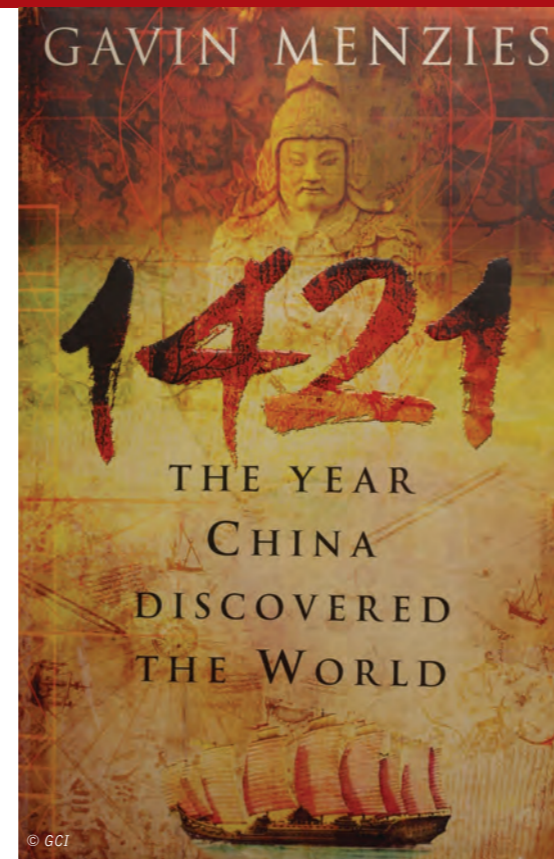
In the early 1990s, former British Naval Officer and Commander of HMS Rorqual Gavin Menzies came across a map in the James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota which aroused his curiosity. Signed and dated 1424 in the name of Venetian cartographer Zuane Pizzigano, the map illustrates the coastlines of Europe and Africa with surprising accuracy for that period. Particularly clearly displayed on the map are four islands in the Western Atlantic Ocean bearing the names Satanazes, Antilia, Saya and Ymana. Upon comparison with modern maps, Menzies was unable to locate any islands at that longitude. Could Antilia possibly be the leeward island of Puerto Rico and Satanazes represent the windward island of Guadeloupe in the Caribbean Antilles? Furthermore, how could a nautical chart produced in 1424 identify islands which, according to conventional history, were first discovered by Columbus on his four voyages between 1492 and 1500? How can

the discovered have been identified before the discoverer had even been born? In his book *1421: The Year China Discovered the World** Gavin Menzies answers these questions and offers life-altering insights into modern world history.

Menzies alleges that in 1421, four vast fleets of at least 800 Chinese junks, over 500 ft in length, set sail from China in a voyage of exploration and imperialisation. Led by Admiral Zheng He (郑和) and his four captains – Zhou Wen (周文), Zhou Man (周满), Yang Qing (杨庆) and Hong Bao (洪保) – these explorers successfully charted The Americas, the Arctic Polar Region, the Antarctic and the region of Australasia. Controversially, Menzies declares that before his first expedition in 1492, Columbus had access to, was in possession of and forged nautical charts created by the Chinese upon their voyage.

Menzies elaborates on the triumphs of the Emperor Zhu Di (朱棣) also referred to as 'The Son of Heaven' and the Yongle

Emperor (永乐帝) who was the 3rd Emperor of the Ming Dynasty (明朝 1368-1644) and reigned over the Yongle Empire from 1402-1424. Having defeated the Mongols in 1387 and amalgamated the northern territories of Mongolia into the Yongle Empire, Emperor Zhu Di organised for large sections of the city Ta-tu – originally designed and built by the Mongol Leader Kublai Khan – to be demolished and the city was remodernised, adopting the name Beijing (北京) or 'The Forbidden City' (紫禁城). Upon completion of this fourteen-year modernisation project, the city was inaugurated with a lavish event. Statesmen from all territories who paid tribute to the Ming Empire, including dignitaries from Malacca (modern Malaysia), Bengal, the Maldives, African Nations, India, Arabia and Asia, were called to Beijing to offer compliments to the Emperor. As a reward, the dignitaries accompanied Admiral Zheng He and his armada receiving protection on their homeward journey.



■ Cover illustration 1421: *The Year China Discovered The World* (Bantam Press, edition 2013)

As a naval expert, a great deal of Menzies's claim is founded upon nautical evidence. Having joined the British Royal Navy in 1953, Menzies served on HMS Newfoundland on a voyage from Singapore to Africa around the Cape of Good Hope and then north to the Cape Verde Islands docking finally in the UK. This voyage mirrors with significant accuracy part of one of the voyages discussed in the book 1421. Menzies uses expertise of sailing winds gained during this expedition to analyse historical charts to substantiate his claim. In particular, this journey would have made use of the southeast trade winds which Menzies suggests propelled the Chinese fleets northwards along the western Coast of Africa. He substantiates

