

## Cultural Industries in China and their Importance in Asian Communities

Qingben Li  
*Hangzhou Normal University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb>



Part of the [Other Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Dedicated to the dissemination of scholarly and professional information, [Purdue University Press](#) selects, develops, and distributes quality resources in several key subject areas for which its parent university is famous, including business, technology, health, veterinary medicine, and other selected disciplines in the humanities and sciences.

*CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, the peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access learned journal in the humanities and social sciences, publishes new scholarship following tenets of the discipline of comparative literature and the field of cultural studies designated as "comparative cultural studies." Publications in the journal are indexed in the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (Chadwyck-Healey), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (Thomson Reuters ISI), the Humanities Index (Wilson), Humanities International Complete (EBSCO), the International Bibliography of the Modern Language Association of America, and Scopus (Elsevier). The journal is affiliated with the Purdue University Press monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies. Contact: <[clcweb@purdue.edu](mailto:clcweb@purdue.edu)>

---

### Recommended Citation

Li, Qingben. "Cultural Industries in China and their Importance in Asian Communities." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 20.2 (2018): <<https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.3231>>

This text has been double-blind peer reviewed by 2+1 experts in the field.

The above text, published by Purdue University Press ©Purdue University, has been downloaded 289 times as of 11/07/19.

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

This is an Open Access journal. This means that it uses a funding model that does not charge readers or their institutions for access. Readers may freely read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of articles. This journal is covered under the [CC BY-NC-ND license](#).

# *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb>> ISSN 1481-4374 ©Purdue University

*CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* (ISSN 1481-4374) is a peer-reviewed quarterly of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences published online in full text and in open access by ©Purdue University and in hard-copy annuals in the Purdue University Press series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies <<http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/compstudies.asp>>. *CLCWeb* publishes scholarship in the widest definition of the disciplines of comparative literature and cultural studies designated as "comparative cultural studies." The journal encourages scholarship in a global, international, and intercultural context and work with a plurality of methods and approaches. In addition to the publication of articles, *CLCWeb* publishes review articles of scholarly books and publishes research material in its *Library Series* <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/library>>. Work published in the journal is indexed in the American Humanities Index, in the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature, in the Arts and Humanities Citation Index, and in the International Bibliography of the Modern Language Association of America. *CLCWeb* is mirrored on the website of the British Comparative Literature Association <<http://www.bcla.org/clcweb/>>, it is preserved at research libraries in the Stanford University lockss system <<http://www.lockss.org/lockss/>>, and it is archived in the *Electronic Collection of Library and Archives Canada* <<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/electroniccollection/>>.

---

## **Volume 20 Issue 3 (2018) Article 4**

Qingben Li

"Cultural Industries in China and their Importance in  
Asian Communities"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol20/iss3/3>>

---

## **Contents of *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 20.3 (2018)**

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol20/iss3/>>

---

### **Abstract:**

In his article "Cultural Industries in China and their Importance in Asian Communities", Qingben Li discusses the concept of cultural industries in China, the new trend and the importance of cultural industries in Asia. Following the model of the One Asia Foundation, Li argues that cultural industries play an ever-increasing important role in economy. Contrary to thoughts held by some Western scholars, Li points out, Chinese culture has not always been closed, but open and inclusive to the world in general. Moreover, Li argues that the unique combination of Chinese traditional culture and new media has an important impact on cultural industries, and the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) contribute to the development and prosperity of all Asian communities as well as the rest of the world.

Qingben LI

## Cultural Industries in China and Their Importance in Asian Communities

The origin of the modern Chinese word 'culture' (文化 *wenhua*) dates about 800 BCE. It appears in the *Book of Changes* (易经 *yijing*). In *Tuan's* (象) treatise on the hexagram 'Bi' 贲, it reads as the following: "We look at the ornamental figures of sky, and thereby ascertain the changes of seasons. We look at the ornamental observances of society, and understand how the processes of transformation are accomplished all under heaven" (Legge, *The Yi King* 231). In its classical form the morpheme 'wen' referred to 'line or marking'. The morpheme 'hua' has the association meanings of transformation, change and nature. In the *Book of Changes*, the morphemes 'wen' and 'hua' are separated and have not yet formed a word. It was Liu Xiang (77BC-7CE), a famous scholar in the western Han dynasty, (202BC-9CE) who really synthesized the two morphemes as one word in his book *Garden Anecdotes* (说苑 *shuoyuan*), in which he used the word 'wenhua' to signify the meaning of ruling by non-violence and refinement (Li, Bi, Li and Chen, *China and Other Countries* 4).

