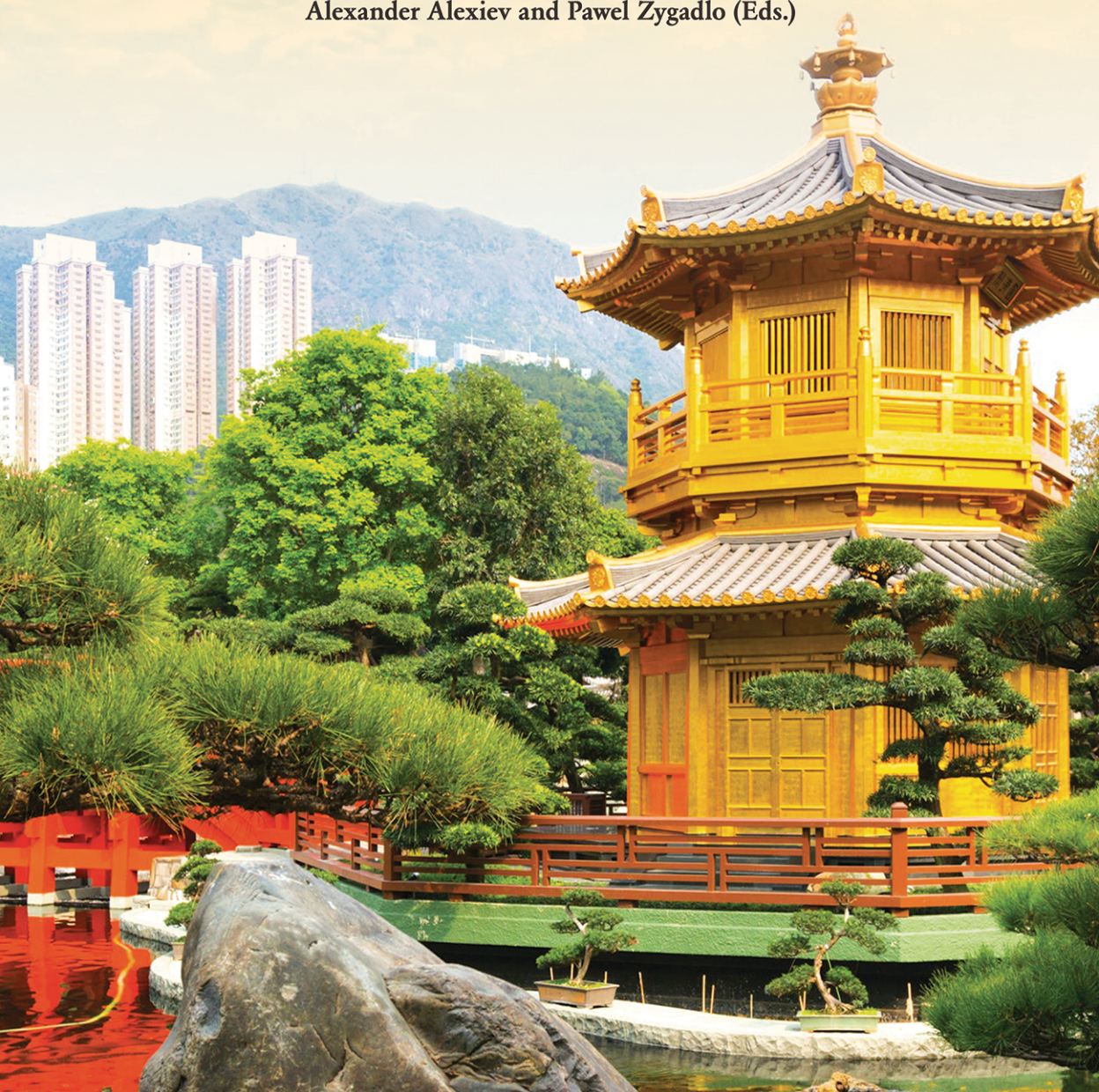


CHINA AND THE WORLD: LANGUAGE, CULTURE, POLITICS

Vol. 1

Alexander Alexiev and Pawel Zygodlo (Eds.)



CHINA AND THE WORLD:
LANGUAGE, CULTURE, POLITICS

Volume 1

КИТАЙ И СВЕТАТ: ЕЗИК, КУЛТУРА,
ПОЛИТИКА

Том 1



CHINA AND THE WORLD: LANGUAGE, CULTURE, POLITICS

Papers from the international conference, jointly organized
by the Department of Sinology at Sofia University
“St. Kliment Ohridski” and the Department of China Studies
at Xi’an Jiaotong – Liverpool University, 12–13 December 2019

Volume 1

КИТАЙ И СВЕТОТ: ЕЗИК, КУЛТУРА, ПОЛИТИКА

Доклади от международната конференция, организирана
от катедра „Китаистика“ на Софийски университет
„Св. Климент Охридски“ и Департамента по китаистика
на Университета Сиан Дзяотунг – Ливърпул, 12–13 декември 2019 г.

Том 1

Co-editors-and-reviewers-in-chief / Съредактори и главни рецензенти:

Prof. Dr. Alexander Alexiev,

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Sofia, Bulgaria

Проф. д-р Александър Б. Алексиев,

СУ „Св. Климент Охридски“, София, България

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pawel Zygodlo,

Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, China

Доц. д-р Павел Зигадло,

Университет Сиан Дзяотунг – Ливърпул, Суджоу, Китай

София • 2020

Университетско издателство „Св. Климент Охридски“

Editorial Board / Членове на редакционната колегия:

- ас. Мария Маринова, докторант (СУ) / Maria Marinova, Asst. Prof., PhD candidate (Sofia University)
- Dr. Roxana Ribu (Transylvania University, Braşov)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chun-fung (Geoffrey) Chen (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University)
- Гл.ас. д-р Евелина Хайн (СУ) / Dr. Evelina Hein, Sen. Asst. (Sofia University)
- Dr. Giulia Rampolla (University of Naples “L’Orientale”; International University of Rome)
- Dr. Loredana Cesarino (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University)
- Dr. Emily Williams (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik (University of Ljubljana)
- Гл.ас. д-р Теодора Куцарова (СУ) / Dr. Teodora Kouzarova, Sen. Asst. (Sofia University)
- ас. Стефан Иванчев, докторант (СУ) / Stefan Ivanchev, Asst. Prof., PhD student (Sofia University)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mateja Petrovčič (University of Ljubljana)

Peer-review Board Members / Рецензионна колегия:

- Dr. Liu Xi (XJTU)
- Dr. Miguel Hidalgo Martinez (XJTU)
- Доц. д-р Антония Цанкова (СУ) / Assoc. Prof. Dr. Antonia Tsankova (Sofia University)
- ас. Стефан Иванчев, докторант (СУ) / Stefan Ivanchev, Asst. Prof., PhD student (Sofia University)
- Dr. Loredana Cesarino (XJTU)
- Dikai Chao, PhD student (University of Canterbury, New Zealand)
- Dr. Giulia Rampolla (University of Naples “L’Orientale”, International University of Rome)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yu Song (XJTU)
- Dr. Chi Zhang (University of Leeds)
- Assoc. Prof. Riccardo Moratto (Hunan Normal University)
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Katarzyna Golik (Polish Academy of Sciences)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik (University of Ljubljana)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mateja Petrovčič (University of Ljubljana)
- Dr. Dragan Pavlicevic (XJTU)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Keping Wu (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University)
- Гл.ас. д-р Евелина Хайн (СУ) / Dr. Evelina Hein, Sen. Asst. (Sofia University)
- Гл.ас. д-р Теодора Куцарова (СУ) / Dr. Teodora Kouzarova, Sen. Asst. (Sofia University)
- Dr. Margaret Chu, Fellow & Council Member (Royal Commonwealth Society in HK)
- ас. Цветелина Недялкова, докторант (СУ) / Dr. Tsvetelina Nedialkova, Asst. prof. (Sofia University)
- Мая Ненчева, лектор (СУ) / Maya Nencheva, lecturer, (Sofia University)

© 2020 ZOGRAPH, корица

© 2020 Университетско издателство „Св. Климент Охридски“

ISBN 978-954-07-5075-0 (мека подвързия)

ISBN 978-954-07-5071-2 (pdf)

Contents

Foreword	9
POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE	
China: The Fragile Balance Between Reform and Legacy	15
<i>Paul G. Clifford</i>	
The Chinese Dream in the Mirror of the European Desire: Differences, Similarities and Insights in the Eyes of Chinese Scholars	29
<i>Tanina Zappone</i>	
The Xi Jinping’s Era and the Evolution of the Chinese Political System. Internal and External Effects	37
<i>Maria Elisabetta Lanzone, Fabio Lavagno</i>	
The Future of Political-Religious Interaction in China	46
<i>Cai Tingjian</i>	
BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE	
Where the Grass is Greener. Bulgaria’s Infrastructure and China’s BRI	57
<i>Richard T. Griffiths</i>	
China is Speaking, Who is Listening? The BRI, State Media, and Discourse Power: A Case Study	71
<i>Natalia Riva</i>	
Examining China’s Belt and Road Discourse: from Outline Sketches to Fine Line Strokes	79
<i>Alexander Alexiev, Stefan Ivanchev</i>	
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	
China as a Game Changer in the Evolving International System	107
<i>Valentin Katrandzhiev</i>	
70 years Between Ideology and Pragmatism – Within the “Zig-Zags” of Bulgaria – China Relations from the Cold War Period to the Belt and Road Initiative	126
<i>Evgeniy Kandilarov</i>	

China and Russia: Intersection of Integration Projects in Eurasia	136
<i>Antonina Habova</i>	
Paul Kennedy in China: Reading and Re-Reading	
<i>The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers</i>	144
<i>Chan Ying-kit</i>	
SOCIETY AND CULTURE	
Striving for Modernity: the Heterogeneous Formation of the “Nation”	
Concept in Early XX Century Chinese Intelligentsia.....	157
<i>Rossella Roncati</i>	
Chinese Social Ideals from Past to Future.....	164
<i>Roxana Ribu</i>	
A Tentative Overview of Nǚshū in Translation: Challenges	
of Translating a Unique Chinese Cultural Heritage	172
<i>Riccardo Moratto</i>	
Cultural Heritage in Globalization, Local Governance, and Nūshu.....	180
<i>Hu Xihuan</i>	
LITERATURE AND FILM	
Silent Marginality: Subaltern Women Between the City	
and the Countryside in Sun Huifen’s Fiction	189
<i>Giulia Rampolla</i>	
From <i>River Elegy</i> to <i>Amazing China</i>: On the Evolution	
of Nationalist Discourse in Modern China	197
<i>Maciej Kurzynski</i>	
LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS	
Euphemism and Communication in the Chinese Cultural Context	207
<i>Pawel Zygałło</i>	
The Chinese Transitive Verb 打 <i>da3</i> as a Radial Category	217
<i>Paul Woods</i>	
Unfolding the Web of Semiosis for the Radical ‘Dog’ quǎn 犬.....	224
<i>Teodora Koutzarova, Stefan Ivanchev</i>	

HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Slovenian Collectors of Chinese Objects: Who, Why, What..... 265

Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik

***Zhongguo yousheng* 中国游圣:**

Rethinking the State Narrative of Xu Xiake 徐霞客 (1587–1641)

as a National Hero..... 276

Loredana Cesarino

A Man of His Time? – Rediscovering Saneto Keishu

and Japanese Attitudes Towards China..... 283

Viktoriya Nikolova

China in World War II 290

Nako Stefanov

Origin and Interpretation of the Custom of Placing Objects

in the Mouth of the Deceased in Ancient China 304

Maria Marinova

CHINESE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Challenges and New Horizons in Teaching Chinese

as a Second Language (TCSL) in Taiwan:

Theoretical Issues and Pragmatic Approaches 321

Chao Dikai

The Potential of H5P Technologies in Pedagogical Process:

An Example of Study Materials for Chinese 330

Mateja Petrovčič

AUTHOR DIRECTORY:..... 338

Foreword

The year 2020 has certainly been an unusual one. Our physical world came under attack from an invisible enemy. We were reminded of the existence of the mighty microscopic world that is the true master of this planet, having inhabited it for billions of years before us, and continuing to thrive, unaware of our human existence. Outnumbered and outlived, like aliens in this world, we were chased away from public spaces and boxed into our private quarters. Our academic community, like everybody else, was also not able to go about its life as usual, where students and teachers gather together in bright halls and classrooms to teach and learn, to communicate and share knowledge. Lively social life has shifted swiftly into the virtual realm of individual screens on the Internet. Nevertheless, thanks to this new technological parallel world that we have created for ourselves, we have been able not only to conduct our classes, but also to go about our academic lives and continue to do what we do. Slowed down, but not deterred, we were able to finish the work we had started in 2019.

We are happy to announce that we are hereby finally publishing the present Volume 1, which contains selected and revised papers, presented at the international conference ‘China and the World: Language, Culture, Politics’, jointly organised by the Department of Sinology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and the Department of China Studies at Xi’an Jiaotong–Liverpool University in December 2019.

The conference as such was held in commemoration of establishing diplomatic ties between PRC and Bulgaria, with other Central- and Eastern European states following suit. Scholars representing a variety of disciplines gathered for a two-day conference to present their research and discuss perspectives and methodologies applied by them. Attended by almost one hundred scholars from China, Europe, the United States and

Australia, the conference marked a new step in interdisciplinary research on China. We were very lucky to have managed to gather all these people in the physical world of our city of Sofia at the last possible time before the massive lockdowns in 2020.

Being one of the major political, military, and cultural global powers, China attracts special attention from the academic world. There is then no lack of interest in ‘Chinese matters’ from linguistics, political sciences, sociology, anthropology, and literary studies. Numerous volumes and research papers have been published in an attempt to grasp the uniqueness of China as a political power, an attempt to explain its social structure and elaborate on China’s history as a cultural and linguistic phenomenon. However, disciplinary specialisation in humanities and social science often results in focusing on just one aspect of the researched phenomenon. As it seems to be an inevitable outcome of science development, it often ‘misses’ the singularity of the civilisational molecule that is China.

Papers collected in this volume represent different perspectives of academic inquiry. As the main theme of the conference was ‘China and the World’, the subtitle ‘Language, Culture, Politics’ arose from this awareness of disciplinary limitations and the urgent necessity of a dialogue between different academic fields. It is then our most sincere hope that the papers selected for this volume will make some contribution to a comprehensive understanding of China, yet well-rooted in a specific scientific field.

Many individuals contributed to the organisation of the conference and the fruition of this volume. First of all, we should thank the authors that honoured us with their participation and later on dedicated time and energy to revise their papers and prepare them for publication. Secondly, we owe a debt of gratitude to all the reviewers who despite their busy schedules engaged with the papers’ review, making lots of valuable comments and suggestions, contributing greatly to the value of the research works included in this proceedings.

We would like to express our special gratitude to Professor Beibei Tang, the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at XJT-LU, and Professor Madeleine Danova, Dean of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, without whose generous support neither the conference nor the publication of this volume would have been possible.

Last but not least, we would also like to thank our dear friend, Professor Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik of the University of Ljubljana, whose expertise, sharp judgement, and timely advice were of critical importance for the successful outcome of this conference, especially at difficult times during the preparation phase.

Our forum and the process of producing this volume was an uplifting experience for us, as we had the chance to meet and work with colleagues from around the world. We sincerely hope to continue this collaboration in the future and look forward to having international scholars who research diverse aspects of China getting together yet again, and seeing ourselves in the midst of a fruitful exchange of knowledge and ideas once more, regardless if this is to take place in the virtual or in the physical world.

Paweł Zygałło and Alexander Alexiev
Suzhou and Sofia, October 2020

POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE

China: The Fragile Balance Between Reform and Legacy

Paul G. Clifford¹

Abstract

The key question posed by the paper is whether the successful but delicate balance between economic reforms and legacy institutions such as the Chinese Communist Party is in danger of being undermined by the current heightened autocracy in China. Discussion of the failure of the first decades of the People's Republic is provided to illustrate the strong appetite for the radical reforms which began in 1978. This is followed by examination of the reform process itself and the emergence of Chinese firms on the world stage. In that context we consider the attempt by the USA to use legitimate security concerns as a smokescreen to try to constrain the rise of China's largest technology firm, Huawei. The "new era" ushered in by China's top leader Xi Jinping is then analyzed. Credit is given to Xi for driving China's technology self-sufficiency and innovation. But there are two main conclusions. Firstly, that China's current state ideology comprising much stronger Party control, traditional neo-Confucianism plus Artificial Intelligence for mass surveillance suggests that China is prematurely declaring victory in the reforms. Secondly, despite China's human rights breaches and its more assertive global posture, we should not make China our enemy. It is better to innovate to compete with China and where possible to work with China on solving global issues.

Keywords: China's rise, China's reform and opening up, Belt and Road, China-EU, 17+1

Introduction

The rise of China, the world's second largest economy, provokes a wide range of emotions and responses, both positive and negative. Recently the voices of concern over China have risen to a crescendo, fueled by anxiety of China as a security threat, China as a competitor and China marred by human rights violations.

¹ keynote speaker to Conference on China and the World, Sofia University, Bulgaria, Dec 13th, 2019.

Much of this anxiety arises from the disappointment that, while China has embraced many aspects of the Western market economy, it has failed to converge with the West in terms of its political system and social values. Unfortunately, the West was deluding itself about what China was out to achieve. Even though Deng Xiaoping may have led China down the reform path through step-by-step experimentation, he nonetheless did have a broad vision which is now playing out. He wanted to somehow “make socialism work.”

To do that he permitted the emergence of a hybrid, mixed economy while maintaining the Communist Party’s strong grip on power. Effective perestroika, but very, very little glasnost.

It is hard to deny that this China model has been astonishingly effective, both in driving the economy forward and holding such a volatile and populous nation together. To a great extent, it has achieved the longstanding goals of Reviving China (zhenhua) and creating Wealth and Strength (fuqiang). But while embodying major reforms this new model retained institutions and ideology, modern and ancient, which act as brake on progress, holding China back from achieving its true potential.

I shall begin by briefly underscoring the failure of the first 30 years of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). This serves to highlight why the Party and the Chinese people embraced the reforms. I shall then explain how the reforms emerged, how the Party-State freed up the economy and revived the State sector. On the back of that I shall discuss how China’s enterprises have taken their place on the world stage. Part of that is the Belt and Road Initiative in which Bulgaria is participating. Next, I consider how we should respond to China’s emergence in technology innovation, in particular the case of Huawei. I round off my talk by examining how the “New Era” of Xi Jinping is reshaping the Chinese model and then share my conclusions on China’s trajectory and what our posture should be to that rise.

The first decades of the PRC – 1949–1976

As a student in the UK during the late 1960s I had been favorably disposed to the “Chinese road to socialism.” Then in 1973–1974, I personally got to see Mao’s China when I studied in Beijing. My bond of friendship with the China people was cemented and has lasted through my career. But that dose of reality when I first studied there was transformative in laying bare the hollowness of Chinese political discourse which, although purportedly a debate over paths to socialism, was largely designed to seize or consolidate political power and maintain social control, Stalinist style.

Let's look at industry and enterprise management. In the First Five Year Plan (1952–1957) China had very choice but to “lean to one side” and embrace the Soviet model. China did achieve much, whether in creating a comprehensive industrial base or in establishing a new infrastructure in science, education and health. Bulgaria contributed to China's transformation, as did other East Bloc nations.

But the organizational principles of the Centrally Planned Economy, which permitted this initial rapid industrialization, in the longer-run hampered China's development during the 30 years that it was in operation and during the following decades when it was painfully dismantled.

The very principles of central planning lay at the heart of its failure. As the Chinese economic reformer Prof. Wu Jinglian puts it, State-owned enterprises were:

“Appendages of high level executive administrative organs: people, finance, materials, supplies, production, selling all were decided by the State Plan, and [the State-owned Enterprises] lost their vitality and vigor. At the same time, the quality of service from industry and commerce was creating consumer frustration.”²

Central Planning compartmentalized economic activity into vertical administrative silos or stove pipes within which manufacturers lacked any real decision-making power.³ Heavy industry was favored over light industry that produced consumer goods. To make contact with their suppliers and their customers, factories were forced to participate in highly bureaucratic bi-annual National Product Ordering Meetings, attended by all the relevant ministries and their subordinate business entities. Officials and engineers allocated materials, people and capital, based on rigid and arbitrary planning targets rather than according to market needs. Direct, lateral contacts and communications between suppliers, producers and customers were illegal (but, given the poor functioning of the “planning,” inevitably did occur to some extent through a black market.)

This all flew in the face of what is required for a functioning modern economy in which businesses achieve efficiency and responsiveness to market needs through an integrated supply chain within which information flows freely.

A deep irony of the planned economy was that it was very poorly planned. It could be argued that China functioned despite, not because of the planned economy. Bulgarians of a certain age may have experienced a similar problem.

² Wu Jinglian, *Dangdai zhongguo jingji gaige jiaocheng*, Nanjing, 2010, p. 33.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 86–87.

So, through the nationalization of industry and commerce, the Chinese business class was abolished. This extended down to small street traders and private restaurants. The color of daily life was drained from China's streets. Once the later reforms began China's merchant and industrialist class, China's entrepreneurial spirit, re-emerged from the shadows. Its earlier apparent extinction represented wasted time and talent.

On the land, large numbers of landlords and rich peasants were executed. Initially the Communist Party instigated a land reform aimed at giving back "land to the tillers." But within a few years it pushed ahead to full collectivization and the land was taken away from the farmer. Then, once the later reforms began, the farmers got their small plots back. More wasted time and lives.

Michael Kochko, the Soviet chemist and academician who spent several years as an advisor in China criticizes the way China assimilated science and technology in the 1950s, arguing that it "blindly" and "slavishly" followed the Soviet system," even though it did not fit China's stage of development.⁴ He also faulted the Chinese leaders for their negative attitude to basic research.⁵ Most damning was his view that "The Party and government consider all scientists, especially those of the older generation as 'class enemies' who cannot be trusted." So, worse than Khrushchev's Soviet Union.

From around 1957, Mao Zedong took things further to the Left.

The Great Leap Forward pushed for breakneck industrialization. In the countryside the Peoples Communes were established and attempts were made to abolish the nuclear family. The result, man-made famine. Some 30 million died of unnatural causes

Mao's so-called "struggle" between two ideological lines (luxian douzheng) was articulated with apparently worthwhile themes such as opposing bureaucracy and the privileges of the nomenklatura, such as insisting that poor kids from the countryside got into universities. But underneath it was also the pretext for a power struggle. After the Great Leap, Mao had been taken out of day-to-day leadership. He used the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" and the mobilization of young red guards to overthrow the Party leadership and to achieve what was at heart a coup d'état.

This process extended to removing officials at all levels of society including heads of universities, research institutes and factories, most of whom were sent to the countryside and China's gulag for "re-education." All material incentives were banned in factories. The import of technology was obstructed.

⁴ Mikhail A. Klochko, *Soviet Scientist in China*, 1964, pp. 177–178.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.184.

Once the brutal red guard movement had done its bit and was reined in, the army was brought in to restore order, to run the government, key institutions and factories through Revolutionary Committees which for a while replaced the State administrative hierarchy.

Intellectuals became the constant punching bag of political campaigns. China's cultural heritage was undermined and destroyed. Religion was suppressed.

China's economic planners, armed with the towering confidence derived from "scientific Marxism," coupled with massive Soviet support for a time, sincerely believed that they could somehow side-step basic economic principles.

There were indeed some laudable results. China was largely able to feed its huge population. From 1952 to 1978 (the first year of the post-Mao economic reforms) China's GDP grew at an annual rate of 8.2%. But the growth did not translate into wealth creation. China's per capita GNP, starting from a pitifully low base of US\$ 52 in 1952, only reached US\$ 210 in 1978, 25 years later.⁶ One Chinese economist, speaking in the first years of the reform, roundly condemned the Mao years as "perpetual poverty."

The roots of the problem lay in the wholesale and unquestioning import of the intrinsically flawed Soviet economic model, compounded by the Maoist variant which made a virtue out of poverty. There was a deep bleakness about that vision of society.

The unfolding of the economic reforms

Mao died in 1976 and the Gang of Four were arrested. By 1978 Deng Xiaoping had full control and in that year he toured China nailing down key issues of his reform.

In agriculture, the collectives (the Peoples Communes) were disbanded and land returned to the farmers. Back where we had started.

Deng denounced the "wanton sabotage" of science and technology and the persecution of intellectuals.⁷ Political prisoners were released from China's gulag. He raised educational standards by bringing back the University Entrance Examinations which had been abolished during the Cultural Revolution.⁸

⁶ Justin Lin, *The China Miracle*, Hong Kong, 2003, p.71.

⁷ Deng Xiaoping, *zai quanguo kexuedahui kaimushishang de jianghua*, in *Deng Xiaoping xuanji*, Vol.2, pp. 85–110.

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 85–110.

He combatted excessive egalitarianism and restored “material incentives,” or bonuses in industry.⁹ He saw that Chinese factories had become lifeless extensions of the bureaucracy and argued that they should have “the right to make their own decisions and act independently.”¹⁰ This set the stage for the retreat from the planned economy. Deng mocked the Left’s view that importing technology was “worshipping foreign things,”

This was an impressive and bold reform agenda which paved the way for China’s economic takeoff!

But at the same time, Deng drew a line in the sand, making it clear that he was not retreating from socialism:

“Effective things that have worked in the past we must keep, especially the basic system, the socialist system, the socialist system of ownership, on that there can be no wavering.... We import advanced technology so that we can develop the productive forces, raise the living standards of the people, this is beneficial to the socialist state and the socialist system.”¹¹

Despite Deng’s pragmatism in achieving his goals, there is no evidence that he was a closet capitalist just paying lip service to socialism. Like all of China’s recent reformist leaders, he actually wanted to make “socialism” work.

So, the centrally planned economy was slowly dismantled brick by brick. Industrial input costs and final product prices gradually came to reflect the true economics.

The path to economic takeoff was based on three fundamental planks:

First, State own enterprises were dealt with. While the smaller “dogs” were sold off, the largest state firms were restructured and revitalized, and in many cases were listed on the stock exchange. The Party retained control, but wielded a light hand.

Second, foreign direct investment was welcomed, to bring in much needed capital, technology and skills. Whole sectors such as auto and fast-moving consumer goods were rebuilt. The consumer was listened to.

Thirdly, unannounced, private enterprises (some initially defined as collectives) emerged and propped up the economy while the state-sector was reformed. Private firms such Huawei, Alibaba, Tencent, Wanxiang have flourished despite living precariously under the shadow of the state-owned sector which has received the lion’s share of capital allocation.

⁹ Deng Xiaoping, *Adhere to the Principle of “to Each According to his work*. In *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Vol 2, pp. 112–113, Beijing 1995.

¹⁰ Deng Xiaoping, *yong xianjinjishu he guanli gaizaoqiye*, in *Deng Xiaoping xuanji*, Vol.2, pp. 129–131.

¹¹ Deng Xiaoping, *shixin kafang zhengce, xuexi shijie xianjin kexuejishu*, in *Deng Xiaoping xuanji*, Vol.2, pp. 132–133.

China takes its place in the global economy

I have identified four models adopted by Chinese enterprises as they “go out” into global markets.”¹²

The first model is through novel product or process innovation. China is pushing on many fronts which can have global impact. It is seeking to develop Molten Salt Reactors (MSRs) whereby thorium is used to generate electricity. Its bio-tech capability is finally becoming world class. It is pioneering autonomous vehicles. It is a leader in the Internet of Things, in Smart Cities and in some areas of applied Artificial Intelligence. It has made a major contribution to the development of world standards for 5G telecoms.

Secondly, China adopted the model of learn and catch up. In high speed rail and in 3rd generation nuclear technology China tweaked and improved existing technology which it intends to deploy globally.

Thirdly China has acquired and turned around underperforming assets in the global market. This is exemplified by how the Chinese firm Lenovo took over IBM’s PC business which was three times larger than it. It was called “a snake that swallowed an elephant.” Lenovo turned the business around and made the acquisition a huge success.

Fourthly, China’s government, financial institutions and companies are operating in lockstep to entered new markets. This has coalesced into the Belt and Road Initiative, a central part of Xi Jinping’s vision for China in the world.

The Belt and Road seems to be driven in the first instance by economic imperatives. Belt and Road exports help relieve China’s excess industrial capacity. China also has new innovative technology and products which need new markets. China has an extraordinary capacity in infrastructure development (roads, bridges, tunnels, airports, ports, power stations, water treatment, cement plants, telecommunications) which closely fits the needs of the host countries along the Belt and Road. The Belt and Road now includes South America. It stretches into Europe where Bulgaria is part of the 17+1 link up.

There is anxiety about China using the Belt and Road as a neo-colonial or imperialist construct. It is true that China has established an overseas military bases in Djibouti, and is planning more for instance in Pakistan. It is true that Chinese loans to Sri Lanka have been converted into 99 year Chinese owner-

¹² For further discussion of these models adopted by China firms going into global markets, see Paul G. Clifford, *The China Paradox. At the Front Line of Economic transformation*, De Gruyter, 2017.

ship of a port. There is undeniably a geo-political dimension to the Belt and Road and given China's strength these relationships look asymmetrical, that is in favor of China. This is especially true with Belt and Road deals with neighboring countries such as Laos.

But so far China has been cautious about throwing its political weight around. Moreover, in host-nations where there is strong civil society, there is regular local pushback against how China entices local elites with attractive deals which have no human rights conditions attached. Can Bulgaria's civil society and press help monitor things and push back if needed?

China naturally prefers to use a one-size-fits-all approach. But in reality, the way Belt and Road deals are transacted can vary greatly. Bulgaria and other host countries should do their utmost to shape the projects rather than simply take what is offered by China

There are plenty of myths that need to be dispelled. Many of the Belt and Road transactions are conducted along regular commercial lines and are not directly connected to government-to-government programs, or "stitched up." There are also cases of significant skills transfer from the Chinese. Students are given scholarships to study in China. And debt diplomacy can be resisted.

Host countries need to be mindful of the small print and wary of Chinese motives. They also need to do their own due diligence on the Chinese companies that come knocking. Despite Chinese government oversight, the companies enjoy significant autonomy. It is worth checking how that Chinese firm has performed in other countries. Avoid taking at face value what you are told. Do not let the Chinese side persuade you that things are too complex to fully understand. Don't let your China relationship become a black box.

For Bulgaria, a new, less wealthy EU member sitting on the periphery of the EU, the strategic relationship with China potentially has distinct benefits. Trade volumes between the two countries are small but growing fast, although there is a trade deficit in favor of China. China also wants to make industrial investments to gain EU market access in locations where there is a high level of technical skills but relatively low wages rates. In terms of wage costs, Bulgaria is well below the EU average and likely highly competitive against the Baltic states to which China is also attracted. It can also strengthen Bulgaria's hand in negotiations with Brussels.

But as China engages with the 17 in Europe, it will inevitably create some friction with the EU. (But less so with NATO). That said, I think China will handle this issue carefully, especially during a period of trade tensions with the USA.

How to handle technology competition: the case of Huawei

The actions being taken by the US against the Chinese technology firm Huawei are the opening salvos in a dangerous technology war which may be a slippery slope towards dire consequences.

This goes far beyond legitimate national security concerns and is aimed at bringing down Huawei which has had the temerity to challenge US technology hegemony. It is part of an exercise to contain, disable or derail China's remarkable economic revival.

It is true that in its early days Huawei used technology theft to gain market advantage. But the reason the US Administration fears Huawei is that through being an avid learner of Western business practices and through spending 15% of its revenues on R&D, Huawei has to a great extent passed from the model of catchup and imitation to one whereby it is innovating.

The West has demanded that China become a responsible global stakeholder and ironically that is exactly what Huawei has done, participating actively in the creation of global 5G standards and plugging into global supply chains.

The US Administration should not use the smokescreen of security concerns to attempt to bring down global technology rivals such as Huawei. Huawei is a world-class, self-made company that has carefully maintained a high degree of autonomy. China's Party-State certainly does exert pressure on Huawei when it sees fit. But day-to-day it typically resists interfering in Huawei's management.

It is misguided to force American and other global firms to disengage from China. Working with Huawei and China does not mean you have to surrender your core technology. US firms are certainly capable of protecting their intellectual property.

Xi Jinping's "New Era."

China's hybrid developmental model has proven to be a winning formula. It has worked well because the forces of change, of entrepreneurialism and innovation have enjoyed a productive equilibrium with the ruling Communist Party which, while not abandoning its autocratic instincts, has displayed remarkable pragmatism in leading the economic reforms. Incompatible forces unexpectedly became mutually supportive and aligned. The reforms unleashed creativity and energy throughout society. But through the twists and turns of the reforms, Chinese leaders have never deviated from their vision of the new prosperous China continuing to be ruled by the Party.

The hybrid developmental model that has emerged is a mixture of spontaneous economic activity and bureaucratic guidance. The model has hummed with positive energy while underpinned by the government as the backstop to prevent any social meltdown.

Having reaped the benefits of the reforms, the Party is revealing its longer-term vision on how it plans to rule. Its goal is to restore more of its central authority and play a stronger coordinating role in the economy. This does not mean a revival of the discredited Central Planning, but it implies a move from an improvised system, like jazz, in earlier decades, to one more like classical music, with a conductor, in the future.

We are at a watershed in China's development. After China stumbled so badly during the Mao period, Deng and his successor reformers appeared to have learnt many lessons and exhibited less hubris and more practical common sense than the Party had in the past. Whether it was in insisting on a truly collective Party leadership, in creating a stable leadership succession process, in tolerating a burgeoning private economy or in permitting the entry into China of foreign firms that could easily outshine local SOEs, the reformers showed wisdom and pragmatism.

The Party showed a true inquisitiveness about how things work in other societies. It exercised restraint in how it handled social control, with certain serious exceptions such as in 1989. In the early phases of the reforms China's leaders were, in the main, tentative, cautious and mindful of not disrupting the economic forces they had liberated.

Though the hybrid model during the last four decades did have its weaknesses, it fitted China's political legacy and permitted an orderly and gradual dismantling of the old economic model.

In 2012 Xi Jinping took power and started with much talk about deeper reforms. But they did not materialize. He later launched his concept of "socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era." As this vision has unfolded, it does not look like a "new era" as a continuation of the reforms. Rather, the evidence supports the view that this is a break with the reformist hybrid model of the previous 40 years. We have seen a stalling out or even a rolling back of the reforms.

In a sense you could say that he has declared victory in the reforms. The centrally planned economy is history and the state-owned sector has been transformed to a level where it can mostly sustain itself.

To his credit, Xi has, in a highly strategic manner, set up industrial zones and allocated funds to support large and small firms engaged in Artificial Intelligence, blockchain and quantum computing. This is showing strong results.

He has launched R&D into 6G telecoms, even though 5G is only now being rolled out. The Party has done a good job of using its industrial policy to kick-start innovation and to nurture “national champions.”

The greatest remaining legacy is the Communist Party itself, and all the organizations, processes, attitudes and mindsets that underpin it. Over recent decades the Party has shown itself to be adaptive and, under Jiang Zemin, began admitting capitalists into its ranks.

It has also shown itself adept at addressing natural disasters such as the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan. It serves as the glue that bonds society together and as such is seen by many Chinese as a strong guarantee that civil strife will not return to the nation. It has bolstered China’s pride by hosting the Olympic games (though sadly still can’t create a half-decent national football team). All this has fueled the notion that nationalism is indivisible from loyalty to the Party.

70 years ago, the Party was a vehicle for the seizure of State power and the pursuit of what it deemed to be its historical revolutionary task. Since then, the Party, having come close to political bankruptcy, swallowed its pride and adapted, finding a route to survival by fostering an economy animated more by money than by central directives. In return it insisted on enjoying unchallenged power.

However, the role of the Party in business and in society more broadly has remained the unfinished business of the reforms and a taboo subject. Few ever expected the Party to abandon its grip on power. But the lighter hand it has wielded has permitted the hybrid system to function well.

What we have seen under Xi Jinping is a backtracking on all this and a massive tightening of the Party’s social control and surveillance. The heightened censorship and barriers to international discourse seems to fly in the face of the goal of participating in global markets. It obstructs China’s path up the ladder towards a knowledge economy. With the fate of Gorbachev and the Soviet Union still etched in memories, the Party is hugely risk averse. Its first instinct is to hunker down and to repress social ferment and discourse, to wrest back control in areas where it previously permitted relaxation.

For example, Xi insists that the Party should return to playing a central role in the life of state-owned firms, holding sway not only over any strategic decision but also over operational matters such as executive bonuses. State owned enterprise executives are dismayed. In light of this and the ongoing anti-corruption campaign, these executives are inclined towards passivity rather than entrepreneurialism.

While China’s general population seem to appreciate Xi’s style, many businessmen, intellectuals and, yes, officials, are concerned with Xi’s height-

ened stress on control, his hubris in abolishing term limits for himself and having his political ideas deemed to be “Xi Jinping Thought”.

We may have thought that the Party had found a sustainable equilibrium for handling its dealings with enterprises. But we were mistaken. It is now tightening its grip not just on state-owned firms but also on private enterprises.

Xi is also criticized domestically for misreading Trump and contributing to the zero-sum trade war. He is also faulted for abandoning Deng’s doctrine of a stealthy advance, in favor of a more strident and overconfident one which has fueled global concerns about China’s intentions. China’s soft power offensive globally seems to be falling on deaf ears.

Domestically, we may have imagined that the Party has learnt some lessons from the killing of students in 1989. But under Xi, the Party has taken a much tougher stance on the Xinjiang Uighurs than did his predecessor Hu Jintao.

Heavy handed policies towards Hong Kong have led to a grave crisis which may spill over into China’s economy and its international relations. There is already a flight of capital and talent from Hong Kong.

All of this makes us rethink the sustainability of the China model as it is currently evolving. We have probably overestimated the Party’s adaptability. Its current harsh rigidity is likely to undermine the economic gains made by the Chinese people since the reforms began.

Conclusions

Most would still say that China’s reform process is irreversible given its staggering success and the memories of what came before. There will be no return to Mao’s ruinous path. But that certainly does not preclude backsliding and an erosion of the delicate balance at the heart of the model Deng devised.

When the Party unleashed the economic reforms it left open the path to achieving two fundamental goals.

Firstly, there was goal of digging China out of the Stalinist and Maoist hole it had fallen into and reviving the economy as the way to maintaining the Party’s legitimacy. When we grasp the centrality of the Party’s drive to keep its iron grip on power, the other elements, such as economic success using capitalist techniques, which support that goal, are explained. This is not to doubt China’s leaders’ sincere commitment to nationalism, to “reviving China.” But that has to be on the terms of the Communist Party. No room for other visions.

The second goal was to sustain the economy during the painful period of dismantling Central Planning and reconstituting those parts of the state-owned economy which had a chance to survive. Even though China’s state-owned

sector cannot match the profitability and job creation of China's private economy, it nonetheless represents "ownership by the whole people" and provides the argument that China is socialist. It also gives the Party direct control over many businesses, providing a "raison d'être" for the Party, in a way that it could not do with private firms.

The China that Xi Jinping seeks to build owes much to the legacy of the last 70 years, both good and bad. But the relatively constrained use of Party power that we saw for instance under Zhao Ziyang (who led China in the late 1980s) has given way to a harsher version of autocracy.

China is actively rebuilding the connection back to traditional Confucianism. In his recent address to a meeting commemorating the 2,570th anniversary of Confucius' birth, China's Vice President Wang Qishan specifically linked Confucianism to the 70 years of "brilliant achievements" of the Party. Xi Jinping himself has expressed a deep respect for the highly authoritarian Neo-Confucianism of the Song dynasty. Such philosophy is a useful tool for enhancing social control and Party Power.

Lenin famously said in 1920 that "Communism = Soviet Power + Electrification of the Whole Country." I have zero interest in following in Vladimir Ilyich's footsteps. But I hope you can excuse my thoughts on a similar phase we can use to characterize China's state ideology today. In my mind, Xi's "New Era" could be summed up as:

Socialism with Chinese characteristics = Party power + Neo-Confucianism + Artificial Intelligence.

The Party's ideology reinforced by traditional philosophy is a powerful cocktail of power and control. That is then further enabled by Artificial Intelligence to produce an autocracy the like of which the world has not seen before.

As someone who has put decades of work into supporting China's rise, I find this deeply worrying. It is not that China should follow our development models. It must find its own path. The issue is that the Chinese model that served so well for 40 years is now under threat. This is not the time to declare victory in the economic reforms and to hunker down. The reforms should continue so that China is further integrated into the global economy.

How then should we respond to China rise? Internationally China's posture is one of trying to use its soft power to create favorable opinion. So far China's international expansion is about pursuing new markets rather than creating an empire or interfering in our elections.

When it comes to China's domestic politics and social order, there is plenty to criticize. But still I maintain my position that there is still room to seek common ground with China in science and technology, on environmental pro-

tection and on a host of other issues. I stand firmly against the view that we should declare China our enemy.

I should like to bring us back to how we should react to China's recent surge of technology innovation. We must remain committed to constructive engagement with China. The other options are dangerous and unacceptable. Maintaining a high level of vigilance over security threats from China and pushing back on human rights violations in China is **not** at odds with permitting Chinese firms to take their place on the global stage.

Seeking to slow or undermine China's legitimate technological rise, implies a decoupling of the Western and Chinese economies. It can lead to a technology war that manifests itself in a new technology iron curtain. We should disavow restricting global discourse and collaboration in telecommunications that is such a fast developing and socially transformative tool.

It is better to avoid a paranoid response which can lead to conflict and instead to respond in two ways, by investing to compete, which implies a massive rethink of Western industrial policy, and by cooperating with China, wherever prudent, recognizing that we have complementary skills and approaches.

The integrated global technology supply chain needs to be further developed not dismantled. The interdependency this brings is a healthy counterbalance and antidote to the breed of nationalism that leads to conflict.

References

- Wu, Jinglian. *Dangdai zhongguo jingji gaige jiaocheng*. [A Course on Modern Chinese Economic Reform]. Nanjing, 2010.
- Klochko, Mikhail Antonovich. *1902-Soviet scientist in Red China*. New York, 1964.
- Lin, Justin. *The China Miracle*. Hong Kong, 2003.
- Deng, Xiaoping. *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Vol 2*. Beijing, 1995.
- Clifford, Paul G. *The China Paradox. At the Front Line of Economic transformation*. De Gruyter, 2017.

The Chinese Dream in the Mirror of the European Desire: Differences, Similarities and Insights in the Eyes of Chinese Scholars

Tanina Zappone

Abstract

The paper aims at demonstrating how the “European dream” has entered the academic debate on the Chinese dream, contributing to the latter’s definition and evolution. In particular, the paper tries to answer the following questions: what is the interpretation of the European dream in Chinese academic literature? Which are the main differences and similarities between the Chinese dream and the European dream? Has the perception of the European vision changed through the years? In the eyes of Chinese scholars, is a Sino-European dream possible or even desirable?

Keywords: European dream, Chinese dream, World dream

Since its first mention in November 2012, the slogan “Chinese dream (*Zhongguo meng* 中国梦)”¹ has become the “political manifesto (*zhengzhi xuyan* 政治宣言)” and the “mission statement (*fendou mubiao* 奋斗目标)” of the Communist Party of China (Liu 2013). Impossible to be captured in a single definition, the Chinese dream encompasses at least three main goals: the goal of national rejuvenation (*minzu fuxing* 民族复兴), namely the goal to recover China’s glory of the past; the goal of people’s happiness (*minzu xingfu* 人民幸福), namely people’s aspiration to have a good life in the material and spiritual aspects; and the goal of national prosperity (*guojia fuqiang* 国家富强), which means to enhance country’s soft power on the international level. Domestically, it is deeply rooted in the Chinese understanding of history.²

¹ Xi Jinping launches the motto during a visit to the exhibition *The Road of Rejuvenation*. Xi states: “We are now all talking about the Chinese Dream. In my opinion, achieving the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has been the greatest dream of the Chinese people since the advent of modern times (现在, 大家都在讨论中国梦, 我以为, 实现中华民族伟大复兴, 就是中华民族近代以来最伟大的梦想.)” (Li 2012).

² In particular, the concept of national rejuvenation constitutes a narrative used by many leaders before Xi Jinping to bolster CCP legitimacy, promote CCP interest, encourage a nationalistic spirit and mobilize mass support for social change (Zheng 2014: 11).

While, internationally, it aspires to gain for the country a more substantial position among great powers; in this regard, it does not surprise that the Chinese dream is often compared to other national aspirations.

To cast light on how different national dreams have been acknowledged within PRC borders to detect the unique meaning of the Chinese dream, the following sections aim at presenting the perspective of Chinese scholars on the European dream, through a review of the academic literature from 1993 to nowadays.

The European dream in the Chinese literature

Setting a time range from 1979 to 2019 and using “*Ouzhou meng* 欧洲梦” as precise keywords for the title, a search on the Chinese Academic Journal Database results in a total of 40 papers.³

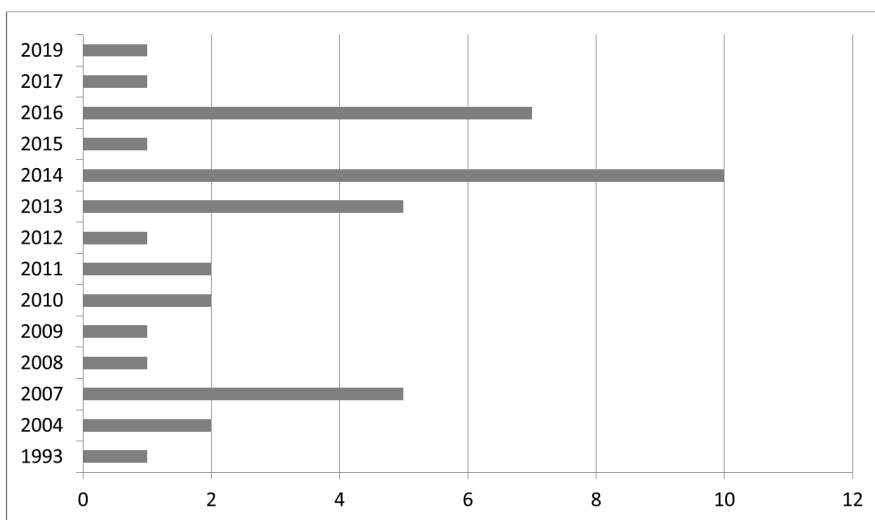


Fig. 1. PRC Academic papers about European dreams (1979–2019)

Source: Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure – CNKI

As shown in Figure 1, Chinese scholars’ interest in the topic is quite steady throughout the years. The reason of the rise of scholarly attention in 2007 could be the translation in Chinese of the book *The European dream*, wrote by Jeremy Rifkin (Rifkin 2004), which rapidly becomes a famous seller in PRC. The massive promotional campaign following the launch of Xi Jinping’s slo-

³ The search includes academic journals in the fields of philosophy, humanity and social science.

gan, along with the signature of Ukraine–European Union Association Agreement, could explain higher academic output in 2013/14, while current events – such as Greek’s debt crisis and Brexit – can have ignited interest in the period between 2015 and 2016.

Not surprisingly, the first paper is dated 1993, the year in which the Treaty on the European Union (EU) enters into force. In particular, the paper refers to the “dream of the EU” (*Oumeng meng* 欧盟梦), a dream of peaceful integration, which matches the idea of the “European dream” by most of the European people. However, as described below, this is not the conception of the “European dream”, provided by the majority of Chinese scholars.

From 1993 to 2006 one can just find a couple of papers about the dream of the European football champions league, while in 2007, for the first time, an analysis by Yue Daiyun compares US, Europe and China dreams, in an effort to “rethink human beings’ position in the world, at the turn of the XXI century” (Yue 2007:1). The main point of the paper – which has a very high download rate (almost 8.000) – is no more on the EU as an economic, social and political entity, but on Europe as a life standard. With few exceptions,⁴ From here onward, Chinese literature mainly focuses on this perception of Europe as a model of development.

According to the majority of Chinese scholars, the main goal of the European dream is achieving high “quality of life (*shenghuo zhiliang* 生活质量)”, by building an affluent society, based on a sophisticated economic system, able to ensure social security to its labourers. This concept of quality of life includes the necessity of having enough freedom, time and material conditions to get an abundant spiritual life (Ma 2013; Cui 2014), and, in this regard, is not so dissimilar from the search for people’s happiness of the Chinese dream.

One of the main features of this European dream is the concept of interdependence. Wei Pingqiang, among others, notes that the idea of freedom in Europe does not correspond to that of absolute independence, advocated by the US, but is based on the idea that joining a collectivity leads to having more choices and, hence, more freedom (Wei 2013: 9; Yue 2007: 161).

Another notion related to the European dream – as described by Chinese scholars – is that of “collective individualism”, according to which personal problems – such as unemployment – should be considered not in terms of individual responsibility, but as social issues. Governments are expected to

⁴ Exceptions are two more papers on European football and five essays on EU integration, including three on the potential access of Ukraine. In particular: one article on the LX anniversary of the treaty of Rome, another on the impact of Croatia’s entry into the EU and one on Macron’s vision of Europe.

undertake actions not only to protect public interests, but also to improve personal lives and happiness by investing in the welfare state and social security.

More in general, Chinese scholars pay great attention to the political nature (*zhengzhixing* 政治性) of the European dream. Zhao Tingyang, for instance, points out that every aspect of life tends to become a political target in Europe (Ma 2013: 54), while Wang Juan argues that the political objective of the European dream is not the protection of a political system, but the survival of a “system of life (*shenghuo tixi* 生活体系)” (Wang 2014: 2).

In their papers, Chinese authors refer almost exclusively to one western source: the abovementioned book *The European dream*, by Jeremy Rifkin. In this picture of Europe – portrayed by a US economist and social theorist, who was personal advisor of the former President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi (1999–2004) at the time of the book – Chinese scholars have found elements which echoes the Chinese dream. The reference to Rifkin’s analysis not only explains the uniformity in Chinese scholars’ description of the European dream, but also solve the ‘mystery’ of the lack of fame of the “European dream” in Europe. Everybody knows the US dream; since 2012, few people world-wide know the Chinese dream, which has become a hot topic in China, but even fewer people have heard about the European dream. Probably most of the European people have no idea what it is.

The idea of the European dream in Chinese scholarly literature basically comes from one source, although controversial, since a European reader would maybe find it a bit biased towards a leftist perspective. The fascination with the European dream lies in several similarities between the Chinese and the European models. It can not be considered a real model, but just a mirror in which Chinese intellectuals look to find new answers for their questions on the Chinese dream.

The Chinese and the European dream: similarities in the eyes of Chinese scholars

The European dream is considered quite akin to the Chinese ‘model’, in term of both shared values and common aspirations to domestic and global achievements.

First of all, both are influenced by socialism, which in Europe is represented by the work of left political parties, while in China by the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristic, which – in the words of Xi Jinping – is the proper road to realizing the Chinese dream.⁵

⁵ “To realize the Chinese dream, we must take our own path, which is the path of building

Another similarity is multiculturalism. Europe is a peaceful model of cultural integration, and it is committed to protecting cultural diversity among member States. In China, multiculturalism means the protection of cultural minorities, as well as the respect of foreign cultures, a concept ideally embodied in the Belt and Road Initiative. According to Chinese scholars, this idea of multiculturalism is rooted in the Confucian view of harmony, which is at the core of China's traditional culture. Harmony should be maintained in social relationships, in international relations and the relationship between man and nature. This third point brings to another aspect which pools European and Chinese dreams together: ecologism. EU representatives are the most active promoters of green policies in the world – as the key targets set by the *Climate Action of the European Commission for 2030* demonstrate –, while China's government has recently enhanced its commitment to support sustainable development and “beautiful China (*meili Zhongguo* 美丽中国)” and “ecological civilization (*shengtai wenming* 生态文明)” have become keywords of China's political discourse.

Moreover, according to some Chinese authors, the idea of ‘collective responsibility’ of the EU project can be tracked down in the Confucian perception of social relationships and in the utopia of the “great unity (*da tong* 大同)” of classical China. Europe and China are both based on an ancient civilization, and have similar regional dynamics, with Germany playing a prominent role in the European region, as China in the Far East.

All these commonalities primarily bring Chinese scholars to urge for a dreams fusion (Tian 2016: 139–140), and for Sino-European joint initiatives for a new common system of human values (Cui 2014). In the first analyses, Europe is often portrayed as a potential strategic cultural partner, since “China and Europe should jointly push forward a global governance style [...] and should cooperate for the building of a new form of humanism that combines Eastern and Western wisdom”(Wang Yiwei 2013). However, in the most recent publications, an increasingly critical vision of the European dream tends to prevail.

The limits of the European dream and the ‘inclusiveness’ of the Chinese dream

Already in the first 2010s, Chinese scholars underline the limits of the European dream: it is not a new dream, but the reviewed version of an old dream (Wu 2013); it is a dream of “local protectionism (*diqu baohuzhuyi* 地区社会主义 with Chinese characteristics)” (Xi 2014: 41).

保护主义)” (Wei 2014), and it is still too close to the Eurocentric myth of liberal “universalist values (*pushi jiazhi* 普世价值)” (Ma 2013). They recognize limits of the Chinese model as well: China needs to develop towards a global, industrial and maritime approach (Wang 2013); it is not ready to be a leading country in the world and is lacking a fully independent system of thought (Ma 2013). However, the Chinese dream is presented as potentially inclusive of the European dream. While the latter is the expression of an advanced region, China is experiencing a particular stage of development, by facing modernity and postmodernity at the same time and, therefore, could provide a model of development, which would better fit the requirements of developing countries (Wu 2013: 14).

Recently, following the aggravation of the EU economic situation and the growing success of populist parties in European elections, Chinese authors assume an even more pessimistic view on the future of the European dream and are inclined to highlight more the differences from the Chinese dream. If already in 2013 Zhou Jing points out that “the ‘Chinese dream’ is open, inclusive and shared; it is the dream of a nation, but even more is the dream of the world (*Zhongguo meng shi kaifang de*、*baorong de*、*gongxiang de*、*Zhongguo meng shi minzu de*、*geng shi shijie de*“ 中国梦”是开放的、包容的、共享的, “中国梦”是民族的, 更是世界的)” (Zhou 2013: 22), in 2016 Chen Jibing moves one step ahead, by wondering if the European dream is about to vanish, under the impact of Brexit. Chen argues that, if in past Europe was the embodiment of Kant’s idea of perpetual peace, nowadays’ Europe, which must tackle with the debt crisis, Islamic terrorism and a refugee emergency, “is no longer an example, but a problem (欧洲不再是榜样, 而变成了问题)” (Chen 2016: 42). He Huining analyzes the inherent differences between the European dream and the Chinese dream and comes to a conclusion that “European dream is essentially an individual dream, a life dream, and a regional dream (*Ouzhou meng benzhi shang shi geren meng*、*shenghuo meng*、*diqu meng* 欧洲梦本质上是个人梦、生活梦、地区梦)”, which leads member States down into the deadlock of the zero-sum game. In contrast, the Chinese dream is “a collective dream, a revival dream, and a win-win dream (*Zhongguo meng benzhi shang ze shi jiti meng*、*fixing meng*、*gongying meng* 中国梦本质上则是集体梦、复兴梦、共赢梦)” and “has a wider global vision, compared to the European dream (*Ouzhou meng juyou gengjia gazngkuo de shijie qinghuai* 欧洲梦具有更加广阔的世界情怀) (He 2016: 91).

Concluding remarks

Minor but steady through the years, the interest of Chinese scholars towards the European dream is strictly related to the goal of detecting the unique meaning of the Chinese dream, by comparing it to other national dreams. Differently from the US dream, the European dream – as described in the homonymous book by Jeremy Rifkin – appears congenial to Chinese analysts, who identify a number of similarities in the two models (the notions of collective individualism, multiculturalism, cultural heritage, ecologism and socialism) and are fascinated by the life standard of the European countries, which have already realized their dream at the individual level. However the image of Europe in Chinese literature does not correspond to a real model; it is just a mirror in which Chinese intellectuals look for new ideas, to meet the next historical challenge of China: integrating, refuting or including the values of other models of civilization, in order to build a Chinese spirit inclusive of “the universal feelings of the people (*pubian renxin* 普遍人心)” (Wei 2014), or – to put it in the words of China’s politics – to “build a community with a shared future for mankind (*renlei mingyun gontongti* 人类命运共同体)”. An old dream has reappeared in new guises: that – dreamed by Liang Qichao (1644–1911) – to transform China into the “world’s China (*shijie Zhongguo* 世界中国)”, a country able not only to achieve economic objectives, but also to conquer hearts and minds of all people of the world and to have a deep impact in the future of the humanity.

References

- Chen, Jibing 陈季冰. “Ouzhou meng jijiang hui fei yan mie?” ‘欧洲梦’即将灰飞烟灭? [The ‘European dream’ is about to vanish?]. *Tongzhou gongjin* 同舟共进 11 (2016): 42–45.
- Cui, Yanyan 崔燕燕. “Meiguo meng、Ouzhou meng dui Zhongguo meng de qishi” 美国梦、欧洲梦对中国梦的启示 [American dream and European dream, the implications for the Chinese dream]. *Sanjiang gaojiao* 三江高教 10 (2014): 70–73.
- He, Huining 何会宁. “Cong Xila zhaiwu weiji kan Ouzhou meng yu Zhongguo meng de neizai chayi” 从希腊债务危机看欧洲梦与中国梦的内在差异” [Looking at the inner differences between European dream and Chinese dream from the Greek debt crisis]. *Xuexiao dangjian yu sixiang jiaoyu* 学校党建与思想教育 3 (2016): 89–91.
- Li, Bin 李斌. “Kong tan wu guo shi gan xing bang” 空谈误国 实干兴邦 [Empty talk harms the nation, practical action helps it thrive]. *Caixinwang* 财新网, 30 November 2012. <http://china.caixin.com/2012-11-30/100466950.html>, 24 October 2019.
- Liu, Qibao 刘奇葆. “Guangyu Zhongguo tese shehuizhuyi lilun tixi de ji dian renshi” 关于中国特色社会主义理论体系的几点认识” [Some points concerning the

- theoretical structure of socialism with Chinese characteristics]. *Renminwang* 人民网, 8 July 2013.
<http://opinion.people.com.cn/n/2013/0708/c1003-22109528.html>, 25 October 2019.
- Ma, Jing 马静. “Meiguo meng? Ouzhou meng? Haishi Zhongguo meng? —— Zhuanfang Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan zhexue yanjiusuo yanjiuyuan Zhao Tingyang” 美国梦? 欧洲梦? 还是中国梦? ——专访中国社会科学院哲学研究所研究员赵汀阳 [American dream? European dreams or Chinese dream? Interview with Zhao Tingyang, a researcher at the Institute of Philosophy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences]. *Renmin luntan* 人民论坛 3 (2013): 53-55.
- Rifkin, Jeremy. *The European dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream*. New York: Penguin, 2004. Print.
- Tian, Dewen 田德文. Zhongguo meng yu Ouzhoumeng: xin shiqi Zhong-Ou guanxi yanjiu” 中国梦”与“欧洲梦”:新时期中欧关系研究. [The ‘Chinese dream’ and the ‘European dream’: A Study of Sino-European Relations in the New Era]. *Ouzhou yanjiu* 欧洲研究 4 (2016): 131–144.
- Wang, Juan 王娟. “Lun Zhongguo meng yu Meiguo meng、Ouzhou meng de chayi” 论中国梦与美国梦、欧洲梦的差异 [On the differences among the Chinese dream, the European dream and the American dream]. *Xue lilun* 学理论 7 (2014): 1–2.
- Wang, Yiwei, 2013, “When the Chinese dream meets the European dream”, *Clingendael Asia Forum* – 16 July 2013. <https://www.clingendael.nl/publication/when-chinese-dream-meets-european-dream>, 30 September 2016.
- Wei, Pingqiang 魏平强 and Qin, Ting 秦婷. “Meiguo meng、Ouzhou meng、Zhongguo meng zhe bijiao yanjiu” 美国梦、欧洲梦、中国梦之比较研究 [A comparative study of the American dream, the European dream and the Chinese dream]. *Lilun guangcha* 理论观察 5.95 (2014): 9–10.
- Wu, Haijiang 吴海江 and Du, Yanjun 杜彦君. “Guoji bijiao shie xiao de Meiguo meng、Ouzhou meng he Zhongguo meng” 国际比较视野下的美国梦、欧洲梦和中国梦 [The American dream, the European dream and the Chinese dream in an international comparative perspective]. *Sixiang lilun jiaoyu* 思想理论教育 6 (2013): 11–16.
- Xi, Jinping. *The Governance of China*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2014. Print.
- Yue, Daiyun 乐黛云. “Meiguo meng, Ouzhou meng, Zhongguo meng” 美国梦, 欧洲梦, 中国梦. [The American dream, the European dream and the Chinese dream]. *Shehui kexue* 社会科学 9 (2007): 159–165.
- Zheng, Wan. “The Chinese Dream: Concept and Context”. *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 19 (2014): 1–13. <https://www.shu.edu/diplomacy/upload/The-Chinese-Dream-Concept-and-Context-JCPS-Zheng-Wang.pdf>, 25 October 2019.
- Zhou, Jing 周静. “Touguo Meiguo meng, Ouzhou meng sikao Zhongguo meng” 透过‘美国梦’、‘欧洲梦’思考‘中国梦’ [Thinking about the ‘Chinese dream’ through the ‘American Dream’ and the ‘European dream’]. *Shijiazhuang jingji xueyuan xuebao* 石家庄经济学院学报 36.5 (2013): 18–22.

The Xi Jinping's Era and the Evolution of the Chinese Political System. Internal and External Effects

Maria Elisabetta Lanzone
Fabio Lavagno

Abstract

The XXI Century appears as China's Century, with many consequences. During the seven decades since the foundation of PRC, many changes occurred. Nowadays under the guide of Xi Jinping, whose though has been included in the Constitution in 2018, China knows a new transformation with the full consciousness of being one of the most potent worldwide rulers, with a strong tradition, preserved by a recent revival of Confucianism. "One belt, one road initiative" (一帶一路) is part of this transformation. It represents not only an infrastructure plan but also the ambitions of Chinese leaders to increase the role they want to play with the US and in the EU. Under this framework, the paper aims to analyse the most profound changes during Xi's Era with a specific focus on the current relationship between European Countries (Italy in particular) and PRC.

Keywords: Chinese Politics, Chinese Communist Party, Chinese Constitution, Europe, Italy

The People's Republic of China 70 years later

The XXI Century appears more and more as China's Century. This will carry on many internal and external consequences. The general crisis of Western World, the lack of capability of US to grant its rule of "World's gendarme" (after the end of USSR and the Cold war era characterized by the contraposition between the two super-powers), the EU not playing the role of continental power, joined to the crisis of the liberal democracies systems, give to China and to its not stopping growth the chance to be one of the most powerful rulers in the World order redefinition during the next decades.

When People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in Beijing in 1949, after the triumphant Long March of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Mao

Zedong and the winning Chinese Communist Party (CCP) found themselves to face and govern a wounded and undeveloped country. This was due to the semi-colonial status that occurred in China during the XIX Century after the Opium Wars and as a result of the condition imposed to China by the western Countries. The term “Unequal Treaty” (signed in Nanjing in 1848) became associated with the concept of China’s “century of humiliation”, especially the concessions to foreign powers and loss of tariff autonomy through the treaty ports. China’s history of the first half of the XX Century is not less important to determinate the Country’s condition at the birth of PRC. The Sun Yatsen Republic experience, after the conclusion of the imperial power with the end of Qing dynasty, the decades of civil war between CCP and the fascist inspired nationalism of the Kuomintang (KMT) only interrupted during the periods of a common front against the Japanese invasion and domination; are all aspects to keep in consideration analysing the birth of the PRC.

After the took of power the new regime gave to the state a temporary structure based on the tripartite of the power among CCP, formal government and PLA on the theoretical basis of the Common Program for China that at the article 5 guaranteed to all, except for “political reactionaries” the right o freedom of “thought, speech, publication, assembly, association, correspondence, person, domicile, moving from one place to another, religious belief and to hold processions and demonstrations”. This resume the spirit of cooperation of the united front that include the peasantry, the urban and the national bourgeoisie and the working class as a basis for the people’s democratic dictatorship. Land redistribution and reform and new marriage law are entirely part of this period of transition.

The 1954 Constitution strengths the State structure and gives permanent institutions. The People’s National Assembly (National People’s Congress) is elected for four years and is designed as a legislative assembly and as State supreme organ. The President of the Republic is designed by the same assembly.

The State Affair Council (previously called Politic Affair Council) is in charge of the governing affairs. The Council of National Defence is tied to the Republic’s Presidency, the Prosecutor’s Office and the Supreme People’s Courts are under the control of the National Assembly. It’ A very classical state structure, in which the only two particular aspects are the maintenance of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference – CPPCC (that is no more a legislative assembly, but the symbol of the United Front) and the creation of the State Supreme Conference not well defined in its composition, but tied to Republic’s Presidency and often used as a political tribune for Mao’s campaigns (Spence 1999).

With the new state structure, the first phase of land reform complete, the bourgeoisie broke, the CCP was free to develop an integrated plan for the nation's economic development. The model adopted was that of the Soviet Union, where the state control industrial production in a sequence of five-year plan. The Soviet model was adoption is due to many causes such as the isolation from Western countries (after the anti-foreigner campaigns and the Korea war), the failure for the GMT attempts at reform along Western lines. CCP adopted the Soviet model as a way to emphasize the anti-capitalist and the anti-imperialist nature of the new People's Republic, where the goal was to build socialism in a poverty-stricken country (Sabattini, 1996).

Modern China: the Evolution of Chinese institutions during Deng Xiaoping's Era

If Mao's era has been characterized by the effort to rebuild a wounded Country in which the main goal was to build a complete socialist society, is during the Deng Xiaoping's Era that the basis of China, as nowadays known, was settled.

Deng inherited a China full of contradictions, in which different campaigns shocked the Country on the political side (such as Hundred flowers or the Cultural Revolution) or the economic side (Great Leap Forward). A country isolated diplomatically and ideologically from the communist world (with the only exception of Albania) after breaking with the USSR (Joyaux 1988) but finally recognized by the United Nations in 1971. A country not properly developed economically and with severe difficulties for agriculture, its major economic sector; but at the same time a nuclear power since 1964.

Deng moved his plan on internal "normalization" and at the same time on an economic shock opening to foreign investments and a new responsibility on agriculture. Four Modernizations were the goals posed by Deng to strengthen China in the World competition and integration in international economic relationships. In 1980 China joined the International Monetary Fund and to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, in 1983 to the International Atomic Energy Agency and 1985 to the Asian Development Bank.

The results of these policies are evident in the economic field. Salary growth, increase in domestic demand, the attraction of foreign investments, the constant growth of GDP, have characterized China in recent decades (Bergere 1994).

Jian Zemin's leadership, followed to Deng's one, face internal contradiction in which the development and growing gap between internal and coastal

areas can difficult coexist. A new China, economic power not only in Asia but also on the world stage has to face the internal problem about poverty, corruption and organized crime. These are the main problems that Jian faced under his leadership. On the international front, every effort are addressed to have stable diplomatic relations with Russia and the US. “China’s peaceful development” is the doctrine that has characterized the years in which the Asian giant has been led by Hu Jintao, that succeeded Jian¹. A way to pursue soft power that extended China’s influence in different world region, especially Africa and South America. This type of foreign policy is due to both ideal and economic factors. China permanently became the second world economic power during the last decade of the XX Century and the first one of the new century can be ready to be a new big player on the world scene, ready for the “National revival” (国家复兴) that Xi Jinping has been theorizing since his election in 2012.

The 2018 Constitutional Reform and the Xi Jinping’s Era

Until 2017 the constitutional reforms in China were limited to economic affairs rather than political matters. In 2018 a critical revision occurred and, differently from the previous cases, was focused on the political and institutional basis (Malaschini 2019).

The First Session of 13th National People’s Congress (NPC) on March 11, 2018, has brought some remarkable Constitutional amendments, after the proposal arrived from 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (October 2017). In particular, the NPC voted a constitutional amendment abolishing the two-term limit for the Chinese President and approved a new version of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (中华人民共和国宪法). The same reform represents a significant change within China’s political system since Xi is expected to further centralize his political power, with significant consequences to be felt shortly.

The new Preamble of the Constitution includes the “Xi Jinping Thought” close to the ideas of other crucial Chinese political leaders: “[...] the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of Three Represents” in Paragraph 7, the Preamble of the Constitution shall be amended to read as: “[...] the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of

¹ See Ewing, Richard Daniel. “Hu Jintao: The Making of a Chinese General Secretary”. *The China Quarterly*. Cambridge University Press (20th March 2003).

Three Represents, the Scientific Outlook on Development, and the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”².

The text of the document underlines the reassertion of “Chinese Dream” with particular attention for the modernization, and “harmonious values”³: “[...] improve the socialist rule of law, apply a new vision of development, and work hard and self-reliantly to modernize the country’s industry, agriculture, national defence, and science and technology step by step, to promote the coordinated development of the material, political, spiritual, social, and ecological civilizations, to turn China into a strong modern socialist country that is prosperous, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful, and to realize the great rejuvenation for the Chinese nation”⁴.

After this reform, many observers warned that Xi’s personalization of power could have negative consequences for China’s future political stability and their relationship with Western Liberal Democracies or with other post-authoritarian countries able to start a democratization process (He 2013). On the contrary, internal effects are very impressive and also the construction of Chinese image around the world appears solid and modern: the same reform appears able to reaffirm Chinese role as a great Nation, President Xi continues to enlarge its power and to construct its popularity, not only inside his Country. Today, eight years later the Congress that crowned Xi Jinping leader and two years after the constitutional reform that allows him to keep his office even after a two-term mandate ends, it is possible to see «the image of a man capable of stepping back from the position he pursued most of his adult life and temporarily plunging into deep uncertainty both his allies and his rivals if the conditions to obtain leadership did not precisely correspond to the terms he had already dictated» (Talia 2018: 3).

According to again to Talia (2018), now that all the key roles – including top positions in the security and intelligence apparatus – are filled with loyalists, Xi Jinping became the “Chairman of Everything”, and he focuses his main discourse on “National Rejuvenation” (国家复兴 – *Guojia Fuxing*), a political mission that could be defined as the ultimate goal of restoring China’s central role in the world. President Xi – now with an indefinite time at his disposal – is injecting into this system code strings based on Marxism with

² English version is available here: <<http://en.pkulaw.cn/display.aspx?cgid=311950&lib=law>> (last seen: 15th March 2020).

³ See Garrick, John and Yan Chang Bennett. “Xi Jinping Thought. The realisation of the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation?”, 1.2 (2018): 99-105.

⁴ The full text of the Chinese Constitution is available here: <http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2018-03/22/content_5276318.htm> (last seen: 21st March 2020).

Chinese characteristics and a strong revival of Confucianism (Bell 2015, Scarpari 2015). Xi Jinping's thought remains marked by the motto: "To realize the China Dream we must keep to the Chinese way, to realize the China Dream we must advance the Chinese spirit, to realize the China Dream we must consolidate Chinese power".

Summarising, under Xi Jinping guidance, China is entered into a new era characterized by a strong national unity, and cohesion. In the same framework, the formal role of President Xi, the personalization of his power, the mediation of its reputation around the World (for example the Xi Jinping's book has been translated in more than twenty languages, according to data diffused by Xu Bu, President of Foreign Languages Press)⁵ Can put China at the core of the international political arena. China appears more and more like a cohesive, modern and effective country, and it can improve its role under a geopolitical point of view.

Recently (March 2020), after the health emergency caused by the dissemination of the so-called virus COVID-19, the China of the New Era has proven to the organization and strong efficiency. As reported by the *People's Daily* (人民日报, *Rénmín Ribào* – 11th March 2020)⁶, President Xi visited the area of Wuhan using impressive, ceremonial and triumphalist manners. At the same time, he has symbolically stated the end of the tragic and more acute phase of the crisis, and he opened in practice a sort of "post-emergency phase"⁷. In particular, during a public speech, Xi announced a new step focused on prevention instead of care that will change the health system. At the same time, other Xi's discourse focused on poverty aims to reduce internal differences. According to the press agency *Xinhua* (9th March 2020), at the beginning of March, Xi participated in a meeting centred explicitly on poverty underling the intention of reducing the same poverty levels and reduce inequalities, with specific attention to rural areas. These topics appear as the keystones in Xi Jinping political agenda, since at least 2013. The PCC has embedded these policies in the programme of the XIX Congress (2017) in order to improve the standard of living for an ever-wider portion of the Chinese population.

⁵ See the original Chinese version of the book: 习近平, 谈治国理政. In particular, the Foreign Languages Press has distributed 4 million printed copies, more than 400 thousand abroad, only.

⁶ The full print copy version is available here: <http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrb/html/2020-03/11/nbs.D110000renmrb_01.htm> (last seen: 21st March 2020).

⁷ See Lavagno, Fabio "La Cina entra nella fase 2: la 'post-emergenza' (e la 'solidarietà' all'Italia)", *Gli Stati Generali*. <<https://www.glistatigenerali.com/geopolitica/coronavirus-cina-italia-emergenza/>>, 19th March 2020 (last seen: 20th March 2020).

From China to Europe (and Italy): future challenges

The Chinese New Era is not only characterised by an adequate internal power but also by a great project under a geo-political point of view, aimed to drive China in a more international arena.

In order to analyse the evolution of Chinese external influence, it is crucial to consider in particular one gigantic program named “Belt and Road Initiative” (BRI) or “One belt, one road” (一帶一路, OBOR)⁸. It was launched in 2013 by President Xi during a speech entitled “Promote People-to-People Friendship and Create a Better Future” pronounced at Kazakhstan’s Nazarbayev University. The idea is to create different “corridors” and sea routes (a “belt” of overland corridors connecting China with Europe, via Central Asia and the Middle East and a maritime “road” of shipping lanes linking China’s southern coast to east Africa and the Mediterranean, with about 65 countries involved in three Continents) and to resurrect the ancient “Silk Road ideally”, the network of trade routes officially established during the Han dynasty (Wenxian et al. 2018).

The project can completely change relationships between China and the World, in particular, it produces many consequences on some European Countries (inside and outside the EU-zone), also distorting the balance between USA/Europe/China. Also, the OBOR project appears capable to enlarge Chinese interest in Europe, gradually undermining the central role of the US. In this framework, Italy represents a peculiar and controversial case⁹.

In order to consider relations between Italy and China is crucial to cite the signature of the so-called Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). It is a specific format-document chosen by China to sign bilateral (economic and commercial) treaties. The Italian-Chinese MoU is composed of 29 agreements (10 between private companies and 19 with institutional nature), with a value of 7 billion Euro. In addition to Italy, other 16 EU-Countries (with a marginal role inside UE) signed an MoU¹⁰ with some consequences on the already fragile balance between Italy and the European Union. Beyond its economic value, the MoU represents a first significant and tangible signal to affirm the importance of current Italian-Chinese relations.

⁸ BRI official link: < <http://english.www.gov.cn/beltAndRoad/>>; OBOR Europe is a website specifically created to promote the project in Europe and the Chinese soft power: < <https://www.oboreurope.com/en/about-us/>> (last seen: 21st March 2020).

⁹ See Fardella, Enrico and Prodi, Giorgio. “The Belt and Road Initiative Impact on Europe: An Italian Perspective”. *China & World Economy* 25.5 (2017): 125–138.

¹⁰ The first in 2015 was Hungary (2015), between 2018 and 2019 were also added Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

The same relationships have been intensified again in March 2020 during COVID-19 emergency when China decided to help Italian people directly. China wants to promote more and more an image of effective Country able to incrementally win the battle against the virus and then to become a player in an assistance/support phase (human and material) towards Countries facing with the crisis after China, first of all, Italy.

A press release circulated through the *Qiushi Journal* (求是) reports a phone call between the Chinese President Xi and the Italian First Minister Giuseppe Conte able to underline important aspects¹¹. First of all, Xi ensures his effort to “defeat the epidemic as soon as possible and in a completely way” but he is able to go beyond asserting that “it should be to give confidence to the people in order to [...] contain the epidemic”. The new policy appears as clear Chinese disposal to «[...] work together in order to contribute to international cooperation, to fight against the epidemic and to construct a ‘health silk road’». In other words, China is pursuing and re-launches its geopolitical project with also peculiar attention for communication: in fact, the release uses the phrase “silk road” and not the more usual “one belt, one road” because the first sentence sounds more emphatic with the Italian tradition and rhetoric.

So, during the 2020 emergency phase, President Xi has a new opportunity to demonstrate a growing power, and he tests it exactly with Italy, the only G7-country that signed the MoU. At the same time, China continues to confirm its availability to other Country (inside and outside Europe) in order to reinforce its international role and to realise policies of the New Era, that of Xi Jinping. Under the described framework and after these key-events, China can continue its growing process with significant internal and primarily external effects.

References

- Bell, Daniel. *The China Model: Political Meritocracy and Limits of Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015. Print.
- Domenech, Jean-Luc and Richer, Philippe. *La Chine de 1971 à nos jours*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1995. Print.
- Fardella, Enrico and Prodi, Giorgio. “The Belt and Road Initiative Impact on Europe: An Italian Perspective”. *China & World Economy* 25.5 (2017): 125–138. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/cwe.12217>.
- Garrick, John and Yan Chang Bennett. “Xi Jinping Thought. The realisation of the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation?”. *China Perspectives, Special Issues on*

¹¹ Qiushi Journal, Organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, 17th March 2020, <http://www.qstheory.cn/zdwz/2020-03/17/c_1125722429.htm> (last seen: 20th March 2020).

- “*New Approaches to the Political Regime Under Xi Jinping*”, 1.2 (2018): 99–105. <http://www.cefc.com.hk/issue/china-perspectives-20181-2/> (22.03.2020).
- He, Baogang. “Working with China to Promote Democracy”. *The Washington Quarterly* 36.1 (2013): 37-53. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2013.751649>.
- Joyaux, Françoise. *La nouvelle question d’Extrême-Orient 2, L’ère du conflit sino-soviétique 1959–1978*. Paris: Payot, 1988. Print.
- Lavagno, Fabio. “La Cina entra nella fase 2: la ‘post-emergenza’ (e la ‘solidarietà’ all’Italia)”. *Gli Stati Generali*. <https://www.glistatigenerali.com/geopolitica/coronavirus-cina-italia-emergenza/>, 19th March 2020 (22.03.2020).
- Malaschini, Antonio. *Come si governa la Cina. Le istituzioni della Repubblica Popolare Cinese*. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2019. Print.
- Peters, Michael Adrian. “The Chinese Dream: Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 49.14 (2017): 299-304. DOI: 10.1080/00131857.2017.1407578.
- Sabattini, Mario and Santangelo, Paolo. *Storia della Cina*. Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1996. Print.
- Samarani, Guido *La Cina contemporanea. Dalla fine dell’Impero a oggi*. Torino: Einaudi, 2017. Print.
- Scarpari, Maurizio *Ritorno a Confucio. La Cina di oggi fra tradizione e mercato*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2015. Print.
- Spence, Jonathan D. *The search for modern China*. WW Norton & Company, 1999. Print.
- Xi, Jinping 习近平. *Tan zhi guo li zheng 谈治国理政 [The Governance of China]* Beijing 北京, Foreign Languages Press 外文出版社有限责任公司, 2014. Print.
- Talia, Antonio. “China’s Dream Needs Chinese Power”: the New Era in Xi’s Thought. *ISPI Commentary*. https://www.ispionline.it/sites/default/files/pubblicazioni/commentary_talia_06.04.2018.pdf, 6th April 2018 (22.03.2020).
- Zhang, Wenxian, Alon, Ilan, and Lattemann, Christoph. *China’s Belt and Road Initiative. Changing the Rules of Globalization*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. Print.

The Future of Political-Religious Interaction in China

Cai Tingjian

Abstract

Chinese modernization and secularization has not replaced Chinese traditions, but rather has led to a mixture of Chinese traditions and modern (socialist) state construction. The result of this mixture can be clearly seen in the intensified political-religious interaction that the religious revival has called forth. This paper analyzes mainly the future of the political-religious relationship in China with regard to the religious revival. Some possible scenarios for the future of political-religious interaction will be considered. Will the future bring a “neoimperial sacral hegemony”? A Confucian framework of the political-religious field? Will religious freedom be guaranteed? Or will an amalgamation of liberty and the state’s desire for political-social order emerge?

Keywords: political-religious interaction, future scenarios

“The dramatic worldwide return of religion and its importance as a public power has surprised most of us [...] We had all believed more or less that such a revival of religion was not possible, for the Western modernization myth had taught us to expect a progressive movement towards the secularization and privatization of religion. There were various options for religion in the modern world, but neither its return as a political power and index of social identity, nor its ability to form people according to its own ethos were among them” (Riesebrodt 2001: 9 [My translation]). This reflection on the discourse of the return of religion, presented by Martin Riesebrodt at the beginning of the millennium, sums up well the historical significance of the religious revival in modern societies.

As much of the empirical field research and statistical evidence have demonstrated the prediction that religions would wither away was false, and the religious revival is now causing intensified political-religious interactions, people begin to discuss the future of religions in the current political public sphere. China, as a non-Christian society in which modernization and secularization have followed the Western model, also belongs to the worldwide secularization narrative as one of its variations.

Four Prospects for the Future of Political-Religious Interaction

The increasingly intensified contradictions between the state and religious communities in China in recent years have shown that under the prevailing conditions, the existing political-religious model of interaction does not hold much promise. As clear as this is, it is nevertheless still unclear which new model could take its place in China's highly complex political-religious situation. In an attempt to provide a deeper insight into the future of political-religious interaction in China, the following section of this paper will offer several possible scenarios.

The first scenario presents a strong state-centralist vision. According to Madsen the main political-religious problem today is that the old model, based on the political-spiritual primacy of the state and the "state-leads, religion-follows" principle, can no longer be sustained in a global atmosphere of religious revival that emphasizes religious freedom. A possible way out of this globalization effect is "[for China] to become so powerful that it can set the terms of its relationships with the rest of world" (Madsen 2010: 70). This is a new imperialist proposal, the core of which is that China, because of its rapidly increasing economic and military power, could claim that the "universal" value of religious freedom does not apply to China and that global religions may only be active in China if they accept the absolute primacy of the state. However, this new imperialist conception depends on the extent to which the Chinese state becomes a decisive global power. As a matter of fact, the proposal to create the narrative of New-Tianxiaism or New-Culturalism (Xu 2014) follows exactly this "neoimperial sacral hegemony" logic, however this vision appears to be unrealistic.

The second scenario is mainly concerned with the fate of Confucianism, or more precisely the prospect of Confucianism's revival. Several different plans or sketches for the future development of Confucianism can be observed today. The first variant is to redesign Confucianism as an institutionalized religion in order to gain the official status of being the "sixth religion". In fact, in many foreign Chinese communities which have been strongly influenced by the Chinese tradition, Confucianism has long been recognized as a religion and plays an important role in local Chinese society in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea. However, the question remains: to what extent would the ideologically atheistic Communist Party be willing to accept a new official religion?