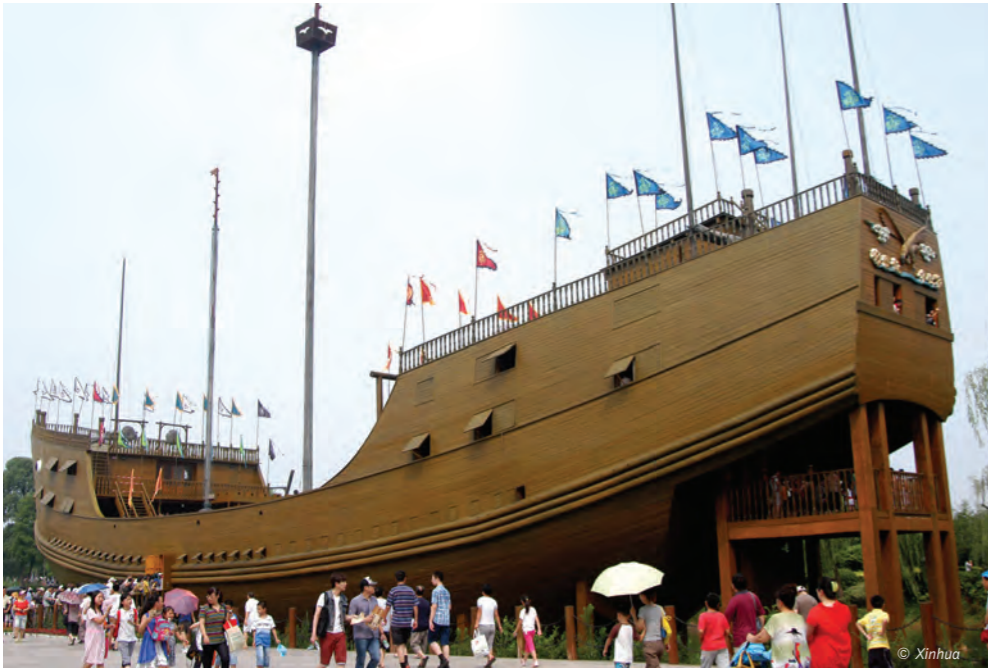
this claim with pictorial references depicting unidentified stone carvings found on the Cape Verde Islands. Also, a shipwreck supposedly containing artefacts from the early Ming era and a picture of the remains of a road of flat stones submerged in The Bahamas also appear in the book. Popular theory attributes this construct as a remnant of the 'lost city of Atlantis', although Menzies suggests it was built to assist the Chinese sailors haul their gigantic vessels (the size of modern super-cruisers) onto land for repair.

As shipbuilders, the Chinese possessed an engineering savvy in excess of contemporary Europeans which Menzies suggests facilitated this momentous journey. They also had knowledge of

astronomy which allowed them to develop an accurate measurement of latitude in the Northern Hemisphere by following the star Polaris. To achieve a measurement of longitude, Ming astronomers built 25-foot-square observation platforms for the measurement of the movement of the moon's shadow during an eclipse. Menzies suggests relics of such platforms are located along the East Coast of America and Australasia and offers diagrams to illustrate their shape and size. Measurements taken using these observation platforms in conjunction with sophisticated methods of determining time enabled Admiral Zheng He and his fleet to create accurate charts of the territories they discovered, leading the Pizzigano



■ Piri Reis map of 1513, illustration in 1421: *The Year China Discovered The World* (Bantam Press, edition 2013)



■ A replica of Zheng He's treasure ship in Nanjing's Baoshan Shipyard

chart cartographer to develop the map which encouraged Menzies to research this subject.

Conversely, Menzies provides DNA evidence indicating many Chinese voyagers settled in North and South America as well as Australia. He also cites Aboriginal and Native American Indian folklore dating from this period, and particularly cultural peculiarities noticed around the Strait of Magellan. The prominence of traditional Chinese methods of varnishing and decorating trinket and storage boxes as well as techniques for grinding grain which have been assimilated into the culture in this region suggests the Chinese sailed through the straight before Magellan, and successfully colonised this region. Additionally, the presence of types of Asiatic chickens and local names for plants serve as further reinforcement.

Well researched and backed up with historical facts, pictures and images to

substantial his claim, Menzies does write out of a personal interest in the topic. His book *1421* is primarily a narrative explaining Menzies's own voyage of discovery revealing historical assertions which, when presented together, display a thought-provoking alternative view of history. In fact, it cremates the conventional world history purported in history books. Equally as important to note is Menzies's professional background: As a formal British Naval Admiral, he has the expertise and personal experience necessary to corroborate that it would have been possible for a fleet of Chinese junks, the size of modern day super-cruisers, to follow nautical currents and winds which continue to propel sailors across the globe today. The evidence he presents based on the Chinese superior techniques of measuring latitude support that the Chinese would have been able to chart their progress along the journey. This then

reinforces that it was possible for fifteenth-century cartographers to copy nautical maps produced by Chinese sailors during this journey.

