



Photo: Hangzhou, Mark Pegrum

Nordic Centre Newsletter *Summer 2017*

Hot summer greetings from Shanghai

It's the middle of Nordic Centre's busy summer, and our annual course Doing Business in China has just kicked off. In this newsletter, you can read about selected upcoming events, some of our activities from the past few months, and listen to three new podcast episodes featuring presentations by academics in our network on the ties between business and culture, China's political reforms, and legal challenges pertaining to 3D-printing. Also, read an interview with a student from Lund who got hired by a company he visited with Nordic Centre; get the lowdown on the Belt and Road Initiative; and learn how one does food-safety anthropology in China. And much more, from Shanghai and our members in the Nordic region.

Enjoy reading and listening, and have a great summer!



Students of our Chinese Politics and Society course mingle with Chinese students who plan to study in Norway, June 2017. Event co-hosted with the Norwegian Consulate and Noralumni.

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About

- The Nordic Centre at Fudan University is a platform for academic collaboration between the five Nordic countries and China
- Subscribe at

nordiccentre.net

New director with background in public health

Masthead

Contributors

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In June 2017, Fudan University's Foreign Affairs Office and Nordic Centre got a new director, Professor Chen Wen. He previously served as the Dean of the School of Public Health at Fudan, since 2013. Chen received his M.D. in social medicine and health management from Shanghai Medical University in 1998 and completed a research fellowship at School of Public Health, University of California at Berkeley from August of 2000 to May of 2001.



Professor Chen is often invited as investigator and advisor by national and municipal governments for research programmes in the field of Chinese healthcare system, national and provincial health insurance, pharmaceutical policy, health financing, and more.

"I very much look forward to working with my colleagues from the Nordic Centre member universities, and hope I can contribute to the further development of Nordic Centre," he says.

Dr. Zhu Chouwen, the previous director, is returning to medicine as the vice-director of Zhongshan Hospital.

Nordic Education Fair set for October 22



For the first time since autumn 2015, Nordic Centre will host a Nordic Education Fair this October to promote its member universities' programs to Chinese students. Rather than hold the fair every year, as was previously the case, the idea is to make it a bigger, bi-annual event with a greater number of participants, also from other universities around Shanghai.

Nordic Centre will set up free buses for students from other universities including Tongji University, Jiaotong University, Shanghai University of Science and Technology, and East China Normal University, so that students from all over Shanghai will get the chance to take part.

The time is set as Sunday, October 22 in the afternoon, the day before the council meeting, and the location is the student plaza at Guanghua Towers. Council members or other staff from our members are encouraged to take part with stand, rollups, and rollups, and answer questions face to face from the potential students from these various institutions. An email has been sent to the council members with information on which institutions we already have rollups for.

Save the date, and write to magnus@nordiccentre.net if you have any questions or suggestions.

Brains, food waste, play, and heritage

Council funds a diversity of academic areas at Nordic Centre for autumn 2017

Interest in funding from the Nordic Centre Council to host workshops and other types of events in Shanghai was greater this year than perhaps ever before, and at the meeting in Copenhagen in April, the university representatives made a tough decision on which of the many excellent applications to prioritize. And not to worry, the above headline describes four separate events that received funding.

Autumn 2017 will be very busy for our team, as we will host not only the below four activities, which successfully applied for Nordic Centre funding, but also a two-day conference on Digital Culture and Society, a workshop on Food and Nutrition in Ageing Societies, a workshop on Unexpected Transitions in Ions and Atoms, seminars in connection with October's Finland Days, and much, much more. Keep an eye on nordiccentre.net for specific information on these activities.

Activities funded by council decision in April 2017, at the meeting hosted by Aalborg University in Copenhagen:

- **Food waste generation, impacts, and mitigation: A Nordic-China conference. Main applicant from University of Southern Denmark**
- **Nordic Perspectives on Play and Learning. Main applicant from University of Gothenburg**
- **Therapeutic strategies based on brain plasticity – Nordic-Chinese brainstorming meeting. Main applicant from University of Eastern Finland**
- **UNESCO and World Heritage in China: Histories, Concepts, Actions and Impacts Conference / Research Seminar. Main applicant from Aalborg University**

Environmental Asia

Conference hosted by UiO and NIAS

Global environmental degradation and climate change are possibly the greatest challenges of our times. They have roots in humanity's long history of creatively making use of natural resources to generate change, often with unforeseen and unpredictable consequences.

As the gravity of the world economy shifts east, Asia finds itself at the center of the global environmental crisis.

The conference aims to facilitate critical discussions about Asia's environmental pathways. What interests are at stake in current environmental policies, and who represents them? How will Asian societies deal with the double-bind of economic development and environmental protection? How have people reacted to and coped with major environmental changes in the past, and how do they anticipate the future?

The conference and PhD course are organized by IKOS - Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo, and NIAS - Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, and will take place November 20-24, 2017.

Abstract deadline: 15 August. Read more at environmental-asia.com



Three new episodes of the NC podcast

'Legal issues of 3D-printing', 'Political Reforms in China', and 'Culture and Business'

Since our last newsletter, we have released three new episodes of the Nordic Centre podcast. All are straight-forward sound recordings from lectures given at Nordic Centre, one by a researcher in our visiting scholars program, the other two by summer course instructors. The overall purpose of the podcast is to showcase the activities of our members in an accessible way, and we are open to suggestions for future topics to include.

'Culture and business', lecture by professor Can Seng Ooi, Copenhagen Business School

[Listen here](#)

Market reforms have since the 1980s made China more and more accessible to Western businesses. So has that made for a universal business culture, rendering previous differences irrelevant? As instructor in our annual summer course 'Doing Business in China' professor Can Seng Ooi argues, not so fast! Adaptation to the local way of doing things is crucial to business success in China. Hear his arguments why, and some of the key difference to be aware of, in this episode.