In Chinese history, despite the many cultural and commercial activities of the country, the concept of cultural industries did not exist. In fact, the concept comes from the west. In 1947, two well-known representatives of the Frankfurt school of philosophy, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno used the term 'culture industry' for the first time in their book *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* to define what they considered the basic features of mass culture. In their view, culture is characterized by the importance of its industrial dimension, the force of its political and economic impact, and the fact that, although it may originate from a small number of industrialized countries, it is disseminated throughout the world. In "Culture Industry Reconsidered", Adorno elaborates on why they replaced the expression 'mass culture' with 'culture industry'. The reason was in order to exclude it from the outset of an interpretation agreeable to its advocates, that is, that culture may arise spontaneously from the masses themselves, like contemporaries form of popular art. The authors chose to distinguish culture industries from popular art forms. To them, culture industries fuse the old and the familiar into a new reality. Besides, in all branches of culture industries, products which are tailored for consumption by masses, which to a great extent determine the nature of that consumption, being manufactured more or less according to plan (Adorno, "Culture Industry" 98). That is to say, the cultural industry is an industry that makes cultural products by means of modern technology and planning production, different from traditional mass culture.

The term 'cultural industry' was used in singular form and eventually became 'cultural industries' (in plural) in the 1960s and 1970s. The French 'cultural industry' sociologists rejected Adorno and Horkheimer's use of the singular term 'culture industry' because it suggested a 'unified field', where all the different forms of cultural production co-existing in modern life were assumed to obey the same logic. Instead, they were concerned to show how complex cultural industries are, and to identify the different logics at work in different types of cultural production. For example, broadcasting industries operated in a very different way from the press, or from industries reliant on 'editorial' models of production, such as publishing, different also from the recording industry. As result, they preferred the plural term 'cultural industries' (Hesmondhalgh, *The Cultural Industries* 15-16).

As indicated above, the Chinese case is a little different. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, culture was treated as a government affiliated business, and not as an enterprise affiliated business. During this period, cultural industries were regarded as a concept close to the bourgeoisie and had to be strongly controlled by the government. In 1958, Mao Zedong (1893-1976) had established a plan to replicate the communist model. It was called the 'Five-Year Plan' and it was replicated by means of people's communes and huge mass mobilization across the country. Economic production

was reduced to single commodities in many cases, and although the plan was successful in some areas, where production increased, in many other regions, it was an economic failure because rural areas were lacking infrastructures and technologies. Many areas became much poorer and there was a great famine. The plan's failure reduced Mao's prestige within the Communist Party and in 1959 he had to resign as President of the People's Republic of China. Some years later, in 1966, Mao, still Chairman of the Communist Party of China, initiated a purging campaign to eliminate what he considered remnants of capitalism in Chinese society. He claimed that certain bourgeoisie elements had infiltrated into the Party, the government, the army, society at large and, in particular, the spheres of culture, and insisted that they would try to create the conditions to seize political power. The purging movement was called the "Cultural Revolution" and it lasted from 1966 until 1976, when Mao died. The revolution marked Mao's return to power and the imposition of his communist ideology within the Party.

Mao's 'Cultural Revolution' isolated China from the rest of the world and, according to some scholars, it had a negative effect on Chinese society and economy. With the opening up in 1980s, China's cultural policy began to make major adjustments. One of these changes affects 'cultural industries'. Many government affiliated cultural institutions have gradually become cultural enterprise units. In October 2000, the proposal of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party on the 'Tenth Five Year Plan' was passed at the fifth plenary session of the fifteenth CPC Central Committee. The improvement of cultural industries was one of the most important items in the agenda. It was decided to strengthen construction and management of the cultural market, and promote the development of the cultural sector. In March 2001, this proposal was adopted by the fourth session of the Ninth National People's Congress, and was formally incorporated into the national 'Tenth Five Year Plan'. These concerns with China's cultural industries were written in the document of the party's and national policies for the first time, and have, since then, become an important national strategy in China. In the same year (2001), China joined the World Trade organization (WTO), showing that China's cultural industries would develop along with the process of globalization.