Nevertheless, Menzies has been heavily criticized within the academic community for this alternative and controversial record of history. It does bare consequences for international relations and begs the questions: Why has this history remained silent for so long? How has the conventional theory that Columbus discovered the Americas become the dominant history? Similarly, *1421* is not an academic text and the evidence is not presented in a clear manner to suggest the type of writing expected of an academic. The novel does present a great deal of evidence to suggest that the Chinese discovered the New World before Columbus and the Europeans. However, this unconventional view is yet unaccepted throughout the academic community and is not widely corroborated.

*First published in 2002, Bantam Press, a division of Transworld Publishers, London, (2nd Bantam edition, 2003). Also published in 2003 under the title: *1421: The Year China Discovered America*. HarperCollins Publishers, New York (editions 2003, 2004, 2008).

Alicia Kern is a graduate of English Language and Linguistics from the University of Lancaster, UK. Currently based in Hamburg, she works as an English Language Consultant and Teaching Fellow at a number of institutions, including the European School of Economics and Management and the Europäische Medien- und Business-Akademie (EMBA).

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) 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).

LANGUAGE

Chinese courses

GCI offers various levels Chinese courses which will start from 26 January and 24 April 2015. Each unit consists of 12 weeks. Please visit our website www.confuciusgroningen.nl for detailed information.

HSK Tests

GCI will organise five HSK tests (Chinese Proficiency Test) and two HSKK tests (Chinese Proficiency Oral Test) in 2015:

Exam	Date	Deadline registration	Location
HSK	18 April	21 March	Amsterdam
HSK(K)	16 May	19 April	Zwolle
HSK	14 June	17 May	Zwolle
HSK	14 November	17 October	Amsterdam
HSK(K)	6 December	9 November	Groningen

GCI EVENTS

MAY 2014 TO NOVEMBER 2014

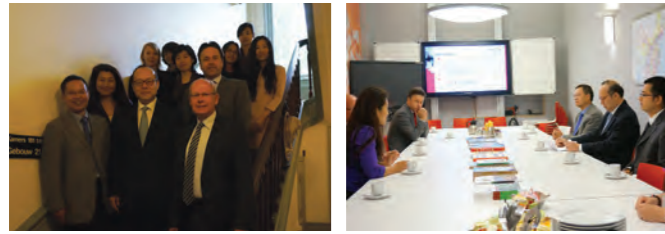
Chinese Ambassador Visited Groningen Confucius Institute

In the morning of **28 May 2014**, H.E. Mr. Chen Xu (陈旭), Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Mr. Fang Qingchao (方庆朝), Counsellor of Education of the Chinese Embassy in the Netherlands, and Mr. Wang Yiwei (王怡伟), Second Secretary of the Education Section visited GCI to cordially exchange views with GCI's directors and teachers.

Dr. Liu Jingyi (刘婧一), Chinese Director of GCI, gave the honoured guests a warm welcome and introduced Mr. Ad Geerts, the Advisory Board Member of GCI, GCI's management team and teachers. Mrs. Xuefei Knoester-Cao, Dutch Director of GCI, introduced GCI's organisational structure and explained the cooperation between GCI and the University of Groningen. Mr. Jan Klerken, Vice Director of GCI, reported GCI's various efforts in business communication between China and the Netherlands and introduced



■ Chinese Ambassador, Mr. Chen Xu at GCI



■ Chinese Ambassador, Mr. Chen Xu at GCI

the ongoing programmes. During the meeting, GCI directors also shared GCI's achievements in Chinese teacher training, the establishment of Confucius Classrooms, and the publication of the English-language journal *Global China Insights*, and gave an overview of upcoming large-scale events: the Chinese advertising exhibition and the Business Forum Programme in the Netherlands. Ms. Hao Cui (郝翠), on behalf of GCI's teachers, shared her work experiences at GCI with the guests from the embassy. Ambassador H.E. Mr. Chen Xu congratulated GCI on its achievements in the past three years and expressed his gratitude for GCI's contribution in promoting Chinese language and culture as well as in business exchange. Impressed by GCI's achievements, the ambassador also gave supporting advice on the further development of GCI.

Chinese Language Teacher Training Programme

From 19 to 22 June 2014, GCI, sponsored by Hanban, organised its first Chinese Language Teacher Training Programme in The Hague. The chargé d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in the Netherlands, Mr. Liu Chun (刘春), opened this event and Counsellor of Education of the Chinese Embassy in the Netherlands, Mr. Fang Qingchao (方庆朝), closed it by awarding certificates to the 28 participants for satisfactory completion of the entire training programme. 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) who has presented on Chinese national TV, were invited from China to give lectures entitled *How to Design Your*



■ Lecture Mrs. Ardi Bouwers



■ Seminar: dialogue between teachers and principals, Mr. Bert Oosting

Teaching and The Art of Chinese Presentation and Practice Skills respectively. Yin Wenying (尹文英), Inspector of Chinese Language Teaching at the Ministry of National Education in Paris, introduced the teaching principles and techniques in teaching Chinese as a second language in secondary school in the perspective of students' development from knowledge to competence. Mrs. Ardi Bouwers, sinologist and owner of the China Circle, gave a lecture on cross-cultural communication. Dr. Liu Jingyi (刘婧一), Chinese Director of GCI, offered a philosophical annotation of Chinese culture from