The second plan is the so-called "state religionization", "politicization", or "civil religionization" of Confucianism. Within this plan, some argue for a

complete politicization of Confucianism or a unification of state and Confucianism. These include the proposal by Jiang Qing (2003) in “Political Confucianism”, Daniel Bell (2010) in “Beyond Liberal Democracy”, and Kang Xiaoguang (2006) in “Cultural Nationalism”. Others argue less strongly for the China-centric, political transformation of Confucianism – Yao Zhongqiu (2012) pleads clearly for a compromise between Confucianism and liberalism and proposes a framework of “Confucian constitutionalism” in order to establish a bridge between Confucianism and liberal constitutionalism. Chen Ming (2012) proposes transforming Confucianism into a civil religion. Civil religion goes to the root of society and is compatible with the modern political system, which is characterized by liberty, democracy, and constitutionalism. For this reason, civil religion may well prove to be the only way to achieve a Confucian renaissance, which would be the perfect status for Confucianism in a modern society.

The third plan is more ambitious. It proposes to go beyond the western framework of “religion” or “civil religion” and regards the fate of Confucianism as a decisive social-cultural occurrence of a civilization that is independent of Western civilization. In this case the question is no longer whether Confucianism could serve the modern Chinese nation-state as a “religion” or “civil religion”, but whether Confucianism with its appeal to an elite group (*Jun Zi*) and its emphasis on ritualism could offer China new moral sources and resources of legitimacy. This plan can be seen as part of the fundamental narrative shift from “nation state” to “civilization state” that has emerged in recent years (Zhang 2017). This problematic loss of China’s traditions and self-awareness as a unique civilization in its transformation into a nation-state has led to the “cavernous emptiness” of the moral-spiritual sphere and to the crisis of political legitimacy. In this respect, the revival of the Chinese “civilization state” is the only correct way to solve the state crisis and to advance the great rejuvenation of the nation.

Although the above-mentioned plans and sketches for the future development of Confucianism reveal a broad spectrum, every variant of the drafts for the future of the New Confucians, especially those that clearly contain authoritarian tendencies, such as the plan to make Confucianism into a state religion, has been questioned by Chinese liberals, who point out that Confucianism was originally and naturally closely related to the authority which limited liberty. Thus, the applicability of civil society theory in the future with Confucianism is still open to question, since a Confucian cultural sphere “cannot permit a free space between the state, family, or clan” (Koenig 2008: 40 [My Translation]). In this regard, the preservation and development of Confucianism

in Taiwan can be seen as an instructive case of reference for the discussions (Jochim 2003).

The third scenario is characterized by the loosening of religious regulation and by the legal protection of religious freedom. According to Christian Meyer (2013: 147 [My Translation]), the current religious policy always tries “to reconcile different religious as well as the non-religious factors, depending on the situation, and to exercise effective rule and control over them”. But “flexible” regulation is not a permanent solution to the political-religious problem, but rather is its cause. If the state weighs the political-social gains of religious regulation against its political and material costs, it would be a rational choice for the state to loosen the restrictions on religion and to grant more religions a legal status.

In fact, the guarantee of religious freedom is not in significant conflict with the revival of Confucianism. The difference lies only in the fact that while in the second scenario Confucianism plays a central role in the political-religious relationship and is regarded as the key to the solution of the current political-religious problem, the third scenario includes all religious actors in the solution. In view of the “post-secular” society, the public sphere of religious actors and their political-social influences are emphasized. Questions are raised with regard to what extent public discourse on political-religious topics in a “religious-theoretical extension of discourse ethics” (in the sense of Habermas) is applicable to the Chinese regime.

According to this prospect, the key to solving all religious problems lies in modern citizenship, in free, legally protected, access to the public sphere and with the legal guarantee of religious freedom. With regard to China, where the regime has a long tradition of authoritarianism and religious regulation, this legal guarantee seems both necessary, and also less risky, if it presumably at first is limited only to religion, and thus will probably be more acceptable to China in the face of the urgent problematic political-religious status quo.

Jürgen Habermas concedes that his political-religious extension of discourse ethics is suited primarily to German political culture, “which is characterized today by a neutral benevolence of the state towards the religious communities of Protestants, Catholics and Jews” (Habermas 2007: 1446 [My Translation]). But he also believes that his proposal can be generalized: a “dialectical understanding of cultural secularization” would provide the best chance for de-stressing the religiously shaped global conflicts, as the non-Western cultures counter “the leveling violence penetrating from outside with their own cultural resources” and develop “the religious consciousness of a modernization from within” (Habermas 2005: 32 [My Translation]). This

proposal is encouraging, since China has numerous cultural resources for a “modernization from within”. But the possibility of realizing this scenario depends on the extent to which the Chinese government can accept religion as a “risk factor” (Fischer 2009) and on this basis establish the win-win situation of reciprocal “twin tolerations” between the state and the religions (Stepan 2000) with a “liberalized” religious policy.

At first glance, the last scenario also seems to deal with the possible extension of legal guarantees to individual freedom in China. In the search for a solution to the current religious or moral crisis Ci Jiwei develops a unique approach in an attempt to find a compromise between liberty and China’s current situation.

Ci (2014) argues that in traditional Chinese thought individual freedom has long had a bad reputation, i.e. freedom has always been seen as dangerous, or at least as incomprehensible and mysterious, for the state as well as for the individual. In the contest between freedom and order, the latter is understandably preferred. This means that the Chinese state and society must constantly guard against potentially “too much” freedom. This has created a decisive vulnerability of the political system in the face of freedom. With regard to the question of vulnerability, the perception of the contradiction between freedom and order in Chinese culture and political institutions must be overcome, and the de-demonization and disenchantment of freedom are necessary in order to make it into an important component of the Chinese political spectrum.

Ci’s goal is “to find a place for freedom in our moral and political culture” (Ci 2014: 54). In fact, freedom as a “mode of subjection” and as a “moral resource” has long been accepted by communist and Maoist ideology. However, with the decay of this ideology, a new “form of subjection” for individuals and for the preservation of order is now urgently needed in China, and it will need to include “certain values of freedom”. As the rule of the Communist Party and the expectation of its moral development of society are increasingly questioned, a large space for the “good” has been created. This “good” which has long been “unexplored” in China could serve as the solution to the urgent ruling crisis.

Filling the gaping void in the place of the good “requires a lot of moral imagination tempered by a sense both of Chinese tradition and of the conditions of life in China today” (Ci 2014: 221). The only possible, realistic opportunity for doing this lies in the parallel “imaginative exploration of the moral primacy of the good and judicious use of the political possibility of strong leadership” (Ci 2014: 221). At the same time, the primacy of the good will not repress liberty but forge “a bracing dialectic” with it. Based on

the current political reality in China, this dialectical relation will clarify the meaning of life under modern conditions of liberty, which means “acceptance of liberty as constitutive of modern life and awareness of its moral and political liabilities in the absence of a dialectical relation with the good” (Ci 2014: 222 f.), and by that identify a way to integrate liberty into the Chinese political and moral reality and to solve the problems caused by the gaping void of morals or values.

Apparently, this proposal aims to coordinate the liberal aspect with China’s current condition, in which a democratic conception of political rule hardly plays a role. In its most realistic form it could be viewed as an undemocratic liberal concept in which liberty is guaranteed by a constitutional framework. But, once undemocratic liberalism is realized, what would be the probability that the Chinese state would automatically be on the path to democratization? This question has been answered by Habermas: “Democratic practices unfold their own political dynamics. Only a constitutional state without democracy, to which we were long enough accustomed in Germany, would suggest a negative answer to Böckenförde’s question: ‘To what extent can a nationally united people live solely from the guarantee of the individual’s freedom, without a unifying bond that precedes this freedom?’” (Habermas 2005: 110 [My Translation]).

Conclusion

Although China has experienced a clearly westernized modernization and secularization process since the beginning of 20th century, the introduction of new terms like “religion” and new understandings of state- and society-building have not eradicated the tradition, but led rather to a mixture of Chinese tradition with modern (socialistic) state construction. This can be clearly observed in the political-religious field. As the religious revival increasingly became a reality and caused intensified political-religious interactions, the logic of dealing with these interactions has continued to be the one that has existed for thousands of years.

This old strategy of regulation is not likely to prove promising in the future and has already led to severe political and social problems. However clear this may be, the future of this highly complex political-religious situation remains unclear. None of the above-mentioned scenarios will be fully realized, just as Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer (2011: 400) point out, the prospects for future political-religious interactions in China “are unfolding simultaneously, and all lead to a greater space for and influence of religiosity

within Chinese society, in a context of ‘distended communism’ that allows a greater space”. This assumption, with its differentiated view of the problems, its opening up of a broad scope for further research, and its hopes with regard to the permanent, reciprocal political-religious provocation for the future of China as a whole, is a good place to bring these reflections on political-religious interactions in China to an end.

References

- Bell, Daniel A. *Zhongguo Xinrujia*. Shanghai Sanlian Shudian. 2010. (贝淡宁. 中国新儒家. 上海三联书店. 2010)
- Chen, Ming. *On Confucian Civil Religion*. (Ed. by Ren Zhong/Liu Ming). Zhongguo Zhengfa Daxue Chubanshe. 2012. (陈明. 儒教之公民宗教说. 中国政法大学出版社. 2012.)
- Ci, Jiwei. *Moral China in the Age of Reform*. Cambridge University Press. 2014.
- Fischer, Karsten. *Die Zukunft einer Provokation. Religion im Liberalen Staat*. Berlin: Berlin University Press, 2009.
- Goossaert, Vincent and David A. Palmer. *The Religious Question in Modern China*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 2011.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *Between Naturalism and Religion*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp. 2005.
- Habermas, Jürgen. “A Consciousness of What is Missed”. *On Belief and Knowledge and the Defeatism of Modern Rationality* (Ed. by Knut Wenzel) Herder, 2007: 47–56.
- Jiang, Qing. *Zhengji Ruxue: Dangdai Ruxue de Zhuanxiang, Tezhi yu Fazhan*. Beijing: Sanlian Chubanshe. 2003. (蒋庆. 政治儒学：当代儒学的转向、特质与发展. 北京：三联出版社. 2003)
- Jochim, Christian. “Carrying Confucianism into the Modern World: The Taiwan Case”. *Religion in Modern Taiwan: Tradition and Innovation in a Changing Society* (Ed. by Philip Clart/ Charles B. Jones), Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003: 48–83.
- Kang, Xiaoguang. “Confucianization: A Future in the Tradition”. *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 73 (1), 2006: 77–120.
- Koenig, Wiebke. “Transformation of Religion and Politik in China”. *Introductory Reflections* (Ed. by Wiebke Koenig/Karl-Fritz Daiber), Würzburg: Ergon, 2008: 11–46.
- Madsen, Richard. “The Upsurge of Religion in China”. *Journal of Democracy*, 21 (4), 2010: 58–71.
- Meyer, Christian. *Religious Policy and the Transformation of Religious Field in PRC on the Example of Falun Gong*, (Ed. by Edith Franke/ Katja Triplett), Berlin: LIT, 2013: 141–165.
- Riesebrödt, Martin. *The Return of Religion. Fundamentalism and the “Conflict of Culture”*. München: C.H. Beck. 2001.

- Stepan, Alfred. "Religion, Democracy, and the 'Twin Tolerations'". *Journal of Democracy* 11, No.4, 2000: 37-57.
- Xu, Jilin. *New Tianxiaism and Chinese Domestic and External Order*. (Ed. by Xu Jilin/Liu Qing). Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2014: 3-25. (许纪霖. 新天下主义与中国的内外秩序. 上海人民出版社. 2014).
- Yao, Zhongqiu. *Refinding Confucianism*. Changsha: Hunan Renmin Chubanshe. 2012. (姚中秋. 重新发现儒家. 湖南人民出版社. 2012).
- Zhang, Guangsheng. *Wenming-Guojia de Zijue: Zhongguo Daolu yu Zhongguo Zhengzhi Huayu Jiangou. Zhejiang Shehui Kexue*. 2017. (张广生. "文明-国家"的自觉: 中国道路与中国政治话语建构. 浙江社会科学.2017).

**BELT AND
ROAD INITIATIVE**

Where the Grass is Greener. Bulgaria's Infrastructure and China's BRI

Richard T. Griffiths¹

Abstract

Bulgaria is the poorest of the current member states of the European Union. The reasons for this stretch back several centuries and it is illusory to pretend that there is a simple solution to the country's development problems. China's Belt and Road initiative has the potential to lighten this burden of history and to facilitate a path towards a faster economic growth and market integration. For Bulgaria and the Balkans China's main contribution lies in the provision of infrastructure and offering a model of zonal development (the latter reinforced by the prospect of industrial FDI by Chinese firms). These initiatives may also facilitate access to China's growing markets. Indeed, China and Bulgaria have recently raised their relationship to that of 'strategic partnership' intended to signal a new commitment to mutually beneficial development in a multi-polar world. How significant are these developments for Bulgaria? To answer this question, one must ask who or what else is providing these inputs and to assess the degree to which those of China quantitatively or qualitatively differ. The obvious counter-model is the European Union. It too has provided both infrastructural improvement and market access, and western firms have invested in increasing business capital. Moreover, Bulgaria is politically integrated as an equal partner in decision-making in the largest single market on earth. Once we have ascertained the scale and scope of China's contribution to Bulgaria's development, and that of the Balkans, we still have to ask whether, together or apart, these initiatives are likely to work in transforming the economic prospects of the region. This involves an assessment of the other social, economic and institutional impediments to growth and development. Only the outcome of such an exercise can determine how, and to what extent, China's Belt and Road initiative contributes to the region's economic development.

Keywords: China, Belt and Road Initiative, Bulgaria, Balkans, European Union, Central and Eastern Europe

There is a saying in English that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. It suggests a person who is dissatisfied with his/her own lot, and

¹ Keynote speaker to Conference on China and the World, Sofia University, Bulgaria, Dec 12–13th, 2019.

looking elsewhere for improvement. I sometimes get that feeling with the former communist states of central and eastern Europe (CEE), and certainly after the 16+1 arrangements threw China into the equation. China seems to have become a new source of opportunity for these countries or, at the very least, a counter narrative to that used to describe the European Union (EU). I had a feeling, too, that academics found it more exciting to write about the relationship of the CEE countries with China and its Belt and Road initiative (BRI) than they are to deal with their relationship with the EU. To test my hunch, I set Google Scholar to search for publications since 2013 and entered the search terms 'Bulgaria' and 'European Union'. This delivered 34,300 hits. I repeated the exercise substituting 'China' for 'European Union' and was rewarded by no less than 66,400 hits (May 2020). This is not the fault of the citizens of Bulgaria. Rather it is just one example of how the EU is failing in the projection of its soft power even towards its own members. This, in turn, is a reflection of its inability to articulate and pursue an agreed long-term strategy. To the extent that it has a vision, this is shared largely by an educated elite since it lacks the language or the emotional charge to seize the popular imagination. Nonetheless, most of the CEE countries seem to hold both the EU and China almost equally in high regard. In this respect Bulgaria is quite exceptional, with 61 per cent having a positive attitude of the EU and 55 per cent being favourably disposed towards China.² In this paper, I will measure the promise and achievement of the BRI in Bulgaria and juxtapose it against the benefits Bulgaria gains from EU membership.

China's BRI was announced, almost out of the blue, in September 2013 when president Xi Jinping addressed the leaders of the Central Asian republics. Recalling the spirit of the ancient silk road, he offered a five-pronged approach for its revival. Four of those will be relevant for this analysis (the one on currency convertibility cannot be realised solely within this context). These points were:

- political cooperation,
- improved transport,
- trade facilitation, and
- people-to-people exchanges.

² Eurostat, Standard Eurobarometer, 92, 2019, 8-9. Url: <https://ec.europa.eu/comfrontoffice/publicopinionmobile/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/surveyKy/2255> Pew Research Centre, 5.12.2019. Url: https://www.pewresearch.org/global/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/12/PG_2019.12.05_Balance-of-Power_FINAL.pdf. The main exception among the eight CEE countries common to both surveys were the Czech and Slovak Republics whose citizens were not enamoured by either.

Although the speech was not immediately relevant for Central and Eastern Europe, soon made clear that these countries, too, were to be included within its scope. In the following paragraphs we will examine each of these in turn.

Political Cooperation

The institutional context within which the facilities of the BRI would be available to Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans lay in the 16+1 format that had been conceived and implemented the previous year. This had already committed the partners to regular political discourse, cooperation in improving infrastructure, transport and logistics, and the promotion of increased connectivity, trade and investment (ambitions almost identical with those of the BRI itself). At the 16+1 meeting in November 2013 Beijing made clear that it would bring the '16' into the BRI framework. It showed that it meant business by agreeing to cooperate in the finance and construction of interesting infrastructural projects. Almost immediately China picked up on a suggestion to construct a 350 kms high speed rail connection between Bucharest and Budapest. The following year Serbia, Hungary and China signed a memorandum of understanding giving it effect. China agreed to fund 85 per cent of the estimated cost of \$2.89 billion through concessional, low-interest loans. Although the project has since encountered difficulties, it opened an interesting perspective for the poorer, cash-strapped countries in central and eastern Europe.³

At the 16+1 forum in Suzhou in November 2015, Bulgaria became the third country in Europe to sign a memorandum of understanding committing it to helping to promote the objectives of the BRI.⁴ Then, in July 2019, when President Rumen Radev visited China, the two countries raised the status of their relationship to that of a 'strategic partnership'.⁵ Although these are achievements that tend to be lauded by both sides, it is difficult to know how much importance should be attached to them. I apologise for being sceptical, but the simple fact that, by the end of 2016, China had already signed strategic

³ I. Karásková (ed.) *Empty shell no more: China's growing footprint in Central and Eastern Europe*, Prague, 2020. Url: https://chinaobservers.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CHOICE_Empty-shell-no-more.pdf; *Eu-China Investments: Solving the 16+1 Equation*, Clingendael Spectator, 20.11.2017. Url: <https://spectator.clingendael.org/en/publication/eu-china-investments-solving-161-equation>; A. Brînză. 'China and the Budapest-Belgrade Railway Saga', *The Diplomat*, 28.4.2020.

⁴ Hungary and Romania had signed six months earlier. Several other countries signed at the same time as had Bulgaria.

⁵ China-CEE Institute announcement, 6.8.2019. Url: <https://china-cee.eu/2019/08/06/bulgaria-external-relations-briefing-bulgaria-and-china-establishing-strategic-partnership-relations/>

partnership agreements with almost half of the countries with which it held diplomatic relationships speaks volumes by itself.⁶

Contrast this with the relationship that Bulgaria enjoys since 2007 with its partners within the EU. With the other member states, and its elected members of the European Parliament, Bulgaria helps shape all EU policies. The corollary, of course, is that it is also bound by these EU decisions. Membership of the ‘single market’ gives the country unfettered access to the markets of the other member states and the freedom for its workers to seek employment in any EU country. In addition, it enjoys access to policy instruments that involve transfer payments in its favour of up to three percent of its GDP.⁷

Improved Transport Infrastructure

The state of Bulgaria’s transport infrastructure is pretty lamentable by European standards. In 2019 the Global Competitiveness Report, issued each year by the World Economic Forum, gave its transport infrastructure an overall ranking of 68th among the 141 countries surveyed. Roads performed relatively badly, not so much because of the extent of the network (which ranked 67th) but because of the quality of the roads themselves (which ranked no higher than 102nd). Rail managed much better, with the network connectivity earning ranked 26th, but this was dragged back with a ranking of 68th for the quality. Bulgaria quite clearly needs more infrastructure but, perhaps more importantly, an upgrade of the existing networks.⁸

Because railways will not just part of the problem, but also part of the solution later in this chapter, it is worth exploring the issue further. Bulgar-

⁶ Li, Q. and Ye, M. “China’s emerging partnership network: what, who, where, when and why”, *International Trade, Politics and Development*, 3, 2, 2019, pp. 66-81. Url: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b52a/a5e9a82cb92bffee7af0e0a02e77aa6f4660.pdf>. See also A, Michalski, *Diplomacy in a Changing World Order: The Role of Strategic Partnerships*, Stockholm, 2019. Url: <https://www.ui.se/globalassets/ui.se-eng/publications/ui-publications/2019/ui-paper-no.-10-2019.pdf>

⁷ For a short summary, from a not unbiased source, see ‘Bulgaria celebrates 10 years in the EU’, *Panorama*, 60, 2017, 8–15. Url: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/panorama/pdf/mag60/mag60_en.pdf.

⁸ World Economic Forum, *The Global Competitiveness Report 2019*. Url: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf The Index uses a combination of ‘hard’(observable) and ‘soft’ (elite opinion-based) data, which makes them susceptible to criticism, especially where the close differences in scores make for large differences in rankings. However viewed, these scores for Bulgaria are not good. For a recent critique see: D. Kiselakova e.a. ‘Competitiveness and sustainable growth analysis of EU countries with the use of Global Indexes methodology’, *Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Issues*, 5,3,2018, 581–599.

ia has a railways network of 4030 kms, but only 2870 kms (71 per cent) is electrified and only 900 kms (22 per cent) is double track.⁹ These are important deficiencies, since lack of electrification limits the speed of trains and single-track lines restrict capacity and contribute to delays. The length of the network is the same as it was almost a decade ago when calculations were made that about 530 km of lines could be scrapped, ‘with very minimal impacts on people’s transport needs, and with significant positive impacts on the level of taxpayers’ contribution to sustain these unutilized or little utilized lines.’ At that time the state authorities that managed the network, and most of the trains, were accused of making Bulgaria’s railways one of the least productive railways in the EU. ‘They are overstaffed, they have obsolete rolling stock, railway infrastructure is generally in poor condition, and the significant subsidies... are not always efficiently used.’¹⁰ Since then little seems to have changed. Last December, an article in *Банкеръ Daily* lamented, ‘Slowly and slowly the railway transport in our country is moving and trying to modernize. Money is set aside from the state budget and from European operational programs, but it seems that things are not visibly changing. In the past year we have counted several projects for over one billion levs, but we still do not believe that anything can change. Or rather, it seems to us that we are simply lagging behind the dynamic time around us. We want to be a railway connection, we expect the Silk Road to pass from here, but ... we are lagging behind’.¹¹

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) estimated that for the five years 2018–2022 Bulgaria’s transport infrastructure would need €3.13 billion a year (measured at 2010 prices and exchange rates), equivalent to 7.3 per cent of its GDP. Half of this sum would be needed to make up the deficiency of previous years and a further 35 per cent was necessary for maintenance for the existing capital stock.¹² The European Union has tried to help. In the five years after accession (2007–2013) it invested

⁹ National Statistical Institute. Url: <https://www.nsi.bg/en/content/7191/length-railway-network>

¹⁰ ACROSSEE (2014) *Assessment of Available Infrastructure Capacity (Rail And Road) with focus on bottlenecks*. 32–33. Url: <http://www.southeast-europe.net/document.cmt?id=1236>

¹¹ *Банкеръ Daily*, 17.12.2019 (Наливат над 1.3 млрд. лв. в жп проекти с европейско финансиране) Url: <https://www.banker.bg/upravlenie-i-biznes/read/nalivat-nad-13-mlrd-lv-v-jp-proekti-s-evropeisko-finansirane>.

¹² European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Transition Report 2017-2018, Sustaining Growth*, 53–55. Url: <https://www.ebrd.com/documents/ocf/pdf-transition-report-201718-english.pdf>. The author is grateful to the EBRD for providing the disaggregated data that allowed the calculations to be made for Bulgaria.

€300 million pa in the transport infrastructure (all of it in the form of grants) with the Bulgarian government adding €56.5 million. It helped upgrade of 345 kms of railways (about 8 per cent of the network) and it built 310 kms of new roads as well extending the metro line in the capital.¹³ In the following years, the annual level of spending has remained almost unchanged, divided equally between road and rail.¹⁴

These are generous sums, bearing in mind that they do not have to be reimbursed, but they represent only ten per cent of Bulgaria's needs. This may help explain the attraction of using China to supplement existing spending levels. However, aside from the fact that China seems to show little inclination for such ventures in Bulgaria, there are two problems with this alternative. The first is that China's loans are usually accompanied by a demand that the projects use Chinese contractors. However, in the case of state-owned enterprises, EU competition rules require that these be opened to public tender. This is the reason the Hungarian leg of the Bucharest-Budapest railway has stalled.¹⁵ The second problem is that the loans are usually contracted with the government and have to be repaid. Unless the investment makes a profit (which has been the exception rather than the rule for Bulgarian railways¹⁶) the government will need to find the funding either from tax income, or by renewed borrowing on the open market.

China has started to engage with Bulgarian infrastructure, In 2018 China Exim Bank loaned Navibulgar, the country's largest ship owner, \$94 million for the order of six 45,000 dwt bulk carriers from Chinese yards.¹⁷ Potentially more interesting in this regard is the decision in April 2019 by the port of Varna to award a €120 million contract to the Logistics Center-Varna EAD and the China National Mechanical Engineering Corporation (Sinomach) to

¹³ European Commission, *Transport, Final report. WORK PACKAGE 5 Ex post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes 2007-2013, focusing on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF)*, Brussels, 2016, 28. Url: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/de/information/publications/evaluations/2016/transport-final-report-work-package-5-ex-post-evaluation-of-cohesion-policy-programmes-2007-2013-focusing-on-the-european-regional-development-fund-erdf-and-the-cohesion-fund-cf.

¹⁴ EU, CEF, Project database. Url: <https://ec.europa.eu/inea/connecting-europe-facility/cef-transport/projects-by-country>.

¹⁵ Z. Vörös, 'Who benefits from the Chinese-built Hungary-Serbian Railway?', *The Diplomat*, 4.1.2018

¹⁶ Novinite, 6.3.2019 (Bulgarian Railway Company Plans to Invest BGN 71 Million to Improve Service). Url: <https://www.novinite.com/articles/195599/Bulgarian+Railway+Company+Plans+to+Invest+BGN+71+Million+to+Improve+Service>

¹⁷ Splash247. 10.7.2018 Url: <https://splash247.com/navibulgar-secures-chinese-financing-for-six-newbuildings/>

jointly develop new infrastructure in the port. The Chinese company would be the main contractor, responsible for the construction and installation¹⁸. We will return to this development later in the paper.

Trade Facilitation

Addressing the China-Bulgaria Business Forum in Beijing in January 2020, deputy PM Mariyana Nikolova said that from 2006 to 2019, bilateral trade volume between the two countries increased 12-fold and that China had become Bulgaria's second largest export partner outside the EU. Nikolova suggested that Bulgaria could be a gateway and a bridge for Chinese companies to enter the EU market.¹⁹ In 2019 China was Bulgaria's seventh largest source of imports, and its eight largest market for exports, accounting for accounting for 4.8 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively of the total. In both cases Germany was the largest trading partner, accounting for 12.8 percent and 14.8 per cent for imports and exports, respectively. The question that needs answering is whether this performance with China is good or bad.

One way of measuring this is to employ the data for 'trade costs', first published by the World Bank in 2016, and upgraded since to cover the period up to 2017.²⁰ What the 'trade costs' exercise does is to measure the size of transactions within the country and to compare that with the size of transactions with its partners. The presumption is that by buying abroad, customers will pay more and therefore consume less. Therefore, the more a country prefers to trade with itself than with a partner, the higher will be the so-called 'trade costs'. The World Bank then converts this to a 'tariff equivalent' – the higher price of foreign goods that would produce this differential. This higher price will come about because of transport costs to the border, the border costs on leaving the country, the transport costs between countries and the border costs at the frontiers of transit countries, the border costs at the importing countries (including any tariffs) and, finally the transport and distribution costs to the final destination. None of these factors are measured individually and,

¹⁸ BNR News, 23.4.2019 (Водеща китайска строителна компания подписа договор за разширяване на пристанище Варна). Url: <https://bnr.bg/post/101110585/vodeshta-kitaiska-stroitelna-kompania-podpisa-dogovor-za-razshiravane-na-pristanishte-varna>

¹⁹ CGTN News 16.1.2020. (China, Bulgaria strengthen cooperation in various industries). Url: <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-01-16/China-Bulgaria-strengthen-cooperation-in-various-industries-NiLKdXSRby/index.html>

²⁰ The original dataset is here. Url: <https://www.unescap.org/resources/escap-world-bank-trade-cost-database>. The updated version is 20190604-ESCAP-WB-tradecosts-dataset seems subsequently to have been removed.

although trade costs occur in trade in both directions, the calculation makes no statement about which of the partners is responsible.²¹

In 2007, 'trade costs' for agricultural and manufactured goods (i.e. excluding raw materials and energy) for trade with China were equivalent to a tariff of 171 per cent. By 2017 that figure had fallen to 118.4 per cent, but with most of the fall occurring before the announcement of the BRI. This fall in trade costs represents an improvement, but there is still a considerable way to go. For example, in 2017 China's trade costs with Belgium is 78.6 per cent and with Germany, 72.9 per cent.²² This difference could be a reflection of the fact that both are producers of, and markets for, higher value-added goods. A more probable explanation lies in the fact that many of the China-Europe express freight train lines end in West Germany, and that both countries have North Sea ports where the (even cheaper) sea-borne containers arrive. Bulgaria's trade costs with the EU countries have also fallen and often to lower levels. This, of course, is because they are all closer, and because Bulgaria has a single market arrangement with all of them with no tariffs and no border controls.

People-to-People Exchanges

There are various ways of measuring people-to-people exchanges, none of them particularly satisfactory. One is simply to look at the number of foreign visitors registering at a hotel or similar establishment. In 2018 Bulgaria recorded 36,000 visitors from China (0.95 per cent of the total) compared with 2,745,000 (72.1 per cent) from EU countries.²³ China has made 22 full bachelor or master degree scholarships available for Bulgaria for 2018–2019²⁴ and another 30 stipends for training and short courses for the same academic year²⁵, and 20 full bachelor or master degree scholarships – for 2020–2021²⁶.

²¹ For a quick introduction see OECD/WTO, *Aid for Trade at a Glance. Reducing Trade Costs for Inclusive, Sustainable Growth*, 2015. Url: https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/aid4trade15_e.pdf. For a more critical analysis see M.O. Moore, *Trade Costs and International Trade Flows, methodologies, data and empirical evidence*, RSCAS Working Paper, 2018/05. Url: https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/52006/RSCAS_2018_05.pdf?sequence=1

²² See note 15.

²³ UN World Tourism Organisation. Interactive database. Url: <https://www.e-unwto.org/toc/unwtotfb/current>

²⁴ 22 Scholarships, 2018-2019. (22 стипендии, Китай, 2018–2019). Url: <https://mon.bg/bg/100275>

²⁵ Stipends for training and short courses, China, 2018-2019. (Стипендии за обучение и специализация, Китай, 2018–2019). Url: <https://mon.bg/bg/100273>

²⁶ January 20, 2020. China scholarship competition awards (До 20 януари 2020 г. Конкурс за стипендии, отпуснати от Китай). Url: <https://mon.bg/bg/100766>

By contrast, in 2018, the European Union's ERASMUS scheme for student mobility gave grants that allowed 2,660 Bulgarian students to study for a period at another EU university.²⁷ There are two Confucius Institutes in Bulgaria²⁸, which teach Chinese classes in four schools as well as supporting teaching the language at two universities. However, both Germany and the UK have their own cultural institutes in the country. The final, and possibly the most telling indicator, is that today some 900,000 Bulgarians live and work in other EU countries.²⁹

Challenges and Opportunities

However, FDI has dropped off a cliff since 2007. Total FDI into Bulgaria reached a peak of €8,4 billion in 2007 before dropping to €2,4 billion in 2009 and, with a single exception in 2015 (only just) it has remained below that level ever since. Between 2009 and 2018, the average level of FDI was €1.6 bln.³⁰ Much of this has to do with the usual reasons advanced – that Bulgaria has an inefficient economy, an ineffective market and suffers generally from poor governance. These factors would apply to potential investment from China as well, but with several added considerations. China's FDI is directed towards the richer countries in Europe, with a particular focus on firms making high(er) value-added products. By coincidence, these countries are also those with the most developed markets for those products.³¹ It is true that Bulgaria has many high-quality agricultural exports to offer Chinese consumers, but they are not produced at a scale that any Chinese buyer is likely to demand. Although at the recent China-Bulgaria business forum, China's Vice Minister of Commerce Yu Jianhua, commented on the attraction of Bulgaria's low labour costs and favourable tax regimes³², the truth is that China can count on access to those far closer to home.

Not everything is negative, however. I mentioned earlier that Bulgaria was not helped by the fact that the rail freight routes from China travelled most-

²⁷ *Erasmus+ Annual Report, 2018*. Statistical annex. Url: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ae35558f-41b8-11ea-9099-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

²⁸ <https://www.digmandarin.com/confucius-institutes-around-the-world.html>

²⁹ Eurostat, *People on the Move, Statistics on Mobility in Europe*, 2019. Url: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/digpub/eumove/index.html?lang=en>

³⁰ World Bank, Foreign Direct Investment, Net Inflows. interactive database. Url: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.CD.WD?locations=EU>

³¹ M.X. Chen and C. Loin, Foreign Investment across the Belt and Road Patterns, Determinants and Effects, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, 8607, 2018. Url: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/394671539175518256/pdf/WPS8607.pdf>

³² See note 14.

ly through Poland and Germany before dispersing their cargoes to their end destinations. However, there are factors at work that may erode the preference for the so-called ‘northern route’. The first is that the Chinese government is trying to force the local authorities in China to roll back the subsidies that they pay to attract custom to their own city. It has been estimated that these may be as high as covering half the cost of transport.³³ Second, China is concerned by the high charges and low speeds of freight on that part of the journey made on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Certainly, the kilometre charges for trains using part of the Trans-Siberian railway are much higher than if trains were to cover their entire journey that way.³⁴



There is a middle route available which is both shorter and potentially much cheaper. The problem is that it involves crossing the Caspian Sea, which in turn means breaking up the train and reassembling it on the other side. Moreover, because of the uncertain weather conditions there are heightened prospects of delays. This creates security issues (tampering with containers, theft and smuggling) while the containers are at rest. The route also involves

³³ J. Mardell, 'Trade Infrastructure Investment or Propaganda Tool?' Berlin Policy Journal, 10.4.2019. Url: <https://berlinpolicyjournal.com/trade-infrastructure-investment-or-propaganda-tool/> F. Feng et al. China Railway Express Subsidy Model Based on Game Theory under “the Belt and Road” Initiative, Sustainability, 12, 2020. Url: <https://pp.bme.hu/tr/article/download/10743/7365>

³⁴ P. Goble, Russian Railway System in Trouble, Threatening China Trade and Russian Economy, Eurasian Daily Monitor, 17, 26, 25.2.2020. Url: <https://jamestown.org/program/russian-railway-system-in-trouble-threatening-china-trade-and-russian-economy/>

negotiating transit arrangements dealing with a new set of countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey) and an unproven record of efficiency and compliance. Finally, until recently, the middle route involved coping with an inadequate infrastructure. This has all begun to change. Ports have been relocated and modernised in both Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan and a new railway has been completed between Baku and the newly constructed Turkish logistics hub in Kars. Trains could then continue to Europe either by rail through Turkey or by crossing the Black Sea.³⁵ Transit times have started to tumble. Recently a fully loaded freight train took fifteen days to make the journey from the China/Kazakhstan border to the West coast of Turkey (Izmir), with the 2,500 kms journey from Baku onwards slashed from 148 hours to only 64 hours.³⁶

The main rail-line passing through Turkey to Europe enters the EU via Bulgaria, and the Turkish government has invested heavily in expanding the freight capacity of that route, including a freight tunnel built under the Bosphorus. The first China-Europe express traveling this route passed through the tunnel en route to Prague in June last year.³⁷ If I were the Bulgarian government I would be planning now to ensure that the country had the capacity to handle the prospective increase in traffic with minimal delay and cost so as to entrench the country's position as first choice of transit. The line from the border to Sofia is already recognised as a core part of Europe's TEN-T network, which gives it priority treatment. The electrification of the line was completed in 2016 and it now matches the EU's minimum speed requirements (160km/h for passenger trains and 100km/h for freight).³⁸ Moreover, it will be quite some time before the railway between Athens, home to the Chinese owned and run port of Piraeus, and Budapest is completed (if ever) and this should leave the coast clear for Bulgaria for the time being.

The second option lies in the Black-Sea crossing. There are three candidates for the position of favoured port. The first are the ports in the Ukraine.

³⁵ R.T. Griffiths, *The New Silk Road. Challenge and Response*, Leiden, 2019, 91–98. There is a third 'southern' route that no one is talking about at the moment. This would avoid all the complications and capacity constraints that challenge the route over the Caspian Sea. However, since it would need to pass through war-torn Afghanistan and sanction-crippled Iran as well as the restive 'Kurdish' regions of Turkey, there is little likelihood of it happening soon.

³⁶ Railfreight.com, 7.7.2020. Url: <https://www.railfreight.com/beltandroad/2020/07/06/new-records-set-on-the-middle-corridor-to-turkey/>. This time included passing through two international frontiers and a gauge change requiring the offload and transfer of all the containers to a new train.

³⁷ Xinhuanet, 11.7.2019 (Turkey welcomes first freight train travelling from China to Europe). Url: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-11/07/c_138534109.htm

³⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/rail-nip/ccs-tsi-bulgaria-en.pdf>

In December 2018 the World Bank and European Union envisaged investing in €425.5 million in improving the facilities in Yuzhny and €333.5 million on upgrading the port of Chornomorsk as well as committing €210 million euro to repair and improvement of the main highway linking the port area with Kiev.³⁹ The second option is the Romanian port of Constanta, which the government is pushing as gateway for freight moving from China to Europe and is lobbying for support of the EBRD in funding the port's expansion.⁴⁰ The port, operated by DP World, already has a capacity for 1 million containers a year, and there is the space available to quadruple that flow. DP World is a major port operator, and it is modernising the logistics of the port in order to turn it into an efficient multi-modal hub.⁴¹ Third, and the smallest of the three options by some considerable margin, is Bulgaria's main port at Varna. It is here that that small initial step by China may pay dividends. In April 2019 the EU China Connectivity Platform agreed on a joint study of the rail infrastructure of the BRI, on the selection of priority projects and a joint effort to realise them.⁴²

Bulgaria's chances in this competition hinges on China's willingness to push for the inclusion of Varna in any joint EU-China Program, and even that may not be sufficient. The EU's own integrated TEN-T transport plans are divided into 'core' corridors, which it wants completed by 2030, and which will get priority access to the funds available. There is a second layer, part of what will become a 'comprehensive network', that is only scheduled to be completed by 2050, and will have to wait for EU help. Varna is not a part of the core network. The port is small still, but that need not be a major hurdle if one of the main port-operators (Chinese or otherwise) were to take an interest in its expansion. The real issue lies in the rail connection to Romania. The line from Varna to Ruse is only 230 kms long. It is electrified, but the electricity provision needs upgrading. Worse still only the first 85 kms from the port is double-track. From there to the border is single-track, which will be hopeless

³⁹ Eastern Partnership, *Indicative TEN-T Investment Action Plan*, 2019. Url: https://www.euneighbours.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2019-01/ten-t_iap_web-dec13.pdf

⁴⁰ Xinhuanet, 11.9.2018 (Romania hopes Constanta port to become important hub on the Belt and Road). Url: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-09/11/c_137459208.htm. The Asset, 29.4.2020 (EBRD approves new Romania strategy). Url: <https://www.theasset.com/article/40291/ebrd-approves-new-romania-strategy>.

⁴¹ Port Strategy, 19.8.2019. Url: <https://www.portstrategy.com/news101/port-operations/cargo-handling/constantina-now-targeting-hinterland-demand>. DC Velocity, 11.5.2020. Url: <https://www.dcvelocity.com/articles/45992-dp-world-constantina-upgrades-legacy-terminal-system-transitioning-to-n4-to-improve-operational-funct>

⁴² European Commission, Mobility and Transport, 8.4.2019. Url: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/international/news/2019-04-09-eu-china-summit_en (include pdf. of minutes)

if the line is ever to carry substantial amounts of traffic. Only in December 2018 was the announcement made that work on the Varna-Ruse railway was about to start.⁴³

One should not exaggerate the opportunities for large incomes from the China-Europe freight routes, whether by land or by sea. Each train carries about 82 standard 20-foot containers (or 41–40-foot shipping containers). A busy city-city route would have at most two or three trains a week; others would have difficulty in reaching one train a fortnight. The main advantage in the middle route lies in avoiding Russia, and the possibility of freight disruptions by sanctions imposed by either side. This reason also makes it probable that the Ukraine, with its own bilateral problems with Russia, will be favoured for the Black Sea route, leaving Bulgaria as the main land route to central Europe. The authorities should be developing the necessary infrastructure, not just because it could be part of China's BRI but because the same route would service rail transport for trade with Turkey, the Caucasus and the Middle East.

There are no magic prescriptions for economic development. In the EU, Bulgaria has a partner in which it is treated as an equal and whose aims specifically include the closing of regional inequalities in levels of development. In China it has a partner that is specifically interested in promoting trade and connectivity and in building infrastructure. The government should be alert to the opportunities offered by each for the economic development of the country as whole and resist the temptation to employ funds for prestige projects or electoral gain. In this way the grass is greener regardless of which side of the fence it is located.

References

- Brînză, Andreea. "China and the Budapest-Belgrade Railway Saga". *The Diplomat*, 28.4.2020.
- Kandilarov, Evgeniy. "Bulgaria external relations briefing: BULGARIA AND CHINA – ESTABLISHING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP RELATIONS". *China-CEE Institute announcement*, 6.8.2019.
- Michalski, A. *Diplomacy in a Changing World Order: The Role of Strategic Partnerships*. Stockholm, 2019.
- Li, Q., Ye, M. "China's emerging partnership network: what, who, where, when and why". *International Trade, Politics and Development*, 3.2.2019.
- Vörös, Z. "Who benefits from the Chinese-built Hungary-Serbian Railway?" *The Diplomat*, 4.1.2018

⁴³ Economic.bg News 15.11.2019 (България и Гърция „декларираха интерес“ към жп коридора „Солун-Русе“) Url: <https://www.economic.bg/bg/news/12/balgariya-i-gartsiya-deklariraha-interes-kam-zhp-koridora-solun-ruse.html>

- Moore, M.O. "Trade Costs and International Trade Flows, methodologies, data and empirical evidence". *RSCAS Working Paper*, 05.2018.
- Griffiths, R.T. *The New Silk Road. Challenge and Response*. Leiden, 2019.
- Chen, M.X., Loin, C. "Foreign Investment across the Belt and Road Patterns. Determinants and Effects". *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*, 8607. 2018.
- Mardell, J. "Trade Infrastructure Investment or Propaganda Tool?" *Berlin Policy Journal*, 10.4.2019.
- F. Feng et al. *China Railway Express Subsidy Model Based on Game Theory under "the Belt and Road" Initiative Sustainability*, 12. 2020.
- Goble, P. "Russian Railway System in Trouble, Threatening China Trade and Russian Economy". *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 17, 26. 25.2.2020.

China is Speaking, Who is Listening? The BRI, State Media, and Discourse Power: A Case Study

Natalia Riva

Abstract

In 2013, the year that marked the debut of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) onto the global stage, Xi Jinping urged the enhancement of international discourse power and communication capabilities among the methods to increase China's soft power. The mediatic echo generated around the organization of the first (2017) and second (2019) Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation is a case in point. Taking a selection of related news headlines disseminated by Chinese state-subordinated media outlet Xinhua News Agency for Chinese and foreign audiences as a case study, this paper analyses the official narrative of the BRI. By identifying similarities and differences between representations of the BRI in Chinese and English discourses, also taking into account Xinhua's identity, it aims to identify traits of Beijing's international relations discourse and evaluate its efficiency in articulating China's own worldview.

Keywords: *Yi Dai Yi Lu*; BRI; Xinhua; China's discourse power; *huayuquan*; PRC international relations discourse

Introduction to the case study

The debut of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) onto the global stage in 2013 coincided with Xi Jinping's call for a boost to the external discourse system of the People's Republic of China (PRC) with the aim to "tell the stories of China well, spread the voices of China well, and explain Chinese characteristics well" (Xi Jinping 习近平 2013). The PRC has embarked on a strategy to enhance its soft power since 2007, but this attempt has become more effective under Xi's leadership. It is implemented by leveraging the mechanisms of external propaganda and image-building and through a search for greater discourse power on the global stage (Shambaugh 2015; Lee 2016).

This paper aims to contribute to the analysis of "discourse power" (*huayuquan* 话语权) – a topic often debated in literature on Chinese soft power and foreign affairs (Lynch 2009; Wang 2015; Zhao 2016) – intended as the articulation and spread of China's own worldview and the promotion of

Chinese national interests abroad. By offering a case study on news headlines disseminated by state-run Xinhua News Agency (*Xinhua she* 新华社, hereafter XH) at the time of the organization of the first and second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF), on 14–15 May 2017 and 25–27 April 2019 respectively, it argues that discourse on the BRI officially produced by Beijing can be considered a textual example of its quest for “*huayuquan*”. The analysis focuses on the “*Yi Dai Yi Lu*” *Pindao* (“一带一路”频道, hereafter YDYLPD) website, XH’s online space dedicated to the BRI. It compares headlines drawn from the website’s Chinese and English editions at the time of the two forums in order to identify traits of the PRC’s international relations discourse and evaluate the extent to which the official narrative of the BRI has potential to play a role in strengthening China’s discourse power.

The choice of XH stems from its “multifaceted organizational identity” (Mottura 2017: 95), with the hypothesis being that the state media’s news production is still profoundly controlled by the Chinese Party-state but not immune to the challenges posed by ever-growing exposure to market forces and globalization trends (Hong 2011; Xin 2012). XH controls the incoming and outgoing information flow, while its website is the spearhead of news diffusion targeting the global public (Mottura 2014: 196). Nonetheless, even when trying to enhance China’s global influence and shaping international public opinion, the state media are still required to protect government interests and the Chinese Communist Party’s legitimacy at home and abroad (Xi Jinping’s 19 August speech revealed? 2013).

YDYLPD is embedded in the same media environment as XH’s. Available by clicking on the “*Yi Dai Yi Lu*” (一带一路) and “B&R Initiative” icons in the Xinhuanet 新华网 (<http://www.xinhuanet.com/>) and Xinhuanet (<http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/>) news portals respectively, it has been online since 17 June 2016. As reported by XH upon its official launch, establishing a BRI-specific platform in Chinese and foreign languages was envisioned as an important factor in the increase of the influence and dissemination power of the XH brand abroad, thus accelerating the pace of the Chinese media’s overseas strategy (Xinhuanet 新华网 2016). Currently, the website is available in ten languages: Chinese, English, Arabic, Spanish, French, Russian, Portuguese, German, Japanese, and Korean.

Data and methods

Investigating YDYLPD’s contents targeted to different audiences can shed light on how an ideologically-driven and market-oriented news agency

attempts to shape discourse on the BRI and the PRC’s international relations. It must be clarified that the two versions of the website present slightly different layouts. This study’s data were collected from their “latest announcements” (*zui xin bobao* 最新播报, <http://www.xinhuanet.com/silkroad/zxbb.htm>) and “latest news” (<http://www.xinhuanet.com/silkroad/english/latest-news.htm>) sections in the two eight-day periods between 13–20 May 2017 and 24 April–1 May 2019. The corpus includes a total of 215 Chinese and 326 English headlines for the first period and 136 and 236 respectively for the second. The larger amount of English headlines – with the number of Chinese items being higher only on 18 May 2017 and 28 April 2019 – could be explained in light of the very intent behind the launch of the website in different languages which is, as mentioned, to increase the influence and dissemination power of the XH brand abroad. Chronologically, there is a considerable decrease in number of headlines published in both languages (-79 for Chinese and -63 for English).

The choice of headlines is motivated on the basis of their function as “framing devices” which, by presenting the news reports’ most relevant information, define from the very beginning the topic of the subsequent texts. As Pan and Kosicki (1993: 59) point out, “a headline is the most salient cue to activate certain semantically related concepts in readers’ minds: it is thus the most powerful framing device of syntactical structure”.

As the English headlines do not necessarily correspond to the translation of the Chinese ones, all data were organized based on the publication date. Tables 1 and 2 show the distribution of items in the two sub-corpora.

Table 1. Distribution of headlines in the 2017 sub-corpus

Date	Chinese	English
13/05/2017	36	68
14/05/2017	56	96
15/05/2017	54	81
16/05/2017	30	45
17/05/2017	13	14
18/05/2017	18	6
19/05/2017	8	11
20/05/2017	0	5

Table 2. Distribution of headlines in the 2019 sub-corpus

Date	Chinese	English
24/04/2019	43	56
25/04/2019	10	76
26/04/2019	47	63
27/04/2019	17	36
28/04/2019	14	12
29/04/2019	3	10
30/04/2019	0	6
01/05/2019	2	4

The analysis combines the observation of the choice of topics covered and communicative goals pursued in the two sub-corpora with the examination of the representation of actors and lexicon utilized, as done in previous studies (He and Zhou 2015; Wang and Chen 2015; Mottura 2017). It is thus possible to empirically classify the linguistic choices found in the two sup-corpora based on five thematic frameworks. Five corresponding analytical dimensions, in turn, function as bases upon which similarities and discrepancies between the two data groups can be assessed.

Analysis

The thematic frameworks and corresponding analytical dimensions identified include: 1) historical legacy – historical and cultural dimension; 2) guidelines and principles – theoretical and conceptual dimension; 3) China’s position – domestic and foreign policy dimension; 4) Xi Jinping’s role – ideological and propagandistic dimension; and 5) official media’s stance – political discourse dimension. This paper focuses on the ideological-propagandistic and political discourse dimensions as they are rich in findings useful to answer the study’s research questions.

Ideological-propagandistic dimension

President Xi Jinping’s leading role in all activities organized in the context of the BRFs is reflected in the large number of Chinese and English headlines portraying the leader as an actor or producer of a message, as shown by the following items reporting highlights of his 2017 and 2019 speeches:

习近平：要将“一带一路”建成和平之路、繁荣之路、开放之路、创新之路、文明之路(14/05/2017)

习近平：共建“一带一路”为世界经济的增长开辟了新空间
(26/04/2019)

President Xi: Why I proposed Belt and Road (13/05/2017)

Belt and Road opens up new space for global economic growth: Xi
(26/04/2019)

In both the sub-corpora, Xi Jinping's name is extensively repeated as a subject, accompanied by verbs such as *huijian* 会见, *chuxi* 出席, *fabiao* 发表 etc. and “launches”, “calls”, “urges”, “says”, “highlights”, “meets” etc. Moreover, the English data group contains headlines such as the following:

Enter the Dragon: Xi Jinping's opening address to B&R forum
(14/05/2017)

Xinhua Insight: Xi's Belt and Road vision points way to global prosperity
(14/05/2017)

Xinhua Insight: From G20 Hangzhou Summit to Belt and Road forum, Xi's global prominence on the rise (16/05/2017)

China Focus: Riding on fruitful forum, confident Xi takes Belt & Road to next level (16/05/2017)

Xi Focus: Xi opens up new horizons for high-quality B&R cooperation
(26/04/2019)

In the first example, China – or perhaps Xi himself – is represented as a “dragon”, recalling the country's glorious imperial past. While the analysis of the other dimensions identified in the discourse produced by both Chinese and English headlines shows an overall representation of the role of China in the BRI as a partner, in relation to Xi the expressions “global prominence” and “on the rise” are used. The leader is described as “confident”, and so is the way in which XH pushes its own narrative of Xi's role in the promotion of the BRI. XH's ideology-driven nature emerges when stating Xi's rightful place among the world leaders. A clear stance is taken in relation to his role as the “father” of the BRI, for example through the use of the possessive “Xi's Belt and Road”. All the benefits this project will produce for the international community – i.e. “global prosperity” – appear to be thanks to Xi's vision.

The tag “Xi Focus” represents a novelty in the 2019 data group. It is used two other times on 26 April with the purpose of drawing attention to certain aspects of Xi's initiative or convey XH's stance on the matter:

Xi Focus-Backgrounder: Belt and Road Initiative progress

Xi Focus-Commentary: Building more consensus on Belt and Road Initiative

Political discourse dimension

Along the same line, headlines belonging to the genre of news commentary (*xinwen pinglun* 新闻评论) (Lupano 2019) deserve a specific mention. Editorials (*shelun* 社论) and commentaries on current affairs (*shiping* 时评) are interesting subgenres of news commentary: the former are the expression of the media outlet's position, while the latter are pieces written by external commentators and could theoretically diverge from the official discourse (Lupano 2019: 60-5). The Chinese sub-corpus includes only one editorial (*sheping* 社评). Yet, there are numerous commentaries on current affairs or pieces written by XH or People's Daily (Renmin Ribao 人民日报) commentators. In addition to offering relevant insights, these headlines generally praise the positive aspects characterizing the BRI and China's "open" position within the initiative:

新华时评：让务实举措助力“一带一路”行稳致远 (14/05/2017)

新华社评论员：更开放的中国为世界带来新机遇 (27/04/2019)

人民日报评论员：中国市场世界机遇 (28/04/2019)

In the English sub-corpus, the general label "commentary" is used with no reference to the source being XH or the People's Daily. While in 2017 these headlines hinted overall to the explanatory nature of the articles, containing questions or statements in response to projected questions, in 2019 the tone appears to be more assertive even when addressing potential uncertainties:

Commentary: Is China's B&R initiative just hegemony in disguise?
(13/05/2017)

Commentary: Will the Belt and Road Initiative cause clash of cultures?
(13/05/2017)

Commentary: West needs to let go of outdated Neocolonialism mindset
(25/04/2019)

Commentary: No debt traps on Belt and Road (25/04/2019)

XH's messages are influenced by the doubts the international audience might have in regard to the purposes behind the BRI. By discussing concepts such as "hegemony", "clash of cultures", "Neocolonialism", "debt traps" etc., XH not only attempts to address the foreign readers' expectations but also draws on a lexicon which is familiar to this particular target audience, thus arousing its interest while appeasing its worries.

In regard to the ideological-propagandistic and political discourse dimensions, the media narrative created both in Chinese and English seems to follow the Party-state's official line, with the English headlines showing an even greater determination in producing assertive statements targeted to the international audience.

Closing remarks

YDYLPD is a valuable example showing how China has embarked on a strategy aimed at enhancing its media's global presence and ability to shape foreign public opinion. By striving to produce its own narrative of the BRI – China's very own global project – the website reflects the PRC leadership's determination to end the West's control on international relations discourse.

But how favourable are the odds of China winning the ongoing “discourse war” (Shambaugh 2015) with the West? As a matter of fact, bringing back the Silk Road spirit (*silu jingshen* 丝路精神) and promoting a new (*xin* 新) vision for common (*gong* 共) prosperity, YDYLPD contributes to the construction of Beijing's international relations discourse. However, this study has also highlighted aspects of this communicative attempt that may still lack efficiency in helping XH obtain the attention of the international audience. The narrative conveyed by YDYLPD heavily reflects XH's role of a mouthpiece of political power. Ideology prevails over market with the result of producing an example of what Cao Qing (2014: 11) has defined “closed texts” which contribute to maintaining political stability and perpetrating the Party-state's legitimacy through the use of dominant discursive strategies. While expected when dealing with internal propaganda, this can be considered a dangerous weakness of China's external communication methods.

In the long run, the credibility issue which may consequently arise on the global stage could prove to be harmful to the country's soft power strategy and ultimately jeopardize, rather than facilitate, the enhancement of China's discourse power.

References

- Cao, Qing. “Introduction: Legitimation, resistance and discursive struggles in contemporary China”. *Discourses, Politics and Media in Contemporary China*. Eds. Qing Cao, Hailong Tian, and Paul Chilton. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014, 1–21.
- He, Xianzhong and Xulu Zhou, “Contrastive Analysis of Lexical Choice and Ideologies in News Reporting the Same Accidents between Chinese and American Newspapers”. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 5(11), (2015): 2356–2365. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0511.21>.
- Hong, Junhao. “From the World's Largest Propaganda Machine to a Multipurposed Global News Agency: Factors in and Implications of Xinhua's Transformation since 1978”. *Political Communication* 28 (3), (2011): 377–393. doi: 10.1080/10584609.2011.572487.
- Lee, Paul SN. “The rise of China and its contest for discursive power”. *Global Media and China* 1(1-2), (2016): 102–120.

- Lupano, Emma. "News and Views: Definitions and Characteristics of Genres in Chinese Journalism". *Emerging Chinese Theory and Practice of Media*. Eds. Hugo de Burgh, Emma Lupano, and Bettina Mottura. *Languages Cultures Mediation* 5, (2018): 51–70.
- Lynch, Daniel. "Chinese Thinking on the Future of International Relations: Realism as the Ti, Rationalism as the Yong?" *The China Quarterly* 197, (2009): 87-107. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27756424>.
- Mottura, Bettina. "Mediazione e stampa cinese in lingua inglese". *Lingue culture mediazioni* 1(1-2), (2014): 187–206.
- Mottura, Bettina. "Reporting on Chinese Politics. A Genre-based Analysis on Xinhua News Agency Dispatch". *Media & Politics. Discourses, Cultures, and Practices*. Eds. Bettina Mottura, Letizia Osti, and Giorgia Riboni. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017, 94–111.
- Pan, Zhongdang and Gerald M. Kosicki. "Framing analysis: An approach to news discourse". *Political Communication*, 10, (1993): 55–75.
- Shambaugh, David. "China's Soft-Power Push". *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2015. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2015-06-16/china-s-soft-power-push>. 09/11/2019.
- Wang, Hung-jen. "Contextualising China's Call for Discourse Power in International Politics". *China: An International Journal* 13(3), (2015): 172–89.
- Wang, Li and Shuzhen Chen. "A Corpus-Based Critical Analysis of Lexical Choices in Sichuan Earthquake by Chinese and American News Media". *Canadian Social Science* 11(7), (2015): 111-16. doi:10.3968/7339.
- Xi Jinping: jianshe shehuizhuyi wenhua qianguo zhuoli tigao guojia wenhua ruanshili 习近平:建设社会主义文化强国着力提高国家文化软实力 [Xi Jinping: build a socialist cultural great power, strive to enhance the country's cultural soft power]. *Xinhua* 新华网, 31 December 2013. http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-12/31/c_118788013.htm. 09/11/2019.
- Xi Jinping's 19 August speech revealed? (Translation). *China Copyright and media*, 12 November 2013. <https://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2013/11/12/xi-jinpings-19-august-speech-revealed-translation/>. 09/11/2019.
- Xin, Xin. *How the Market is Changing China's News: The Case of Xinhua News Agency*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2012.
- Xinhua "Yi Dai Yi Lu" pindao zhengshi shangxian dazao "xin Silu" zixun fuwu pingtai 新华网“一带一路”频道正式上线打造“新丝路”资讯服务平台 [Xinhua's "Yi Dai Yi Lu" pindao officially online, creating an information service platform for the "new Silk Road"]. *Xinhua* 新华网, 17 June 2016. http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2016-06/17/c_129071239.htm. 09/11/2019.
- Zhao, Kejin. "China's Rise and its Discursive Power Strategy." *Chinese Political Science Review* 1, (2016): 539-64. doi 10.1007/s41111-016-0037-8.

Examining China's Belt and Road Discourse: from Outline Sketches to Fine Line Strokes

Alexander Alexiev
Stefan Ivanchev

Abstract

China's rise is the most important geopolitical event of the 21st century. China's steps towards a centre-stage role in the world with the help of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has been accompanied by a narrative with a large set of specific concepts and slogans. Throughout the initial period (2013-2018) BRI 1.0 was full of fuzzy concepts. Motivation was expressed by proverbs, like "Money is easy to get, but friends are hard to find." Plans were coded in fables, like "The Foolish Old Man Who Moves Mountains." First proclaimed as "China's Project of the Century", supporting regional integration, BRI quickly "evolved into the World's Project of the Century". After widespread criticism of being ambiguous, opaque, and ensnaring, BRI 2.0 (2018–2019) embarked on a course of concept elucidation – from "outline sketching" to "fine line brushwork". The new post-Covid BRI 3.0 (since 2020) is emerging as a Green Digital Silk Road for the "New Era" focused on creating "New Infrastructure" with projects such as 5G, Big Data Centres, and "trade in services on the Internet", instead of the former BRI 1.0 and BRI 2.0 largescale rail and highway infrastructure projects. This paper follows the development of BRI's key discourse themes for the past seven years in an attempt to put together a bigger picture and identify visible trends.

Keywords: China, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Belt and Road Forum (BRF), Green Silk Road, Digital Silk Road, New Development Strategy, Dual Circulation, New Infrastructure, High-Quality Development

Introduction

There is presently no doubt about the ambitions of China to reshape the world. Top Chinese institutions state that "as an emerging power, China has the ability, the will, and the responsibility to contribute wisdom and strength for the improvement of the global governance system." For China, BRI is the platform on which it plans to "provide a new path and direction for "Global

Governance”, deliver “Chinese Solutions” to the world that are “win-win” and even “multi-win”, implement “High-Quality Development” through policies, like “Dual Circulation”, “Supply-Side Structural Reform”, and ultimately “Jointly Build” a “Community of Shared Future for Mankind”. In spite of the large amount of articles and commentaries in the Chinese and foreign media, there still exist “unclear and incomprehensible aspects and even misunderstandings and misinterpretations” about the Belt and Road in the international community and China’s vision of the world in the “New Era”. By examining the narrative of the BRI and taking into account the circumstances, the intensity and the aim to which its concepts have been used, we can try to uncover the roots and implications of its concepts, which the Chinese official propaganda is promoting domestically and internationally, and thus better understand the meaning and motivation behind BRI’s mottoes, models and strategies, and even anticipate its intentions and envision the new world that it is creating.

Methodology

Analysis of the official BRI discourse in this paper is based on selecting and reading relevant speeches of President Xi Jinping and Chinese state media articles, and picking out important recurrent conceptual phrases and labels on the subject of the Belt and Road (B&R), as well as their elaborations and discussions, including relevant commentaries and other publications in the foreign press. Key BRI expressions are then subject to empirical comparative assessment of their importance for certain moments in time, from inception through evolution to eventual replacement with new ones, based on statistical data of their use. This inductive approach allows us to highlight the dynamics of major BRI policies, follow general tendencies in China’s BRI domestic and foreign policy narrative from the project’s initiation in 2013 till present, map out policy priorities, and use these observations as guidelines for drawing a clearer picture of BRI’s past, present and future.

BRI 1.0 (2013–2018)

The BRI narrative begins in 2013 as a projection of China’s domestic economic strategies and the need for regional integration and new globalization policies in the course of “Building a Socialist System with Chinese Characteristics¹”, realizing the “Chinese Dream of the Great Rejuvenation of

¹ (建设中国特色社会主义 Jiànshè Zhōngguó tèshè shèhuìzhǔyì)

the Chinese Nation²”, and achieving China’s “Two Centenary Goals (两个一百年 Liǎng gè yībǎi nián)”, the first of which is “Building a Well-off Society in an All-round Way³” by 2020.

BRI 1.0, Phase 1 (2013-2017) – Connectivity Partnership for Regional Integration with a Global Outlook

On September 7, 2013, at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan, Xi Jinping delivered the inauguration speech for the One Belt (一带 Yīdài) entitled “Promoting People’s Friendship and Creating a Better Future⁴”, advocating the use of innovative cooperation models to jointly pursue the “Silk Road Economic Belt”. (“Xi Jinping’s speech at Nazarbayev University”) The title of President Xi’s speech was a slogan in itself, signifying the first shift in China’s foreign policy – forming a regional integration framework of governance with China at its centre.

On October 3, 2013, at the Indonesian National Assembly, Xi Jinping delivered the second speech entitled “Joining Hands to Build a China-ASEAN Community of Shared Future⁵”, advocating the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to jointly pursue the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, thus introducing the One Road (一路 Yīlù) – the second half of the new package “One Belt One Road”. (“Xi Jinping’s speech at the Indonesian National Assembly”) The latter was presented as a friendly common endeavour between two great Asian neighbours with the help of popular Chinese and local proverbs, like “Money is easy to get, but friends are hard to find⁶”, and “True friends share each other’s hardships (患难与共 Huànnànyǔgòng)”. The prototype of a key concept of the future BRI – “Community of Shared Future” (命运共同体 Mìngyùn gòngtóngtǐ), presented in the title of President Xi Jinping’s speech in Jakarta, signalled the first impetus in China’s foreign policy for regional governance. After the 3rd Plenary Session of the 18th Communist Party’s Central Committee adopted the decision to move forward with the project, and in November 2013 the way was paved for China’s “grand strategy (大战略 Dà zhànluè)” to emerge and go global by 2017. (Rolland 2017: 5–6)

On September 11, 2014, while attending the meeting with the heads of state of Russia and Mongolia, Xi Jinping proposed to link the “Silk Road Eco-

² (实现中华民族伟大复兴 Shíxiàn Zhōnghuá mínzú wéidà fùxīng)

³ (全面建成小康社会 Quánmiàn jiànchéng xiǎokāng shèhuì)

⁴ (弘扬人民友谊, 共创美好未来 Hóngyáng rénmin yǒuyì, gòng chuàng měihǎo wèilái)

⁵ (携手建设中国 – 东盟命运共同体 Xiéshǒu jiànshè Zhōngguó-Dōngméng mìngyùn gòngtóngtǐ)

⁶ (金钱易得, 朋友难求 Jīnqián yì dé, péngyǒu nán qiú)

conomic Belt” with the “Eurasian Economic Union” and the Mongolian “Steppe Road” initiative, and build the Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor. “The three countries agreed broadly on the common goal to advocate a multipolar world and work together to maintain global security and stability⁷”. (“Xi Jinping Attends the Meeting of Heads of State”) On November 8, 2014, Xi Jinping announced in his speech, at a meeting with the leaders of seven regional countries⁸ in the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, the goal of “Strengthening Connectivity Partnership⁹”, and China’s commitment to invest 40 billion US dollars to establish a Silk Road Fund, which would then provide infrastructure, resource development and industrial cooperation for countries along the B&R. (“Speech by Xi Jinping”) The newly coined two-part term “One Belt One Road” (一带一路 Yīdài yīlù) was then officially installed into the narrative. B&R agenda at this regional forum was outlined very broadly by President Xi, like in Jakarta the previous year, mostly by citing proverbs, like “Friends and neighbours become closer when they visit each other more often¹⁰”, and the fable about “The old man who moves mountains”, associated with Mao Zedong’s famous analogy¹¹. President Xi’s speech ended with the Chinese saying “Cherishing the same ideals and following the same path¹²” and, for the first time, two future bywords for the B&R, “Jointly Build (or Joint Pursuit, Contribution)” (共建 gòng jiàn), appeared next to the concept “Community of Shared Future”¹³. Nevertheless, at this stage B&R’s officially proclaimed goal was still mainly limited to “optimizing regional cooperation in Asia¹⁴”. (“Speech by Xi Jinping”)

⁷ (三国都主张世界多极化，应该共同努力，维护地区安全稳定 Sānguó dōu zhǔzhāng shìjiè duō jí huà, yīnggāi gòngtóng nǚlì, wéihù dìqū ānquán wěndìng)

⁸ Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia.

⁹ (加强互联互通伙伴关系 Jiāqiáng hùlián hùtōng huǒbàn guānxì)

¹⁰ (朋友越走越近，邻居越走越亲 Péngyǒu yuè zǒu yuè jìn, línjū yuè zǒu yuè qīn);

¹¹ “The Foolish Old Man Who Moves Mountains” (愚公移山 Yúgōng yí shān) is the title of a famous closing speech delivered by Mao Zedong at the Seventh Party Congress on June 11, 1945. The spirit of Yugong of never giving up until one reaches his goal is an allegory, notoriously used by Mao to define the source of the Communist Party’s strength. The two metaphorical mountains that the CCP and the Chinese people are determined to move out of their way, according to Mao are imperialism and feudalism.

¹² i.e. having a common goal (志同道合 Zhì tóng dào hé, also 志向相同, 意见一致 Zhìxiàng xiāngtóng, yìjiàn yīzhì)

¹³ only as a separately conjoined word combination – [deepen] the joint pursuit of development and the (notion of) the Community of Shared Future” [深化]共建发展和命运共同体 Shēnhuà gòng jiàn fāzhǎn hé mìngyùn gòngtóngtǐ)

¹⁴ (优化亚洲区域合作 Yōuhuà Yàzhōu qūyù hézuò)

BRI 1.0 Phase 2 (2017–2018) – The First Belt and Road Forum

From China's to the World's "Project of the 21st Century"

A cornerstone in China's foreign policy is the First Belt and Road International Cooperation Forum (First BRF), held on May 14th to 15th, 2017, in Beijing, where the official name in English "Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)" was formulated. Definitions of the BRI remained blurry, but its global scope and ambitions emerged more openly than ever. An article by Professor Hu Angang, the Head of the Institute for Contemporary China Studies at Tsinghua University (Hu, Zhang 2017), which was published on the second day of the First BRF, for the first time openly characterised BRI as "China's Project of the 21st Century" that has "evolved from China's to the World's Project of the Century"¹⁵ – a global effort for "integration of the spiritual and material human abilities to understand the world, change the world, and profoundly influence the destiny of humanity"¹⁶, a "construction with sustainable resources, sustainable participation, and sustainable spirits", epitomizing the Chinese proverb "Great things are achieved by mass effort"¹⁷. (Ang 2019) The catchphrase "Project of the Century" is repeated 28 times in this article of about 2500 characters. It was also used once in President Xi Jinping's opening speech at the First BRF. ("Standing hand in hand")

The First BRF marked an important metamorphosis of the key China-ASEAN concept "Community of Shared Future". The two characters – the word "mankind" (人类 rénlèi) were added to the phrase to form the new notion of "Community of Shared Future for Mankind (人类命运共同体 Rénlèi mìngyùn gòngtóngtǐ)". The new enhanced and fuzzier concept was mentioned three times – in President Xi's First BRF opening and closing speeches, and six times in his speech at the leaders' roundtable. ("The "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum") ("A series of important speeches") From this moment on it completely replaced its regional prototype.

¹⁵ (一带一路)是21世纪的“世纪工程” Yīdài yīlù shì 21 shìjì de “shìjì gōngchéng”; “一带一路”，就是从中国的世纪工程演变为世界的世纪工程 “Yīdài yīlù”，jiùshì cóng Zhōngguó de shìjì gōngchéng yǎnbiàn wéi shìjì de shìjì gōngchéng)

¹⁶ (所谓“世纪工程”，是人类认识世界、改造世界、并对人类命运产生深远影响的精神实践和物质实践的统一 Suǒwèi “shìjì gōngchéng”，shì rénlèi rènshí shìjìè, gǎizào shìjìè, bǐng duì rénlèi mìngyùn chǎnshēng shēnyuǎn yǐngxiǎng de jīngshén shíjiàn hé wùzhì shíjiàn de tǒngyī)

¹⁷ (“一带一路”建设具有资源可持续性、参与可持续性和精神可持续性 “yīdài yīlù” jiànshè jùyǒu zīyuán kěchíxù xing、cānyù kěchíxùxing hé jīngshén kěchíxùxing; (Lit. ‘With many people adding fuel, the flames rise high’) – 众人拾柴火焰高 zhòng rén shí chái huǒ yàn gāo)

Winning Recognition

The new concept “Community of Shared Future for Mankind” was actually already coined and used a year earlier. Its first promotion was in March 2016, when it was already “winning recognition” after being inserted in a UN Security Council Resolution. (“A community of shared future”) On November 17, 2016 the 193 member states passed a resolution welcoming the “Joint Pursuit” of the B&R, among other economic cooperation initiatives, and calling on the international community to provide a safe environment for the advancement of the BRI. (“The UN General Assembly”)

One month after the First BRF, the UN Human Rights Council, for the first time, adopted a resolution initiated by China, entitled “The Contribution of Development to the Enjoyment of All Human Rights”, which contained the concept “Community of Shared Future for Mankind”. Completely in line with CCP rhetoric, it framed economic development as a precondition for attaining human rights, recognizing the common aspiration of the international community for building a community of shared future for all human beings and affirmed that economic development “contributes significantly to the enjoyment of all human rights”. (Mokry 2018) (“UN Human Rights Council”)

The First BRF in 2017 and the earlier UN resolution in November 2016 also instated the principle(s) of “Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits (共商共建共享原则 Gòngshāng gòngjiàn gòngxiǎng yuánzé)”. Later on, they became the basic principle(s) of global governance of the BRI and were used five times in President Xi’s First BRF roundtable speech¹⁸. The following year, on 26 March 2018, one year before the Second BRF, the Daily Telegraph and its website published a signed article by China’s UK Ambassador Liu Xiaoming entitled “Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits – the Golden Principles of BRI”¹⁹. (“Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits”)

BRI 2.0 (2018–2019)

BRI 2.0 Phase 1 (2018) – A Course for Policy Clarification

Eight months ahead of the Second BRF, held in April 2019, at the end of August 2018 President Xi attended the 5th anniversary symposium on the BRI

¹⁸ The slogan uses the word-formation model of an earlier domestic and regional policy of “Establishing a Social Governance Model Based on Collaboration, Participation and Common Interests (共建共治共享 gòng jiàn gòng zhì gòng xiǎng)”.

¹⁹ (共商共建共享是“一带一路”的“黄金法则” Gòng shāng gòng jiàn gòng xiǎng shì “yīdài yīlù” de “huángjīn fǎzé”)

and delivered a speech, entitled “Joint Pursuit of the B&R (共建“一带一路” Gòng jiàn “yīdài yīlù)”, reiterating China’s position on the topic, and putting forward main points for future work. He proposed a change of style – from “outline sketching (大写意 dà xiěyì)” to “fine line strokes (工笔画 gōngbǐ huà)”, clearly showing his willingness to shed more light on the BRI 1.0 fuzzy conceptual framework. (“To jointly build the Belt and Road”) In Xi Jinping’s words, in the past few years the “Joint Pursuit of the BRI had completed the overall layout, painting a great “outline brushwork” and now the focus must be put on “key points, meticulous craftsmanship, and jointly pursuing a delicate “fine brushwork”²⁰. (“To jointly build the Belt and Road”)

As for concept clarification, President Xi pointed out that the BRI reflects the global scope of “China’s Solutions (or China’s Plan) (中国方案 Zhōngguó fāng’àn)” – an old foreign policy concept that goes back to 2013. Xi Jinping gave three definitions of the BRI – “what it is and what it is not (“是”与“不是” “shì” yǔ “bùshì”):

“The “Joint Pursuit of the BRI” is an “economic cooperation initiative, not a geopolitical alliance or a military alliance; it is an open inclusive process and is not about creating a coterie of inner circles or Chinese clubs behind closed doors; it is not about drawing demarcation lines and does not engage in zero-sum games, all countries are free to join at will”²¹. (“To jointly build the Belt and Road”)

The source of Xi Jinping’s abovementioned three explanations for the BRI can be traced back a few months earlier. In February 2018 their extended prototype, authored by the Study Times²² was published in the Shanghai Observer. (“Belt and Road is China’s geopolitical tool”) The article was written in response to the fact that “while more than 100 countries and international organizations around the world actively support and participate in the BRI”,

²⁰ (过去几年, 共建“一带一路”完成了总体布局, 用习近平的话说, 就是“绘就了一幅‘大写意’”。他接着指出, 今后要聚焦重点、精雕细琢, 共同绘制好精谨细腻的“工笔画” Guòqù jǐ nián, gòng jiàn “yīdài yīlù” wánchéng le zǒngtǐ bùjú, yòng xījīnpíng dehuà shuō, jiùshì “huì jiùle yī fú ‘dà xiěyì’”。 Tā jiēzhe zhǐchū, jīnhòu yào jùjiāo zhòngdiǎn, jīng diāo xì zhuó, gòngtóng huìzhi hǎo jīng jǐn xìni de “gōngbǐ huà”。

²¹ (共建“一带一路”是经济合作倡议, 不是搞地缘政治联盟或军事同盟; 是开放包容进程, 不是要关起门来搞小圈子或者“中国俱乐部”; 是不以意识形态划界, 不搞零和游戏, 只要各国有意愿, 我们都欢迎。Gòng jiàn “yīdài yīlù” shì jīngjì hézuò chàngyì, bùshì gǎo diyuán zhèngzhì liánméng huò jūnshì tóngméng; shì kāifàng bāoróng jìnchéng, bùshì yào guān qǐ mén lái gǎo xiǎo quānzi huòzhě “Zhōngguó jùlèbù”; shì bù yǐ yìshì xíngtài huà jiè, bù gāo líng hé yóuxì, zhǐyào gèguó yǒu yìyuàn, wǒmen dōu huānyíng)。

²² Central media of the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, which targets the country’s elite – party members, government officials and intellectuals.

and although “it has also been included in important documents, such as resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Security Council”, there still exist “unclear and incomprehensible aspects and even misunderstandings and misinterpretations²³” about the “Joint Pursuit of the B&R” in the international community. Another reason for this article was an academic visit by the author(s) to Japan the previous year, where, during discussions with academics from well-known Japanese universities, think-tanks and research institutions, it appeared that Japan “did not have ample awareness and held a one-sided view²⁴” of the B&R. In the same style and wording as those in President Xi Jinping’s anniversary speech in August 2018, this article offered a list of answers to questions about “what is and what is not” BRI, and “what it brings to the world” (“Belt and Road is China’s geopolitical tool”):

- BRI is an open, inclusive regional cooperation initiative, not an exclusive, closed “coterie”²⁵.
- BRI is a platform for practical cooperation, not a geopolitical tool of the Chinese state²⁶.
- BRI is a joint development initiative based on Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits, not China’s foreign aid plan²⁷.
- BRI is an extension and complement to existing mechanisms, not their substitute²⁸.
- BRI is building a bridge to promote cultural exchanges, not a fuse to trigger a clash of civilizations²⁹.
- The scope of cooperation under the BRI continues to expand and the areas of cooperation are becoming broader³⁰.

²³ (不清楚、不理解的地方，甚至存在着误解与曲解 bù qīngchǔ, bù lǐjiě dì dìfāng, shènzhì cúnzàizhe wùjiě yǔ qūjiě)

²⁴ (认知不多，且存在偏差 rèn zhī bù duō, qiě cúnzài piānchā)

²⁵ (“一带一路”是开放性、包容性区域合作倡议，而非排他性、封闭性的中国“小圈子” shì kāifàng xìng, bāoróng xìng qūyù hézuò chàngyì, ér fēi páitāxìng, fēngbì xìng de Zhōngguó “xiǎo quānzi”)

²⁶ (“一带一路”是务实合作平台，而非中国的地缘政治工具 shì wùshí hézuò píngtái, ér fēi Zhōngguó dì dìyuán zhèngzhì gōngjù)

²⁷ (“一带一路”是共商共建共享的联动发展倡议，而非中国的对外援助计划。“Yīdài yīlù” shì gòng shāng gòng jiàn gòngxiǎng de liándòng fāzhǎn chàngyì, ér fēi Zhōngguó de duìwài yuánzhù jìhuà.)

²⁸ (“一带一路”是和现有机制的对接与互补，而非替代“Yīdài yīlù” shì hé xiàn yǒu jīzhì de duìjiē yǔ hùbǔ, ér fēi tìdài)

²⁹ (“一带一路”建设是促进人文交流的桥梁，而非触发文明冲突的引线。“Yīdài yīlù” jiànshè shì cùjìn rénwén jiāoliú de qiáoliáng, ér fēi chùfā wénmíng chōngtú de yǐnxiàn.)

³⁰ (“一带一路”合作范围不断扩大，合作领域更为广阔。“Yīdài yīlù” hézuò fānwéi bùduàn kuòdà, hézuò lǐngyù gèng wèi guǎngkuò.)

- BRI provides a new path and direction for “Global Governance”³¹.
- BRI has brought “Chinese Solutions” to the world for a “win-win situation” in the modern times³².
- BRI has added new impetus and provided a new platform for balanced and sustainable global development.³³

As can be seen from the answers above, the clarification campaign, launched in preparation for the Second BRF, still left a lot of fuzziness in the big picture, involving central concepts, like providing a “new path and direction for Global Governance” and delivering “Chinese Solutions (中国方案 Zhōngguó fāng’àn)” to the world. The article states:

“As an emerging power, China has the ability, the will, and the responsibility to contribute wisdom and strength for the improvement of the global governance system”³⁴. (“Belt and Road is China’s geopolitical tool”)

The ambiguity of BRI’s concepts provides a useful strategic advantage for its policies and cannot be readily discarded. BRI’s “continuous expansion” and “broadening of areas of cooperation” had led to exponential growth of the number of projects, which by 2018 were already numbering in the thousands globally. Overall fuzziness leaves convenient ways for new interpretation and further adaptation of BRI policies and goals, whenever such a necessity arises. In the words of Professor Alexei Maslov, Founder of the School of Asian Studies at Russia’s Higher School of Economics and Director of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the “amorphousness” of the BRI guarantees its “insubmergibility” – invulnerability to criticism, since “no one can tell if it is successful or not, also giving China the right to change the rules of the game depending on the situation.” China says that BRI is open to everyone, the fact however is that one can join in only by recognizing China’s leadership in reshaping the world order. There is no way for joint activities there, as there is simply no mechanism for them, the expert says. (Maslov 2017)

³¹ (“一带一路”为全球治理提供了新的路径与方向。“Yīdài yīlù” wèi quánqiú zhìlǐ tígōnglè xīn de lùjìng yǔ fāngxiàng.)

³² (“一带一路”为新时期世界走向共赢带来了中国方案。“Yīdài yīlù” wèi xīn shíqí shìjiè zǒuxiàng gòng yíng dài lái Zhōngguó fāng’àn.)

³³ (“一带一路”为全球均衡可持续发展增添了新动力，提供了新平台。“Yīdài yīlù” wèi quánqiú jūnhéng kě chíxù fāzhǎn zēngtiānlè xīn dònglì, tígōnglè xīn píngtái.)

³⁴ (作为一个新兴大国，中国有能力、有意愿同时也有责任为完善全球治理体系贡献智慧与力量 Zuòwéi yīgè xīnxīng dàguó, Zhōngguó yǒu nénglì, yǒu yìyuàn tóngshí yě yǒu zérèn wèi wánshàn quánqiú zhìlǐ tǐxì gòngxiàn zhìhuì yǔ lìliàng.)

BRI 2.0 Phase 2 (2019) – A New Set of Concepts

Attempts for clarification of BRI 1.0 concepts in the year preceding the Second BRF had not been genuine and fruitful. They had also caused discontinuations of BRI 1.0 labels and deployment of new ones for the BRI 2.0 stage.