However, this initial proposal didn't define what cultural industries are. In those years until 2003, most officers and scholars in China's government had been employing UNESCO's definition, referring to "those industries that combine the creation, production and commercialization of contents which are intangible and cultural in nature. These contents are typically protected by copyright and they can take the form of goods or services" (UNESCO, *Culture* 11-12). It generally included industries such as "printing, publishing and multimedia, audio-visual, phonographic and cinematographic productions, as well as crafts and design. For some countries, this concept also embraces architecture, visual and performing arts, sports, manufacturing of musical instruments, advertising and cultural tourism" (UNESCO, *Culture* 12).

In 2003, China's Ministry of Culture issued a provisional document entitled 'Several Opinions to Support and Promote the Development of Cultural Industries', which defined cultural industries as "the business industries that produce cultural products and provide cultural services". It also pointed out that "the term 'cultural industries' is a juxtaposition of cultural undertakings, all of which are important components of socialist cultural construction. Cultural industries are the inevitable outcome of the development of productive forces, and the emerging industries that develop with the gradual improvement of China's socialist market economy and the continuous progress of modern production methods" (Wang, "Analysis" 41. translation by Qingben Li). In this definition of the Ministry of Culture, cultural industries include nine industries, such as acting, film and television, video, cultural entertainment, cultural tourism, Internet culture, book publication, cultural relics and art, and art training.

In 2004, China's National Bureau of Statistics issued another 'classification of culture and related industries' which provided additional details on the system of cultural industries.

It defined 'cultural and related industries' as activities to provide cultural, recreational products and services for the public, as well as the collection of activities associated with these activities. Thus, the National Bureau of Statistics further divided culture and its related industries into 'core layer', 'outer layer' and 'related layer'.

- The 'Core layer' includes news, books, newspaper, journal, audio-visual products and electronic publications, radio, television, movies, theatrical performances, cultural performance venues, cultural relics and cultural protection, museums, libraries, archives, mass culture, cultural studies, cultural service organizations, other cultures, and so on.
- The 'Outer layer' includes the Internet, travel service, cultural services in tourist attractions, indoor recreation, amusement parks, leisure and entertainment, Internet cafes, culture broker, leasing and sale of cultural products, advertising, exhibition services, etc.
- The 'Related layer' includes stationery, photographic equipment, instruments, toys, recreational equipment, paper, film, film, tape, CD, printing equipment, radio and television equipment, film equipment, household audiovisual equipment, arts and crafts production and sales, etc.

According to the classification principle, the system of cultural and related industries is also divided into four levels. The first level is divided into cultural services and related cultural services in accordance with the importance of cultural activities. The second level is divided into 9 big categories according to the management needs of the department and the characteristics of cultural activities. The third level is divided into 24 intermediate categories based on the industrial chain and the relationship between the upper and lower levels. The fourth level includes 80 small categories, which are the industry's categories included in the third level, as well as the specific categories of activities in culture and related industries.

In 2006, 'the National Outline of Cultural Development During the 11th Five-year Period', issued by the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, confirmed the 'core cultural industries' as follows: the production of film and television, publishing and distribution sector, the printing industry, the advertising industry, performing arts, entertainment, cultural convention and exhibition, digital content and animation. In this way, the Chinese concept and definition of cultural industries has gradually become more mature.

Compared with western countries, the Chinese concept of cultural industries still has its own distinctive features. Due to its different social and political system, China has special cultural policies whose goals are mainly to serve socialism and the people, and to pursue national scientific and popular culture. In the paper "China's Micro Film: Socialist Cultural Production in the Micro Era", Qingben Li, author of the present article, contemplated China's cultural industries as a 'Master Model' where the Chinese government plays the role of 'teacher' in the development of creative and cultural industries (67-75). The strength of this model lies on the fact that cultural units affiliated to enterprises receive government funds so that they are able to focus their creative energy to promote socialist cultural prosperity. The weaknesses of this model resides in the fact that cultural products experience difficulties in achieving international standards and exerting influence abroad, and those large cultural enterprises have easier access to government financing than small and medium cultural enterprises.