■ Welcome speech Dr. Liu Jingyi



■ Opening speech Mr. Liu Chun, the chargé d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy

belief to behaviour and provided guidance on how to use culture to help or strengthen language learning. In addition to the lectures on language teaching and culture, there was also a seminar dialogue centered around the theme of *The Challenge, Expectation and Opportunities for Chinese Teaching*



■ Lecture Mrs. Yin Wenying



■ Mrs. Yolande Ulenaers and Mr. Arnold Koot

between Chinese language teachers and Confucius classroom principals Ms. Yolande Ulenaers, Mr. Bert Oosting and Mr. Arnold Koot. And two sessions of teaching demonstrations were presented by doctoral candidate Zhou Wencui (周文翠), Chinese language teachers Jessica Paardekooper, Liu Shasha (刘莎莎) and Marieke Havinga, as well as GCI Chinese instructors Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛) and Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈). The teaching demonstrations were followed by expert comments and peer discussion. This part of the programme also offered information about teaching materials



■ Lecture Professor Jiang Liping



■ Lecture Dr. Zhao Lin

shared by GCI Chinese instructors Hao Cui (郝翠) and Boi Boi Huang (香佩佩). At the end of this event, a tea workshop was given by GCI Chinese instructors Teng Jiaqi (滕嘉琪) and Li Yunxuan (李韵璇), allowing the participants to experience Chinese tea culture.



■ Education Counsellor of Chinese Embassy, Mr. Fang Qingchao and the Chinese Language Teachers



■ 2014 Summer Camp

The Second Summer Camp

From 11-25 July 2014, GCI organised the second Summer Camp to China in cooperation with the Communication University of China and sponsored by the Headquarters of Confucius Institutes, Hanban. The Summer Camp was designed to get Dutch learners of Chinese in closer contact with the country, its language and its culture. 18 students from GCI and its Confucius Classrooms participated in this event. The students were provided with a variety of both Chinese



■ 2014 Summer Camp



language and Chinese culture courses. They experienced the art of calligraphy and Chinese knotting and appreciated Chinese films and Chinese classical and popular music. On their cultural tours, they visited the main attractions of Beijing (北京) and Tianjin (天津) city to get a taste of Chinese history and culture. They also had a chance



■ 2014 Summer Camp



■ Farewell Meeting for 2014 Confucius Institute Scholarship Winners

to exchange ideas with college students from the Communication University of China (中国传媒大学) and Tianjin Normal University (天津师范大学).

Confucius Institute Scholarship

To be more supportive of the development of Chinese teaching and learning and to promote language and cultural exchanges between China and overseas countries, GCI is actively encouraging qualified Chinese language teachers and outstanding Chinese language learners to study in China with the help of a Confucius Institute Scholarship. The Confucius Institute Scholarship programme was launched by the Confucius Institute Headquarters, Hanban, to sponsor foreign students, scholars and Chinese language teachers to study Chinese in relevant universities in China.

On **22 August 2014**, GCI organised a Farewell Meeting for five 2014 Confucius Institute Scholarship winners, who are going to study in China for six months or one year from September 2014. GCI Director Xuefei Knoester-Cao, GCI Chinese Director Dr. Liu Jingyi (刘婧一) and GCI Chinese teachers Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈), Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛), and Xu Wenjia (续文嘉) as well as a delegation of the Communication University of China (CUC, 中国传媒大学) attended this meeting. In Chinese, the five scholarship winners shared their stories and experiences about learning Chinese and their dreams about China. They also showed their impressive talents in this meeting by singing a Chinese song (composed by one of the scholarship winners), playing guitar and showing videos. The CUC delegation exchanged ideas about university life in China with the five winners to let them know more about China and to prepare them well before going to the country.



■ Farewell Meeting for 2014 Confucius Institute Scholarship Winners



Danny Nobel

Danny Nobel will be studying at Xiamen University (厦门大学) for the 2014/15 academic year. He studied Human Geography at the University of Utrecht and Chinese Language at the Dalian University of Foreign Languages (大连外国语大学). During his time in Xiamen (厦门), he hopes to further improve his spoken Mandarin and

his knowledge of classical Chinese. He is very grateful to GCI for their active support in getting a scholarship, and cannot wait to go back to China once again to indulge himself in experiencing more of this thrillingly interesting language and culture.



Florine van Meer

After graduating from grammar school at the Stedelijk Gymnasium Breda, 18-year-old Florine van Meer wanted to do something extraordinary. That is the reason she applied for a Confucius Institute Scholarship to study at Xiamen University for one semester. After waiting for the outcome for a long time, she finally

received the news that she won the scholarship. Florine will depart to Xiamen on 9 September 2014 and in addition to feeling honoured that she won the scholarship, she is also really curious about what this new experience of living in China will bring her.