Inserting Conceptual ‘Clarity’ and Highlighting ‘Joint Pursuit’

Significant changes in BRI’s narrative have taken place from 2019 onwards. In reaction to worldwide calls for more transparency in BRI projects and accusations of “debt-trap diplomacy”, the Second BRF, held in April 2019, vowed for a course of more clarity, detail, openness and partnership. This new impulse has generated new slogans, repeated four-five times by Xi Jinping in his opening speech, like “strengthening policy coordination”, “open exchange and consultations”, “forging closer partnerships”³⁵. (“Joint Pursuit”)

The Second BRF marked a clear tendency for self-restraint in the portrayal of China’s leading role in the BRI. From the second BRI 2.0 phase onwards, the emphasis has been on teamwork – “Joint Pursuit (共建 gòngjiàn)” of a “bright future (美好未来 měihǎo wèilái)” for mankind. In an attempt to downplay China’s centrality in the BRI, Xi Jinping’s opening speech for the Second BRF used the phrase “Jointly Building the B&R in Agreement and Creating a Bright Future”, which has since become the main slogan of the BRI 2.0. (“Joint Pursuit”) It had been mentioned just once in President Xi’s speech at the welcome banquet for the First BRF (“Xi Jinping’s toast at the welcome banquet”), but now it was included in the title of his main speech, where it was repeated four times. For the same reason the new BRI 2.0 “Golden Principles” of “Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits”³⁶, which, as mentioned above, had already been coined and used, albeit sparsely, in the BRI 1.0 narrative, were also promoted and repeated more than 10 times in Xi Jinping’s speeches during the Second BRF.

Conversely, the key concept of the “Chinese Solutions” for the world, which was widely and frequently used during the BRI 1.0 period, especially with the release of the BRI Maritime Cooperation Plan in June 20, 2017 (“The “One Belt, One Road” Maritime Cooperation Plan”), can be last seen in the February 2018 article by the Study Times (“Belt and Road is China’s geopolitical tool”).

³⁵ (推进互联互通 Tuījìn hùlián hùtōng) (加强政策对接 Jiāqiáng zhèngcè duìjiē) (打造更紧密伙伴关系 Dǎzào gèng jǐnmì huǒbàn guānxì)

³⁶ (共商共建共享原则 Gòngshāng gòngjiàn gòngxiǎng yuánzé)

Another key catchphrase “Project of the Century (for the benefit of people from all countries)³⁷”, used as a synonym for the BRI in both BRI 1.0 phases, which was also included in President Xi’s First BRF speeches, was also never again included in any of the BRI 2.0 texts. From 2018 onwards it can be found only in reference to two concrete local “highly influential Projects of the Century³⁸” – the first two electrified railways in Africa – the Yaji Railway (Addis Ababa to Djibouti), opened in October 2016, and the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway, opened in May 2017. (“Joint Pursuit”)

The use of pacifying concepts, like “Community of Shared Future for Mankind”, with six mentions during the First BRF and seven mentions the Second BRF speeches in 2019, and “Economic Globalisation (经济全球化 Jīngjì quánqíuà)”, with four mentions at both BRFs, has remained stable.

Push for “High-Quality Development”

The BRI 2.0 has also started using some brand-new concepts. One such is “High-Quality Development³⁹”. It is used in a holistic sense – referring not only to the economy, but to a high quality of life in general. As such, it is regularly connected with the phrases “creating a brighter future” and “international cooperation with concrete and deep insight, long-term and far-reaching stability⁴⁰”. Totally absent from the narrative in the whole BRI 1.0 phase, this new term has over 10 mentions in President Xi’s speeches at the Second BRF.

The notion of “High-Quality Development” itself is not new. It can be derived from the general direction towards which the Chinese state has been steering economic development since 2018 – focusing on things “Good”, rather than just “Available” (“Made in China is moving on”). “Our country has entered a stage of High-Quality Development⁴¹”, said Xi Jinping in his speech at the Politburo meeting in July 2020, which charted China’s future post-Covid economic development. (“Xi Jinping presided over the Politburo meeting”) The concept was first put forward by the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 2017, indicating that China’s economy has shifted from a stage of “rapid growth” to that of High-Quality Development. (“Baidupedia”)

³⁷ (让这一世纪工程造福各国人民 Ràng zhè yī shìjì gōngchéng zàofú gèguó rénmin)

³⁸ (中国在非洲大陆承建的两大极具影响力的世纪工程 Zhōngguó zài Fēizhōu dàlù chéngjiàn de liǎng dà jí jù yǐngxiǎng lì de shìjì gōngchéng)

³⁹ (高质量发展 Gāo zhiliàng fāzhǎn)

⁴⁰ (着眼推动“一带一路”国际合作进一步走深走实、行稳致远、高质量发展，开创更加美好的未来 Zhuóyǎn tuīdòng “yīdài yīlù” guójì hézuò jìnyībù zǒu shēn zǒu shí, xíng wěn zhīyuǎn, gāo zhiliàng fāzhǎn, kāichuàng gèngjiā měihǎo de wèilái)

⁴¹ (我国已进入高质量发展阶段 Wǒguó yǐ jìn rù gāo zhiliàng fāzhǎn jiēduàn)

The necessity of switching to a new BRI 2.0 stage with a clearer set of motives also entailed the adoption of the new concept of High-Quality Development. The connection can be seen clearly in the following quote from a commentary published in the People's Daily on April 19, 2019, at the time of the Second BRF, authored by the esteemed "Guo Jiping"⁴², where it is mentioned six times with regards to the BRI (Guo 2019):

"The Joint Pursuit of the BRI has completed the stage of tamping down foundations, pillars and beams, and is now moving towards a stage of rooting and long-term development. People are placing more expectations on building the BRI, which is shifting to High-Quality Development"⁴³.

Major Shift to "Green Development"

In accordance with its new shift to "High-Quality Development", the BRI 2.0 has also attributed significant importance to "seeking New Drivers for Growth"⁴⁴ and "promoting Green and Sustainable Development"⁴⁵ in particular. The "Green (绿色 lǜsè)" concept was mentioned at least 20 times in Second BRF speeches, compared to just six mentions in those of the First BRF.

A number of green sustainability initiatives have been launched, implementing the 2030 Agenda (for Sustainable Development and UN SDGs), such as the Green Ambassadors Plan, Green Cooling Initiative (GCI), Green Lights Initiative, Green Financial Cooperation, International Union for Green Development⁴⁶, etc. ("List of achievements") In addition to that, on the day after the closing of the 2019 BRF in Beijing a large scale International Horticultural Ex-

⁴² Guo Jiping (国纪平) stands for the abbreviation "guoji ping" (国际评), i.e. "the most important international commentary" (有关国际的重要评论) of the People's Daily. It was launched in 2005. Disguised as a single person's name by typical homophonic wordplay, according to Chinese tradition, it is actually a name for the collective authorship of editors and reporters of the International Department of People's Daily, who have participated in its writing, discussed and revised it. As expected, these texts are rare and generally focus only on major international issues, explaining China's position and viewpoints to the public. They are also mostly longer, about 4,000-5,000 characters.

⁴³ (共建"一带一路"已完成夯基垒台、立柱架梁的阶段,正在向落地生根、持久发展的阶段迈进。人们对向高质量发展转变的"一带一路"建设,正寄予更多期待。Gòngjiàn "yīdài yīlù" yǐ wánchéng hāng jī lěi tái, lìzhù jià liáng de jiēduàn, zhèngzài xiàng luòdì shēnggēn, chījiǔ fāzhǎn de jiēduàn màijìn. Rénmèn duì xiàng gāo zhìliàng fāzhǎn zhuǎnbìan de "yīdài yīlù" jiànshè, zhèng jìyǔ gèng duō qīdài.)

⁴⁴ (挖掘增长新动力 wājué zēngzhǎng xīn dònglì)

⁴⁵ (推动绿色和可持续发展 Tuīdòng lǜsè hé kěchíxù fāzhǎn)

⁴⁶ (绿色丝路使者计划 Lǜsè sīlù shǐzhě jìhuà), (绿色高效制冷行动倡议 Lǜsè gāoxiào zhilěng xíngdòng chàngyi), (绿色照明行动倡议 Lǜsè zhàomíng xíngdòng chàngyi), (绿色金融合作 Lǜsè jīnróng hézuò), (绿色发展国际联盟 Lǜsè fāzhǎn guójì liánméng)

hibition was also organized as a follow-up event. Its great importance comes from the fact that Xi Jinping took the time to hold a keynote opening speech (“Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony”), entitled “Working Together for a Green Life and a Better Future for All”⁴⁷, where he used his popular phrase: “Green mountains and lucid waters are indeed mountains of gold and silver.”⁴⁸ This has become his trade mark aphorism, and a source of reverence for him since 2005, associated with successful models of substituting old polluting local industries with new, green businesses – like those in the pilot project under his supervision in the Yu village in Tianhuangping Town, Anji County, Zhejiang Province⁴⁹. (“The saying green mountains and lucid waters”)

The Post-Covid BRI 3.0 (since 2020)

The Covid-19 pandemic crisis in 2020 led to holding an online High-level video conference on BRI International Cooperation, – on June 18, where Xi Jinping submitted a written opening address, which stated:

*“Through High-Quality Joint Pursuit of the BRI, standing hand in hand, we will promote the Building of a Community of Shared Future for Mankind*⁵⁰.” (“Written opening address”)

Two months before the event, on April 17, at a meeting of the Chinese Communist Party’s Politburo (“Xi Jinping presided over the meeting of the Political Bureau”) for discussing the situation with the pandemic and the economy in China in 2020, the slogan “Promoting High-Quality Development of the BRI⁵¹” was mentioned just once.

A month later, on May 22, at the third session of the 13th National People’s Congress, in his Government Report for 2020, Premier Li Keqiang also mentioned the BRI only once, but made promises to “focus on High-Quality in the [BRI’s] Joint Pursuit”, “stay committed to [its Principles of] Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits”, “work with BRI partners for mutually

⁴⁷ (《共谋绿色生活，共建美丽家园》Gòng móu lǜsè shēnghuó, gòng jiàn měili jiāyuán” de zhòngyào jiǎnghuà)

⁴⁸ (绿水青山就是金山银山 Lǜ shuǐ qīngshān jiùshì jīnshān yínshān)

⁴⁹ In August 2005, Xi Jinping, then Secretary of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee, came to the Yu village during an inspection tour in Anji County. After that visit he wrote an article, published in Zhejiang Daily with this phrase as its title and under the pseudonym “Zhe Xin (哲欣)”.

⁵⁰ (通过高质量共建 ‘一带一路’, 携手推动构建人类命运共同体 Tōngguò gāo zhiliàng gòng jiàn ‘yīdài yīlù’, xiéshǒu tuīdòng gòujiàn rénlèi míngyùn gòngtóngtǐ.)

⁵¹ (推动共建 “一带一路” 高质量发展 Tuīdòng gòng jiàn “yīdài yīlù” gāo zhiliàng fāzhǎn)

beneficial outcomes”, and “guide the healthy development of outbound investment”⁵². (“Report on the Work of the Government “)

BRI 3.0 and The New Development Strategy of Dual Circulation

According to the Chinese government’s statement in June 2020, around 30% to 40% of the B&R projects were “affected to some extent (受到一定影响 shòudào yīdìng yǐngxiǎng)” by the Covid-19 crisis in 2020, while 20% were “severely affected (受到严重影响 shòudào yánzhòng yǐngxiǎng)”, and 40% were “hardly affected (几乎没有受到影响 jīhū méiyǒu shòudào yǐngxiǎng)”. (“American Magazine”) In other words, 80% to 90% of B&R projects have been affected by the depression in the first half of 2020. Thus, it is not surprising that during the important July 30 meeting of the Politburo there was not a single mention of the BRI (“Xi Jinping presided over the Politburo meeting”). Attention was concentrated solely on internal affairs, with all attention turned on domestic policies, like the “six stabilities (六稳 liù wěn)⁵³”, the “six guarantees (六保 liù bǎo)⁵⁴”, maintaining social stability, etc. Understandably, it was this situation that led to “forming a New Development Strategy with the Big Domestic Circulation in the Leading Role and a Domestic-International Dual Circulation mutually helping each other⁵⁵”. (“Xi Jinping presided over the Politburo meeting”)

Experts argue that this new “Dual Circulation (双循环 shuāng xúnhuán)” strategy is about reorienting China’s supply and demand policy towards self-sufficiency – reliance mainly on the domestic market and production, while reducing China’s dependence on foreign markets and technology for its economic growth. They see this policy as a consequence of the government’s

⁵² (高质量共建“一带一路” Gāo zhiliàng gòng jiàn “yīdài yīlù”) (坚持共商共建共享 Jiānchí gòng shāng gòng jiàn gòngxiǎng) (遵循市场原则和国际通行规则 Zūnxún shìchǎng yuánzé hé guóji tōng háng guīzé) (发挥企业主体作用 Fāhuī qīyè zhǔtǐ zuòyòng) (开展互惠互利合作 Kāizhǎn hùhù hùlì hézuò) (引导对外投资健康发展 Yǐndǎo duìwài tóuzī jiànkāng fāzhǎn)

⁵³ Namely – stable employment, finance, foreign trade, foreign investment, outgoing investment, and forecasts (稳就业、稳金融、稳外贸、稳外资、稳投资、稳预期 wěn jiùyè, wěn jīnróng, wěn wàimào, wěn wàizī, wěn tóuzī, wěn yùqī)

⁵⁴ Safeguard citizens’ employment, basic livelihood, stability of market players, ensure food and energy security, stability of the industrial chain supply, and of operations at grass-roots level (保居民就业、保基本民生、保市场主体、保粮食能源安全、保产业链供应链稳定、保基层运转 Bǎo jūmín jiùyè, bǎo jīběn mínshēng, bǎo shìchǎng zhǔtǐ, bǎo liángshí néngyuán ānquán, bǎo chànyè liàn gōngyīng liàn wěndìng, bǎo jīcéng yùnzhuǎn)

⁵⁵ (形成以国内大循环为主体、国内国际双循环相互促进的新发展格局 Xíngchéng yǐ guónèi dà xúnhuán wéi zhǔtǐ, guónèi guóji shuāng xúnhuán xiānghù jùnjìn de xīn fāzhǎn géjú).

previous Made in China 2025 program for upgrading China’s technological capacities as it has become possible to substitute high-end goods only due to advances in key sectors. (Garcia-Herrero 2020) With the upcoming Fifth plenary session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, scheduled for the end of October 2020, in which the outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025) will be reviewed and approved, this “Dual Circulation” strategy is likely to guide China’s development in the next five years. (Wang, 2020)

An editorial in the Xinhua News Agency International Department comments on the link between the BRI and the New Development Strategy in Xi Jinping’s July 21, 2020 speech at the Symposium of Entrepreneurs like this:

“The B&R is an important platform for cooperation in better connecting the domestic and international markets and forming the “New Development Strategy” in which the domestic and the international “Dual Circulation” can stimulate each other.⁵⁶” (“From the New Development Strategy”)

The Way of the New Green Digital BRI 3.0

The Green Silk Road

In 2020, the concept “Green Silk Road⁵⁷” has undergone a considerable rise in status. The term is not new and can be traced back to a May 2017 document, issued by the State Council Information Office (SCIO) for the First BRF (“Guiding opinions on advancing the construction”), but has been used only occasionally ever since. In a special report, published in September 2020 on the Xinhua Silk Road Channel for BRI’s 7th anniversary, there are four mentions of the “Green” concept, two of which are for the “Green Silk Road” (“Zhao 2020”).

Aside from its inherent “Sustainable (development)”, the new “Green BRI’s” conceptual package now includes comprehensive goals, like the new “High-Quality (development)” and “Global (Ecological) Governance”:

“BRI is constantly evolving in the direction of a Greener and more Sustainable development. The Green BRI has not only become key for promoting the High-Quality Development of the BRI, but it has also become a new practice for improving the global ecological governance system.⁵⁸” (“Cheng, Li,

⁵⁶ (更好联通国内国际两个市场，形成国内国际双循环相互促进的新发展格局，“一带一路”是重要的合作平台。Gèng hǎo liántōng guónèi guójì liǎng gè shìchǎng, xíngc-héng guónèi guójì shuāng xúnhuán xiānghù cùjìn de xīn fāzhǎn géjú, “yīdài yīlù” shì zhòngyào de hézuò píngtái.)

⁵⁷ (“绿色丝绸之路” Lùsè sīchóu zhī lù)

⁵⁸ (“一带一路”不断向着更加绿色，更加可持续的方向演进，绿色“一带一路”不

Xie 2020”)

Accomplishing “Sustainable Development of the B&R” during the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and in the midst of tensions with the outside world is another reason that has led to the adoption of the New “Dual Circulation” Strategy of self-sufficiency.

BRI’s new Green, Sustainable, High-Quality Development, and self-sufficiency goals can all be effectively addressed by prioritizing ICT projects. The latter are much lower in cost, less risky and with a shorter ROI period, compared to building railways, bridges, power stations and highways. They not only cut outside spending, but also spur the development of innovative top-of-the-line home-grown technologies. Last but not least, ICT can be very effective in providing “Global (Ecological) Governance” – another key BRI goal.

The Digital Silk Road

Although the term Digital Silk Road (数字丝绸之路 Shùzì sīchóuzhīlù) was mentioned just two times in President Xi’s 2019 BRI 2.0 speeches, its goals were ranked third in this year’s May 18 Guiding Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council – from a list of 36 priorities for the future development of China’s Western regions (西部地区 Xībù dìqū). Digital infrastructure objectives come in third place, immediately after top concerns like “Fighting the Three Tough Battles”⁵⁹ as the key task for building the “Well-off Society (小康社会 xiǎokāng shèhuì)”, and “Innovative Development (创新发展)” with the “New Development Philosophy (新发展理念 xīn fāzhǎn lǐniàn)”⁶⁰ – promoting “High-Quality Development” with the “upgraded version of the Double Innovation (“双创”升级版 “shuāng chuàng” shēngjí bǎn)”⁶¹. (“Guiding Opinions of the Central Committee”) The importance of the abovementioned May 18 Guiding Opinions on the development of China’s Western regions comes from the fact that they also represent the prioritised agenda for China’s future development, discussed at

仅成为推动“一带一路”高质量发展的关键领域，也成为完善全球生态治理体系的新实践。“Yīdài yīlù” bùduàn xiàngzhe gèngjiā lǜsè, gèngjiā kě chíxù de fāngxiàng yǎnjìn, lǜsè “yīdài yīlù” bùjīn chéngwéi tuīdòng “yīdài yīlù” gāo zhìliàng fāzhǎn de guānjiàn lǐngyù, yě chéngwéi wánshàn quánqiú shēngtài zhìlǐ tǐxì de xīn shíjiàn.)

⁵⁹ 打好三大攻坚战：防范化解金融风险 (preventing and defusing financial risks)、精准脱贫 (targeted poverty alleviation)、污染防治 (pollution control); (Dǎ hǎo sān dà gōngjiānzhàn: Fángfàn huàjiě jīnróng fēngxiǎn, jīngzhǔn tuōpín, wūrán fángzhì).

⁶⁰ i.e. the Five key development concepts: innovation driven, coordinated, green, open, and shared development (五大发展理念 -- 创新、协调、绿色、开放、共享的发展理念 Wǔ dà fāzhǎn lǐniàn -- chuàngxīn, xiétiáo, lǜsè, kāifàng, gòngxiǎng de fāzhǎn lǐniàn)

⁶¹ i.e. pursuing innovation and entrepreneurship, upgraded to the height of national strategy, – a course taken since 2018.

the Third Session of the 13th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), held on May 21, 2020. "New Infrastructure" was admittedly one of the hottest topics and a high-frequency word during the 2020 Two Sessions. ("Focus on the Two Sessions") (Gu 2020)

The presence of the Digital BRI as one of the top-three priorities for China's future development, although not specifically mentioned in the May 18 Guiding Opinions, can nevertheless be recognized by its digital agenda. It includes creating a "Modernised Industrial System (现代化产业体系 xiàndàihuà chǎnyè tǐxì)", which comprises the "intensive development (积极发展 jījí fāzhǎn)" of "Big Data (大数据 dà shùjù)", AI (人工智能 réngōng zhìnéng), "Smart+" Industries ("智能+"产业 "zhìnéng+" chǎnyè), Industrial Internet (工业互联网 gōngyè hùliánwǎng), "New Internet Work Formats (新业态 xīn yètài)" – "Internet + Education (互联网+教育 hùliánwǎng + jiàoyù)", "Internet + Healthcare (互联网+医疗 hùliánwǎng + yīliáo)", and "Internet + Tourism (互联网+旅游 hùliánwǎng + lǚyóu)", as well as "increasing Internet speed and reducing fees for Internet use (网络提速降费 wǎngluò tísuǒ jiàng fèi)", accelerating the development of "cross-border e-commerce (跨境电子商务 kuà jìng diànzǐ shāngwù)". ("Guiding Opinions of the Central Committee")

The critical importance of the Digital Silk Road in the BRI 3.0 is evident also from President Xi's 2020 key speeches, specifically emphasising speeding up the construction of the digital "New Infrastructure (新基建 xīn jījiàn)"⁶². ("Xi Jinping: Speeding up the construction of new infrastructure") As Xi Jinping points out in his speech at the Symposium of Scientists on September 11, 2020, unlike "traditional infrastructure"⁶³ such as railways and highways, "New Infrastructure" is about building sites like 5G networks, Data centres, AI, Internet of Things (物联网 Wùliánwǎng). Its complex goal is to support vital economic policies, like the "Innovation-Driven Development Strategy (创新驱动发展战略 Chuàngxīn qū dòng fāzhǎn zhànlüè)", "Conversion from Old to

⁶² In the official definition, "New Infrastructure" (新型基础设施 Xīnxíng jīchǔ shèshī) refers to "seven major fields (七大领域 qī dà lǐngyù)", namely 5G infrastructure (5G 基建 5G jījiàn), ultra-high voltage (UHV) transmission (特高压 tè gāoyā), intercity and high-speed railways (城际高速铁路和城际轨道交通 chéng jì gāosù tiělù hé chéng jì guǐdào jiāotōng), new energy vehicle charging piles (新能源汽车充电桩 xīn néngyuán qìchē chōngdiàn zhuāng), Big Data Centres (大数据中心 dà shùjù zhōngxīn), Artificial Intelligence (AI) (人工智能 réngōng zhìnéng), and Industrial Internet (工业互联网 gōngyè hùliánwǎng). See: Our country's first official announcement of the scope of "new infrastructure" – 3 major aspects and 7 major areas fully exposed. 国家首次官宣"新基建"范围: 3大方面 7大领域全曝光. 2020年04月20日. Url: <https://finance.sina.com.cn/china/gncj/2020-04-20/doc-iircuyvh8827676.shtml> (25.09.2020)

⁶³ (传统基础设施 Chuántǒng jīchǔ shèshī)

New Drivers of Growth (新旧动能转换 Xīnjiù dòngnéng zhuǎnhuàn)”, “Stabilizing Investment and Growth (稳投资稳增长 Wěn tóuzī wěn zēngzhǎng)”, implementing “The New Development Strategy” of “Dual Circulation”, “expanding domestic demand (扩大内需 Kuòdà nèixū)”, and “High-Quality Development”. (“Xi Jinping’s Speech at the Symposium of Scientists”)

In the May 18 Guiding Opinions, BRI occupies 7th to 13th positions, grouped under the title “Intensified opening up of the Western regions, guided by the joint building the B&R”⁶⁴. BRI includes projects like the “Xinjiang Core Area of the Silk Road Economic Belt” (新疆丝绸之路经济带核心区 xīnjiāng sīchóu zhī lù jīngjì dài héxīn qū), the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor (中蒙俄经济走廊建设 Zhōng Méng É jīngjì zǒuláng jiànshè), as well as key regional projects in Southern China, like those in Yunnan and the Lancang-Mekong region (云南与澜沧江－湄公河区域 Lánkāngjiāng-Méigōnghé qūyù). BRI is mentioned only three times in the whole document, compared to tags like the “Great Western Development Strategy” (西部大开发 Xībù dà kāifā) – 12 times, “Green Development” and “Green Silk Road” – 10 times, “High-Quality Development” – nine times, and “New Era (新时代 Xīn shídài)” – seven times.

ONLINE TRADE IN SERVICES ON THE BRI 3.0

On September 5, 2020 Beijing hosted the first major international economic and trade event held by China since the start of the pandemic – the Fifth “Colourful World Cultural Exhibition of the Countries Along the Belt and Road”⁶⁵. This has been the largest comprehensive exhibition in the field of global services trade ever held in history. Its importance was acknowledged by President Xi who delivered the main speech at this forum, where he said:

“China has organized this major international event in order to work together with everyone to overcome the difficulties, jointly promote the development and prosperity of the global trade of services, and support the rapid recovery of the world economy”⁶⁶.

He also added that as a next step China will integrate trade in services cooperation into all aspects, links and fields of the BRI to comply with the “digital, networked and intelligent development”⁶⁷ trend, so as to “jointly cre-

⁶⁴ (以共建“一带一路”为引领，加大西部开放力度 Yǐ gòngjiàn “yīdài yīlù” wèi yǐnling, jiā dà xībù kāifàng lìdù)

⁶⁵ (第五届“炫彩世界——‘一带一路’沿线国家特色文化展示活动” Dì wǔ jiè “xuàn cǎi shìjiè——‘yīdài yīlù’ yánxiàn guójiā tèsè wénhuà zhǎnshì huódòng)

⁶⁶ “中国克服重重困难，举办这样一场重大国际经贸活动，就是要同大家携手努力、共克时艰，共同促进全球服务贸易发展繁荣，推动世界经济尽快复苏。”

⁶⁷ (数字化、网络化、智能化 Shùzìhuà, wǎngluò huà, zhìnéng huà)

ate” an “open and inclusive environment for cooperation”, and “facilitate the High-Quality Development of the B&R”. (Wan, 2020)

According to Liu Huaqin, Director of the Eurasian Research Centre at the Institute of International Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Ministry of Commerce, the continued spread of the new coronavirus pandemic has impacted traditional services, but has also stimulated new momentum in their development as the fastest growing businesses during the crisis. The latter include cross-border e-commerce, remote office and financial services, wireless payment, online education, telemedicine platforms, etc. It is expected that such services trade will provide new directions for the “Joint Pursuit of the B&R”, as well as important support for BRI’s sustainable development. (“Li 2020”)

Conclusion

The year 2020, which has largely been defined by the Covid-19 “black swan event”⁶⁸ marks the 7th anniversary of the inauguration of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The evolution of the BRI narrative in the past seven years since its launch in 2013 shows that BRI plays a key role not only in the foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), but also in supporting China’s domestic policies.

BRI discourse can be distinctly divided into three stages – BRI 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0. In each of them BRI has displayed the characteristic pattern of a typical political campaign, playing a key role not only in the foreign policy propaganda, but also setting China’s domestic political and economic objectives, and mobilizing people to support them.

BRI 1.0 started from a regional “China’s Project of the 21st Century” and “evolved into the World’s Project of the Century” for the sake of creating a “Community of a Shared Future” for the Asian region, but also for the worldwide “Community of a Shared Future for Mankind”.

During the BRI 2.0 concept clarification phase some old mottoes got big promotions. The ordinary “Jointly Building the B&R in Agreement and Creating a Bright Future” became the main slogan of the BRI 2.0. The back-row principles of “Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits” became foremost and “Golden”. The importance of “Green Development” rose sharply. The domestic policy concept “High-Quality Development” became a major part of the BRI 2.0 narrative. Conversely, the popular old concept of “Chinese Solutions” for the world and the key catchphrase “Project of the Century (for

⁶⁸ Although Nassim Taleb, the author of this term insists, that Covid-19 is a “white swan”, since it was in fact expected and predictable

the benefit of people from all countries)” have been discontinued in all texts from 2018 onwards.

In the post-Covid 2020 the BRI has returned to supporting China’s border projects in the West and South-East, as well as domestic policies, like the “New Development Strategy” and the “Supply-Side Structural Reform⁶⁹”, in a push for economic self-sufficiency, with “dominating big domestic circulation⁷⁰” of supply and demand, which have an international side – limiting imports to a lesser “domestic-international Dual Circulation⁷¹” domain. BRI’s development will continue the “Joint Pursuit” of the “Community of Shared Future for Mankind” based on “Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era⁷²”.

The new BRI 3.0 push for ICT projects ensues directly from the above-mentioned policies. ICT has many benefits and is well pragmatically motivated. ICT investment’s gains compare favourably to their relatively low cost, low investment expenses and risks, saving on bulky and problematic procedures, especially during the pandemic, minimising logistics and staff management for projects on the ground. In addition to being more economically viable, it also stimulates homebased technologies in line with the “Innovation-Driven Development Strategy” and the course for self-reliance in producing cutting edge technology, and “Conversion From Old to New Drivers of Growth”, like online trade in services, cross-border e-commerce, etc.

Digital connectivity during the 2020 Covid-19 crisis has proven to be indispensable for coping with the new situation of social distancing, limited gatherings, not being able to get on with daily life as people know it. The importance of ICT for adapting to the new normal of distance communication and information exchange has been growing by the day. Relevant databases with personal information, gathered from daily communication, through telemedicine and online banking – to education and entertainment, and with the upcoming Smart Life 5G, 8K, AIoT can amass a colossal wealth of Big Data. China’s strong position in such digital infrastructure would boost its national power and allow it to have better control over the media and daily life “along the B&R”. Although restrictions for Chinese digital infrastructure and communication devices have been set in place in the developed world, as pointed out by Xi Jinping in his speech at the Fifth “Colourful World Cultural Exhi-

⁶⁹ (供给侧结构性改革 Gōngjì cè jiégòu xìng gǎigé)

⁷⁰ (国内大循环为主体 Guó nèi dà xún huán wéi zhǔ tǐ)

⁷¹ (国内国际双循环 guó nèi guó jì shuāng xún huán)

⁷² (习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想 Xí Jìnpíng Xīnshídài Zhōngguó tè sè shèhuì zhǔyì sīxiǎng)

bition”, countries with economies lacking in traditional infrastructure will be especially in need of China’s digital “New Infrastructure”. (“Wan, 2020”) It should be noted that such weak economies present a huge market potential and are eager to see deployment of ICT infrastructure on their soil. In fact, half of the world’s population resides there – in the Least Developed Countries and most of the developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South America, Asia and Oceania. They lack not only traditional, but also digital infrastructure, and are thus “excluded from the ‘benefits of digitalization’” and modern civilization itself. (“Nearly Half of World’s Population Excluded”)

In view of the abovementioned analysis of economic viability and relevant B&R discourse it seems clear that BRI 3.0 will be developing as a merger of the “Green Silk Road” and the “Digital Silk Road”, focused on the ICT “New Infrastructure”. It will aim to bring China the extra clout and leverage, which it needs to become a centre-stage world power in the new post-Covid world faster, more effectively, with less investment and lower risk, and drawing much less attention and scrutiny than with the former traditional bulky agenda of the BRI 1.0 and BRI 2.0.

References

- A community of shared future: Commentary: ““A community of shared future for all humankind” – a Chinese concept winning U.N. recognition”. *Xinhuanet*. 20.03.2017. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-03/20/c_136142216.htm (11.09.2020)
- A series of important speeches: “Xi Jinping zhuxi zai “Yi dai yi lu” guoji hezuo gaofeng luntan shang de xilie zhongyao jianghua” 习近平主席在“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛上的系列重要讲话 [A series of important speeches by President Xi Jinping at the “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit]. 17.05.2017. Web. <https://www.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/xwzx/xgcdn/13853.htm> (14.09.2020)
- American Magazine: “Meiguo zazhi: yiqing dui “Yi dai yi lu” changyi jishi tiaozhan yeshi jiyu” 美国杂志: 疫情对“一带一路”倡议既是挑战 也是机遇 [American Magazine: The epidemic is both a challenge and an opportunity for the “Belt and Road” Initiative]. 30.09.2020. Web. <https://finance.sina.com.cn/world/2020-09-30/doc-iivhvpwy9627294.shtml> (30.09.2020)
- Ang 2019: Ang, Yuen Yuen. “Demystifying Belt and Road. The Struggle to Define China’s “Project of the Century””. *Foreign Affairs*. 22.05.2019. Web. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-05-22/demystifying-belt-and-road> (11.07.2020)
- Baidupedia: *Baidupedia*. Web. https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E9%AB%98%E8%B4%A8%E9%87%8F%E5%8F%91%E5%B1%95_
- Belt and Road is China’s geopolitical tool: ““Yi dai yi lu”, shi Zhongguo de diyuan zhengzhi gongju? Zhe wu da renzhi dou shi cuo de” “一带一路”, 是中国的地缘

- 政治工具？这五大认知都是错的 [“Belt and Road” is China’s geopolitical tool? These five perceptions are all wrong]. 26.02.2018. Web. <https://www.jfdaily.com/news/detail?id=80937> (15.09.2020)
- Cheng, Li, Xie 2020: Cheng, Baodong 程宝栋, Li Fangfang 李芳芳, Xie Xiwei 解希玮. “Tuijin lüse “Yi dai yi lu” jianshe: wanshan quanqiu shengtai zhili tixi de xin shijian” 推进绿色“一带一路”建设：完善全球生态治理体系的新实践 [Promoting the construction of the green “Belt and Road”: new practices to improve the global ecological governance system]. 09.04.2020. Web. <http://theory.people.com.cn/n1/2020/0409/c40531-31667261.html> (20.09.2020)
- Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits: “Consultation, Contribution and Shared Benefits – the Golden Principles of BRI”. 26.03.2018. Web. <https://www.en84.com/4930.html> (14.09.2020)
- Focus on the Two Sessions: “Jujiao 2020 nian quanguo Liang-hui” 聚焦2020年全国两会 [Focus on the Two Sessions in 2020]. 28.05.2020. Web. <http://www.cena.com.cn/special/2020qglh.html> (20.09.2020)
- From the New Development Strategy: “Cong Xi Jinping chanshu de “xin fazhan geju” zhong, shijie buzhuo dao zhexie xin jiyu” 从习近平阐述的“新发展格局”中，世界捕捉到这些新机遇 [From the “New Development Strategy” described by Xi Jinping, the world has captured these new opportunities]. *Xinhuanet*. 14.08.2020. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2020-08/14/c_1210751982.htm (21.08.2020)
- Garcia-Herrero 2020: Garcia-Herrero, Alicia. “Why China’s ‘dual circulation’ plan is bad news for everyone else. New economic strategy is about meeting growing domestic demand”. *Nikkei*. 17.09.2020. Web. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Why-China-s-dual-circulation-plan-is-bad-news-for-everyone-else> (26.09.2020)
- Gu 2020: Gu, Yue. 谷月. “Zhi “the 2020 Two Sessions. +AIoT” zhi bi, chuang wei miaohui wanwu zhi lian ren ju tujing” 执 “the 2020 Two Sessions. +AIoT” 之笔，创维描绘万物智联人居图景 [With a “5G+8K+AIoT” pen – 5G, 8K video streaming and Artificial Intelligence of Things, Skyworth depicts a vision of an intelligent home where all is connected]. 21.05.2020. Web. <http://www.cena.com.cn/smartt/20200521/106762.html> (21.09.2020)
- Guiding Opinions of the Central Committee: “Zhong-Gong Zhongyang Guowuyuan guanyu xin shidai tuijin xibu da kaifa xingcheng xin geju de zhidao yijian” 中共中央 国务院关于新时代推进西部大开发形成新格局的指导意见 [Guiding Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council on Promoting the Development of the West in the New Era and Forming a New Strategy]. 18.05.2020. Web. <http://www.mzb.com.cn/html/report/200531910-1.htm>
- Guiding opinions on advancing the construction: “Guanyu tuijin lüse “Yi dai yi lu” jianshe de zhidao yijian” 关于推进绿色“一带一路”建设的指导意见 [Guiding opinions on advancing the construction of a green “Belt and Road”]. 16.05.2017. Web. <http://www.scio.gov.cn/xwfbh/xwfbfh/wqfbh/39595/40298/xgzc40304/Document/1652433/1652433.htm> (20.09.2020)
- Guo 2019: Guo Jiping 国纪平. “Gongjian Yi dai yi lu kaichuang meihao weilai” 人民日报：共建一带一路 开创美好未来 [Jointly building the Belt and Road and

- creating a better future]. *People's Daily*. 19.04.2019. Web. http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrb/html/2019-04/19/nw.D110000renmrb_20190419_6-01.htm (21.09.2020)
- Hu, Zhang 2017: Hu Angang, Zhang Xin 胡鞍钢, 张新. ““Yi dai yi lu”: gongjian zaofu renlei de shiji gongcheng” “一带一路”: 共建造福人类的世纪工程 [“One Belt, One Road”: Building Together the Project of the Century that Will Benefit Mankind]. *China Daily*. 16.05.2017. Web. http://china.chinadaily.com.cn/2017-05/16/content_29371140.htm (13.09.2020)
- Joint Pursuit: ““Yi dai yi lu” meihao weilai. Zai di-er jie “Yi dai yi lu” guoji hezuo gaofeng luntan kaimushi shang de zhuzhi yanjiang” “一带一路”美好未来. 在第二届“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的主旨演讲 [Joint Pursuit the B&R in agreement and creating a bright future. Keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Second “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit Forum]. 26.04.2019. Web. <http://jhsjk.people.cn/article/31053285> (15.09.2020)
- Li 2020: Li, Bin 李斌. “Zhuanfang: Fu mao hezuo zhuli “Yi dai yi lu” kechixu fazhan — fang Shangwubu guoji maoyi jingji hezuo yanjiuyuan Ou-Ya yanjiusuo suozhang Liu Huaqin” 专访: 服贸合作助力“一带一路”可持续发展——访商务部国际贸易经济合作研究院欧亚研究所所长刘华芹 [Service trade cooperation helps the Sustainable Development of the “Belt and Road”. Interview with Liu Huaqin, Director of the Eurasian Research Centre, Institute of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, PRC Ministry of Commerce]. *Xinhuanet*. 02.09.2020. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2020-09/02/c_1126445463.htm (26.09.2020)
- List of achievements: “Di-er jie “Yi dai yi lu” guoji hezuo gaofeng luntan chengguo qingdan” 第二届 “一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛成果清单 [List of achievements of the second “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit Forum]. 27.04.2019. Web. <http://www.beltandroadforum.org/n100/2019/0427/c24-1310.html> (21.09.2020)
- Made in China is moving on: “Zhongguo zhizao zheng cong “you mei you” xiang “hao bu hao” kuayue pinzhi = zhiliang + pinpai” 中国制造正从“有没有”向“好不好”跨越 品质=质量+品牌 [Made in China is moving on from “do you have it” to “is it good or bad”, excellence = quality + brand]. 02.04.2018. Web. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2018-04/02/content_5279107.htm (20.09.2020)
- Maslov 2017: Алексей Маслов Alexey Masloŭ. “Kogda mir stanet “nezapadnym”: mesto Rosii na Shelkoŭom puti” Когда мир станет “незападным”: место России на Шелковом пути [Alexey Maslov. When the world becomes “un-western”: Russia’s place on the Silk Road]. *RIA.ru*. 19.05.2017. Web. <https://ria.ru/20170519/1494649444.html> (25.09.2020)
- Mokry 2018: Mokry, Sabine. “Decoding Chinese Concepts For The Global Order. How Chinese scholars rethink and shape foreign policy ideas?”. *Merics.org*. 04.10.2018. Web. <https://merics.org/en/china-monitor/decoding-chinese-concepts-for-global-order> (14.09.2020)
- Nearly Half of World’s Population Excluded: “Nearly Half of World’s Population Excluded from ‘Benefits of Digitalization’, Speaker Stresses as Second Committee Debates Information Technology for Development”. *UN.org*. 18.10.2019. Web.

- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/gaef3523.doc.htm> (13.06.2020)
- Report on the Work of the Government: “Li Keqiang 2020 nian zhengfu gongzuo baogao (quanwen)” 李克强2020年政府工作报告 (全文) [Report on the Work of the Government in 2020 (Full text)]. 03.06.2020. Web. http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/2020-06/03/content_76114748.htm (22.09.2020)
- Rolland 2017: “The Belt and Road Initiative: China’s Grand Strategy?” *ECFR. China Analysis 2017*. Web. https://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR_234_-_China_Analysis_Grand_strategy_2.pdf
- Speech by Xi Jinping: “Xi Jinping zai “Jiaqiang hulian hutong huoban guanxi” dongdao zhu huoban duihua hui shang de jianghua (quanwen)” 习近平在“加强互联互通伙伴关系”东道主伙伴对话会上的讲话 (全文) [Speech by Xi Jinping at the Host Partner Dialogue on “Strengthening Connectivity Partnership” (full text)]. CNR. 09.11.2014. Web. http://news.cnr.cn/native/gd/201411/t20141109_516752262_5.shtml (12.09.2020)
- Standing hand in hand: “Xieshou tuijin “Yi dai yi lu” jianshe. Xi Jinping zai “Yi dai yi lu” guoji hezuo gaofeng luntan kaimushi shang de yanjiang” 携手推进“一带一路”建设. 习近平在“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛开幕式上的演讲 [Standing hand in hand to promote the “Belt and Road” construction. Xi Jinping’s speech at the opening ceremony of the “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Forum]. 14.05.2017. Web. <http://jhsjk.people.cn/article/29274601> (11.09.2020)
- The “One Belt, One Road” Maritime Cooperation Plan: ““Yi dai yi lu” jianshe haishang hezuo shexiang fabu zhongdian jianshe san tiao lanse jingji tongdao” 《“一带一路”建设海上合作设想》发布 重点建设三条蓝色经济通道 [The “One Belt, One Road” Maritime Cooperation Plan was released, focusing on the construction of three blue economic channels]. 21.06.2017. Web. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2017-06/21/content_5204111.htm (15.09.2020)
- The “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit Forum: ““Yi dai yi lu” guoji hezuo gaofeng luntan juxing yuanzhuo fenghui. Xi Jinping zhuchi huiyi bing zhici” “一带一路” 国际合作高峰论坛举行圆桌峰会 习近平主持会议并致辞. [The “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit Forum held a round table summit. Xi Jinping chaired the meeting and delivered a speech]. 15.05.2017. Web. <https://web.archive.org/web/20170922132316/https://www.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/xwzx/xgcdt/13674.htm> (13.09.2020)
- The saying green mountains and lucid waters: “Lüshui qingshan jiushi jin shan yinshan” zuizao zai zhege cun tichu” 绿水青山就是金山银山” 最早在这个村提出 [The saying “Green mountains and lucid waters are indeed mountains of gold and silver” was first proposed in this village]. 31.03.2020. Web. <https://news.163.com/20/0331/12/F923HG1S000189FH.html> (20.09.2020)
- The UN General Assembly: “Lianheguo Dahui yizhi tongguo jueyi huyu geguo tuijin “Yi dai yi lu” changyi” 联合国大会一致通过决议呼吁各国推进“一带一路”倡议 [The United Nations General Assembly unanimously passes a resolution calling on all countries to promote the “Belt and Road” Initiative]. 17.11.2016. Web. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/wjdt_674879/zwbdt_674895/t1416497.shtml (14.09.2020)

- To jointly build the Belt and Road: *Gongjian* “‘Yi dai yi lu’”, Xi Jinping tichu cong “daxie yi” dao “gongbihua” 共建“一带一路”, 习近平提出从“大写意”到“工笔画” [To jointly build the “Belt and Road”, Xi Jinping proposed to go from “free-hand brushwork” to “fine line brushwork”]. *Xinhuanet*. 28.08.2018. http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/xxjxs/2018-08/28/c_1123341344.htm (14.09.2020)
- UN Human Rights Council: “UN Human Rights Council adopts China-proposed resolution”. *Xinhuanet*. 23.06.2017. http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/23/c_136387460.htm (14.09.2020)
- Wan, 2020: Wan, Zhe 万喆. “Yong fuwu maoyi zhuli “Yi dai yi lu” gao zhiliang fazhan” 用服务贸易助力“一带一路”高质量发展 [Promote the High-Quality Development of “Belt and Road” with trade in services]. 07.09.2020. Web. <http://beijing.qianlong.com/2020/0907/4689651.shtml> (26.09.2020)
- Wang, 2020: Wang, Tao. “UBS: What to expect from China’s 14th Five-Year Plan”. *CGTN*. 25.09.2020. Web. <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-09-25/UBS-What-to-expect-from-China-s-14th-Five-Year-Plan--U4WJo9IoWA/index.html> (26.09.2020)
- Written opening address: “Xi Jinping xiang “Yi dai yi lu” guoji hezuo gaoji bie shipin huiyi fabiao shumian zhici” 习近平向“一带一路”国际合作高级别视频会议发表书面致辞 [Written opening address by Xi Jinping at the high-level video conference on “One Belt One Road” international cooperation]. 18.06.2020. Web. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-06/18/content_5520353.htm (20.09.2020)
- Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony: “Xi Jinping chuxi er ling yi jiu nian Zhongguo Beijing shijie yuanyi bolanhui kaimushi bing fabiao zhongyao jianghua” 习近平出席二〇一九年中国北京世界园艺博览会开幕式并发表重要讲话 [Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony of the 2019 International Horticultural Exhibition and delivered an important speech]. 29.04.2019. Web. <http://www.ngtc.com.cn/index.php?m=Article&a=show&id=2857> (20.09.2020)
- Xi Jinping Attends the Meeting of Heads of State: “Xi Jinping chuxi Zhong E Meng sanguo yuanshou huiwu” 习近平出席中俄蒙三国元首会晤 [Xi Jinping Attends the Meeting of Heads of State of China, Russia and Mongolia]. *Xinhuanet*. 11.09.2014. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-09/11/c_1112448718.htm (12.09.2020)
- Xi Jinping presided over the meeting of the Political Bureau: “Xi Jinping zhuchi zhongyang zhengzhiju huiyi fenxi guoneiwai xin guan feiyan yiqing fang kong xingshi yanjiu bushu zhuajin zhua shi zhua xi changtai hua yiqing fang kong gongzuo fenxi yanjiu dangqian jingji xingshi he jingji gongzuo”. 习近平主持中央政治局会议分析国内外新冠肺炎疫情防控形势 研究部署抓紧抓实抓细常态化疫情防控工作 分析研究当前经济形势和经济工作 [Xi Jinping presided over the meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee to analyse the domestic and international situation about prevention and control of the new coronavirus epidemic, research institutions to pay meticulous attention to quickly normalise epidemic prevention and control work, analysing and studying the current economic situation and economic work]. 17.04.2020. Web. <http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-04/17/>

content_5503621.htm (23.09.2020)

- Xi Jinping presided over the Politburo meeting: “Xi Jinping zhuchi Zhong-Gong Zhongyang zhengzhiju huiyi jue ding zhaokai shijiu jie wuzhong quanhui fenxi yanjiu dangqian jingji xingshi he jingji gongzuo” 习近平主持中共中央政治局会议决定召开十九届五中全会 分析研究当前经济形势和经济工作 [Xi Jinping presided over the Politburo meeting of the CPC Central Committee and decided to convene the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee to analyse and study the current economic situation and economic work]. 30.07.2020. Web. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-07/30/content_5531313.htm (21.09.2020)
- Xi Jinping: Speeding up the construction of new infrastructure: “Xi Jinping: Jiakuai 5G wangluo, shuju zhongxin deng xinxing jichu sheshi jianshe” 习近平: 加快5G网络、数据中心等新型基础设施建设 [Xi Jinping: Speeding up the construction of new infrastructure, such as 5G Networks and Data Centres]. 01.04.2020. Web. <http://finance.eastmoney.com/a/202004011440273138.html> (26.07.2020)
- Xi Jinping’s speech at the Indonesian National Assembly: “Xi Jinping zai Yinni guohui fabiao yanjiang: xieshou jianshe Zhongguo-Dong-Meng mingyun gongtongti” 习近平在印尼国会发表演讲: 携手建设中国 – 东盟命运共同体 [Xi Jinping’s speech at the Indonesian National Assembly: Join hands to build a China-ASEAN Community of Shared Future for Mankind]. *Xinhuanet*. 08.09.2013. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2013-10/03/c_117591652.htm (12.09.2020)
- Xi Jinping’s speech at Nazarbayev University: “Xi Jinping zai Nazhaerbayefu daxue de yanjiang (quanwen)” 习近平在纳扎尔巴耶夫大学的演讲 (全文) [Xi Jinping’s speech at Nazarbayev University (full text)]. *Xinhuanet*. 08.09.2013. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-09/08/c_117273079.htm (12.9.2020)
- Xi Jinping’s Speech at the Symposium of Scientists: “Xi Jinping “Zai kexuejia zuotanhui shang de jianghua” danxingben chuban” 习近平《在科学家座谈会上的讲话》单行本出版 [Xi Jinping’s “Speech at the Symposium of Scientists” gets published]. *Xinhuanet*. 14.09.2020. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2020-09/14/c_1126492126.htm (02.10.2020)
- Xi Jinping’s toast at the welcome banquet: “Xi Jinping zai “Yi dai yi lu” guoji hezuo gaofeng luntan huanying yanhui shang de zhujiu ci (quanwen)” 习近平在“一带一路”国际合作高峰论坛欢迎宴会上的祝酒辞(全文) [Xi Jinping’s toast at the welcome banquet of the “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Summit Forum (full text)]. 15.05.2017. Web. <https://www.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/xwzx/xgcdn/13434.htm> (15.09.2020)
- Zhao 2020: Zhao, Yan. 赵嫣. “Te gao: Tong zhu gong ying zhi lu gong ying meihao mingtian — gongjian “Yi dai yi lu” quanjing saomiao” 特稿: 同筑共赢之路 共迎美好明天——共建“一带一路”全景扫描 [Special report: Building together a road for a win-win situation and welcoming a better tomorrow – a panoramic scan of the “Belt and Road” Initiative]. 13.09.2020. Web. http://www.xinhuanet.com/silkroad/2020-09/13/c_1126486680.htm (20.09.2020)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

China as a Game Changer in the Evolving International System

Valentin Katrandzhiev

Abstract

The study gives a critical account of China's evolving policies and interests in the international/global system from the period of Cold War bipolarity until the latest geopolitical and geo-economic reshaping of the system in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. China's growing weight in the international/global system has been analysed from the viewpoint of paradigm shifts, aggregate national power, geopolitical, geo-economical and geo-civilisational/cultural factors. The dilemma of China, as simultaneously being a developing nation, and a great power, has also been examined. China's vision on reforming the international/global system based on its brand of multipolarity and multilateralism has also been viewed from the standpoint of a constantly evolving world. The study brings insight into the extent to which Chinese vision of the world order (based on the concepts 'community of common destiny', 'community of shared future' and 'global connectivity and shared development') form the contours of a new 'Beijing Consensus' (as competitive and/or complementary to the existing 'Washington Consensus' in international relations).

Keywords: international system, geopolitics, bipolarity, multilateralism, 'Washington Consensus' vs. 'New Beijing Consensus'

On the 1st of October 2019 the world marked the 70th anniversary of the creation of the People's Republic of China, defined in Chinese political science literature as 'New China'. Beijing itself witnessed an unprecedented scale of celebrations in the form of a grandiose military parade, mass spectacle, music and dance festivities. In his nationwide address at the reception devoted to the celebration of this milestone in the country's modern history, the Chinese leader Xi Jinping described his country's 70 years of achievements as 'the marvel of the world' and 'a great miracle in human history' (Xi 2019:1) The confidence in his message conveyed the astounding and profound transformation of the Chinese nation over the past seventy decades in terms of economic, social, technological, etc. development.

In the following pages we try to measure Beijing's growing role on the evolving international system, based on the specific features of China's de-

velopmental model, as well as on the nation's strategic and foreign policy thinking. For the purpose of our analysis we will use interchangeably the terms 'international system' and 'global system' (though being aware of the nuanced conceptual difference between them¹). The nation-building of modern China has been characterized by a constant process of reforms and adaptation both in the context of addressing internal and external challenges. That's why the paper examines explicitly China's capabilities as a 'game changer' in the international system. The concept of China's essential role as a game-changer draws on a set of unconventional philosophical notions, policies, tools and modes of cooperation New China began to employ in the international relations from the very beginning of its coming into existence in 1949.

China's Positioning in the Context of Bipolar Paradigm

Following the end of the civil war and the formation of communist-led China, the country's political leadership has pursued, internally, a policy of national consolidation and reconstruction of the Chinese statehood (incl. search for a developmental model that suits China's national political and cultural traditions and the country's socio-economic needs) and externally, a policy of regaining territorial integrity and national sovereignty and respect for China as a great power in international relations (which is associated with overcoming the historical legacy of 'the century of humiliation' – the period Opium Wars in 19th century the Middle Kingdom was stricken by internal commotions and subjected to semi-colonization by foreign powers).

Chairman Mao Zedong, was fast to grasp the not only ideological (East-West), but also the geopolitical dimension of the Cold War rivalry. Evidently, the bi-polarity of the Cold War geopolitics would have impacted the dynamics

¹ The 'international system' has been traditionally dominated by state-to-state interaction, with the nation-states acting as principal actors of the international relations. The term 'global system' is more encompassing. It has been introduced in the context of managing processes and consequences of globalisation (known as 'global governance'). The nation-states perform as main, but not the only actors in the global system. Thus, the global governance involves participation of state and nonstate actors in a loose system of structures and modes of policy coordination and rule-making for the purpose of addressing plethora of transnational challenges and managing common affairs of mankind. (such as: transnational/global problems: irregular migration flows; economic and financial crises; worldwide poverty; spread of deadly pandemics – AIDS, Ebola, SARS-CoV; COVID-19; transnational terrorism (incl. religious extremism); proliferation of WMD etc.; as well as management: global environmental system (incl. waste, climate change, ozone layer, biodiversity, forests, fresh water resources etc.); global economic development; global markets of trade, investment and finance markets; global energy markets; internet governance etc.).

of China's relations with the rest of the world. After an initial period of Sino-Soviet rapprochement, the mid 50-s of the 20th century, Beijing has got rid of Moscow's industrial and technological dependence (especially when it has become clear that the Soviet Union will pursue a foreign policy at the expense of China's strategic interests and will not share with China nuclear know-how and technology for creation of its atomic bomb).

Despite rigidities of the bipolar system of alliances, the period was swiftly used by Beijing for strategic positioning. In this respect, China has secured incremental diplomatic recognition: 1) by Central and Eastern European Countries, with whom it nurtured mutually beneficial political and economic relations in the first half of the 50-s of the last century. This historical context has been recaptured by Beijing to upgrade the relationship with these countries after 2012, in the new geopolitical context of '17+1' China-CEEC Cooperation Platform; 2) by North European countries (Denmark, Sweden, Finland), whose policy of neutrality in the Korean war was greatly appreciated by China; 3) by major former European colonial powers with particular geo-strategic interests in the Far East, such as Great Britain and France. London and Paris have opened a new chapter of relations by upgrading their diplomatic relations with China to ambassadorial level from 1954 to 1964. 4) The normalisation of Sino-US relations following US president Nixon's visit to China in 1972 created favourable conditions for other West European countries to follow suit in recognition of New China (e.g. West Germany, Italy and Belgium).

The normalisation of the Sino-American relations was accepted under the Chinese terms (incl. Washington's acceptance of 'One-China' policy which was followed by the UN granting the continental China its rightful place as a permanent member in the UN Security Council). Beijing seized the new geopolitical momentum to gain strategic advantages from the three-polar US-China-Soviet Union geopolitical equilibrium during 70-80s. The US-China geopolitical rapprochement starting from late 70-s helped Beijing obtain access to critical American know how, best management practices and technologies at a time when the country had been embarking on an ambitious period of market oriented economic reforms and industrial modernisation under the paramount reformist leader Deng Xiaoping. Not surprisingly, the architect of this rapprochement Henry Kissinger (who served as US Secretary of State and National Security Advisor during Nixon and Ford presidential administrations) has been a strong advocate of overcoming the current dangerous stalemate in the US-Sino relations.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, China's foreign policy has been governed by a high degree of pragmatism despite its ideological profile. Bei-

jing has strategically distanced itself from the struggle for supremacy between Soviet-led communist bloc and US led Western community of liberal democracies (embodied in formats of political-military confrontation: NATO – Warsaw Pact; and the economic competition: European Community – Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). Beijing defined the super-power play as a hegemonically-driven and counterproductive to the stability of the international system.

However, for geo-economic reasons (seizing the opportunities of the emerging Single European Market for burgeoning Chinese exports) Beijing established pragmatic relations with the European Community through the supranational European Commission 1975. Bilateral EU-China trade agreement in 1985 (mainly treating Chinese textile exports) formed the foundations of EU-China relations. In view of the persistent Sino-Soviet ideological and geopolitical confrontation, Beijing gave up the idea of developing similar pattern of pragmatic relations with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

Moreover, Beijing played an indispensable role in founding the Non-aligned movement (NAM) in 1976 which may be considered a paradigmatic evolution of the bipolarity model of the Cold War. NAM brought under one roof a large group of developing nations from Asia and Africa, unified by a common notion of opposing block politics and increasing the leverage of the Third World in the international system. NAM's founding principles (based on Bandung conference in 1955) such as respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, equal treatment of big and small states, non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful settlement of inter-state disputes, were in line with the Chinese vision on how the international affairs should develop. Based on its early experience in NA policy-making and high level diplomatic conferences, Beijing shaped its doctrine of multilateralism under which it has been developing sustainable relations with the Global South in the post-Cold War period (both bilaterally, regionally, e.g. Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, or multilaterally within the UN system).

Beijing in the Context of post-Cold War World Paradigms

Beijing's strategic positioning in the Cold War international context has been influenced by two major post-Cold War paradigms.

Firstly, the disintegration of the Soviet led communist bloc, the reunification of Germany and the incorporation of the Central and Eastern European countries in the Euro-Atlantic community of liberal democracies in the 90-s have motivated the prominent American political scientist Francis Fukuyama

to pronounce the triumph of liberal democratic order worldwide. The period coincided with the economic paradigm known as ‘Washington Consensus’ (1989) which promoted neo-liberal economic policy-making in the context of globalisation (in other words, it was a triumph of the forces of markets over fiscal powers of governments).

The following decades proved, that communism has lost ground as one of the global political mainstreams but survived and had transformed as a political system and ideology in new forms, and in some parts of the globe in the context of the constantly evolving international system. China is a case in point, where the political system is branded as ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’. Against the backdrop of the fall of communism in Europe and the Tiananmen pro-democracy movement (1989) Beijing was quick to reinforce the one-party rule of the Communist party by crushing any political dissent, but simultaneously, continued its policy of socio-economic modernisation. The Chinese developmental model rests on the presumption of further economic and social development (incl. eradication of absolute poverty and boosting the creation of sizable, affluent middle-class as a backbone of the country’s political stability), placed, however, within the framework of established political order. Domestically, Beijing accepts some merits of liberal market economy policies as professed by ‘Washington Consensus’ (incl. allows selective market de-regulation, privatization of unprofitable state enterprises, encouragement of private entrepreneurship, de-collectivization of agriculture etc.). However, the Chinese political leadership retains the state planning and control over strategic sectors of industry and finance (e.g. banking, oil and gas industry) as well on pricing and free capital flows. Beijing has been recognised for setting favourable conditions to foreign investment, especially in the special coastal economic zones. However, Western analysts and investors maintain the view that China has been developing a narrative of open market economy abroad while in fact pursuing a calibrated protectionist policy at home. (e.g. in restricted sectors such as public procurement, digital services, telecommunications, financial services). That is one of the reasons for the US and the EU member states to refuse to grant China a status of a functional market economy despite the country’s membership in WTO. Internationally, Beijing has secured its membership in WTO (2001) to boost its export-driven economy (after China has turned into a world biggest manufacturer and by 2018 the country accounted for 28% of global manufacturing output), (Richter 2020). An increase of the direct foreign investment in the Chinese economy from \$193 billion to \$1.6 trillion during 1998–2018 has also contributed to that. (Zeneli & Vann 2020). China is a proponent of

economic globalisation (incl. liberalisation of free trade regime in line with WTO policies) and challenges the forces of global protectionism. However, it opposes political globalisation (reiterated in free flow of political ideas and political pluralism etc.). Beijing opposes a form of globalisation which undermines the sovereignty of nation-states or/and provides room for supra-national forms of global governance (the latter is acceptable in the context of the ‘Washington Consensus’).

Secondly, it has been another American political scientist Samuel Huntington whose paradigm presented the post-Cold War world as the one that no longer is driven by the ideological clash (liberal democracy vs. global communism), but by cultural and civilizational dynamics of the international system. The cultural considerations (such as national mindset and history, philosophy, family values and way of life, ethnic and religious identity) have begun to shape the behaviour and interests of nation-states and an increasing group of non-state actors in the international relations. (Huntington 1996: 32–34) From a Chinese perspective this paradigm meant two parallel developments: 1) upgrade of China’s developmental model, and 2) re-definition of China’s role in the international system along civilisational lines. The Chinese political leadership has encouraged the renaissance of the Confucian values in the Chinese society (which formed the Chinese traditional culture based on respect for authority and family oriented social ethic). Externally, Beijing used the concept of ‘Cultural China’ to reconstruct the concept of Sinic civilisation (mainland China as the core state together with Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore – regarded as the principal Chinese entities). Chinese cultural identity (also portrayed as ‘Chineseness’) has been an important factor in Beijing’s strategy of nurturing close relationship with Chinese ethnic communities (e.g. Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia) and has helped Beijing regain its historical position of a regional power in East Asia. (Huntington 1996:168–169) The cultural factor has determined to a certain extent the intensity and depth of mainland China’s political and economic relations with overseas compatriots. Confucian Institutes worldwide have become an influential tool of Chinese ‘soft power’ (used as a platform for popularisation of Chinese language, culture, history and way of life).

China in the Context of the Global Economic and Financial Crisis (2008–2010)

The global economic and financial crisis has seriously questioned the viability of the liberal economic model based on ‘Washington Consensus’.

The crisis hit the US and the EU hard. The crisis demonstrated that financial markets and instruments cannot be a sole driver of economic and social development. The stability of the global economy rests on striking the right balance between ‘virtual’ economy of financial services (based on the profits generated from speculative financial and capital transactions and the world’s major stock exchanges) and ‘real’ economy (based on the actual production of goods). The global crisis raised importance of the state which employed massive bail-outs and other fiscal policies to prevent breakdown of banking systems and transnational companies in the US and the EU. For instance, following the collapse of Lehman Brothers investment bank, the US government went into temporary nationalisation of leading American corporation ‘General Motors’ to save it from bankruptcy (known as Temporary Liquidity Guarantee Program).

China has entered the crisis in a relatively good shape. China’s 12 leading corporations (e.g. construction engineering, mobile communication, rail engineering, electricity, oil and gas sectors) are state owned (Fortune Media, 2015). The country was able to navigate more smoothly through the turbulent global economic crisis because of the role of the state in strategic planning of the economy. This includes the government’s power to concentrate needed material, human and financial resources for the development of strategic sectors of the economy, upgrading the management of state run industrial and commercial enterprises and allowing for limited privatization of state assets.

Until 2013 Beijing still maintained unprecedented annual growth rates of 8-9%, amassing considerable currency reserves. Under the World Bank classification China has reached the status of an upper-middle-income country and the second largest economy. By end of the first decade of the 21 century China witnessed emergence of sizable, affluent Chinese middle class of around 400 million people (which meet national targets for eradication of absolute poverty).

Inadvertently, China used the global crisis to expand its geo-economic leverage, especially in Europe (the complex word *weiji* ‘crisis’ in Chinese language blends the meanings of two roots – *wei* ‘danger’ and *ji* ‘opportunity’). Beijing has profited from the privatization programmes implemented in Southern Eurozone states (namely Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal) which sold out sizable state assets as a way of accumulating financial resources to tackle growing budget deficits and sovereign debts. As a result, Beijing bought equities in the Eurozone worth 40 billion euro (Euronews 2011). The move was also aimed at backing the euro currency and supporting EU financial stabilisation.

In 2016 IMF added the Chinese Renminbi (RMB) to the basket of five major reserve currencies which facilitated internationalization of RMB (as the third in ranking, reserve currency after US dollar and the Euro, and before Japanese Yen and British Pound Sterling). More notably, in 2019 Portugal appeared as the first Eurozone country to issue Chinese yuan denominated bonds, popularly known as ‘Panda Bonds’ worth €260 billion, with a three-year maturity (New Europe May 2019).

Moving Towards New Dynamics of the International System

The global economic crisis (2008) triggered the beginning of a gradual geopolitical realignment within the international system. By 2020 the world has witnessed the end of the post-Cold War period, dominated by the American leadership (known in geopolitical writings as the period of ‘unipolarity’). The international system is being slowly reshaped along the lines of multipolarity. The US has been transforming from a hegemon into one of the few. The US policy of strategic disengagement from Middle East (namely, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan) is an indication of this evolving trend. The current US administration uses the economic tools (such as ‘trade wars’ and economic sanctions) to accomplish American geo-strategic goals. The diffusion of power in the international system has produced several poles of power (regional powers) where interests are synchronized and maximised through regional cooperative platforms (e.g. EU, NATO, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Eurasian Economic Union etc.).

In his keynote speech at the Ambassadors Conference delivered at the Élysée Palace in Paris (this is an annual gathering of France’s heads of diplomatic missions at the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs in which they receive political guidelines with regard to country’s foreign policy priorities) president Macron was eloquent to point out that the international system is ‘undergoing an upheaval, transformation, a geopolitical and strategic reconfiguration and experiencing the end of Western hegemony over the world and the emergence of new not just economic, but political non-western powers – India, Russia and China’. (Macron 2019).

The overshadowing of G-7 by G-20 could be sited as an example of this emerging tendency. Another proof of that trend are the growing rifts within the transatlantic alliance itself. Despite the optimistic rhetoric of unity during NATO high level summits (incl. declared areas of transatlantic cooperation such as planning and conducting shared military drills, shared development of defence capabilities, military mobility, cyber security, neutralization of hybrid

and terrorist threats etc.) US-EU relations have deteriorated during the presidency of Donald Trump. Their relations have been marred by trade disputes and policy disagreements over Iran nuclear deal, Israeli-Palestinian peace process, EU energy dealings with Russia, the US rejection of EU's cooperative and balanced approach towards the Chinese technological leader Huawei. The Trump administration has mainly been using the bilateral diplomatic track to pursue US interests worldwide often at the expense downgrading established multilateral institutions (e.g. the UN system, WTO, UNSECO, WHO). The most conspicuous change in the US foreign policy has been evidenced in elevating China to the level of prime strategic threat to the American national security. The ongoing US 'trade war' with China has not simply commercial, but a clear geopolitical dimension. The US is determined to slow down and eventually stop China's rise, especially in the high-tech sector (namely Chinese R&D programs in Artificial Intelligence domain) at any costs.

In view of the above, we can outline the following dynamics of the current international/global system:

- High levels of strategic insecurity and geo-economic competition in the world;
- Increasing gap between 'winners' and 'losers' of globalisation (growing North-South divide, global economic and social disparities drive mass migration from poor to richer geographical regions; share of developing countries in global production and supply chains has been decreasing; depletion of the middle-class worldwide);
- Predominance of *real politik* in international relations and diplomacy (zero-sum format of relations dominate at the expense of win-win solutions);
- Weakening of the global trading system by 'trade wars' and policies of economic nationalism/protectionism; maximization of national interests via participation of regional trading blocs;
- Collapse of the strategic arms reduction treaties and resumption of strategic arms race, incl. in the outer space, with application of newest technological achievements (incl. in the field of Artificial Intelligence [AI]);
- Spread of regional instability (e.g. 'Arab Spring' have led to the collapse of statehood [sustained by moderate authoritarian Arab secular regimes] in large parts of the North Africa and the Middle East; the region is undermined by intra-state conflicts, ethnically and religiously incited civil wars);
- Increased fragility of the global ecosystems as a result to widespread air, land and water pollution and the climate change effect (driven by

environmentally hazardous industrial and commercial activities [for instance, Amazon rain forests, known as the lung of our planet are at risk of extinction].

China's Brand of Multipolarity and Multilateralism

China's response to the current set of challenges to the international system can be observed in the development of its band of multipolarity and multilateralism.

Beijing retains a highly pragmatic, non-ideological foreign policy profile and is unlikely to impose its developmental model outside China. Key Chinese political and communist party officials have repeatedly stated that countries willing to emulate the Chinese developmental model (presumably referring to countries in the developing world), should carefully consider to what extent and how to apply it to their national matrix (e.g. how it fits into the political culture, mindset and socio-economic needs of the receiving states). The Chinese approach has always been that any theory or model can be successful if the national specifics are aligned with its practical implementation. That's why China is known for its 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' or 'multilateralism with Chinese characteristics'. At the same time, it is evident, that China is unlikely to tolerate outside criticism of its one-party political system and/or violation of human rights (incl. ethnic minorities rights) or suppression of internal political dissent (as it is qualified and interpreted by western countries). However, as diplomatic history shows, these cases will be treated within the realm of diplomatic demarches and would not cause substantial deterioration of China's relations with the West.

Most notably, Beijing is unlikely to resort to military power to defend its interests, except for East Asia, the region it considered vital for its national security. Under the national military doctrine, the whole set of accompanying strategic security risks for China will be considered before the country decides to use force. Thus, China's activism in the international system would have to be deciphered from its diplomatic, political, economic, cultural (incl. civilisational) perspectives.

In line with China's brand of multilateralism, Beijing positions itself as a pole in the international system. It is adapting to an international order of one super-power and multiple great powers.

China's aggregate national power can be summed as follows:

Human Resources Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of 1.4 billion
Geo-political power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent Member of the UN Security Council; • The biggest contributor to the UN Peace-keeping missions; • Assuming greater responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security;
Geo-economic power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggest world manufacturer (with sizable share in the global supply and production chains); • World's driver of economic growth (until 2019); • Chinese state-owned corporations (in the energy, engineering and telecom fields rank high in the list of global 'multinationals');
Geo-financial power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chinese RMB is part of the IMF reserve currency pool; • Chinese policy banks assume sizable position in the global finance; • Holder of the largest foreign currency reserves;
Civilizational power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Chinese language is spoken by over 1 billion people; • Study of Chinese language worldwide is likely to increase especially in regions where China has been expanding its economic and cultural influence;
Social power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300 million people affluent middle-class;
Military Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops solid military, technologically advanced industrial complex (backed by solid military budget); • Rapid expansion of the People's Liberation Army (in terms of size and capabilities) in line with China's growing regional ambitions;
Technological Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the leaders in the field of Artificial Intelligence development; • Hi-tech giant Huawei is one the global leaders in 5G Network development; • Emerged as a third country in space exploration, developing an ambitious space program; • 'Made in China 2025' state-planning program outlines the goal to replace imported technology with home-grown globally competitive and innovative R&D and hi-tech sector.

When it comes to projection of its national power, the future strategic dilemma China is likely to face is how to reconcile its ambitions as a rising great power and its assumed status of a regional power in East Asia. China is expected to continue to expand its international scope not through instruments of traditional geopolitics, but via soft power – trade, investment, foreign aid, cultural, educational, scientific, technological and inter-civilisational exchange.

China uses high level international forums to declare its support for multilateralism and international law, the core role of the UN system. However,

China is selective in what rules and norms of international law it decides to adhere and which to oppose in line with its national interests. For instance, it unequivocally rules out the use of international arbitration to solve its maritime dispute with neighbouring countries over the South China sea or its border dispute with India. Beijing promotes its brand of multilateralism in regional and global policy platform (e.g. UN General Assembly and Security Council, G-20, Asia-Europe Meeting, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, BRICS, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change). It is also an active proponent of global economic governance (based on WTO principles rules).

The Chinese brand of multilateralism introduces a conceptually new policy terminology. For instance, Beijing favours ‘cooperative security’ over ‘collective security’ because it believes the latter is an anachronism of bloc based mentality (indirectly, referring to NATO collective security arrangements). The adjective ‘cooperative’ is meant to initiate cooperation when dealing with global threats. Another example of its vision of multilateralism is replacing ‘international community’ with ‘global community’, because Beijing believes that the former is associated with the club of developed industrialised countries only (described as the core of ‘Washington Consensus’). Thus, the adjective ‘global’ is meant to incorporate a wide group of developing countries in the policy-making fora. Being highly sensitive on the issue of its developmental model, Beijing has also brought into international circulation the notion of ‘political inclusiveness’. It is also meant to reinforce internationally the Chinese view that there are not universal political systems to follow. Each country has the right to choose its path of development in line with its historical experience and political tradition.²

It may be concluded that by launching the Belt or Road Initiative China aims to reform the existing international/global system. The BRI is China’s response to the era of globalisation. Beijing uses its mega initiative to promote its vision of a new world order which can be outlined as an emerging ‘New Beijing Consensus’ (NBC). In line with ‘Xi Jinping Thought’ the NBC will have to be built on the principles of ‘community of common destiny and shared future for mankind’ and ‘global connectivity and shared development’ (Semenov & Tsvyk 2019: 73–78)

² The following observations were derived and systematized by the author following his participation in the policy symposiums of the 17+1 China-CEEC Think Tank Network.

Contours of a NBC vs. ‘Washington Consensus’ (Complementary and Competitive)

Washington Consensus	New Beijing Consensus
Universality of Western democratic model of governance: combination of democratic form of government, free markets and rule of law;	Political inclusiveness (accepting diversity in the choice of development paths and political systems);
Neoliberal economic making and thinking in the context of globalisation means deregulation: opening up domestic markets incl. financial markets, to foreign competition; less state planning over economy, outright privatization);	A ‘market economy’ as a mix of ‘state run’ and ‘private’ economy, high degree of economic planning; selective deregulation and opening the market to foreign competition; Strategy 2025; policies to eradicate absolute poverty and redress economic inequalities; still a developing nation in terms of per capita income; adapting to challenges of globalisation;
Economic aid to developing countries delivered upon implementation of liberal economic reforms: introduction free market economic policies as defined by global financial institutions – the World Bank and IMF; structural reforms and reduction of state regulation of the economy);	No political conditionality to provision of foreign aid; pragmatic and mercantilist strategy for supporting the Global South; the notion of ‘stability through development’ attracts some level of support in the developing world, vis-à-vis the Western concept of ‘freedoms and democracy’;
Rules based international system/order treats globalisation as political and economic phenomenon; an increased role of transnational companies in global economic governance; less state sovereignty; (liberal democracy: retreat of the state in favour of business elites, and civil society, rise of individualism);	Short of endorsing rules based order, support for global economic governance under WTO rules (liberalisation of global trade); a lead role of nation-states in the international system, primacy of national sovereignty;
International trading and financial institutions at the core of economic and financial globalisation	Supports for Western led international financial institutions and at the same time promoting alternative Chinese-led international banks and credit institutions such Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Silk Road Fund, New Development Bank (BRICS)

Impact of COVID-19 on the International/Global System

The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to have far-reaching geopolitical and geo-economic implications for the international/global system.

The World Health Organisation has been criticised for initial serious underestimation of the severity of the problem and for lack of an effective and coordinated global response (at the very beginning when the COVID-19 was still in its ‘embryonic stage’ and was not qualified as a global pandemic). What has been thought of largely as China-centred health issue (bearing in mind that coronavirus originated from China’s Wuhan province) is gradually plunging the world in the worst global economic crisis, compared in depth and vastness with the Great Depression of the 30s of the last century. The global economy has been virtually placed in an induced coma and its survivability depends on how fast it re-opens to normal economic activity. Recreation (incl. tourism, retail food and restaurant business, entertainment & leisure), all means of transportation and trade are among the hardest-hit sectors. The COVID-19 triggered a disruption of the global supply and demand and may also lead to high turbulence in the global financial markets. IMF forecasts warn of a possible global recession this year and a slow and painful recovery in 2021.

Increased physical interaction and mobility worldwide (facilitated by fast modern means of air, rail and maritime transportation, coupled with the needs of the global economy for such interconnectivity) are the hallmark of globalisation. However, that has also led to a rapid spread of contagious diseases. That’s why the COVID-19 has put to the fore of the global policy debate the type of globalisation that humanity would have to adjust to, once the pandemic is curbed, and the global economy reopens.

We can, therefore, identify two underlining trends within the multitude of scenarios in store for international/global system as result of COVID-19:

- The COVID-19 would contain the physical dimension of globalisation, but at the same time push for virtual/online forms of globalisation (internet driven global socialization). This, however, might create possibilities for greater levels of surveillance over human communications, transactions and interactions. A fundamental re-thinking of the notion of privacy (as a basic human right) may occur as a result of that (how to strike the balance between citizen’s surveillance as an element of the national security and right his/her private life). For instance, proponents of the surveillance policy claim that accomplishment and effective biosecurity and swift tackling mass diseases actually justifies the government’s continued control over citizens’ movements;

- The COVID-19 would not lead to de-globalisation of the global system and its encapsulation exclusively within the national governance frameworks (structures and tools). However, future globalisation will produce a come-back of the nation-state as a principal actor in the management of globalisation. The globalisation as previously thought will not lead to undermining of the state's political, economic, technological, health determined sovereignty.

China in the COVID-19 Geopolitical and Geoeconomic Context

For the past decade China has enjoyed a geoeconomically advantageous position of the world's second largest economy as an engine of global economic growth. The current coronavirus crisis may derail, or at least temporarily detain the Chinese path to becoming an economic superpower. China's National Bureau of Statistics has acknowledged in its latest report that GDP has fallen down by 6.8 percent during the first quarter of the year, calculated on a yearly basis. There has not been such GDP contraction since 1976. The projected growth before the pandemic outbreak was around 6.1 percent (Hale et al. 2020).

Domestically, the Chinese political leadership has been focused on mitigating the shut-down effects for the socio-economic development and preparing the country for gradual restart of the affected by the crisis industry sectors. Against the backdrop of the rising urban unemployment to unacceptable for China levels of 6.2 percent, around 5 million people, (Hale et al. 2020), Beijing has exerted considerable effort to maintain social stability and cohesion on a wide-country level.³ It is especially pertinent at a time when the COVID-19 crisis is putting great social strain on Asian countries. It has become also obvious that Beijing would not be in a position to accomplish the goal of doubling the country's GDP (against the figures of 2010) by the end of this year. It is also impacting the implementation targets of the national program for eradicating extreme poverty.

Internationally, China has engaged in a proactive 'mask diplomacy' to improve its tarnished international image of a conceiver of the coronavirus

³ In their monograph 'Social Cohesion in Asia: Historical Origins, Contemporary Shapes and Future Dynamics', Aurel Croissant and Peter Walkenhorst have empirically identified the 'Sinic World' (mainland China, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong) as the Asian cluster with most cohesive societies (comparing it with South Asian and Southeast Asian clusters] (West, J. 2020).

(incl. initial concealment of critical information to WHO about the highly contagious nature of the coronavirus). This included airlifting of a group to Chinese doctors and nurses (equipped with massive medical supplies) to Italy and Spain to help their national overwhelmed healthcare capacities to deal with the pandemic. The Chinese willingness to share expertise and medical assistance, however, has backfired and been interpreted by some EU policy-makers as a kind of interference in EU affairs. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian has called for limiting Europe's dependence on great powers such as China. Other warned of Europe's import overdependence on China and India manufactured medicines. In this context, the Czech Health Minister *Adam Vojtech* has called for a paradigmatic shift by bringing the production of generic medicines (which Europe traditionally imports from third countries) to European soil as part of ensuring its bio-security (Ortega, 2–3:2020).

Another feature of the current crisis is the 'global battle of the pandemic narratives' as the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, has defined it (Ortega, 2:2020). US-China confrontation from the field of conventional geopolitics and geo-economics (associated with fight for economic and technological supremacy) has transcended to a level of 'infodemic wars'. The Chinese narrative that ['although the coronavirus did start from Wuhan province, it might have been conceived in a US laboratory as a biological weapon'], has been countered by the US narrative that ['the WHO has been China-centric organisation and has deliberately failed to report on China's intentional mismanagement of containing the spread of the deadly virus]. In this respect, Beijing has been calling for a coordinated global response to the current pandemic with the WHO taking a leading role thorough its Strategic and Preparedness Plan (at a time when the Trump administration has suspended its funding and support for the UN specialised health agency until thorough investigation of the agency's activities is completed).

Conclusion

What has made New China a game changer in the international system (since its creation in 1949), is its capacity to constantly adapt and reform internally in line with its national economic and social development goals, and to follow a pragmatic, adaptive and particularly mercantilist foreign policy in different historical and geopolitical contexts.

A key aspect of the Chinese foreign policy strategy is its mid and long-term planning perspective. Chinese political leadership analyses and foresees the world and China's place in it within a time scope of 50–100 years ahead.

Culture provides an important reference framework for deciphering China's foreign policy mindset. The reference framework consists of four elements. 1) contextuality: seeing things in a broader perspective; employing deductive approach: analysing the context (mega trend); 2) correlativity: seeing things in comparison; things are correlated to each other; 3) complementarity: seeing no difference between different identities, as they complement each other and still act as a single entity; 4) changeability: flexible to constantly evolving environment; change and adaption to what is going on in the world.

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution the ideology no longer has been a factor in pursuit of Beijing's foreign policy interests. At the same time, China is a staunch defender of the primacy of national sovereignty in the international system, thus shielding its one-party communist political system from outside interference. In addition, Beijing seeks to legitimize the concept of political inclusivity in the system of international (inter-state) relations.

The Chinese political leadership has employed unconventional approaches to adapt the current dynamics of the international/global system. Through its mega Belt and Road initiative (BRI) China seeks to position itself in the global system as a non-western civilizational power, with its capacity to offer the world alternatives or/and improvements to the current neo-liberal paradigm. It can succeed only if it proves that the BRI is not a solely a Chinese-centred global enterprise and legitimate interests of other participating countries are taken into account. So far, the majority of non-Chinese political observers and analysts have assessed the BRI as a zero-sum game initiative.

China's rise is not irreversible.

Domestically, at present, Beijing faces several strategic challenges to its national development and cohesion. Firstly, China's four decades of uninterrupted heavy industrialisation has produced high levels of air, land and water pollution. The environment has been elevated as a top national security concern, and the respective policies need to be designed in order to improve the situation. Secondly, China's forced one-child policy has led to aging of the population and has caused structural changes in the Chinese society and workforce distribution. Thirdly, rapid urbanization (as a tool of poverty reduction strategy) of the country amid rising urban unemployment in Chinese cities may destabilise social stability.

Internationally, China's economic growth dependability on foreign export markets has made the economy particularly vulnerable at times of crises (the current the COVID-19 pandemic is a case in point).

The Chinese economy is also very energy dependent and the country has been a net energy importer since 2010. Thus, energy will remain an essential

factor in China's relations with energy producing countries (e.g. Middle East, Russia). China resource-driven foreign policy is most evident in Africa. In this respect, for those African countries (that are cash stripped) Beijing would continue to build a critical road and rail infrastructure against assuming access and control over their natural resources.

While the US-Soviet Union geopolitical struggle was an eminent characteristic of the Cold War, the emerging US-China geo-economic and geo-technological competition is becoming the underlining feature of the 21st international/global system. The US government has ended a long period of strategic luxury for China. Currently, the Chinese political leadership has come to terms with the new geopolitical reality, but we are still unclear about the content and framework of the Chinese strategy to meet the US strategic challenge. Beijing may seek situational coalitions with Russia (on issues of strategic security, as well as energy and civilian and military technology related cooperation) and with the EU (on the issue of curbing protectionist tendencies and preserving the fruits of economic globalisation). However, given its historical experience, Beijing is unlikely to engage in a fixed type of alliances. Despite the official rhetoric in favour of the EU-China strategic partnership, attitudes and official statements in the EU policy-making fora are growing worryingly anti-Chinese. It is also evident in the content of the policy research of Brussels based think tanks as well as in Visegrad-4 group's distancing from the 17+1 China-Central and Easter Europe cooperation platform (particularly, in Poland and Czech Republic). Simultaneously, Europe remains predominantly pro-US and Atlantist despite EU attempts to forge autonomous identity in security and defence (in the form of strategic autonomy). The Sino-Russian strategic partnership has its limitations, too, because of its geo-economic asymmetry.