At the end of 20th century, China had become the biggest manufacturing country in the world. During this period, the resource depletion and environmental pollution have become very serious too. The development path of the 'high input, high consumption, high pollution and low benefit' would eventually face the development bottleneck. Vigorously developing the cultural and creative industries will provide a new way and mode for the sustained and healthy development of the economic society and realize the economic transformation from 'Made in China' to 'Created in China'.

Keane points out the shift from 'Made in China' to 'Created in China' includes innovation as a key element of cultural industries reform opened up a space for the import of another Western concept- the creative industries. The swift uptake of this idea in China's cities has been assisted by the political obligation to 'catch up' to the developed capitalist economies (Keane, *Created* 7).

Recent data shows that the cultural and creative industries play an active role in economic growth and structural adjustment in recent years. China's cultural industries grew at an annual growth rate of 21.3 percent during 2005-2014. In 2014, the added value of China's cultural and related industries was 2,394 billion RMB Yuan, growing up by 12.1 percent over the previous year, and 3.9 percent higher than the corresponding GDP growth rate in the same period. The share of GDP is 3.76 percent, growing up 0.13 percent from the previous year (Chyxx<<http://www.chyxx.com/industry/201607/431903.html>>). The latest statistics show that the added value of national culture and related industries increased to 3,025 billion RMB Yuan in 2016, accounting for 4.07% of GDP (Huang and Jiang, "The Spirit"). In recent years, the added value of cultural industries in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Hunan, Yunnan has exceeded 5 percent of GDP. We can expect that the added value of the whole country's cultural industries will reach 5 percent of GDP in the near future, and the cultural industries will become the strategic industries and the new growth point of the economy.

At present, the whole country has formed six important clusters of cultural and creative industries: (1) the capital zone, where Beijing is the leading area, including Tianjin and Hebei province; (2) the Yangtze river delta zone, where Shanghai is the leading area, including Hangzhou, Suzhou, Nanjing; (3) The pearl river delta zone, which is represented by Guangzhou and Shenzhen; (4) Yunnan and Hainan zone, which is represented by Kunming, Lijiang and Sanya; (5) Sichuan and Shaanxi zone, which is represented by Chongqing, Chengdu and Xi 'an; (6) The central zone, which is represented by Wuhan and Changsha.

"The creative economy, above all, is an economy of individuals eager to express themselves. It is based on individuals seeking to make sense of the world, and hoping to make an impact on the world" (Howkins, "Foreword" vi). Cities are the main space of the development of creative economy and cultural industries. In the 20th century, the development of the service industry, the promotion of cultural industries, the transformation of economic growth and the adjustment of industrial structure created the suitable conditions where certain cities are being pushed into world cities.

World or Global Cities are generally considered to be important nodes within the global economic system. In 1998, Jon Beaverstock, Richard G. Smith and Peter J. Taylor from Loughborough University, established the 'Globalization and World Cities Research Network' (referred to as GaWC). Initially, the network attempted to use the data definition in order to offer a classification of world cities. In 1999, GaWC published a classification and ranking of world cities based on the analysis of data extracted from international companies and advanced producer services, including supply and manufacture, accounting, advertising, finance and law. The ranking confirmed a world-class city with three levels and a plurality of sub levels ranging from high to low, and from Alpha (including four sub grades: Alpha++, Alpha+, Alpha and Alpha), through Beta (including the three sub grades: Beta +, Beta and Beta-), to Gamma (including the three sub grades: Gamma+, Gamma and Gamma-). Two other levels, 'self-reliant' and 'self-sufficiency' indicated whether or not the city provided a sufficient degree of service and no obvious dependence on other global cities. In the 2016 version of the latest ranking, London and New York were defined as Alpha++, Singapore, Hong Kong, Paris, Beijing, Tokyo, Dubai, and Shanghai as Alpha+ (see GaWC official roster). That is to say, in the nine Cities ranked as Alpha++ and Alpha+, there are six cities in Asia. Beijing is the fastest-growing city, growing from the twelfth place in 2010 to the sixth in 2016.