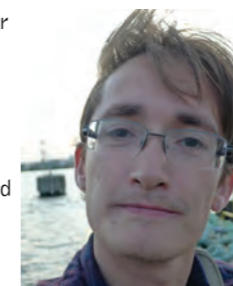
Gineke ten Holt

Gineke ten Holt is a researcher in Artificial Intelligence and Pattern Recognition, working at the research institute INCAS3 in Assen. She received her Master's degree from the University of Groningen in 2004 and her Doctoral degree from Delft University of Technology in 2010. Her

interest in Chinese started when sharing a room with a Chinese colleague in Delft. She has been studying Chinese as a hobby since 2009, developing a great interest in both the Mandarin language and Chinese culture and history. In 2014, she passed the HSK 4 exam. With the help of the Groningen Confucius Institute, she applied for a Confucius Institute Scholarship in 2014 and was awarded a full scholarship. She will spend one academic year at Liaoning Normal University (辽宁师范大学) in Dalian (大连).

Bert Oostdijk

Bert Oostdijk is a freelance urban designer and researcher into urban affairs. What fascinates him about cities is that their growth reflects both the grand designs of their rulers as well as the aspirations of ordinary citizens. This interest has resulted in two Master's degrees: Urban Policy from the University of Amsterdam and Urban Design from the Delft University of Technology. During his time in Delft, Chinese classmates roused his interest in China and its language, culture and design. He is currently studying the Chinese language on a one semester Confucius Scholarship at the Communication University of China (中国传媒大学) in one of the world's greatest cities: Beijing (北京). He enjoys riding his bicycle up and down Chaoyang Road (朝阳路).



Daniel Kenyon-Jackson

Daniel Kenyon-Jackson recently obtained his bilingual school diploma (HAVO) from Kandinsky College, Nijmegen. His passion for Chinese comes from master classes at school, which this year opened the first Confucius Classroom in the Netherlands. During a ten-day visit to Beijing last year with an organisation called Jialei,

Daniel made a lot of new friends. Now, he has settled in at the Communication University of China with students from all over the world. During a recent conference in The Hague to encourage schools to offer Chinese, he urged teachers to challenge pupils more

beyond the compulsory curriculum. As the youngest CIS scholarship winner (17), Daniel is keen to use his four-and-a-half months in Beijing to improve his Chinese and learn more about the fascinating Chinese culture he was introduced to during his first visit. When he returns to the Netherlands in January, he will start his Bachelor's degree in International Business and Management Studies at the internationally renowned Arnhem Business School of HAN University of Applied Sciences. But for now, he is making the most of this amazing opportunity to study Chinese at CUC.

China Workshop

On **Tuesday 16 September 2014**, GCI, the Centre for East Asian Studies Groningen (CEASG) and Globalization Studies Groningen jointly organised a workshop on China's foreign policy and China-EU relations at the University of Groningen. Academic Director of the CEASG Professor Jan van der Harst, an expert on China-EU relations, opened this event. CEASG Director Professor Tjalling Halbertsma and Chinese Director of GCI, Dr. Liu Jingyi (刘婧一) respectively chaired the two sessions of presentations and discussions. The speakers, Professor Shi Zhiqin (史志钦), Professor Zhang Lihua (张利华) and Dr. Lai Suet-yi from Tsinghua University (清华大学); Dr. Niall Duggan from Göttingen University in Germany; Assistant Professor Jay Huang and Mr. Chen Bo (陈博) from Leiden University; Senior Research Associate Ingrid d'Hooghe from Clingendael; Assistant Professor Frank Gaenssmantel from the University of Groningen and Senior Policy Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Ms. Wu Xiaoling (吴小玲) shared their insights on the themes *Traditions and Cultural Foundations of China's Foreign Policy*, *Cooperation Between China and the EU in Global Security Governance*, *Post Debt-crisis China-EU Relations*, *Mutual Perceptions of China as Energy Actors*. More than 40 university students and scholars interested in China-EU relations attended this meeting.



■ China Workshop at the University of Groningen



■ GCI's teacher performing calligraphy

Chinese Festival 2014

On **Saturday 27 September 2014**, GCI organised its second Chinese Festival in the Chinese garden in the Hortus in Haren. During the day, we celebrated the tenth anniversary of Confucius Institutes worldwide. This special day was opened with a spectacular Lion Dance performed by students from the Groningen Bao Trieu martial arts school, followed by a welcoming word from Professor Sibrandes Poppema, President of the University of Groningen.