Sofia, 21st April 2020

References

- Macron 2019: "Ambassadors' Conference – Speech by M. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic". Web. <https://lv.ambafrance.org/Ambassadors-conference-Speech-by-M-Emmanuel-Macron-President-of-the-Republic>. 27.11.2019.
- Chendrowski 2015: Chendrowski, Scott. "China's Global 500 Companies Are Bigger Than Ever – and Mostly State-owned". *Fortune Media IP Limited*. Web. <https://fortune.com/2015/07/22/china-global-500-government-owned/>. 22.07.2015.
- Euronews 2011: "China Promises Help With Euro Zone Debt Crisis". *Euronews*. Web. <http://www.euronews.net/2011/06/28/china-promises-help-with-euro-zone-debt-crisis/>. 12.09.2011.

- Hale et al. 2020: Hale, T., L. Xinning, Y. Yuan. “China’s Economy Shrinks for First Time in Four Decades”. *Financial Times*. Web. <https://www.ft.com/content/8f941520-67ad-471a-815a-d6ba649d22ed>. 17.04.2020.
- Huntington 1996: Huntington, Samuel. “The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order”. *Simon & Shuster*, 1996. Print.
- Ortega 2020: Ortega, Andres. “The Deglobalization Virus?” *The Globalist*. Web. <https://www.theglobalist.com/coronavirus-covid19-pandemic-globalization-deglobalization-globalism>. 18.03.2020.
- Ortega 2020: Ortega, Andres. “COVID-19: How to Fight the Infodemic Wars”. *The Globalist*. Web. <https://www.theglobalist.com/coronavirus-pandemic-infodemic-misinformation-propaganda-media-social-media-democracy/>. 31.03.2020.
- NEOnline 2019: “Portugal Becomes First Eurozone Country to Sell Debt in Chinese Yuan”. *New Europe*. Web. <https://www.neweurope.eu/article/portugal-becomes-first-eurozone-country-to-sell-debt-in-chinese-yuan>. 30.05.2019.
- Richter 2020: Richter, Felix. “China Is the World’s Manufacturing Superpower”. *Statista*. Web. <https://www.statista.com/chart/20858/top-10-countries-by-share-of-global-manufacturing-output/>. 18.02. 2020.
- Semenov & Tsyvk 2019: Semenov A., A. Tsyvk “The “Community of a Shared Future for Humankind” Concept in China’s Foreign Policy Strategy”. *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya* 63.8 (2019): 72-81. Web. <https://doi.org/10.20542/0131-2227-2019-63-8-72-81>.
- West 2020: West, John. “Advantage Asia: Social Cohesion as King in the COVID 19 Era”. *The Globalist*. Web. <https://www.theglobalist.com/asia-social-cohesion-coronavirus-covid19-china-south-korea-india-indonesia/>. 9.04.2020.
- Xi 2019: Xi, Jinping. “Speech at the Reception in Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People’s Republic of China. 2019”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People’s Republic of China*. Web. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/zyjh_665391/t1704400.shtml. 6 April 2020.
- Zeneli & Vann 2020: Zeneli, V. Vann, J. “Coronavirus: A True Stresstest for Globalisation”. *The Globalist*. Web. <https://www.theglobalist.com/globalization-deglobalization-global-supply-chains-coronavirus-covid19-pandemic-china>. 24.03.2020.

70 years Between Ideology and Pragmatism – Within the “Zig-Zags” of Bulgaria – China Relations from the Cold War Period to the Belt and Road Initiative

Evgeniy Kandilarov

Abstract

This year Bulgaria and China celebrate 70 years anniversary since the beginning of their diplomatic relations. Over the years this relations went through different stages of ups and downs. There have been times when the two countries have been ideologically and politically very close followed with periods of getting distant and then back having close and active relations again.

During the first two decades after the end of the Cold War China was not a priority of the Bulgarian foreign policy which was focused mainly on the Euro-Atlantic Integration of the country.

Since the beginning of the Belt and Road Initiative the inertia of the Bulgarian government from these two decades continue without any significant change. With the extension and the deepening of the BRI, Bulgarian government started trying to be driven more by the economic pragmatism as well as by the idea that remaining the only country from the whole CEEC region out of the giant Chinese Initiative will be a kind of a geostrategic catastrophe brought by a political short-sightedness. The paper will put under analyses also the issue how Bulgaria will move forward in the context of BRI being between the described existing restrictions and the economic and geostrategic pragmatism.

Keywords: Bulgaria-China relations, Cold war, China-CEEC, BRI, 16/17+1 Initiative

This year Bulgaria and China celebrate the 70th anniversary since the establishment of their diplomatic relations (as most of the CEEC). Over the years these relations went through different stages of ups and downs. There have been times when the two countries have been ideologically and politically very close, followed by periods of getting distant and then back having close and active relations again.

Within this relatively long period of bilateral relations we can clearly distinguish the following stages of the relations which are having very different internal characteristics. From 1949 to 1960 – very close relations with spirit of mutual trust and friendship; from 1960 to 1980 – distant and cold relations under the spirit of Sino-Soviet Split; from 1980–1989 – slow but gradual warming of the relations with its peak in the second half of the 80s; from 1989 until 1998 – time of mutual neglect; from 1999–2008 – both China and CEEC started to find its place in international arena; since 2009 – until now – the relations are running within the framework of the OBOR and 16+1 which define the “strategic character” of Bulgaria-China relations.

During all these stages main motives and factors that determine Bulgarian policy towards China often change, mainly under the influence of the international context but also due to the domestic political dynamics in the country.

The analysis of these dynamics shows that in some periods the determining factor for the bilateral relations between Bulgaria and China is the Ideological closeness or the opposite, the complete contradiction between the political ideologies espoused by the government of the two countries. During other stages, ideological proximity or contradictions stepped back and gave priority to entirely pragmatic approach, driven mainly by certain economic interests.

The bilateral relations between Bulgaria and China during the Cold War, like the Soviet-Chinese ones, went through polar opposites – from friendship between the “two fraternal peoples” to mutual attacks and abuses. At the end of the 1980s, Bulgaria was attempting a turn and a new approach to the PRC from completely different, entirely pragmatic positions which led to a new gradual rapprochement between the two countries, but from a purely pragmatic standpoint.

Bulgaria is the second country in the world to recognize the People’s Republic of China on October 3, 1949. The opening of diplomatic missions in the two capitals has been postponed by one year, and the bilateral contacts in the first two to three years after the establishment of official relations are reduced mainly to the exchange of trade union and youth delegations and regulatory and propaganda materials (CSARB, F.1477, In. 6, a.u.187).

The 1950s were a time when relations between Bulgaria and China developed entirely in the spirit of a communist ideology common to both countries. From this point of view, the main motive and impetus for close contacts and relations is the pursuit of mutual support, friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance in every field of politics, economy and cultural relations.

The 1950s were the time of the signing of the first trade treaty between the two countries (1952) as well as the first intergovernmental agreement on cul-

tural cooperation signed in July 1952. This gave start of the economic relations as well as the beginning of cultural contacts between the two countries. Mutual visits of writers, artists, music ensembles, exhibitions, etc. begin (CSARB, F. 363, In 9, a.u. 114).

Again 1950s are the years with extremely intensive educational exchange between Bulgaria and China. During that time there are tens of Chinese students studying in Bulgaria, who after completing their education are actively involved in the economic, cultural, scientific and educational life of their country and respectively become the engine of Bulgarian-Chinese relations in the coming years. Some of these Chinese students in Bulgaria after their return set the basis of the Bulgarian studies in China. This was accordingly the time when the first Bulgarian Students went to study in China. In 1955, the first interstate science and technology cooperation agreement between Bulgaria and China was signed, with a five-year term (CSARB, F. 1477, In 18, a.u.548, p.5).

During the 1950s, a number of high-level visits were made between Bulgaria and China. In late September-early October 1954 a Bulgarian government delegation headed by Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers Rayko Damyanov visited Beijing. In the same 1954, a Chinese delegation headed by Deputy Chairman of the State Council of the PRC Dong Beu visited Bulgaria. Two years later, in September 1956, a new governmental delegation, this time headed by Prime Minister Anton Yugov, visited Beijing on the occasion of the CCP's 7th Congress. The same 1956 year Bulgaria was visited by a high-ranking Chinese parliamentary delegation led by Peng Zhen, a member of the Politburo of the CCP and Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly of China. The following year, 1957, China was visited by a Bulgarian military delegation led by Lieutenant General Ivan Buchvarov, Chief of General Staff of the Bulgarian People's Army. During the visit, Bulgarian guests were welcomed by Mao Zedong and State Council President Zhou Enlai. The same year, Bulgarian Prime Minister Anton Yugov made a second visit to Beijing and also met with Mao Grandfather, Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi, as well as Chinese leadership members such as Deng Xiaoping and Peng Zheng (CSARB, F. 1477, In 18, a.u. 548, p. 8).

At the end of September 1958 a Bulgarian parliamentary delegation led by a member of the Politburo and Deputy Prime Minister Valko Chervenkov visited China on the occasion of the celebration of China's 9th year anniversary. The delegation traveled throughout 32 days to various parts of China, visited industrial and agricultural plants, communes and large metallurgical plants. After his return to Bulgaria, Valko Chervenkov made a number of publications in the press, as well as statements in the National Assembly in which he

expressed his sincere admiration and impression on the policy of the Chinese leadership to achieve the so-called Great leap forward (Chervenkov 2000: 96–101).

In May 1959, the member of the Political Bureau of CCP and Minister of Defense, Peng Dehuai, made an official visit to Bulgaria. In September the same year, a Bulgarian party-government delegation headed by the Chairman of the Presidium of the National Assembly Dimitar Ganev also visited China on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the proclamation of the PRC (70 Years 2019: 23).

The dynamics of these high-level visits clearly show the desire for closer political, economic and cultural ties between Bulgaria and China, entirely in the spirit of communist ideology for the mutual support of the peoples-democratic regimes throughout the world in their total opposition to the capitalist and imperialist aggression and threat represented by the US and their allies.

The Sino-Soviet Split that emerged at the beginning of the 60s of the XX century had a long term negative impact on the relations between PRC and the countries from the so called Soviet bloc for a quite a long time and in many aspects it wasn't completely surmounted until the end of the Cold war period. The bilateral relations between China and the closest allies of the Soviet Union such as Bulgaria reflected strictly the condition of Sino-Soviet relations during 70s and 80s. From that point of view next period of the relations between Bulgaria and China were also dominated by the Ideology but with exactly opposite toward China sign (Kandilarov 2016: 148–162).

In the late 70s, profound changes occurred in Chinese domestic politics. Having normalized its relations with the United States, for the purpose of providing a peaceful environment, Deng Xiaoping also sought improved relations with the Soviet Union and the other countries from the Soviet bloc (Vamos 2010: 80-81).

The major tendencies of the development of Sino-East European relations and in this context China-Bulgarian Relations during the 1980s can be characterized by a gradual switch from informal exchanges to formal relations, from peripheral fields of cooperation to central issues, and from small steps to major moves (Vamos 2016: 2). At the same time, it is evident from the available documentation that the Bulgarian party and state leadership has a constant ongoing interest in the political changes and economic reforms in China. In the period 1983-1985, the political dialogue between the two countries intensified significantly (Baev 2012: 238–239).

The real impetus for the development of bilateral relations, and at the same time the study of Chinese experience, which corresponds with Zhivkov's

reform efforts in Bulgaria, took place after 1985, when a series of high-level visits from both sides were exchanged.

Two important visits were made in November-December 1985. The Bulgarian National Assembly Speaker Stanko Todorov visited Beijing in November 5-11, 1985 and the Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Li Peng visited Sofia right after that. During Li Peng's visit to Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov emphasized that the issue of faster development of economic and political relations with the PRC was specifically discussed at the last Warsaw Pact Summit at the end of October 1985 in Sofia. During this visit, a five-year trade agreement was signed between the two countries (Kandilarov 2016: 217–219).

In mid-October 1986, Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov visited Beijing and was welcomed by Chinese President Li Xiannian. The purpose of the visit was to strengthen relations between the two countries in the fields of economic, trade and scientific and technical cooperation. Particular attention is paid to the opportunities in the field of scientific and technical cooperation, with particular reference to the fact that, due to the more liberal implementation of the embargo policy on China by the Western countries, a number of directions in scientific and technical research, the creation and introduction of new technologies in China has received a broad and dynamic development, which is of crucial interest to Bulgaria in terms of the development of priority directions in the country's technological development (Ibidem).

Among the important results of Lukanov's visit are the establishment of an Intergovernmental Commission for Economic, Trade and Scientific and Technical Cooperation.

Indisputable peak in the Bulgarian-Chinese relations in the second half of the 1980s marks the visit of Todor Zhivkov to China, held from 5 to 9 May 1987. The conclusion of Zhivkov after the visit was that the reforms in China goes through opening, through commodity-monetary relations, through the import of technologies, but the political system and organization is not affected at all and that is the key for the successful reforms according to the Bulgarian leader. According to Zhivkov, the main goal of opening China is technology transfer. In this regard, entirely in pragmatic sense he places technology transfer as one of the opportunities for the development of Bulgarian-Chinese relations. In one of his meetings with Chinese government he described this question as follows: *"You buy technology from everywhere. Our capabilities are limited, but if you want to maintain a good relationship, let us develop technology transfer."* The same arguments uses the chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology (STCT), Stoyan Markov, who noted that *"if we can really use the door between socialism and capitalism in*

this country for technology transfer, this is the real open door between the East and the West.” (Ibidem)

Approximately ten years later already former Bulgarian Party and State Leader during the State Socialism Todor Zhivkov, in his “Memoirs”, claims that at the last stage of his government he turns to the strategic advantages of the Chinese model of reforms conducted by Deng Xiaoping. Zhivkov argues that he was trying to follow China as a more effective and successful model of reforms of the socialist system and this was the reason for the worsening of the Bulgarian-Soviet relations and finally resulted in the overthrow of Zhivkov by a coup organized and supported by the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly, Todor Zhivkov was greatly impressed by the results of the Chinese reforms and he didn’t hide his desire Bulgaria to draw experience and to benefit the most pragmatic way of the opportunities offered by the rapprochement with China in economic, scientific, technological and political way. But that doesn’t mean an attempt to implement the so-called “Chinese model” in Bulgaria. Zhivkov rather feels flattered by the thought that the actions of the Chinese leaders (especially Deng Xiaoping) largely coincide with his understanding of the main purpose of Bulgarian reforms (Kandilarov, 2016: 231; Kandilarov, 2020: 89).

Despite controversies over the contents of political reform, a commitment to reform served as a binding force for both Eastern Europe and China right until the spring of 1989. Paradoxically, the same reform processes—which on both sides initially ran parallel, serving as a point of reference and contributing to the renormalization of relations, by 1989, led to diametrically opposite political solutions and turned into a source for difference and separation after the end of the 1989.

The year of 1989 is a turning point in the history of Bulgaria as well as all CEEC and its consequences had a long standing impact on Bulgaria-China relations.

During the first two decades after the end of the Cold War China was not a priority of the Bulgarian foreign policy which was focused mainly on the Euro-Atlantic Integration of the country. Additional reason for the cooling down was the Ideological incompatibility since all the Bulgarian governments during the transition period have been demonstrated that they have cut off with the communist past of the country respectively with its ideology so more close relations with country like China would be quite problematic, especially when we take into account the extremely active role and influence that USA have had over Bulgaria and its governance since the beginning of the 90s.

Since the start of the BRI the tendency of the Bulgarian government from these two decades continue without any significant change, especially having

in mind that Bulgaria has been governed by a right wing party for the last more than ten years. At the beginning of the Chinese geostrategic project Bulgarian government was not eager to demonstrate any strong will to explore the opportunities it offers to the country or to play active role in this process (Kandilarov, Dimitrov 2018: 58).

Although the thesis of Bulgaria's "strategic geographic position" is often included in a variety of official comments, until 2018 there was no clear position or elaborated priorities of Bulgaria on this initiative. Bulgaria was part of the 16+1 from the very beginning, but until 2018 its participation was quite formal, often lurid and generally passive.

With the extension of the BRI and the involvement of more and more countries especially such as all the Bulgarian neighbors, no matter members of the EU or not, Bulgarian government slowly started trying to be driven more by the economic pragmatism (Kandilarov, 2018: 76).

That's why during the last years Bulgarian Government started being more active in 16 + 1 (already 17 + 1) format within the framework of BRI and respectively this influenced the improvement of the relations with China. At least on a declarative level it was clearly visible (Kandilarov, Dimitrov 2018: 62).

At the same several limitations still lay in front of Bulgarian government. The first one is the lasting ideological prejudices caused by the dominant neoliberal ideology in the country government and the society. To this must be added still the extremely strong American influence over the Bulgarian government. The other limitation is related to the certain restrictions coming out from Brussels since the EU itself or at least on a top level administration and within the government of certain countries there is still very pessimistic attitude toward China and its Initiative and this raises strong feeling of suspicion and lack of trust towards the true intentions of the Chinese government. In this regard Bulgarian government is following and is being under the influence of the most conservative and mistrustful toward China and BRI countries in the EU.

So never the less the fact that during the last two years and especially after hosting the 7th 16 + 1 summit in Sofia in 2018, Bulgaria started being much more active and positive in its attitude towards China, the last EU-China summit at 9 of April 2019 set the exact EU framework of limitation. Within this summit no matter of the expression that both sides committed to deepen the EU-China strategic partnership, the analyses shows that actually both sides confirmed that there are still not completely clear, stable and equally beneficial base for their future relations. This is even more clearly visible from the so

called Joint Communication on ‘EU-China – A strategic outlook’ document launched by the European Commission a month before the EU-China summit in which China has been described as “*an economic competitor in pursuit of technological leadership, and a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance*” (EU-China Strategic Outlook).

The way that Bulgaria completely share, accept and follows this understanding toward China as well as regarding its own participation in the 16 + 1 format as a part of the China-EU relations and BRI dynamics was clearly manifested and showed during the 8th Summit of China and Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) in April 2019 at Dubrovnik. The Bulgarian Prime minister underlined many times that our common understanding is that “16 + 1” can be developed only as a supplement to the strategic partnership EU-China, following the principles of openness, reciprocity, equal treatment and supremacy of the law.

Another concrete example for the ideological prejudices of the Bulgarian government and the large part of the society is the way that Bulgarian media covered the celebrations of the 70 years anniversary of the Chinese People’s Republic. Almost all the publications reflecting the event were predominantly critical and full of warnings, questioning what stays behind this demonstrated power and what are the true goals of its further development? Most of the time the suggestions made were related with warnings that this new power is threatening the basic values of western democracy, political freedom, the liberal economic system, fundamental rights and freedoms of the people etc.

At the same time one of the key international events for Bulgaria this year was the official state visit to China of the Bulgarian President Rumen Radev held from 1st until 5th of July. Leading accents in all the meetings of the Bulgarian president with Chinese governmental and state officials were the upgrading of the bilateral relations between Bulgaria and China at strategic level and the establishment of guidelines for their further development and deepening. Bulgarian president discussed a series of concrete prospects for increasing Chinese investment in Bulgaria, promoting business contacts, as well as partnerships in information technology, transport infrastructure and communications, tourism, science, education and culture, agriculture etc. The core of the visit of the Bulgarian President was that the two heads of state announced their intention to raise relations between the two countries to the level of strategic partnership by signing a Joint Declaration between the Republic of Bulgaria and the People’s Republic of China.

The main point of the signed document is focused in the article three which states that “*Both sides express their willingness to achieve the objectives set*

out in the intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding on the Joint Implementation of the “One Belt One Road” initiative, following the principles of broad consultation, joint contribution and mutual benefit, in order to foster practical cooperation in a range of areas, for the purposes of implementing the “One Belt, One Road” initiative to the highest level of quality.”

What will be the real impact of the newly signed Joint Declaration on establishing strategic partnership relations on the further development of the relations between Bulgaria and China is about to understand in the near future.

Whether Bulgarian government will fully recognize and strictly follow the goals and principles of this document is very hard to be predicted. One is clearly sure and it is that Bulgaria is one of the first Central and Eastern European countries to sign intergovernmental cooperation documents with China on the Belt and Road Initiative. With this declaration Bulgaria shows clearly that it considers the BRI and “17 + 1” not only as a projects for transport connectivity, but also an investment in the future and the prosperity of the countries that participate in the project.

But how Bulgaria will move forward being between the described existing Ideological limitations and the economic and geostrategic pragmatism is a matter of better political assessment of China and its growing power and influence considering it not only and simply as a threat, but also as an opportunity and a chance for a better model of development, both globally and regionally, and not least nationally.

References

- EU-China Strategic Outlook: Commission and HR/VP contribution to the European Council (21–22 March 2019). https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/eu-china-strategic-outlook-commission-contribution-european-council-21-22-march-2019_en
- Baev, Jordan. Баев, Йордан. *Drugata Studena vojna. Svyetsko-kitajskiiat konflikt i Iztochna Evropa* Другата Студена война. Съветско-китайският конфликт и Източна Европа [The other Cold War. Soviet-Chinese Conflict and Eastern Europe]. Sofia София, 2012.
- Central State Archive of the Republic of Bulgaria (CSARB), Fund 1477, Inventory 6, archival unit 187 (CSARB, F.1477, In. 6, a.u. 187).
- Central State Archive of the Republic of Bulgaria (CSARB), Fund 1477, Inventory 18, archival unit 548 (CSARB, F. 1477, In 18, a.u. 548).
- Central State Archive of the Republic of Bulgaria (CSARB), Fund 363, Inventory 9, archival unit 114 (CSARB, F. 363, In 9, a.u. 114).
- Chervenkov, Valko. Червенков, Вълко. *Valko Chervenkov za sebe si i svoeto vreme* Вълко Червенков за себе си и своето време [Valko Chervenkov for himself and For His Time.] Sofia София, 2000.

- Kandilarov, Evgeniy. Кандиларов, Евгений *Iztochna Azia i Bulgaria* Източна Азия и България [East Asia and Bulgaria]. Sofia София 2016.
- Kandilarov, Evgeniy. “China And CEEC Relations In The Past 40 Years: Achievements, Challenges And Prospect – Bulgarian Point Of View”. *Journal of Xi’an Jiaotong University (social sciences)*, 6 (2018): 76–82. [doi:10.15896/j.xj-tuskxb.201806009].
- Kandilarov, Evgeniy, Dimitrov, Aleksander. Bulgaria-China Relationship: Between the National Development Strategy and Belt and Road Initiative – Yearbook of UNWE, University of National and World Economy, 2018, pp. 33–73, ISSN: 1312-5486
- Kandilarov, Evgenij. Die chinesischen Reformen unter Deng Xiaoping und ihre Auswirkungen auf die bulgarischen Wirtschaftsreformen in den 1980er-Jahren – Jahrbuch für Historische Kommunismusforschung 2020. Machterhalt durch Wirtschaftsreformen. Chinas Einfluss auf die sozialistische Welt Metropol Verlag Berlin, pp. 89-104, ISBN: 978-3-86331-516-0.
- Vámos, Péter. “Only a Handshake but No Embrace”: Sino-Soviet Normalization in the 1980s – China Learns From The Soviet Union , 1949 – Present. Edited by Thomas P. Bernstein and Hua-yu Li, 2010, pp. 80–81.
- Vámos, Péter. China and Eastern Europe in the 1980s: A Hungarian Perspective – CWIHP e-Dossier no. 69, 2016 – <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/china-and-eastern-europe-the-1980s-hungarian-perspective>.
- 70 godini priiatelstvo i sytrudnichestvo. Bulgariia-Kitaj. Diplomatcheski otnosheniia*
70 години приятелство и сътрудничество. България-Китай. Дипломатически отношения [70 Years Friendship and Cooperation. Bulgaria-China. Diplomatic Relations.] Sofia София, 2019.

China and Russia: Intersection of Integration Projects in Eurasia

Antonina Habova

Abstract

Eurasia is one of the most important regions for contemporary geopolitics. It is a key component in the process of building a new global order. Russia and China are two of the actors that define the regional order in Eurasia. Russia turns to the East and China “Marches West” through the Silk Road Economic Belt project. The interests of the two countries intersect in the heart of Eurasia. Both countries have their own vision, ambitions and projects in the Eurasian space which are important elements in their global strategies. The paper, however, argues that the intersection of their projects in the Eurasian space will not result in an open confrontation as common challenges and geopolitical pressure from other strategic powers overshadow their conflicting geopolitical interests in this area.

Keywords: China, Russia, Eurasia, BRI, EAEU, geopolitics

Introduction

Relations between China and Russia are an important component of the contemporary international system and one of the major driving forces of its dynamics. These are two of the main actors that strive to improve the geopolitical environment in Eurasia according to their interests and ambitions for the regional and global order.

Eurasia¹ is one of the most important regions for contemporary geopolitics and a key component in the process of building a new global order. The events of the early 1990s marked a turning point in the geopolitical dynamics of Eurasia. The main geopolitical rivalry in the international system left the territory of Europe and moved to the East – towards the center of Eurasia. Western countries, Islamic forces and China tried to benefit from the strategic vacuum and to increase their influence in this part of the world after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

¹ In this paper the term “Eurasia” refers primarily to the post-Soviet space.

The dynamic and significant changes in the international system over the last decade resulting from the financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009, the processes within the European Union, the conflict in Syria, the events in Ukraine, among others, have given a new impetus to the process of shifting the political and economic axis of the world towards Eurasia. The cooperation mechanisms developed by Russia and China in Eurasia as well as their interaction in this space are one of the major forces in this process.

This article reviews evolving interaction of China and Russia in Eurasia and argue that the intersection of their projects in the Eurasian space will hardly result in an open confrontation. Common challenges and geopolitical pressure from other strategic powers (from the United States, in particular) overshadow their conflicting geopolitical interests in this area. The common goals of upholding post-WWII world order, reducing the global influence of the West and constraining US influence in Eurasia allows them to accommodate their differences in interests and approaches.

The analysis of the dynamics of Sino-Russian relations in the Eurasian space requires an interdisciplinary approach. The paper takes into consideration bilateral political and diplomatic relations, strategic interactions in the field of international political economy. The geopolitical analytical approach – building on geographical information (location, size, landform, borders, demography, natural resources, etc.) – allows for the design of different patterns of interaction in Eurasia.

Russia's Turn to the East

The major institutional and political framework of Russia's integration plans in Eurasia is provided by the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) launched in 2015. The EAEU, the successor to the Customs Union, is an important instrument for further enhancing Russian political and economic influence in the post-Soviet space. It is also a key element in Russia's strategy for consolidating its position as one of the great powers in the international system. When the balance of power in the world system shifts east, such integrationist project² would enable Russia to enter into an equal partnership with both China and the EU as well as to contain both Chinese and European influence in Eurasia (Liik 2014: 9–10).

President Putin has consistently emphasized the importance of the EAEU. The Executive order on measures to implement the Russian Federation For-

² Today the EAEU brings together 184.3 million people and occupies over 20 million sq. km. It is on the first place in the world in oil extraction (14.5%) and natural gas production (20.2%) (See Eurasian Economic Commission, <http://www.eurasiancommission.org/>).

foreign Policy signed by Vladimir Putin in May 2012 defines as Russia's key foreign policy priorities the encouragement of "deeper Eurasian integration within the framework of the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space between the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Kazakhstan" as well as support for "the position of these new integration associations in the international fora" (President of Russia 2012). In 2011, the Russian president described the Eurasian union as "model of a powerful supranational union that can become one of the poles of today's world while being an efficient connecting link between Europe and the dynamic Asia-Pacific Region" (Putin 2011).

Russia's strategy for Eurasia was upgraded in the context of Moscow's geopolitical and ideological 'pivoting to Asia' catalyzed by the events in Ukraine in 2014 and the escalation of tensions between the country and the West. The concept of Greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok gave way to the quest for the construction of "Greater Eurasia" from Shanghai to Saint Petersburg (Lukin 2019: 1–14). In December 2015, President Putin launched the idea of a Greater Eurasian Partnership as a format for regional economic integration involving member states of the Eurasian Economic Community, ASEAN and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) (President of Russia 2015). This initiative for a "Greater Eurasia" is assessed by some Russian experts as a response to the US plans for Trans-Pacific Partnership but also to the Chinese Belt and Road initiative (Ivanov et al. 2017). It could be used by the Russian government as a tool for further diversification of its foreign policy partnerships in Asia.

China's March West

China's vision for the future of Eurasia is best illustrated through the Belt and Road initiative (BRI) and specifically, the overland component of the initiative – the Silk Road Economic Belt project launched by the Chinese president Xi Jinping in September 2013. Three of the "economic corridors" within the initiative have their routes through the Eurasian space. These are the New Eurasian land bridge, the China–Central Asia–West Asia corridor and the China–Mongolia–Russia corridor. In contrast to the EAEU, BRI is not a formal economic integration project but a platform for dialogue and cooperation.

BRI is a key element of China's foreign policy strategy for the 21st century. On the one hand, the initiative is a further development of the opening up policy elaborated by the Chinese state. Its implementation will enable China to gain greater access to the Central Asian markets and trade routes connecting

Asia and Europe. On the other hand, BRI represents a projection of the accumulated economic and military power of China beyond country's territory.

Historically, East and South East Asia were the most important strategic direction in Chinese diplomacy (Grachikov 2015: 94). In the beginning of 21st century, however, security and stability in southwestern and western neighboring areas – as a strategic rear of China – became of increasing importance both for external and internal reasons. The expansion of the Chinese influence in Central and South Asia has been a strategically important step aimed at breaking the US containment strategy, as perceived by a significant part of the political elite in Beijing. The Silk Road Economic Belt project is also a supplementary mechanism for guaranteeing energy supplies for the Chinese economy, decreasing country's vulnerability, primarily vis-à-vis the United States. The westward expansion of China's strategic security space is also one of the key instruments for guaranteeing security and stability in its own western areas (Xinjiang, in particular), for preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Chinese official rhetoric does not emphasize any geopolitical goals of the BRI. The geopolitics of China, in contrast to Russia or the USA, does not include the concept of spheres of influence (Grachikov 2015: 22). The new Chinese initiative, however, challenges regional geopolitics and the interests of Russia, the US and the EU in Eurasia. The BRI successful implementation could allow China to establish control over a significant part of the infrastructure in Eurasia and strengthen Chinese influence in part of the Eurasian heartland.

Coincidence or competition of interests

Russia's pivot to the East and China's march to the West make them meet. Despite the strategic partnership established between China and Russia in the last decade, there still are potential areas of friction and some geopolitical competition in their relations.

There is a growing power asymmetry in the Sino-Russian relations where China is increasingly becoming the dominant actor in the Eurasian heartland (Hsiung 2019). While Russia's influence was in a relative decline at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, China became the world's second largest economy. Chinese GDP is eight times larger than Russia's (World Bank 2020). China outcompetes Russia also in terms of military spending (SIPRI 2019) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) funding and dominance (Forbes 2020).

The power imbalance is particularly salient at regional level. China's progress in strengthening its position in the heart of Eurasia in the last decade

was – in some of the cases – at the cost of narrowing Russia’s influence in areas of Russian strategic interest. In Central Asia, for example, China has out-paced Russia on trade and investments (European Commission 2020). China’s military engagement with Central Asia has also grown (Pantucci 2019), thus challenging Russia’s interests in the region.

China’s idea of regional integration in Eurasia partly contradicts Russia’s plan to develop the Eurasian Economic Union. The EAEU is focused on strengthening the institutional base and the Chinese initiative is intended to create a network of bilateral relations which could impede the formation of common EAEU policies. Further development of the BRI in this part of the world will additionally limit Russia’s strategic room for maneuver. Gaining strategic depth in the Eurasian landmasses and establishing its own geopolitical and geoeconomic space, Beijing could try “to re-constitute the Eurasian regional order with new governance ideas, norms, and rules” (Callahan 2016: 1) that could not be in line with Russia’s interests and perceptions.

Russia has already lost the initiative in the process of economic integration between Europe and Asia. It is now driven mainly by Chinese interests after the launch of the Belt and Road initiative and the standstill of the EU – Russia relations. The development of alternative land corridors connecting China (Asia) and Europe does not correspond to Russia’s economic and strategic interests as it could reduce the role of Russia as a key transport corridor between Europe and Asia. This is contrary to one of the foreign policy aims formulated in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation approved in 2016 i.e. “to take action to benefit from its unique geographic location by increasing transit cargo shipments with a view to facilitating the development of trade and economic relations between Europe and the Asia-Pacific Region” (Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation 2016).

Russia is not powerful enough to resist China as an emerging center of influence in Eurasia. Moscow does not have the necessary economic power to effectively balance the growing presence and engagement of China with the countries in the region. Moscow, however, tries to gain more strategic room for maneuver in the context of an ambitious Chinese initiative and seeks the role of a ‘balancer’ in the broader Eurasian space. The idea of Greater Eurasian Partnership is a good platform for pursuing such goals.

Though there are different (even competing) interests and strategic goals underlying the BRI and the EAEU, the intersection of the two projects will hardly result in an open confrontation between China and Russia. China is not interested in any destabilization of the international system or escalation of tensions with any of the great regional actors. As the United States is the major

opponent of China, it is of strategic importance for Beijing to maintain partnership relations with Russia as a core component of Eurasia and major link between China and Europe. A geostrategy offered by Chinese experts recommends the country to pacify the West, to lean on the North and to fight for the East and the South, which is interpreted as: to improve relations with India, to establish strategic partnership with Russia and to resolve the maritime disputes in East and South China Seas (Grachikov 2015: 36).

The future relationship of the BRI with the EAEU will be shaped by the triangular relations between China, Russia and the USA. Increasing strategic competition between the USA and China as well as US pressure on China's neighborhood would trigger further coordination and synergy between the BRI and the EAEU. The common interest in overcoming Western domination in international relations is an important motivation for finding a formula for reconciling Chinese and Russian interests, projects and ambitions and for avoiding clashes in the Eurasian space. The Joint declaration on cooperation in coordinating the development of the Eurasian Economic Union and the Silk Road Economic Belt signed on May 8, 2015 by the Presidents of Russia and China and the idea of establishing a comprehensive Eurasian partnership between the countries from EAEU, SCO and ASEAN is a step towards a rapprochement between the two great powers and their integration plans.

Concomitantly, the success of the Belt and Road concept is closely related to the policy of Russia. China could hardly advance in the development of the Silk Road Economic Belt without a certain level of support on behalf of Russia with its unique geographic location. With the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the EAEU Russia retains a considerable presence and influence in Eurasia, especially in the field of security. As far as China is concerned about the security of the BRI economic projects, Beijing has an interest in a division of labor in Eurasia where Moscow provides security (Cooley 2015). The continued development of the SCO itself provides also an important and "convenient floor for integrating the implementation of these integration plans" (Putz 2018).

Conclusion

The relations between China and Russia developed and strengthened significantly in the last decade to be upgraded to a "comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era" in 2019. Though this relationship should not be exaggerated, it is obvious that Beijing and Moscow share common medium-term geopolitical goals and concerns. The interest of both coun-

tries to maintain political stability and economic development and to restrain the Western influence in Eurasia is paramount.

There is an obvious political will in both countries to accommodate their interests in Eurasia and to find a formula for an alignment between their integration initiatives in this space. Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov declares that the further strengthening of ties between the Russian-led EAEU and China's BRI will help form a new geopolitical architecture in Eurasia" (Lavrov 2019).

It is difficult to predict whether or not China and Russia will form an alliance in the future. Their relationship is more likely to continue to be much more an "axis of convenience" (Lo 2008), a tactical cooperation than a strategic partnership. The sustainability of this partnership and the synergy between their integration projects will depend on the processes both in China and Russia as well as on the future development of the triangular relations between China, Russia and the USA.

References

- Callahan, William. "China's Belt and Road Initiative and the New Eurasian Order." *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*. Policy Brief 22/2016. https://nupi.brage.unit.no/nupi-xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2401876/NUPI_Policy_Brief_22-16_William_Callahan.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y, 26 October 2019.
- Cooley, Alexander. "Russia and China in Central Asia." *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*. Policy Brief 26/2015. https://nupi.brage.unit.no/nupi-xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2434912/NUPI_Policy_Brief_26_15_Cooley.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y, 17 September 2020.
- European Commission. *European Union, Trade in goods with Central Asia 5*. https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/isdb_results/factsheets/region/details_central-asia-5_en.pdf. 22.04.2020.
- Forbes. *Why The Race for AI Dominance Is More Global Than You Think*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/cognitiveworld/2020/02/09/why-the-race-for-ai-dominance-is-more-global-than-you-think/#7cc9cc4c121f>, 19 September 2020. 09.02.2020
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*. https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248. 23 January 2020.
- Grachikov, Evgeniy Грачи́ков, Евгений *Geopolitika Kitaj: jegocentrizm I prostranstvo setej* Геополитика Китая: эгоцентризм и пространство сетей [Geopolitics of China: Egocentrism and Space of Network]. Moscow Москва, 2015.
- Hsiung, Christopher. *Facing the "new normal": The Strong and Enduring Sino-Russian Relationship and its Implication for Europe*. The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2019. <https://www.ui.se/globalassets/ui.se-eng/publications/ui-publications/2019/ui-paper-no.-3-2019.pdf>.

- Lavrov, Sergey Лавров, Сергей “Partnerstvo, ustremlennoe v budushhee” Партнерство, устремленное в будущее [Partnership towards the Future]. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* Российская газета, 216 (7974). <https://rg.ru/2019/09/26/lavrov-rossijsko-kitajskij-dialog-eto-obshchenie-dvuh-ravnyh-partnerov.html>, 29 October 2019.
- Liik, Kadri (ed.). *Russia’s “Pivot” to Eurasia*. ECFR, 2014.
- Lo, Bo. *Axis of Convenience. Moscow, Beijing and the New Geopolitics*. Brookings Institution Press, 2008.
- Lukin, Alexander. “Russian-Chinese Cooperation in Central Asia and the Idea of Greater Eurasia”. *India Quarterly*, 75 (1): 1–14, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0974928418821477>, 17 September 2020.
- Pantucci, Raffaello. *The Dragon’s Cuddle. China’s Security Power Projection into Central Asia and Lessons for the Belt and Road*. NBR Special Report no. 80.2019. <https://www.nbr.org/publication/the-dragons-cuddle-chinas-security-power-projection-into-central-asia-and-lessons-for-the-belt-and-road-initiative/>, 10.09.2020.
- President of Russia. *Executive Order on Measures to Implement Foreign Policy*. Moscow. 07.05.2012, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/15256>, 21 January 2020.
- President of Russia Президент России *Poslanie Prezidenta Federal’nomu Sobraniyu* Послание Президента Федеральному Собранию [Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly]. Kreml’ Кремль. Moscow Москва, 2015, <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/50864>, 26 October 2019.
- Putinn V. V. Путин, В. В. *Novyj integracionnyj proekt dlja Evrazii – budushhee, kotoroe rozhdaetsja segodnja* Новый интеграционный проект для Евразии – будущее, которое рождается сегодня [New Integration Project for Eurasia – Making the Future Today]. *Izvestija* Известия. 03.10.2011, <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/502761>, 23 October 2019.
- Putz, Catherine. “Can Russia and China ‘Synergize’ the Eurasian Economic Union and the Belt and Road Initiative”. *The Diplomat*. 09.10.2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/11/can-russia-and-china-synergize-the-urasian-economic-union-and-the-belt-and-road-initiative/>, 27 October 2019.
- Rossiysko-kitajskij dialog: model’ 2018: doklad#33/2017* Российско-китайский диалог: модель 2018: доклад № 33/2017 [Russian – Chinese Dialogue: The 2018 Model: Report 33/2017]. (gl. Red. Igor S. Ivanov гл. ред. Игорь С. Иванов). Moscow Москва, 2017, <https://russiancouncil.ru/papers/Russia-China-Report33.pdf>, 12 October 2019.
- World Bank. “GDP (current US\$)”. *World Development Indicators*. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?year_high_desc=true, 19 September 2020.

Paul Kennedy in China: Reading and Re-Reading *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*

Chan Ying-kit

Abstract

Published in 1987, “*The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*” by historian Paul Kennedy garnered much attention from academics and was one of a few scholarly books that became a bestseller in the non-scholarly community. The aims of this article are to describe Kennedy’s interpretation of Chinese power and discuss how Chinese scholars have referred to the book in making their own arguments about China’s rise and fall. The article will conclude with reflections on the “peaceful rise of China” narrative as suggested by interpretations of the book by Chinese scholars.

Keywords: Paul Kennedy, Great Powers, China

China in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*

The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers explores how some states in the period 1500–2000 came to accumulate sufficient economic and military power to dominate their region or continent and project it on a global scale. Great powers also possessed substantial cultural and diplomatic power to bend middle and smaller powers to their will without resorting to war and conquest. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* focuses not only on the sinews of state power but also on why the same factors that created them could cause their decline, resulting in shifting geopolitical alliances and the rise of one or more new major powers. Written at a time of standoff between superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union, during the Cold War, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* was actively studied by policymakers and political scientists alike for historical inspiration and was devoured by general readers who sought to better understand their situation and predict how the Cold War would end.

The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers begins by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the power centers in the sixteenth-century world – Ming China; the Ottoman Empire and its Muslim offshoot in India, the Mogul Empire; Muscovy; Tokugawa Japan; and some states in central-western Europe.

By contrasting these European states with the major global powers in the so-called Orient, Kennedy suggests that their rise was not inevitable or obvious at the time. Taking Ming China as an example, he contends that it suffered from the consequences of having a centralized authority, which insisted on a uniformity of belief and practice not only in official state religion but also in commercial activities and weapons development. The lack of such a supreme authority in Europe and the military rivalries among its kingdoms and city-states stimulated a constant search for military improvements, which forced European societies into a consistently upward spiral of economic growth and enhanced military effectiveness which would carry them ahead of all other regions of the world (Kennedy 1988: xvi-xvii). Whatever the dynamics or nuances might be, a key message of the book is that no single power can rise and remain dominant for long; it will decline or fall under the weight of its own success until new domestic and external conditions favor its rise again. Without a rough balance between competing demands of consumption, defense, and investment, a great power is unlikely to preserve its status (Kennedy 1988: 446). The strengths and weaknesses of the great powers are relative in light of the broader economic and technological changes that affect the world as a whole. All powers, big or small, have to survive by managing their resources better than others.

In *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, Ming China (1368–1644) is described as the most advanced civilization of premodern times. Its population of 100–130 million, compared with Europe’s 50–55 million in the fifteenth century, was linked by an elaborate canal system and fed through fertile and well-irrigated plains. Confucian bureaucracy cohered Chinese society, which benefited from huge libraries and movable-type printing. Trade routes were extensive, and paper money expedited the flow of commerce and the growth of markets. An enormous iron industry produced armaments and farming implements, and Ming cannons and gunpowder kept nomadic invaders at bay. The magnetic compass helped navigate long-distance naval fleets across the Indian Ocean for trade and tribute. But despite its impressive feats, Ming China, according to Kennedy, “was a much less vigorous and enterprising land than it had been under the Sung dynasty four centuries earlier” (Kennedy 1988: 8). Kennedy suggests that intensive farming and the use of marginal lands could not keep pace with the burgeoning population, which was checked by the Malthusian instruments of floods, plague, and war. Even the replacement of the Ming Empire with the more vigorous Manchus, a nomadic people in north-eastern China, could not stem the steady relative decline. In the end, whether or not the states in Asia would have entered a “self-driven commercial and

industrial revolution [like that experienced in Europe] had they been left undisturbed seems open to considerable doubt, but what was clear was that it was going to be extremely difficult for other societies to ascend the ladder of world power when the more advanced European states occupied all the top rungs” (Kennedy 1988: 30). To catch up with western and central Europe would have implied a wholesale borrowing of its culture, science, and technology, which Chinese political and social institutions resisted. Although Kennedy does not explicitly make that claim, he does state that China lacked “a combination of economic laissez-faire, political and military pluralism, and intellectual liberty... which had been in constant interaction to produce the ‘European miracle’” (Kennedy 1988: 31).

Toward the end of the book, Kennedy offers an interpretive “speculation” about Chinese power in the twentieth century, but he is quick to suggest that his summary of possible tendencies in China can only be conjectural and provisional. In what he calls “China’s balancing act,” Kennedy, writing in the late 1980s, has identified the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as the poorest of the major powers and probably the least well placed strategically. Yet, he has also presciently suggested that while the material constraints on China may be great, they could be ameliorated by an economic expansion that – if it could be maintained – promised to transform the country within a few decades. Geopolitically, China was isolated and surrounded by enemies, both real and imagined, such as the Soviet Union, the USA, India, and Japan. “Furthermore,” Kennedy continues, “it hardly needs saying that the difficulties of governing such a populous state, of reconciling the various factions (party, army, bureaucrats, farmers), and of achieving growth without social and ideological turbulence will test even the most flexible and intelligent leadership” (Kennedy 1988: 448). Kennedy’s analysis expresses both an empathy with China’s scale of difficulties and the belief that they are ultimately unsurmountable as a possible result of its somewhat inherent dynamics or qualities.

Kennedy views favorably the reform and policies of self-improvement undertaken by former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping 鄧小平 (1904–1997), likening them to those pursued by Frederick the Great (r. 1740–1786) of Prussia and the Emperor Meiji (r. 1867–1912) of Japan (Kennedy 1998: 448). China’s reforms involved “the ability to see how the separate aspects of government policy relate to each other. It therefore involves a sophisticated balancing act, requiring careful judgments as to the speed at which these transformations can safely occur, the amount of resources to be allocated to long-term as opposed to short-term needs, the coordination of the state’s internal and external requirements, and—last but not least in a country which still has a ‘modified’ Marxist

system – the ways by which ideology and practice can be reconciled” (Kennedy 1988: 448-9). Kennedy also discusses the nascent yet rapid development of tactical nuclear technology and submarine-launched ballistic missiles as well as the modernization of Chinese armed forces, which had put China on par with traditional regional rivals such as Vietnam, Taiwan, and India and provided a “rough equivalence” or “balance of forces” in Central Asia. He highlights the expansion of its navy: “In 1980 an eighteen-vessel task force undertook an eight-thousand-nautical-mile mission in the South Pacific, in conjunction with China’s latest intercontinental ballistic missile experiments. (Was this, one wonders, the first significant demonstration of Chinese sea power since Cheng Ho’s cruises of the early fifteen century?)” (Kennedy 1988: 449).

China’s economic growth fueled its military complex. A considerable manufacturing power, China also enjoyed substantial agricultural and industrial capacities. But its growth in these sectors faced the challenge of a population time bomb: how would it be able to feed a billion people without the substantial acreage of crops as seen in USA and without increasing its dependence on imported food? With the population increasing and turning more and more to meat consumption (which requires more grain), the pressure to sustain this expansion in agricultural consumption would become more intense. China would have to “maintain this part of its elaborate balancing act with a considerable degree of success” in its drive toward agricultural and strategic self-sufficiency (Kennedy 1988: 452). China had started to get state industries to respond to the commercial realities of price, quality, and market demand. It had also encouraged the creation of privately run, small-scale enterprises and allowed foreign trade to expand, leading to rises in industrial and manufacturing output. Kennedy therefore surmises that “China will have a very large GNP within a relatively short space of time, barring some major catastrophe; and while it will still be relatively poor in per capita terms, it will be decidedly richer than it is today” (Kennedy 1988: 455). According to him, acquiring foreign technology, tools, and production methods would be subject to the larger requirements of China’s balancing act. Finally, he predicted that China would have no intention of remaining a strategic “lightweight” in the future: “The more that China pushes forward with its economic expansion...the more that development will have power-political implications [for the big powers]” (Kennedy 1988: 458).

A book as influential as *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* almost certainly receives its fair share of criticism. One of the more vocal critics has been political scientist Henry R. Nau, who pointed out that the book’s realist model of international politics ignored the role of national identities, which

involve domestic institutions and domestic reforms that motivate citizens to create and use wealth and power (Nau 2001: 579). Nau's main argument was that delays in domestic reforms, rather than international economic and military rivalries, slowed Asian growth vis-à-vis the West. Writing in 2001, Nau could assess whether or not Kennedy's predictions were accurate, particularly those pertaining to developments in the post-Cold War era. Specifically, with regard to Kennedy's predictions about China, Nau cited that China slowed down to 3–4 percent annual growth from a previous level of 10–12 percent growth and faced potentially crippling problems of corruption, unemployment, and social unrest (Nau 2001: 579–80). To Kennedy's credit, however, he was dealing with trends over centuries rather than with outcomes measured only over years or decades. Nevertheless, as Nau suggested, the deviations after barely more than a decade in directions opposite to those Kennedy predicted were not trivial. As Nau elaborated cynically, "Social science is often little more than guesswork, dressed up in intimidating models and data" (Nau 2001: 580). For Nau, Kennedy was a realist who saw the world primarily in terms of a struggle for power.

An important idea in Kennedy's argument is military overstretch, which draws resources away from productive economic investments. Nations on the periphery of international conflict and military engagements can then surge ahead and acquire new wealth to join the military struggle, and the cycle of dominance and decline starts all over again. In response to Kennedy's cyclical theory, Nau argued that he had missed "completely the phenomenon of the democratic peace, the fact that democratic nations never, or almost never, fight against one another" (Nau 2001: 582). For Nau, the capacity of nations to inspire their citizens is the flip side of their capacity to possess arms and wealth. The USA won the Cold War largely by persuading its own citizens, and eventually the citizens and leaders of communist nations, that a liberal society uses its economic and military capabilities more acceptably than a totalitarian one. Relative military power between the USA and the Soviet Union changed little after 1970, and it was the rising disillusionment of Soviet citizens with their communist institutions that ultimately led to the surrender of the Soviet government to its own people (Nau 2001: 579–592).

In this age of China's rise, the so-called Asia's Century, how do Chinese academics make sense of *The Rise of the Great Powers* and its discontents?

The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers in China

Early Chinese opinion of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* regarded it as a product of the "Free World" and hence a guide for the USA to avoid the

pitfalls of previous imperial expansions and build on its existing strengths in order to maintain its superpower status. Writing during the late 1980s when Soviet power was on the wane, Chinese reviewers gathered from the book that American superiority was not absolute or secure. In their reviews, the Soviet Union was mentioned only in passing; they did not seem interested in reading the book against the backdrop of Cold War politics. This was perhaps understandable, given that China under Deng Xiaoping was opening up to capitalist development and overseas investments and shared few similarities with the planned economy of the Soviet Union. They were more eager to understand how the USA had overtaken the Soviet Union in world domination by developing a free-market economy – the USA was considered a prototype for China’s bold economic reforms for much of the 1980s. It is unsurprising, then, that most of the first Chinese reviewers of the book were professional economists from prestigious Chinese universities (Li 1988: 41; Zhu 1988: 27–28; Shi 1993: 73–76). The first translation of the book appeared in 1988, through which non-academic readers could access Kennedy’s ideas and assess China’s economic potential as a result of its reforms.

But by the beginning of the twenty-first century, when China’s rise and economic growth appeared more certain, Chinese opinion of the book had subtly changed. As Chinese scholar Li Changjiu 李長久 remarked in his discussion on the world’s major powers, “We no longer have to avoid saying ‘the rise of China’” (Li 2004: 71). He agreed with Kennedy that the rise of a great power, or an aspiring one such as China, depends on increasing both its “hard” and “soft” powers. Like Kennedy, he believed that science, technology, and economic power constitute the backbone of national strength. Li described a string of scientific and technological achievements made by the Chinese in history, which culminated in the fifteenth-century Zheng He 鄭和 voyages across the Indian Ocean. He quoted Kennedy as saying that the Chinese were a peaceful people who, despite their military might, did not colonize and exploit Africa, Asia, and India like the Europeans did (Li 2004: 73). Then, in the nineteenth century, although China remained an economic power, it rejected Western science which, by that time, had surpassed Chinese levels. As a result, China fell to Western imperialism and remained subjugated until the founding of a new China under the current communist regime in the mid-twentieth century.

Li has thus read Kennedy’s book through the lens of Marxist historiography, whereby China had indeed undergone the stages of development as described by Kennedy but in a linear progression to the historical present. In his reading, China was on its way to greatness until its feudal malpractices of

complacency, inaction, and intransigence stopped it from adopting superior Western science. China's ascendancy was dealt a death blow by foreign imperialists who were not as merciful to their inferiors as Zheng He. The creation of communist rule restored the balance in Chinese internal dynamics and set in motion again the rising trajectory of Chinese power (Li 2004: 71–73). At the start of the twenty-first century, confidence in China's resurgence, or peaceful rise, was palpable among its scholars.

By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, after China had successfully hosted the Olympic Games in 2008 and showcased its growing power, scholars had picked up *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* again and re-read it with fresh eyes. Liu Chang 劉暢, a professor of international relations at Peking University, referred to it when emphasizing the need for China to stay focused on economic development (Liu 2009: 54). In an elaboration, or corrective, of the book, Liu also stressed the importance of pacing and social harmony in ethnically diverse China, which continued to face many challenges from within to its rise. For him, pacing should be favored over the desire for quick success. China's rise was spurred by overseas investments, so a misguided pursuit of only strategic advantages might prove counterproductive to its courting of diplomatic allies and foreign capital. Through constant reform and reflection, China could hope to exploit its comparative advantages and increase its global influence in a more appropriate way. Only then, Liu suggested, could China remain economically competitive and secure a more stable presence as a global power (Liu 2009: 54). Although he did not broach the issue of nationalism explicitly, he suggested that while the Chinese should be content with the level of development they had achieved thus far, they should remain vigilant in their identification of domestic and foreign threats and improve their coordination of the forces of defense, consumption, and investments, which Kennedy identified as the basic function of government (Liu 2009: 55). Kennedy's book, Liu concluded, was popular in China for the many lessons and historical precedents it offered to guide China's rise. It should be referenced from time to time to check where China stands and what it lacks in its rise to great-power status (Liu 2009: 55).

With the benefit of hindsight, Chinese academics – in this case, political scientists and scholars of international relations – increasingly recommended the book as essential reading for policymakers and used it as a guide to foretell trends in China's future. Economic growth was no longer the primary concern of those scholars, who measured China's phenomenal rise relative to other powers, especially the USA. For them, the strength of the book lay in the accuracy of its predictions about subsequent events, which, in turn, de-

terminated whether it could be useful for speculating about future trends. Su Pengyu 蘇鵬宇, a professor at the Nanjing College of International Relations, suggested that although Kennedy failed to foresee that Japan—China’s long-time adversary, so to speak—would experience a prolonged period of economic stagnation after the 1990s, he had correctly predicted that Japan would gradually strengthen its military capabilities as memories of the Second World War began to fade, so China should also boost its defenses accordingly (Su 2012: 198). Su also cautioned against a complete dependence on Kennedy’s realist interpretations of global politics. The Soviet Union did not descend into civil war after its collapse, which also did not precipitate a major global conflict as Kennedy had anticipated; it was, in many ways, an Armageddon averted. Although he does not appear to have consulted Nau’s writings, Su shared the opinion that domestic governance and internal dynamics, which had brought down the Soviet empire, were as important as war and diplomacy in effecting the rise and fall of great powers. Su disputed Kennedy’s argument that economic development serves or should be subordinate to military expansion. In Kennedy’s subconscious, Su suggested, economic development and wealth accumulation worked to expand the state’s military capacity, but what is the purpose of building up the military? For Su, military power should support economic development, not the other way round (Su 2012: 198). His advice for China was to see the protection of citizens’ lives and property as its ultimate strategic goal and raise the people’s standard of living. The role of the military, then, is to deter invasions and safeguard the country’s overseas economic interests. The grand strategy for China is to compete with other countries through cultural, economic, and technological means. Su advocated China’s exertion of soft power and invoked the concept of geo-economics, which, in retrospect, was similar to China’s current Belt and Road initiative of infrastructure building in beneficiary nations (Su 2012: 198).

Broadly speaking, Chinese scholars did not deviate very far from Kennedy’s arguments. They were generally concerned about increasing China’s comprehensive strength, whether economic, military, or both. They wanted to reap the fruits of three decades of economic reforms and identify or, at least, predict the manifestations of rapid economic growth. Continuing to seek inspiration from *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, they suggested that China follow the ascendancy of former great powers and postpone study of their decline; China has yet to rise, so its possible decline can be explored later. The Chinese scholars discussed in this article advised that China encourage technological creativity and, against the opinion of some social scientists concerned about the adverse effects of capitalist development on marginalized

communities, pushed for even faster and more thorough economic growth. They feared the disparity between China and the USA in economic strength and military technology and hoped that China could close the gap as soon as possible. China has economic interests in the South China Sea, which are contested waters in the region. To defend these interests and Chinese sovereignty over the Spratly Islands, China should develop sufficient military capabilities funded by a strong economy. A powerful navy would not only expand Chinese influence over the region but also safeguard the lives of overseas Chinese—the hijack of a Chinese ship off the Somali coast was a case in point. More importantly, a militarily strong China can hope to break America’s Pacific Rim of defense against it. However, despite adopting Kennedy’s realist approach, they maintained that China’s rise was peaceful and so unlike the ultimately self-destructive expansion of past European great powers that China may even be able to break the cycle of rise and fall by means of co-existing peacefully with other great powers and all other nations on the basis of its ascendancy, which will not be premised on exploitation, imperialism, or war (Wen 2012: 42-5).

Conclusion

In 2006, the state-owned television network China Central Television (CCTV) produced a 12-episode Chinese documentary television series *Daguo jueqi* 大國崛起 [The Rise of the Great Powers] – again proving that China’s rise rather than fall is the preoccupation of its educated class. Like Kennedy, the series explored how Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, and the USA rose to become great powers. Chinese historians, who also briefed the Politburo on the subject, served as consultants for the series. State media publicized the series, which received high ratings and reviews throughout its run. The series also included interviews with foreign scholars, and one of those frequently featured was Kennedy. The series displayed broad similarities with Kennedy’s book in depicting the conditions for the rise of great powers, so it may not be a stretch to suggest that it was inspired or, at the very least, influenced by the latter.

The reading and re-reading of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* may be contextualized in the sociopolitical dynamics of surging Chinese nationalism and the scholarly need to interpret and explain how China’s rise can be peaceful as per the official claim. By selecting parts of Kennedy’s book that appear most relevant to China’s own historical trajectory, Chinese scholars have attempted to mix and match similarities and positive attributes. A nation interrupted in its path to greatness by foreign imperialism, China, at least in

their formulation, will not inflict suffering and victimize other nations in its rise to great-power status. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* has presented Chinese readers with policy prescriptions and intensified the debate on China's future model of development, even though they appear interested in knowing only half the story as their country's upward trajectory of power continues.

References

- Kennedy, Paul. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*. London: Unwin Hyman, 1988. Print.
- Li Changjiu 李長久. "Ji ge daguo xingshuai de qishi" 幾個大國興衰的啓示 [Reflections on the rise and fall of some great powers]. *Xin shiye* 新視野 [New Perspectives] 4 (2004): 71–73. Print.
- Li Yanning 李延寧. "Daguo de xingshuaiyinqi de zhendong" 《大國的興衰》引起的震動 [The sensation of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*]. *Liaowangzhoukan* 瞭望周刊 [The Weekly Observer] 31 (1988): 41. Print.
- Liu Chang 劉暢. "Cangmangdadi, shui zhuchenfu: Daguo de xingshuaiduhou" 蒼茫大地, 誰主沉浮: 《大國的興衰》讀後 [Reflections on *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*]. *Bolan qunshu* 博覽群書 [Chinese Book Review Monthly] (2009): 53–55. Print.
- Nau, Henry R. "Why 'The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers' Was Wrong". *Review of International Studies* 27 (2001): 579–592. Print.
- Shi Renmei 施任梅. "Jingjiyulishi: Daguo de xingshuaiduhou" 經濟與歷史: 《大國的興衰》讀後 [Economy and History: A Reflection on *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*]. *Shijiejingjiwenhui* 世界經濟文匯 [World Economics] 3 (1993): 73–76. Print.
- Su Pengyu 蘇鵬宇. "Dazhanlue de lishi qishi: du *Daguo de xingshuai de ji diantihui*" 大戰略的歷史啓示: 讀《大國的興衰》的幾點體會 [The Historical Lessons of Grand Strategy: Some Reflections on *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*]. *Kejiaowenhui* 科教文匯 [The Science Education Article Collects] 1 (2012): 197–198. Print.
- Wen Hao 文豪. "Daguo xingshuai de lishi luoji qiqi dui dangqian Zhongguo de jiejianyi" 大國興衰的歷史邏輯及其對當前中國的藉鑒意義 [The Historical Logic of the Rise and Fall of Great Powers and its Lessons for Contemporary China]. *Cangsang* 滄桑 [Vicissitudes] 3 (2012): 42–45. Print.
- Zhu Guisheng 朱貴生. "Cong jingjixiaozhangkandaguo de xingshuai: *Daguo de xingshuaijianjie*" 從經濟消長看大國的興衰: 《大國的興衰》簡介 [The Rise and Fall of Great Powers from Economic Perspectives: A Brief Introduction of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*]. *Jingjigongzuotongxun* 經濟工作通訊 [The Economics Newsletter] 18 (1988): 27–28. Print.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Striving for Modernity:¹ the Heterogeneous Formation of the “Nation” Concept in Early XX Century Chinese Intelligentsia

Rossella Roncati

Abstract

I analyse the genesis of the national concept in China by considering the period from the late XIX century to the early XX century, known as the period of “transition to nationalism” (Townsend 1992: 109). I stress the importance of the coeval intelligentsia in this nation-building process. I consider the work of two emblematic intellectuals, Yan Fu and Liang Qichao. Furthermore, I take into account different historiographical perspectives, stressing how nationalist ideas were not simply ‘copy-pasted’ in the Chinese context, but subjected to substantial changes in combination with the traditional Chinese heritage.

Keywords: Chinese modern history, Chinese nation-building, migration of concepts, sinicization of western thought

This paper aims at introducing Chinese nation-building through the historiographical lens of the “World Society” theory. The heterogeneity and isomorphism characterizing this process are rendered by analyzing the work of two of the most influential scholars of the time: Yan Fu and Liang Qichao.

China’s opening up: the Qing striving for modernization and the national solution

The Manchu Qing dynasty, reigning since 1644, was turning to its end from the mid-XIX to the early XX century. This was due to a set of factors related to changes in the global scenario which involved the encounters with Western powers. The West progressive abandon of mercantilist policies in Europe, prompted international migrations and the Europeans imposed that stance also upon Asian states. These are, in a nutshell, the exogenous factors of the Chinese ‘opening up’ (Lucassen and Lucassen 2014: 37).

¹ With reference to Ravina’s (2005: 87–89) distinction of “modernization” and “modernity” theories on the formation of nation-states. See the final part of this paper for further discussion.

The colonial presence forced the Chinese people to face a wide range of new issues. For almost a century, from 1842 to 1943, China was subjected to an international recognized regime which resulted in inability to be fully sovereign on its own land (Mitter 2013: 291). Furthermore, Chinese imperial power was deeply weakened also by many conflicts, both internal and external². As a result, the Manchu dynasty experienced a general weakening of the Chinese empire's relations with foreign powers. Attempting to cushion this situation, a 'soul-searching' campaign was conducted since 1860 by the emperors Tongzhi (r. 1862–1874) and Guangxu (r. 1875–1908) who promoted a 'self-strengthening' and a "Westernalization" Movement (洋务运动) aimed at enriching the country and strengthening its military" (Wang 2016: 2) by the adoption of Western techniques, combining "the strength of China's past with the modernity of the present" (Mitter 2013: 291). These diplomatic missions prompted Qing government to promote 1898's 'Hundred Days Reform', a political rejuvenation movement led by Chinese intelligentsia. But even though reformers were following European models, these reforms were surely *Sinicized*³, marked by a peculiar character when they came to contact with Chinese society by setting up modern schools, amending the 2,000-year-old civil service examination system, and largely reorganizing the government. For example, the government carried out a movement to advocate Confucianism as key element of a Qing-led nationalism following in some way the example of French revolution (Mitter 2004: 21). Overall, these reforms had deep consequences in the political milieu, to the extent that the ultra-millenary imperial system itself resulted out-of-date. The emergence of a nationalist consciousness led political thinkers and activists to become more persuaded that the establishment of a modern nation state was the right choice (Mitter 2013: 292). In other words, the theoretical responses to a search for social unity led to opposition to the Qing dynasty as much as to Western invaders.

This opposition was built on new theoretical categories, primarily the Social Darwinist concept of 'race', introduced by the translation of Herbert Spencer's social Darwinist theory made by Yan Fu (Spencer 1981). Furthermore, new means of communication prompted the contemporary intellectual movement, around journals.

² Among the external conflicts Opium wars (1840–1842 and 1860–1861), the Sino-French war (1883–1885), and the first Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) were the most traumatic. Internally, the 'peasant revolutionary wars', threatened imperial power from 1850 to 1873 (Mitter 2013: 291).

³ With reference to Pamela Crossley's (2002: 6) definition.

Yan Fu (嚴復) and the introduction of liberal thought in China

Yan Fu (1853–1921) represents the first and most notorious interpreter of “late Qing reformist thinking”, as well as the more influential translator of the period (Mitter 2013: 291). His career started in 1877, when he was sent to the UK to study at the Greenwich Naval College. During that time, he developed his interest for Social Darwinism and liberal thought, moreover he started translating many key works that would have deep influence on later Chinese reformers. Yan was the first Chinese author translating directly from English, when at that time most of Western writings came from either foreign missionaries, or Chinese students in Japan (Mitter 2013: 295; Huang 2008: 1). Yan Fu, during the late imperial and early Republican period, had a key role in the introduction of Western liberalism into China by means of his translations of authors like Thomas Huxley, Adam Smith, John S. Mill and Herbert Spencer (Mill 1981: i-ii; Huang 2008: xxv). Yan Fu introduced in China the race discourse, which revealed to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it promoted a revenge of the ‘yellow race’ on the unfair oppression of the white race (Aydin 2013: 676-80). On the other, the race-based discourse was also used to discredit the Qing dynasty in relation to its Manchu origins, in contrast with the Han ethnic majority of the population (Mitter 2000: 28).

Sun Yat-sen was among the revolutionary thinkers who carried on this theory in the political field. In 1905, he founded the “Alliance for democracy” (同盟会) predecessor to the Nationalist party (国民党), which came to power after the fall of the empire. Nevertheless, even after the overthrow of Qing dynasty in February 1912 the process toward the formation of a modern state was not yet devoid of heterogeneity. Nevertheless, while his thought was deeply modernity-oriented, it was rooted in the Chinese heritage. In fact, Yan Fu’s translations in refined traditional Chinese were questioned by many successive scholars for their lack of preciseness and accessibility (Huang 2008: 2). This stylistic choice is related to Yan’s conservative political position. In fact, his decision to use the classical literary language (文言), is directly connected to the kind of intellectual evolution he believed China needed (Huang 2008: 5–9). In other words, he didn’t conceive any development, without a classical-rooted background.

Nevertheless, it’s important to emphasize that despite the criticism moved against Yan, the entire audience of contemporary intelligentsia, including future leaders of the 1919’s May Fourth Movement, underlined how much they profited from reading his works (Huang 2008: 2). Still, accessibility was a fundamental problem of that time, concerned the diffusion of the new ideas to

a wider audience. One of the principal means for this purpose was the abandonment of the elitist language for a ‘clear’ one (白话).

Liang Qichao (梁啟超) and the reflection upon linguistics

Described by Rana Mitter (2013: 291) as “perhaps the single most significant figure of the late Qing nationalist movement”, Liang Qichao (1873–1929) was certainly among the first Chinese historians who reflected upon nationalism. Liang’s name became important in relation to the 1898’s Hundred Days of Reform. Liang’s reformist ideas were expressed as early as 1896 in his *General Discussion of Reforms*, in which he emphasized positive effects of social “grouping, society” upon “isolation, individual” (Tang 1996: 66). But Chinese imperial society was not ready for this huge reconfiguration and, when the empress dowager Cixi stopped and condemned the reform movement considering it too inclusive, Liang and other reformers under threat of arrest had to seek shelter in Japan. There, his reflections on society and nation continued and spread out through a new powerful mean of communication: journals. In 1901, he wrote an essay on the responsibility of press to spread a shared communal language, helping reinforce national consciousness, and stimulating a reflection on society.

One of the aspects characterizing Liang Qichao’s reflection is linguistics. In fact, as many Chinese intellectuals of the time he was also a translator who brought from Japanese many neologisms such as ‘nation’, ‘democracy’, ‘constitution’ together with ‘liberty’, ‘civilization’, ‘society’ and ‘civic virtues’ (Tang 1996: 47). Nevertheless, those translated neologisms were continuously under discussion and reformulation in the fervent scholarly environment of that time, resulting in one concept having numerous translations. For example, in *New Historiography* (Liang 1983c), Liang used the word *qun* (群) for “society” but also for “nation”. Likewise, he used this term in various other works⁴, eventually replacing it with *shehui* (社会), as we can see in the work *The Contradictory and Complementary Meaning of Ten Kinds of Virtuous Conduct*. In the same writing he also used the word *minzu* (民族) to refer to the “French nation”⁵ (Liang 1983b). Liang was one of the most fortunate coiners of Chinese modern expressions and his translations were widely used, from newspapers to officials’ reports (Tang 1996: 47). It’s important to stress that he was the most active promoter of language’s democratization starting from his

⁴ One of the latter works in which the term *qun* figures is 1903’s *On the state of scholarship around the world* (Liang 1983a).

⁵ “法兰西民族”.

effort for the creation of a vernacular written language, which was later carried on by the May Fourth movement intellectuals.

Overall, from Liang's writings emerge an optimistic view which, even if "fostered by Enlightenment rationalism", yet it is accompanied by a "tension between universalism and particularism" (Tang 1996: 48, 61). This way of thinking was in line with other intellectuals of that time like his mentor Kang Youwei and Tan Sitong who, with Liang, were part of a 'new social elite' which – using the words of Tang Xiaobing (1996: 52–53) – "contributed as much to an emergent nationalist consciousness as the new technology of literacy and mass communications".

State-making in a Global context: historiographical perspectives

The historiographical interpretations of the Chinese nation-building process have produced different representations of this historical moment, to the extent that for some authors the term 'nationalism' "may not be the best term to apply to the Chinese case." (Hunt 1993: 63).

James Townsend (1992: 97) described Chinese nationalism as "A long and traumatic process that left its mark, and continues to do so, on all periods and divisions within the modern era". He emphasized the reciprocal and heterogeneous character of the encounter between nationalist theories and oriental civilization. Townsend's perspective is in contrast with the approach which characterized the former generation of historians, and consider nationalism less as a process and more as a clear caesura. This latter approach is close to the 'modernization theory' – still the dominant historiographic paradigm in the 1960s and 1970s – which conceptualizes history as a path made by a sequence of developmental stages (Ravina 2005: 88).

More recently, "the Hegelian legacy in Western scholarship", as it has been defined by Prasenjit Duara (1995: 23), has given way to different historical perspectives developed in the aftermath of the cold war. During the 1980s, the progress made by post-colonial studies and by the French *Nouvelle Histoire*⁶ led historians to shift their focus on the complexity of the *modernity* concept – rather than *modernization*. One of the most fortunate perspectives within this theoretical framework is the 'World society' theory. It considers nation-states in the modern world system as entities characterized by *isomorphism*, that "have similar goals so, quite naturally, they develop similar institutional solutions." (Ravina 2005: 89). Subsequently, the spread of na-

⁶ See Charles Le Goff (1988) work for an introduction of *Nouvelle Histoire*.

tionalist ideas in China results less as a copy of European models and more as a conscious choice of sharing the same objectives that led to a social, political, economic, and administrative reconfiguration. In short, it was an act to become internationally intelligible. The New generation's historians have also reflected upon the concept of nation in relation with people's identity, to the point that nowadays scholars speak of an 'entangled modernity' (Wang 2014: 25).

Before the theoretical turn, nationalism was considered a strong incorporating force, capable to override other identities in a society. As a result, religious, racial, linguistic, class, gender, and historical minoritarian realities fall behind being shadowed by a larger identity (Duara 1995: 10). The resultant rigid identity is used and abused by leading figures to the purpose of legitimation, internal control and external intelligibility, to the point of becoming empty rhetoric in some cases (Anderson 1983: 67–82).⁷ This identity-creating mechanism can be easily neutralized, though, since it rationally falls on itself. For example, let's consider the nationalist use of women's bodies, which has many examples both in Western and Eastern national histories. Likely, the image of Chinese women, abused by foreign invaders – Mongol, Manchu, or Japanese – are considered one of the deepest wounds for Chinese nationalism. Yet the bias and thus the fallacy within this national representation was once crystal clear to the most brilliant minds of early-modern China, as the writer and intellectual Xiao Hong. In her 1935's *Field of Life and Death* (*Shen sichang*), the feminist novelist powerfully subverted the nationalist order by choosing her protagonist to be violated by a Chinese man (Duara 1995: 10–11)⁸.

References

- Anderson, Benedict R. O'Gorman. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, 1983. Print.
- Aydin, Cemil. "Pan-nationalism of Pan-Islamic, Pan-Asian, and Pan-African thought." *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*. (Ed. by John Breuilly) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 672–693. Print.
- Crossley, Pamela K. *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002. Print.
- Duara, Prasenjit. *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995. Print.

⁷ See also the Early XX century's debate on National Essence and *Chineseness* presented by Laurence A. Schneider (1976, Liu 1995: 240–242).

⁸ For an insight on role Chinese female literati within the period considered see professor Wang Zheng's (1999) work.

- Hunt, Michael H. “Chinese National Identity and the Strong State: The Late Qing-Republican crisis.” in *China’s quest for national identity*. (Ed. by Lowell Dittmer, and Samuel S. Kim) New York: Cornell University Press, 1993, 62–79. Print.
- Huang, Max Ko-wu. *The meaning of freedom. Yan Fu and the Origins of Chinese Liberalism*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2008. Print.
- Le Goff, Jacques, ed. *La Nouvelle Histoire*. Paris: Éditions Complexe, 1988. Print.
- Liang, Qichao 梁啟超. *Lunxueshuzhishilizuooyoushijie* 論學術之勢力左右世界 [On the State of Scholarship Around the World]. 1902. Reprinted in Liang Qichao, *Yinbingshiheji* 飲冰室合集(YBSHJ), *Wenji* 文集, 1983a, 6:110-116.
- . *Shizhongdexingxiangfanxiangchengyi* 十種德性相反相成義 [The Contradictory and Complementary Meaning of Ten Kinds of Virtuous Conduct]. 1901. Reprinted in Liang Qichao, *YBSHJ*, *Wenji*, 1983b, 5.
- . *Xin shixue* 新史學 [New Historiography]. 1902. Reprinted in Liang Qichao, *YBSHJ*, *Wenji*, 1983c, 9: 1–32. Print.
- Liu, Lydia H. *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity. China, 1900-1937*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995. Print.
- Lucassen, Jan, Leo Lucassen. “Measuring and quantifying cross-cultural migrations: An introduction.” in *Globalising Migration History: The Eurasian Experience (16th–21st Centuries)*. (Edited by Jan Lucassen, and Leo Lucassen). Leiden: Brill, 2014, 3–54. Print.
- Mill, John, S. *Qun ji quanjielun* 群己权界论 [On Liberty]. 1903.tran. Yan Fu 严复译, Beijing 北京: Shangwuyinshuguan 商务印书官, 1981. Print.
- Mitter, Rana. *A bitter revolution. China’s Struggle with the Modern World*. Norfolk: Oxford University Press, 2004. Print.
- . *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. Print.
- . “Nationalism in East-Asia, 1839–1945” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*. (Ed. by John Breuilly) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 287–307. Print.
- Ravina, Mark. “State Making in Global Context: Japan in a World of Nation-States.” *The Teleology of the Modern Nation-State. Japan and China*. (Ed. by Joshua A. Fogel) Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, 87–104. Print.
- Spencer, Herbert. *Qunxueyiyán* 群学肄言 [The Study of Sociology]. 1903. tran. Yan Fu 严复译. Beijing 北京: Shangwuyinshuguan 商务印书官, 1981. Print.
- Tang, Xiaobing. *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996. Print.
- Townsend, James R. “Chinese nationalism.” – *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No. 27, 1992, pp. 97–130. Print.
- Zheng, Wang. *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Print.
- Wang, Hui. *China from Empire to Nation-State*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014. Print.
- Wang, Hui. *China’s Twentieth Century*. London: Verso, 2016. Print.

Chinese Social Ideals from Past to Future

Roxana Rîbu

Abstract

Observing the different stages in the evolution of the Chinese society one cannot ignore the passion some thinkers put in imagining a better world. From the antiquity of Confucius to the modern and contemporary history, bold visions of ideal worlds were taught or imposed with different outcomes for the development of the society. Even though they seem, to many, like plain utopias, these projections had a rather strong impact on the society, they set, somehow, a very high goal in people's moral evolution. Our study tries to demonstrate the actual importance of these idealistic visions and the path that the modern Chinese society chose to advance on, with an emphasis on the effect that these ideals produced in the governing platforms or social organization.

Keywords: dream, utopia, Golden Age, community, individualism

Looking back through various conceptual formulations concerning good governance and the economic mechanisms which could ensure peace and wellbeing within any society we can easily jump to the conclusion that utopian views permeate all governance programs. As for contemporary China, let us remember that its actual program is currently placed under the sign of the dream – namely „the Chinese Dream”.

Starting from these statements, there arise two urgent tasks to be fulfilled by my study, and that is first to try and discern between utopia and dream linked to various political or social projections and, second, to stress out what is Chinese and what is universal within the utopias and dreams envisioned by the Chinese thinkers.

乌托邦 *wūtuōbāng*, the Chinese term for „utopia” is a phonetic loan. Using this term, many scenarios of ideal government, ideal communities made of ideal individuals could be labeled, such instances being depicted within few fictional and many non-fictional writings of Chinese thinkers, writers or scholar-officials. This term is seen, actually, as having a rather negative connotation, pointing to something highly unlikely to happen, improbable, something which cannot actually happen.

On the other hand, „the dream” (夢 mèng, a character which contains a component meaning „to squint” or „covered eyes”, which some interpreters even associate with bad sight or even blindness but which is sure to contain the radical „night”夕 xī, a time when dreams usually occur) can also be traced within the Chinese literature, with magical or mysterious connotations, of the realm which enlightens or reveals things that cannot be clearly seen in plain daylight.

Concerning both utopia and dreams in connection with Chinese political thought, there arise some questions that I would like to find an answer to all along my present and future research, such as:

- To what extent do these scenarios for a better world represent the aspirations of enlarged communities and not of an individual ruler or a small elite circle?
- Can they be judged in terms of success or failure?
- Do authors of such scenarios envision the possibility that they come true, do they assume a prophetic mission or they are fully aware that the only thing they can do by airing their visions is to suggest new ideas and thus indirectly contributing to an enhanced possible world order?
- If we interpret utopian visions expressed within works of literature as subtle satires, can we conclude that they only question the social and political *status quo* and, thus, that they are only meant to help let off some steam?
- Do we have the possibility, capacity and right to psychoanalyze these visions and to bring to daylight that which we could call desires, compulsions, obsessions and even fears of the Chinese collective unconscious?

Not to mention the simple dream, but „the Chinese Dream” is a term with a rather long history in the Chinese literature. In relation to contemporary governance, it was coined by president Xi Jinping since 2012, an expression which is described and developed in many discourses delivered on various occasions. Concerning the “Chinese dream” of the “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation” which “means that we will make China prosperous and strong, rejuvenate the nation and bring happiness to the Chinese people”, according to Xi Jinping’s discourse⁹, although facing towards the future and concentrating on what is new or young, it cannot be cut off from what John Makeham (2008) called “the core of the Chinese culture”, even though nowadays the characteristically Chinese socialist core values bear derivative names of both modern and traditional values (The 12 values, written in 24 Chinese characters, are the

⁹ Speech occasioned by the exhibition “The Road to Rejuvenation”, November 29, 2012.

national values of “prosperity”, “democracy”, “civility” and “harmony”; the **social** values of “freedom”, “equality”, “justice” and the “rule of law”; and the **individual** values of “patriotism”, “dedication”, “integrity” and “friendship”) and are the necessary path to make the Chinese dream come true.

The fact that the dream, as compared to utopia, is seen as possible to fulfill, bound to come true, is demonstrated by the very adoption of this term in the actual macro policy of China. Let’s go through some of the most important statements of president Xi Jinping, the engineer of this huge project:

In my opinion, achieving the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has been the greatest dream of the Chinese people since the advent of modern times. This dream embodies the long cherished hope of several generations of the Chinese people, gives expression to the overall interests of the Chinese nation and the Chinese people and represents the shared aspiration of all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation.¹⁰

This statement comprises a very complex answer to some of the questions listed above. We can plainly see that the Chinese dream is an expression of the aspirations of the Chinese people, the largest community on the planet; it is in a close connection to reality as long as it represents “the overall interests” of the entire nation; it is a matter of modernity because it was born together with “the advent of modern times” and was cherished by “several generations” and, finally, it is future oriented because it is shared by the “sons and daughters” of the nation.

The assertion that “People’s wish for a good life is our goal”¹¹ reveals that it is the mission of the political elite, the government or the ruler to achieve precise goals such as “better education, more stable jobs, better income, more reliable social security, more comfortable housing conditions, more diverse cultural consumption and a better environment.”¹² The stages of this complex process are linked to a certain calendar, with dates that close the circles starting from the founding of the Chinese Communist Party and the People’s Republic: “[...]building a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2021, and building a prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious modern socialist country by 2049.”¹³

But even so, the effort is definitely a collective one, the state is only responsible for laying the necessary plans and logistics, ensuring the proper cir-

¹⁰ idem.

¹¹ speech delivered on November 15, 2012, at the press conference of the members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee.

¹² idem.

¹³ ibid.

cumstances and, especially, for encouraging the community to commit and get to work. The community is made of individuals, but, as Xi Jinping states within the discourse mentioned above, even though the capability of the individual is limited, it is by their united force that any difficulty will be overcome.

Starting from the Reform and Opening stage, the state has had the task of encouraging every Chinese person to work hard for their own professional career and for achieving their life ideals, as long as they obeyed the law and respect the social values, they had a chance to create a competitive society with equal rights and fair opportunities and rules, eventually to make their dreams become reality. Nowadays, the current leader stresses the central role of the Party and the importance of the community. The fuel that this complex project relies upon is patriotism, reform, innovation and also the all inclusive “force of great unity of all ethnic groups of China.”¹⁴

The ideals that the Chinese dream envisages actually have many things in common with the aspirations of other peoples or other cultures and the comparison to the “American dream” comes to mind as natural. As Xi Jinping himself told Barack Obama in 2015, “The Chinese Dream has many things in common with all the beautiful dreams including the American Dream of all the people in the world.” And even though the latest dialogues between the two countries might have focused on the difference between the individualism proper to the Western nations, concentrated on the word “I”, versus the Chinese emphasis on the community (the “we”), the common ground is obviously made up of shared traumas and ideals.