In recent years, with the city's industrial transformation, Beijing's high-tech and high-end manufacturing and service industries have developed rapidly, providing good technical support and creating a huge market demand for the development of cultural and creative industries. According to the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Statistics survey, in 2012, Beijing residents' consumption expenditure was 24,046 Yuan per capita, which resulted a 9.4% year-on-year growth. Of this, the average per capita educational and cultural entertainment service expenditure in 2012 was 3,696 Yuan, growing 11.8% from 3,307 Yuan in 2011, and accounting for 15.4% of all consumption expenditure. Per capita cultural and educational entertainment products and services expenditure of rural residents in the same period was 1153 Yuan, growing at 14.8% and accounting for 9.7% of all the consumption expenditure (of which the culture and entertainment consumption was 363 Yuan, grew 34.9%). These figures indicate that Beijing's cultural and creative industries are rapidly developing. The average annual growth rate of the cultural and creative industries was nearly 19.5% from 2004 to 2011, 4.3 percentage points higher than the growth rate of Chinese GDP, and higher than the finance industry, with an average annual growth rate of 17.6% during the same period. In 2014, the added value of Beijing's cultural and creative industries reached 282,630,000,000 Yuan, accounting for 13.2% of the total regional economy. By the end of 2014, the number of cultural enterprises in the city had reached 171,000, a year-on-year increase of 15.8%. These numbers show how cultural and creative industries have been playing a more and more important role in the economic development of China's cities.

From the trend of global cultural industries, Asia is rapidly becoming one of the most urbanized areas in the world. The new urban agglomeration offers a large number of capital, goods, technology, services, forming the main clusters of the cultural industries and the main market. Asian cities, as emerging markets, are driving force of the economy with a variety of professional ideas.

The development of the international cultural and creative industries has created more job opportunities and its contribution to the economy has been increasingly recognized. In 2006, the former British Chancellor Gordon Brown pointed out that, whereas 25 years ago the market value of Britain's top companies was based entirely on their physical assets, their market value today is five times their physical assets, which demonstrates the economic power of knowledge, ideas and innovation. In December 2015, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Association of Writers and Composers, and Ernst & Young (EY) jointly released a report titled "Cultural Times: the First Global Map of Cultural and creative Industries". According to this report, by the end of 2013, the market size of global cultural and creative industries had reached 2.250.000 million dollars, and the number of employees reached 29.5 million. One of the fastest growing regions is the Asian Pacific region, with a total of \$743 billion, with employees reaching 12.7 million, making it the largest in the world. Latin America and the Caribbean also grew rapidly, reaching \$124 billion and employing 1.9 million people. The cultural and creative industries in Africa and the Middle East have reached \$56 billion and 2.4 million job opportunities (<http://www.ey.com/es/es/home/ey-cultural-times-the-first-global-map-of-cultural-and-creative-industries>). It shows the profound changes of space layout of the global cultural and creative industries have undergone, the imbalance between east and west is being broken, and non-western countries are rising steadily.

These changes in the development of cultural and creative industries also highlight the patterns by means of which China continues to open itself to the world. For years, possibly because of Mao's regime, western scholars regarded Chinese culture as a closed culture. However, this has not always been so. There are many historical examples that show how Chinese culture has always been open and inclusive to the world. For instance, Indian Buddhism was embraced by the ancient Chinese, fitting well into the Chinese cultural framework in the first century. Marco Polo was probably the first European ever employed at Chinese emperor's court in 14<sup>th</sup> century. Marco Polo's route from Venice to China connected a number of very important cities between East and West, passing through Acre, Tabriz,

Hormuz, Balkh, Kashgar, Shang-tu. From Beijing back to Venice the route passed through Yangzhou, Zaitun, South China Sea, Sumatra, Ceylon, Hormuz, Trebizond, and Constantinople (Istanbul). Marco Polo's descriptions of his travels inspired other explorers and merchants to follow in his footsteps to come to China, eventually opening up an international age. From the beginning of 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, many European missionaries and other Westerners came to China, taking Western culture and technology to the country and deepening the exchanges between China and the West. The Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci reached Beijing, becoming adviser to Emperor Wanli of the Ming Dynasty in 1601. He was given free access to the Forbidden City. His 1602 map of the world in Chinese characters introduced the results of European exploration to the Far East. Ricci established Nantang Cathedral in 1605, the oldest Catholic Church in the city. He dressed in traditional Chinese robes, spoke Chinese, and explained the Bible in Confucius' terms. For example, Ricci borrowed an unusual Chinese term, Lord of Heaven, as the Catholic name for God. Thus, he was successful in explaining the Catholic faith to the Chinese. Apart from this, Ricci was also the first European to translate some of the Confucian classics into Latin, with assistance from the Chinese scholar Xu Guangqi. He made a really great contribution to cultural exchanges between East and West. Since modern times, especially since the 1980s, China's opening up policy has brought the country closer and closer to the world. The most powerful and visible proof of this integration was the successful hosting of 2008 Beijing Olympics, which enhanced the overall national self-confidence and tolerance towards the West, reflected in the slogan of 'one world, one dream'.