The entire day was filled with all kinds of Chinese activities. GCI's teachers hosted several workshops on Chinese paper cutting, Chinese knotting, Chinese language, calligraphy and a tea ceremony. Visitors could also participate in a Taiji Bailong Ball (太极白龙球) workshop, a sport that perfectly integrates the traditional Chinese Taiji concept with modern, western sporting skills. During two plenary sessions, the audience could enjoy many different Chinese-themed performances, e.g. performances with traditional Chinese instruments (the Pipa (琵琶) and Erhu (二胡)), a Kung Fu (功夫) workshop and demonstration, a costume show demonstrating the traditional clothes of various different ethnic



■ Peacock dance performance



■ Chinese Lute performance: *Ambush from Ten Sides*

groups of China and a Peacock Dance. There were also various performances by Dutch learners of Chinese, including Ingrid Fischer's excellent delivery of the Chinese song Sinian (思念) and poetry recitations by students from the Confucius Classroom at CS Vincent Van Gogh, impressing the Chinese language learners very much.

Around 700 people visited the Chinese Festival.

A Delegation of Communication University of China visits GCI

On **15 October 2014**, GCI welcomed a delegation from the Communication University of China (CUC, 中国传媒大学), one of GCI's founding members. The delegation was led by CUC's Vice President, Professor Hu Zhengrong (胡正荣), who is also a GCI board member. The Chinese Director of GCI, Dr. Liu Jingyi (刘靖一) introduced GCI's main programmes and upcoming events. Professor Hu Zhengrong and Professor Pang Zengyu (潘增玉), who is also a board member of GCI and Dean of the International College for Chinese Language Studies, offered their compliments on GCI's achievements and provided some advice on development



■ CUC Delegation with representatives from the Department of Journalism of the University of Groningen



■ CUC Delegation with representatives from the Hanze University

for the future. GCI's Chinese language teachers shared their work and life experiences in the Netherlands, deeply impressing the CUC leaders.

Arranged by GCI, the delegation also had meetings with representatives of the Department of Journalism, the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences and the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Groningen as well as with representatives of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences to discuss possible areas of cooperation.

Five New Confucius Classrooms of GCI Approved by Hanban

Ever since the Dutch Ministry of Education announced Chinese to be an official University Preparatory Education final exam course (VWO) in Dutch secondary schools in 2013, Chinese language and culture as either a potential or an existing school subject has generated considerable interest among school leaders. Cooperation between GCI and Dutch secondary schools has also improved greatly. In September 2013, GCI established the first three Confucius Classrooms in the Netherlands with three outstanding secondary schools (Kandinsky College in Nijmegen, CS Vincent Van Gogh in Assen and Theresialyceum in Tilburg). After just one year, these three Confucius Classrooms are now fully operational. In 2014, cooperation between Dutch schools and GCI



has increased even further and has become more extensive. Five schools submitted an application to collaboratively establish a Confucius Classroom together with GCI. And in November 2014 the exciting news came from Hanban that all five applicant schools have been approved, totalling eight Confucius Classrooms across the Netherlands. These five new Confucius Classrooms are Wolfert Tweetalig in Rotterdam, Scholengemeenschap De Goudse Waarden in Gouda, Lorentz Lyceum in Arnhem, Cals College in Nieuwegein and Kastanjeport OBS in Erichem.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lecture: *The Water Kingdom*

Date: Thursday 9 April 2015

Time: 18:00-19:30

Location: Zernikezaal (Academy Building, University of Groningen)

Lecturer: Dr. Philip Ball

GCI has honourably invited Dr. Ball to give a lecture to share his insights about the role of water, one of the most constant, significant and illuminating themes among the turbulent and often confusing currents of Chinese history and culture. Not only does water play a central part in Chinese philosophy, history, politics, administration, economics and art; but these roles are intimately connected to a degree unmatched anywhere else in the world. For this reason, it is not simply the case that all these facets of Chinese culture become easier to understand when the role of water is recognised. Rather, it can be concluded that many of them are likely to remain strange, opaque or alien unless their connection with water is understood.

Philip Ball is an author and science writer, and former editor for the science journal *Nature*. He has written for many publications, including the *Guardian*, the *New York Times*, *Prospect* magazine, *New Scientist* and *The Times*. His books include *H2O: A Biography of Water*, *Critical Mass* (which won the 2005 Aventis Prize for Science books), *The Music Instinct* and most recently, *Invisible*. He graduated in Chemistry from the University of Oxford, and has a PhD in Physics from the University of Bristol





■ Communication University of China

'Chinese Bridge' Chinese Proficiency Competition

Date: 19 April 2015

Location: Amsterdam

On 19 April 2015, GCI will hold the preliminary round of the eighth 'Chinese Bridge' Chinese Proficiency Competition ("汉语桥"中文比赛) for Dutch secondary school students in Utrecht. The competition consists of three parts: writing, speaking and a talent show. The competition covers Chinese language proficiency, Chinese cultural skills and knowledge of contemporary China. To allow the audience to fully experience Chinese culture, the competition will be followed by a 45-minute performance of Chinese music and art. The winners of the preliminary round will have the opportunity to participate in the 'Chinese Bridge' final competition in China, organised by Hanban, where secondary students from all over the world will compete for first prize.

Summer Camp

Dates: 11-25 July 2015

Location: Beijing (北京), China

Having successfully held the Summer Camp twice, GCI is organising its third Summer Camp to China in cooperation with the Communication University of China and sponsored by Hanban. 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 as well as exchanging ideas between teachers and students from China.