Let’s remember the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, that “sons of former slaves and sons of former slave owners sit down together at the table of brotherhood; not judged by the color of skin but by content of character.”¹⁵ This in itself points to past issues as well to future ideals, from freedom to equality and prosperity that the entire human race is still fighting for.

In a comparative analysis, one can discover that “the Chinese dream” is more prescriptive, with clearly laid down projects and goals, with the role of the “dreamer” boldly assumed by the party-state. The people involved in this dream seem to be mere characters that populate an updated “Peach Blossom Spring” valley. Whereas Martin Luther’s dream is a descriptive one, the characters in his dream are enjoying a new age of equality and, from then on, this enhanced society seems capable of evolving at its own natural pace.

As Douwe Fokkema showed in the introduction to his study (2011), utopian societies are often placed in isolated lands, far from the influences of a

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Speech delivered by Martin Luther King at the March on Washington, August 28, 1963.

world considered decadent or bound to disintegrate. In his turn, Michel Foucault's definition of utopia is "sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of society" (Foucault, 1984, p. 44). To this, Tao Yuanming's "Peach Blossom Spring" can be related, a remote, dreamlike realm to which one could arrive only after going through a hidden and tight passageway. Its inner order, the ideal relations between its inhabitants, their mentality and state of mind and especially its rather long history are factors which point to a utopian country. The fact that it cannot be found on return, so that the main character wonders whether what he had seen was just a dream or not, places it in an imaginary world. Nevertheless, this utopian, ideal, imaginary society is depicted as based on ideas that had long been discussed and even cherished in ancient China. These ideas can all be counted as making up the core of the Chinese civilization and the simple fact that nowadays rulers take them into account can only sustain this assumption.

Passing through the Golden Age and cradle of the Chinese culture, the times of Yao and Shun or the duke of Zhou, when power was passed peacefully to the rightful successor, the nostalgia of another kind of paradise lost is almost complete within the Confucian thought. Even in its devising of an ideal society led by an ideal ruler one can find traces of incomplete optimism, cracked by the already verified assumption that man is imperfect and that "sagehood" is always close but never here.

Even if near, close by or at hand, the trust in attaining *ren* or the ideal way human beings will behave after fulfilling a series of conditions always bears an idealistic overtone. One can, ideally, "develop his mind to the utmost," he can "serve Heaven" and "fulfill his destiny" (Mencius 35: 29a). There seems that only few virtuous individuals can assume lofty ideals advocated all through the Classics, such as benevolence and recovering the rites or following the Golden Age models of virtue. Such is their capacity to grow (and keep!) a kind heart, while avoiding negative influence. It is these few who can actually understand and walk the Way of Heaven, being immune to wicked desires. Whereas revolutionary minds like some of May 4th intellectuals, or like Mao Zedong and some of his supporters who firmly believed that totally parting with the past make the perfect foundation for a new beginning or that people's will to sacrifice will stay the same in war time as in times of peace. But one can hardly imagine that this kind of idealism can be met in every nook and cranny of the society at large.

At the symposium to commemorate the 120th anniversary of Mao Zedong, Xi Jinping cites a number of ancient thinkers, beginning with Guanzi saying:

“Success in government lies in following the hearts of the people. Failure lies in opposing them.” (Guanzi, Mumin:3). Confucius is also quoted by Xi Jinping for his optimistic hope, similar to Plato’s, that a virtuous ruler can bring about virtuous society. The quotation is from Confucius in Analects 16: “He sees what is good and acts as though he could never attain it, sees what is not good and acts as though he had put his hand in scalding water.” With the commentary that if „they lose their awe for institutional power or ignore laws they are bound to drift towards the depths of corruption.”

Another quotation is from Mozi (Exalting virtue 1): “In good times, virtuous officers must be promoted. When times are not good, virtuous officers likewise must be promoted. If the wish is to follow the Way of Yao, Shun, Yu and Tang, it is impossible not to exalt the virtuous. Indeed, exalting the virtuous is the foundation of governance.”

Mencius (6A6) is also quoted: “Give them what they need and everything will be fine” or “Let people follow their original nature and they will be able to do good. Benevolence can overcome cruelty as water can extinguish fire.” with the important observation that “These days, those who claim to practice benevolence can be compared to a man who tries to put out a burning cartload of wood with a cup of water.”

The quotations above, which are part of Xi Jinping’s rhetoric, point to the fact that these ideals have not lost their appeal on contemporary people, that the wisdom of ancient China could still be capable of making right the paths of the people and that there is no point in breaking with the past. Nevertheless, they still point to ideal states of being and, eventually, to an ideal society that cherishes and follows, in its entirety, this kind of wisdom. What is beyond any doubt is that without these ideals there would probably remain very little in trying to correct or to direct the mentality or the behavior of the Chinese community, so their educational role is still very important.

But way more intense and even more heated than the vision manifested in the nostalgia for *illo tempore* is that oriented toward the future. A little less tangible than an edulcorated past, the future leaves enough room for the power of the imagination, which opposes the present, permanently shadowed by danger and catastrophe.

The modern Chinese utopias are mostly corresponding to tumultuous historical contexts such as that of the end of the 19th century when Kang Youwei devised his vision on Great Harmony (*Da Tong* – another name for “utopia”) or of the first half of the 20th century for Liang Shuming or Liang Qichao, continuing with Mao Zedong and even with recent propositions like that of Jiang Qing’s “new constitutional order” and Kang Xiaoguang’s supporting vision.

Kang Youwei requires special attention not only for his definite and ample utopia but also for his actual contribution to the short lived reform of 1898 and also because of his relative influence on Mao's views! Describing human history as "a linear and progressive march from division to unity and to a brighter future" (Brussadelli 2017: 105) Kang sketches a world with no borders, no differences between sexes or races, no private interest and property, having a global scale government, where everything is public and belongs to the community. While it can be said that his visions are about the real world or our world, "the present society in a perfected form" (Foucault 1984: 44), it still remains a "fundamentally unreal" one, as Foucault also points out.

Also of a very high intensity are the very programs devised by Mao Zedong, from letting people express their criticism towards the ruling officials to the Great Leap Forward with its economic goals and its Jiangxi soviet, to the various stages of the Cultural Revolution.

Placed under a different flag, Jiang Qing advocated for the return to an order legitimated by the Confucian aura, with his tricameral parliament: House of Ru (*tongruiyuan*), that represent sacred legitimacy of Heaven and has veto power; the House of the Nation (*guotiyuan*) which represents cultural legitimacy and a House of the People (*shuminyuan*). We can see from the previous examples that the future oriented utopian scenarios do not only represent ways to react to the pressure of the present but that they also extract their legitimacy and even a rather large proportion of ideas from the past, both the recent and the ancient one. Even if their authors are aware that their ideas could never be implemented as such, they still consider this kind of imagining a perfect future society as a contribution to a better present one.

As a culmination of the most cherished ideas that can design a better world, projected on the globalization background, with its pros and cons, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party has successively elaborated concepts such as One World One Dream, followed by the Chinese Dream and One Belt One Road, as "means of seeking common ground and shelving differences", as president Jiang Zemin stated back in 2002. With a universal stance, Xi Jinping describes the Chinese dream as "a dream of peace, development, cooperation and win-win." He then adds "We will not only strive to develop ourselves but also stress our responsibility and contributions to the world. We will not only enrich the Chinese people but also the people of the world. A strong China brings more opportunities for the world, not threats."¹⁶

Even if not equally far from reality, we cannot draw the conclusion that

¹⁶ Answer in a written interview with reporters from Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica and Mexico, May 2013.

utopias are a waste of time in relation to the concerns of the present world. They seem rather necessary not only for the sketching of possible dreams but also for issuing ideals for the present society. We cannot avoid wondering, if all the visionaries of a united world were to be seated at the same table and invited to devise the plans for ONE better world, would it be possible for them to transcend their own cultural characteristics and, mainly, the idea of precedence? If such a congress isn't, in itself, a utopian scenario and considering the process and the conclusion of so many negotiations over issues of capital or secondary importance over the past or recent history, isn't it more probable that these personalities would rather slap each other's hands on endless bargain?

References

- Brusadelli, Federico. "A Tale of Two Utopias: Kang Youwei's Communism, Mao Zedong's Classicism and the "Accommodating Look" of the Marxist Li Zehou" in *Asian Studies*, Volume V (XXI), Issue 1, Ljubljana 2017, pp. 103–124.
- Fokkema, Douwe. *Perfect Worlds: Utopian Fiction in China and the West*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011.
- Foucault, Michel. „Des Espaces Autres” in *Architecture/Mouvement/Continuité* no.5, 1984 pp. 46–49.
- Makeham, John. *Lost Soul, "Confucianism" in Contemporary Chinese Academic Discourse*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Asia Center, 2008.
- Vișan, Florentina. *Prelegeri de confucianism* [Lectures on Confucianism], vol. II, București, Ed.Universității din București, 2012.
- Xi Jinping, *The Governance of China*, Foreign Languages Press, 2014 [Kindle Edition].

A Tentative Overview of Nǚshū in Translation: Challenges of Translating a Unique Chinese Cultural Heritage

Riccardo Moratto

Abstract

Hunan province is the repository site of a unique Chinese culture heritage: nǚshū (female script). In 1983 these manuscripts were brought to light in the rural county of Jiangyong. However, they were translated into Mandarin Chinese only in 1991.

Our research has shown that Western translations are few and far between and in some cases are indirect translations, either from English or from other Western languages, posing a big problem for the preservation of the intrinsic characteristics of this linguistic cultural heritage.

The present study focuses on the issue of translation strategies and analyzes with a descriptive-explanatory approach some practical implications for translators dealing with texts which are socio-linguistically and semantically loaded.

We hope that by shedding light on the importance of translators not only as cultural bridges but rather as cultural ambassadors, more researchers will embrace the challenging yet rewarding task of translating this unique corpus.

Keywords: China, nǚshū, translation, cultural heritage

Introduction

The Chinese province of Hunan is a multi-ethnic province with long-standing history, diverse cultures and unique natural resources which have endowed the Hunan people with an utterly rich intangible cultural heritage.

Hunan province is also the repository site of a unique Chinese culture heritage, namely nǚshū, which literally means “female script”. These manuscripts were a niche cultural heritage belonging to a group of women in the remote rural county of Jiangyong, whence the name “female script” or “women’s script”. For centuries, Jiangyong women had been using nǚshū to write in verse form sisterhood letters, biographic laments, wedding literature, prayers, folk stories, and other narratives that documented their experiences and articu-

lated their feelings. This fascinating script has been passed down from mother to daughter, elder to younger, for hundreds of years.

Despite decades of research, scholars can't agree on the origin of *nǚshū*. The script was used during the Qing Dynasty (1644 to 1912), though others trace it back as far as the 13th century. In 1983 these manuscripts were brought to light in what is duly considered as one of the most intriguing discoveries of the eighties. However, these manuscripts were translated into Mandarin Chinese only a decade later, in 1991, making them accessible to the large public and to ethnolinguists.

As for the translation of *nǚshū*, our research has shown that Western translations are few and far between and in some cases are indirect translations, either from English or from other Western languages, posing a big problem for the preservation of the intrinsic characteristics and peculiarities of this linguistic cultural heritage.

The present study focuses on the issue of translation strategies and analyzes some practical implications for translators dealing with texts which are socio-linguistically and semantically loaded, especially considering the fact that the *nǚshū* corpus, intended as all the material available, is invariably written in verse.

We hope that by shedding light on the importance of translators not only as cultural bridges but rather as cultural ambassadors, more researchers and specialists will embrace the challenging yet rewarding task of translating this unique corpus.

Literature review

Culture is an abstract, complex and problematic term (Barber & Badre 1998). It has been defined in various ways. For example, in 1952, Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn compiled a list of 164 definitions of culture in *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. In the case of *nǚshū*, the present paper adopts Northouse's definition of culture, according to whom "culture is defined as the learned beliefs, values, rules, norms, symbols, and traditions that are common to a group of people" (Northouse 2007: 302).

According to Stuart Hall, people who belong to the same culture must share a similar conceptual map and the same way of interpreting the signs of a language so that meaning can be exchanged effectively (Hall 1997). Visual signs and images, even when they closely resemble the things they refer to, are still signs; they carry meaning and have to be interpreted (Hall 1997). To interpret, we must have access to the two systems of representation (Hall

1997). In our research, the question is how can we represent the same system in a foreign language? In other words, how is it possible to maintain all the culturally-loaded elements of *nǚshū* in a western language?

The present study postulates that, in order to achieve this, the translator must adopt an alienating, foreignizing method of translation (Munday 2016). This emphasizes the value of the foreign, by bending target language (TL) word-usage to try to ensure faithfulness to the source text (ST). In the discussion section, we will explain why we think this is the only adequate translation method for culturally loaded texts, as in the case of *nǚshū*. It is argued that in this way the target text (TT) can be faithful to the sense (Forster 2010: 416) and, possibly, the sound of the ST and can import the foreign concepts and Chinese culture into a Western language. A special language, as will be revealed later in the paper, might be necessary to achieve this.

We consider the *nǚshū* corpus to be a dynamic source text, as defined by Hatim and Mason (1997). With dynamic STs, “the translator is faced with more interesting challenges and literal translation may no longer be an option” (Hatim & Mason 1997: 30–31). For the Formalists, a literary work is not studied in isolation but as part of a literary system, which itself is defined as a “system of functions of the literary order which are in continual inter-relationship with other orders” (Tynjanov 1927/1971: 72). In the case of the *nǚshū* literary corpus, it means that it is part of the social, cultural, literary and historical framework and the key concept is that of the system, in which there is an ongoing dynamic of mutation and struggle for the primary position in the literary canon (Munday 2016).

The term *nǚshū* can refer both to the women’s script itself and to the texts written in such a manuscript. When it was first discovered, it was considered as a proper female activity in the area of its use, rice-farming villages in and around Shangjiangxu Township in Jiangyong County in southwestern Hunan Province. *Nǚshū* was such an accepted part of local culture, in fact, that the standard Chinese script, *hanzi*, was commonly called *nanzi* — men’s writing (Silber 1995). *Nǚshū* is inspiring because it represents a case of women using power tools. Moreover, women aren’t just sharing the use of a male power tool, they aren’t letting men use it at all. Men couldn’t read or write it. They were excluded. However, it seems opportune to underline that the secrecy of *nǚshū* has been overemphasized in the literature and, at times, has been mainly turned into a tourist attraction. Indeed, this secret nature of the Chinese female script has also been one of the main keys to the popularization of *nǚshū*. As a matter of fact, the Chinese female script was secret not because men weren’t allowed to know it, but rather because men were not clamoring to be let in on

this secret, just as they were not demanding to learn embroidery. A secret, by nature, is exclusionary, but what does exclusion mean to those who have no desire to be included? (Silber 1995).

In the 1980s, when scholars began to study this script, they worked with its last two known writers, Yi Nianhua (1906–1991) and Gao Yinxian (1902–1990) (Silber 1995). With the exception of one woman in her eighties and another in her fifties, *nǚshū* literacy is no longer practiced today. However, a few hundred *nǚshū* texts, and memories of the social practices within which these texts were written and read, survive.

***Nǚshū* Literacy**

When it comes to the *nǚshū* corpus, the two most useful anthologies are *Zhongguo Nǚshū Jicheng* (Collection of Chinese *Nǚshū*) by Zhao Liming (1992), and *Jiangyong Nǚshū Zhi Mi* (The Puzzle of *Nǚshū* in Jiangyong) by Xie Zhimin (1991). As previously mentioned, *nǚshū* literature, intended as all the material available, is invariably written in oral-formulaic verses. It was written to be sung or chanted aloud.

Nǚshū reading is locally known as *duzhi* (reciting from paper) or *dushan* (reciting from fans). *Nǚshū* literature can be divided into personal and nonpersonal. Personal writings involve individualized authorship and/or audience, that is, a specific writer with or without a specific audience; public writings involve neither a specific, identifiable writer nor a specific audience. Personal genres comprise writings to brides, autobiographies, letters, condolence or birthday greetings. Public writings share a virtually exclusive focus on the experiences and interests of women. Scholars of *nǚshū* categorize the material differently, and the usual criteria for genre determination (provenance, subject matter, formal features, narrative conventions, historicity versus fictionality, modes of production and consumption) do not account for these arbitrary descriptive designations. Other *nǚshū* texts are translations and renditions of tales from Chinese vernacular narrative heptasyllabic verse traditions. Some of these, such as the story of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, have been popular throughout China for centuries. Other stories, though less well known, can be identified with *changben* (recitation manual) and *baojuan* (precious scroll) versions. Other renditions of Chinese texts include Tang pentasyllable quatrains, such as Li Bo's *Night Thoughts*, Wang Zhihuan's *Climbing Crane Pagoda*, and Meng Haoran's *Spring Dawn*; a morality instruction manual for women (*Sizi Nǚjing*), and a selection on filial piety from the *Ouanjiabao*, a late imperial home encyclopedia.

Translating *Nǚshū*

Most of the existing translations of the *nǚshū* corpus invariably go through the intermediary of Mandarin, because Mandarin is usually the language used to discuss and explain these texts. Also, it seems easier to translate pentasyllabic or heptasyllabic lines of verse into lines with an equal number of syllables. However, there are many pitfalls if one translates *nǚshū* texts into Chinese rather than directly into English, Italian, French, or any other language. This is due to the fact that, irrespective of their apparent similarities with Chinese characters, *nǚshū* expressions carry different shades of meaning in *nǚshū* than they do in Mandarin. These differences may be related to the fact that *nǚshū* is actually based on the local dialect of the county of Jiangyong and not on the national standardized language. The American sinologist Victor Henry Mair is right to caution against the practice of passing “local cultures through a Modern Standard Mandarin filter because this causes linguistic, social, and ideological distortions which may prevent us from gaining a true comprehension of their nature” (Mair 1990: 121).

Hence, what are the best strategies to translate the *nǚshū* literary corpus? The next section will focus on the issue of translation strategies and analyze some practical implications for translators dealing with texts which are socio-linguistically and semantically loaded.

Discussion

As a professional translator and a translation scholar, my fascination with *nǚshū* led me to analyzing how it was translated into different languages. I was astonished to see that the *nǚshū* had not been translated in most European countries. As a matter of fact, in many Western countries no translation is available and where there is one it is conducted unmethodically, randomly choosing some passages here and there, and indirectly, through the intermediary of either Mandarin Chinese or English, thus losing all the peculiarities of the original *tuhua* (local dialect) in which the *nǚshū* corpus was written. Some of the translations are just part of a thesis in Chinese literature (Zanolo 2018) and have never been published as a book or as an anthology.

The translator must have a background of knowledge about the topic covered in the text to be translated, in order to grasp all the nuances contained in the ST and play the important role of ‘bridge’ between two different worlds. As Osimo underlines in his translation manual: “Translation is a phenomenon that develops when two cultures come into contact. [...] It is a cultural mediation and, in some cases, affective” (Osimo 2004: 58). Therefore, it is imperative

that anyone translating the *nǚshū* corpus must first analyze it as a historical and social phenomenon, and not simply go through the intermediary of Mandarin Chinese. The message must be kept as faithful as possible to that of the author, while preserving the chanted structure.

In English most of the existing translations are derived from Mandarin Chinese. The present paper adopts a target text-oriented translation approach. The ultimate goal is trying to avoid what Spivak (2012:316) calls “translationese”, i.e. a translation register which eliminates the identity of individuals and cultures that are politically less powerful and leads to a standardization of very different voices.

In order to achieve this, the best translation strategy to adopt in translating the *nǚshū* corpus is foreignization. We agree with Venuti when he bemoans that “domestication involves an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values” (Venuti 2008: 15). Foreignization entails “choosing a foreign text and developing a foreign text and a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language” (ibid.: 242). Venuti (2008) considers foreignizing practices to be highly desirable strategic cultural intervention which seek to send “the reader abroad by making the receiving culture aware of the linguistic and cultural difference inherent in the foreign text” (Munday 2016: 226). This is to be achieved by a non-fluent, estranging or heterogenous translation style designed to make visible the presence of the translator and to highlight the foreign identity of the ST.

Conclusion

Moratto (2011) has already applied such translation strategies to translate *Yǒng Huái shī* (咏怀诗, Poems chanting from my heart) by Ruǎn Jí (阮籍, 210–263). In the original poem the verses are pentasyllabic with alternating rhymes (only in even verses). In this translation experiment, the author has adapted the target language to have its own metric and rhythmic pattern, while respecting the original meaning of the text, thus obtaining a foreignization effect in the language used.

The same translation strategies are proposed for the *nǚshū* corpus, which is perceived not as a linguistic process but rather as the demystification of a purportedly secret language.

The few existing translations are just a transposition of the narrative, with no or very limited attention paid to the internal rhythm of the original *tuhua*. It is suggested to reserve the line breaks and couplet structure of the original

nǚshū verse, and try to render it into something that may remotely resemble colloquial verse in Italian, French, English, or any other Western language, while attempting to capture the meaning of these texts as fully as possible.

This is an arduous endeavor, indeed, yet it seems to be the only plausible way to render justice to the *nǚshū* literature, which is invariably written in oral-formulaic verses and which was originally composed to be sung or chanted aloud.

References

- Barber, W., & Badre, A. Culturability: “The merging of culture and usability.” Presented at the Conference on Human Factors and the Web, Basking Ridge, New Jersey: AT&T Labs, 1998. Print.
- Forster, M. *After Herder: Philosophy of Language in the German Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Hall, S. ed. *Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1997. Print.
- Hatim, B., & Mason. I. *The Translator as a Communicator*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.
- Liu, F.W. “The Confrontation Between Fidelity and Fertility: *Nǚshū*, *Nǚge*, and Peasant Women’s Conceptions of Widowhood in Jiangyong County, Hunan Province, China.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 60.4 (2001): 1051–1084.
- Mair, V. H. “Sound and Sense in the Study of Chinese Popular Culture”. *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles Reviews (CLEAR)* 12 (1990): 119–127. Print.
- Moratto, R. “*Ruǎnjí yǒnghuái shī bāshí’èr shǒu zhī shí’èr* 阮籍咏怀诗八十二首之十二 (Ruan Ji’s Twelfth Poem).” *Intralinea (sezione Testi a Fronte)*. 30 Oct 2019. Web. http://www.intralinea.org/translations/item/yong_huai_shi
- Munday, J. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. New York: Routledge, 2016. Print.
- Kroeber, A. L. & Kluckhohn, C. “Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions”. *Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology*, 47.1 (1952). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University). Print.
- Northouse, P. G. *Leadership theory and practice (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA, US: Sage Publications, 2007. Print.
- Osimo, B. *Manuale del traduttore. Guida pratica con glossario*. Milano: Hoepli, 2004
- Silber, C.L. *Nǚshū (Chinese Women’s Script) literacy and literature*. 1995. University of Michigan, Ph. D dissertation.
- Spivak, G. “The politics of translation”. In: L. Venuti, ed., *The Translation Studies Reader*. Oxon: Routledge, pp. 312–330, 2012.
- Venuti, L. *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Xie, Z. M. 谢志民. *Jiangyong Nǚshū Zhi Mi* 江永女书之谜 [The Puzzle of *Nǚshū* in Jiangyong], 3 vols. Henan 河南: Henan renmin chubanshe, 1991. Print.

- Zanolo, S. *Il Nǚshū 女书, riflesso dell'interiorità delle donne cinesi. Proposta di traduzione e commento traduttologico di testi Nǚshu*. 2018. Ca' Foscari University, MA Thesis. 2018.
- Zhao, L. M. 赵丽明. *Zhongguo Nǚshū jicheng 中国女书集成* [Collection of Chinese *Nǚshū*], Beijing 北京: Qinghua University Press, 1992. Print.

Cultural Heritage in Globalization, Local Governance, and Nüshu

Hu Xihuan

Abstract

This paper aims to explain the status of China's intangible cultural heritage from the perspective of globalization and local governance over Nüshu. It explores how governance at the local level accomplishes its goals on the protection and development of intangible cultural heritage and the influence of globalization on the community. This paper argues that globalization revitalizes the world cultural heritage and gives the governments from national to local levels legitimacy to manage their heritage recourses. Local authorities have become a pivotal player in heritage governance and heritage has become a resource over which various departments claim to own the "sovereignty." Under such circumstances, the influence of the folk cultural participants on the culture is weakened.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage; Nüshu; Heritage Governance; Globalization.

Introduction: The Past and Present of Nüshu

This paper aims to demonstrate the heritage governance at the local level in China, under the trend of heritage globalization, taking Nüshu as an example.

Nüshu is a syllabic script exclusively used among women in Jiangyong County and its neighboring areas in Hunan Province, China. Nüshu refers to Nüshu literature, Nüge (女歌, songbooks), and Nüshu customs. In history, women established sworn-sister (in Chinese: 结拜姐妹¹) relationships, wrote consolation letters to each other and recorded autobiographies using Nüshu scripts. They excluded men from their Nüshu discourse world. These scripts were an emotional tie among women in Jiangyong areas. Nüshu was once marked as "feudal dross," "witch's script" (Liu 2015: 3) and was almost abolished after the establishment of the PRC, due to a series of political and social

¹ Sworn sister (in Chinese: 结拜姐妹) refers to the formation of brothers and sisters of different surnames through a certain ceremony.

movements such as the Breaking Four Old Things Movements and Cultural Revolution (Liu 2015; Lee 2008). Until China's Reform and Opening-up in the 1980s, the openness in politics and economy brought loosened cultural policies, thus, cultural scholars could rediscover and recover Nüshu. The 1980s witnessed a boom in Nüshu research in mainland China and overseas. At the same time, globalization had become a concept of great significance all around the world. Initiated by UNESCO, the intention of "World Heritage" developed rapidly and became one of the outputs of globalization.

In November 1972, UNESCO adopted the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* and proposed to jointly protect the world culture and world heritage as an asset of humanity. China became a party in the *Convention* in 1987, which signified that China's heritage protection has begun to integrate into the globalization process and international norms. Nüshu is inevitably involved in the trend of heritage globalization and embarks on the road that subverts its traditional transmission model. "Nüshu Custom" was included in the first batch of the *Lists of National-Level Intangible Cultural Heritage* in China in May 2006. In the meantime, scholars and government administrators have long been dedicated to declaring Nüshu as one of UNESCO's *Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*. The globalization of heritage has caused the political process of cultural heritage preservation to become increasingly intricate. Heritage communities are massively affected by globalization and nationalization, which witnessed the transfer of a major branch of cultural heritage sites from private to state ownership or control. The bond between local heritage agencies and local community groups is loosened.

Two questions are discussed in this paper: How can local governments accomplish their goals of the protection and development of intangible cultural heritage through local governance? Is globalization a peril or a benefit to an intangible cultural heritage site? The data of this study was collected from the researcher's fieldwork in Jiangyong County, China. Through interviews, participatory observations and digital ethnography, nearly 30 participants involved in Nüshu heritage activities have been approached. The significance of this paper is to indicate the impacts of globalization on China's heritage communities through perceiving the social transformation of an intangible cultural heritage field.

Heritage Governance: From National to Local

Many scholars have investigated the national and regional governance of heritage from the perspective of globalization. The term "governance"

refers to having authority to conduct the policy, actions and affairs of a state, organization or people. It is the action or manner of governing, ruling or controlling a state, organization and so on. Governance is a dynamic process concerned with power, relationships and accountability (Zhu and Li 2013: 53). UNESCO suggests that World Heritage sites need to “have management structures and governance that are extremely open and inclusive (*World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit Guidance*, Part 3: Governance).” The idea of “good governance” (ibid) of heritage requires a sustained process of interaction with as many as members of a heritage community, however, the tendency in many sites to try and retrofit community and stakeholder support is a mistake (ibid). China has localized UNESCO’s heritage governance suggestions according to its specific social context. The heritage governance in China has its “Chinese socialistic characteristics” (Zhu and Li 2013: 68). Zhu and Li (2013) argue that China is adopting a diversified approach to heritage governance due to the regional differences in economic development and history. The authoritarian state is still dominant in local heritage governance. Numerous tangible and intangible heritages in China have become a tool of governance (Chan 2018; Svensson and Maags 2018; Maags 2018; Blumenfield 2013; Oakes 2013; Holbig and Maags 2012; Kang 2009). Individuals and communities may be excluded from decision-making (Svensson and Maags 2018). This dominance has even evolved into a monopoly, while the heritage participants separated from the state power may be marginalized. China’s multi-level governance can promote racial-cultural identity, vernacular practice, cultural autonomy and protection, and can also enable the country to achieve its goals of national integration and political stability in all local heritages (Svensson 2006), while simultaneously brushing over them to pursue economic and political interests, thereby creating local cultural contestation (Maags 2018).

This paper also analyzes the features of local heritage governance of Nüshu. The following section demonstrates how the local authorities dominate heritage governance and accounts for the status and voice of the other stakeholders in the Nüshu field. It is argued that globalization grants a chance for cultural heritage to be revitalized and gives the governments at all levels legitimacy to manage their heritage. Local authorities have become a pivotal player in heritage governance. Heritage has become a resource that different government departments claim to own the “sovereignty” over it. Under such circumstances, heritage performs as an implement of local governance and the influence of the folk cultural participants on the culture is weakened.

Local Governance of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Nüshu

The Essence of Heritage Governance

The protection and development of the intangible cultural heritage Nüshu has become one of the components of local governance. Today's Nüshu is no longer a medium of emotional communication between women but has become a cultural tourism resource for the governments to develop local economies, implement large-scale construction projects and prove their governance capabilities. What are the ways that the local governments adopted in order to accomplish their objectives of heritage protection? The following section presents three main approaches.

First, various departments of the Jiangyong County governments are involved in the governance of Nüshu, such as the County's Culture, Radio, Film and Television Press and Publication Bureau, the County's Education Bureau, the County's Women Federation, the County's Youth League Committee and so on. Besides, Jiangyong County has set up specialized agencies to engage in the special management of Nüshu, for example, the "Nüshu Cultural Research and Management Center" was established in 2013. Second, these agencies have implemented or designed a variety of plans to expand the application of Nüshu cultural resources. These agencies are attempting to build the "Nüshu Cultural Brand" and the "China's Historical and Cultural Village" nationwide and worldwide by integrating the resources, technology and capital advantages of the governments, experts, and scholars and enterprises. Their purpose is to attain a feasible route to transform Nüshu's "cultural power" into "productivity", which can boost the economic development of the county. These impressive long-term plans reveal the desire and determination of the local governments to manifest their governing competence with heritage as a carrier. Last but not least, the shift of authority from the central to the local governments means that the local governments are given a dimension and "discretion" (Zhu and Li 2013: 55) to negotiate with the global and national heritage governance mechanisms, which has inspired the local governance agencies to pursue interests for themselves. Jiangyong County has issued several construction plans in cultural tourism and has invested massively with human resources and funds in heritage conservation and development. However, dilemmas still exist. The heritage governance mechanisms which seem well-performed have already suppressed the living space of the other stakeholders in the Nüshu cultural field.

The Situation of the Other Stakeholders

We don't know who is managing us now. It seems that everyone is managing a bit. (Interviewee 1, Nüshu Transmitter, July 2018)

The specially established Nüshu Research Center does not play any role. This institution does not have a central idea or a scheme on cultural protection. (Interviewee 2, Nüshu Transmitter and Practitioner, August 2018)

The Nüshu governance structure in Jiangyong remains complicated. Several government departments and agencies claim their leading roles in Nüshu culture, but the specific functions of each department have not been elucidated. Even though some institutions have existed for many years, but they are still “an empty shell.” Nevertheless, the obscure and indefinite heritage governance situation does not mean other Nüshu participants are given more opportunities, but it has intensified the governors' supremacy over their personal interests, who are attempting to intervene in the development of the Nüshu resources through their administrative power. Nüshu cultural participants from the folk communities are, therefore, facing greater pressure and challenges from the authorities. They voice their concerns:

Anyone who wants to carry out cultural or business activities must visit the officials who manage Nüshu and obtain their consents. The local governments have occupied all the Nüshu trademarks that can be registered. They are not satisfied with the folk Nüshu people who are registering Nüshu trademarks for their cultural business. (Interviewee 3, Folk Nüshu Practitioner, September 2018)

A monopoly has been formed. Now, only the officially designated Nüshu Transmitters are considered authentic. The governments and their transmitters have produced a fixed interpretation on Nüshu culture. Others are asked to accept this set of interpretation. (Interviewee 4, Folk Nüshu Practitioner, August 2019)

Local governors reached their exclusive possession and control of Nüshu in two ways. The first is to claim their “property rights” (Tang 2013) to the cultural resources by registering cultural-related trademarks. The second is to designate their spokespersons to assert their cultural interpretation. The right to interpret the authenticity of the culture is dominated by the governing bodies, they can also maintain their legitimate leading position in the Nüshu field. As Zhu (2014: 12) argues “the authentication of heritage became a governance strategy to legitimize inclusion and exclusion and to allocate economic, moral and aesthetic values.” In the Nüshu community, the local heritage governance agencies are attempting to exclude the other stakeholders from their governing system. The folk cultural group has lost their ownership over the heritage and

their right of decision-making. The local heritage governors are severing their relations with the folk cultural community. These facts have run counter to the intention of the “good governance” of heritage alleged by UNESCO. As intangible cultural heritage has been enshrined within multiple levels of Chinese governance, international approval has become less crucial than in an earlier age (Blumenfield 2018: 188). UNESCO’s suggestions on heritage protection have little room to perform in China under the driven forces of local interests and governors’ personal interests from heritage recourses.

Conclusion

China’s heritage governance agencies have gained the authority to regulate and develop the resources of the nation’s heritage sites throughout the heritage globalization led by UNESCO, the authorities have become the determinants and directors of the new order. The process of “heritagization” (Svensson and Maags 2018; Chan 2018; Shepherd and Yu 2013) has made heritage a device of governance. The power of the local authorities is concentrated and strengthened, a monopolized heritage governance system has been generated, resulting in the exclusion of non-governmental groups who are becoming the “other” party and regarded contesting with the authorities. In what ways should a “power interval” be set for the heritage governance under the Chinese system? How can the folk cultural groups be given more possibilities to decide their culture? These are the matters to be worked in cultural heritage protection and development in the future.

References

- Blumenfield, Tami, and Helaine Silverman (eds.). *Cultural Heritage Politics in China*. New York: Springer, 2013.
- Blumenfield, T. “Recognition and Misrecognition: The Politics of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Southwest China.” *Chinese Cultural Heritage in the Making. Experiences, Negotiations and Contestations*. Edited by Christina Maags, and Marina Svensson. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018: 169–194.
- Chan, Selina C. “Heritagizing the Chaozhou Hungry Ghosts Festival in Hong Kong.” *Chinese Heritage in the Making: Experiences, Negotiations and Contestations*. Edited by Christina Maags, and Marina Svensson. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018: 145–168.
- Kang, Xiaofei. “Two Temples, Three Religions, and a Tourist Attraction: Contesting Sacred Space on China’s Ethnic Frontier.” *Modern China*, 35.3, 2009: 227–255.
- Lee, Ann-Gee. *Female Fabrications an Examination of the Public and Private Aspects of Nüshu*. Ohio: Bowling Green State University, 2008.

- Zhang, Lifan. “The “Globalization” and “Localization” Game of the Idea of Heritage Protection: Taking the “Xingjiao Temple Incident” as an Example.” *World of Antiquity*, 1 (2019).
- Liu, Fei-wen. *Gendered Words: Sentiments and Expression in Changing Rural China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Maags, Christina. “Creating a Race to the Top: Hierarchies and Competition within the Chinese ICH Transmitters System.” *Chinese Heritage in the Making: Experiences, Negotiations and Contestations*, edited by Christina Maags and Marina Svensson. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (2018): 121–144.
- Maags, Christina, and Heike Holbig. “Replicating Elite Dominance in Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding: The Role of Local Government–scholar Networks in China.” *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 23.1 (2016): 71–97.
- Oakes, Tim. “Heritage as Improvement: Cultural Display and Contested Governance in Rural China.” *Modern China*, 39.4 (2013): 380–407.
- Shepherd, Robert J., and Larry Yu. *Heritage Management, Tourism, and Governance in China: Managing the Past to Serve the Present*. Vol. 2, New York: Springer Science & Business Media, 2012.
- Svensson, Marina. *In the Ancestors’ Shadow: Cultural Heritage Contestations in Chinese Villages*. Centre for East and Southeast Asian Studies. Lund: Lund University, 2006.
- Svensson, Marina, and Christina Maags. “Mapping the Chinese Heritage Regime: Ruptures, Governmentality, and Agency.” *Chinese Heritage in the Making: Experiences, Negotiations and Contestations*, edited by Marina Svensson and Christina Maags. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018: 11–38.
- Tang, Zijun. “Does the Institution of Property Rights Matter for Heritage Preservation? Evidence from China.” *Cultural Heritage Politics in China*. Edited by Blumenfeld, T. and H. Silverman, New York: Springer, 2013: 23–30.
- UNESCO. *UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit*. Web. <http://whc.unesco.org/sustainabletourismtoolkit/guides/guide-3-developing-effective-governance>.
- Zhu, Yujie. “Cultural Effects of Authenticity: Contested Heritage Practices in China.” *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 21.6 (2015): 594–608.
- Zhu, Yujie, and Na Li. “Groping for Stones to Cross the River: Governing Heritage in Emei.” *Cultural Heritage Politics in China*. Edited by Blumenfeld, T. and H. Silverman. New York: Springer, 2013: 51–71.

LITERATURE AND FILM

Silent Marginality: Subaltern Women Between the City and the Countryside in Sun Huifen's Fiction

Giulia Rampolla

Abstract

This paper investigates the condition of women and gender issues, related to social marginalisation, rural-to-urban migrations and the consequences of modernisation, in the fiction of Sun Huifen. She herself comes from the countryside and is particularly interested in subaltern characters and the world surrounding them in a global context. I'll focus on the topics of social constraints endured by women upon migration and the resulting psychological implications, and gender inequalities that are deep-rooted in poor rural areas, where women are victims of discrimination. These themes will be analysed in selected literary works by Sun Huifen, in which female characters appear to be entangled between tradition and modernity.

Keywords: Subaltern literature, native soil fiction, Sun Huifen, city-country-side gap

Sun Huifen's narrative universe is populated with peasant women and migrant workers who are psychologically torn between the urban and the rural world; she recounts their disillusionment with what was once an idyllic life in the countryside in global times, while focusing upon the emotional sphere of the female characters and their interpersonal relationships.

Sun Huifen's background is deeply rooted in tradition, in the ways of life of rural north-eastern China and in proletarian culture: born in 1961 in Zhuanhe, near Dalian, Liaoning Province, she was a factory-worker and a farm-labourer, before resuming her studies¹ and long before becoming a well-known writer. This is no doubt one of the reasons why her realism appears to be so instinctive and yet extremely accurate, devoid of any kind of empty rhetoric, and able to avoid the cultural misunderstandings that frequently jeopardise a genuine cognition of rural reality and of the underprivileged. Furthermore, her lifelike representation of the daily life of country-dwellers, who are caught between the conservation of tradition and the lure of modernity, is unbiased

¹ She had to leave school at the age of 17 to help with her family's income. In 1982 her literary career began, while in 1986 she graduated at Liaoning University.

and rational, therefore providing the reader with a clear insight into the consequences that arise from a belief in outdated superstitions and backward values, as well as highlighting the constraints that modern women have to endure as a direct result of economic development.

As the writer herself states (Xiao 2019), her literary creativity has gone through two stages, which coincide with her personal evolution: departure from the hometown and return to the native land. Initially, when she was predominantly interested in stories of peasants who had to leave their farmland and craved for the attainment of an urban identity,² she actually experienced a psychological shunning of the agrarian world: “For a long time after I moved to the city, I didn’t want to have anything to do with the countryside; then I realised that for me denying this bond was like rejecting nutrition” (Xiao 2019). The second phase, in fact, represents a symbolic about-turn towards the native land, which has gradually evolved into her spiritual source of creativity, while the need to depict its image as truthfully as possible has become the motivation behind her writing.

When dealing with the emotional dimension of her characters, Sun seems uninterested in describing love and romance, but is captivated by the mysterious forces that drive their actions and the impulses that lead to the formation of emotional bonds.

Theoretical rationale

The intense urbanisation process that has been taking place in China over the last few decades³ is one of the most evident outcomes of the development of the market economy following forty years of reforms. One of its most notable aspects is the mass migration of millions of peasants. This process is vividly portrayed in dozens of Chinese novels, and has led to such a vast plurality of slightly different literary phenomena that critics have as yet not agreed on exact categorisations. Genres such as New Urban Literature, Migrant Workers’ Novels, Subaltern Fiction⁴ deal with one aspect of the overall reality and various features of these genres may coexist in one novel.

² *Mingong* (Sun 2005) is the story of a father and son who, while working at the same construction site, suddenly receive the news that their wife/mother is dead. Their journey back to the village, where the beloved woman still lived, is a device used to reveal the world of migrant workers. It awakens pleasant memories, but also generates awareness of the decay of the countryside.

³ The scope and the proportions of Chinese urbanisation are unprecedented in history. See: Ren (2013).

⁴ On these two trends, see respectively: Li (2014); Liu (2012).

Sun Huifen's works could be partially classified into any of the aforementioned categories; although they could not be said to fall entirely into any specific group, they are most frequently included in New Native Soil Fiction (*xin xiangtu xiaoshuo* 新乡土小说). This genre, which is typical of the 21st century,⁵ can be considered as a development of the Native Soil Literature dating back to the May Fourth period (Li 2014: 165–166), enriched by new elements that originate from the impact of rural culture with modernity and by the spread of globalisation.⁶ In other words, nostalgia for the native village is now overshadowed by a tone of ambivalence, due to the decline of the rural world, which is no longer uncontaminated and harmonious. The homeland is the place that characters dream of running away from or have finally escaped from: they may look back on their childhood memories with fondness, but they would never really move back there.

The typical characters of New Native Soil Fiction are either migrant workers who live in the city and represent the social category that intellectuals are mainly focused on, or rural dwellers who still live in their hometown (Li 2013: 154–156). Many of them are women and, regardless of whether they live in the metropolis or in the country,⁷ they are compelled to accept compromises, put aside their ambitions, and to conceal their truest identity.

Rural women in the hamlet

Several stories by Sun Huifen describe women who remain in their remote villages to take care of elderly relatives and children and to cultivate the fields, while their male counterparts migrate to the city to find seasonal work. The author recounts the ordeal of those who wait at home: for them, time is suspended, feelings are frozen, and they can find little meaning in their everyday routine. In *Xiema shanzhuang de liangge nüren* (The women from the Horse resting villa; Sun 2012),⁸ all the menfolk move to the metropolis each spring and do not return until winter: “In the 12th lunar month some migrant workers finally returned home [...] delicious food from the houses smelled all around. It was a sacred event for farming households” (Sun 2012: 57).

⁵ 21st century native soil writers deal with the inevitable changes that modernisation has caused within rural culture and values (Lin, Zheng 2013: 227).

⁶ In Native Soil Novels of the 1920s the agrarian world was self-sufficient: it had not then been affected by urbanisation. Nowadays, however, the countryside is exploited or impoverished. Wang (2017: 361).

⁷ Sun's works are also interpreted as Narration of the Space because of the relevance that environment, economic circumstances and social conditions have upon the fate of her protagonists (Liu 2017: 208).

⁸ The author won the Lu Xun Prize for this short story in 2004.

The story focuses on two girls who are both newlyweds. They go through a painful process of adjustment as they must conform to the old-fashioned habits of the villagers. The two protagonists share the same fate: their husbands move to the city just a few months after getting married and the two brides are left to come to terms with their feelings of boredom and futility. Pan Tao has to live with her mother-in-law, who takes care of the house and the fields, which leaves her relatively free to think about her clothes and other things that rural women consider frivolous. However, Li Ping, simply called “Cheng Zi’s wife”, spends her time cleaning the house; her husband’s elderly aunt lives nearby. The deep, warm friendship between the two girls is a subversive force, capable of shattering the psychological balance within the families and scandalising the old women: they spend most of their time together, sleep together, share secrets and ambitions. Their tie makes them aware of their identity: “As their friendship was strengthened, Li Ping gradually understood that it was a big mistake to perform like country woman right after marriage. There wouldn’t be many young ages in life” (Sun 2012: 47). The revitalising power of friendship temporarily overcomes social biases and the oppression of patriarchy and ignorance. Unfortunately, there will be no happy ending: the two old women, who keep putting pressure on the two girls in order to force them into submission, unexpectedly join forces and finally succeed in destroying their friendship. Thus, ‘normality’ is restored and the young women are obliged to abandon their former aspirations. Li Ping, by accepting to become Cheng Zi’s wife, effectively relinquishes her dream of becoming an urban lady. She had been a waitress in a restaurant in the city long before she met her husband and had been in love with a married man who took advantage of her inexperience. When she meets Chen Zi, he pretends to help her find a new job, but then tricks her into leaving the city. Domestic violence erupts when her husband Chen Zi finds out, through gossips, that she had had sex with other men before marrying him. Through this story, Sun evaluates the weight of traditions in the life of modern rural women. By the end of the story, Pan Tao is pregnant and just spends time at home with her mother-in-law, while Li Ping does not talk to her friend any more.

Bozhong (Sowing; Sun 2017b) narrates a different kind of relationship between two women, Dafeng and Shoulan. The story opens with their chance meeting in a field. The scene is almost theatrical: they are sowing opposite ends of the field, not facing each other, but slowly moving towards each other. The daughter of Shoulan, is having an affair with Dafeng’s husband and has run away to the city with him.

Sun describes the thoughts of the characters and investigates their feelings. They do not communicate, yet they are aware of one another and cannot

help thinking about each other. Dafeng initially intends to insult Shoulán, to vent her anger, but then she decides to avoid making a scene in order to emphasise her respectability. Shoulán, however, expecting Dafeng to be furious, is determined to let her talk and then try to explain that her daughter's behaviour is not her responsibility. As they continue sowing the field, they move closer, so that Dafeng cannot help but notice Shoulán's large breasts. She then thinks of how Shoulán's daughter must have the same large breasts, which she no doubt used to seduce her husband. This fuels her anger: she attacks Shoulán and tries to strangle her. However, the violence abruptly ends when Shoulán manages to say that she has slept with another man. Dafeng, at that point, stops and says that she too has been with another man. The two women, exhausted after fighting, experience a moment of epiphany, and realise that they share the same fate of misfortune and adversity.

The disenchanting city

The bitter disappointment felt by peasants when their dreams of a better life in the city are crushed is a recurring theme in Subaltern Literature and one which acquires particular relevance in Sun's works: the city exploits rural women and leaves them vulnerable to misunderstandings, scams and prejudice. In *Baomu* (The housemaid; 2017) Sun uses a first-person narrator, who is a distant relative of the protagonist, to describe the steady progression of emotions that a rural girl experiences upon migration to the city: from initial attraction to subsequent impact with harsh reality and therefore disillusionment. Weng Huizhu starts working in the house of a professor in Shenyang, whose wife is ill. She is very attentive to the needs of the sick woman, but she gradually becomes attracted to her employer. Following the death of his wife, however, the professor chooses to marry a middle-class woman and Huizhu is left feeling bitterly disappointed. Her suffering is intensified by the fact that her relatives have no intention of welcoming her back to the village. Her life goes on, she works as a housekeeper in various places, but she still longs for genuine affection.

In *Nüren Lin Fen yu nüren Xiaomi* (Lin Fen and Xiao Mi; Sun 2017c) the author explores once more the sentimental aspect of friendship between women. The protagonists are both around forty years old and divorced. Lin Fen has a brilliant career working at a magazine and has raised her daughter alone. A cousin of hers tells her about Xiao Mi, a rural girl who was left penniless by her ex-husband, an urban dweller, who also took away their children. Moved by the similarity of their stories, she hires Xiao Mi as her housekeeper, and the two become close friends; moreover, Lin Fen is extremely satisfied with

the way she takes care of the house, and often buys clothes and cosmetics for her. They are so happy together that they both swear they will never look for a man again. However, when a younger colleague of Lin Fen, who is already married, confesses that he is in love with her, they begin a passionate affair and Xiao Mi decides to leave without notice: she realises that her values are different from those of her successful friend. Lin Fen has failed her, just as men and the city itself have failed her.

Ten conversations about life and death

When Sun Huifen decided to write about the alarming phenomenon of suicides in rural areas, such cases were widely reported in the press. In *Shengsi shi ri tan* (Ten conversations on life and death; 2013) Sun chooses the genre of reportage to tell the shocking stories of the suicides of a number of people from low socioeconomic families and low-education backgrounds, who lived in the countryside in the Southern area of Liaoning province. This novel can be seen as a sort of collaboration between psychology and literature (Wang 2015: 360).

Most of the victims of the phenomenon of rural suicides are women, even though official statistics are not available (Giafferi 2017: 2). Although, since the foundation of the RPC, laws have sought to uphold women's rights,⁹ rural women still face blatant gender discrimination. After actually doing field research, Sun discovered that the causes at the heart of so many tragedies lay in the influence of the economic transformations affecting people's private lives rather than in individual problems. In fact, the impact of globalisation and the urban-rural gap lead to crisis and confusion regarding ethical and moral values. These factors can also provoke feelings of resentment amongst the underprivileged when they come to realise that their goals are unattainable and that they cannot actually share in the wealth brought about by capitalism.

The title of the book seems to hint at Xiao Hong's gloomy novel *The fields of life and death* (1979),¹⁰ set against the backdrop of snowy fields in Northern China at the time of the Japanese invasion.

⁹ The marriage law delivered by Mao in 1950 marked a revolution in the condition of women, by abolishing child marriage, forced marriages and polygamy, and declaring equal rights between husband and wife. The marriageable age was raised to 18 for women and 20 for men.

¹⁰ Written in 1934, the novel portrays the patriarchal atmosphere and the extreme poverty endured by peasant women during the first decades of the 20th century. Describing one of the characters, the narrator says: «he raised his fearful hands and threw a big bucket of water [...]. The pregnant woman with her still bulging abdomen sat in silence, her body drenched with cold water. She dared not move a single muscle: like the child of a patriarchal society, she lived in dread of her man» (Xiao 1979: 53).

Each of the cases of suicide that Sun describes is unique and cannot be said to be representative of any other story (Wang 2017: 361) but, at the same time, there is a common thread which unites each story: each victim dies to preserve the ultimate meaning of their humanity. The people involved have an independent way of thinking and do not passively adapt to social conventions (Wang 2017: 366). The deceased are of different ages, the methods they use for their extreme act vary and they are driven to commit suicide for numerous reasons: continuous arguments between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, lack of money needed to treat a serious illness, self-sacrifice so as not to be an economic burden on the family, an unfaithful husband, and so on.¹¹ All of the stories underline the fact that social biases concerning the traditional roles of women in rural contexts are still a contentious issue.

Conclusion

Whether one looks at Sun Huifen's fiction from the perspective of urban literature or of rural writing, initial findings of an analysis of her works reveal that she is constantly narrating the internal aspect of women's marginality, by delving into their emotional sphere and trying to untie the knots of the complicated relationships they form with others and with their surrounding environment. Furthermore, I have attempted to demonstrate that her fictional universe, which emerges from the interaction of literary talent and sociological awareness, can significantly contribute to an understanding of certain aspects of China's contemporary society that are not to be found without difficulty elsewhere. Thanks to her sensibility, she unearths buried feelings and repressed wishes, inner tragedies and silent suffering, which arise from the dichotomies of tradition-modernity, globalisation-local culture, and city-countryside.

References:

- Giafferri, Xiaomin. "Entre tradition et modernité, la femme chinoise rurale d'aujourd'hui à travers Dix Conversations sur la vie et la mort de Sun Huifen". *Nouveaux Imaginaires du Féminin*, (2017): 1–12. <http://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01665786>.
- Li, Xingyang 李兴阳. "Zhongjie guocheng zhong de liebian yu xinsheng" 终结过程中的裂变与新生 [Separations and rebirth in the process of conclusion]. *Nanjing Normal University Journal*, 5 (2013): 153–160.
- Li, Yunlei 李云雷. *Xin shiji diceng wenxue yu Zhongguo gushi* 新世纪底层文学与中国故事 [New century Subaltern literature and the Chinese stories]. Canton, 2014

¹¹ For more insights on this work: Giafferri (2017).

- Lin Danya 林丹娅, Zheng Siyang 郑思杨. “Lun jinnian nüxing xiezuozhong de xiangtu lunliguan” 论今年女性写作中的乡土伦理观 [Native soil ethics in this year’s female writing]. *Southeast Academy Journal*, 5 (2013): 226–231.
- Liu, Dongwu 柳冬妩. *Dagong wenxue de zhengti guancha* 打工文学的整体观察 [A Survey of Workers’ Literature]. Canton, 2012.
- Liu, Xinsuo 刘新锁. “Diceng shengcun kunjing ji qi kongjian yinyu” 底层生存困境及其空间隐喻 [The constraints of subaltern life and its spatial metaphors]. *Jiangsu Shehui Kexue* 江苏社会科学, 2 (2017): 206–221.
- Ren, Xuefei. *Urban China*. Cambridge: Polity, 2013.
- Sun, Huifen 孙惠芬. *Mingong* 民工 [Migrant Worker]. Beijing, 2005.
- Sun, Huifen. “The Women from the Horse Resting Villa”. *The Women from the Horse Resting Villa and Other Stories* (Ed. Chinese Writers Ass.) San Francisco: Long River, 2012: 3–71.
- Sun, Huifen 孙惠芬. *Shengsi shiri tan* 生死十日谈 [Ten Conversations on Life and Death]. Beijing, 2013.
- Sun, Huifen 孙惠芬. *Baomu* 保姆 [Housemaid]. Shanghai, 2017a.
- Sun, Huifen 孙惠芬. “Bozhong” 播种 [Sowing]. *Chuntian de xushu* 春天的叙事 [Spring narrative]. Shanghai, 2017b: 67–85.
- Sun, Huifen 孙惠芬. “Nüren Lin Fen yu nüren Xiao Mi” 女人林芬与女人小米 [Lin Fen and Xiao Mi]. *Yidi fengguang* 异地风光 [Scenery in a remote land]. Shanghai, 2017c: 208–222.
- Wang, Li 王莉. “Zai xinlixue de huangwu zhi chu tanxun xinling” 在心理学荒芜之处探寻心灵 [Exploring the spirit in the waste of psychology]. *Journal of Dalian minzu University*, 17, 4 (2015): 360–367.
- Xiao, Hong. *The Fields of Life and Death and Tales of Hulan River*. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1979.
- Xiao, Yu 肖煜. “Sun Huifen: cong yuedu he shenghuo zhong jiqu lilian” 孙惠芬: 从阅读和生活中汲取力量 [Sun Huifen: draw strength from reading and living]. *Hebei Daily*, 28/10/2019, http://www.he.xinhuanet.com/wenti/2019-10/28/c_1125160387.htm.

From *River Elegy* to *Amazing China*: On the Evolution of Nationalist Discourse in Modern China

Maciej Kurzynski

Abstract

Separated by 30 years of rapid economic growth, the divergent aesthetics of two Chinese documentaries River Elegy (Heshang, 1988) and Amazing China (Lihaile, wode guo, 2018) merit a comparative cross-inquiry. While River Elegy expressed a younger generation's admiration for the azure Western culture with its overseas expeditions and scientific ingenuity, Amazing China turns the tables, and in its depiction of the People's Republic as a maritime empire celebrates the sheer power of nationalized technology. The comparison provides yet another, contemporary example of the startling flexibility with which the party-state avails itself of subversive imageries at the expense of their own creators.

Keywords: River Elegy, nationalism, intellectuals, aesthetics, party-state

The ironic dimension of nationalism is at its most blatant whenever staunch patriots become themselves victims of a nation's quest for wealth and power. In party-states where the ideological axis constitutes a modernization narrative featuring a technocratic interpretation of knowledge (Andreas 2009), this ironic twist takes place whenever prophetic visions of a modernized state are appropriated by political regimes and then deployed to brutally dispose of the very intellectuals who had conceived them. The case of Lu Xun's polemical writings exploited by Mao Zedong to "beat the drowning dog" (*tongda luoshuigou*) of feudalism, which in practice meant targeting the writer's former friends (Davies 2013: 223–227), or the rhetorical power of the early leftist cinema, initially deployed by the CCP to legitimize its rule in the countryside but then harnessed to strike back at the urban intellectuals in Yan'an (Pye 1996), demonstrate how easily an emancipatory narrative can be transformed into a tool of oppression. In this paper, a comparison between two popular PRC documentaries: 1988 *River Elegy* (Heshang) and 2018 *Amazing China* (Lihaile, wode guo), will provide yet another, contemporary example of the startling flexibility with which the party-state avails itself of subversive image-ries at the expense of their own creators. As I will show, albeit the promise of

River Elegy is said to have been fulfilled, the humanist scholar who cherished national ambitions has now disappeared without a trace.

The symbolism of *River Elegy*

River Elegy, a six-part TV documentary series aired twice on national television in June and August, 1988, was undoubtedly an expression of ideological and cultural crisis on the Mainland (De Jong 1989, Wang 1996, Chen 2002). The documentary constituted a bold attempt to invite the broader population to self-reflection after the disaster of the Cultural Revolution and a decade of painful economic reforms, airing the voices of intellectuals (*zhishi fenzi*) who returned to the urban centers disconcerted by the underdevelopment of rural areas and the enormous gap between a “backward society” and “a modern world.” “The Chinese civilization collapsed,” the *River Elegy*’s narrator deplored, “and we should not deceive ourselves anymore.” Perceiving the Chinese culture as one with ingrained propensity for collectivism and blind personality worship, the authors echoed Fang Lizhi’s clarion call for “total Westernization” (Cheek 2015: 233) and made it clear that the only right solution was to “go blue” and let the yellow waters of Huang He flow freely into the azure oceans of Western civilization with its scientific prowess and highly-developed industry.

River Elegy’s skillful combination of visual symbolism and political agenda manifested the peak of the Culture Fever, a period of intellectual commotion that took place just ten years after the end of another cultural-political turmoil, the Great Cultural Revolution. The uncanny similarity between the two feverish decades, i.e. their culture-centeredness, brings to the fore the peculiarity of Chinese modernism of the 1980s, which, “while evolving by disclaiming its past, in fact, by disengaging its history, actually revisited this history over and over again” (Zhang 1997: 121). To follow Zhang Xudong, however, and understand this “culturalist” quality as a symptom of estrangement of modernist aesthetics from the socio-political realities of rapid industrialization and the developing market economy would amount to misrecognition of the documentary’s rhetorical potential and the challenge the latter posed to the political *status quo*. According to Zhang, although modernist authors created languages dissociated from the discourse of “socialist realism” and thus engendered a space of representation for an emergent public, they invariably ended up taking refuge in “high culture,” “in building theoretical systems, engaging in philosophical debates, aesthetic experiments, and historiographical revisionisms,” and remained painfully incapable of producing a solid alternative vision of

the Chinese society (1997: 13). With the luxury of hindsight and not a small dose of cynicism, Zhang locates the reason behind the mythopoetical nature of the Culture Fever in the economic scarcity of 1980s China: “the immediate appearance of Chinese reality was by no means spectacular enough to feed a modernist desire” (1997: 264). Viewed as such, *River Elegy* would be yet another expression of the “modernism of underdevelopment,” “forced to build on fantasies and dreams of modernity, to nourish itself on an intimacy and a struggle with mirages and ghosts” (quoted in Zhang 1997: 20), blind to its own conditions of possibility, given that the merely cultural—and for this very reason, fake—freedom was always already “conditioned, defined, and provided by the total and immediate rule of a reforming socialist state” (Zhang 2008: 8). Such an interpretation would dismiss *River Elegy* as just another example of the liberal intelligentsia’s unconflictual attitude towards Deng Xiaoping’s social programs.

However, by dismissing the “culturalist” paradigm as unselfconscious, Zhang obviously misrecognizes the formative power of aesthetic reflection (Lyotard 1994), ignoring the fact that illusions, ghosts, and fictions might be “more rational than their denial inasmuch as they are concepts that recognize the limits and the deceptions of the prevailing rationality” (Marcuse 2012: 186). If we agree that the emergence of purportedly autonomous institution of Culture in 1980s China was underscored by its explicit or implicit integration into the world economy, it should be also recognized that, as an event, what the fledgling modernism of the 1980s manifested was precisely the impossibility of institution. In Derrida’s phrasing, the literary consists in “producing discursive forms, ‘works,’ and ‘events’ in which the very possibility of a fundamental constitution is at least ‘fictionally’ contested, threatened, deconstructed, presented in its very precariousness” (quoted in Culler 2007: 163). To rearrange, retranslate, and renarrate a Culture means to reveal its constructedness; this is why the symbolism of the 1980s was arguably the most powerful way the progressive intellectuals could appeal for political change in a “directed public sphere” (Cheek 2015, see also Herzfeld 2005) rigidly shaped by ideological constraints, and it is here that one should recognize the far-sightedness of the documentary’s producers, given that the most urgent task faced by the proponents of democratization after Mao’s death was precisely to unsettle the collective imagination nurtured over the former few decades with revolutionary romanticism and nationalist sloganeering. This move was all the more dangerous for the establishment given the party-state’s increasing awareness of the huge symbolic capital residing in the traditionalist imagery.

The (socialist) postmodernism in *Amazing China*

Seen from this perspective, however, the buoyant optimism of *River Elegy*'s narrator over the imminent confluence of yellow and blue waters towards the end of the documentary was in fact a swan song for the documentary's producers, precisely because of its enormous aesthetic potential. The vision of a modernized state with its cloth of ideological control spread far over the oceans proved way too appealing for the rapidly developing party-state to simply ignore it.

This ironic turnabout is best manifested in the recent 2018 documentary *Amazing China* (or *Lihai le, wode guo*, dir. Wei Tie), whose message, unlike the nebulous symbolism of *Heshang*, could not be clearer: the promise of national modernization has been realized. In the opening scene the documentary combines two most recognizable symbols of PRC ideology, transfixing the fluttering five-star red flag with blazing sun rays, while the closing episode finishes with the unmistakable sign of the rising sun, repeating the rhetoric of such classics as *The Song of Chinese Revolution* or *East is Red*. Ominously, although the promise of modernization is said to have been delivered upon, the loquacious humanist that we remember from *River Elegy* is nowhere to be seen. Instead, *Amazing China* portrays a number of recent formidable technological advancements in the PRC, most of them shown on the background of azure waters of South China Sea.

The documentary starts with *Zhen Hua 30*, the world's largest self-propelled crane vessel, which voyages across a vast oceanic space. The narrator explains that China has now become an "oceanic power" (*yihai fuguo* 依海富国 and *yihai qiangguo* 以海强国), and then conveniently links the vessel to another huge water construction project: the Hong Kong–Zhuhai–Macau Bridge. The narrator explains emotionally that "when its technology is strong, then the nation is strong (*keji qiang, ze minzu qiang*)," and then again, in a repetitive pattern: "there is a speed called 'Chinese support,' there is a feeling called 'Motherland will take you back home,' there is a pride called 'I am Chinese,' there is a happiness called 'I am Chinese,' and there is a sense of safety called 'I am Chinese.'" By constantly adjoining the adjective "Chinese" to each and every described object, the documentary violently nationalizes technology, in stark contrast to *River Elegy* which 30 years earlier cast technology harnessed in the service of a progress as a Western invention. The 2018 production presents China as firmly established beyond the yellow earth, as though it has already left its unwanted past and entered the era of spatial expansion.

The shift from commiseration to celebration, from yellow earth to blue oceans, demonstrates the ease with which an emancipatory aesthetics has been transformed into a mainstay of imperialist discourse. Paradoxically, by conceiving their role as concomitant with the PRC's quest for hegemony, Su Xiaokang and the generation of thinkers he represented rendered their own positions even more vulnerable, despite their endeavour to the contrary. Their subsequent brutal demise and disappearance from collective memory reminds one of Claude Lefort's critique of Stalinist bureaucracy and the remarkable contrast he identifies between the strength of the bureaucracy's constitution as a class and the fragility of the position of its members: "the great Stalinist purges," he writes, "showed that the bureaucracy was ideally everything and the bureaucrats nothing; the periodic eviction of thousands or tens of thousands of bureaucrats, far from being contrary to the interests of the bureaucracy, seemed to be proof of its power, beyond the fate of individuals" (1986: 293). The appealing vision of national modernization became an easy target for the party-state, while the intellectuals craving for national grandeur inadvertently allowed the official discourse to arrogate their visions of "Blue China."

In search of a new theory

Amazing China exhibits the uncritical endorsement of technology as a panacea for the dangers that blighted China's past. Technology as such, however, lacks the emotional appeal necessary to mobilize the national community, nor is it conducive to aesthetic elaboration which could serve as a functional ground of cultural hegemony. In the words of Zhang Xudong, despite its celebratory tenor, "this national ideology invariably fails to inspire" (2008: 29). However, I would argue that this kind of aesthetic dryness is also indicative of the new situation the Chinese intellectuals have found themselves in. According to Zhang, the concept of nation-state has been already outgrown in China by the new emerging ideology: the "civilizational nation," whose growing potential "comes, paradoxically, from the steady activation and regeneration of all kinds of local, communal, and everyday connections and multiplicity as well as from the growth of the Chinese economy and of Chinese social freedom, which prefigures a postmodern restoration of the imperial or civilizational order" (Zhang 2008: 16). Obviously, such a civilizational order must be based on something much more meaningful than just the pride in the continued growth of the Chinese economy. As neither socialism nor capitalism can now provide satisfactory guidelines for the emerging power, nor can they mobilize the potentialities inherent in the consumerist masses,

“innovative thinking is urgently needed... to articulate a new theory for a new social system and its cultural-intellectual discourse in the making” (Dirlik and Zhang 2000: 429).

Zhang’s call for “innovative thinking” and more discursive control over the historical moment has not so far elicited any official acknowledgement of the state leadership. The regime seems unwilling to step beyond the celebration of economic progress and chooses the easy way out: in its depiction of the People’s Republic as a maritime empire, the documentary solidifies the authority of the First Secretary and celebrates the sheer power of the Sinicized technology. As Zhang himself recognizes, “what is missing in this alliance between economic sphere and mass culture is a theoretically articulate political philosophy and cultural vision” (2008: 112). In this context, it is not surprising that in his recent article Zhang, who formerly accused the official literature of the 1980s of “ideological-discursive conformism” (1997: 123) and reproached the Fifth Generation film for its “implicit endorsement of the Reforms” (1997: 235), now declares: “Assuming that China’s sustained and rapid economic growth can continue for 20 to 30 years, China’s socialist industrialist and ‘post-industrialist’ modes of production will not only ‘produce’ the largest economic entity in world history, but also produce a completely new livable world and a Brand New Chinese Man (*quanxinde zhongguoren*)... China is transforming into a country of fully ‘proletarianized’ New People; but this time it will be the ‘proletariat’ that have mastered modern production technology, production management, independent research and development capabilities, and it will be also a new ‘all-rounded’ people, creative in culture, art and thought, who in pursuing their happiness will engender new values” (Zhang 2018). The irony of this statement is that it constitutes just another repetition of the collective project which is nevertheless presented as something unprecedented (notice the Soviet overtones in the reference to the “Brand New Chinese Man”). What Zhang seems to have forgotten is his own critique of Reform intellectuals lacking the “self-reflexive or self-critical thought about the legitimate violence their privileged position superimposes on social problems and social spaces” (1997: 11).

The question remains whether the ironic cycle will repeat itself also in the case of the new world order and its most ardent proponents. It is doubtful whether the consumerist masses will prove any more merciful towards the symbolic producers (Bourdieu) than the “reformed” socialist state once the need for ideological change emerges again. As the nationalist legacy is clearly palpable in the ideology in formation, it might also bring with itself all the dangers that former generations of modernizers became aware of only *post factum*.

References

- Andreas, Joel. *Rise of the Red Engineers: The Cultural Revolution and the Origins of China's New Class*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Cheek, Timothy. *The Intellectual in Modern Chinese History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Chen, Xiaomei. *Occidentalism: a Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002.
- Culler, Jonathan D. *The Literary in Theory*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- Davies, Gloria. *Lu Xun's Revolution: Writing in a Time of Violence*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- De Jong, Alice. "The Demise of the Dragon: Backgrounds to the Chinese Film 'River Elegy.'" *China Information* 4. 3 (1989): 28–43.
- Dirlik, Arif, Xudong Zhang. *Postmodernism & China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Herzfeld, Michael. *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Lefort, Claude., and Thomson, John. *The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1986.
- Liotard, Jean-Francois. *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime: Kant's Critique of Judgment, [sections] 23–29*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1994.
- Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2012.
- Pye, Lucian. "How China's Nationalism was Shanghaied." In Unger, Jonathan, and Geremie Barmé. *Chinese Nationalism*. Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 1996: 86–112.
- Wang, Jing. *High Culture Fever: Politics, Aesthetics, and Ideology in Deng's China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Zhang, Xudong. *Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms: Cultural Fever, Avant-Garde Fiction, and the New Chinese Cinema*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Zhang, Xudong. *Postsocialism and Cultural Politics: China in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Zhang, Xudong. "Gaijie kaifang 40 nian wenyi wenhua sixiang lingyu huigu" [40 Years of Ideas in Literature, Art and Culture: A Retrospect]. *Dongfang xuekan*, Fudan University: China Institute, 9/2018, <http://www.cifu.fudan.edu.cn/64/78/c12233a156792/page.htm>. Accessed 3/30/2019.

**LANGUAGE
AND LINGUISTICS**

Euphemism and Communication in the Chinese Cultural Context

Paweł Zygałło

Abstract

The paper is intended as an analysis of prevalent in Chinese culture tendency towards applying euphemisms in everyday communication. It aims to understand the specific features of Chinese euphemistic expressions and their historical and socio-cultural roots. It will then first provide an overview of the main definitions and analysis of an up to date research. Subsequently, some specific instances will be scrutinised to illustrate the particularity of Chinese euphemistic expressions. This paper will then argue that in the Chinese context, usage of euphemism results from a specific 'cultural cognitions,' amongst which taboo-avoiding and face are the most crucial. As such, euphemistic expressions are not merely 'handy tools for communicating an inconvenient truth.' Being drawn from a set of 'cultural cognitions', euphemistic expressions are verbal behaviours with a crucial contribution to the further reproduction of the specific 'programming of the mind'.

Keywords: Chinese communication, euphemism, face, intercultural communication.

What is a euphemism?

Euphemism is one of those communicative practices that can be found across human cultures. In every culture, under certain circumstances, some specific messages require some unique code to be produced and successfully delivered. Euphemism is then defined as:

1. A rhetorical device: substitution of mild or vague or roundabout expression for harsh or blunt or direct one. (Conscience Oxford Dictionary).
2. The use of other, usually less exact but milder or less blunt, words or phrases in place of words required by truth accuracy. (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English).
3. Word etc. used in place of one avoided as, e.g. offensive, indecent, or alarming. (The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics (2 ed.)).

From the three definitions above, we can draw a picture of linguistic behaviour that is a mean of easing the tension between the intended meaning and the given context in which communication happens.

Due to its long-lasting influence of the notion *li* (禮, ritual, social etiquette) on Chinese culture (Zhu 1992; King 1992), euphemism and inclination towards indirectness seem to be an indispensable element of Chinese communication (Wu 2008: 6-7). In the contemporary Chinese scholarship, quite a few conceptualisations of euphemism seem to exemplify this special relationship. Chen Wangdao (1957), for instance, defines euphemism as the speech that does not use obvious designators and does refer to the subject matter directly. Instead, an allusion is being applied. One then employs the strategy that can be summarised with the Chinese proverb, *guiwan mojiao* (拐弯抹角), ‘to speak obliquely’. Wu Jiazhen (1982), on his behalf, points out, that under specific circumstances, certain content cannot, or is impossible to be adequately delivered through direct communication. It is then necessary to use some ‘rhetorical devices’ that convey the message in alluded and milder way.

Similarly, Wang Xijie (2004), also emphasises the fact that euphemistic expressions are used when something cannot or is not intended to be referred to directly. For Wang, euphemism is then the expression that is somehow related to the initially intended content, and as such, allows to convey the message. Huang Borong and Liao Xudong (2004), also emphasise the role of euphemism as a substitute that allows for delivering the message that otherwise could not be adequately addressed.

It is quite apparent that the way the euphemism is conceptualised by Chinese scholars, although not that different from the understanding presented in English dictionaries, is somewhat unique. The main characteristic of that uniqueness is the emphasis on indirectness as the mean of dealing with the potentially unpleasant or extraordinary nature of the original message. This emphasis on indirectness, expressed by a proverb *wanzhuan quzhe* (婉轉曲折, ‘to communicate mild and indirectly’), begs the question about the reason for such tailored communication in contemporary China. In other words, what makes euphemism indispensable?

It seems that two more conceptualisations can shed some more light on the matter. As Shao Junhui (2016) puts it, ‘...most of the euphemisms results from replacing taboos (with ordinary words)’ (27). Euphemisms are then ‘safe’ expressions that can be used in reference to objects that are somehow ‘dangerous’, undesirable, aloof or sacred, mentioning of which can bring about unwanted consequences. Euphemism seems then serving socio-ritualistic, and

even religious purposes, preventing a potential disturbance of the social and mental equilibrium.

Allan and Burrige (1991) on their behalf, provide another conceptualisation that seems to fit Chinese reality equally well. As they put it:

‘A euphemism is used as an alternative to a dis-preferred expression, in order to avoid possible loss of face: either one’s own face or, through giving offence, that of the audience, or some third party.’ (11)

These two conceptualisations point out to the underpinning necessity of avoiding an offence to any of the party involved directly or indirectly, in the conversation. However, the things that are ‘dis-preferred’, too difficult to be communicated with ‘regular’ means (e.g. taboos) must still be referred to somehow. Others, valued highly, but possible to be endangered by an individual linguistic behaviour also require a specific address. Euphemism is then a necessary substitute that is not just an isolated act of speech, but an answer to the requirements of the axiology of a socio-cultural system. As it can be drawn from Allan’s and Burrige’s definition, face is one of those axiological requirements. Following we will try to explore the links between euphemism and face, the notion that in Chinese settings seems to be an everyday expression of the core values of Chinese culture (Lin 1936; Ho 1976; Jia 2001).

Euphemism: motivation, aims and means

As mentioned above, euphemistic expressions are forms of communication that are being produced and applied under specific circumstances. Being situationally but also culturally determined, euphemism is a selective linguistic behaviour aiming for a particular result. As such, it can be analysed in terms of motivation, aims, and means applied to attain those aims.

It has been a quite well-established consensus amongst scholars, that the first and the fundamental motivation that made humans creating ‘euphemistic replacements’ is a necessity to distance one from the sacred, impure, fearful or condemned, the taboo (Zhang 1996; Shao 2016; Deng 2019). The meaning of originally Tongan word *taboo*, ‘forbidden’ (Framkin, Rodman and Hyams 2017: 310), is reflected by the Chinese term *biwei* (避諱). It refers to notions and occurrences that are either perceived as too sacred and significant or too dangerous or impure to be mentioned by their actual names. In Chinese, the event of death that could simply be referred to with the word *si* (死) is usually referred as *qushi* 去世 (be gone from the world), *guoshi* 过世 (pass away from the world), *xieshi* 谢世 (thanks the world), *shishi* 逝世 (leave the world), *jian Yan wang* 见阎王 (see Yama the King of Hell) or the specific recent ‘incarna-

tion' of this saying *jian Makesi* 见马克思 ('see Marks'). Death is not addressed directly, but through the reference to 'being in this word'. The malice of death is then somewhat mitigated, hidden behind the reference to the more desirable state of affairs. Especially in case of suicide that is even more socially and emotionally disruptive event, this tendency is even more apparent. *Qīngshēng* (轻生, thinking of life lightly) or *ziwo duan* (自我断, lit. breaking oneself), are examples of the same tendency, hiding (abrupt) death behind the condemning an inappropriate attitude towards life. However, there is one more, an often-neglected factor that influenced the Chinese attitude towards the word *si* itself. The Classic of Rites (*Liji*, 《禮記》), provides a very detailed prescription regarding proper wording that should be used when mentioning the deaths of people of different social statuses. As it reads:

The death of the son of Heaven is expressed by *beng* (has fallen); of a feudal prince, by *hong* (has crashed); of a Great officer, by *zu* (has ended); of an (ordinary) officer, by *bu lu* (is now unsalaried); and of a common man, by *si* (has deceased). (天子死曰崩, 諸侯死曰薨, 大夫死曰卒, 士曰不祿, 庶人曰死。) (“Summary of the Rules of Propriety Part 2”) (《禮記·曲禮(下)》)

The meaning and the following tabooisation of word *si* seem then to have strong, not fully realised socio-political roots and carry explicit message regarding the crucial in this context values.

Besides death, the names of celestial beings, the ruler, and heads of social units (family), as signs of divine or socio-political power used to be strongly tabooed. In ancient China characters of ruler's and father's names were not allowed to be used by their subordinates/descendants, and disobedience could even cost the perpetrator his or her life (Shao 2016: 29). Human physiology as a source of potential impurity, and sexuality as source strong emotions were, and still are another two spheres that being strongly tabooed contributed to the emergence of numerous euphemistic expressions and new meanings attributed to them. *Da/xiao bian*, *xishoujian*, *sichu*, *da yima* (大/小便, 洗手間, 私處, 大姨媽), convey a way more specific meaning than just 'big/small convenience', 'hands-washing room', 'private place' and 'Great auntie' as their direct translation could suggest. Physiology and sexuality as sources of strong emotions and potential impurity can be a source of embracement and potential conflict, and as such need to be moderated in the everyday conversation (Wu 2008: 28).

Euphemistic language also results from a desire to protect social cohesion through the utilisation of polite, not-confrontative linguistic behaviour, *limao* (禮貌, 'polite appearance'). The notion is a derivate of *Li* (禮, ritual and eti-

quette based on socio-political hierarchy) that has a long-lasting significance in Chinese culture (Gu 1990; Cai 1991; Wu & Hu 2010). It has been a factor determining not only the norms of ceremonial but also regular, everyday behaviour and the socio-political structure of the state and the socio-moral upbringing of the individual through centuries. *Li* strictly applied for century norms were, and in the to a degree modified form, still are at the bottom of the entire Chinese civilisation (Zhu 1992). One of the words that appear in conversations between adults and children is then *limao*, that roughly can render as ‘politeness’. The ‘informal’ (not legally codified) ‘formality’ (common appreciation of status and relevant behavioural patterns) of the Chinese code of behaviour is continuously being re-appraised and re-applied. As such, ‘polite appearance’ is not just a sign of being properly cultured or even less a simple nicety, but a very core of the entire socio-historical structure. Addressing an overweight person as *fafu/fuman* (發福/豐滿), disabled person *xingding bu-bian* (行動不便), unsatisfactory results as *yiban/you gaishan kongjian* (一般/有改善的空間), is not just a way of concealing a not-well accepted reality. It is more of a desire to be perceived as culturally ‘refined’ (*qiuya*, 求雅), that is another form of *Li* motivated usage of euphemism. That is precisely why instead of a direct statement regarding human’s health and physiology more refined words are used. It is also for this reason that especially in the official communication, lots of self-deprecating and excessive appreciation of others and their achievement. As the expressions regarding physiology have been listed above and can be omitted here, following grid summarise the tendency towards self-denigration and elevation of others in a highly formalised communication:

	Self-related	Other-related
Person	鄙人(humble person)	您 (vous)
Surname	敝姓 (humble name)	貴姓 (precious name)
Profession	卑職 (humble job)	尊職 (respectful job)
Opinion	愚見 (foolish opinion)	高見(great opinion)
Writing	拙作 (clumsy work)	大作 (great work)
Wife	內助 (domestic helper)	夫人 (lady)
House	寒舍 (cold adobe)	貴府 (precious mansion)
School	蔽校 (humble school)	貴校 (precious school)
Country		貴國 (precious country)
Visit	拜訪 (worship-visit)	賞光 (‘reward a light’)

Like the previous one, ‘message conceal’, ‘message beautification’ (*yan-shi*, 掩飾) is another motivation that is crucial in the given context. What differentiates it from *limao* is the level of immediateness of the speaker’s involvement when euphemisms are applied. In the case of ‘beautification’, the content of the message is not in an immediate presence. Although, it can be related to the matters of a greater significance than just obesity and using restrooms, such as war and death

To summarise the above analysis, a few things are worth mentioning. First, there are numerous motivations behind applying specific, not-direct utterances, that reveal crucial for the entire system values. Certain events are beyond the limits of a regular discourse and as such, cannot be addressed in a usual, everyday manner. As this is not a feature specific only to Chinese culture, which elements do require specific address is. Not only that. The means applied are products of these particular cultural settings. As such analysis of means applied, and severity of the consequences of misapplication are the source of further knowledge about a specific system. As we look at the examples above, we quickly notice that what is a core value hidden behind these expressions is not just civility or mere nicety. Calling one’s wife a ‘lady’, ‘dame’ is undoubtedly a display if not genuine respect so at least an acceptance of social rules. However, calling one’s own wife a ‘domestic helper’, even currently rather rare amongst urban dwellers is the level of woman’s denigration hardly acceptable in contemporary society. Referring to one’s own opinion as ‘foolish’ and written work as ‘clumsy’, seems to be going far beyond Leech’s maxim of modesty (Leech, 1983). At the same time, excessive appraisal, ‘precious name’, ‘respectful job’, ‘great opinion’, etc., of everything related to the addressee of the message marks something more than a mere pleasantry of the polite conversation. The attachment to proper address according to one’s occupation and social status, even amongst contemporary Chinese, takes us back to Allan’s and Burrige’s conceptualisation. Many Chinese scholars (Hsu 1953; Ho 1976; Jia, 2001; Kinnison 2017), similarly emphasise that in Chinese context face is one of the core ‘cultural cognitions’¹ and as such plays a pivotal role in everyday communication. Exploring this interwind may then shed some new light on the role and nature of euphemism as a Chinese communication practice.