On October 18, 2017, in his report at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping, the president of the People's Republic of China, confirmed once again that China would insist on the basic national policy of opening up to the outside world, actively promoting the international cooperation of 'One Belt And One Road', to achieve policy communication, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financing and people-to-people exchanges, to build a new platform of international cooperation, to support the multilateral trading system, to promote free trade zones, and to build an open world economy. It is stressed that China will increase assistance to developing countries, especially to the least developed countries in order to promote the narrowing of the north-south development gap (<<http://www.gov.cn/zhuanti/19thcpc/baogao.htm>>).

In China itself, Reform Policies between 2004 and 2014 have been carried out to increase public investment in the minority ethnic areas of the west in order to push forward their economic development. However, this is still a pending subject since the speedy development in eastern areas of China has contributed to maintain the economic gap between the west and east.

How can the unique Chinese cultural resources, combined with new technologies, stimulate economic growth in China and in the world? This paper argues for the importance and impact of cultural and creative industries upon the economy. Data collected from China Statistical Yearbook (2014-2015) demonstrates the large difference in GDP between the eastern area and the ethnic area. It has been argued that the development of cultural and creative industries with special particularities can help these deprived ethnic areas to grow (for more information see Liu Yi Xiao Jia-Yan "On the Culturalization of Ethnic Economy in China" in this thematic issue of clcweb). Indeed, a positive outlook by means of which education in culture is made a priority is necessary, as "China's future will be greatly affected by its confidence, gained over thousands of years, and its unique approach to ideas and the ownership of ideas and the commercialization of ideas" (Howkins, "Foreword" vi).

Examples of economic success are for instance those related to China's animation industry, which started relatively early. In 1970s, cartoons like 'Nezha Conquers the Dragon King' and 'Monkey King' were adapted from *Journey to the West*, a Chinese classical novel, and integrated into Chinese cultural resources, achieving a great success. In the 1990s, the global animation industry began to develop rapidly. The USA animation 'Mulan' and 'Kung Fu Panda' are films based on traditional Chinese culture. The Japanese video game 'Sally Wood

3', not only features the Guilin landscapes in Guangxi province of southern China; local characteristics of Hakka Tulou in southeastern China are also present. All of these prove that Chinese traditional culture can provide rich resources for the development of cultural industries in China and abroad. Thus, traditional forms of culture can help consolidate economic power, allowing the continuation of the historical context while expanding the national character at a global level. The collaboration of traditional forms of culture and new media can become a major force in economic growth. At present, there are more than 710,000,000 Internet users in China and Internet penetration rate has reached 51.7 percent.

Another example outside China is Japan, the world's largest producer and exporter of animation with more than 60% of the animation works in the world. The animation industry is concentrated in Tokyo and Osaka. The east Kyoto training area is also known for its animation industry. Facilities of business, culture and tourism in Akihabara are completed with tourist destinations for anime fans. Similarly, video games, TV shows and movies are the main cultural and creative products in South Korea, with Seoul an important center of cultural and creative industry. All these industries –games, thematic parks, film and television, and art- are important cultural and creative industries clustering together in key cities around the world.

In order to accelerate the growth of other cities in the Asian region and Europe, an important project is being developed that will revitalize the ancient Silk Road. In September 2013, Xi visited Kazakhstan to collaborate in the project of the Silk Road as economic and cultural belt (for more information on this project, please see Ainura, Aljanova and Manassova's paper "The Marginocentric Cultural Features of Cities along the Great Silk Road in the territory of Kazakhstan" in this thematic issue of *clcweb*).