■ Communication University of China

Principals' Trip to China

Dates: 10-16 October 2015

Location: Beijing (北京), China

GCI is planning a seven-day Principals' Trip to China from 10 to 16 October 2015 in cooperation with the Communication University of China, sponsored by Hanban. We will invite 10 principals from Dutch secondary schools who have an interest in developing a Chinese Language and Culture programme in their school. During the trip, the principals will have the chance to visit Chinese universities, secondary schools, China mainstream media and Confucius Institute Headquarters Hanban. In addition, they will attend lectures and meetings and participate in cultural experience activities. The purpose of this trip is to enhance the Dutch principals' understanding of Chinese culture and education, so as to further promote Chinese language and culture in the Netherlands.

Course: Intensive 1 to Intensive 6

Method: Great Wall Chinese

The goal of *Great Wall Chinese* is to develop the communicative competence of Chinese learners. This method has six textbooks corresponding to six levels with each level containing ten units and each unit comprised of three lessons. The content covers personal information, daily life, learning and working, social activities, with a focus on satisfying the basic communication needs in everyday life. The six textbooks cover 976 Chinese characters, more than 1300 words, 163 grammar points, 219 communicative scenes and 258 communication skills. With weekly two-hour classroom sessions and two hours self-study, each level can be achieved in three months. Each textbook comes with a CD, CD-ROM, online multimedia courseware as well as a workbook.

Volume	Chinese Characters	Words	Grammar Points	Communicative Scenes	Communication Skills
1	288	275	35	32	43
2	219	296	32	48	41
3	152	224	27	36	39
4	95	166	27	31	43
5	107	180	22	35	42
6	115	235	20	37	50

Course: Language Centre University of Groningen

Method: Contemporary Chinese

This course is suitable for adult beginners (students) and is divided over three semesters. The course consists of 26 hours per semester (78 hours in total) and uses the textbook *Contemporary Chinese*. You will learn more than 700 words and reach HSK Level 3 after finishing the course. Two hours self-study per week before or after class is recommended to achieve better results. The language acquired on the course includes a range of topics, including self-introduction, greetings, expressing numbers and time, making phone calls, shopping, seeing the doctor, asking directions, transportation, light conversation (about the weather, interests and hobbies, experiences), making arrangements and appointments. The teacher will combine Chinese language learning with Chinese culture, and will integrate interesting activities and games to make sure the learner has fun learning Chinese.

Course: HSK Standard Course / HSK Training Course
Method: HSK Standard Course

HSK Standard Courses 1 to 3 are designed for beginners who would like to learn the Chinese language systematically and who also have the desire to attend HSK test Level 1 to 3. We use the textbook series *HSK Standard Course*, which highly match the HSK tests from the content and form to the levels. The courses focus on training students' integrated language abilities including listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. The essential ideas of the communicative approach and task-based language teaching will be used in the courses.

HSK Training 4 to 6 are designed for those who would like to have an intensive training for preparing HSK test Level 4 to 6. The syllabuses of HSK tests, old official examination papers and other related materials will be used in the courses. The learning, reading and writing skills will be practiced according to the requirements of HSK tests.

Course Name	Objective	Vocabulary	Class Hours
HSK Standard Course 1	HSK (Level 1)	150	28
HSK Standard Course 2	HSK (Level 2)	300	32
HSK Standard Course 3	HSK (Level 3)	600	36
HSK Training Course 4	HSK (Level 4)	1,200	20
HSK Training Course 5	HSK (Level 5)	2,500	20
HSK Training Course 6	HSK (Level 6)	5,000 and above	20



■ The University of Groningen

Course: Children Playful Chinese
Method: Chinese Paradise

Chinese Paradise is a method for children fused all around the world opening the door to the Chinese language, leading children on a pleasant and exciting journey to interesting and enjoyable places in the world of Chinese. It has six textbooks and six workbooks corresponding to three levels with each level containing six units and each unit two lessons. Its abundant and vivid content not only includes a brief introduction to Chinese culture, descriptions of Chinese characters and short stories; but also has games, handicrafts, popular children's and folk songs. Each level can be attained in six months with intensive training, with hourly classroom sessions once per week, focusing on one or two characters, ten new words and one basic sentence pattern. After completing three levels, students will have mastered approximately 50 Chinese characters and 300 new words; will be able to formulate simple sentences, recite popular children's songs and poems, and have a preliminary understanding of Chinese culture.

Course: Chinese (Dutch)
Method: Eigentijds Chinees

These courses are suitable for adult beginners who prefer to be taught in the Dutch language. In this course, the Dutch version of the method 'Contemporary Chinese', *Eigentijds Chinees* is used. The language used in this course includes the following topics: self-introduction, greetings, expressing numbers and time, making phone calls, shopping, seeing the doctor, asking directions, transportation, light conversation (about the weather, interests and hobbies, experiences), making arrangements and appointments. The teacher will combine Chinese language learning with Chinese culture, and will integrate interesting activities and games to make sure that the learner has fun learning Chinese.