Face, facework and euphemism

Tracing the relationship between the usage of euphemistic expressions and the notion of face, inevitably we come across the Brown’s and Levinson’s (fur-

¹ Term borrowed from Sharifan, 2017.

ther as B&L) theory of politeness as a response to ‘Face threatening acts’ (FAT) (1987). As probably the most often referred scholarship in the field (Ting-Toomey 1988; Gu 1990; Vilkki 2006, Cardon: 2009; Wang 2018), it does not need to be reviewed in greater detail here. It is enough to remember that for B&L politeness is a language that somewhat redresses the threats to this ‘self-image’ into a less offensive manner. Despite all, not always unjustified criticism (Gu 1990; Jia 2001) of this theory and its applicability in the Chinese settings, it is hard to deny, that how euphemism is understood and applied by the Chinese resemble B&L theory quite vividly. Analysing Chinese euphemistic expressions, we then find out that not only unpleasant, undesirable and impure is being referred to with some generic terms. Also, social statuses and the relationships between them are being described in terms that substitute the more common and direct ones. The tabooisation of certain aspects of human life, the necessity of maintaining a rapport, and hierarchy between members of a community in the closest vicinity and search for social recognition are the primary motivation behind the usage of euphemism in Chinese context. These motivations fall not very far from B&L notions of the ‘negative’ (the desire to be unimpeded in one’s actions) and ‘positive’ (the desire (in some respects) to be approved) face (B&L, 1987: 13). It is the proper usage of language that allows the speaker to avoid or at least mitigate the threats that can result from the more direct referencing. Euphemism is then a part of a larger structure that is built of acknowledgement of social cohesion and hierarchy, the authority that it entails (*Li*), and, as follows face as an essence of social relations (Hwang 1992). Social hierarchy and authority along with face as their necessary product, seem to be the core values, the ‘ultimate taboos’ of this specific ‘programming of the mind’ (Hofstede 2001: 9). Scholars like Gu (1991) and Yang (1981; 1995), through their theories of other-directed politeness and ‘social orientation’ of the Chinese, demonstrates the rules of the operationalisation of these core values in the everyday settings. Euphemism, as a linguistic behaviour is then not just a mean serving specific, immediate purposes, but rather a product of a socio-historically determined structure. It is a ‘convenor’ allowing for the transmission and further perpetuation of this very structure (Sharifian 2017: 5). Looking again on the examples provided above, the way they are being applied in everyday communication and how they refer to the notion of facework can provide us with direct supporting evidence.

In meta-theory facework could be summarised as all sorts of acts that are meant to, on the one hand, prevent harm and loss, on another save and enhance of face. Oetzel and Ting-Tommey identified thirteen types of mainly linguistic facework behaviour in this respect (2003: 600). It is then a situation of crisis, such as death or challenges of human physiology impose a threat to maintain-

ing socially recognised self-image (*mianzi*) and or perception of fulfilment the obligations of one's social roles (*lian*). Also, claiming a face 'bigger' than one is entitled to can potentially be a source of disturbance of the structure (challenging the ultimate taboo, *Li*). It leads to the disruption of social order, disharmony, and as a consequence, imposes a severe threat to one's psycho-mental integrity (Kolstada & Gjesvika 2012). Euphemism, applied in a Chinese way, mitigates the threats and reduces psychological distress, re-confirming and/or re-negotiating one's socio-moral standing (respecting the ultimate taboo). It is a handy tool that is entangled with the structure that following Oetzel and Ting-Toomey is 'an explanatory mechanism for different conflict management styles' (2003: 600). At the more concrete level, it is then a form of conveying a message that delivered in another way could be harmful to the face of at least one party involved in the process. Euphemism being a necessity of a specific situation, is also a product of culture, the proper usage of which denotes the level of individual acculturation. As such, it is a tool allowing for protection and enhancement of face of parties involved in the exchange.

Conclusion

Summarising above divagations, we could repeat that euphemism is a tool that allows for conveying a meaningful message that for some specific reasons, cannot be effectively delivered in another way. Fear and avoidance of and disgust with specific beliefs and behaviours seem to be familiar to all human societies phenomena. However, as mentioned, what is feared, avoided or disgusted is specific to a given culture. The way it is being dealt with or referred to is also culture-specific. Specific verbal and non-verbal methods applied, are a display of the particular cultural cognitions that collectively can be called the collective programming of the mind. Euphemism and its application in everyday communication is then a part of this more elaborated and prevalent structure that is not only being displayed but also re-appraised, re-applied and re-invented. In the Chinese context, euphemism is then a product of, and an indispensable factor contributing to the preservation and adaptation of a particular set of cultural cognitions for which *Li*, in-group cohesion and social status, and face are core values and ultimate taboos.

References:

- Brown, Penelope, and Stephen C. Levinson. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Print.
- Cai, Shangsi 蔡尚思. *Zhongguo lijiao sixiang shi* 中國禮教思想史 [The History of Chinese Lijiao Thought]. Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju Press, 1991. Print.

- Cardon, Peter W. "A Model of Face Practices in Chinese Business Culture: Implications for Western Businesspersons." *Thunderbird International Business Review* 51.1 (2009): 19–36. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.20242>
- Chen, Wangdao 陳望道. *Xiucixue fayan 修辭學發凡* [Introduction to rhetoric]. Shanghai: Xinweyi Press, 1957. Print.
- Deng, Zhaohong, 鄧兆紅. *Weiwanyu jiedu de shehui-renshi yuyongxue yanjiu 委婉語解讀的社會 – 認識語用學研究* [A Socio-cognitive Pragmatic Study on Euphemism Interpretation]. Guangzhou: Jinan University Press, 2019. Print.
- Fromkin Victoria, Robert Rodman and Nina Hyams. *An Introduction to Language*. Boston: Cengage, 2017. Print.
- Gu, Yueguo. "Politeness phenomena in modern Chinese." *Journal of Pragmatics* 14 (1990): 237–257.
- Hofstede, Geert. *Culture's consequences: comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications. 2001. Print.
- Hsu, Francis L. K. *Americans and Chinese: Two Ways of Life*. NY: Abelard-Schuman, 1953. Print.
- Hsu, Francis L. K. *Clan, caste, and club*. NY: Van Nostrand Co., 1963. Print.
- Hu, Hsien-chin. "The Chinese concepts of "face"." *American Anthropologist* 46 (1944): 45–64. <https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1525/aa.1944.46.1.02a00040>
- Huang, Borong and Liao Xudong 黃伯榮, 廖序東. *Xiandai hanyu 現代漢語* [Contemporary Chinese]. Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2004. Print.
- Hwang, Kuang-kuo 黃光國. "Renqing yu mianzi: Zhongguoren de quanli youxi" 人情與面子：中國人的權力遊戲 [Favour and Face: Chinese Power Games]. *Zhongguoren de xinli 中國人的心理* [Chinese Psychology]. Ed. Kuo-shu Yang, Taipei: Guiguan Press, 1992. 289-318. Print.
- Jia, Wenshan. *The remaking of the Chinese character and identity in the 21st century: The Chinese face practices*. Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing, 2001. Print.
- Keith, Allan, and Kate Burridge. *Euphemism and Dysphemism: Language Used as Shield and Weapon*. Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 1991. Print.
- King, Ambrose 金耀基. "Mianzi, chi yu zhongguoren xingwei zhi fenxi" 「面」、 「恥」與中國人行為之分析 [Face, Shame and Analysis of Chinese People's Behaviour] *Zhongguoren de xinli 中國人的心理* [Chinese Psychology]. Ed. Kuo-shu Yang, Taipei: Guiguan Press, 1992. 319–346. Print.
- Kinnison, Li Q. "Power, integrity, and mask – An attempt to disentangle the Chinese face concept". *Journal of Pragmatics* 114 (2017): 32–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.03.015>
- Kolstad, Arnulf, and Nini Gjesvik. "The importance of harmonious relationships for mental health in traditional Chinese society." *International Journal of Culture and Mental Health* 6.3 (2013): 193–207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17542863.2012.681672>
- Leech, G. *Principles of pragmatics*. London, New York: Longman Group Ltd. 1983. Print.

- Lin, Yutang. *My Country and My People*. London: WilliamHeinemannLtd, 1936. Print.
- Oetzel, John G., and Stella Ting-Toomey. "Face Concerns in Interpersonal Conflict: A Cross-Cultural Empirical Test of the Face Negotiation Theory." *Communication Research* 30 (2003): 599–624. <http://crx.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/30/6/599>
- Shao, Junhang 邵軍航. *Weiwanyu yanjiu 委婉語研究 [Study of Euphemism]*. Shanghai Jiaotong University Press, 2016. Print.
- Sharifian, Farzad. *Cultural Linguistics: Cultural conceptualisations and language*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin's Publishing Company, 2017. Print.
- Ting-Toomey, Stella. "Intercultural conflict styles. A face-negotiation theory." *Theories in Intercultural Communication*. Eds. Young Yun. Kim and William B. Gudykunst. Newbury Park: Sage, 1988. 213–235. Print.
- Vilkki, Lissa. "Politeness, face and facework: Current issues". *A man of measure: Festschrift in honour of Fred Karlsson on his 60th birthday. Sky Journal of Linguistics, special supplement* 19 (2006): 322–332. http://www.ling.helsinki.fi/sky/julkaisut/SKY2006_1/1.4.7.%20VILKKI.pdf
- Wang, Xijie 王希杰. *Hanyu xiucixue(xiuding ban) 漢語修辭學 (修訂版) [Chinese Rhetoric]*. Taipei: Shangwu Yinshu Guan, 2004. Print.
- Wang, Yang. A Principled Understanding of Compliment Functions Based on a New Version of Brown and Levinson's Face. (Preprint version, 2018, Oct. 29) Retrieved from <http://ir.lzu.edu.cn/handle/262010/198118>
- Wu, Jiazhen 吳家珍. *Xiucixue yu luoji 修辭學與邏輯 [Rhetoric and Logic]*. Beijing: Communication Press, 1982. Print.
- Wu, Liquan 吳禮權. *Weiwanyu yanjiu [Studies in Euphemistic Rhetorical Devices]*. Jinan: Shangdong Wenyi Press.
- Wu, Zongjie and Meixin Hu. "Ritual Hermeneutics as the Source of Meaning: Interpreting the Fabric of Chinese Culture." *China Media Research*, 6.2 (2010): 104–114. Print.
- Yang, Kuo-Shu. "Chinese social orientation: an integrative analysis." *Chinese societies and mental health*. Eds. Tsung-Yi. Lin, Wen-Shing Tseng, and Eng-Kung Yeh. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995. 19–39. Print.
- Yang, Kuo-Shu. "Social orientation and individual modernity among Chinese students in Taiwan." *Journal of Social Psychology* 113 (1981): 149-170. Print.
- Zhang, Gonggui 張拱貴. *Hanyu weiwanyu cidian 漢語委婉語詞典 [Dictionary of Chinese Euphemisms]*. Beijing: Beijing Language and Culture University Press, 1996. Print.
- Zhu, Rui Ling 朱瑞玲. "Zhongguoren de shehui hudong: lun mianzi de wenti" 中國人的社會互動：論面子的問題 [Chinese Social Relations: The Matter of Face]. *Zhongguoren de xinli 中國人的心理 [Chinese Psychology]*. Ed. Kuo-shu Yang, Taipei: Guiguan Press, 1992. 239–288. Print.

The Chinese Transitive Verb 打 *da3* as a Radial Category

Paul Woods

Abstract

This paper examines the Chinese verb 打 (da3, to hit) using cognitive linguistics. Prototypically, this is a transitive verb whose object is a concrete, count noun, examples being 打球 (da3qiu2) and 打人 (da3ren2), hit a ball and hit a person, a classic agent-patient relationship with transfer of energy. Collocations such as 打听 (da3ting1, hit-hear), 打气 (da3qi4, hit-air), 打电话 (da3dian4hua4, hit-electric-speech), and 打招呼 (da3zhao1hu, hit-greet) represent non-prototypical transitivity and intransitivity. These show the verb to be a radial category (Lakoff 1987) containing sub-categories produced by extensions from the central transitive sense.

Adapting Langacker's (1990) transitivity theory and action chain idea suggests that chainings from prototypical transitive da3 produce non-prototypical transitives with abstract objects and verbs, as well as non-transitive uses. The article thus examines a specific transitive verb as well as the complex nature of transitivity in verb-object collocations.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, Chinese, transitive verbs, radial categories

Introduction

The paper explores the Chinese verb *da3* (打, to hit) as a group of related senses and a transitive verb which form a radial category. Examples of *da3* were drawn from two print dictionaries, an online corpus, and several online dictionaries, which are listed at the end of the paper.

The study applies cognitive linguistics concepts from Lakoff (1987) and Langacker (1990) to 250 *da3* collocations to categorise the form and behaviour of *da3*. Lakoff's radial categories (1987: 91ff) and prototypicality (1987: 58ff) are foundational for the analysis. I also employ Langacker's action chains (1990: 215) and profiling (Langacker 1990: 218), which includes the notion of focus on part of an action chain. In addition, influence or information is a non-prototypical form of 'action' from agent to patient.

Langacker's Action Chains

For Langacker, our understanding of transitivity comes from our experience of physical objects; in his 'billiard ball model' (1990: 209) a transfer of energy from an actor to an object causes physical movement. From this Langacker derives his 'action chain' concept (1990: 215) in which energy is transferred from one participant to another until no further transmission is possible or significant. In a 'prototypical transitive clause', the agent acts volitionally as an energy source and the patient at the other end of the chain is an energy sink (Langacker 1990: 215).

In an extended discussion of transitivity, Langacker produces a number of example sentences (1990: 216ff), showing different combinations of agents, patients, and instrumentals. The difference between *Floyd broke the glass (with the hammer)*, *The hammer (easily) broke the glass*, and *The glass (easily) broke* is a matter of profiling; a clause or sentence highlights a particular section of the action chain. In his diagrams, circled regions of the action chain represent the different sentences. Where Floyd is mentioned, the agent is profiled as well as the patient. Where the hammer is the grammatical subject, Floyd the prototypical agent is not profiled. In the third example, the only profiled entity is the glass, as the agent (Floyd) and the instrumental (the hammer) do not form part of the sentence. Profiling is significant for this study.

Langacker begins with verbs such as *to break* and *to hit*, moves on to the less prototypically transitive *to tickle*, *to injure*, and *to scratch*, and ends with *to send*, *to persuade*, and *to consider*. While a prototypical transitive verb is associated with transfer of energy and physical movement, non-prototypical transitivity or 'asymmetrical interaction' (Langacker 1990: 221), concerns contact or motion in the mental or thought realm, a chaining from the prototypical billiard ball concept.

***da3* as a Radial Category Centred on Prototypical Transitivity**

I define the prototypical sense of *da3* as *to hit* or *strike* a solid, count noun with a force which is linguistically unrestricted and whose result is unspecified. Other, marked, senses are extensions from the prototypical meaning with one of two principal characteristics. First, the verb *da3* remains transitive, but the scope of its action is restricted in some way, such that it refers *to making a hole* or *playing a game*, rather than general hitting. This is consistent with attenuation of physical force and semantic bleaching of the verb. Second, ob-

ject nouns which are non-physical or mass nouns cause a departure from the central idea of physical force.

Examples of the prototypical transitive, such as *da3ren2* (*hit-person, to hit a person*) and *da3gou3* (*hit-dog, to hit a dog*), conform to Langacker's billiard ball model. These unmarked cases represent the transfer of physical force to a person and a dog respectively, unrestricted in that there is no specification of degree or purpose.

In addition, the data provided several subcategories of *da3*, as follows.

PNR1. Physical force acting directly on a noun with a restricted result. This marked case describes a particular form of hitting with a specific purpose and physical result. In the examples *da3ka3* (*hit-card, to clock in or out*), *da3ji1dan4* (*hit-hen-egg, to crack an egg*) the hitting is a transfer of physical energy or force along the action chain. However, rather than simply hitting an egg or a card, the action is carried out in a specific way and for a specific purpose – it is restricted. Here, hitting a card means inserting it into a machine which makes a hole or prints on it to show that an employee has arrived at or left a place of employment. Likewise, hitting the egg is done in order to crack the shell and allow its contents to be cooked or mixed in order that it can be eaten. This subcategory contained 53 examples.

In the related PNR2 the grammatical object noun is the result rather than the patient of the action. It is similar to PNR1 in that physical force is transferred in a restricted way, but the difference is one of profiling. In Langacker's action chains, Floyd uses a hammer to break a piece of glass by hitting it, and selective profiling causes Floyd or the hammer to be absent from the sentence, resulting in the forms *The hammer broke the glass* or *The glass broke*. PNR2 is analogous with Langacker's profiling, yet significantly different. In *da3dong4* (*hit-hole, to punch a hole*), the hole is the outcome of the *da3* action on an unspecified patient known to or assumed by speaker and hearer. In the example 他打了一个洞 (*ta1 da3le yi1ge4 dong4*), rendered in English as *He made a hole*, the Chinese verb *to hit* refers to a patient which does not exist at the beginning of the hitting process; in English one can *make* a hole but not *hit* one. Thus, profiling allows reference to an entity temporally and physically beyond the scope of the action chain. The hole which is hit is a 'virtual' one, emerging as the result of an action chain transferring energy to an unspecified physical object, an energy sink such as a piece of wood or paper, such that a hole is made in it. The patient at the end of the action chain is implied logically but is not required linguistically in Chinese and thus the profiling discounts that which is there and includes that which is yet to be. There were 31 members on the PNR2 subcategory.

In a further subcategory, PNR3, force or energy is used to obtain, bring, or gather the grammatical object of the verb. Thus, a restricted and particular application of force allows *da3shui3* (*hit-water, to fetch water*), *da3you2* (*hit-oil, to fetch oil*), *da3fan4* (*hit-rice, to fetch rice*), and *da3chai2* (*hit-firewood, to fetch firewood*) to refer to the gathering or bringing of various items to the agent of *da3*. Physical force moves along the action chain to gather the referent of the patient noun and bring it to the agent. Further, while we can hit wood, hitting water or oil will not result in it being brought to the agent. The means by which the patient noun is manipulated (a bucket, box, or bundle) is not profiled. Ten examples fit into this group.

MNR1. Metaphorical force acting on a noun to produce a restricted action. Various forms of communication involve the transmission of information rather than physical force, such as *da3dian4hua4* (*hit-electric-speech, to make a phone call*), *da3dian4bao4* (*hit-electric-report, to send a telegram*), *da3xin4hao4* (*hit-message-sign, to send a signal*). This fits with Langacker's 'asymmetrical interaction' in that influence rather than force *per se* travels down the action chain. It is possible that the original sense of hitting did involve transfer of energy or application of force to an apparatus. Without a diachronic study, it is difficult to be certain. There were 34 collocations of this kind.

The related subcategory MNR2 refers to influence in the mind, with no physical manifestation. Examples are *da3ding4zhu3yi4* (*hit-set-idea, to make up one's mind*) and *da3bi3fang1* (*hit-analogy, to make an analogy*). This purely mental or cognitive action is arguably further away from the prototypical transitive use even than MNR1; rather than influence travelling from one person to another along a metaphorical action chain and producing objects which can be perceived by the senses, ideas and situations are created by a purely mental action chain within the mind. There is no interpersonal transfer. The study found 11 such uses.

Prototypical billiard ball transitives consist of forces acting on objects and subsequent non-prototypical chainings from *da3* retain an object noun. The next two subcategories of *da3* do operate on a patient, but the verb *da3* is qualified or restricted by the addition of a secondary verb/adjective.

PVR. Physical force focused through a secondary verb with a restricted result. Examples are *da3sui4* (*hit-broken, to smash to pieces*) and *da3po4* (*hit-broken, to break*), the second character of the collocation functioning as a stative verb/adjective. *Da3* refers to a physical force acting on a solid object, resulting in the profiled *sui4* or *po4* state, and the two-character verb has the sense of 'to apply physical force through hitting, resulting in the patient noun being smashed to pieces or broken'. There were 43 cases of PVR.

MVR. Metaphorical force focused through a secondary verb with a restricted result. Examples are *da3ting1* (*hit-listen, to ask*), and *da3wen4* (*hit-ask, to ask*). This subcategory works in a similar way to its physical analogue. In examples such as 打问价钱 (*da3wen4 jia4qian2, to ask the price*) a request for information is transmitted along the action chain from an agent to a patient who is not profiled. Note that the direct object, the desired information, is not the energy sink at the end of the chain. The total in this group was 42.

PMR. Physical force acting in a restricted way on a patient noun which is a physical object standing metonymically for a broad enterprise, usually a game. Two examples are *da3qiu2* (*hit-ball, to play a ball game of some kind*) and *da3pai2* (*hit-card, to play a card game of some kind*). The simple nouns *ball* and *card* are used metonymically to represent a complex rule-governed activity such as football or bridge, which once specified is not profiled. The sense of *to hit* varies, ball games being more physical than card games. Less physical senses of *to hit* may be chainings from more physical ones. Only 8 collocations of this type were found.

PIR. Physical, effectively intransitive, restricted. This subcategory refers to bodily actions such as belching, sneezing, and hiccoughing. Noun phrases such as *ge2* (*a belch*) or *ha1qian1* (*a yawn*) cannot function as verbs and must be preceded by the verb *da3*, resulting in forms such as *da3ge2* (*hit-belch, to belch*) and *da3ha1qian* (*hit-yawn, to yawn*). At the character level *da3* behaves as a transitive verb, similar to the category PNR2 in that the transfer of energy associated with *da3* produces that which is profiled rather than acting upon it. There is a physical transfer of energy, primarily inside but also beyond a person's body. While at the character level we can consider it a transitive verb, for all intents and purposes the collocation of *da3* and noun phrase (the *ci2* 词, in Chinese) behaves intransitively. There were 14 such bodily function uses.

In English, *sneeze*, *belch*, and *yawn* function as verbs as well as nouns, but cannot in Chinese. That certain bodily functions require the verb *to hit* is interesting because Chinese grammatical categories are relatively fluid. In these expressions the verb *da3* appears highly attenuated and seems to serve as a default action or energy verb. I am reminded of the generic noun classifier *ge4*.

Among the data, 3 examples could not be categorised. Also, a few examples belonged to more than one subcategory. Most significant were 10 verbs identified as both PVR and MVR, such as *da3duan4* (*hit-break off, to snap off*).

Implications

Da3 provides insights into the nature of transitivity in Chinese. The verb *da3* is a radial category comprised of subcategories which I consider as chainings from a prototypical sense of unrestricted transfer of physical force or energy from agent to patient. One chaining concerns restricted physical forces acting on an object in a specific way to produce a certain limited outcome. Also, physical forces may ‘act on’ a currently non-existing patient to produce it. Expressions like *da3dong4* (*hit-hole, to bore a hole*) extend Langacker’s profiling; this is profiling of result, as the putative patient cannot be found at the beginning of the hitting process.

The use of *da3* to convey the idea of gathering or bringing is yet another form of non-prototypical extension. In phrases such as *da3shui3* (*hit-water, to fetch water*), physical energy is expended, but not directly on the patient in the sentence. Energy is sent out from the agent in order to gather and bring the patient back to the agent. Information or influence can be understood as metaphorical transfers of energy.

In the small number of collocations of *da3* and (stative) verbs such as *sui4* (*smashed*) and *po4* (*broken*), the physical energy expended on the patient causes the state indicated by the stative verb. Although these two-verb collocations take a physical entity as patient, the appending of a stative verb/adjective to *da3* suggests profiling of the final state of the patient.

Finally, the use of *da3* for certain bodily functions points to what is arguably a rather attenuated form of hitting, the transfer of physical energy against objects or entities unknown (because they are inside the body) to produce physical phenomena such as sneezing or belching.

Conclusion

This study of *da3* suggests that transitivity is a radial category. We should expect transitive verbs to show something of the variety of sense, restriction, and profiling exhibited by *da3*. The Chinese verb *da3* may be a relatively comprehensive example of different forms of transitivity; other transitive verbs might contain fewer non-prototypical subcategories. Further work could examine other transitive verbs and their agent and patient nouns.

References

Lakoff, George. *Women, fire and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Langacker, Ronald. *Concept, image, and symbol: The cognitive basis of grammar*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990.

Chinese Language Resources Consulted

Concise English-Chinese Chinese-English dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

The pinyin Chinese-English dictionary. Hong Kong: The Commercial Press Ltd, 1979.

Ministry of Education Dictionary (Taiwan). <https://www.moedict.tw>

Han Dian (汉典) Dictionary. <https://www.zdic.net>

Hai Ci (海词) Dictionary. <http://dict.cn/>

Cha Cha (查查) Online Dictionary. <http://ichacha.net>

The Lancaster Corpus of Mandarin Chinese. <http://corpus.leeds.ac.uk/query-zh.html>

Unfolding the Web of Semiosis for the Radical ‘Dog’ quǎn 犬

Teodora Koutzarova
Stefan Ivanchev

Abstract

This paper aims to develop an alternative approach to Chinese script acquisition based on tracing the infiltration of a given Chinese radical as a sign in the process of semiosis on lexical, morphemic and phonemic level. We choose the radical ‘dog’ quǎn 犬 to serve as an example and typify the meanings it can generate, e.g. ‘Dog general characteristics’; ‘Dog typical behaviour’; ‘Dog-related activities’; ‘Dog types/breeds’; ‘Type of animals’; ‘Proper names’; ‘Abstract meanings’; ‘Signification leaps’; ‘Link-words’, etc. We outline the semantic field of the most frequently used characters, discuss the liánmián-binomials, and analyse the semiotic interchangeability of the radicals.

Keywords: Semiosis; Chinese script; radical ‘dog’; animal-based radicals; binomials; interchangeability

Animals and images of animals have accompanied the advancement of human civilization since its dawn. The phylogenetic continuity remains an integral part of the development of the human mind. Countless animals in sculptures, paintings, myths and legends, as well as in written signs, have been interwoven in Chinese ancient culture, and continue to be used today. In Chinese modern script, however, these images have reverted to a semi-conscious or altogether unconscious level. In this paper we focus on the characters, particularly the radicals that signify animals (but not animal parts like jì 豕 ‘pig’s head’ or jiǎo 角 ‘horns’, etc.). Their number have varied through the ages with a clear tendency for depletion. The ones that can be found in modern dictionaries are 19, whereas in oracle bone script jiǎgǔwén 甲骨文 animal pictograms that group ideo-collective characters huìyìzì 會意字 are considerably more abundant. This could be a result of change in fauna, i.e. dying out of certain species, but in the stream of linguistic reasoning, we observe a shift in cognitive modeling, i.e. each radical classifies phenomena generically, whereas any specific feature is expressed by other means (mainly by harmonics xíngshēng-

zì 形聲字). Here we scrutinise the radical ‘dog’, but in its next stage, the study of semiosis intends to encompass all the remaining animal-based radicals.

We will begin with a short discussion of the currently active animal-based radicals, contrasting them to those that have fallen out of use. Almost identical to the ancient form of the ‘dog’ quǎn 犬 犳 is the ‘pig’ shǐ 豕 豕, which explains the 22 cases of interchangeability (e.g. ‘a sounder of pigs’ bīn 豨 can be written as 豨, etc.). There is graphical and consequently – via the archetypal function – semantic similarity between ‘dog’ and the radical zhì 豸 豸 resulting in 35 cases of interchangeability (e.g. ‘to bark’/‘wail’ háo 獯 can be written as 獯, etc.). Zhì 豸 can signify both: 1) ‘legless insect’ (like ‘caterpillar’), and 2) ‘a big cat (stalking its pray)’. The seeming lack of connection between the two dissolves into the abstract idea of ‘something curved/arched like a body/back/spine’.

Other domesticated animals are the ‘cow’/‘ox’ niú 牛 牛; the ‘sheep’/‘goat’ yáng 羊 羊, and the ‘horse’ mǎ 馬 馬. Wild animals include:

1. Fish genus: ‘fish’ yú 魚 魚;







2. Amphibians: ‘frog’ mǐn 黽 黽;









3. Reptiles: ‘turtle’/‘tortoise’ guī 龜 龜; ‘small venomous snake’ huǐ 虫 虫; ‘a venomous snake’/‘embryo’ jǐ 己/sì 巳 巳 (Discarded as radicals: ‘large venomous snakes’ 也/它 也, 也; discarded both as pictograms and radicals: other specific types of snakes, e.g. 虺, 虺, etc.);







4. Birds: ‘long-tailed bird’ niǎo 鳥 鳥; ‘short-tailed bird’ zhuī 隹 隹 (Discarded as radicals: ‘owl’ guàn 隹 隹; ‘swallow’ yàn 燕 燕; ‘magpie’ xī 鳥 鳥; discarded both as pictograms and radicals: ‘eagle’ yīng (鷹) 鷹; ‘rooster’ jī (雞) 雞 and other unidentifiable birds: 雉, 雉, etc.);

5. Rodents: ‘mouse’/‘rat’ shǔ 鼠 鼠 (Discarded as radicals: ‘rabbit’ tù 兔 兔; ‘rabbit-like animal’ chuò 兔 兔);

6. Hooved mammals: ‘deer’ lù 鹿 鹿 (Discarded as radicals: ‘rhinoceros’ sì 兕 兕; discarded both as pictograms and radicals: ‘hornless deer’ 麋 麋 and other types of deer, e.g. 麋, 麋; ‘giraffe-like animal’ 麇 麇 and other unidentified hooved animals: 麇, 麇, 麇, etc.);

7. Big cats and other big animals: ‘tiger’ hū 虎/hǔ 虎  (Discarded as radicals: ‘elephant’ xiàng 象 ; ‘bear’ xióng 熊 ; ‘gigantic animal’ luó 羸 /羸 ; discarded both as a pictogram and radical: ‘leopard’ .

From the mythical animals (usually bearing hybrid features) an active radical is the ‘dragon’ lóng 龍  (Discarded as radical: ‘unicorn’ zhì 廌 ; discarded both as a pictogram and radical: ‘winged bear-like animal’ 犼 ). Some of the insect pictograms have lost their radical function as well, e.g. ‘centipede’ qiú 求 ; ‘scorpion’ chài 萬 ; ‘cricket’ qiú 龜 /², others are no longer pictograms, e.g. ‘cicada’ chán (蟬) 𧈧 , ‘spider’ zhū (蛛) 𧈧 , etc.

The remaining 4 animal-based radicals have somewhat peculiar status, i.e. 1. The ‘clam’ shèn 辰/屮  has shifted to indicate ‘natural phenomena’; 2. The ‘cowrie’/‘mollusk’ bèi 貝  depicts a ‘sea snail’, but generates meanings predominantly related to ‘money’/‘wealth’; 3. The radical ‘wind’ fēng 風 originated from ‘phoenix’ fèng 鳳 (鳳  → 𧈧  → 𧈧 ); 4. The radical fēi 飛  depicts the head, wings and feathers of a bird in flight, but functions as a verb ‘to fly’ and as such is an ideogram.

We have analysed 609 characters that appear under the radical ‘dog’ quǎn 犬 in the 1986–1990 eight-volume edition of The Big Chinese Character Dictionary Hànyǔdàzìdiǎn 《漢語大字典》 (HDZD) (vol. 2, pp 1331–1379), and have compared the data with 813 entries (732 under “犭” + 81 under “犬”) in the electronic source Hàndiǎn 《漢典》 (<https://www.zdic.net/>). From this bulk of nearly a thousand polyphonic, polysemic and polymorphic characters, we have extrapolated, based on the ancient dictionary definitions, the core semantic ranges³. Before discussing them in detail, we will illustrate the challenges polyphony poses. The character 獠 has 9 different pronunciations that correspond to different meanings⁴:

² The meaning ‘cricket’ is not listed in ancient dictionaries, where the character *qiú* 龜 is associated with 1) ‘young dragon with horns’ 《說文》：“廌，龍子有角者。”，or 2) ‘a tortoise with shell that doesn’t crack’ 《正韻》：“廌，灼龜卜兆而焦也。”

³ Since the source material is character dictionaries, ‘the character’, as the unit in focus, differentiates the following levels: 1) lexemic (monosyllabic words); 2) morphemic (disyllabic words), and 3) phonemic (syllabograms as parts of binomials or polysyllabic transliterations).

⁴ Other extreme cases are: 獠/獠 – 5 pronunciations (*shān*; *cán*; *sāo*; *xiāo*; *shǎn*); 獨 – 4 pronunciations (*xiē*; *hè*; *gé*; *hài*), etc.

Table 1

Data from ancient dictionaries	Pīnyīn romanization	English meaning
《廣韻》火包切	[xiāo]	barking of a frightened dog
《集韻》虛交切，音虬。	xiāo	confuse
《集韻》力交切，音顛。	láo [liào]	disorder; disturbance
《集韻》又於交切，音顛。	āo	cunning; artful; crafty
《類篇》何交切，音爻。	yáo	fail
《集韻》/《類篇》丘交切，音敲。	qiāo	be exposed
《廣韻》/《集韻》下巧切，音舉。	xué	
《集韻》女巧切，音膠。	nǎo	
《類篇》古巧切，音絞。	jiǎo	

Dog general characteristics

The radical quǎn 犬 [k'iwən] (graphic variations: 𤝵; 𤝶; 𤝷; Korean character: dūn 獬) is a pictogram of 'dog'/ 'canine', an animal that has been both a sacrificial object and food source since ancient times. The modern word for 'dog' is gǒu 狗 (quǎn 犬 'dog' + gōu 句 'curved'): one of the 12 zodiacal signs shēngxiào 生肖 of the Chinese Lunar calendar. As a verb it means 'to flatter'. It is a metaphor for 'a bad person'/ 'evildoer' and can be used as a curse 'bloody'/ 'damned'⁵ (e.g. 狗腿子; 狗東西, etc.). There is yet another pictogram – 𤝸, depicting 'a furry dog', graphically assimilated to yóu 尤 + shān 彡 – máng 龙/虯, a character that can be written with a second exposure of the dog-sign – 獠.

There are characters with sign 'dog' that have extremely narrow meaning, e.g. fèi 猓/狒 'the state/manner of being a dog' "犬兒。"; jú 昊 / yíyí 狒狒 'dog's way of looking' "犬視兒。"; hài 獨 'dog's odour' "犬臭也。"; shàn 獐 'dog's fur' or péng 獍 'strong (for a dog)'; jùn 狻 'fast (for a dog)', etc. But there is an overall tendency towards connotative generalization, analogical to the example: zhuàng 狀 'caniniform'/ 'form of a dog' "犬形也。" → any 'form'/ 'appearance'/ 'shape'; 'dog' → other type of animal, and 'dog movement/behaviour/sound' → movement/behaviour/sound of any other animal, including humans (e.g. jiǎohuá 狡猾 'cunning'; 'deceitful', etc.) and stretching to non-living beings (e.g. lièliè 獵獵 'sound of wind blowing', etc.). The presence of the sign 'dog' in the characters for 'wild animal'/ 'beast' shòu 獸

⁵ *Lǎo* 獠 is an ancient way of cursing, whereas *wěi* 猥 'abject'/ 'despicable' is a modest way of addressing oneself.

and chī 獾/獾 ‘fierce animal’ is due to dog’s participation in hunting activities since its domestication. The character jù 獠/獠 depicts the ‘(dramatic) fight between a tiger and a boar’ “豕虎之鬪，不解也。” [the radical ‘dog’ is optional, but not in the extended meaning qú 獠 ‘fierce (for a dog)’]. The appearance of ‘dog’ in one of the variants of zhì 豸 ‘an animal from the big cat family’ – 豸, is a tautology that verifies the shift in signification of both radicals from concrete to generic⁶ (This to a certain degree is valid for the remaining animal-radicals and allows for the phenomenon of their interchangeability; see Tab. 19). Following the same logic ‘dog’ is optional in the character chù/xù 畜(畜) ‘livestock’/ ‘to raise cattle’ and sù 獯(素) ‘animal white in color’. Due to dog’s function to protect, in the character bǎo 保 (保) ‘to safeguard’, the module ‘human’ (more precisely ‘the body of the mother’ 保) can be substituted with ‘dog’, resulting in 獯. In Chinese language there are different significations for ‘to give birth to puppies’ depending on their number: jí 猥, wěi 猥 or zōng 猥 is ‘to give birth to three’ “犬生三子。”; zòng 猥 – ‘to give birth to two’ “犬生二子。”; háo 獠, qí 獠 or zòng 猥 – ‘to give birth to one’ “犬生一子。”. Yī 猥, on the other hand, is ‘castrated dog’ “犗犬也。”, but the sign ‘dog’ is part of the idea for ‘castrated/neutered animal’ in general – fēn 獯.

The sign ‘dog’ can be combined with itself, resulting in yín 吠/吠 ‘two dogs barking at/biting each other’ or fèi 吠 ‘to bark’. In its reduplicated form the module appears in sī 獄/獄 ‘warden’; yù 獄/獄 ‘jail’; ‘lawsuit’, and the syllabogram guǎng 獯 (guǎngguǎng 獯獯 ‘fierce’; ‘uncivilized’). The tripled form is biāo 猋 ‘pack of dogs running wildly’ → biāo 飊 ‘whirlwind’ → biāo 贗 ‘shellfish’.

There are 15 words, related to ‘rabies’ “狂病。” – xiāo 狷, with slightly varying definitions, i.e. “The dog is mad”. “犬狂(也)。” (cuō 狷; jì 獯; yào 獯); “A mad dog”. “狂犬。” (kuáng 狷/狷/狂; zhì 獯/狷/狷/狷/狷/狷), and “To be mad”. “狂也。” (ài 獯; chēn 狷; jí 狷; jiān 狷; jiàn 狷; xiāo 獯; xù 狷; yàn 狷 + the binomial xùkuáng 狷狂).

In the table bellow we summarize characters that reflect different aspects of ‘Dog typical behaviour’:

⁶ Refer also to the interchangeability of quǎn 犬 and zhì 豸 in mào 兒/貌/貌 ‘appearance’; ‘countenance’, initially an anthropomorphic sign 兒.

⁷ From this point onward, the number of binomials of liánmián 連綿詞 or reduplicated type (or polysyllabic words) will appear after the (+) sign.

Table 2 (Total of 6 + 2)

Character/ Word	Liánmián- binomial	Ancient dictionary definition	Meaning in English
bèi 𤝵		犬張斷貌。	bare one's teeth
bó 狝		過弗取也。	shoot past and snatch away
cán 猯/猯			worm through a narrow place
chuàn 獾	See lián 獾		be in heat
cù 猝		犬从艸暴出逐人也。	dash from the bushes and attack from behind
dú 獨/𤝵		羊爲羣，犬爲獨也。	be solitary
lián 獾/獾	liánchuān 獾獾	犬走草。	be in heat
xiáng 狝	See yāng 獾		
yāng 獾	yāngxiáng 獾狝	犬不服牽也	disobedient; cannot be led on a leash

There are 4 characters that have “angry dog” in their definition: 1) “The state of an angry dog”. “犬怒兒。”/“怒犬兒。” (*pèi* 狝; *nóu* 猯/獾; *yí* 狝) and 2) “A dog raising up its ears angrily”. “犬怒張耳。” (*zhé* 狝). Nine can be subsumed under ‘dog fights’: 1) “(Two) dogs fighting”. “(兩) 犬爭也。”/“犬爭兒。”/“Dogs have gotten into a fight”. “犬相得而鬪也。” (*biàn* 狝/狝; *dú* 𤝵/獨/狝; *fān* 狝/狝; *lì* 狝; *xiàn* 獾; *yán* 獾/獾/獾; *yán* 狝; *yí* 狝; *yín* 狝; *yǐn* 狝/斷). Six characters signify “Dog in a frightened state”. “犬驚兒。” (*hè* 獨; *náo/nǎo* 獾/獾; *shuò* 獾/獾/獾; *xǐ* 猯(猯); *xiào* 狝(狝); *xù* 獾; *hè* 獨)⁸ (Total of 20). The connotation “Dog in the state of running”. “走犬兒。” is expressed ideographically by manipulating the pictogram ‘dog’ (𤝵 – *bá/bó* 友/友 《說文》: “从犬而丿之。曳其足，則刺友也。”) or, as already mentioned, by tripling the pictogram to form *biāo* 獾 ‘pack of dogs running wildly’. ‘Dog walking/moving’. “犬行也。” *huán* 獾/獾(獾) and its reduplicated form *huánhuán* 獾獾, judging by the module 𠄎 (𠄎), implies ‘rotation’/‘going in a circle’ (Total of 3 + 1). Verbs that signify generic animal movement are greater in number (See Tab. 3).

⁸ In this group, *xǐ* 猯 means ‘timid’; ‘shy’ 《廣韻》: “懼兒也。”; *xiào* 狝 can mean both ‘frightened dog’ 《玉篇》: “犬驚。” and ‘frightened pig’ 《廣韻》: “豕驚。” (variant 狝); *xù* 獾 means “frightened birds/beasts flying/running away” 《集韻》: “驚遽貌。”; *hè* 獨(嚇) is ‘to scare’ 《廣韻》: “恐也。”.

Table 3 (Total of 6 + 2)

Definition	Charater/Word	Binomial
‘An animal running’ 獸走貌。/ ‘Running rabbit’ 兔走貌。 ‘Animals running about wildly’ ‘To run (fast)’ 走也。	chuān/chuàn 獾 jué 狻; tà 獾; xù 獾; shū 倏/爽	See lián 獾
‘To run in fear’	xuè 狻	
‘To climb a tree (for a monkey)’	lián 獾	liánchuān 獾猿
‘To walk one after the other’ 相從貌。	fān 狻	liánfān 連狻
‘Animal dancing (courtship dance)’	huán 獾	

Tab. 4 summarizes the verbs that have something to do with dog’s mouth, like ‘biting’, ‘eating’, etc.

Table 4 (Total of 18)

Dog(’s way of)		
‘ Biting ’ 犬噬也。/齧也。	‘ Eating ’ 犬食也。/犬食貌。	‘ Licking ’ 犬舐也。
chā 狻 (Cant. dial.)	chǎn 獾	shì 狻(舐) ‘to take with one’s tongue’ 犬以舌取物。
chān/dàn/yán 獾 ‘to gnaw’	dá 狻	tiè 狻/獾(舌)
chǎn/shàn 獾	kěn 狻(狻)	
dú 獨	nà 獾	
shǎn 獾	shàn 獾	
yín 狻/狻 ‘dogs biting each other’	tà 狻/狻/狻/狻	
yìn 狻 ‘to growl’; ‘to snap’	tiè 狻/獾	
zhì 獾		
zhuó 獾 ‘to bite fiercely’		

Tab. 5 presents the verb ‘to bark’ “犬吠。”, Tab. 6 – the related onomatopoeias. Compared to them, significations of other animal sound-related verbs and onomatopoeias are insignificant in number (See Tab. 7 and Tab. 8).

Table 5 (Total of 14 + 3)

Character/ Word	Binomial	Ancient dictionary definition	English meaning	Interchange- ability
fèi 狻/狻				吠(口)
gǎn 犴			dog barking loudly	
hǎn 獫/獫		小犬吠。	pups barking	
háo 獯/獯/獯		犬呼也，鳴也， 咆也。	bark; howl; wail; yelp	嗥(口)/獯(豸)
jiàn 獫		惡犬吠不止也。	fierce dog bark- ing endlessly	
náo 獯/獯	náonáo 獯獯	犬吠。/犬驚 吠貌 犬吠。	frightened dog barking barking	
wěi 猥		犬衆吠也。	group barking	
xiàn 獫		犬吠不止也。	endless barking	
xiāo 獯/獯/獯	náoxiāo 獯獯		barking of a frightened dog barking of a frightened dog	
xiāo 獯/獯/獯			group of dogs barking wildly	
xiāo 獯			bark	
xiào 獯		犬獯獯咳吠也。	barking of a frightened dog	獯(豸)
xiào 猷/獯	xiàoxiào 猷 猷	犬吠。	bark	
yín 吠/吠		犬相吠也。	two dogs barking at each other	
yín/yīn 狻			bark	

Table 6 (Total of 17 + 6)

Onomatopoeias	Character/Word	Binomials
‘Barking sound’ 犬吠聲也。	chán 獾; hǎn 獾; hào 犴; hú 犴; shàn 獾/獾/獾; wěi 猥; xiāo 猷; yín 猗	xīngxīng 猩猩 yínyín 信信
‘Sounds produced by a dog’ 犬聲。	dòu 狃; shān 獾/獾; xiàn 狃	shānjiàn 獾獾 jiànshān 獾獾
‘The sounds of dogs fighting’ 犬鬪聲/ ‘The sounds of dogs fighting’ 犬爭聲。	fán 獾/獾; yán 猥/猥; xiā 獾; yān 獾	
‘Dog sounds coming from a hole/cave’	yān 獾	
‘The sound of pups crying’ 呼犬子也。	yín 犬/犬 yú 犬	yínyín 犬犬 yúyú 犬犬
‘The sound of dog chewing’	hàn 獾	

Table 7 (Total of 4)

Character	Ancient dictionary definition	English meaning	Interchangeability
lóu 獾	豬求子。	a mother-pig calling her piglets	獾(豕)
níng 獾	咆也。	to roar	
xì 獾	豕息也。	to grunt; snore	獾(豕)
xiāo 獾		to roar	獾(九)/獾(口)

Table 8 (Total of 3 + 3)

Onomatopoeias	Monosyllabic	Binomials
‘Roaring of a tiger’ 虎聲。	jiàn 獾	
‘The sound of wind blowing/flag flapping’		lièliè 獵獵
The sound used in calling pigs ‘The sounds produced by a running pig’ 豕走豕豕。		xīxī 豕豕 xīxī 豕豕
‘The roar of a tiger when it wants to eat somebody’ 虎欲啗人聲也。	xiāo 獾	
‘Crying of piglets’ 豬兒聲。	yú 獾	

‘Dog-related activities’ include 3 significations for ‘hunting’ in general “狩也。” (chī 獾; liè 獵/獵/獵; tián 狃/畋/甸); 3 for ‘hunt in winter’ (jìng 獾; zhào 獾; shòu 狩); 2 for ‘hunt at night by torches’ “獵也。” (liáo 獾/獾/獾; zhǎo 獾/獾); ‘springtime hunting’ “春獵名。” (sōu 獾/獾/獾/獾), ‘summer hunting’ “夏獵。” (miáo 獾/苗) and ‘autumn hunting’ “秋田也。” (xiān 獾/獾/獾/獾) – each 1 (Total of 11 characters).

There are 67 characters (53 monosyllabic + 18 syllabograms as parts of 12 binomials) that signify ‘Dog Types/Breeds’ “(良)犬也。”/“(良)犬名。” (See Tab. 9 A and 9 B):

Table 9 A

MONOSYLLABIC			
Type/Breed	Ancient dictionary definition	English	Interchangeability
àn 狽/狽/狽	胡地野狗。/ 北地野狗。	wild dog from the north/ a fierce Mongolian dog	狽(豸)
áo 獒/獒	犬如人心可使者。	mastiff; large fierce dog	
bài 狽	短脛狗。	short neck	
bèn 獮	守犬。	guarding dog	獮(豸)/獮(豸)
bó 獬	犬名。	dog breed	
dī 狽	犬名。	dog breed	
diāo 貂	犬之短尾者。	short-tailed dog	貂(豸)
dùn 獻	道犬。/犬也。	street dog	
gǎn 獫	犬名。	dog breed	
gēng 狽	犬也。	a fierce dog /a small dog that hunts rodents	
gǒu 狗	狗，犬也。大者为犬，小者为狗。	puppy	狗(豸)
guǎng 獯	犬也。	a dog	
hú 狺/狺	小犬。	small-size dog	
huán 獬/獬	大犬也。	big dog	
huáng 獯/獯	犬也。	spaniel	
jiá 猊	雜犬。	crossbreed	猊(豸)
jiān 狽	逐虎犬。	tiger-chasing dog	
jiǎo 狡	少狗也。	young dog	
jìng 狽		a hunting-dog	
jū 狙	暫齧人者。一曰犬不齧人也。	a dog that bites/doesn't bite	
kàng 狽	健犬也。	a strong dog	
kūn 獬	大犬也。	a big dog	
líng 狽/獮/獮/獮	犬名。/良犬也。	dog breed	
lú 獮		a hound	

Table 9 A (Continued)

máng 獠/朧	犬之多毛者。	furry dog/striped dog	
měng 猛	健犬也。	strong dog	
nāo 獠	多毛犬也。	furry dog	
náo 獠		a type of dog	
náo 獠	犬惡毛也。	furry dog	
pái 狻	犬短首。	short-snouted dog	
pēng 獠	犬也。	a dog	
qí 猗	汝南謂犬子爲猗。	'dog' (Runan dialect)	
què 猗	宋良犬。	'the magpie'/'the jackdaw' breed	
shān 獠		a dog	
shān 獠/獠	惡健犬也。	a strong and fierce dog	
shuāi 獠	犬名。	dog breed	
tí 猗	犬也。	a dog	
tóng 獠	犬名。	dog breed	
wá 狴		yellow dog	
wō 猗/猗	小犬。/犬名。	small-size dog / dog breed	
xiǎn 獠/獠	長喙犬。一曰黑犬黃頭。	a dog with a long snout/muzzle	
xiāo 獠	犬黃白色。	a white-yellow dog	
yán 獠	犬也。	yellow head black body dog	
yàn 狻/狻	一曰逐虎犬。	tiger-chasing dog	
yóu 獠/猗	一曰隴西謂犬子爲猗。	large dog / puppy (Longxi dial.)	
yóu 猗	五尺大犬也。	dog large 5-chi	
zàng 獠	妄彊犬也。	wild and stubborn dog	
zào 猗	黑犬。	black dog	
zhào 猗/猗	犬有力也。	strong dog	
zhōng 猗	犬名。	dog breed	
zhòng 猗		Pekinese dog; lap dog	
zhù 猗	黃犬黑頭。	a yellow dog with black head	
zhuó 猗	猛犬。	a fierce dog	

Table 9 B

DISYLLABIC			
Character	Binomials/ Disyllabic words	Ancient dictionary definition	English
chī 獾	See nóng 獾		
fén 獾	See zhù 獾		
gēng 狢	See pī 狢		
hú 狐	See pán 獾		
huáng 獾	See yáng 狢 Chǔhuáng 楚獾	犬屬也。	Canis genus/dog breed
lú 獾	Hánlú 韓獾	天下駿犬。	an excellent breed of dog
nóng 獾/獾	nóngchī 獾獾	犬惡毛也。	a dog with shaggy hair
pán 獾	pánhú 獾狐	犬也。/犬短尾。	a short-tailed dog
pī 狢	pīgēng 狢狢	犬名。	a kind of dog
sōu 猯/猯/猯	See yōu 猯		
wēi 猯	wēiyī 猯猯	犬屬。	Canis genus
xiāo 獾/獾/獾	See xiē 獾		
xiē 獾/獾/獾	xiēxiāo 獾獾 xiēxiē 獾獾	短喙犬也。	short-muzzle dog short-muzzle dog
yáng 狢/狢	yánghuáng 狢獾	犬也。	a kind of dog
yī 猯	yīyú 猯猯 See wēi 猯	犬子也。	a puppy
yōu 猯/猯	yōusōu 猯猯	南越人名犬。	famous dog breed of Southern Yue
yú 猯	See yī 猯		
zhù 狂	zhùfén 狂獾	犬屬	Canis genus

There are 190 ‘Types of animals’ “獸也。”/“獸名。” based on the dog-sign: 146 monosyllabic + 66 syllabograms as parts of 44 binomials (See Tab. 10 A and 10 B). ‘Dog’ as a carrier of the generic meaning ‘animal’ exceeds the scope of ‘mammals’ and covers ‘birds’ (e.g. *kuáng* 狂/*xiāo* 獾 ‘owl’; *yá* 雅 ‘a type of bird’), ‘reptiles’ (e.g. *shé* 蛇 ‘snake’; *náolǜ* 忽律 ‘alligator’), ‘molluscs’ (e.g. *biāo* 鱗 ‘shellfish’⁹) and even ‘insects’ (e.g. *yán* 蜒/犴 ‘millipede’), etc. There is one case of ‘plant name’ – *bóqiě/páoju* 獾且 ‘mioga ginger’/‘a type of banana’, but we suspect that if appropriate sources specializing in flora are accessed, the dog-sign is very likely to appear as a character or a character module in disyllabic or polysyllabic names of plants.

⁹ Here the dog-sign is in its tripled form, as such signifying ‘whirlwind’/‘spiral’.

Table 10 A

MONOSYLLABIC			
Animal name	Ancient dictionary definition/ Likeness	English	Interchangeability
àn 狻	貙獍。/似貙。	tiger-like fierce animal	豸(豸)
bā 豨	牝豕也。/二歲爲豨。	mother pig / 2-year old pig	豨(豸)
bān 獬	獸名。		
bào 豹/狻	似虎， 圈文。/似虎。	leopard; panther	豹(豸)
bì 狨	獸名。/似豕。		
bì 獬	獸名。		
biān 獭/獺	獭之別名。	otter	
biāo 贔/蝨	貝也。	shellfish	
chá 獾		badger-like wild animal	
chà 獬	水獸名。	a kind of sea animal	
chái 豺/狻		wolf; jackal	豺(豸)
chái 狻	獸名。		
chán 獬	狡兔也， 兔之駿者。	a cunning hare; a wily rabbit	
chī 獬	鷲獸。	a fierce wild beast	獬/獬(豸)
chī 獬	獸名。		
chù 狻		a lemur of the genus Cynocephalus	
chuán 狗	獸名。/似豹。	like leopard, but with fewer patterns	
chuò 貘/貘/貘	獸也。/似兔， 足與鹿同。	like a rabbit, but bigger, with hooves	
cǐ 獬	雌貉也。	female Japanese badger	
dǎn 獬	獸名。		
dāng 獬	獸名。		
dí 狄		a type of hornless river deer	
dí 獬	特雄也。	bull / castrated ox	獬(牛)
dī 狻/狻	似狐。	fox-like animal	
diāo 貂	鼠屬。	marten; mink; sable	貂(豸)/貂(鼠)
dú 獨	猿類也。	a type of ape	
dú 獨	獸名。/如鼠。	a type of rat-like animal	
dú 獨	獨獸。/如虎， 白身， 豕鬣， 尾如馬。	solitary tiger-like animal	

Table 10 A (Continued)

è 狃	豕絕有力。	a large, very strong pig	豸(豕)
fèn 獐	羊名。	a type of sheep	豸(豕)/豸(豕)
gǎn 獦	羊有力也。/羊牝謂之獦。	big and strong sheep / a ewe	
gēng 狃	獸名。	a type of animal	
gòu 獡	獸名，食猴。/似犬。	dog-like animal, eats monkeys	
hài 獢	獸名。	kind of beast	
hān 犴/狎/狎	獸名。	moose; elk	
hāo 獣	豕名。	a type of pig	
hāo 獤	貉類，色白尾小如狗。	raccoon dog (Nyctereutes procyonoides)	
hé 貉	狐貉。	foxes and badgers	豸(豕)
hóu 猴/狒	靈也。	monkey; ape; macaque	
hù 狒/狒	獸名，似獼。	monkey-like, longer tail	
huá 狒	海獸名，狒無骨，入虎口，... 自內齧之。	eel	
huān 獦/狎		badger	
huán 獦	豕屬。	porcupine	豸(豕)
huàn 獦	獸名。		
huāng 獦/獦	狼屬。	a kind of wolf	
huī 獦/輝	獸名。		豸(豕)
jiā 狒	豕也。	pig	
jiā 狒/狒	獼也。	a large ape in Western China	
jiān 狒	三歲豕。	3-year old pig	豸(豕)
jiào 獡	狼子。/狼牡獡，牝狼，其子獡。	wolf puppies / crossbreed between he-badger and she-wolf	
hǒu 狒	北方獸名。/似犬。	a fierce Mongolian wolf	
hú 狐	禊獸也。鬼所乘之。	fox	
jīng 狒	獸名。		
jū 狒	獼屬。	ape; monkey; macaque	
jú 狒	獸名。脣厚而碧色。	ape	
jù 獦/虞	獸名。	big pig; boar	
jué 狒	獸名。		

Table 10 A (Continued)

jué 獾	母猴也。	monkey; a large ape	
kāi 獬	獸也。		
kàng 狃	猬也。	hedgehog	
kuáng 狂	鳥名。茅鴟。/似鷹	owl	
kūn 狽	獸名。		
lái 狻	狸也。	fox	狻(豸)
láng 狼	銳頭，白頰，高前，廣後。	wolf	
léi/lèi 獾/鷓/蠅/雛	飛生鳥。/鼠形。	flying squirrel	鷓(鳥)蠅(虫)雛(佳)
lí 狸	伏獸。/似貓。	fox	狸(豸)
lì 獬/獬/獬	獸名。		獬(豸)
liú 獬/獬	竹鼠也。	sea otter/guinea pig/a kind of big rat	獬(鼠)
lóu 獾		badger; bear	獾(豸)
mǎ 獾	獸名。	badger-like	
māo 貓		cat	
méi 獾	獸名。	ferret-badger	
méng 獾	雌之小者。紫黑色，能捕鼠。	mongoose	
míng 獾	小豕。	piglet	獾(豸)
mò/mú 獾	獸名。	panther; tapir	
nà 狃	獸名。		
náo 狃/狃	猴也。/猿屬。	monkey with yellow hair	
nǎo 獬/獬/獬	雌狃也。	Japanese raccoon dog	獬(豸)
páo 狃	獸也。	a small spotted deer of North China	獾(鹿)
pí 狃	白狐。/豹屬。	white fox; leopard; panther	獾(豸)
qiān 狃	獸名。		
ráng 獾/獾	獸名。/狃屬。	type of monkey	
rì 狃	獸也。		
róng 獾	猛獸也。	fierce beast; zebu; humped ox	獾(豸)
róng 狃	獸名。其毛柔長可藉。	golden monkey; marmoset	
sāo 狃	獸名。		
shà 狃/狃	豕母也。	female pig	
shān 狃/狃/狃	獸名。/似狼。	wolf-like	

Table 10 A (Continued)

shān 獾	獸名。/似兔。	rabbit-like	
shé 蛇		snake	蛇(虫)
shēng 狴		yellow weasel; Japanese mink	鼬(鼠)
shī 獅/狷/狷		lion	
shī 猷/豨		swine; pig; hog	豨(豕)
sì 狻/狻	狸子。	fox-cub	狻(豕)
sōu 猯	豕也。	pig	
sù 獐	獸也。		
sui 獠/獠	獠也。	a castrated hog	獠(豕)
pī 狻	狸子。	fox-cub	狻(豕)
tǎ/tà 獭/獭	如小狗也。水居食魚。	otter	
tóng 狨	野彘也。	boar	狨(豕)
tú 狢	獸名。		
tuān 獐	野豬。	boar	獐(豕)
tún 狶/狶		a suckling pig	狶/豚(豕)
tuō 狶/狶	獸名。		
wéi 獠	豕豚。	a castrated hog; pig	
wěi 猯/猯	毛刺也。	hedg hog	
wèi 狻	似獼猴。	long-tailed monkey	狻(虫)
wēng 獠	豬也。	pig; hog	
wú 狻/狻	獸名。善啼。/如猿	gibbon	
xī 獠	獸名。		
xī 獠	豕也。	pig; hog	獠(豕)
xī 猷/豨		swine; pig; hog	豨(豕)
xiān 獠/獠	獸名。		
xiāo 獠/梟	不孝鳥也。	owl	
xié 獠	獸名。		
xiè 狻	雌貉也。	female Japanese badger	
xìn 猷/豨		swine; pig; hog	豨(豕)
xìn 狻	小獸，有臭，色黃，食鼠。	cat-like animal	
xióng 獠/熊		bear	
xū 狻/狻	猿屬。	a type of monkey/ape	
xù 獐	獸名。		

Table 10 A (Continued)

xuān 狽		young racoon dog; porcupine	豸(豸)
xuè 狻/狻	獸名。		
yá 狻	鳥也。/鳥名。	a type of bird	
yà 狻	獸。/似獾。	badger	
yán 狻/狻		millipede	蛭(虫)
yán 狻	獸名。		
yán 狻	羊有力也。/羊牝。	big and strong sheep / ewe	
yāng 狻	獸名。貉也。	badger; fox-like animal	狻(豸)
yàng 狻/狻	獸如師子，食虎豹及人。	lion-like beast	
yáo 狻	獸名。	jackal	
yí 狻	兽名。		
yì 狻	狸子。	a kind of fox/monkey	狻(豸)
yìn 狻	獸名。山驢也。	wild pig/donkey	
yíng 狻	獸名。黃狐也。		
yòu 狻/狻/狻- /狻		black ape/weasel	狻(豸)
yú 狻	獸名。		
yù 狻	獸也。	jackal	
yuán 狻/狻/狻/狻		ape	
zhàn 狻	獸名。	a kind of animal	
zhāng 狻	麋屬。	roebuck; hornless river deer	麋(鹿)
zhào 狻	獸名。		
zhé 狻	豕別名。	fine pig	豕(豸)
zhuó 狻	似獼猴而黃。/禺屬。	a kind of monkey	
zhuó 狻	似鹿白尾。	deer-like animal with white tail	麋(虫)
zhuó 狻/狻		panther-like animal; jaguar	

Table 10 B

POLYSYLLABIC					
Character	Binomials	Dissyllabic/ Trisyllabic	Ancient dictionary definition	English	Interchangeability
àn 犴	See bì 狴				
bī 狴	bīyàn 狴狴		獸名。		
bì 狴	bì'àn 狴犴		獸也。	four-footed animal; tapir	
bì 狴	bixié 狴邪			platypus	獬(象)
chán 獫	chánhú 獫 獫				
chū 獮	chūmàn 獮 獮		獸名。/似狸	a tiger-like fierce beast	獮獮(豸)
dàn 狫/狫	See gé 獮 See liè 獮				
dú 獨	dúyuán 獨 獮		獮類也。/似獮 而大	ape	
gǎng 狽	gǎngláng 狽 狽		獸名。		
fèi 狽/猱	fèifèi 狽狽		被髮，迅走，食 人。	baboon	
gé 獮	gédàn 獮狫		巨狼也。	giant wolf	
guì 獮/貴	See méng 獮				
guō 猱	guōrán 猱 猱			a kind of monkey	
hóu 猴/猴	hóusūn 猴 獮			macaque; ape; mon- key	
hú 獮	húsūn 獮狫 See chán 獫 See yóu 狽			a kind of monkey	
huò 獮		huòjiāpí 獮 狽 ⁹		okapi/the forest gi- raffe	
jiā 狽	See jué 獮				

¹⁰ With very few exceptions (e.g. transliterations like *měngmǎ* 猛獁 ‘mammoth’, *huòjiāpí* 獮狽 ‘okapi’, etc.), HDZD does not include polysyllabic names of modern animals.

Table 10 B (Continued)

jīa 狛		See huò 獾		okapi/the forest giraffe	
jié 狛	jiéjué 狛狛		獸名。		
jīng 狛		huángjīng 黃狛	獸名。	a small yellow-and-black deer	
jū 狙	jūró 狙如		鼠		
jú 狛		shíjú 石狛	獸名。食猴也。	a kind of animal	
jù 狙	jùxū 狙獯		似驃	off-spring of a stallion and a she-mule	駉驃(馬)
jué 獾	juéjiā 獾狛			monkey; ape	獾(豕)
jué 狛	See jié 狛		。		
láng 狼	See gǎng 狛 See shì 狛				
lì 狛	See shē 狛				
liè 獵	lièdàn 獵狛		獸名。似狼	wolf-like animal	
lù 獺	zǐlù 子獺		熊也。	bear	
luó 獾	See zhū 狛				
mǎ 獾	See měng 獾				
màn 獾	mànyán 獾狛 See chū 獾		大獸名。似狸。	badger-like animal	獾(豕)
méng 獾/蒙	méngguì 獾狛			mongoose	
měng 猛	měngmǎ 猛獾	měngshì 猛氏	獸名。	mammoth	
mí 獾/狛	míwèi 獾狛		獾狛。	macaques	
mò 狛	See tuō 狛				

Table 10 B (Continued)

náo 獠/獠	náotíng 獠 獠		猴也。猿屬。	monkey with yellow hair	
náo 獠	náolù 獠律			alligator	
náo 獠/獠/獠	náoxiāo 獠 獠		獸名。	ape; mon- key	
ní 猊	See táng 獠				
pí 狔		See huò 獠			
qióng 獠	qióngqí 窮 奇		獸屬。似虎。	tiger like animal	
qiú 狃	qiúyú 狃狃			armadillo	
rán 獫	See guō 獫				
shē 猯	shēli 猯猯			a wild cat / lynx	
shǐ 狔	See yāng 狔				
shì 狔/狔	shiláng 狔 狼		狼屬。如狐。		
sūn 獠	See hóu 猴 See hú 狃				
tà 獠	tàxié 獠獠		獸也。		
táng 獠	tángní 獠猊			a type of beast	唐
tíng 獠/獠	See náo 獠				
tóng 狃	tóngtóng 狃狃		如豚。	pig-like	狃(豕)
tuō 狃	tuōtuó 狃駝 tuōmò 狃狃		驢父牛母。似熊	camel mule/tapir	
wèi 狃	See mí 獠		。		
xiāo 獠	See náo 獠				
xié 獠	See tà 獠				
xīng 猩/狃	xīngxīng 猩猩			orangutan	
xū 獠	See jù 狃				
yán 獠	See màn 獠				
yàn 狃	bīyàn 狃狃		獸名。		
yāngshǐ 狔 狔	yāngshǐ 狔 狔		獸名。似犬。	dog-like animal	

Table 10 B (Continued)

yóu 犹/猶	yóuhú 犹糊		獸名。獾屬	a kind of monkey	
yú 猓	See qiú 狃				
yuán 猿	See dú 獨				
zhé 狻	zhémò 狻駝		驢父馬母。/驢父牛母。	mule	駝(馬)
zhū 猪	zhūluó 猪獠			pig; hog (Wu dial.)	猪(豕)/猪(豕)

The ‘Mythical animals’, 41 in total (16 monosyllabic + 36 syllabograms as parts of 25 binomials), are defined as “A type of animal”. “獸也。”/“獸名。” or the dictionary information comprised merely of “Animal, mentioned in ancient books”. In spite of the fact that most of them come from *The Classic of Mountains and Seas Shānhǎijīng* 《山海經》 and their description does not correspond to any known animal, we still dealt with a degree of uncertainty how to distinguish between animals that have once existed and legendary ones.

Table 11 A

MONOSYLLABIC				
Character/ Word	Dictionary data	Characteristic features	English	Inrerchan- geability
fēi 斐			Mentioned in ancient books	
bèi 狽	獸名。狼屬也。	生子或欠一足，二足者，相附而行，離則顛。	A legendary animal with no forelegs, which rode a wolf	
bó 𤝵/狻		如狼。善驅羊。	Lion-dog shrine guardians	
fù 狻	獸名。	似羊。	Sheep-like strange animal	
hù 𤝵	獸名。	犬屬。	A fierce animal with dog head and horse tail, yellow-and-black in color	𤝵(豕)
huán 獠	獸	狀如牛而三足	Bull-like with three legs	獠
jī 狻	獸名	兔喙而蛇尾。/ 獸如狐，出則有兵。	A legendary beast with rabbit-mouth and snake-tail	

Table 11 A (Continued)

jī 狻/狻/狻- /狻			Mentioned in ancient books	
jiǎo 狡	獸		Legendary dog-like beast with leopard patterns and bull horns	
jìng 獍	獸名。食人。	狀如虎豹而小。始生，還食其母。	Tiger-like, eats its mother after it is born	獍(豸)
nà 狻/狻			Seal-like, no front legs, with horns	狻/狻(豸)
lái 獒/來		塊然一物，無頭眼手足，毛如漆，夜有聲如雷。	Lump-like creature with no head, eyes, hands or legs that produces thunder-like sounds	
lǐ 狻	獸	其狀如彙，赤如丹火。	Purple in colour hedgehog-like animal	
lín 獒/獒	獸	狀如犬，虎爪，有甲。善駛，食者不風。	Dog-like animal with tiger paws and armour	
shuò 獒		獸似熊。	A bear-like legendary beast	
yǎo 獒	獸名。		Panther-patterned head	

Table 11 B

POLYSYLLABIC				
Character	Binomial/Disyllabic words	Dictionary data	English	Interchangeability
áo 獒/獒	áo yè 獒狻		Man-eating beast white in colour, with bull-body and 4 horns	
bèi 狻	See láng 狼			
bì 獒	bì bì 獒獒	狐屬也。狀如狐而有翼，音如鴻鴈。	Winged fox	

Table 11 B (Continued)

bó 獬/狻	bótú 獬訖 (獬狔)	獸也，目在背上。	Goat-like animal with 4 ears and 9 tails	獬(羊)
cán 豨	shāncán 山豨	長尺餘，袒身，捕蝦蟹以食。	Dwarf-like monster	
chù 狺	chùtī 狺踢	兩首獸也。左右有首。	Two-headed	跂(足)
dòng 狻	dòngdòng 狻狻	一角一目，目在耳。	Unicorn	羴(羊)
fēng 狻	fēngmǔ 狻母	有尾，小打即死，因風更生。	Animal that plays dead upon seeing a human, and is revived when wind blows	
jìng 獬	xiāojìng 鼻獬	狀如虎豹而小。始生，還食其母。	Tiger-like, eats its mother after it is born	豨(豕)
jū 狙/獼	See piàn 獼			
láng 狼	lángbèi 狼狽	生子或欠一足，二足者，相附而行，離則顛。	Animal with no forelegs, which rode a wolf	
mò 獼	mòwèi 獼獼	長短如人，著敗衣，手虎爪。伺人獨自，欲食人腦。	Monster	
mǔ 狻	See fēng 狻			
ní 狻	See suān 狻			豨(豕)麋(鹿)
páo 狻	páoxiāo 狻鴞	羊身人面，目在腋下，虎齒人爪，音如嬰兒。	Man-eating taotie-like animal	
pí 狻	píxiū 狻狻		Beast with dragon head and lion-like body, hooves, wings and tail.	豨(豕)
piàn 獼/獼	piàn jū 獼狙	似猿，頭如犬。	Ape-like beast with dog-like head	
róng 狻	See yù 狻			
rú 獼	See zhū 狻			

Table 11 B (Continued)

suān 狻	suānní 狻猊	如虬貓，食虎豹者。	Lion-like fabulous beast/Tibetan lion	豸(豸)
wèi 獬	See mò 獬			
xī 狻	xīxī 狻狻	獸似熊。	Bear-like legendary beast	
xiè 獬/解	xièzhì 獬豸/廌		Mythical unicorn that gored the guilty person at court	
xiū 狻	See pí 狻			豸(豸)
yà 狻/獬/狻	yàyǔ 狻猊	似羆，虎爪，食人，迅走。	Legendary man-eating beast	豸(豸)
yè 狻	See áo 狻			
yí 豸	yíjī 豸即	其狀如膜犬，赤喙，赤目，	Dog-like animal with red mouth, red eyes, white tail.	豸(豸)
yīng 豸	yīngrú 豸如	其狀如鹿而白尾，馬足人手而四角。	Deer-like animal with white tail, horse hooves, human hands and 4 horns	
yù 狻/禺	yùróng 狻狻	母猴屬。頭似鬼。	Monkey-like, with the head of a ghost	
yǔ 豸	See yà 豸			豸(豸)
yù 豸	dúyù 獨豸	獸如赤豹，五尾。	Purple panther with 5 tails	
zé 豸	báizé 白豸		Sacred animal	
zhēng 豸	rúzhēng 如豸	似豹，一角五尾。/ 獸似狐，有翼。	Strange beast	
zhì 豸	lóngzhì 龍豸	九頭。	Nine-headed animal	豸(人)
zhì 豸/豸	See xiè 豸			豸
zhū 豸/朱	zhūrú 豸孺		Fox-like animal, covered in fish scales	

The ‘Proper names’, 102 in total, are divided in subcategories: Tab. 12 – ‘Ethnic groups’/‘nationalities’ (23 + 20 syllabograms as parts of 15 binomials); Tab. 13 – ‘Surnames and Personal names’ (31 + 1) and Tab. 14 – ‘Toponyms’ (10 + 11 syllabograms as parts of 10 binomials). Here 3 names of constellations (*Dòu* 獬; *Gǒu* 狗; *Láng* 狼) can be included, and the characters for the Qing dynasty reign period *Xiánfēng* 咸豐¹¹ (1851–1861).

Table 12

Monosyllabic	Variants (without radical ‘dog’)	Disyllabic	Variants (without radical ‘dog’)
Bī 狴		chā 狴 Chāáo 狴獠	
Dàn 狃		dú 獨 Dúlóng 獨龍	
Dí 狄		gē 狄 Gēlán 狄獫; Gēláo 狄獠/狴; Gēlíng 狄伶; Gēlóu 狄獠	
Dòng 狃	侗(人)	huáng 獠 See yáng 狴	
Jí 狴		kǔ 狴 Kǔzòng 狴獠	
Lái 狴	豸(豸)	lǎn 獠 See gē 狄	仡佬(人)
Láng 狼	佺(人)	láo 狴/獠 Láoláo 狴狴 See chā 狴; See gē 狄; See mù 狴	
Mò 狴	貉(豸)	lì 獠 Lìlì 獠獠	
Nóng 獠		líng 狴/獠 See gē 狄	
Qiāng 狴	羌	lóu 獠 See gē 狄	
Qiú 狴		luó 狴/獠 Luólóu 狴狴	
Ráng 獠		mù 狴/狴 Mùláo 狴狴	仡佬(人)
Shā 狴		mú 狴 Múyáo 狴狴	莫~
Xī 狴		pú 狴 Púyán 狴鉛	濮~
Yà 狴		xiǎn 獠/狴 Xiǎnyǎn 獠狴	
Yáo 狴	猺(人)/瑶(玉)	xūn 獠 Xūnyù 獠鬻	猺(豸)~
Yí 狴	夷	yáo 狴 See mú 狴	
Yī 狴		yáng 狴 See huáng 獠	
*Yīn 狴 ¹¹		yǎn 狴 See xiǎn 獠	

¹¹ The Sinocentric worldview is responsible for the presence of radical ‘dog’ in 43 characters used in names of non-Chinese ethnic groups (14 of which ancient). Most of them have later been replaced by radical ‘human’ 亻 *rén*. Qing dynasty rulers, however, have consciously added the module ‘dog’ to *xián* 咸 ‘concord’ and *fēng* 豐 ‘abundance’, to emphasize their non-Chinese origin.

¹² According to 《字彙補》 the pronunciation of the character is unknown “音未詳。”。 Further such cases are marked by asterisk (*).

Table 12 (Continued)

Zhǎo 獾		zòng 狻 See kǔ 狓	
*Zhòng 狨	仲(人)		
Zhuàng 獾	僮(人)/壯		
*狨			

Table 13

Sur-name	Variants (without 'dog')	Sur-name	Variants (without 'dog')	Sur-name	Variants (without 'dog')	(Double) Sur-name	Variants (without 'dog')
Àn 犴		Gǒu 狗		Liè 獵		Wáng 狂	王
Bào 豹	豹	Hú 狐		Māo 猫		Xiàn 獻	
Chǎn 獫		Huò 獲		Měng 猛		Yī 猗	
Dí 狄		Láng 狼		Nòu 獯		Yī 猗	
Dú 獨		Lǐ 狸		Qiāng 狓	羌	Yóu 犹/猶	
Fēi/Fèi 斐	斐/斐	Liè 獵		Róng 狓		Linghú 令狐	
Personal names							
Gāo 獬	Huò 獲	Shān 獬	Yǎn 狽	Gé 狓	Pí 狓	Shǐ 猗	*猗

Table 14

Monosyllabic	Type	Dissyllabic	Type	Variants (without 'dog')
Dí 狄	地名	hǎng 狼 Duhǎng 都狼	地名	
Hǎn 獬	地名	huì 獬 Huimò 獬貊	古国名	蕨/穢(禾)
Huí 狽	鄉名	làng 狼 Bólàng 博狼	地名	
Huò 獲	縣名/古水名	liè 獵 Lièshān 獵山	山名	
Lǐ 狸	地名	luó 獬 See shǔ 狓 Luó[...]shān 羅狓山	山名	
Tóng 狓	地名	náo 狓/狓 Náoshān 狓山	山名	
Xiāo 狓	縣名	quán 狓/獬 Quánshì 狓氏	縣名	
Yá 狓	古河名	shǔ 狓 Shǔluó 狓獬	地名	
Zhù 獬/狓	村名	sù 狓 Sùzhū 狓蟲	山名	
*狓	地名	yuán 獬 Yuándào 獬道	縣名	獬(豕)
		*狓 See luó 羅		

Dog/animal characteristics can be transferred to humans, e.g. *jiǎo* 狡 ‘young dog’ → ‘young and strong (person)’; *kàng* 抗 ‘strong dog’/ *línlín* 獠獠 ‘strong (for a dog)’ → ‘strong (person)’; *yán* 獾/獾 ‘fierce dog’ → ‘fierce (person)’, etc. This can disclose the path by which abstract meanings are generated, e.g. *měng* 猛 ‘strong dog’ → ‘ferocious’; ‘violent’; ‘brave’; *chái* 豺/豺 ‘jackal’ → ‘cruel’; ‘wicked’; *huá* 猾 ‘boneless marine creature’ → ‘sly’; ‘cunning’, etc. Tracing the infiltration of the sign ‘dog’ in morphemes and phonemes with abstract meanings we detect 65 cases (31 monosyllabic + 36 syllabograms as part of 34 binomials) (See Tab. 15). Their connotation is predominantly derogatory (approximately 25 clusters; see Fig. 1) vs. commendatory (approximately 15 clusters; see Fig. 2) and 1 neutral – the binomial *chēnchūān* 獫狫 ‘continuous’; ‘uninterrupted’.

Table 15

Phoneme/Morpheme/Monosyllabic word	Binomials	English meaning	Interchangeability
chái 豺/豺		cruel; wicked; mean	
cāng 獐	cāngnáng 獐囊	chaotic; disordered; muddled; hurried; rushed; pressurised	儻(人) chēngráng 搶攘(手)
chāng 猖	chāngjué 猖獗 chāngkuáng 猖狂	mad; reckless; unruly furious; aggressive rash; unrestrained; defiant; aggressive	
chàng 獐		disappointed; dissatisfied	悵(心)
chēn 獫/獫	chēnchūān 獫狫	continuous; uninterrupted	
chí 豺	chíyí 豺鬣	sharp; angular; precipitous; rigorous	
cù 獾		strong; unyielding; tough; powerful	
chuān 獫	See chēn 獫		
cūi 獫	See wèi 猥		
dāi 獫		dull-minded; simple; stupid	
dú 獨		alone; single; solitary	
ě/yī 猗	ě'yī'nuó 猗儻	gentle and beautiful	
guǎng 獠/獠	guǎngguǎng 獠獠 guǎngguì 獠獫	fierce; rude; uncivilized; unruly valiant; intrepid; lionhearted	

Table 15 (Continued)

guì 獼/獼	See guǎng 獼		
fān 狃	liánfān 連狃	meandering; mild and indirect; tactful	
hàn 獼		courageous; brave; violent	悍(心)
hóu 猴		clever; smart	
huá 猾	huáxiá 猾黠 See jiǎo 狡	sly; cunning; deceitful crafty; cunning; shrewd; tricky	
huò 獲		generous; grand; great	
jiǎo 狡	jiǎohuá 狡猾 jiǎokuài 狡獪 jiǎozhà 狡詐	young and strong sly; cunning, deceitful; treacherous sly; cunning; crafty sturdy and brave; fast; violent; deceitful	
jū 狙	jūhuá 狙猾 jūjué 狙譎 jūkuáng 狙狂	(monkey-like) sly/cunning/ deceitful deceitful cunning, deceitful, treacherous	
juàn 狃/狃		overcautious; impetuous; upright	
jué 獼	See chāng 猖		
kàng 狃	See piǎo 獼 See qiè 獼	strong	
kuài 獼	See jiǎo 狡		
kuāng 狃	kuāngráng 狃 勤	terrified; flurried; zealous	劬(力)
kuáng 狂/狃/獸	See chāng 猖	insane; mad; violent; wild; arrogant; stiff-necked; unruly; unrestrained; violent; ferocious	悻(心)
láng 狼	lángkàng 狼狃 lángdāng 狼當 lángmáng 狼忙	fierce and malicious; clumsy; staggering perplexed; dejected; dispirited hurried; impetuous; rash	
lì 戾/戾		perverse, recalcitrant, rebellious	

Table 15 (Continued)

liáo 獠		fierce; ferocious; inhuman	
lín 猓/獠	línlín 獠獠	strong	
mào 貌/貌		superficial; ostensible; seeming	
měng 猛		fierce; ferocious; violent; severe; brave	
nǐ 狃	See yī 猗		
níng 寧/獠	See zhēng 狰	malevolent, fierce, sinister	
píxiū 狷	píxiū 狷狷	fierce; valiant; heroic; brave	獠(豸)
pī 狍	pīchāng 狍猖	mad; reckless; unruly rash; unrestrained; defiant; aggressive	
pī 狍	pīpī 狍狍	(place) alive with wild animals	
piào 獠	piàokàng 獠犷	cunning; crafty; sly; wily; artful vigorous; strong	
piào 獠		light; airy; agile; nimble; frivolous	獠(人)
qiè 猓	qièkàng 猓犷	untameable; untamed; uncultured	
què 狎		timid; lacking in courage; cowardly	
tà 狎	tàtà 狎狎	greedy	
wěi 猓	wěicuī 猓獯 wěisuǒ 猓鎖	abject; despicable despicable, abject; vulgar; ugly; short	
wěi 猓/猓		vulgar; low; wanton; obscene; numerous	
xiá 狹	àixiá 隘狹	narrow, limited; nar- row-minded narrow, confined	
xiāo 獠		brave	
xiè 獠	See zhāi 獠		
xiū 狷	See pí 狷		
yán 獠/獠		fierce	
yáo 獠		cunning; artful; crafty	

Table 15 (Continued)

yī 猗	yī'nǐ 猗狔 yī'nuó 猗儻	pretty charming and gentle; tender; marvelous gentle and beautiful	旖旎(人)
yín 玃/玃		rude; unpolished; rustic and coarse	
zhǎi 獬	zhǎixiè 獬廌	arrogant	儻(人)
zhēng 狰	zhēngníng 狰 狞	malevolent, fierce, sinister; hideous	
zhì 獬/獬		frenzied	

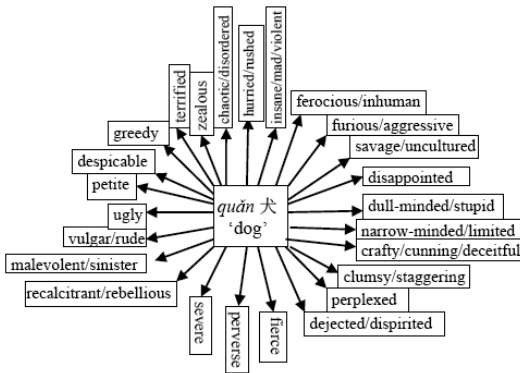


Fig. 1

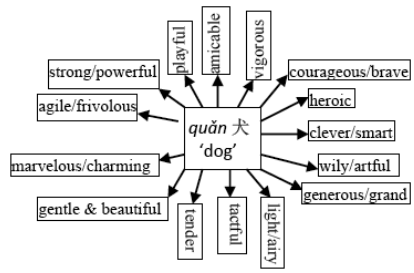


Fig. 2

By ‘signification leap’ (Tab. 16) we understand a rather extreme extension of the meaning with no explicit connection. Among the 59 characters, involved in more than 70 leaps, some are a result of character interchangeability (e.g. *bì* 弊 interchangeable with *bì* 髡, thus the meaning ‘to collapse’, etc.), others are variants (e.g. *shù* 獬 as a variant of *shù* 墅, thus the meaning ‘villa’, etc.). Even though some of them have an intermediate meaning that can direct us to the new meaning (e.g. *bì* 狴/狴 ‘a fierce beast’ → ‘a fierce beast depicted on the prison door’ → ‘prison’, or the binomial type: *lángbèi* 狼狽 ‘a legendary animal with no forelegs that rode a wolf’ → ‘to walk slowly because of the wrong position of the feet’ → ‘dire straights’, etc.), most of them seem distant jumps (e.g. *dī* 狄 ‘barbarian tribe’ → ‘petty official’; *jù* 昊 ‘dog’s way of looking’ → ‘to stretch wings’; *náo* 獯 ‘frightened dog’ → ‘wall painter’, etc.). Here some terms in art, astronomy and medicine are present (e.g. *náo* 獯 ‘monkey’ → ‘a way of playing the strings of the *qin*’; *dàn* 狽 ‘a giant wolf’ → ‘a woman character in Chinese opera’; *fàn* 犯 ‘commit crime’ → ‘the five aggregates entering a certain constellation’; *hú* 狐 ‘fox’ → ‘name of a disease’, etc.).