In ancient China, the Silk Road, starting from Chang'an (now Xi'an Shanxi province in west China), the capital city of the Han dynasty (206BC-221CE), through the 'Western Region', later to be known as Central Asia, had opened up a path to the Roman Empire by the first century CE, and this trade route brought woolen and linen into China as well as coral and pearls, amber, glass and other precious stones. By the tenth century, the Silk Road had lost its appeal to long distance traders due to the likelihood of conflict; the focus of trade turned to the maritime route. The ocean had served to direct trade as early as the second century. Indian and Indian-Malayan merchant ships had plied the spice trade along India's east coast to Guangzhou, southern China. The Arabs and the Persians later used this Spice Route. Bagdad, Rome, Guangdong and Guangxi were accessible to Madagascar, providing a means to establish contact with India, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), the Mediterranean, and the Persian Gulf. Chinese embroidery, pottery and porcelain handcrafts reached distant destinations, eventually arriving in Europe in the sixth century. Besides, Chinese textile designs were popular in Rome and Iran, while Iranian designs were introduced into the Chinese repertoire (Keane, *Created* 41).

The ancient Silk Road has left us with rich cultural resources along these routes. On March 28, 2015, China's National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce jointly issued 'the Vision and Action on Jointly Building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road'. This document designed five economic lines: the key direction of the Silk Road economic belt is from China through central Asia and Russia to Europe (the Baltic sea); from China through central Asia, west Asia to the Persian gulf, and the Mediterranean Sea; from China to southeast Asia, South Asia and the Indian Ocean; from the coastal areas of China through the south China sea to India, extending to Europe; and from the coastal areas of China through the south China sea to south Pacific Ocean.

In his speech to the Indonesian parliament in October 2013, Xi suggested that China is committed to strengthening connectivity with ASEAN countries and proposing the establishment of an Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. He stressed that China is ready

to develop the maritime partnership with ASEAN countries and jointly build the maritime Silk Road of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Further, in November 2014, Xi announced at the APEC summit in Beijing that China would contribute \$40 billion to establish a Silk Road fund to provide financing support for the infrastructure construction, resource development and industrial cooperation of the countries along the 'One Belt and One Road'. The project is rapidly becoming a comprehensive industrial structure where cultural and creative industries will realize a breakthrough development, actively integrating with industries in other fields.

Based on the 'Belt and Road Initiative', China's State Council has successively put forward "Some Opinions to Promote the Integrate Development of Cultural Creativity, Design Services and Other Related Industries" and "Opinions on Accelerating the Development of Foreign Cultural Trade", the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Finance jointly issued "the Strategic Planning of the Silk Road Cultural Industries". All of these policies have created favorable conditions for the development of China's cultural industries, so as to enable the development of the cultural industries more room to rise.

Many Chinese scholars believe that the 'Belt and Road Initiative' is good for the development of cultural and creative industries. Jian Hua points out that it will enhance the possibility of improving the Chinese cultural Industries and promote them at an international level. Important research subjects to optimize and integrate strategic resources through interconnection and being put forth in order to expand cultural and creative industries. These will involve the cultivation of export-oriented cultural enterprises to optimize culture and trade structures, improving exports of cultural services, and strengthening transnational cooperation through the connection along Silk Road cities. Jian Hua believes that this research project will contribute to expand the global impact of China's cultural industries and the convergence of resources, as well as lead to the establishment of a mutually beneficial international community of cultural industries, in which the nations and people along the 'Belt and Road' can share more cultural wealth (Hua, "Promotion" 30-39).

Jianhua Fan also believes that the cultural industries along 'One Belt And One Road' have unique advantages manifested at several level. First, with the international development of cultural industries, strengthening cultural exchanges and trade between countries along the Silk Road, and disseminating the idea of harmonious development and peaceful coexistence across different cultures, regions and peoples. At a second level, the project will mean the diversification of cultural industries. Different economic development levels and socio-political backgrounds will enrich this cultural belt with a colorful economic base. These plurality will bring about more variables as well as greater space for development. The third aspect is the relevance of the development of cultural industries. The cultural belt is not only characterized by its own culture, but also features the bond between the cultural belts (Fan, "Ribbon Development" 84-93). In addition to these benefits, the development of cultural industries along 'One Belt and One Road' will also benefit the development and prosperity of Asian communities in general.