GCI PEOPLE DYNAMICS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Ms. Teng Jiaqi all the best in her Master's study and in her future career.

Teng Jiaqi (滕嘉琪) worked as a Chinese teacher and Editorial Assistant of Global China Insights for GCI from March 2012 to August 2014. She has been a devoted member of the GCI team, teaching Chinese language courses, managing Chinese proficiency tests and organising GCI's monthly events. GCI really appreciates her intelligent and assiduous work. We would like to wish



Li Yunxuan (李韵譔) worked as a volunteer Chinese teacher for GCI from November 2013 to July 2014. Talented in Chinese dance and Chinese lute, her performances have always been in the spotlight at GCI's Chinese cultural workshops. GCI is also grateful for her professional work in teaching Chinese language. We would like to wish Ms. Li Yunxuan all the very best for the future.



cultural activities. GCI really appreciates the high quality of her work and her professional attitude. We would like to wish Ms. Ding Xiyuan all the very best for the future.

Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛) worked as a volunteer Chinese teacher and Editorial Assistant of Global China Insights for GCI from January 2014 to November 2014. She has been involved in teaching Chinese language courses, organising the Teacher Training Programme, recommending Confucius Institute Scholarship Winners and working on all of GCI's

NEWCOMERS

Zheng Jing (郑晶) is a multimedia designer specialising in graphic design, interface design and video editing. She received her Bachelor's degree in Fashion Design from the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology (北京服装学院) in 2000, a Master of Science degree in E-Media from Quinnipiac University in Connecticut, USA in 2006, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in Design & Technology from Parsons School for Design in New York City, USA in 2008. She was a graphic designer at the Tsinghua University Publishing Company (清华大学出版社) between 2000 and 2003. Jing currently lives in Groningen. She has a design studio and is also a project assistant for Asian affairs in the International Relations Office at the University of Groningen.



Sylvie Poirier, MFA, Editor of Groningen Confucius Institute's *Global China Insights*. After working as Publications Editor for The European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER) within Utrecht University's Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, she is currently Director of SP Lang(u)age Solutions, a language agency offering editing and translation services as well as language coaching in English and French. She received her Bachelor's degree in Communication from Ottawa University, Canada, and a Master of Fine Arts in Visual Studies from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo in the United States of America.



Zhu Qihan (朱奇涵), Chinese teacher at Xi'an International University (西安外事学院). She received her Master's degree in Chinese Language and Literature from Shaanxi Normal University (陕西师范大学) in 2009. Her academic research is mainly in the fields of Chinese grammar and vocabulary teaching. She teaches Contemporary Chinese to Chinese undergraduate students and Basic to Advanced Chinese to international students, including intensive reading and writing, Chinese Culture as well as HSK courses. She has obtained first prize in the Teachers' Speech Competition of Shaanxi Province universities in 2005. As recipient of the title Excellent and Outstanding Teacher of the Year in 2010 at Xi'an International University, she has been involved in conducting several research studies.



THE GCI TEAM

GLOBAL CHINA INSIGHTS



First row from left to right: Ingrid Fischer, John Goodyear, Liu Jingyi (刘婧一), Xuefei Knoester-Cao (曹雪飞), Jan Klerken, Sylvie Poirier.
 Second row from left to right: Zheng Jing (郑晶), Guo Xin (郭新), Xiao Yingying (肖盈盈), Jasna Ros, Ding Xiyuan (丁喜媛), Xu Wenjia (续文嘉), Hao Cui (郝翠).

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Contemporary Chinese Advertising Exhibition 1979-2015

5-19 March 2015 at WTC The Hague
 2-30 April 2015 at Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen

5 March 2015 Grand Opening at WTC The Hague

The exhibition's Grand Opening will take place in WTC The Hague on 5 March 2015, consisting of keynote speeches from culture and communication experts and governmental officials, Chinese music performances, followed by a networking reception.

Groningen Confucius Institute, in collaboration with the School of Advertising from the Communication University of China, is planning the Contemporary Chinese Advertising Exhibition 1979-2015, which will open in the Netherlands in March and April 2015.

The exhibition aims at revealing the transformation of China's consumer and social culture through Chinese advertising from the 1970s until the present day. An array of nearly 600 print, film and broadcast ads will be on display, showing the development and change in the life of Chinese people over the past 35 years. The exhibits are structured around five themes: clothing, food, living, travel and daily use. From a marketing perspective, the exhibition provides information and context to European entrepreneurs and researchers about Chinese consumer behaviour, and the development of international and Chinese brands in China during that period. Visitors also get the chance to find out about policy changes and their impact on Chinese people's lifestyles, and how these changes influenced various industries.

Five Themes of the Exhibiton:

- The Landmarks of Fashion - Clothing
- The Demarcations of Affluence - Food
- The Thermometer of Living - Housing
- The Coordinates of Travelling - Transportation
- The Compass of Wellbeing - Daily Appliances



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