Table 16

Character	Original meaning	Intermediate meaning	Signification leap	Character/ Radical inter- changeability
àn 犴/獬	a fierce Mongolian dog		prison; to go to court	
bì 狴/狴	a fierce beast	a fierce beast depicted on the prison door	prison	
bì 弊			collapse; die	bì 毙
biāo 猋	dog running	whirlwind	a type of shellfish a type of grass	飊(風) 贓(貝)
dàn 狔	a giant wolf		a woman character in Chinese opera	dàn 旦
dí 狄	barbarian tribe		a petty official	
dūn 獬	dog (Korean character)		sable's skin	
duó/yì 戮			to ruin; to dislike; to be weary of; to exterminate	yì/dù 戮(女)
fān 狝	lián(~) 連(~) to walk one after the other	meandering; mild and indirect	to turn hand-springs; to somersault; to toss about; to take a circuitous route	
fàn 犯/狝	commit crime, violate; criminal		(astr.) the five aggregates entering a certain constellation/ change of tonality in ci and the ballad	
hóu 猴	monkey	to squat like a monkey	to squat	
hú 狐/狐	fox hú hé 狐貉	foxes and badgers	a character in Chinese opera/ (Chinese med.) name of a disease/ garments made from the skin of foxes and badgers	

Table 16 (Continued)

huán 獾	big dog	(~)huán (~)獾 dog movement	animal dancing (courtship dance)	
jì 蹟			footprints; traces	jì 蹟(足)
jiǎng 獎/獎	to set a dog on; to incite		to give award; reward; prize	
jū 狙	a dog that bites/ doesn't bite		to spy; to watch for; to lie	
jú 昊	dog's way of looking	a bird watching in flight	to stretch wings (for a bird)	
juàn 獾	to jump fast		rash; honest and straightforward	躑(足)
jué 獾	monkey		snatch away, seize; catch	攫(手)
láng 狼	(~)bèi (~)狈 a legendary animal with no forelegs that rode a wolf	to walk slowly because of the wrong position of the feet	dire straits; to be in a difficult/awk- ward situation	踉(足)
lì 獄			law	
lù 楛			to shoot an arrow	
luó 獾			(~)pǒ (~)狍 bend down; to walk with a stoop; bend down	
māo 貓 máo	cat		to hide to arch (the spine)	
niǔ 犟	dog's stubborn nature		to covet; to be accustomed; to take a post; animal footprints	
nù 狃			to confuse; to delude	
náo 獾	frightened dog		wall painter	
náo 猱/猱	monkey		a special way of playing the strings of the qin by pressing and vibrating/ a char- acter in Beijing opera	

Table 16 (Continued)

pī 狃	fox-cub	(~)pī (~)狃 (place) alive with wild ani- mals	(~)zhēn (~) 獫 natural wilderness; jungle	
qiāo 糲			confuse; disorder; disturbance, to fail; to be exposed	
què 猷			to reach; high	
sāo 獯/獯			ghost; apparition	
shòu 狩	winter hunting	imperial tour	go on a punitive expedition	
shù 獮/狩			villa; country house	shù 墅(土)
sī 獄/獄			a warden; execu- tioner (in ancient China); minister of public works; to observe; to watch	
tián 狝	hunt		till/cultivate land	畝(女)/甸(勺)
tún 狷	piglet		to shuffle along without lifting the feet	豚(豕)
wěi 猥	despicable		pron. I	
xiá 狎	trainable	to tame; do- mesticate;	to be improperly familiar with; to disregard	
xiá 狹	narrow		to pinch	狎
xiǎn 獮/獮	autumn hunting		to kill	
xiàn 獻/獻	sacrificial dog	to offer	celebrate; show, display	
xiāo 獠	to roar		vulgar language	
xiè 獬			a type of hat	
xīng 猩	orangutan		scarlet red	
xùn 狗			to follow	徇(彳)
yán 獠/獠	dogs fighting		to go to law; in- dictment	
yàn 厭/厭	overeat dog meat	satiate	dislike, detest, reject	

Table 16 (Continued)

yī 猗			(exclam.) Oh!	
yín 吠/狻	dogs barking		rude language	
yōu 獯			páiyōu 俳優 pan-tomimist	俳優(人)
yóu 狻/猯	a kind of monkey		to plan; plot; scheme	猯(豸)
yú 猯	crying of a piglet		to sigh in lamentation; sighing	
yù 獄/圜			jail; case; lawsuit	
zǎi 狻			panther patterns	
zhì 獯	mad dog		to go in a frenzy	
zhì 豸 zhizhi 豸豸	legless insects/ big cat		arched spine/back	豸豸
zhuàng 狀	caniniform	form; appearance	to describe; official	
zǒu* 獨			(~)*zhàng 獨杖 ancient torture instrument	

Usages as link-words *xūcí* 虛詞 can be viewed as leaps at the greatest distance. Adverbs like ‘suddenly’ “突也。”: *cù* 猝; *měng* 猛; *wěi* 猥, etc.; ‘hastily’ “暴疾也。”: *shū* 倏; *lángmáng* 狼忙; ‘only’/‘merely’: *dú* 獨; prepositions and conjunctions like *yóu* 猶/犹; modal particles like *yī* 猗; markers for rhetorical question like *dú* 獨 ‘could it be said that’; ‘adjectival/adverbial suffix’ *rán* 然, etc. Fig. 3 gives the full picture of the semantic richness of the character *yóu* 猶/犹 (23 meanings, 5 of which “empty”).

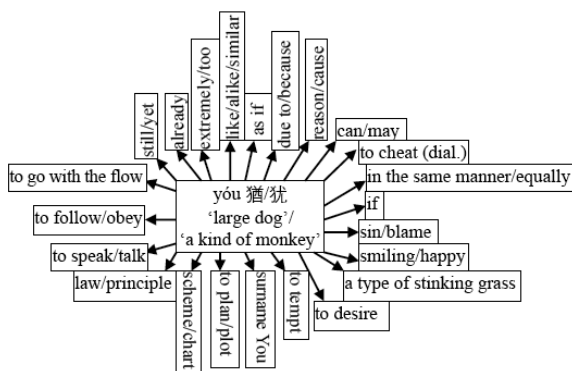


Fig. 3

Table 18

Character/ Word	English meaning
cāi 猜	hate; envy; doubt; fear; terror; guess, conjecture, suppose; feel
dú 獨	alone; single; solitary; only; sole; alone; by oneself; in solitude; only; old people without offspring; the childless
fàn 犯	invade; assail; offend; attack; expose oneself to danger; prejudice; damage; bully; violate; be worth of; incur; occur; conquer; commit a crime; fall into; arrive; expense; criminal; convict
hěn 狠	vicious; cruel; ferocious; able; firm; resolute; control one's feelings; determine; eat
huá 猾	crafty, cunning, sly; shrewd; deceitful; invade; play; treacherous person
huò 獲	obtain, get, receive; seize
jiǎo 狡	strong; sly; cunning, deceitful; treacherous
kuáng 狂	mad dog; insane; mad; violent; wild; arrogant; stiff-necked; unruly; unrestrained; violent; ferocious; roaring
láng 狼	wolf; fierce and malicious; in a hurry; at random; bulky
liè 獵	hunt; field sports; pursue; search; sweep past; fly past
māo 猫 máo	cat; hide arch
měng 猛	strong dog; fierce; ferocious; violent; vigorous; savage, cruel; bold; valiant; severe; suddenly
shòu 獸	beast, animal; bestial; barbarian
xiá 狹	narrow; limited; narrow-minded; pinch
xiàn 獻	sacrificial dog; give as a gift; offer; present; celebrate; show; display
yàn 厭	dislike, detest, reject; satiate
yóu 猷	like; alike; may; can; extremely; similar to; just like; as
yóu 猶	grand plan; law; merits; scheme; plot; way
yù 獄	prison; jail; case; lawsuit
zhuàng 狀	form; appearance; shape; state; condition; official; describe

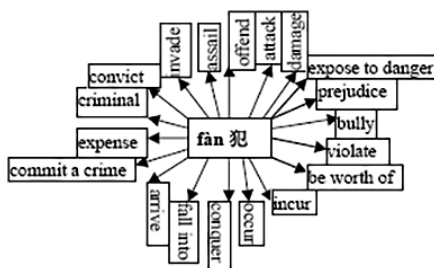


Fig. 5

Lastly, we will summarize the module interchangeability phenomenon (101 cases), attributable to the mechanism of cognate branching grounded in one of the following principles: 1) extended meaning (e.g. *què* 怯 ‘timid dog’ → *què* 怯 ‘cowardly’); 2) the same word, applied to different settings (e.g. *qiāng* ‘cavity’ can be written as 狹 if in the body of a dog/animal; as 鞞 if in the body of a sheep, and 腔 in the body of a human) or 3) highlighting different aspects of the same act (e.g. ‘dogs fighting’ *yīn* 狎 can be written as 齧 with radical *chǐ* 齒 ‘teeth’; *xiāo* 哮 ‘to bark/roar’ can be written as 哮 with radical *kǒu* 口 ‘mouth’), etc. (See Tab. 19).

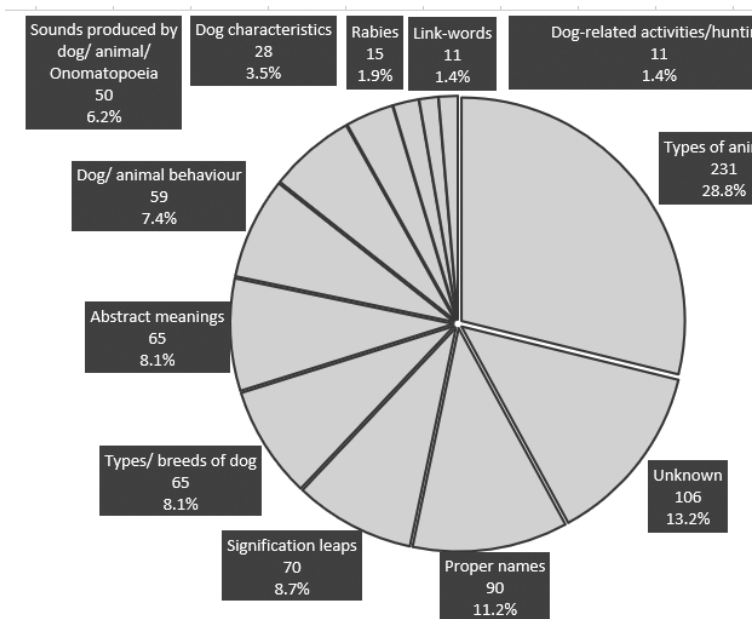
Table 19

Interchangeability of radical ‘dog’ quǎn 犬 with	Lexical/Morphemic level	Phonemic level	Total number
zhī 豸 ‘big cat’	àn 犴/豸; bào 豹/豹; bèn 獾/獾; chái 豺/豺; chī 獬/獬; diào 貂/貂; fèn 獾/獾; gǒu 狗/狗; háo 獬/獬; hé 貉/貉; jiá 狻/狻; jìng 獬/獬; lái 狻/狻; lái 狻/狻; li 獬/獬; lóu 獬/獬; nà 狻/狻; nǎo 獬/獬; pī 狻/狻; pí 狻/狻; róng 獬/獬; sì 狻/狻; suān 狻/狻; tuān 獬/獬; xī 獬/獬; yāng 狻/狻; yóu 獬/獬; yòu 狻/狻	chūmàn 獬/獬 猊/猊; píxiū 狻/狻 狻/狻; yànyù 狻/狻 猊/猊; yíjī 狻/狻 zhūluó 狻/狻	35
shǐ 豕 ‘pig’	bā 狻/狻; bèn 獾/獾; bīn 狻/狻; è 狻/狻; fèn 獾/獾; hù 狻/狻; huán 狻/狻; huī 狻/狻; jiān 狻/狻; míng 狻/狻; shǐ 狻/狻; suī 狻/狻; tóng 狻/狻; tún 狻/狻; xī 狻/狻; xī 狻/狻; xiào 狻/狻; xuān 狻/狻; zhé 狻/狻	juéjiā 狻/狻; tóngtóng 狻/狻; zhūluó 狻/狻	22
huǐ 虫 ‘venomous snake’	léi/lěi 狻/狻; shé 狻/狻; wèi 狻/狻; yán 狻/狻; zhuó 狻/狻		5
mǎ 馬 ‘horse’		jùxū 狻/狻; zhémò 狻/狻	3

Table 19 (Continued)

shǔ 鼠 'mouse'/'rat'	diāo 貂/貂; liú 留/留; shēng 牲/牲		3
lù 鹿 'deer'	páo 狍/麋; zhāng 獐/麀	suānní 狻猊/麀	3
yáng 羊 'sheep'	qiāng 狓/狓	bótúo 獐狍/獐狍; dòngdòng 狓狓/ 辣辣	3
niú 牛 'cow'/'ox'	dí 獐/獐		1
niǎo 鳥 'long-tailed bird'	léi/lěi 獐/鷓		1
zhuī 隹 'short-tailed bird'	léi/lěi 獐/鷓		1
xiàng 象 'elephant'		bìxié 獬/獬邪	1
yú 魚 'fish'	xǐ 獐/鯢		1
rén 人 'human'	cāng 獐/倉	lóngzhi 獐狓/狓; Gēláo 狓/乞 獐/佬; zhǎixiè 獐/獐獐; páiyōu 佻獐/優	6
xīn 心 'heart/mind'	què 狓/狓; chàng 獐/悵; kuáng 狓/悵; hàn 獐/悵		4
kǒu 口 'mouth'	fèi 狓/吠; háo 獐/嗥; xiāo 獐/哮		3
shou 手 'hand'	jué 獐/攫	cāngnáng 獐/搶 囊/攘	2
zú 足 'leg'	juàn 獐/蹶	chùtī 狓/跡踢	2
bāo 勺 'to envelop'	tián 狓/甸		1
ròu 肉 'flesh/meat'	qiāng 狓/腔		1
pǔ 夂 'hand with a stick'	tián 狓/畋		1
chǐ 齒 'teeth'	yǐn 狓/斷		1
jiǔ 九 'nine/biceps'	xiāo 獐/號		1
yǎn 旃 'troops marching under a banner'		yī'nǐ 狓/旃泥/旃	1
chì 彳 'crossroad/to walk'	xùn 狗/徇		1
tǔ 土 'earth'	shù 獐/墅		1
lì 力 'plough/ strength'		kuāngráng 狓/ 勁勤	1
hé 禾 'grain ear'		Huimò 獐/穢狓	1

The study of the process of semiosis based on a given sign has helped us visualize crucial links between semiotics and semantics. Fig. 6 gives an overview of the spectrum of semiosis of radical ‘dog’.



References

- HDZD Hanyu dazidian bianji weiyuanhui. 汉语大字典编辑委员会. Hanyu dazidian 漢語大字典 [The Big Chinese Character Dictionary]. Chengdu 成都: Hubei cishu chubanshe, Sichuan cishu chubanshe 湖北辞书出版社, 四川辞书出版社: 1989–1990.
- Li Xusheng. 季旭昇. Jiaguwen zigen yanjiu 甲骨文字根研究 [A Study of the Character Roots in Oracle Bone Script]. Taipei 臺北: Wenshizhe chubanshe 文史哲出版社, 民國92 (2003).
- Handian 漢典 [Chinese Dictionary] <https://www.zdic.net/>

HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Slovenian Collectors of Chinese Objects: Who, Why, What

Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik

Abstract

This paper addresses the collecting practices of Chinese objects in Slovenia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It particularly highlights the status and identity of three individuals: Alma M. Karlin, Ivan Jager and Ivan Skušek. Compared to other individuals who travelled to East Asia and whose purchases were usually spontaneous and of a variety of items, their collecting practices reveal a planned and systematic approach. As such, they could be identified as the first collectors of East Asian (Chinese) objects in Slovenia.

Keywords: Slovenia, collectors, Chinese objects, Alma M. Karlin, Ivan Jager, Ivan Skušek

Introduction: Historical Context and the Austro-Hungarian Empire

As today's Slovenian territory used to be a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the practice of collecting Chinese objects in the Slovene ethnic territories should be considered within the context of a wide range of socio-political developments that affected the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the turn of the 20th century and its contacts with East Asia. Compared to other, stronger European imperial powers, the Austro-Hungarian Empire entered the East Asian market at a relatively late stage (at the end of the 19th century), when the main colonial forces of Great Britain and France had already established their concessions and held dominant positions in the region.

The Habsburg Monarchy, which had gained access to the sea through the port of Trieste as early as 1382 and acquired a large part of the eastern Adriatic coast in 1527, started to use the advantages of maritime travel only in 1797, after it had acquired Istria, Dalmatia and Venice (Marinac 2017: 14). In the 19th century, Trieste and Rijeka developed into important merchant ports, while the

main military port was set in Pula.¹ Compared to the major European powers, during the first half of the 19th century the Habsburg navy was relatively small and its colonial interests were oriented primarily towards the Balkans². It was not until the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century that it became one of the more important naval forces, which turned to East Asia in search of cheap raw materials and new markets, when it gained a slight advantage over the rest of the naval states with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

By September of the same year, it signed a trade agreement with China and established a consular representation in Shanghai. The newly established diplomatic relationships with China, Japan and Siam were a result of the so-called East Asian Expedition (1868–1871) that was made possible by the frigate *Donau* and the corvette *Erzherzog Friedrich*, which both sailed under the patronage of the Austro-Hungarian government (Slobodnik 2013: 107). This event opened the seas to an increasing number of Austro-Hungarian mercantile and military ships sailing into East Asian waters, and so they quickly ensured their share—albeit a small one—in the eastern Chinese territories. Due to its role in the Eight-Nation Alliance that brought the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901) to an end, the Austro-Hungarian Empire also gained the right to establish a concession in Tianjin. Before that, in 1896, the Habsburg Monarchy had purchased a small plot of land in the diplomatic district of Beijing, where it built its consulate building (Marinac 2017: 14, 69).

As soon as the diplomatic relationships with China were established, the Austro-Hungarian Empire had at least one ship that patrolled between the nearby ports, protecting the interests of its citizens. Under these circumstances, seamen and soldiers were boarding Austrian naval or merchant ships and travelling to East Asia in ever increasing numbers. Among them were also individuals from Slovene ethnic territories.

Slovenian Travellers to China

The overview and analysis of individual travellers and collectors, whose objects are now held by various museum institutions in Slovenia, reveal that most of the individuals from Slovene ethnical territories who travelled to China were sailors.³ They followed government directions and served on Austrian

¹ For more information on the development of the military and merchant navy in the Austro-Hungarian Empire see Marinac 2017: 13–18.

² It had formally annexed Bosnia in 1908.

³ For an overview of Slovenian collectors of East Asian objects see Vampelj Suhadolnik 2019: 98–99.

naval and merchant vessels as officers or sailors. The second significant group of travellers was represented by Franciscan and Salesian missionaries, and the least numerous group comprised of scientists, professionals, scholars and diplomats engaged in scientific research, professional duties, or diplomatic-consular missions for the Austro-Hungarian government. In fact, there were only two individuals who belonged to the latter category of travellers. One was Eleonora von Haas (1866–1943), the wife of the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General, born to aristocratic parents of the von Pertazzi family, who are believed to have been of Slovene origin (Čeplak Mencin 2012: 86–90). The other was Ivan Jager (1865–1962), a famous Slovene architect and urbanist, who travelled to Beijing in 1901 with the goal of participating in the reconstruction of the Austro-Hungarian embassy building which had been demolished during the Boxer rebellion.

Due to the geographical distance and the financial burden that such travels entailed, very few individuals from the Slovene ethnic territories travelled to East Asia by private arrangements. One of them was Alma M. Karlin (1889–1950), a famous traveller, writer and amateur researcher from Celje. The nature of her journey certainly places her in a special position among those Slovenians who visited East Asia at the time. During her travels, which took her to at least 45 different countries (Trnovec 2011: 30–46), she earned her living mainly through her work as an interpreter and journalist, but was often forced to take on other jobs in order to survive. She was not the first woman to travel around the world, but according to Barbara Trnovec, curator of the large collection of materials and documents that Karlin accumulated during her journey, she was most likely the first woman to travel alone for such a long period, during which she had to earn money to make ends meet (Trnovec 2017: 5).

Most individuals who travelled to East Asia at the time brought back various objects that cover practically all typologies with the exception of bronze vessels. Most of the collected items can be dated to the second half of the 19th or the beginning of the 20th century. The selection of objects was dictated by multiple factors such as the individual's economic and social status, the nature of his or her travel, the context of trade, the accessibility of those objects on the market and, last but not least, the prevalent aesthetic ideals and ideological views of the time, as well as personal tastes and interests. It would be hard to define most of the individuals who travelled to China as collectors, as their purchases were usually spontaneous and consisted merely of a few isolated items. On the contrary, a planned approach to collecting and consequentially a more diverse selection of objects can be seen in the collections of the traveller Alma M. Karlin, the architect and town planner Ivan Jager and the navy officer

Ivan Skušek who, under the influence of various personal, aesthetic, social and political factors created large collections.

Alma M. Karlin (1889–1950)

The role of economic power, the nature of travel and interest in collecting objects can be clearly seen in the collection of the Slovenian traveller, writer, journalist and collector from Celje, Alma M. Karlin. In November 1919, she embarked on her eight-year journey around the world, during which she visited at least 45 different countries (Trnovec 2011: 30–46). She supported herself mainly by working as an interpreter and journalist, but she often had to accept other jobs in order to make ends meet.



Fig. 1. Alma M. Karlin with her collection
(Manuscript collection in the National and University Library in Ljubljana)

Alma's journey around the world, during which she spent almost two years in East Asia, was inspired by her desire to acquire new knowledge, learn about different local customs and habits, and collect as many different objects as possible to bring back and show to her fellow citizens. Her comprehensive collection includes a wide variety of items that she sent home from her travels, including numerous natural objects such as shells, corals, seeds, fish, tropical plants and unusual rocks. This is actually the first Slovenian collection to include specimens from various segments of natural history from East Asia. She devoted special attention to the local customs of the places she visited, and assembled a range of wedding and funeral clothing, shoes, jewellery, baskets, sculptures, small vessels and other kitchen or eating utensils. Her collection also contains a few weapons and other military accessories. In this respect, she can be regarded as an amateur anthropologist and ethnologist who amassed a collection with the intent of presenting the natural and cultural heritage of

distant lands to those of her fellow citizens who might be interested in the lifestyles and customs in other parts of the world.

Her selection of objects undoubtedly depended on her financial situation. During her journey, she had to work very hard to support herself and she often found herself in financially difficult situations. As a result, she was able to purchase mainly small objects of daily use, which nonetheless covered a number of different areas and aspects of East Asian societies and cultures. During her one year stay in Japan (June 1922–July 1923), Alma worked at the German Embassy in Tokyo, which boosted her finances as well as provided her with the opportunity to get in contact with influential people. Even though she met prominent political figures and leading journalists, she was most enthusiastic about her meetings with Japanese artists, as written in her travelogue *A Lonely Journey*: “*My most beautiful experience of this time was meeting Japanese artists at Tadaichi Okadasan. I met the actor Suzuki, a number of contemporary artists, a few high official dignitaries, highly educated men and women... These acquaintances provided me with an insight into Japanese artistic ideals, which differ greatly from ours, but which are just as great – in their own way.*” (Karlin 1969: 173–174). It was most likely the young Japanese artists who inspired her to start learning traditional Japanese style painting. Her admiration of colour harmonies and universal beauty must have inspired her to purchase 17 *ukiyo-e* paintings, amongst which we can find some famous *ukiyo-e* artists, such as Andō Hiroshige 安藤広重 (1797–1858) and Utagawa Kunisada 歌川国貞 (1786–1865). The items she acquired in Japan also include a few lacquered objects that were specifically produced for the European market.

Karlin’s legacy is extremely rich and varied. During her eight-year journey she collected and purchased a truly exceptional number of items. As shown by the gift certificate, Alma’s long-time friend and roommate Thea Shreiber Gammelin (1906-1988) donated as many as 1392 non-European objects, including natural objects, to the Celje Provincial Museum between 1957 and 1960 (Trnovec 2011: 57). In addition to the large collection of various objects, she also left behind her published and unpublished literary works, typewritten manuscripts, documents, correspondence and journalistic contributions, together with photographs, postcards, an herbarium, watercolours of flowers and plants, as well as sketches and drawings. Currently, her collection has been divided amongst the following Slovenian institutions: Celje Regional Museum, Celje City Library, Museum of Contemporary History in Celje, and the National and University Library in Ljubljana. A large part of her heritage is kept in private ownership.

Ivan Jager (1865–1962)

Ivan Jager was a construction engineer, architect and urban planner with a keen sense for folk art, elements of which he incorporated into his interior design. This was the key factor that contributed to Jager's enthusiasm for Chinese and Japanese art and the main criterion behind his selection of objects. During his travels to East Asia, he therefore sought to collect as many as possible study material which he could later use in his professional post.

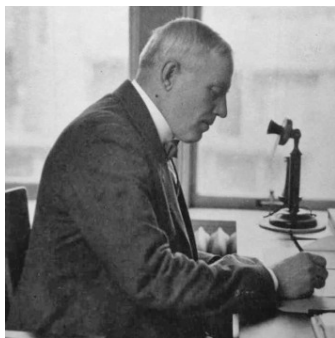


Fig. 2. Ivan Jager in his office in the construction company Hewitt & Brown Inc., Architects and Engineers, Minneapolis, 1926 (Jager's Collection, SAZU Library)

Ivan Jager was sent to Beijing in 1901 to participate in the reconstruction of the demolished Austro-Hungarian embassy building. He stayed in Beijing for four months before moving on to Japan and then continuing to the United States, where he gained fame as the builder of Minneapolis and laid the foundations of modern American architecture. Although the time he spent in East Asia was rather short, he managed to assemble quite an admirable collection of East Asian art objects. Among these, the most impressive items are a number of Japanese sword fenders (*tsuba* 鐔), Japanese *ukiyo-e* prints and a variety of precious textiles. The wide selection of textiles reflects and is closely related to his studies and professional work. His textile collection includes embroidered silk garments, wall hangings, Chinese decorative screens, various embroideries and embroidered paintings, 12 mandarin rank badges and a Japanese leather album containing 85 different specimens of traditional Japanese brocades. The four-part Chinese decorative wall screen decorated with flower and bird motifs is worth a special mention. According to his wife, Selma Jager, it originally adorned the imperial Summer Palace and represents one of the finest specimens of the Qianlong 乾隆 period (1711–1799) (Koblar-Horetzky 1982: 18, 20).

Jager's interest in textiles originated from the time he still lived in his hometown and collected individual pieces of traditional folk costumes worn by Slovenes and other South Slavic nations. He studied the various patterns found on these textiles and innovatively reused them in his architectural and interior designs, skilfully combining different styles of folk art. His enthusiasm for textiles intensified once he arrived in China. He wrote: "*Last night I saw beautiful embroideries at the ambassador's residence. If I stay in Beijing for a year, I will at least be able to collect a lot of such pieces.*" (Koblar-Horetzky 1981: 41).

Following his death, his wife Selma Jager sent his bibliographical and art collection to the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1967 (Pajsar 2005a: 397). In addition to museum artefacts, the collection also includes a rich selection of books on social sciences and humanities (1469 inventory units), as well as biographical and documentary material, including letters, manuscripts, postcards, photographs of newspaper clippings, sketches and architectural plans. It should be noted, however, that the collection is not fully preserved, because he sold or donated certain items during the final years of his life (Pajsar 2005b, 109–110).

Ivan Skušek (1877–1947)

Ivan Skušek boarded the Austro-Hungarian cruiser *S.M.S. Kaiserin Elisabeth* as a naval officer in July 1913 and seven years later, on the 8th of September 1920, he stepped off the train at the Ljubljana railway station as a collector and promoter of Chinese culture. In the years that followed, the apartment in which he lived with his Japanese wife, Tsuneko Kondō Kawase (Maria Skušek) (1893–1963) and her two children from her first marriage, was packed with various Chinese objects and became the centre of Ljubljana's cultural and social life.



Fig. 3. Ivan Skušek and Tsuneko Kondō Kawase in Beijing, between 1918–1920 (A copy of this photo is kept in the library of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, while the original is kept by Skušek's great nephew Janez Lombergar)

The cruiser's final destination was meant to be Japan, where it would replace the cruiser *Kaiser Franz Joseph I*, but due to the outbreak of WWI, the captain of *S.M.S. Kaiserin Elisabeth* received the order to sail to Qingdao in China where he was to help the German troops in defending the port which was besieged by the Japanese on 25th August 1914 (Barovič 2005: 49). As the Japanese siege progressed, the cruiser was scuttled on the 2nd of November, only five days before the German port and fortress surrendered to the Japanese. The Austro-Hungarian soldiers were interned in war camps in Japan, while the officers were sent to Beijing. Among these men was also Ivan Skušek, who arrived to capital city at the end of November 1914.

During his almost six-year stay in Beijing, Skušek became a keen collector and regular visitor of Beijing antique shops. When purchasing objects in the shops of Beijing, he was driven – amongst other things – by his wish to establish a museum in Slovenia, in which “*Tzu [his wife] would welcome visitors in a Japanese kimono and, if he would not be at home, also explain the origin and age of the exhibited objects*” (Skušek n.d.). Therefore, he collected objects systematically and in accordance to his sophisticated aesthetic taste. His vision of establishing a museum of Chinese art upon his return home places him in the category of proper collectors in the strictest sense of the word. His collection of approximately 500 Chinese objects is the largest collection of Chinese objects in Slovenia. It includes a variety of Chinese objects, ranging from everyday commodities, coins, musical instruments and richly embroi-

dered textiles to paintings, albums, rare books, old postcards and photographs; from Buddhist statues, ceramics and porcelain to furniture, carved wooden components of decorative screens, and a model of a house.

During his stay in Beijing, Ivan Skušek developed a remarkable aesthetic sense for Chinese art objects. His pioneering discovery of the elegantly carved pieces of Chinese furniture was of particular importance. The most notable and valuable part of his collection can be found in the various specimens of classical Chinese furniture and decorative walls. His collection is one of the few in Europe to contain Chinese furniture. As it was assembled in the early 20th century, it is also one of the earliest in the world. All of the major classical collections of Chinese furniture that can be admired in notable North American museums were assembled at a later stage, in the post-war period, the earliest dating to the 1920s and 1930s (Roote 2017: 32). Therefore, we can confirm that Skušek was one of the earliest collectors of Chinese furniture in the west, and that he recognised the subliminal lines of Chinese furniture and gave it the status of an art form. He should definitely be considered as the very first collector of Chinese artefacts in Slovenia. He built his collection systematically, checked the provenance of each individual object and kept a detailed record of all his purchases in order to exhibit them in the form of a private museum. Further research into his collection, which is now housed in the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, will help us fully reconstruct and shed light on the identity and the refined sensitivity of this outstanding collector.

Conclusion

Most objects of Chinese origin made their way to Slovenia through direct contact and purchases in China, which took place once formal relations were established between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and China at the end of the 19th century. These new circumstances opened up new opportunities for travellers. Individuals from the Slovene ethnic territories who visited East Asia were predominantly sailors and missionaries, diplomats and their wives, experts, professionals and researchers, as well as a few individual travellers and adventurers. Among them, the traveller Alma Karlin, the architect and town planner Ivan Jager and the navy officer Ivan Skušek showed an elaborate and systematic approach towards the selection of collected objects. If we wish to reconstruct the cultural contacts and highlight the specific position held by the Slovene ethnic territories within the history of Euro-Asian connections, we need to conduct a detailed analysis and a systematic study of these collections.

It is also worth mentioning that they did not bring home merely the objects they gathered while travelling, as their experiences and the impressions of foreign, distant lands, their memories and stories of their adventures were far more important. From the second half of the 19th century onwards, the information on China and Japan that reached the Slovene ethnic territories gradually became more abundant and reliable, at least to a certain extent. Along with this process, the prevalent ideas and views of East Asian cultures and societies were reshaped and gradually transformed from the previous romantic, fantastic and exotic images into a somewhat more concrete and down-to-earth notion of those territories.

Acknowledgments

The research for this paper was carried out as part of the project *East Asian Collections in Slovenia: Inclusion of Slovenia in the Global Exchanges of Objects and Ideas with East Asia* (2018–2021) (No. J7-9429), which was funded by the Slovenian Research Agency.

I would like to thank the Library of the Slovene Academy of Science and Arts, the National and University Library in Ljubljana, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, and Janez Lombergar for giving permission to publish the photographs.

References

- Barovič, Jože. *Mornarica dvojne monarhije v I. svetovni vojni*. [Double Monarchy Navy during WW1]. Maribor: Grafis d.o.o. 2005. Print.
- Čeplak Mencin, Ralf. *V deželi nebesnega zmaja. 350 let stikov s Kitajsko* [In the World of the Heavenly Dragon. 350 years of Contacts with China]. Ljubljana: Založba *cf. 2012. Print.
- Karlin, Alma M. *Samotno potovanje*. [A Lonely Journey]. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1969. Print.
- Koblar-Horetzky, Ana. “Zapuščina Ivana Jagra. 4, Gradivo muzejske zbirke” [Legacy of Ivan Jager. 4, Materials from the Museum Collection]. *Objave* 6. Ljubljana, Library of Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1982. Print.
- Marinac, Bogdana. *Čez morje na nepoznani daljni vzhod: potovanja pomorščakov avstrijske in avstro-ogrske vojne mornarice v Vzhodno Azijo* [Across the Sea towards the Unknown Far East: Travels of Austrian and Austro-Hungarian Navy Sailors to East Asia]. Piran: Pomorski muzej, 2017. Print.
- Pajsar, Breda. “Muzejska zbirka arhitekta Ivana Jagra” [Museum Collection of the Architect Ivan Jager]. *Etnolog* 15 (2005a): 395–404. Print.
- Pajsar, Breda. “Arhitekt Ivan Jager (1871–1959) in njegova zapuščina v biblioteki Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti” [Architect Ivan Jager and his Legacy

- in the Library of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts]. *Japonski lesorezi iz zbirke Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti* [Japanese Woodblock Prints from the Collection of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts], 2005a: 109–116. Ljubljana: Cankarjev dom, kulturni in kongresni center. Print.
- Roote, John A. “A Scholarly Pursuit: George Kates and the Ascendancy of Chinese Classical Furniture”. *Orientalism* 48/4, 2017: 28–34. Print.
- Skušek, Franci. *Rokopisni zapiski Francija Skuška* [Franci Skušek’s Manuscript]. Ljubljana. n.d. Print.
- Slobodnik, Martin. “Early Contacts Between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and China: The Zichy Brothers in East Asia”. *Talking Literature: Essays on Chinese and Biblical Writings and their Interaction*, Raoul David Findeisen and Martin Slobodnik (eds.), 2013: 101–121. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Trnovec, Barbara. *Kolumbova hči: življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin*. [Columbus’ Daughter: Life and Work of Alma Karlin]. Celje: Pokrajinski muzej Celje, 2011. Print.
- Trnovec, Barbara. *Kolumbova hči: Alma M. Karlin*. [Columbus’ Daughter: Alma M. Karlin]. Cultural, Historical and Anthropological Exhibition, 21 September 2017–14 January 2018. Ljubljana: Cankarjev dom, kulturni in kongresni center; Celje: Pokrajinski muzej. Print.
- Vampelj Suhadolnik, Nataša. “Zbirateljska kultura in vzhodnoazijske zbirke v Sloveniji”. [Collecting Practices and East Asian Collections in Slovenia]. *Procesi in odnosi v Vzhodni Aziji: zbornik EARL*, Andrej Bekeš, Jana S. Rošker Zlatko Šabič (eds.). Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, 2019: 93–137. Print.

Zhongguo yousheng 中国游圣: Rethinking the State Narrative of Xu Xiake 徐霞客 (1587–1641) as a National Hero

Loredana Cesarino

Abstract

Xu Xiake's Travel Diary is one of the most famous travelogues of late imperial China. During the 20th century though, the scholarly interest in the "Diary" has gradually been replaced by a reappraisal of its author, who has been elevated to the status of national hero. This paper will explore the strategies used by Chinese authorities to build and promote this new perception of Xu Xiake, and explain how the popularity of the Diary has been overshadowed by a fictional narrative created in the official discourse to portray the Ming traveller as a national hero. It will argue that this narrative, however, contradicts the scope of Xu Xiake's travels which – from the primary sources – emerge more as a rejection of officialdom and public life than a sacrifice driven by patriotic sentiments.

Keywords: Xu Xiake, Travel Diary, narrative, national hero, patriotism

Born in an elite family in the outskirts of Jiangyin 江阴,¹ Xu Xiake 徐霞客 (1587–1641) reached notoriety only after his death thanks to the detailed chronicles of his life-long journey to the remotest corners of the Ming empire known as *Xu Xiake's Travel Diary* (*Xu Xiake Youji* 徐霞客游记).² For the quantity and the quality of the information it contains, the *Diary* has been widely recognized as an absolute masterpiece of seventeenth century Chinese travel literature. It “attracted the admiration of contemporary as well as later generations of traveling literati” writes Riemenschneider (2003: 286–287), and it engendered a rich exegetic tradition based on biographies, commentaries and annotated editions.³ During the late imperial period, due to the extremely

¹ Jiangsu 江苏 province.

² Xu Xiake travelled extensively throughout his life, but his *Diary* only covers the years between 1613 and 1639.

³ Qian Qianyi 钱谦益 (1582–1664), Chen Jiru 陈继儒 (1558–1639) and Huang Daozhou 黄道周 (1585–1646) are only few of the scholars who wrote about Xu and his *Diary*. (Casaccia, 2019).

detailed descriptions of distances, heights and geoformations and to a consistent lack of anthropological details about the people living at the margins of the empire, Chinese scholars lost their appetite for the *Diary* and, as a consequence, the level of scholarly attention devoted to the travelogue declined sensibly.⁴ Despite the waning fascination with the *Diary*, China's early twentieth century modernization process led to a reappraisal of the role played by Xu Xiake in national history and, instead of being credited only as the author of a travel masterpiece, he started to be celebrated as the man who had discovered the source of the Yangtze river and described karst formations two centuries before the Europeans. Following this reappraisal, Xu started to be marketed by central authorities as a national hero who had contributed to the advancement of the scientific and geographic knowledge of China.

This paper will briefly describe some of the strategies used by Chinese authorities since the mid-1980s to promote and consolidate this new perception of Xu Xiake. It will argue that he has been transformed into a national hero through the construction of a fictional narrative that (re)presents him as a man who sacrificed his life for the advancement of China's scientific knowledge. This narrative, however, contradicts with the information about Xu Xiake provided by his *Diary* and his biographies: from these primary sources he emerges as a man who shunned public life and whose travels were a form of silent rebellion against a central government in decline, a spurn against officialdom and all other social and political duties of his age, rather than a sacrifice driven by patriotic sentiments.⁵

Xu Xiake's narrative in heritage sites

The reappraisal of Xu Xiake began with the anti-traditionalists of the May Fourth Movement, probably ignited by the Western attitude towards great explorers like Christopher Columbus, James Cook or Marco Polo⁶ (Riemen-schnitter 2003: 298), and it gained momentum towards the end of the 20th century. Starting from the mid-1980s, Chinese authorities have used different strategies and communication channels to create a powerful and evocative narrative of Xu Xiake as a national hero. This narrative has been firstly promoted

⁴ Ward 2001.

⁵ Since Xu didn't pursue an official career, his *Diary* and biographies are the only source of information about his life and character (Ward 2001).

⁶ The comparison between Xu and Marco Polo is made explicit in the documentary *A million steps. The great travellers Xu Xiake and Marco Polo* (2011) sponsored by Jiangyin local government and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, produced by Imago Orbis and directed by Mario Chemello.

through Chinese tangible heritage and, in particular, through Xu Xiake's former family residence in Jiangyin. Destroyed during the so-called "Eighty-one Days of Jiangyin" (*Jiangyin bashiyi tian* 江陰八十一天),⁷ the residence was restored in 1985 as part of the local cultural heritage and transformed into a literary attraction in which Xu was packaged as a national hero for tourists' consumption. Two fieldtrips conducted in 2017 and 2018 have revealed that the entire residence exploits what Herbert (2001: 315) calls "the physical attributes of the site and a range of interpretive techniques" to echo this new perception of Xu Xiake. The fieldtrips have also revealed that this narrative dominates the entire tourist experience and is delivered to the visitors consistently throughout their tour. For example, outside the main entrance visitors are welcomed by posters and slogans that promote patriotism, filial piety and other socialist values; inside the residence, posters and wooden engravings reiterate the qualities that have allowed Xu to be elevated to the status of national hero,⁸ and inside the main garden dozens of metallic plaques celebrate the venue as a "Patriotic Education Base" (*aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu jidi* 爱国主义教育基地)⁹ because of the man who once inhabited it. The state narrative continues to be streamlined and fed to tourists along the winding corridors and the wooden pavilions with calligraphies, paintings and it is amplified at the end of the tour by a stone tablet placed next to Xu Xiake's tomb in 1985 by the then President of People's Republic of China Li Xiannian 李先念. The tablet reads "He loved the motherland ardently, devoted his whole life to science and respected the practice" (*Re'ai zuguo, xianshen kexue, zunzhong shijian* 热爱祖国, 献身科学, 尊重实践) and represents a permanent and powerful voice that constantly repeats the narrative of "Xu Xiake – the national hero" to all visitors.

Xu Xiake's narrative in stamps and postcards

To promote Xu's narrative at all levels of society, in 1987 China Post issued three commemorative post stamps to celebrate the 400th anniversary of his birth. The stamps bear the inscription "400th anniversary of Xu Xiake's birth, Ming dynasty's geographer and traveller 1587–1987" (*Mingdai dili xue-*

⁷ A period of unrest that followed the fall of the Ming and the founding of the Qing dynasty (1644–1912).

⁸ These are "national spirit" (*aiguo jingshen* 愛國精神), "scientific spirit" (*kexue jingshen* 科學精神), "spirit of sacrifice" (*xianshen jingshen* 獻身精神), "innovative spirit" (*chuangxin jingshen* 創新精神).

⁹ A "Patriotic Education Base" is a place that contributes to improve the moral quality of the entire national population and inspires people, especially the young ones, to cultivate patriotism.

jia, lüxingjia Xu Xiake dansheng sibai zhounian 1587–1987 明代地理学家、旅行家徐霞客诞生四百周年一五八七—一九八七) and are interesting for the iconography they use to represent the traveller in this new heroic version.

On the first stamp of the series, Xu is portrayed in a red robe, looking over his shoulder, ready to set off for the journey that will take him to regions of the Ming empire “still practically unknown at the time” (Needham 1959: 147). On the symbolic level, the image can be considered as the visual representation of the choice made by Xu Xiake to give up the familiar comforts and the political ambitions typical of his age to embark on a very difficult and ambitious journey. On this stamp, Xu’s spirit of sacrifice is evoked by the frugality of his travel gear, similar to that of a pilgrim: heading out on his life-long journey, he carries with him only a paper scroll, a walking staff, a straw hat and a flask gourd tied to the belt.

On the second stamp, the image of Xu Xiake crouched on a rock inside a cave writing his *Diary* at the dim light of a candle emphasizes the spirit of sacrifice and the dedication he showed despite the difficulties, the solitude and the extreme conditions he had to face during his wanderings, thus consolidating his status as national hero. This status is advertised also by the iconography of the third stamp where Xu is seen from afar among high peaks: a small human being in contrast to the magnitude of nature, he is bent on his knees and holds a walking stick in a pose that resembles that of a warrior ready to fight against any adversity he may face on the way. This image is particularly interesting because it contrasts with the Xu Xiake that emerges from the pages of his *Diary*: a man always meek and quiet, even when he is robbed or beaten by thieves and swindlers.

The representation strategies used on these stamps can also be found on some commemorative medals and on a series of postcards issued in the same year (1987) by China Post and, overall, they all aim at promoting and consolidating an image of the Ming traveller useful to justify the role of national hero he has been called to play.

Xu Xiake’s narrative in the media

The narrative of Xu Xiake as a national hero has been widely promoted through the media and disseminated through movies, documentaries, TV shows¹⁰ and cartoons.

In 1996, the story of Xu Xiake was adapted for the big screen with the film *The Legend of Xu Xiake* (*Xu Xiake chuanqi* 徐霞客传奇) directed by

¹⁰ See *The young Xu Xiake* (*Shaonian Xu Xiake* 少年徐霞客) and *Xu Xiake* (徐霞客).

Du Yunping 杜云屏. As the title suggests, the film moves slightly away from historical reality and takes the nuances of a “legend” (*chuanqi*). It depicts Xu as an extraordinary man committed to making enormous sacrifices to benefit his country, thus echoing the state-sponsored narrative in which he is portrayed as a national hero.

This perception of Xu is promoted also through several documentaries. Particularly interesting are *The Geographer Xu Xiake* (*Dili xuejia Xu Xiake* 地理学家徐霞客) and *At the Ming Court: Xu Xiake* (*Daming wangchao: Xu Xiake* 大明王朝: 徐霞客). In both documentaries, the contribution of Xu Xiake to late imperial travel literature is completely overshadowed by the directors’ choice to represent him as a man of science, a geographer and an explorer who bravely faced the hardships of 17th century’s travelling to support the advancement of Chinese scientific knowledge.

The narrative of Xu Xiake as a national hero has also been packaged to be consumed by a younger audience. Xu features in some elementary school textbooks,¹¹ in comic books¹² as well as animated cartoons. All the cartoons analysed for this research such as *Bedtime stories – Xu Xiake* (*Ertong shuiqian gushi daquan: Xu Xiake* 儿童睡前故事大全: 徐霞客) or *Stories of diligent students: Xu Xiake* (*Zhonghua qinxue gushi: Xu Xiake* 中华勤学故事: 徐霞客) overlook Xu Xiake’s authorship of the *Diary*. They all focus on other aspects of the man’s life instead, and bring to the fore the passion for books and knowledge he showed already at an early age,¹³ as well as his alleged spirit of sacrifice. In both cases, the didactic function predominates over the entertaining and ludic purpose of the cartoon and, by capitalizing on the educational value of Xu Xiake’s adventure, the animation reiterates and reinforces the state narrative that sees him as a national hero who sacrificed his life for the scientific advancement of China, while completely overshadowing the cultural significance of his travelogue.

¹¹ Xu Xiake appears in lesson n. 10 “Let’s go on a journey!” (*Women qu lixing* 我们去旅行) of the elementary textbook titled *Xiaoxue yuwen shiyan jiakeshu* 小学语文实验教科书 (vol. 10) published in 2005 by the Beijing Normal University Press. It also appeared in lesson n. 5 “Read Xu Xiake, [hero] of the world” (*Yuedu dadi de Xu Xiake* 阅读大地的徐霞客) of the elementary textbook titled *Minguo xiaoxue guoyu* 国民小学国语 (vol. 6) published in Taiwan by the Kangxuan Chubanshe 康轩出版社 which, however, is no longer in use in mainland China.

¹² See *Xu Xiake, an outstanding man* (*Qiangu qiren Xu Xiake* 千古奇人徐霞客, 1996) by Chen Xiliang 陈锡良 or *Xu Xiake’s journey to Dian* (*Xu Xiake Dian youji* 徐霞客滇游记, 2012) by Fan Min 范敏.

¹³ They don’t mention, though, that Xu was fascinated more by non-canonical works than by the classics.

Conclusions – Rethinking Xu Xiake’s narrative

Xu Xiake has reached notoriety thanks to the *Diary* he wrote almost on daily basis for over 26 years and yet, since the last decades of the 20th century, the cultural and literary appeal of his work has been overshadowed by a new perception of its author in State discourse. Hailed as a great man of science, the first to find the source of the Yangtze River and to describe karst formations, he has been elevated to the status of national hero. To create a powerful and evocative narrative of Xu Xiake in this new role, Chinese authorities have used a wide range of communication channels such as tangible heritage, commemorative objects and visual media. To promote and consolidate this perception at all levels of society, the Ming traveller has been chosen as the patron of domestic tourism (*yousheng* 游圣) and, since 2011, the date of the first *Diary* entry (May 19th) is celebrated as the “National Day of Tourism” (*Zhongguo lüyouri* 中国旅游日).¹⁴ In 2011 the Chinese navy has even named an escort ship after him: the “Xu Xiake hao baozhang jian” 徐霞客号保障舰 (also known as “88 Xu Xiake hao” 徐霞客号). 196 meters long and 28 wide, this ship can host 2500 people as well as enough food and water to keep them offshore up to three weeks.

This state-sponsored narrative, however, seems to contradict the image of Xu Xiake and his travels provided by the first-hand account of his lifelong journey and from his biographies. From these primary sources Xu Xiake emerges as an atypical traveller, one totally unconcerned with any greater good and lacking a modern scientific approach (Vermeer 1995). The textual evidence of the *Diary* suggests that Xu was an eccentric man who preferred the solitude of mountains and natural landscapes over social interactions and human relations. His friend Chen Jiru described Xu’s demeanour as being similar to that of a mountain recluse, while Qian Qianyi in his biography stated:

以峯岩这床席，以溪涧为饮沐，以山魅、木客、王孙、獬父为伴侣，僂僂粥粥，口不能道；时与之论山经，辨水脉，搜讨形胜，则划然心开。¹⁵

He had precipitous cliffs for bed and mountain streams for refreshment. Mountain fairies, trolls and apes were his companions. Introverted and taciturn, he was animated only by conversations about mountain paths and river courses or by investigations of landscape formations.

Different from other Chinese travellers who set off with either a scientific, religious, commercial or political agenda, the *Diary* suggests that Xu em-

¹⁴ The 19th of May 1613.

¹⁵ Qian Qianyi, *Biography of Xu Xiake* in: Casacchia 2019: 27.

barked on his journey driven only by his curiosity, his passion for travel and a strong fascination with the mysteries of nature. According to Ward (2001), “in his own estimation, Xu was a wanderer” and, as pointed out by Riemenschmitter, “Xu had not set out for marvelous possessions like Western conquerors; he set out neither to enrich himself, nor for the benefit of a religious community, or a nation. His obsession with the marvels of the world was, on the contrary, utterly disinterested” (2003: 310). A tireless walker constantly looking for unexplored caves and secluded gorges, Xu was a radical who shunned public life and went as far as to give up the *cursus honorum* so much yearned for by many of his contemporaries. He chose to live on the margins of the social and political life of a Ming empire on the brink of collapse and his social marginality became one with geographical marginality when he decided to leave his hometown in Jiangyin to travel all the way to contemporary Yunnan. It is believed that his travels were more a form of silent protest against a declining central power than an effort to enhance it, therefore they ill fit the state-sponsored narrative that sees Xu Xiake as a national hero who sacrificed his domestic life and his public ambitions for the scientific advancement of China.

References

- Casacchia, Giorgio. “Il Viaggiatore Permanente” [The Permanent Traveler]. *Xu Xiake – Diario di Viaggio*, edited by Giorgio Casacchia. Venezia and Hangzhou: Cafoscarina, 2019: 23–117. Print.
- Herbert, David. “Literary places, tourism and the heritage experience”. *Annals of Tourism Research*, (2001): 312–333. Print.
- Needham, Joseph. *Science and Civilisation in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959. Print.
- Qian Qianyi 钱谦益 (1582–1664), *Xu Xiake zhuan* 徐霞客传 [Biography of Xu Xiake]. *Xu Xiake – Diario di Viaggio*, edited by Giorgio Casacchia. Venezia and Hangzhou: Cafoscarina, 2019. Print.
- Riemenschmitter, Andrea. “Traveler’s vocation: Xu Xiake and his excursion to the southwestern frontier”. *Political Frontiers, Ethnic Boundaries and Human Geographies in Chinese History*, edited by Nicola Di Cosmo. London: Routledge, 2003: 286–323. Print.
- Vermeer, Eduard. “Notions of Time and Space in the Early Ch’ing: the Writings of Ku Yen-wu, Hsu Hsia-k’o, Ku Tsu-yu and Chang Hsueh-ch’eng”. *Time and Space in Chinese Culture*, edited by Chun-chieh Huang and Erik Zürcher. Leiden: Brill, 1995: 201–236. Print.
- Ward, Julian. *Xu Xiake (1587–1641): The Art of Travel Writing*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001. Print.

A Man of His Time? – Rediscovering Saneto Keishu and Japanese Attitudes Towards China

Viktoriya Nikolova

Abstract

The main objective of this paper is a historical re-examination of Saneto Keishu (1896–1985) – an influential, yet understudied Japanese scholar, who dedicated his life to the research of China and Sino-Japanese relations, and who, like many of his time, struggled to deal with the waging war between the two countries. By exploring the complexity of his personal experience and analysing his writings from before and after the onset of the Second Sino-Japanese war, I will attempt to consider him, his view of China and some of the factors which might have influenced him, within a larger historical context.

Keywords: Saneto Keishu, intellectual history, Sino-Japanese relations, Second Sino-Japanese war, Chinese studies

Introduction

For the past few decades, Japanese scholar Saneto Keishu 実藤恵秀 (1896 – 1985) has been considerably influential and universally respected across Japan, China, and even the West. His research on the history of Chinese overseas students and Sino-Japanese relations is often praised for its balanced argument and extensive use of materials in both languages. Yet surprisingly, he himself has not received the attention of historians. A closer look at his life, however, reveals a complex relationship with his object of study – during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), Saneto underwent a shift towards supporting Japan’s war against China, which he later sincerely regretted and ended up transforming into a life-long dedication to Sino-Japanese friendship. The current paper is thus focused on establishing the nature of Saneto’s change of attitude and the way it intertwined with his research, as well as considering his experience within the bigger picture of the history of Sino-Japanese relations.

Background

In order to understand the significance of Saneto's shift during the war, a few things about him, his work as a scholar and the realities of early 20th century Japan must be first taken into consideration.

To begin with, his initial connection with China came from a mostly emotional, personal place. He chose to major in Chinese literature at Waseda University, only because he once attended a Chinese language class and immediately felt “mesmerized” by the sound of Chinese (Saneto 1960: 545). The course, however, left him disappointed: spoken Chinese was not only not part of the literature major, but its study was in fact deemed unnecessary across Japanese academia. At that time, scholars in Japan would still focus on mastering *kanbun* 漢文 (Classical Chinese), whereas spoken Chinese was only rarely studied, mostly by entrepreneurs and solely for its pragmatic purposes¹⁶. Yet Saneto's passion for spoken Chinese later developed into a deep liking for the Chinese people and an interest towards China's modern literature. He also established connections and life-long friendships with a great number of Chinese students in Japan. This concern for what modern-day Chinese people had to say was indeed uncommon for Japanese academics during that period, but for Saneto it became a major part of his attitude towards research.

In fact, Saneto's development was generally unusual for a scholar. Up to the end of World War II, studies on China in Japan were dominated by the tradition of *kangaku* 漢学 (the study of Chinese classical texts), which presented China as a mostly imaginary realm of classical greatness. At the same time, the common folk's image of contemporary China was largely negative and very politicized. Consequently, even the newly established school of *toyoshi* 東洋史 (Oriental history), which aspired to deal with China's history in an objective and empirical way, was not only still under the hegemony of *kan-gaku*, but also often ended up creating a political, orientalist image of China instead¹⁷. In contrast, Saneto belonged to neither of these currents. He revolted against *kangaku* and concentrated on researching the history of China's overseas students and Sino-Japanese cultural relations by using modern literature as a point of entry. This mixed approach liberated him from any extreme views on China (although only to a certain extent). In this sense, he partially resembled the liberal Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 (1910–1977) and the other members of the later established Chinese Literature Study Group 中国文学研究会¹⁸.

¹⁶ See Ando (1988).

¹⁷ For more on the subject of *toyoshi*, see Tanaka (1995).

¹⁸ In fact, Saneto even joined their activities. For a detailed recount of the group, see Zhu (2017).

Since the very beginning, one of Saneto's main concerns as a scholar was the relationship between China and Japan and he demonstrated a unique take on its character. Based on his indeed insightful findings on the impact Japan had been having on China as a role-model for modernization, he made the daring conclusion that Japan was essentially "leading" China towards advancement (Saneto, *Keishu Bunson*, hereafter KB, volume A-1: 99–129). The idea of Japan assuming some sort of leading role in East Asia is problematic, as we now know that it directly contributed to Japanese military aggression in the region (Saaler & Szpilman 2011: 9–10). However, to label Saneto's words as expansionist in nature would be to misread them. For instance, he was strict about separating the realm of political and economic relations from that of cultural relations. He referred to the first as "physical" and "mathematical", stating that the political or economic interests of one country inevitably resulted in a disadvantage for the other, whereas the "non-physical nature" of cultural relations manifested culture's ability to spread "indefinitely", regardless of origin, and be of universal use to all countries. He would then suggest that although Japan and China were clashing politically, they were "shaking hands" culturally, insisting that "the relationship between Japan and China should be friendly – or rather, when it comes to culture, it is already friendly, and its destiny is to remain friendly for a long time to come" (KB volume A-1: 207–210). Here I would like to stress Saneto's use of the word "destiny" (*unmei* 運命) in comparison to the word "mission" (*shimei* 使命). The idea of a civilizational "mission" for Japan in Asia had been a big part of the discourse on Japanese expansion ever since the Meiji period, pushing for a distinctly proactive (and often aggressive) attitude towards China¹⁹. Compared to this, Saneto's "destiny" was not only limited to cultural interaction, it also lacked any promotion of a proactive attitude – for all he was concerned, he was just "stating the facts". It is exactly this crucial part of his attitude that would later take a 180-degree turn.

In search of "theory"

Following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937, Saneto found himself facing an inner conflict – he couldn't bring himself to accept a war against his beloved China, but at the same time he felt powerless in the face of the situation. After the war ended, he published his notes from that period²⁰, which give us great insight into the nature of his inner struggle. As early as his first note, it

¹⁹ Consider, for example, famous sinologist Naito Konan 内藤湖南 (1844–1934) and his articles on the subject of "Japan's mission".

²⁰ He published them as part of the afterword of his post-war signature work – *History of the Chinese Overseas Students in Japan* (1960).

becomes clear that Saneto had not only never called for military action against China, but he had also failed to foresee it. He developed a feeling of shock and isolation, as if he himself was “surrounded by the enemy and being attacked”. Most of the people around him seemed happy to cheer for the Japanese army, but his personal connection with China could not allow him to do the same. The Chinese students he cared for so much left Japan with resentment and fear, and he even had to face police interrogations because of his connection to them. All of this made him feel torn between his identity as a China scholar and a Japanese man. He believed that although his research first of all had to be of use to his own people, at the same time it also had to be of use to the entire world – “if one held a bias towards Japan to begin with”, then he could “not possibly be of any real use to Japan”. According to him, one needed to approach matters of the two countries “in a composed, scientific manner”, otherwise it would be “impossible to understand the truth of the matter” (Saneto 1960: 553–554).

As he wrote this, he was clearly struggling to be “composed”, as the war with China was making him miserable in more than one way, but what is most significant here is his concern about being “scientific” and understanding “the truth of the matter”. This idea became central in his search for an explanation of the situation and his own role in it. He recognized the fact that Japan’s actions had not been motivated by any valid argument (or in his words – any “theory”) and he considered that such an argument should and could be “discovered”, be it post-factum. Saneto stressed the idea of “discovering”, as opposed to “producing”, and insisted that the “theory” must be acceptable for all sides, or in other words – “of use to the entire world” (Saneto 1960: 559–560).

Saneto was by far not the only one concerned with this precise problem – the lack of justification behind Japan’s actions had become a pressing issue for the Japanese intellectual elite. For example, his deliberations resemble the basic rhetoric of Miki Kiyoshi 三木清 (1897–1945). Miki was also opposed to the war with China and called for the need of a “theory” based on a humanistic worldview beyond Japanese nationalistic aspirations, which would ultimately bring the two countries together and put a stop to the war. Yet the greatest philosopher of modern Japan famously had his ideas misunderstood and, more importantly, misused²¹. As the war began, Miki joined the Showa Research Group, which was essentially a think tank for the Japanese government. Although he entered the group, thinking he will use his philosophy to stop the war, the ideas he proposed in fact ended up being transformed into the backbone of further military expansion²².

²¹ For a more comprehensive look at Miki and his ideas at the time, see Ohara (2006).

²² See Miles Fletcher III (2009).

War and scholarship

Saneto's words might have resembled Miki's discourse, but their differences seem to have been just as significant. Saneto appeared to have been critical of people like Miki for lacking "an understanding of China's reality" (KB volume A-2: 234). In an article called *Two Chinas* Saneto even expressed worry that looking for the opinion of only Chinese intellectuals was not enough and that Japan had to pay attention to the rest of the Chinese population too, namely the peasantry, which was believed to make up 80% of the population (KB volume B-1: 42–43). He therefore must have instead valued the writings of people like journalist Ozaki Hotsumi 尾崎秀実 (1901–1944). But while both Miki and Ozaki had willingly become active in the realm of politics, Saneto was strict about keeping to what he called a "scientific" approach and remaining within the realm of academia – or so he led himself to believe.

Ultimately, he came to embrace the idea that his research, coming from "someone who loves China", could and had to be of use to Japan's resolving of the ongoing conflict – an idea, clearly different from his initial effort in separating his research from politics. This inner shift, at the time possibly unregistered by Saneto himself, is stated very clearly in an article he wrote in November 1937, called *Sino-Japanese cultural exchange in today's times* (KB volume B-1: 40). He started by reproducing what was essentially an ongoing theme in his research up until that point, explaining how at the end of the 19th century Sino-Japanese relations had experienced a "Copernican Revolution", so that for the last 40 years of modernization it had been China actively seeking Japan's cultural example. He then declared that now the time had come "for Japan to actively assist [Chinese culture]" and that this should be "based on what the Chinese had themselves once come looking for". Essentially, this was the first time Saneto connected the pressing matter of the situation with his own research, and it was also the first time he called for Japan's proactive attitude towards China. In other words, he inconspicuously turned Sino-Japanese friendly relations from a "destiny" into a "mission".

This attempt at looking at the past for the sake of the future proved, not surprisingly, detrimental for both Saneto's research and his understanding of "the truth of the matter". In her book – *A theory of History*, Agnes Heller discusses the issue of whether and how historical research could be equated to *episthémé* (or "true knowledge"), depending on the scholar's "interest". She suggests that if history is used as a means for the rationalization of any actions taken, then it is the product of pragmatic interest, and if it is used to "enlighten" and reinforce attitudes through rational deliberation, then it is the product of direct practical interest – and both of these uses go against the norm

of historical research as science (Heller 1982: 79–80). It is disputable whether Saneto's interest should be classified as pragmatic or practical, but in any case, since the justification by history of a present action belongs to history as ideology, not to history as "*episthémè*", it is clear that this new-found attitude actually impaired his understanding of the truth about Chinese people's attitudes during the war.

In the end, many Japanese intellectuals, initially frustrated because of the war with China, came up with some sort of justification for Japan's actions, especially after the start of the Pacific War²³. Although only partially discussed here, Saneto too followed the same path, from accepting a proactive attitude, to shifting his focus on the role of the Western powers, to ultimately supporting the war (Saneto 1960: 568). While this attitude amongst Japanese people has partly been attributed to the intense nationalistic propaganda of the Japanese government, it does not seem applicable to a sizable part of intellectuals, to which Saneto, the abovementioned Takeuchi Yoshimi and even Miki Kiyoshi belonged, which was in fact very wary of extreme nationalism. In the same article, where Saneto supported the Japanese wartime policy of "cultural assistance" to China, he also cautiously warned against Japan's becoming "overconfident and exclusive of others" (KB volume B-1: 40). Another factor, widely and for a long time present in Japanese society, could be considered in these cases, namely the underlying discourse of pan-Asianism. Loosely defined as the aspiration towards Asian unity against a politically aggressive West, the dramatic variation of interpretations amongst its supporters is now universally accepted as pan-Asianism's main feature. This is the reason why a highly individualistic approach is usually required, when studying the ideas of people associated with it. But in considering the way pan-Asianism might have influenced people like Saneto, who were not necessarily political actors with a well-developed agenda, I suggest it beneficial to consider not what pan-Asianism *consisted of*, but rather how it *functioned* within society and what mechanisms the spread of its influence followed across time – whether that be as an "inclination" (Takeuchi 1963: 2), a "style of thought" (Saaler & Szpilman: 2) or even maybe a *zeitgeist*, aka "spirit of the times". This, however, exceeds the purposes of the current paper and shall be discussed on another occasion.

Conclusion

This paper was concerned with the early life and research of a Japanese scholar from half a century ago, whose experience was largely clouded by

²³ For more on this difficult topic, and Takeuchi's standpoint in particular, see Sun (2005).

war and political extremism. Yet at a fundamental level, Saneto's interests and concerns don't seem to be all that different from what is driving us in the here and now. He sincerely loved China and Chinese people; he did his best to observe matters from a Chinese point of view; he firmly believed that what he was doing was "scientific" and that it would lead to something good. Indeed, a cautionary tale of how a China scholar – or any scholar for that matter – could, depending on the circumstances, unknowingly end up trapped by his or her own intentions. I thus wish to suggest the following: although scholarly efforts will always be in one way or another influenced by whatever "spirit" their corresponding time and space have produced, realizing this limitation might be the first step to overcoming it. There is no better time than today for scholars from both China and all over the world to come together as a community and share their knowledge. And what might prove even more beneficial might be to go one step beyond the mere exchange of information and consider how and why different times and different spaces sometimes produce different sides of the truth – because this, in itself, is also part of the truth.

References

- Ando, Hikotaro. *Chuugokugo to Nihon* [Chinese language and modern Japan]. Tokyo, 1988.
- Heller, Agnes. *A Theory of History*. London, 1982.
- Miles Fletcher III, William. *Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan*. Chapel Hill, 2009.
- Ohara, Yuji. *Bungakuteki kioku: 1940 zengo*. [Literary memory: Showa literature and war remembrance around 1940]. Tokyo, 2006.
- Saneto, Keishu. *Keishu Bunson* [The writings of Keishu]. Unpublished anthology, part of The Saneto Collection at Tokyo Metropolitan Library.
- Saneto, Keishu. *Chuugokujin Nihon ryuugakushi* [History of Chinese Overseas Students in Japan]. Tokyo, 1960.
- Saaler, Sven (ed.) & Szpilman, Christopher W. A. (ed.). *Pan-Asianism: A Documentary History* (vol. 1&2). Lanham, 2011.
- Sun, Ge. *Takeuchi Yoshimi to iu toi* [Takeuchi Yoshimi – an inquiry]. Tokyo, 2005.
- Takeuchi, Yoshimi (ed.). *Ajiashugi* [Pan-Asianism]. Tokyo, 1963.
- Tanaka, Stefan. *Japan's Orient*. Berkley, 1995.
- Zhu, Lin. *Kindai Nihon ni okeru chishikijin no Chuugoku ninshiki* [Intellectuals in modern Japan and their perceptions of China]. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10097/00121763>, Accessed: 30.10.2019.

China in World War II

Nako Stefanov

Abstract

China's involvement in World War II is not well known especially in Europe. But we have to say that the so-called Second Sino-Japanese War, which became one of the faces of WWII, started much earlier than the officially recognized by the Eurocentric point of view date of the beginning of this biggest war tragedy in human history. It must be said that the Chinese front of WWII was among the most important battle lines together with the Soviet and Pacific fronts. According to current figures published in the People's Republic of China, there were 35 million military and civilian Chinese casualties.

In this war, the Chinese people have experienced treacheries and defeats, sacrifice and humiliation. But in the end, China, along with other anti-fascist coalition nations, was among the winners. This victory which came at the cost of much blood happened to be the first step to the Great Historical Revival of China.

Keywords: China in World War II, Manchuria, “Mukden incident”, Kwantung Army, “Marco Polo Bridge” incident, Nanjing Massacre, Pacific War, Kwantung Army, China Civil War, the Kuomintang, the China Communist Party, Japan's Strategy in Asia, Red Army rapid advance in Northeast China, The defeat of Japan

Introduction

World War II /WWII/ as the largest armed conflict in the history of mankind has many “faces”, i.e. it took place within various theatres of war. To this day, disputes continue regarding the key parameters of this definitively most tragic event in human civilization based on the huge number of casualties.

An important moment in these disputes is undoubtedly the beginning of the war. From a Eurocentric point of view, it was September 1, 1939, when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. But in China another date is commemorated, namely July 7, 1937, when the so-called “The Lugou Bridge” or “Marco Polo Bridge” incident triggered the start of systematic military actions by Imperial Japan against China. It would be reasonable to mention an even earlier date – September 18, 1931, when Japanese officers from the Kwantung Army (Japanese: 関東

軍 – Kantō Gun) carried out a provocation: the so called Mukden incident which led to the beginning of the occupation of North-East China – Manchuria.¹

The “Chinese aspect” of this war, the atrocities demonstrated by the Japanese Imperial army, the millions of Chinese civilian casualties etc., are not well known in Europe. This is the purpose of this material – to offer a brief, but sufficiently indicative, representation of this part of World War II.

Background and causes of the conflict

The defeat of China in the First Opium War (1840–1842) and the Second Opium War (1850–1856) resulted in the beginning of the transformation of Qing China into a semi-colonial country on part of the Western powers. The next step in this direction was the First Japan-China War (1894–1895). China was forced by the imperialist countries to give up a number of territories, which led to the creation of the so-called “Spheres of influence”. The widespread discontent of various social classes and forces with the Qing Dynasty led to the Xinghai Revolution (Simplified Chinese: 辛亥革命, pinyin: Xīnhài géming), which began on October 10, 1911.

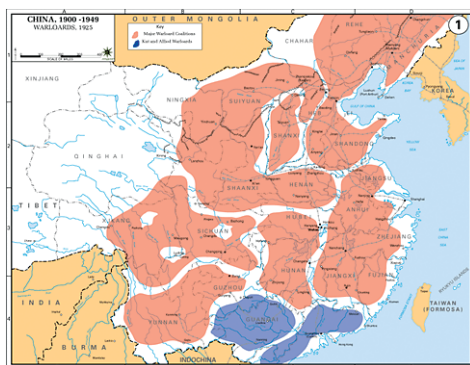
The creation of a new republic not only did not solve the problems, but the chaos deepened even further the political and economic crisis in China. In 1910, Outer Mongolia was separated (Simplified Chinese: 外蒙古, pinyin: Wài ménggǔ). After 1911–1912, Tibet (Simplified Chinese: 西藏, pinyin: Xīzàng) and the Xinjiang Uygur region (Simplified Chinese: 新疆 维吾尔, pinyin: Xīnjiāng wéiwú'ěr) were in an autonomous mode of existence. Japan's pressure on China, expressed in the so-called “Twenty-One Demands (Japanese: 対華21ヶ条要求, Taika Nijūikkajō Yōkyū, simplified Chinese: 二十一条; traditional Chinese: 二十一條; pinyin: Èrshíyī tiáo) of 18.01.1915”, was increasing, aiming to make China a dependent territory.

¹ The War conflict in East Asia is known by various names – in China it is called the Chinese War of Resistance against Japan (Simplified Chinese: 中国抗日战争 – Zhōngguó kàngri zhànzhēng). In 2017 the Chinese Ministry of Education issued a directive stating that textbooks were to refer to the war as the “Fourteen Years of Resistance” (Simplified Chinese: 十四年抗战 – Shísi nián kàngzhàn); the name “Second Sino-Japanese War” is used in the West. In Japan, they call it the Japan-China War (Japanese: 日中戦争 – Nitchū Sensō). When the invasion of China began in July 1937, the government of Japan used “The North China Incident” (Japanese: 北支事變/華北事變: Hokushi Jihen/Kahoku Jihen). When the Battle of Shanghai started the conflict's name was changed to “The China Incident” (Japanese: 支那事變 – Shina Jihen). In Japanese propaganda, the invasion of China was called also “Holy War” (Japanese: 聖戰 – seisen). When China and Japan formally declared war in December 1941, the name was replaced by “Greater East Asia War” (Japanese: 大東亞戦争 – Daitōa Sensō). In Russia, it is the “Japan-China War”. In Bulgaria, the term Sino-Japanese War is used.

After World War I, the central government of the Kuomintang /KMT/ – Nationalist Party of China (Simplified Chinese: 中国国民党, pinyin: Zhōngguó Guómíndǎn,) failed to control the whole country. Regional militaristic cliques divided the country into hostile provinces which struggled with each other and with the central government. In 1927, disagreements between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China – CPC (Simplified Chinese: 中国共产党, pinyin: Zhōngguó Gòngchǎndǎng) led to the first stage of the Civil War. This worsened the internal situation in the country and weakened it for external dangers.

In Northeast China, i.e. the area of Manchuria (Traditional Chinese: 滿洲國, pinyin:

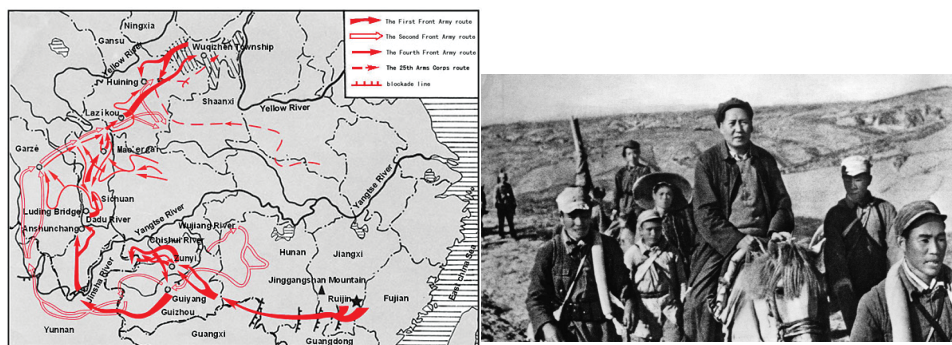
Mǎnzhōu guó; Japanese: 滿州国 – Manshū koku), after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the Japanese influence increased. On September 18, 1931, Japanese officers from the Kwantung Army (Japanese – Kantō Gun) carried out a provocation – the so-called “Mukden incident”. This was the reason for the invasion of the Kwantung Army from the Liaodong Peninsula (Kwantung Peninsula). Japan obtained the lease rights for the peninsula, according to the 1905 Portsmouth Peace Treaty, which ended the Russo-Japanese War. In Manchuria, under the control of the Kwantung Army, the puppet state of Manchukuo was established (Traditional Chinese: 大滿洲帝國, pinyin: "Dà mǎnzhōu dìguó" – "Great Manchurian Empire", Japanese: 大滿洲帝國 – Dai Manshū teikoku), led by the last Manchu emperor Pu Yi. From 1931 localized fighting took place between the armed forces of Japan and China, represented by the so-called “incidents”. Such was the brief war on the January 28, 1932 incident that led to the Shanghai demilitarization at the request of the Japanese.



China's „splitting“ into different parts between militaristic cliques in 1925 ²

² http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/02/Warlords_1929.PNG. Last retrieved March 20, 2020.

Meanwhile in China continued the Civil war between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China. In late 1934, the central government launched a 5th campaign by encirclement of the Jiangxi Soviet region with fortified blockhouses. In October 1934 the CPC took advantage of gaps in the ring of blockhouses. The so-called Long March (Simplified Chinese: 长征. pinyin: Chángzhēng) started. The Communists, under the command of Mao Zedong, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, Lin Biao, Li De and Deng Xiaoping went to the west and north part of the country. The Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army traversed over 9,000 kilometers (5600 miles) over 370 days toward west, then north, to Shaanxi.



Map of the Long March

Mao Zedong during the Long March

At that time Japan launched a policy called “specialization” in North China, known as the “Movement for Autonomy of North China.” It affected the northern provinces of Chahar, Suyuan, Hebei, Shanxi and Shandong. Under pressure from Japan in 1935, China signed the Japanese terms for “normalization” of North China. According to these terms the Chinese Communist Party was prohibited to conduct activities in Hebei. Thus put an end to the Chinese control over North China. The same was repeated in the Mongolian province of Chahar. By the end of 1935, the central government of China had effectively abandoned North China. Accordingly, Japan-backed authorities⁴ – the

³ https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/80thendoflongmarch/2016-08/04/content_26343962.htm

⁴ The North China Buffer State Strategy (華北分離工作, Kahoku Bunri Kōsaku) (simplified Chinese: 华北五省自治, traditional Chinese: 華北五省自治, pinyin: Huáběi wǔ shěng zìzhì) is the general term for a series of political maneuvers Japan undertook in the five provinces of northern China, Hebei, Chahar, Suiyuan, Shanxi, and Shandong. It was an operation to detach all of northern China from the power of the Nationalist Government and put it under Japanese control or influence.

Mengjiang⁵ (Mengkiang; Chinese: 蒙疆; pinyin: Měngjiāng) and the East Ji Anti-Communist Government⁶ – were created there.

Gradually, the goals of the opposing parties crystallized. For Japan, the strategic goal was to establish and strengthen its presence on the Asian mainland by forming the continental part of the Japanese Empire on the conquered territories. For the main opposing forces – the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party, the strategic goals were to drive out the aggressor while crushing the respective internal opponents.

Start of large-scale hostilities between Japan and China – July 1937–December 1941

The large-scale military actions between Japan and China began on July 7, 1937 with the incident of the Lugou Bridge (Marco Polo Bridge). There was a gunfight between Japanese and Chinese soldiers guarding the bridge. The incident prompted Japan to attack the Republic of China, which, against the backdrop of the Civil War, was not sufficiently prepared for war with the Japanese, although it had a much larger manpower.

The Japanese command planned to carry out a “blitzkrieg” and to conquer all of China in three months. China’s National Army was steadily withdrawing, though sometimes the Chinese showed miracles of endurance. In late July, the Japanese Imperial Army succeeded in occupying Beijing and Tianjin.

Fierce fighting unfolded in August 1937 for Shanghai in which 280,000 Japanese soldiers as well as Japan’s Air Force and Japan’s Navy participated. Chinese commander-in-chief Chan Kai-shek sent his best divisions, trained and armed with German help⁷ to defend the city. Shanghai’s defence lasted three months.

⁵ Mengjiang (Mengkiang; Chinese: 蒙疆; pinyin: Měngjiāng; Wade–Giles: Meng3-chiang1; Hepburn: Mōkyō), also known in English as Mongol Border Land or the Mongol United Autonomous Government, was an autonomous area in Inner Mongolia, formed in 1939 as a puppet state of the Empire of Japan. It consisted of the previously Chinese provinces of Chahar and Suiyuan, corresponding to the central part of modern Inner Mongolia. It has also been called Mongukuo or Mengguguo (or Mengkukuo; Chinese: 蒙古國) in analogy to Manchukuo.

⁶ The East Hebei Autonomous Government (Chinese: 冀東防共自治政府; pinyin: Jìdōng Fángòng Zìzhì Zhèngfǔ), also known as the East Ji Autonomous Government and the East Hebei Autonomous Anti-Communist Government, was a short-lived late-1930s state in northern China. It has been described by historians as either a Japanese puppet state or a buffer state. See in https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_China_Buffer_State_Strategy. Last retrieved March 20, 2020.

⁷ It should be remembered that before the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany and Japan on November 25, 1936, there was a ratified military cooperation agreement between Nazi Germany and China, as a result of which German advisers assisted in the preparation of the National Army of China. Also German weapons were purchased.



Chiang Kai-shek⁸ (31 October 1887 – 5 April 1975), also known as Chiang Chung-cheng and Jiang Jieshi, was a Chinese nationalist politician, and military leader who served as the leader of the Republic of China between 1928 and 1949

The losses of the aggressors exceed 40,000 soldiers and officers. In November 1937, however, Chinese troops left Shanghai. In December of the same year Nanjing, the then capital of the Republic of China, was also occupied. In the city a genocide against the civilian population was committed, known as the “Nanjing Massacre” (Simplified Chinese: 南京大屠杀, pinyin: Nánjīng dà túshā) Accordingly, the capital was relocated to the city of Chongqing.

⁸ <https://www.akg-images.com/archive/-2UMEBM2VOITY.html>. Last retrieved March 20, 2020.



Nanjing Massacre

China's losses continued in 1938. Important cities such as Suzhou and Kaifeng were lost. On October 21, a Japanese landing took over the most important port of southern China – Guangzhou (Canton). The most important battle of that year was the defence of the city of Wuhan on the Yangtze River. Chinese troops had been tenacious defending the city for 4 months, but on October 25, 1938 it was captured.

Having conquered vast areas of China, Imperial Japan needed to establish effective control over these territories. Meanwhile, a persistent guerrilla war led by the CPC Red Army was unfolding in the rear of the Japanese. This forced the Japanese Imperial army to move to “strategic defence.” By the end of 1938, Japan had used more than 70% of its forces in counter-guerrilla operations in Northeast, North, Central and South China.

In the meantime, the Japanese were making proposals to the Kuomintang Government for peace on favourable for Japan terms. This heightened internal controversy among Chinese nationalists and led to the betrayal of former Deputy Prime Minister Wang Jingwei (Wang Ching-wei). Thus, in March

⁹ <https://in4press.com/2019/12/13/%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%8F-%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B7%D0%BD%D1%8F/> Last retrieved March 20, 2020.

1940, Japan formed a puppet government in Nanjing, which was led by Wang Jingwei as to gain political and military support in the fight against the Central government and the CPC guerrillas in the rear.



Occupied by Japan territories of China in 1940.¹⁰

Determined to reach a “definitive solution to the Chinese incident”, as the Japanese called at that time the large-scale war on China, they decided to conquer the capital Chongqing. But first they had to take up Changsha, a strategic centre on the road to Chongqing. The battle for Changsha in the autumn and winter of 1941 ended with China’s first major victory. The Japanese army was badly defeated. The Land of the Rising Sun failed to achieve its strategic goal – the defeat of China. Despite the losses, both the Government army and the Communist forces continued their resistance.

The Second Sino-Japanese War as an important front in the Asia-Pacific zone of World War II

The attack by Imperial Japan against the US Naval Base at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, which was designed to dismantle the US Pacific Fleet, was an important condition for Japan’s expansion in the so-called “Southern Seas, i.e. Southeast Asian countries. Accordingly, the purpose of this southward expansion was to secure oil supplies as essential for the victorious end of the war with China. Thus, the Sino-Japanese War became an important front in the Asia-Pacific zone of World War II.