The 'Belt and Road Initiative' involves more than 60 countries, 4 billion people and 20 trillion Economic Aggregates. By developing the cultural industries of the Silk Road, we will accelerate the economic development in the areas along the Silk Road, especially in the western and central Asia, the Eastern Asia, and the Southeastern Asia, expanding employment and promoting consumption through the cultural industries, thus propelling the overall development and prosperity of Asian communities. Therefore, the 'Belt and Road Initiative' and the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to support the regional infrastructure construction in Asia, show China's desire to realize common prosperity of the Asian communities. In 1800, Asia contributed over half of the world's wealth. Only two centuries later, its share had fallen to 20 per cent. However, in recent years, Asia has become the world's biggest economic entity once again. In 2014, Asia contributed 36 per cent of the world's wealth, while America contributed 32 per cent,

and Europe contributed 19 per cent. In this process, cultural and creative industries have played a fundamental role and China has made a great contribution.

**Acknowledgements:** This paper is supported by the Key Projects of Philosophy and Social Science Research from Ministry of Education of P. R. China (13JZD032).

### Works Cited

- Adorno, Theodor W. "Culture Industry Reconsidered", *The Culture Industry, Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, Edited by J.M. Berstein. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Chyxx(中国信息网). 2016 年中国文化创意产业发展概况("The Outline of China's Cultural and Creative Industries in 2016"). CHYXX (2016): <<http://www.chyxx.com/industry/201607/431903.html>>.
- EY. "Cultural Times: the First Global Map of Cultural and Creative Industries", 2015: <<http://www.ey.com/es/es/home/ey-cultural-times-the-first-global-map-of-cultural-and-creative-industries>>.
- Fan, Jianhua(范建华). 带状发展: 十三五期间中国文化产业新趋势("Ribbon Development: New Trend of China's Cultural Industries in the Period of the 13th Five-year Plan"). *Journal of Yunnan Normal University (Philosophy and Social Science Edith)*, No.3, 2015:84-93.
- Hesmondhalgh, David. *The Cultural Industries*. London: Sage Publications, 2002.
- Hua, Jian(花建). "一带一路" 战略与提升中国文化产业国际竞争力研究("On the Promotion of International Competitiveness of China's Cultural Industries in the Background of the Belt and Road Initiative"). *Tongji University Journal Social Science Section*, Vol. 5, 2016:30-39.
- Huang, Xiaoxi(黄小希) and Jiang Xiao(姜潇). 凝聚心力量 铸就新辉煌——从十九大报告看建设社会主义文化强国 ("The spirit of cohesion is a new glory -- the construction of a socialist cultural power from the perspective of the report of the 19th national congress of the communist party of China"). XINHUANET (2017): <[http://news.xinhuanet.com/zgjx/2017-10/24/c\\_136701837.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/zgjx/2017-10/24/c_136701837.htm)>.
- Howkins, John. "Foreword to Creative in China", in Keane, Michael, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Legge, James (trans.). *The Yí King, The Texts of Confucianism, The Sacred Books of China Part II*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1882.
- Keane, Michael. *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Li, Qingben. "China's Micro Film: Socialist Cultural Production in the Micro Era", *Cultura: International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology*, 13(2)/2016:67-75.
- Li, Qingben (李庆本), Bi, Jiwan(毕继万), Li, Nan (李楠), and Chen, Zhong (陈忠). 中外文化比较与跨文化交际 (*China and Other Countries: Cultural Comparison and Cross-Cultural Communication*). Beijing: Beijing Language and Culture University Press, 2014.
- UNESCO. *Culture, Trade and Globalization: Questions and Answers*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000.
- Xi, Jinping(习近平). 在中国共产党第十九次全国代表大会上的报告("Report at the 19th national congress of the communist party of China").GOV(2017): <<http://www.gov.cn/zhuanti/19thcpc/baogao.htm>>.

### Author's profile:

Qingben Li (李庆本) teaches cross-cultural aesthetics at Institute for Art Education, Hangzhou Normal University. His areas of research include literature theory, comparative literature, aesthetics and cultural industries. Li's recent publications include: *Cross-cultural Aesthetics: Beyond the Model of Sino-Western Dualism* (2011), *Multi-Dimensional Models of Cross-Cultural Interpretation* (2014), *Cultural and Creative Industries* (2015).E-mail: <[liqingben1@sina.com](mailto:liqingben1@sina.com)>