¹⁰ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_China_\(Second_Sino-Japanese_War\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_China_(Second_Sino-Japanese_War))



Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor – December 7, 1941¹¹

It must be said that China declared war on Hitler's Germany shortly after Hitler's attack on the USSR. And after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, China officially declared war on Japan. The 5 years of fighting that had taken place until that moment, were fought without an officially declared war. On December 26, 1941, a military alliance was concluded between China, the United Kingdom and the United States. In this way, China formally joined the countries of the Anti-Fascist Coalition and began to play an important role in Allied operations in the Asia-Pacific war zone. To understand its role, it must be recalled that, at the beginning of the Pacific War in December 1941, Japan had 2.1 million soldiers, of whom 1.4 million were at the Chinese Theatre of War and only 400,000 were fighting in the area of the Pacific Ocean. Thus, almost 2/3 of Japan's land forces were on the front with China.

Following the attack on December 7, 1941, Imperial Japan started a Blitzkrieg in the direction of the South Seas. From December 8 to December 25, 1941, the Japanese blockade of Hong Kong began. It ended with the surrendering of a large Anglo-Canadian garrison to the Japanese. Only a few days were needed to defeat British troops in Malaya. After a week of fighting in February 1942, the "Invincible fortress" of Britain, Singapore, was defeated with 70,000 Britons and Australians surrendering. The resistance against the Japanese in the islands of the Dutch East Indies, i.e. present-day

¹¹ <https://zen.yandex.ru/media/id/5c36dd4503ed1900aa15773f/pochemu-iaponiia-napala-na-perlharbor-5c5db96064276e00ae3df875>

Indonesia, lasted about two months – from January 11 to March 2, 1942. Only about 4 months were needed for the Imperial armed forces of Japan to defeat all US troops in the Philippines, which were then a US colony. After a day of fighting, Thailand was forced to enter into an alliance with Japan. On March 8, 1942, the Japanese assault force took over the capital of British Burma, Rangoon and soon the Imperial armed forces controlled almost the entire country.

Meanwhile, in the spring of 1942, the allies – China, the United Kingdom and the United States formed a joint command of the Chinese Military Zone, which included Vietnam, Burma and Thailand in addition to China itself. Chan Kai-shek became commander of this zone. A large Chinese expeditionary corps passed from Yunnan province into the western and northern parts of Burma to rescue the British troops there.

In general, from July to December 1942, only locally fought battles which did not have a strong impact on the overall situation took place. But the occupation of Burma by Japan, in the light of the disruption of China's weapons supply and other supplies needed for warfare by the Allies, put the Chinese army at a particularly disadvantageous situation. By early 1943, China was blocked and isolated, with its capacity for effective resistance deteriorating.

At the same time, Imperial Japan was changing its tactics. It switched to use the so-called. "Rice onslaughts", i.e. local offensive and punishing operations aimed at taking away pieces of territory. In this way, the space controlled by both the Government troops and the Communist resistance movement was reduced. The resource base – food, manpower and others was also reduced. For example, the total population in the CPC's major anti-Japanese strongholds in the early 1943 was halved from 100 million in 1940.

The Japanese activated all their subordinate forces. On January 9, 1943, the puppet government in Nanjing declared war on Britain and the United States. Overall, 1943 was characterized by battles with variable success. Japan's 11th Army attempted to seize the capital Chongqing, but failed. The Chinese army also managed to stop the "rice offensive" at the end of 1943 in Hunan Province.



The advent of Japanese tank units in China¹²

The next year of 1944 was marked by a sharp intensification of the offensive actions of Imperial Japan. In the spring of that year Operation No 1 began with more than 500,000 soldiers deployed. The Japanese ceased actions against the free areas in Northeast China, controlled by the CPC, and focused their efforts in South China. Extensive territories were occupied and important strategic centres such as the cities of Zhengzhou in Central China and Changsha in Southern Hunan province were conquered. In October 1944, a Japanese attack led to the loss of Fuzhou, and in November Guilin, a city with a population of almost one million, was completely burned down.

The attacks carried out by the Japanese army continued in the first half of 1945. At that time, Imperial Japan was holding the strategic initiative in its hands. The Japanese forces occupied a significant coastal area in China, home to most of the population and of the economic potential of China. The defeat of Hitler's Germany by the Anti-Fascist Coalition made it possible for the Allied efforts to focus on Japan, which qualitatively changed the situation on the Chinese Front.

¹² <https://zen.yandex.com/media/historyanalytics/vtoraia-mirovaia-voina-pochemu-kitai-stal-postoiannym-chlenom-sb-oon-i-poluchil-pravo-veto-5b351054e83add00a9a68443>

The defeat of Japan and the end of World War II in 1945

In early 1945, Japan intensified its efforts to reach a peace compromise with the allies of the anti-fascist coalition and thus to avoid the unconditional surrender. Taking advantage of the partial defeat of Chiang Kai-shek's troops in 1944, the Japanese offered a separate peace to the Kuomintang/KMT/. But Chang Kai-shek raised up his own conditions:

1. The full withdrawal of the Japanese troops;
2. The elimination Wang Jingwei's puppet regime;
3. Full compensation for the damages done to China in the war.

Thus this attempt to achieve separate peace ended in failure.

A few words should be said about the military cooperation with the Allies. Undoubtedly, military assistance was being provided by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the USSR. It is expressed both in the provision of weapons, military materials and materials for civilian purposes, as well as in the specialist support – most notably airplane pilots, military advisers and others. In the framework of this cooperation, Chiang Kai-shek was gradually orienting towards the United States, although the Soviet Union supported both the Kuomintang and the CPC.

It should be noted that both the USSR and the US were taking steps to reach reconciliation between KMT and the CPC. But this policy did not always succeed. Hostility in the relations between the two main forces of the anti-Japanese struggle in China remained a permanent phenomenon. For example, in June-July 1945, both Japanese troops and Chinese nationalists conducted punishment operations against the Special Area under the CPC's command.

It must be admitted that the US victories in the Pacific War, including the capture of Okinawa (the so-called "Operation Iceberg") at the end of June 1945, did not seriously affect the situation at the Chinese Theatre of War. Japan had succeeded in establishing, in Northeast China, in the puppet state of Manchukuo, a powerful industrial and agricultural base capable of providing combat readiness to troops even in case the contact with the metropole was lost and Japan collapsed. Essentially, a Second Japan was created there.

In the meantime, events started to move faster and faster. The decisive help of the anti-fascist coalition allies was the defeat of militaristic Japan. On August 6 and 9, 1945, the Hiroshima and Nagasaki's nuclear bombings took place.

On August 8, 1945, the USSR formally acceded to the Potsdam Declaration of the United States, Britain and China, declaring war on Japan. On August 9, the Soviet Armed Forces began fighting in Manchuria. The rapid advance of the Soviet Red Army in Northeast China defeated Japan's most powerful ground forces – the Kwantung Army.

On August 10, the CPC's Red Army Commander-in-Chief Zhu De ordered an offensive against the Japanese. On August 11, a similar order was issued by Chiang Kai-shek, which specifically provided for the 4th and 8th armies, under the command of the CPC, not to participate.

On the same day – August 10, the Japanese government decided on unconditional surrender. On August 14, 1945, the decree of the Emperor announced the surrender of Imperial Japan (Japanese: 日本^の降伏, Nihon-no kōfuku, Simplified Chinese: 日本投降, pinyin: Riběn tóuxiáng) On September 2, 1945, aboard the American battleship Missouri in the Tokyo Bay, the Japanese act of surrender was formally signed. On September 9, 1945 General Ho Yin-ching, representing the Government of the Republic of China and the Allied Command in Southeast Asia, accepted the surrender of Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Forces in China, General Okamura Yasuji. This marked the end of World War II in Asia.



The Japanese delegation signing the surrender of Japan aboard the American battleship, USS Missouri, on September 2, 1945¹³

Conclusion

In World War II, this most cruel war in human history, China has fought for not even only eight years if we look back to 1937. Since 1931, over 14 years there had been fighting on Chinese soil. During these times China's losses amounted to 4 million soldiers and officers and 16 million civilians.¹⁴

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_Instrument_of_Surrender

¹⁴ China's Anti-Japanese War Combat Operations. Guo Rugui, editor-in-chief Huang Yuzhang Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2005; ISBN 7-214-03034-9, pp. 4-9.

The majority of the Japanese armed forces during the war were concentrated on the Chinese Front. All of this is proof of the Chinese people's strategic contribution to the Great Victory over fascism and militarism.

References

- David Murray Horner. *The Second World War: The Pacific*. Taylor & Francis. 2003. Print.
- Guo Rugui. *China's Anti-Japanese War Combat Operations*. Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2005. Print.
- Ramon H. Myers, Mark R. Peattie. *The Japanese Colonial Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987. Print.
- Vasiliev L. S., S.G. Lapina, A.V. Meliksetov, A.A. Pisarev Васильев Л.С., З. Г. Лапина, А.В. Меликсетов, А.А. Писарев *Istoria Kitaya*. История Китая. [History of China]. Moscow, Москва, MGU "Onix" Publishing, И-во МГУ, „Оникс“, 2007. Print.
- Stefanov N., A. Koleva Стефанов Н., А. Колева. *Kitai – socialno-ikonomichesko rasvitiie ot drevnosta do nashi dni*. Китай-социално-икономическо развитие от древността до наши дни. [China – Socio-economic Development from Ancient Times to the Present Day]. Sofia, София, East-West Publishing, „Изток-Запад“, 2015. Print.
- <https://www.akh-images.com/archive/-2UMEBM2VOITY.html>. Last retrieved March 20, 2020.
- https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/80thendoflongmarch/2016-08/04/content_26343962.htm
- <https://in4press.com/2019/12/13/%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%8F-%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B7%D0%BD%D1%8F/>
- http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/02/Warlords_1929.PNG.
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_Instrument_of_Surrender
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_China_Buffer_State_Strategy
- http://www.vivonet.co.jp/rekisi/j03_japan/Second_Sino_Japanese_war.html
- https://yandex.ru/images/search?from=tabbar&text=мао%20дзъдун%20после%20великий%20поход%20в%20янауле&pos=13&img_url=https%3A%2F%2Fsa-voirs.rfi.fr%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fmedias%2Fimages%2Fvignettes%2Fgettyimages-170973524_1920.jpg&rpt=simage
- <https://zen.yandex.com/media/historyanalitics/vtoraia-mirovaia-voina-pochemu-kitai-stal-postoiannym-chlenom-sb-oon-i-poluchil-pravo-veto-5b351054e83add-00a9a68443>
- <https://zen.yandex.ru/media/id/5c36dd4503ed1900aa15773f/pochemu-iaponiia-napala-na-perlharbor-5c5db96064276e00ae3df875>

Origin and Interpretation of the Custom of Placing Objects in the Mouth of the Deceased in Ancient China

Maria Marinova

Abstract

The aim of the present study is to attempt to find a pattern or a semantic framework of the custom of placing objects in the mouth of the dead attested in China as early as the Neolithic, which has undergone many stages of transformation and has been preserved with variations even to this day. The research work comprises an outline of the historical development and the varieties of this ritual in different periods based on data from archeological excavations and written sources. Particular attention is given to the custom of placing a (foreign precious) coin in the mouth of the deceased, which was widespread in Xinjiang burials in the 6th-9th centuries and has been hypothetically connected with the Hellenistic practice of Charon's obol. The article also examines the symbolic connotations of this funeral rite that could provide insights into the eschatological belief systems of the ancients, and could also help to identify a common Eurasian archetype for the custom.

Keywords: 生舍, 死舍, ancient burial customs, jade pieces, 口舍币, Byzantine gold coins, Persian silver coins, Charon's obol

Introduction

Burial customs have a history as long as the history of human civilization. For many ancient societies death was not just an inevitable end of the earthly journey, but a door to life in another realm, a transition from profane to sacred existence. That is why ritual elements in burials are perceived as a complex multi-layered reflection of the intersection between the earthly and the spiritual – a coded expression of the worldview and the eschatological concepts of our ancestors. It is generally assumed that burial practices are not susceptible to innovations, as they are among the most sustainable and conservative structures in a given cultural reality, but nevertheless, after experiencing an adaptive period of acceptance of new/foreign elements, they may

develop their original scenario and turn into evidence of cultural or religious exchange between different communities.

The objects used in burials – their origin and location, utilitarian and symbolic-ritual meaning – have always been the fulcrums for reconstruction and interpretation of the lifestyle and spiritual practices of ancient people. The head was commonly believed to be the seat of the soul which passed out of the body through the mouth as the dying breath (Stevens 1991: 221), therefore the semantic function of the funeral items located on or around the head has been the subject of special attention by researchers, as they are thought to have a direct connection with the soul of the deceased.

In ancient China, the custom of placing objects with a ritual or magical function in the mouth of the deceased dates back to the deepest antiquity and in the process of its evolution it has unfolded geographically and semantically. In most cases, the objects were positioned after death, but there is archaeological evidence from Neolithic times that occasionally the objects were inserted in the mouth while the person was still alive (生含, 生噙). In the Dawenkou site (大汶口遗址) and the Wangyin site (王因遗址) in Shandong Province, as well as in the Dadunzi site (大墩子遗址) and Beiyinyangying site (北阴阳营遗址) in Jiangsu province, stone and clay balls or natural colored stones have been retrieved from the mouth of the deceased (Gu 2008: 4). The original excavation reports describe clear indications that these small objects were kept in the mouth long before death occurred, expressed as tooth atrophy and severe tooth enamel wear most likely caused by friction resulting from long or frequent suction of the balls (Hu 1979: 5–14). Objects of this type were registered in burials of adult men and women as well as of children, suggesting that they may have been made for a special purpose and were of particular importance to their carriers during life. Perhaps they had magical functions as amulets that conferred protection on their owner or drove away evil spirits. However, the insignificant number of such finds has led Chinese scholars to speculate that this variety of the custom was common only in some areas of Shandong province and the northern parts of Jiangsu province during the Neolithic period, but was generally not typical for the other Neolithic cultures in China (Li 1995: 724).

Object(s) placed in the mouth after one's death (死含, 饭含, 饭噙, 饭琿) are undoubtedly the main and far more popular variety of the custom, discussed in this study. The local items used in the ritual usually included millet, rice, cowry shells, jade, gold and silver coins or their imitations. The earliest examples are pieces of jade discovered in individual burials from the village of Sanlihe (三里河遗址) of the Late Neolithic culture Dawenkou (大汶口文化)

(Hu 1979:5-14). But due to the sporadicity of the findings from the Neolithic era, it cannot be asserted that placing an object in the mouth of the dead was a widespread custom during this period, so it is more reasonable to be treated as a phenomenon inherent in the culture of individual social groups.

Historical Development of the Custom of Placing Objects in the Mouth of the Deceased in China

At present there is a lack of systematic scientific research synthesizing the latest archaeological data against the background of written evidence, which would enable us to give a definite answer to the question at what historic moment the custom of placing objects and food in the mouth of the dead took shape as a burial ritual bound to the social structure of the community. Chinese scholars such as Li (1995: 725–726) assume that it's highly probable this custom originated during the late Neolithic among the societies inhabiting the territories of the Dawenkou culture¹, then gradually penetrated to the west and incorporated itself into the funeral rituals of the inhabitants of the later Shang dynasty. Hu (1998) further suggests that this Neolithic practice evolved into a ritual system during the Yin Shang period, was consolidated in the Western Zhou Dynasty and further developed throughout the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period.

Excavations of the Dasikongcun (大司空村) necropolis near Anyang, Henan province in 1953, revealed the presence of cowry shells², jade cicadas, jade fish, jade balls and rectangular jade ornaments contained in the mouth of the dead in 49 out of the 165 graves dating from the Shang dynasty (Li 1995: 725). Although there is no substantial archaeological evidence from the early period of the Shang dynasty (16th–14th century BC) for the existence of this custom, archaeological research of the ruins of the capital Yin (殷墟) confirms that during the late phase of Shang rule (14th–11th century BC) the custom was widespread, with jade and stone objects or jewelry usually placed in the mouth, in the hand or on the chest of the dead, while cowries were typically laid in the mouth, in the hand or under the feet (Zhang 2013: 44; ZSKYKYAG 1979: 27–146). Since cowry shells were utilized as currency in the Chinese state during this period, their massive use in burials, and in increased quantities, could be interpreted as developing their original symbolic meaning and

¹ I. e., mainly the central and the southern parts of Shandong province, the northern parts of Jiangsu province and other areas.

² Natural sea shells with a drilled hole in the back were used, their number in the mouth of the dead varying from 1 to 4.

acquiring purely practical functions such as providing the dead with resources for their expenses in the afterlife – a role that „burial money” (冥钱) played in Chinese culture centuries later.

Archaeological evidence also suggests that during the late period of the Shang dynasty there was already a differentiation between the objects designated to be used in burials of people of different social strata: people of low status, even those who were offered as human sacrifice, were usually buried with cowries in the mouth, while jade fish, jade cicadas, jade pearls and jade jewelry were emblematic of burials of high-ranking individuals (Odani 1991: 84; Li 1995: 726). This is not surprising, bearing in mind that in the first two millennia of Chinese culture jade was perceived not only as a mineral of high aesthetic value and beauty, but also as an indestructible precious material of supernatural origin, which was endowed with transcendental qualities and could impart immortality on its owner. So by placing jade pieces in the mouth or near the body, ancient Chinese people believed that they would confer the properties and virtues of permanence and purity to the deceased and aid his/her transformation to a deathless state. In the burials of emperors and nobles from the later Han dynasty, jade burial suits or jade plugs for the nine body orifices were often used to prevent the body from decay and to preserve the vital energy *qi*, so that the body could later be resurrected. Due to its life cycle, the cicada was a symbol of this resurrection, so it was often placed on the tongue of the dead, and sometimes a jade suckling pig was placed in the hand as a symbol of food, affluence and provisioning for life after death (Odani 1991: 84).

During the Western Zhou dynasty (1046–771 BC), the custom of placing objects in the mouth of the dead further developed the ritual system inherited from the Shang era and became even more popular, spreading from the Central Plain to adjacent areas (Li 1995: 726). Cowries were predominantly used, their number varying from 1 to 50 in the mouth of a single individual (Zhang 2013: 42). In some instances, jade pieces, jade crescents or jade beads were placed together with cowries, but due to the small number of such finds, jade cannot be convincingly interpreted as a sign of higher social status in this period (Li 1995: 726). However, it is believed that the burial ceremonies of the Western Zhou Dynasty generally retained the Shang practice of burying the dead with either jade pieces or cowry shells, depending on their rank.

Archaeological material illustrating the custom discussed in this paper from the Spring and Autumn period (771–476 BC) and the Warring States period (475–221 BC) is rather scarce, yet there are a large number of written sources shedding light on the details of this tradition during the Zhou Dynasty

in general³. It is evident from their accounts that the system of funeral rituals during this period involved the placement of two types of objects in the mouth of the deceased, respectively called “nourishment” (饭) and “mouth amulet” (含). “Feeding” the dead was a widespread folk custom at the time and the nourishment usually comprised some type of grains, while in most cases pearls, cowries or jade pieces played the role of a mouth amulet (Sun 2008: 251; Li 1995: 726).

Ancient Chinese chronicles also reveal that during the Zhou dynasty, placing objects in the mouth was part of a complex procedure for preparation of the body for burial, which took place in a strictly defined order. Pre-Qin Chinese annals like “Gongyang’s Annals” 《公羊传》 from the Warring States period and “The Rites of Zhou” 《周礼》 from the Spring and Autumn Period also unveil the semantics of this custom, and rate it among the duties which the filial son or the caring relatives should perform when parting with their loved ones (Li 1995: 725). “The Book of Rites” 《礼记》 of the Warring States period states: „Filling the mouth with rice uncooked and fine shells arises from a feeling which cannot bear that it should be empty. The idea is not that of giving food; and therefore these fine things are used”⁴ (Legge 1885: 168). This record explicitly discloses the deep allegorical meaning of the custom of placing food and valuable objects in the mouth of the deceased not in order to be fed, but rather as a ritual act of providing for his or her immediate needs in the other-world, using the natural beauty and symbolism of cowries and rice.

Written sources also indicate that by the time of the Spring and Autumn period at the latest, there were already strict rules regarding the types of nourishment and mouth amulets that should be placed in the mouth of the deceased according to their rank. A summary of the records found in various chronicles and literary works relating to this epoch⁵, gives the following picture: the nourishment (饭) for the Son of Heaven (天子) and princes (诸侯) was sorghum (粱); proso millet (稷) for ministers and high officials (卿大夫); rice (稻) for scholars (士); and cereals (谷实) for common people (庶) (Li 1995:727). Accordingly, the mouth amulets (含) for the different ranks were as follows: pearls (珠) for the Son of Heaven (天子); jade and jade disks (玉

³ For instance, the collection of stories “Shuo Yuan” (《说苑》), written by the Confucian scholar Liu Xiang (刘向) in the 1st century BC provides the following information: „天子含实以珠, 诸侯以玉, 大夫以玕, 士以贝, 庶人以谷实” 《说苑. 修文》. See in: Liu 1994:827.

⁴ “饭用米贝, 弗忍虚也; 不以食道, 用美焉尔。” 《礼记. 檀弓下》. See in: Li 2001:310.

⁵ For more detail, see: 《后汉书. 礼仪下. 大丧》; 《周礼. 地官. 舍人》; 《荀子. 礼论》; 《新唐书. 礼乐十》; 《明史. 志36礼十四》.

璧) for princes (诸侯); green jade (碧), jade pieces and ornaments with inferior quality or irregularly shaped pearls (玕) for ministers and civil servants (卿大夫); cowry shells (贝) for scholars (士); and cereals (谷实) for common people (庶) (Li 1995: 727).

It is highly possible that during the Eastern Zhou Dynasty this system of diversification was strictly observed, but the lack of sufficient archaeological evidence renders this assumption difficult to prove. Its existence continued in the funerary rituals of the Qin (221–207 BC) and Han (206 BC–220 AD) dynasties, the only variation being that the mouth amulet for the common people was replaced by copper coin(s). Throughout the Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) dynasties, this innovation became an established practice, but historical records inform us that the number of coins in the burials was limited to one or two only, so as to prevent robbing and desecration of graves (Li 1995: 728). Further archaeological and written evidence also suggests that the system defining the nourishment and mouth amulets for the deceased according to their rank continued to be adhered to throughout the Tang era, while a tendency towards simplification is observed in the Yuan (1271–1368) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties (Li 1995: 728).

Recent studies on the history and social life of Chinese minorities reveal that the tradition of placing objects or food in the mouth of the dead is still preserved among them with some variations, but usually without division by social rank. In addition, similar customs exist in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, Thailand and among other neighboring nations. The items they place in the mouth are mainly gold, silver or copper coins, gold and silver ornaments, sticky rice, meat, fruit, etc., thus manifesting strong similarities with the content and connotations of this burial practice among the Chinese people and minorities (Li 1995: 728–729; Li 2017: 155).

Persian and Byzantine Coins in Xinjiang Burials and Their Semantic Relationship with Hellenistic Eschatological Ideas

Foreign coins on Chinese territory from early historical periods have been a long-standing focus of scientific research as evidence of economic and cultural exchange with the Western world, but their appearance in a funeral context also unequivocally testifies to the existence of ideological and cultural exchange among Eurasian communities. In the period from the 1920s to the 1970s, through systematic archaeological excavations 1426 Persian silver coins were found in different parts of China, and by 1995 about 33 Byzantine gold coins and their imitations were discovered in 27 locations around the

country (Wang 2003: 219). Some of the coins were hidden in pits or excavated from the ruins of ancient cities, but the majority were directly retrieved from tombs, in which case they were contained in the mouth or in the hand of the dead, or placed on both eyes or together with other burial goods (Wang 2003: 219; Xu 1995: 306). By 2006, the number of Byzantine gold coins and their imitations published in the scientific literature reached 97, but most of them came from unknown locations and only 29 were confirmed to have been found through archeological excavations of burials (Guo 2006: 185, 188).

The analysis of the finds demonstrates a differentiation in the use of these two types of foreign coins in a burial context. Gold Byzantine coins were retrieved from graves of members of the imperial court and the royal family, ambassadors or other high-ranking officials; they were dated from the late period of the Northern Zhou dynasty (557–581 AD) until the early years of the Tang dynasty, and most of them had perforations or other marks implying that the coins were probably worn as ornaments by their owners (Guo 2006: 188; Luo 2005: 59). On the other hand, the imitations of gold Byzantine coins were concentrated in tombs of officials from the ancient kingdom of Gaochang (高昌故城) in Turpan, as well as in tombs of Sogdian descendants in inner China from the 7th and 8th centuries; most of the coins were placed in the mouth or on the side of the body, but there are no indications of their use as ornaments (Guo 2006: 188, 210, 213).

The ancient oasis city of Gaochang is an important archeological site, attesting mixed influence on the Western region's funeral customs in the first half of the Tang era. The role of a mouth amulet in burials over this period was played predominantly by imitations of silver Persian coins from the Sassanian empire and of golden Byzantine coins, but in rare cases Kaiyuan Tongbao (开元通宝)⁶ copper coins were also utilized (Guo 2006: 219–220; Li 1995: 728). Although real gold and silver coins were undoubtedly well known and exchanged in Gaochang as a busy trading center on the Silk Road, the choice of imitations as grave goods was probably dictated by purely pragmatic considerations, due to the fact that they were several times lighter than the originals (Guo 2006: 222) and therefore much less of the precious metal was used in their manufacture. Thus the imitations of expensive foreign coins appear to be cheaper substitute, adapted to the needs of local burial rituals, but nonetheless charged with the same semantic functions.

Regarding the origin of the imitations of the Byzantine gold coins in China, the opinions are divided between the Arab region that was formed after

⁶ A Tang dynasty coin, minted in 621 under the reign of Emperor Gaozu, which remained in production and circulation until 907.

the conquest of the Sassanid Empire and the Sogdian region (Luo 2005: 60). Various finds suggest that the Sogdians probably used gold coins not only as a commercial currency, but also as a symbol of treasure, value and high social status (Lin 2004: 122). It is plausible that they were loaded with similar connotations as part of the inventory in Tang dynasty burials, but a convincing interpretation of the coins as burial attributes of the nobles in the Western regions in this period is rendered especially difficult, owing to the lack of sufficient published information about the overall context of their discovery.

The first imitations of Byzantine solidi in Xinjiang were discovered by Sven Hedin in Khotan in 1896 (Montell 1938: 94–95) and by Sir Aurel Stein in the Astana Cemetery near Turpan in 1915, where the two examples were placed in the mouth of the deceased (Stein 1916: 205). Initially, Aurel Stein suggested a close semantic connection with the custom of Charon's Obol, yet the limited number of the finds could not clarify whether they were a direct continuation of the ancient tradition or originated from close mythological and religious ideas⁷. According to Greek and Latin classical texts, the so-called "Charon's obol" was a widely-spread funerary custom throughout the Greco-Roman world, involving placement of a coin in the mouth or on the face of the deceased as a payment to the boatman Charon for ferrying the soul across Acheron or Styx into the underworld. In its classical form, this tradition was formed around the 4th century BC (Bachvarov 2013: 135) and continued sporadically within a wide geographic range throughout the Roman period into the late 5th century AD (Stevens 1991: 215). The examination of the distribution of coins in burials suggests that even when the practice was most popular, it was only customary for a small part of the population, and the fact that it was also attested in Christian graves implies that at a certain stage it might have been severed from the classical myth and promoted by the church (Stevens 1991: 215).

But apart from the private Hellenistic tradition, it is known that the custom of placing coins in the mouth, the hand or the body of the dead was also prac-

⁷ "The fact that out of the four coins actually found by us in the mouths of Astana corpses three are Byzantine gold pieces or imitations of such pieces... and one a Sasanian silver coin... might naturally predispose us to connect this practice with the ancient Greek custom of placing a coin between the lips of the dead as the fare to Charon, the ferryman of Hades. But the reference with which M. Chavannes kindly supplied me in 1916 to a Buddhist story in the Chinese Tripitaka suggests that the custom was not unknown in the Far East also. It must further be borne in mind that as China had never had a gold or silver coinage, those who at Turfan wished to provide their dead with an adequate obolus for the journey to the world beyond would necessarily have to use a coin of Western origin for their pious purpose, if they wished it to be of precious metal" (Stein 1928: 646).

practiced by ancient societies in Bactria, Central Asia and China, which testifies to the vast geographical, temporal and symbolic range of this phenomenon. Archaeological excavations in Central Asia confirm that this burial ritual existed in the territories of present-day Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and northern Afghanistan since the first centuries of the new era until the 6th-7th century AD (Wang 2003: 227). Thus, Charon's obol has become a *terminus technicus*, applicable to the burial customs of many Eurasian cultures, despite its Hellenistic connotations.

According to the eminent Bulgarian historian Georgi Vladimirov (2016: 732), around the middle of the 13th century "the obol of the dead" became one of the most widespread rites in *Pax Nomadica*, the Middle East and Iran, and its semantics in different cultural circles and epochs may be summarized in four main types: 1) The coin is an *apotropeion* (talisman, amulet) with a special magical power against the decomposition of the flesh; 2) The coin is a means of acquiring goods in the afterlife; 3) The coin is a gift for the ruler of the underworld as atonement for the sins of the deceased; 4) The coin serves as payment for transportation across the mystical river, lake or strait, separating the world of the living from the world of shadows.

Currently there is still a division of opinion in scientific circles about the source and direction of influence of this phenomenon in the burial culture of Northwest China. The vast majority of Chinese scientists such as Xia (1959), Li (1995), Xu (2006), Wang (2003) and Zhang (2012) believe that the custom of placing a coin in the mouth of the dead in Xinjiang and the neighboring regions in Central Asia was not influenced by the western tradition of Charon's obol, but rather was the result of the natural evolution and dissemination of the burial rituals of the Central Plain.

The dissenting opinion of the Japanese scholar Nakao Odani (小谷仲男) is based on his research work containing a statistical analysis, which exhibits an exceptional concentration of burials with coins in the cemetery of Astana (Turfan), as compared to other parts of China (Odani 1991: 82). This may be due in part to the destruction of the archaeological record in other parts of the country either by natural factors such as wetter climate, or by man-made causes such as grave desecration and robbery or economic development. But Odani (1991: 82–83) also draws attention to the hiatus in the tradition of placing coins in the mouth of the dead between the 3rd and the 6th century, followed by a revival during the Sui and Tang dynasties, especially along the line of active contacts of the Chinese empire with the West. Therefore, he does not exclude the possibility that the direction of dissemination of this custom was from Turfan to the Central Plain, suggesting that in its early stage it was an

ancient Hellenistic religious practice mythologically associated with Charon and the Styx River, which later penetrated the culture of Central Asian countries through the expansion of Alexander the Great and the founding of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, and the latter eventually acted as a mediator for its spread in western China (Odani 1993: 87).

In addition, Wang Weikun (2003: 224) proposes that the discovery of Persian and Byzantine coins in Chinese tombs does not necessarily indicate assimilation of the custom of Charon's Obol, but rather is the natural outcome of centuries of trade relations between the East and the West and can be associated with different cultural and semantic contexts. His opinion is supported by examples in which foreign gold and silver coins were not placed in the mouth of the deceased, but were used as ornaments and funeral gifts for the dead, or were found in Buddhist monasteries placed together with the remains of the cremation of Buddhist monks (舍利). Therefore, the archaeological interpretation of each coin depends on the specific location and the overall context of its discovery, and in order to draw correct inferences it is also essential to take into account the ethnic origin and the social status of the tomb owners.

Conclusion

The results from this study demonstrate that the practice of placing objects in the mouth of the deceased in China can be viewed as one of the most ancient elements of local burial rituals, which is rooted in the Neolithic and has survived with certain modifications even to this day. In a broader sense, the existence of this practice can be associated with the appearance of the first settled societies in Eurasia: in Southeast Europe it is attested in Early Neolithic burials from the 7th-6th millennium BC, the object being a small river stone, a shell or a bone awl (Bachvarov 2013: 134). During the Neolithic period of Southeast Asia it was also customary to place a shell, a piece of jade, or other items in the mouth or in the hand of the deceased (Odani 1991: 83). The characteristics of the objects used in the early stages of formation of this tradition do not suggest pragmatic or utilitarian purpose, such as to provide supplies for the deceased's journey into the afterlife. Quite to the contrary, they imply a highly abstract meaning and metaphysical importance, probably related to the transition from the world of the living to the world of the dead and the pursuit of resurrection. Therefore, it seems logical to speak of a symbolic connection of this prehistoric burial practice with the later custom of placing a coin in the mouth of the deceased, or a Charon's obol, perceived as payment for the boatman transporting the souls across the riv-

er – the frontier between the two realms of existence. Susan Stevens (1991: 220) notes that in the writings of some ancient Roman authors the word “viaticum” is used to describe Charon’s obol, but since the word itself also carries the general meaning of provisions for any journey, it also implies a conscious and orderly preparation for the longest journey – death. “The word *viaticum* suggests that coins for the dead, at least in the Roman world, may well have been perceived of as replacing alimentary goods in the grave, a symbolic provisioning of the soul for its journey to the underworld. The word has an interesting and suggestive later history, since it carries into Christian Latin a meaning of nourishment for the soul during its journey after death. *Viaticum* is the eucharist, the *communio Dei* which was placed in the mouth of the faithful at the moment of death to provide for the soul in its passage to eternal life. This Christian deathbed rite has been thought by some to replace the classical “Charon’s obol”... The importance of placing “Charon’s obol” in the mouth in order to touch the soul is closely linked to the time of placement. The coin was placed at the time of death, when the soul began its journey to the other world. This fact is crucial to understanding the custom, because it makes placing the coin a rite of passage rather than a burial practice. The placing of the coin... marks the closing of the doorway between the living and the dead” (Stevens 1991: 220–221).

The ancient Chinese custom of placing objects in the mouth of the dead, studied in this article, also provides a basis for drawing semantic parallels with similar mystical practices that existed in Europe and other parts of the world long before the current era. The Orphic lamellae or thin gold sheets inscribed with magical texts, that have been found in graves of Early Antiquity scattered throughout the Mediterranean, are perhaps the most notable example. They are deemed as part of an initiation ritual that the deceased had completed, or a funeral ritual in which the deceased expects to achieve a blessed state of existence after death because of his/her initiated status (Smith 2014: 3). Since ancient times, the various cultures along the Silk Road have always been engaged in constant communication and exchange, leaving imprints in the material and spiritual lives of one another. So despite their different religio-cultural context, the objects placed in the mouth or around the head of the dead in these cultures are undoubtedly a symbolical expression of certain eschatological beliefs, probably reflecting a common archetype. These beliefs fostered both preservation as well as innovation, and in the course of their evolution many foreign elements have been incorporated, eventually resulting in transformation of their original content and symbolic connotations.

Acknowledgements

This research was performed with the support of the EACS/CCK Foundation Library Travel Grant and the 2019 Visiting Program for Young Sinologists (Xian), which have allowed the author to gain access to contemporary Chinese-language resources, essential to this study.

References

- Bachvarov 2003: Bachvarov, Krum Бъчваров, Крум. *Neolitni pogrebalni obredi: Intramuralni grobove ot balgarskite zemi v konteksta na Yugoiztochna Evropa i Anatolia* Неолитни погребални обреди: Интрамурални гробове от българските земи в контекста на Югоизточна Европа и Анатолия [Neolithic Mortuary Practices: Intramural Burials in Bulgaria in their Southeast European and Anatolian Context]. Bard, 2003. Print.
- Gu 2008: Gu, Sen 顾森. *Zhongguo chuantong diaosu* 中国传统雕塑 [Chinese Traditional Sculpture]. Shangwu yinshuguan 商务印书馆, 2008. Print.
- Guo 2006: Guo, Yunyan 郭云艳. *Zhongguo faxian de Baizhanting jinbi ji qi fangzhipin yanjiu* 中国发现的拜占廷金币及其仿制品研究 [Research on Byzantine Gold Coins and Imitations Found in China]. Nankai daxue boshi lunwen 南开大学博士论文 [Doctoral thesis Nankai University], 2006. CNKI. Web. 18.07.2020.
- Hu 1979: Hu, Binghua 胡秉华. “Shandong Yanzhou Wangyin xin shiqi shidai yizhi fajue jianbao” 山东兖州王因新石器时代遗址发掘简报 [A Brief Report on the Excavations of the Neolithic Site Wangyin in Yanzhou, Shandong], *Kaogu* 考古1 (1979): 5–14. Print.
- Hu 1998: Hu, Jinhua 胡金华. “Wo guo shiqian ji Shang Zhou shidai de ‘han’ lue tan” 我国史前及商周时代的“琮”略探 [A Brief Exploration of “Han” in China’s Prehistory and the Shang and Zhou Era]. *Yuan wang ji – Shaanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo Hua dan sishi zhounian jinian wenji (shang)* 远望集——陕西省考古研究所华诞四十周年纪念文集 (上), 1998: 346-372. Print.
- Legge 1885: Legge, James [trans.]. “The Sacred Books of China. The Texts of Confucianism. Part III. The Li Ki, I–X”. *The Sacred Books of the East*, 27. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1885. Print.
- Li 1995: Li, Chaoquan 李朝全. “Kouhanwu xisu yanjiu” 口含物习俗研究 [Study on the Custom of Placing of Objects in the Mouth of the Dead], *Kaogu* 考古 8 (1995): 724–730. Print.
- Li 2001: Li, Xueqin (ed.) 李學勤 (主編). *Liji zheng yi (Tan Gong)* 禮記正義 (檀弓) [True Interpretation of the Book of Rites (Tan Gong)], Wunan tushu Chuban gufen youxian gongsi 五南圖書出版股份有限公司, 2001. Print.
- Li 2017: Li, Guoping 李国平. “Gudai Xiyu diqu ‘Hanbi’ zangsu jianlun” 古代西域地区“含币”葬俗简论 [A Brief Discussion on the Burial Custom of “Placing Coins in the Mouth” in the Ancient Western Regions]. *Xibei minzu daxue xuebao* 西北民族大学学报, 1 (2017): 154–158. Print.

- Lin 2004: Lin, Ying 林英. “Jiu xing Hu yu Zhongyuan diqu chutu de fangzhi Baizhanting jinbi” 九姓胡与中原地区出土的仿制拜占庭金币” [The Nine Barbarian Families and the Imitations of Byzantine Gold Coins Unearthed in the Central Plains]. *Ouya xuekan* 欧亚学刊 4 (2004). Print.
- Liu 1994: Liu, Xiang 刘向. *Shuo Yuan quan yi* 说苑全译 [Complete translation of Shuo Yuan], Guizhou renmin chubanshe 贵州人民出版社, 1994. Print.
- Luo 2005: Luo, Feng 罗丰. “Beizhou Shi jun mu chutu de Baizhanting jinbi fangzhipin xi” 北周史君墓出土的拜占庭金币仿制品析 [Analysis of the Imitations of Byzantine Gold Coins Unearthed from the Tomb of Shijun from the Northern Zhou Dynasty]. *Wenwu* 文物 3 (2005): 57–65. Print.
- Montell 1938: Montell, Gösta. “Sven Hedin’s Archaeological Collections from Khotan, II”. *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, 10 (1938): 83–113. Print.
- Odani 1991: Odani, Nakao 小谷仲男. “Guanyu sizhe kouzhong hanbi de xisu (yi)” 关于死者口中含币的习俗 (一) [On the Custom of Placing Money in the Mouth of the Dead (Part One)]. *Renwen zazhi* 人文杂志 5 (1991): 80–86. Print.
- Odani 1993: Odani, Nakao 小谷仲男. “Guanyu sizhe kouzhong hanbi de xisu (er)” 关于死者口中含币的习俗 (二) [On the Custom of Placing Money in the Mouth of the Dead (Part Two)]. *Kaogu Yanjiu* 考古研究 1 (1993): 81–100. Print.
- Smith 2014: Smith, Shellie A. “Identifying an Archetype: The Hipponion Tablet and Regional Variations in the Orphic Gold Lamellae.” *Proceedings from the Document Academy* 1.1. Article 8 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.35492/docam/1/1/8>. Web. 13.09.2020.
- Stein 1916: Stein, A. M. “A Third Journey of Exploration in Central Asia, 1913-1916”. *The Geographical Journal*, 48.3 (1916): 193–229. Print.
- Stein 1928: Stein, Mark A. *Innermost Asia: Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia, Kan-su and Eastern Iran*, Vol. 2, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928. Print.
- Stevens 1991: Stevens, Susan T. “Charon’s Obol and Other Coins in Ancient Funerary Practice”. *Phoenix* 45.3 (1991): 215–229. Print.
- Sun 2008: Sun, Qingwei 孙庆伟. *Zhou dai yong yu zhidu yanjiu* 周代用玉制度研究 [Research on the Zhou Dynasty Jade System]. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海: 上海古籍出版社, 2008. Print.
- Vladimirov 2016: Vladimirov, Georgi. “Oshte vednazh za t. nar. “haronov obol” v kulturata na Vtoroto Bulgarsko tsarstvo” Още веднъж за т. нар. „харонов обол“ в културата на Второто българско царство [Once Again About the So-called “Charon’s obol” in the Culture of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom]. *Velikotarnovskiat Universitet “Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodiy” i Bulgarskata Arheologia* Великотърновският университет „Св. Св. Кирил и Методий“ и българската археология 2 (2016): 725–740. Print.
- Wang 2003: Wang, Weikun 王维坤. “Sichou zhi lu yanxian faxian de sizhe kou zhong hanbi xisu yanjiu” 丝绸之路沿线发现的死者口中含币习俗研究 [A Study of the Custom of Placing Coins in the Mouth of the Dead Along the Silk Road], *Kaogu xuebao* 考古学报 2 (2003): 219–240. Print.

- Xia 1959: Xia, Nai 夏鼐. “Xianyang Dizhangwan Sui mu chutu de Dong Luoma jinbi” 咸阳底张湾隋墓出土的东罗马金币 [Eastern Roman Gold Coins Unearthed from the Sui Tomb in Xianyang Dizhangwan]. *Kaogu xuebao* 考古学报 3 (1959): 67–74. Print.
- Xu 1995: Xu, Pingfang 徐苹芳. “Kaogu xue shang suo jian zhongguo jingnei de sichouzhilu” 考古学上所见中国境内的丝绸之路 [The Silk Road in China as seen in Archaeology]. *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京学报, 1 (1995): 291–344. Print.
- Yu 2012: Yu, Xin 余欣. “Mingqian xin kao: Yi Xinjiang Tulufan kaogu ziliao wei zhongxin” 冥币新考: 以新疆吐鲁番考古资料为中心 [A New Study on Paper Money (Mingbi): With a Focus on the Archaeological data from Turpan, Xinjiang]. *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* 世界宗教研究 1 (2012): 172–181. Print.
- Zhang 2012: Zhang, Xushan 张绪山. *Zhongguo yu Baizhanting diguo guanxi yanjiu* 中国与拜占庭帝国关系研究 [Research on the Relationship between China and the Byzantine Empire], Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 北京: 中华书局, 2012. Print.
- Zhang 2013: Zhang, Qi 张琦 *Shang Zhou shiqi kouhan de chubu yanjiu (shuoshi xuewei lunwen)* 商周时期口含的初步研究(硕士学位论文) [A Preliminary Study of the Practice of Placing Objects in the Mouth in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties (Master’s thesis)], Minzu xue yu shehui xue xueyuan 民族学与社会学学院, 2013. Print.
- ZSKYKYAG 1979: Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan kaogu yanjiusuo Anyang gongzuodui 中国社会科学院考古研究所安阳工作队. “1969-1977 nian Yinxu xiqu muzang fajue baogao” 1969–1977年殷墟西区墓葬发掘报告 [Report on Excavations of Tombs in the Western District of Yinxu from 1969 to 1977], *Kaogu xuebao* 考古学报 1 (1979): 27–146. Print.

**CHINESE LANGUAGE
TEACHING**

Challenges and New Horizons in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (TCSL) in Taiwan: Theoretical Issues and Pragmatic Approaches

Chao Dikai

Abstract

In the last 25 years, TCSL research in Taiwan has focused on developing a theoretical framework and implementing practical teaching strategies mainly by drawing on pedagogical methods derived from research conducted in the field of teaching English as a second language (ESL). The present study aims to analyse the current challenges in TCSL in Taiwan, by focusing on some theoretical issues and pragmatic approaches. It also aims to envisage new horizons and to put forward concrete proposals for improving the current pedagogic patterns in Taiwan by considering recent research findings and advocating collaborative work amongst TCSL professionals, in order to close the current theoretical and pragmatic TCSL pedagogic gaps.

Keywords: Chinese teaching, second language acquisition, Chinese as a foreign language, teaching Chinese as a second language (TCSL)

Introduction

As the demand for learning Chinese is increasing all over the world, academic research on TCSL has also flourished. Experts and scholars from different regions have conducted research on TCSL, therefore, this discipline is dynamic and full of potential. Taiwan's TCSL has its own features and advantages, which contribute to expanding the research horizon of TCSL and bring about beneficial results.

The present paper focuses on the current situation of TCSL in Taiwan. It is hoped that the world will not only see the dynamics and the diversity of the research conducted on TCSL, but also, by introducing the current situation of TCSL in Taiwan, more dialogue and exchanges will be promoted. The present article investigates all the papers on the topic published in Taiwan in the last three years. From them, we can see several focus areas and research directions

in TCSL in Taiwan. Finally, the above phenomena are comprehensively observed, and suggestions are put forward.

Current trends of the research conducted in Taiwan on TCSL

Background of the teachers focusing their research on TCSL

Chiu (2013) conducted a statistical research on 108 teachers of the National University of Taiwan's Institute of TCSL. She found that 52% of the full-time teachers have a background in the field of Chinese literature, 14% in the field of linguistics, 11% in the field of education. Following Chiu (2013), Song (2016) continued to investigate the qualifications of 166 full-time teachers of all Taiwanese higher institutes of TCSL (not limited to national schools and universities). The results are roughly the same as those of Chiu, namely 45% of the teachers have a background in the field of Chinese literature, 15% in the field of linguistics, 14% in the field of education. Song observed that the proportion of teachers in other fields from 2013 to 2016 has been steadily increasing.

Following Song's method, the present paper once again conducted a statistical study on all the Taiwanese institutes of higher education with TCSL. The information displayed on the webpages of departments was used to investigate the academic background of the full-time teachers. The results show that 40% of the teachers have a background in the field of Chinese literature, 24% in the field of linguistics, 12% in the field of education, 5% in the field of foreign literature, 4% in the field of TCSL, and the remaining 15% in other areas. The data supports Song's observations. In addition to the increasing number of professional teachers in the field of non-Chinese literature, the proportion of linguistics has also increased greatly. This shows that the discipline of TCSL in Taiwan has gradually reduced its literature-oriented inclination and adopted an interdisciplinary approach more concerned with research pathways in other disciplines (such as linguistics).⁸

⁸ It is worth mentioning that during the survey, the author also found out that many departments of TCSL are combined with either the Department of Linguistics or that of Chinese Literature. Therefore, the proportion of teachers in Chinese literature and linguistics tends to be higher.

Research topic and trends

Materials and method

The present study has used as a research material the papers published in the annual conference organized by Association of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (Taiwan), abbreviated as ATCSL, to observe the current trends in TCSL research in Taiwan.⁹ ATCSL holds an annual meeting, and the number of papers accepted at the time is more than 90. Therefore, these papers are very representative of the research current trends and of the academic focus.

The papers collected by the present study are the papers accepted and published by the ATCSL Annual Meeting from 2017 to 2019, including individual papers, panel articles and postal articles, totalling 336 papers. In addition, the method of marking and coding is used to classify these 336 papers in sequence. It must be noted that since ATCSL only publishes the title of the paper but not the abstract, the author can only conduct a preliminary classification based on the titles of the papers. The author could not get the abstract, or read the whole paper, therefore, such a classification of the topic can only be regarded as a rough one.

The classification criteria are based on the interdisciplinary nature of TCSL. The research topics are very diverse. In addition to the disciplinary research framework proposed by Zhao Jinming (2001), the present paper also refers to Li Quan (2002) and Liu Li (2019), who proposed the discipline construction system as a reference for classification. They integrated and developed classification projects:

⁹ ATCSL is an association created in 2002 thanks to the joint efforts of more than ten centers teaching Chinese as a second language, several scholars in the departments of TCSL, teachers of Chinese as a second language in non-governmental institutions, and experts in the field of TCSL. By 2019, there are 1266 individual members, making it the most representative and the largest professional group of teachers of Chinese as a second language in Taiwan. Association of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (n.d.), About Me. Retrieved October 29, 2019, from <http://www.atcsl.org/blog/%e9%97%9c%e6%96%bc%e6%88%91/>.

Category	Content
Chinese linguistics	Language research on phonetics, vocabulary, syntax, sentence pattern, text, pragmatics
Applications of TCSL	Curriculum planning and design; textbook design; teaching method; syntax constructs; teaching sequence and pedagogical strategy; syllabus
Teaching of culture	Cross-cultural communication; teaching of cultural aspects
Teacher education training	Teacher training; license examination
Competency outline and assessment	Learning assessment and evaluation test
Policy and institutional assessment	Teaching methods and materials of teaching institutions; teaching mode, management, etc.
Second language acquisition and cognition	Acquisition research; bias analysis; interlanguage analysis; triggering effect; learning motivation; learning strategy
Modern technology integration into teaching	Multimedia devices, smart phones and applications, integrated into teaching; online platforms; distance learning
No direct relation to discipline construction	Discussion on the external issues of TCSL

Although it is difficult to separate one item from the other (for example, cultural teaching can also be regarded as a part of the teaching application), each item still has its clear and distinctive features.¹⁰ However, the connotative meaning of “applications of TCSL” is too inclusive. Curriculum planning, textbook design, syntax constructs, teaching sequence, and pedagogical methods all belong here. Therefore, the author decided to divide this category into the following subcategories:

¹⁰ The reason why the teaching application category can be distinguished from the cultural teaching is because the theme of the latter focuses on cultural contents, while the teaching application category is only the design and planning of general course materials and does not necessarily focus on culture.

Subcategory	Example
Textbook design and compilation	德語區華語文教材之編寫實踐研究
Curriculum design and planning	運用ORID（焦點討論法）於僑生 密集課程之課程活動設計與實踐
Teaching methodology	運用情境教學法促進新加坡5-6歲幼兒習得名量詞的行動研究
Teaching strategy	華語雙關語理解分析與教學策略
Syntax constructs and teaching sequence	華語中級常用語法點及排序初探
Teaching program	法庭通譯華語詞網建置與教學設計

The author has divided the teaching methodology and the teaching strategy into two different categories. The teaching methodology itself has a rigorous theoretical foundation, involving the language view towards the nature of language and the theory of language teaching/learning. On the other hand, teaching strategy is a part of the practical pedagogical method because it belongs to the level of didactics (Liao 2018: 7-9). We can use the teaching method analysis model proposed by the American linguist H. Douglas Brown, which belongs to the level of teaching skills (technique) (Brown 2000: 17).

Results

	2017	2018	2019	Total
The application of teaching	59	77	50	186
Chinese linguistic	17	12	20	49
Second language acquisition and cognition	19	12	13	44
Modern technology integration into teaching	8	8	17	33
Teaching of culture	11	8	11	30
Policy and institutional assessment	12	7	5	24
Teacher training	4	6	8	19
Capacity assessment and evaluation	5	2	4	14
No direct relation to the construction of the discipline	4	6	4	11
Total number of papers in the year	116	109	111	336

In view of the very broad connotation of the “Teaching Application” category, the present paper subdivides the papers in this category to arrive at the following subcategories:

	2017	2018	2019	Total
Teaching strategies	24	33	13	70
Curriculum design and planning	13	27	15	55
Design and compilation of textbooks	14	19	16	49
Syntax constructs and teaching sequence	11	14	7	32
Teaching methods	6	7	4	17
Teaching programs	2	1	0	3

Discussion

It is clear that the papers focusing on linguistics are not many, far less than those focusing on teaching applications. This may be due to the fact that ATCSL tends to accept papers that pay more attention to an integrated pedagogical orientation combining linguistics with language teaching. Moreover, it may also be because the academic output of teachers in the field of linguistics appears more in linguistic journals or forums, but less in conference papers dealing with Chinese language teaching. We will discuss it later.

Secondly, it was found that the academic community still attaches great importance to the research on the “teaching applications” in TCSL. This phenomenon also reflects the task and the mission of the discipline subject. By using the basic framework of the subject research proposed by Zhao (2001), it is known that Taiwan’s research on TCSL has devoted a lot of efforts to the topic of “how to teach”. If we look closely at the subcategories of “teaching applications”, we find that a large part of the focus is on “teaching strategies”, that is to say, the teaching techniques used in the classroom. On the contrary, there are relatively few teaching theories and methodologies (i.e. teaching methods). In other words, from the point of view of the topic choice, most of the research focus is placed on the practical operation of the curriculum design, which makes such studies very technical, but not often supported by theory.

Challenges and New Horizons in TCSL in Taiwan

Looking at the papers of the ATCSL over the past three years, many articles that focus on teaching strategies are summed up from practical experience, which is very helpful to the first-line teachers. However, there are no complete teaching methods to integrate, reconcile or separate these teaching strategies. A possible reason could lie in the fact that Taiwan’s teaching methods of TCSL

have been following the theories of TESL method for a long time, but it is not easy to integrate these methods to formulate a complete pedagogical system. Liu (2019) believes that it is imperative for the discipline to establish a perfect teaching method system to help students improve their learning efficiency. Zhao (2019) believes that Chinese has its peculiarities in teaching as a second language, and these particularities have not yet been properly incorporated into pedagogical research. He encourages researchers to construct the discipline by focusing on the intrinsic characteristics of the Chinese language and integrating them into research.

Besides, the research on Chinese linguistics and the study of second language acquisition have received relatively little attention. TCSL ranges from linguistics to psychology and education. In addition to the knowledge of teaching theory and teaching skills, the ontology of Chinese linguistics and the knowledge of learners' cognition and acquisition of Chinese, are equally important. However, due to the interdisciplinary nature of TCSL, the theory of TCSL often borrows from linguistics and psychology, and at the same time it also derives a pedagogical framework from English language teaching. For example, there is a long-standing tension between theoretical grammar in linguistics and pedagogical grammar in language teaching. Theoretical grammar scholars do not always care about the orientation of Chinese teaching, and even criticize language teachers for misinterpreting Chinese grammatical structures. On the other hand, language teachers resist the excessively academic analyses of theoretical grammar and refuse to apply them entirely to foreign language teaching (Guo 2002: 60; Chen 2017: 299–300). As a result, some researchers in TCSL tend not to get involved in the discourse surrounding theories in linguistics. It is not only difficult to make research beyond the existing framework, but also difficult to make a difference.

To shed light on this incorporation, Zhao (2019) observed that the particularities of Chinese have not been properly integrated into teaching research yet. For example, the morphemes of Chinese are as important as words. Therefore, it is recommended that the teaching order should be preceded by monosyllabic morphemes, followed by the study of words.¹¹ That is to say, in the future, in addition to paying more attention to the research results of Chinese linguistics, we should continuously explore the particularities of the Chinese language and put these achievements into teaching and research. TCSL re-

¹¹ However, from the perspective of Taiwanese textbooks, teaching grammar should be based on language communication and students' ability to learn. Even though the morphemes are important, and they can reflect the cognitive categories of Chinese thinking, they may not prove to have priority in the learning process for second language learners.

search can also conduct a comparative analysis, thus bravely implementing a dialogue with Chinese linguistics and promoting the joint development of the two disciplines.

Conclusion

The present study has surveyed 336 papers, the titles of which were published on the website of the ATCSL Annual Meeting from 2017 to 2019, and then observed the main focus of the research on TCSL in Taiwan over the past three years. The study has conducted a preliminary classification based solely on the topics of the papers analysed and simply added some statistical observations. Many papers can be classified into more than two categories. This method can roughly show the current research trends in Taiwan when it comes to research on TCSL. The author hopes to open a discussion and receive constructive feedback by fellow scholars and researchers. It would be beneficial for the discipline to start a dialogue on such a topic, so that the academic circles teaching Chinese as a second language on both sides of the strait will better understand each other's strengths, and then exchange views with each other and cooperate to jointly promote the global development of TCSL.

References

- Brown, H. Douglas. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Pearson Education, 2000.
- Chang, Claire H. H. 張郇慧 & Lin, Qinglong 林慶隆. "Taiwan huayuwen jiaoyu de jigou" 台灣華語文教育的機構 [Institutes of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language in Taiwan]. *Taiwan huayuwen jiaoyu fazhan shi* 台灣華語文教育發展史 [History of Chinese Language Education in Taiwan] Ed. Ming-De Lai 賴明德. Xinbei 新北: National Academy for Educational Research, 2013:131–178. Print.
- Chen Janguang 陳俊光. *Duibi fenxi yu jiaoxue yingyong* 對比分析與教學應用 [Contrastive Analysis and its Applications in Language Pedagogy]. Taipei 臺北: Wen He Publisher, 2017.
- Chiu, Meiya 邱美雅. "Dang huayuwen jiaoxue cong lengpan bian rechao: guonei guoli daxue huayuwen xisuo zhuanren shizi jiegou tanxi" 當華語文教學從冷盤變熱炒: 國內國立大學華語文系所專任師資結構探析 [Analysis of the Faculty Structure of the Teaching Chinese as a Second Language Department of the National University in Taiwan]. *Taiwan jiaoyu pinglun yuekan* 台灣教育評論月刊 2.7 (2013): 79–82. Print.
- Cui Xiliang 崔希亮. "Duiwai hanyu jiaoxue de jichu yu yingyong yanjiu" 對外漢語教學的基礎研究與應用研究 [Basic Research and Application Research on Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language]. *Duiwai hanyu jiaoxue de quanfangwei*

- tansuo* 對外漢語教學的全方位探索 (Zhao, Jinming. ed.) Beijing 北京: Shangwu Publisher, 2005. Print.
- Deng Shouxin 鄧守信. *Dangdai zhongwen yufadian quanji* 當代中文語法點全集 [An A to Z Grammar for Chinese Language Learners]. Xinbei 新北: Lian Jing Publisher, 2018.
- Guo Xi 郭熙. “Lilun yufa yu jiaoxue yufa de xianjie wenti: yi hanyu zuowei di'er yuyan jiaoxue weili” 理論語法與教學語法的銜接問題: 以漢語做為第二語言教學為例 [On the Intersection of Theoretical and Pedagogical Grammar]. *Hanyu xuexi* 漢語學習4 (2002): 58–66. Print.
- Liao, Xiaojing 廖曉菁. *Yingyu jiaoxuefa* 英語教學法 [English language teaching methodologies]. Taipei 臺北: Wunan Publisher, 2018.
- Li Quan 李泉. “Duiwai hanyu jiaoxue: xueke jianshe sishi nian – chengjiu yu qushi, wenti yu dingceng sheji” 對外漢語教學: 學科建設四十年—成就與趨勢, 問題與頂層設計 [Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language: 40 Years of the Discipline Construction – Achievements and Trends, Problems and the Top-level Design]. *Guoji hanyu jiaoyu* 國際漢語教育 4 (2018): 3–17. Print.
- Li Quan 李泉. “Feixueli hanyu jiaoxue de xueke shuxing he xueke diwei” 非學歷漢語教學的學科屬性和學科地位 [Recognition of Non-degree CFL Education as a Discipline and its Academic Position]. *Guoji hanyu jiaoxue yanjiu* 國際漢語教學研究 1 (2014): 12–21. Print.
- Li Quan 李泉. “Duiwai hanyu jiaoxue de xueke lilun tixi” 對外漢語教學的學科理論體系 [The Disciplinary Theory System of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language]. *Haiwai huawen jiaoyu* 海外華文教育 23 (2002): 20–24. Print.
- Liu Li 劉利, Zhao Jingming 趙金銘, Li Yuming 李宇明, Liu Xun 劉珣, et al. “Hanyu guoji jiaoyu zhishi tixi de tese yu goujian – ‘Hanyu guoji jiaoyu zhishi tixi de tese yu goujian yantaohui’ guandian huiji” 漢語國際教育知識體系的特色與構建 — 「漢語國際教育知識體系的特色與構建研討會」觀點匯輯 [View Repertory of ‘Symposium on Characteristics and Construction of Chinese International Education Knowledge System]. *Shijie hanyu jiaoxue* 世界漢語教學 2 (2019): 47–165. Print.
- Song, Juyu 宋如瑜. “Taiwan huayuwen jiaoxue shuoshi peiyang tansuo” 台灣華語文教學碩士培育探索 [To Explore the Cultivation of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language at a Master’s Level in Taiwan]. *Taipei jiaoyu daxue yuwen jikan* 臺北教育大學語文集刊 33 (2016): 111–136. Print.
- Wang Dongjie 王東傑. “Guanhua, Guoyu, Putonghua: Zhongguo jindai biao zhunyu de “zhengming” zhengzhi” 官話、國語、普通話: 中國近代標準語的“正名”政治 [Guanhua, Guoyu and Putonghua: Politics and the Modification of Standard Language in Modern China]. *Xueshu yuekan* 學術月刊 2 (2014): 155–170. Print.
- Zhao Jingming 趙金銘. “Duiwai hanyu yanjiu de jiben kuangjia” 對外漢語研究的基本框架 [The Basic Framework of the Study of Chinese as a Foreign Language]. *Shijie hanyu jiaoxue* 世界漢語教學 3 (2001): 3–11. Print.

The Potential of H5P Technologies in Pedagogical Process: An Example of Study Materials for Chinese

Mateja Petrovčič

Abstract

This paper discusses the creation of reading materials for Chinese as a foreign language using H5P and other free and open technologies. The resulting materials should encourage reading and listening comprehension, be flexible and interactive, equipped with information about the estimated difficulty level, and add value to the pedagogical process. This study first analyses English and Chinese graded readers, outlines their positive features, and examines available tools to create the desired reading materials. In the second part, the focus of the paper moves to the procedures of creating reading materials, and presents two types of interactive audio-visual materials. Paper concludes with some remarks on the advantages and disadvantages of this approach.

Keywords: Chinese, graded readers, reading comprehension, H5P, audio-visual materials

Introduction

Book reading is beneficial for learners of all types, and there is no doubt that reading in a foreign language is important. One sooner or later runs upon a question of which materials to choose. Several forum threads and posts reveal that Chinese language teachers often ask for information where to get freely available reading materials for different stages, from the beginner to the advanced level.

We believe that learners should start reading as soon as possible and as much as possible, preferably within the first month of learning, which is in case of Chinese a difficult task due to its writing system. The challenge is therefore to find Chinese reading materials that are simple enough for the early steps of learning, which would resemble, for example, Penguin's Ladybird Readers for learners of English as a foreign language. Reading materials should not create

an excessive cognitive load, which would discourage students from further reading. On the other hand, this study is not limited to the simplest materials, but also takes into consideration materials for other levels.

In search of appropriate materials, this study focused on the following aspects. First, we were looking for audio-visual materials, which stimulate listening and reading comprehension at the same time. Second, an information about the estimated difficulty level would be appreciated. Third, since current generations of students use their smartphones on a daily basis and as their primary source for content, we didn't limit ourselves to the printed books.

Methods

Graded reading materials for English as a foreign language are well developed and widely available, therefore we first gathered and analyzed some well-known series. We also paid attention to the description of difficulty levels. Similarly, we compared Chinese graded readers, their levels and availability. The analyzed readers are *books* by their form, which is just one of the possibilities. Sources for reading materials can also be found elsewhere, e.g. in songs, videoclips, comics, magazines, newspapers, etc. (Strawbridge 2018) The later ones are more appropriate for higher levels, whereas the first ones can be used for complete beginners.

This paper does not discuss theoretical issues about reading comprehension, strategies and skills, or how reading levels are determined, but rather focuses on the tools that enable teachers to create their own flexible teaching materials. Since the requirement *no-cost* frequently appears in forum threads, we exploited free and open resources, text-to-speech applications, text analyzing tools with combination of corpora, etc.

The findings are summarized in suggestion, how to turn a creation of reading materials into students' activities to add pedagogical value to the entire process.

Results and discussion

English graded readers

The analysis of English graded readers has shown that it is possible to create materials with very limited vocabulary. Ladybird Beginner materials are composed of 25–50 words, Starter A and B include 50–100 words, Level

1 equals to 100–200 words, etc.¹² Important parts of these materials are illustrations that accompany the texts, numerous exercises, activities, and downloadable audio files (Kneafsey and Medwell 2018). Ladybird's readers are recorded in American and British English, some publishers provide one version, and some readers come without audio recordings. Two approaches were observed from the available audio files; first, to adjust the speech rate to learners (e.g. Pearson English Graded Readers¹³); and second, to keep the speech as natural as possible (e.g. Lid2Go¹⁴). Since reading and listening are different processes, it is desired to have access to both materials.

Chinese graded readers

Chinese graded reading materials that are widely promoted on the Internet, are Mandarin Companion graded readers¹⁵, Chinese Breeze¹⁶, The Chairman's Bao¹⁷, and Du Chinese¹⁸. Other reading materials are available on the market, as well, but are due to the space limitations not discussed here.

Mandarin Companion currently comprises three titles at Breakthrough Level (150 unique characters), eight titles at Level 1 (300 char.), and three titles at Level 2 (450 char.). They are largely adaptations of existing and popular stories, as stated on the website. Although these books were primarily not equipped with audio recordings, they are now available at Audible.¹⁹ Speech rate is reduced and adapted to learners' level. The authors estimate Level 1 to be appropriate for Chinese learners at an upper-elementary level who have learned Chinese for one or two years of formal study, depending on the learner and program.

Chinese Breeze is a graded Chinese reader series published by the Peking University Press, and it currently comprises 19 titles from Level 1 to Level 4.²⁰ Each book is equipped with audio recordings, which can be played in a normal and a slower speed.

¹² Level labels differ among publishers. A comparison table and list of readers is available at MReader (The Kyoto Scale).

¹³ Available at <https://readers.english.com/>

¹⁴ Available at <https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>

¹⁵ Available at <https://mandarincompanion.com/>

¹⁶ Available at <http://www.chinesebreeze.net/>

¹⁷ Available at <https://www.thechairmansbao.com/>

¹⁸ Available at <https://www.duchinese.net/>

¹⁹ Available at <https://www.audible.com/>

²⁰ Outline: Level 1 (300 base words), Level 2 (500 bw), Level 3 (750 bw), Level 4 (1100 bw), up to Level 8 (4500 bw). Until now, there are no materials published for Level 5 and above.

The Chairman's Bao website presents an innovative approach that is favored by smartphone users, because the reading materials are always right at their fingertips. New lessons are said to be published daily and written by native Chinese speakers in accordance with the HSK word listings. The user may filter news-based articles according to themes of interest and difficulty levels in a few clicks. However, the initial enthusiasm may wane due to the paid subscription service. This company enables teachers and students to do reading activities on their platform, but it is easier to search for no-cost alternatives.

Another similar platform is Du Chinese, which covers numerous lessons with weekly updates. The lessons are categorized by difficulty and topic, contents are equipped with word lookup, English translations and audio files. The mobile app is available in App Store and Google Play, however, from the teacher's perspective, these materials cannot be widely used due to the subscription policy. A teacher cannot require students to subscribe to a yearly license.

The above presented materials are very valuable for Chinese language learners; however, as observed from the forum and social media queries, there are requirements for open access contents. Therefore, we explored the options to create reading materials on our own.

As observed from Ladybird readers, it is possible to create materials and exercises with a few dozen words. Considered from this perspective, there is a very good YouTube channel called Little Fox²¹, which publishes fun educational animated stories and songs for children. *Early Learning 1* materials are short and simple, spoken text is accompanied by written text and visual means, which provides learners audio-visual information. A slightly undesirable feature of these materials is – in our opinion – *childish* pronunciation, but this can be improved to a certain extent using other available tools.

Flexible creation of materials

While searching for available materials, we deliberately ignored Flash based contents, because Flash will be completely removed from all browsers in a year (Adobe 2019). Currently recommended technology for creation of responsive and mobile friendly content is H5P, since it is completely free and open, may be embedded in various platforms, and provides integrations for LMSs like Canvas, Brightspace, Blackboard, or Moodle.²² Our institution uses Moodle as the e-learning platform, which additionally contributed to the selec-

²¹ Available at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCipQJmg3yqouy6MRtPv_0Bg/featured

²² For more details, see <https://h5p.org/>

tion of H5P technology. The teacher can preview and explore various content types. In this article, just two of many are presented, i.e. *Interactive video* and *Course presentation*.

Interactive video is a tool that enables user to turn YouTube videos into interactive contents. As pointed out above, these materials are already very appropriate for absolute beginners, but with a pinch of interactive exercises, they can become similar to the graded readers. Childish pronunciation on some of the clips can be smoothened with additional audio files. Under optimal circumstances, a trained native speaker would do the recordings; however, this task is often not feasible for various reasons. Therefore, text-to-speech applications that produce the outcome within a few clicks are good alternatives. Computer-generated spoken text cannot replace a natural voice, but with the rapid development of these services, the quality increases notably. As the term *text-to-speech* clearly indicates, audio files are created from text files. This step can be done by the teacher, or preferably by learners/participants. Assigning this task to the students is a win-win approach, because it reduces the teacher's workload and leads to multi-fold benefits for the students. It encourages participants to listen to the materials, distinguish and recognize characters, and learn how to write/type²³ Chinese at the same time. This step is required when the transcriptions are not available as textual subtitles. Several Chinese materials have subtitles integrated into the videos, and not available in the form of YouTube subtitle files.²⁴ The later ones can be downloaded within a few clicks with Online YouTube subtitles downloader.²⁵ There are other technical shortcuts to transform spoken text into a text file, but the average users do not make maximum use of the possibilities available.

The steps to create materials using the interactive video section is therefore as follows:

1. The teacher selects video material and gives students the assignment to transcribe texts.
2. Students submit pure text files to the teacher.
3. The teacher transforms texts to speech and downloads the audio files.
4. The teacher uses H5P Interactive video (either of the h5p.org website or within the e-learning platform), embeds the YouTube video into

²³ We believe that the concepts of writing skills and graphical competence should be re-considered. Even in the online HSK exams, writing section requires the test taker to type in the Chinese characters using keyboard, which completely avoids handwriting.

²⁴ Some learner-oriented videos have pinyin subtitles that can be added to the original video with characters, for example story The First Well on the BookBox channel. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErQYEubSL3E>

²⁵ Available at <https://www.dvdvideosoft.com/free-youtube-subtitles-download>

the activity, adds interactive exercises and audio files, and publishes it within the classroom or shares it with other users.

Students can access these materials on their computers, smartphones or other similar devices, adjust speed if necessary, undertake exercises and get the response to their actions immediately.

Course presentation is similar in the sense that it enables interactive contents, but it is more appropriate for the materials that are already texts or pictures in their original form. Scanned passages from printed materials or text selections from the Web form the base, to which audio files, exercises and other interactive features can be added. In both cases, it is advised to have text files at one's disposal, because they can serve as the starting point for the general analysis of the difficulty level.

In Chinese, HSK levels are frequently taken as an orientation point of how demanding a text is. One of the tools that are freely available online, is *Chinese Vocabulary and Text Analysis* at HSK 东西.²⁶ This tool enables the user to analyze parsed or unparsed text. There are no ambiguous situations if the pasted text is in the form one word per line, but since there are no formal means that would indicate word boundaries (such as spaces), big block of text frequently results in several ambiguous situations. Therefore, word segmentation is required before this analysis is carried out. Freely available tool for this task is Laurence Anthony's SegmentAnt. As the result of these two procedures, we get the structure of vocabulary according to the HSK levels.

For the preparation of exercises, extracting more linguistic data would be useful. Sketch Engine²⁷ enables users to create their own corpora from texts of their choice. Functions such as Wordlist, Word sketch, ConcoDrance and CQL queries provide various information about the text. Sketch Engine is currently funded by the EU, and the access is provided at no cost to the institutions between 2018 and 2022. Similar corpus that is available at no cost but just upon registration is The Chinese Corpus Hanku (Gajdoš 2016).²⁸ It operates on the NoSketch Engine, which is an open source version of Sketch Engine with certain functionality limitations.²⁹ However, with the understanding of Chinese grammar and corpus query language, one may overcome these limitations and extract linguistic information anyway. Gajdoš (2019) in his paper discusses how to approach negation words and presents the procedure of refining results.

²⁶ Available at <http://www.hskhsk.com/analyse.html>

²⁷ Available at <https://www.sketchengine.eu/>

²⁸ Available at <http://ictclas.nlpir.org/nlpir/>

²⁹ For more details, see <https://nlp.fi.muni.cz/trac/noske> or <https://www.sketchengine.eu/nosketch-engine/>

This approach can be extended to other queries, as well. Last but not least, a user-friendly tool for a quick overview of the selected texts is NLPir, which provides numerous visual information about vocabulary structure, identifies text genre, extracts key words, and even creates an abstract from the full text.³⁰

Conclusion

This paper presented how a wide variety of reading materials can be created using H5P technology in combination with other free and open tools. We can achieve flexible and interactive reading materials with general information about how demanding the used vocabulary is. Materials in this format are appropriate for mobile devices, can be easily reused, modified or shared. Due to its flexibility, it is also easy to engage students to actively participate in creation of reading materials that they find attractive and useful. H5P contents can be further used to create gamebooks (e.g. *Choose Your Own Adventure* or *Secret Path Books* series) or other decision-making readers, and it has got high potential. On the other hand, this approach has certain limitations. Spontaneously compiled materials lack thorough and in-depth considerations which underly the officially published graded readers designed by a team of experts. We are also aware that automatically generated text-to-speech services cannot provide a perfect substitute for trained speakers in proper pronunciation, regardless to how accurate they may be or become. But nevertheless, in this way we can achieve learner-oriented reading materials that are created specially for the needs and interests of a specific target group of learners. When the initiative comes from bottom-up, and the participants have an opportunity to participate in this process, there are good chances for these materials to be well accepted by their users. This approach is motivating because learners can see their contribution the final product, which contributes to the so-called *chengji-ugan* (sense of accomplishment).

References

- Adobe Flash end of support on December 31, 2020*. Microsoft support, 3 9 2019. <<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/4520411/adobe-flash-end-of-support>>.
- Anthony, Laurence. *SegmentAnt (Version 1.1.3) [Computer Software]*. Ured. Waseda University. Tokyo, 2019. <<https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/segmentant/>>.
- Gajdoš, Luboš. "Retrieving Linguistic Information from a Corpus on the Example of Negation in Chinese." *Acta Linguistica Asiatica* 2019: 103-115. <<https://revije.ff.uni-lj.si/ala/article/view/8587>>.

³⁰ Available at <http://ictclas.nlpir.org/nlpir/>

- Gajdoš, Luboš, Garabík, Radovan, Benická, Jana. “The New Chinese Webcorpus Hanku – Origin, Parameters, Usage.” *Studia Orientalia Slovaca* 2016: 21–33.
- Kneafseyand, Catherine and Claire Medwell. “How to use Ladybird Readers.” 7 2018. *Ladybird Education*. 10 9 2019. <<https://www.ladybirdeducation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/How-to-use-Ladybird-Readers.pdf>>.
- Strawbridge, Jackie. “5 Authentic Materials for Teaching Reading in a Foreign Language Without Books.” 2018. *FluentU*. 15 10 2019. <<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator/teaching-reading-in-a-foreign-language/>>.
- The Kyoto Scale*. n.d. 04 11 2019. <https://mreader.org/mreaderadmin/s/html/Kyoto_Scale.html>.

AUTHOR DIRECTORY:

Name:	Country:	Title:	Position:	Institution name:	Major discipline(s):	Fields of interest:	E-mail address:
Alexander Alexiev	Bulgaria	PhD	Professor	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"	Chinese Studies	Chinese grammar, Lexicology, Word-formation, Phraseology, Culture, Civilization, Politics	a.alexiev@uni-sofia.bg
Antonina Habova	Bulgaria	Dr.	Associate Professor	University of National and World Economy	International Relations	Chinese foreign policy, Sino-European relations, Geopolitics	a.habova@umwe.bg
Cai Tingjian	Germany	Dr.	Postdoc	Geschwister-Scholl-Institut für Politikwissenschaft, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München	Political Science	Political thoughts, Relationship between politics and religion	tingjian.cai@gssi.uni-muenchen.de
Chan Ying-kit	Netherlands	Dr.	Research Fellow	International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden University	East Asian Studies	History, Qing-Republican China	y.k.chan@ias.nl
Chao Dikai	China	PhD Student		University of Canterbury, New Zealand	Linguistics and Literature	Sinophone literature, Teaching Chinese as a second language	chao95101080@gmail.com

Name:	Country:	Title:	Position:	Institution name:	Major discipline(s):	Fields of interest:	E-mail address:
Evgeniy Kandilarov	Bulgaria	PhD	Associate Professor	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"	Modern and Contemporary History of East Asia, International Relations in East Asia, Bulgaria and the East Asia Region	Modern and Contemporary History of Japan, China and Korea, International Relations in East Asia during XX and XXI century, Bulgaria and the countries from the East Asia Region	ekandilarov@uni-sofia.bg
Fabio Lavagnolo	Italy	MPhil	High School Chinese Teacher	Independent scholar	Chinese History and Culture	Chinese politics, International relations, Contemporary history	flavagno@gmail.com
Giulia Rampolla	Italy	PhD	Adjunct Professor	University of Naples "L'Orientale", University of International Studies in Rome "Unint"	Chinese Literature, Chinese Language, Chinese Culture, Chinese-to-Italian translation	Contemporary Chinese literature and culture, with a special focus on 21st century Chinese fiction, the literary representation of the metropolis, etc.	rampolla.giulia@gmail.com
Hu Xihuan	China	PhD Candidate		University of Leicester, UK	Media, Communication, and Sociology	Heritage studies, Social media studies	huxihuan1018@163.com

Name:	Country:	Title:	Position:	Institution name:	Major discipline(s):	Fields of interest:	E-mail address:
Loredana Cesarino	China	PhD, FHEA	Associate Professor	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Department of China Studies	Chinese Dynastic History	Chinese gossip and lore, Classical Chinese anecdotic literature, Xu Xiake, Chinese courtesans, Chinese women	loredana.cesarino@xjtlu.edu.cn
Maciej Kurzynski	Poland	Master of Arts (M.A.), PhD Candidate		Stanford University, USA	Modern Chinese Literature	Intellectual history, Modern literature, Digital humanities, Modern China	makurz@stanford.edu
Maria Elisabetta Lanzzone	Italy	PhD	Adjunct Professor	University of Padua	Political Sociology	Democratic regimes, Democratization process, Comparative politics	elisabetta.lanzzone@unipd.it
Maria Marinova	Bulgaria	PhD Candidate	Assistant Professor	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"	Chinese Phonetics and Phonology, Chinese Dialectology, Modern History of China	Chinese archaeology, Chinese prehistory, Historical development of the Silk Road	mmarinova@uni-sofia.bg
Mateja Petrovčič	Slovenia		Associate Professor, Chair of Sinology	University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts	Sinology	Language teaching, Language technologies, Corpus linguistics	mateja.petrovic@ff.uni-lj.si

Name:	Country:	Title:	Position:	Institution name:	Major discipline(s):	Fields of interest:	E-mail address:
Nako Stefanov	Bulgaria	Professor, Dr. Habilis (in Philosophy), PhD (in History)	Lecturer	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"	Economic History of East, South and South-East Asia, Modern Economic Systems in East, South and South-East Asia, Problems of Modern Economics of the PRC, State and Political System of Japan, etc.	Economy, Politics, History	nako54@abv.bg
Natalia Francesca Riva	Italy	Dr.	Postdoctoral Researcher	Catholic University of the Sacred Heart	Sociology of Culture and Communication	Chinese studies	nataliafrancesca.riva@unicatt.it
Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik	Slovenia	PhD, Dr.	Associate Professor	Department of Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana	Sinology, Art History, History	Chinese art history, Collecting history, Material culture	natasava.vampelj.suhadolnik@ff.uni-lj.si
Paul G. Clifford	USA	PhD	Non-resident Senior Fellow	Harvard Kennedy School, Ash Center	Business Strategy and History of China	Modern Chinese history, Business strategy, Finance, Banking	paul_clifford@hks.harvard.edu
Paul Woods	UK	Dr.	Research Tutor	Oxford Centre for Mission Studies	Linguistics	Society, Culture	pwoods@alumni.manchester.ac.uk

Name:	Country:	Title:	Position:	Institution name:	Major discipline(s):	Fields of interest:	E-mail address:
Pawel Zy-gadło	China	Dr.	Associate Professor	Department of China Studies, XJTU	Cultural Studies	Religions, Cross-cultural communication, Psychology of culture	Pawel.zygadlo@xjtu.edu.cn
Riccardo Moratto	China	PhD	Expert member of Translators Association of China (TAC), former Associate Professor at Hunan Normal University		Translation and Interpreting Studies, Intercultural Communication, Cultural Studies, Literary Translation	Translation and Interpreting Studies, Intercultural Communication, Cultural Studies, Literary Translation	
Richard T. Griffiths	Netherlands	Professor	Director New Silk Roads Project	International Institute for Asian Studies	Economic History, Political Economy	European inter-ation, China's BRI	r.t.griffiths@hum.leidenuniv.nl
Rossella Roncati	Italy		MA Graduate	University of Bologna	History and Oriental studies	Chinese contemporary history, Social history, Political history, Linguistics, Historiography, Literature	ross.roncati@gmail.com

Name:	Country:	Title:	Position:	Institution name:	Major discipline(s):	Fields of interest:	E-mail address:
Roxana Rîbu	Romania	PhD (Doctor in philology)	Lecturer	Transilvania University in Braşov	Chinese History, Literature, Translation	History, Politics, Religion	roxana-alina.ribu@unitbv.ro
Stefan Ivanchev	Bulgaria		Assistant Professor	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"	Chinese Studies	Practical Chinese, Translation	stivan81@gmail.com
Tanina Zappone	Italy		Assistant Professor	University of Turin	Chinese Language	PRC's public diplomacy, PRC's external propaganda, political language and translation	tanina.zappone@unito.it
Teodora Koutzarova	Bulgaria	PhD	Assistant Professor	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"	Chinese Script, Ancient Literature	Ancient Chinese philosophy, Jiaguwen	teo.koutzarova@gmail.com
Valentin Kalandzhiev	Bulgaria	Dr.	Associate Professor	Bulgarian Diplomatic Institute	International Relations, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy	Strategic analysis, Geopolitics, Diplomacy	valentim_k@diplomacy.edu
Viktoriya Nikolova	Bulgaria		Master's Degree Student	University of Tokyo, Japan	Modern History and Thought of East Asia	Sino-Japanese intellectual exchanges, Problems of modernization in China and Japan, Civilizational discourses in East Asia	nikolova.5@yahoo.com

CHINA AND THE WORLD:
LANGUAGE, CULTURE, POLITICS

Papers from the international conference, jointly organized
by the Department of Sinology at Sofia University
“St. Kliment Ohridski” and the Department of China Studies
at Xi’an Jiaotong – Liverpool University, 12–13 December 2019

Volume 1

Българска
Първо издание

Предпечат *Иво Ников*
Дизайн на корицата *ZOGRAPH*

Формат 70x100/16
Печ. коли 21,5

Университетско издателство „Св. Климент Охридски“
www.unipress.bg

St. Kliment Ohridski University Press.