'Political reforms in China', lecture by associate professor Liu Chunrong, executive vice director of Fudan-European Centre for China Studies at Nordic Institute of Asian Studies

[Listen here, and view slides from the talk](#)

Understanding political reforms in China is a key part of our annual summer course Chinese Politics and Society. This year, we had the pleasure of having political scientist Liu Chunrong co-instruct the course. Chunrong's own research explores, among other things, China's political system, including such topics as village democracy, and as a Fudan-affiliated scholar who has lived in Denmark for now over four years, he is ideal for communicating such topics to Nordic students.

'Legal issues of 3D-printing', lecture by doctoral student Mikko Antikainen, Hanken School of Economics

[Listen here, and view the slides referred to in the talk](#)

Public lecture on legal issues arising from 3D-printing technology, including on such matters as legal liabilities from 3D-printed products in case accidents happen, and how to resolve intellectual property challenges that have emerged with the advent of this innovation. Mikko Antikainen was a visiting scholar at Nordic Centre in early 2017, and gave this public talk to an audience of students and researchers from Fudan. *Please note that this lecture was not recorded with our professional recording device, so the sound quality is audible but far from perfect.*



The Arctic in focus

Developments in the Arctic region are of increasing importance to relations between the Nordic countries and China, as we have explored in [a previous Nordic Centre podcast episode](#).

Unsurprisingly, Arctic developments are also in the focus of many researchers at our member universities, from disciplinary angles ranging from international law and politics to environmental sciences and economics. A new report, published in June 2017, explores Chinese-Russian cooperation in the Arctic, co-written by assistant professor Camilla Sørensen from the University of Copenhagen's Department of Political Science. [Download the report here](#).

Also in June, Umeå University hosted a conference on the Arctic's future, with topics ranging from global warming and habitability to extractive industries and indigenous points of view on developments. [Read more here](#).

In the coming year, Nordic Centre plans to support a series of seminars on Arctic developments initiated by Artur Guschin, a Russian scholar who has had affiliations with several of our members institutions, and who is one of the scholars interviewed in the above podcast. More information to come on this.



Summer courses on politics and business

This year Nordic Centre started its summer courses on June 22, with 22 students attending Chinese Politics and Society and 34 students in the following Doing Business in China. Apart from the knowledge they get from distinguished scholars and practitioners both in China and Nordic countries, the courses include visits to companies, consulates, and museums, and meetings with Chinese students (see picture on front page of newsletter), in addition to excursions to the ancient city of Hangzhou and the industrial town of Haiyan.

The main instructors for Chinese Politics and Society were Dr. Teemu Naarajärvi from University of Helsinki and Prof. Liu Chunrong from Fudan University and Nordic Institute of Asian Studies. For Doing Business in China, main instructors are once again Prof. Can Seng Ooi from Copenhagen Business School and Prof. Pia Polsa from Hanken School of Economics. More than 20 different lecturers are involved in this year's summer courses.

To hear recordings from some of these sessions, [check out the Nordic Centre podcast.](#)

We are working on a short video to promote these courses further for next year — check this space!



Food Safety and Family Life in Shanghai

Interview with Ingrid Fihl, visiting scholar at Nordic Centre

Words Kyle Jakobsen

Ingrid Fihl was a visiting scholar at Nordic Centre for most of the spring semester and summer. She holds a BA and MA in Chinese Studies from University of Copenhagen, and is pursuing her PhD at its Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, and she is a part of the collective project *Moral Economies of Food in Contemporary China*. Her field area is modern Chinese society, explored using ethnographic methods, and her PhD is a study of how Chinese families navigate food safety issues in their everyday life. It has a lot to do with trust, the family's choices and priorities, but also how to maneuver a jungle of information.



Ingrid finds this topic particularly interesting because food safety is one of the great lifestyle issues in urban China, partially due to some big food scandals in recent years.

Q: Can you give an example of some of the food scandals?

A: One of the biggest scandals was the powder milk scandal in 2008. The powdered milk was laminated with melamine to make it look like there was a higher protein level in the milk, and this had a great impact on many children's health, where many were hospitalized and some died. In the aftermath, many parents in urban China chose to buy their milk powder from abroad, because they still do not trust the milk powder they can get in the Chinese supermarkets. Another scandal that my informants mention to me concerns gutter oil, which is basically used oil that has been re-filtered and then sold to restaurants. This makes many people anxious about eating take-away food from small restaurants. In the legal end of the spectrum, many of my interlocutors also worry about high levels of pesticides and hormones on their food products that could have long-term health effects.

Q: Any notion as to why food safety has become a thing in China?

A: Social change has happened fast in China, where the focus is on rising prosperity. The theory that my informants, the consumers, tell me is that many farmers are not educated, there's a lot of competition, and so if they see their neighbour do something, they might do the same for the sake of sustaining their livelihood. Some might get tempted to produce these harmful products, even if they hurt the distant consumer, but my informants tell me that they believe people on many levels in the system are at fault.

Q: How do you go about collecting your data?

A: I small talk a lot and use a participation-based observation method like joining in on cooking, eating, and discussions on food. One way I do it is by staying with Airbnb hosts, where I live with the families so I can get a sense of their everyday life. The hosts have turned out to be great interlocutors, they are willing to take me under their wings. I participate in their daily eating life and follow them around, where I get the opportunity to ask questions I had not thought about asking in an interview setting. They have been showing me hands-on how to distinguish between safe and unsafe food.

Q: Has it been easy finding people, and how they navigate in regards to food?

A: It has actually been rather easy. People are really concerned about food safety, especially those with kids. The parents often do a lot to avoid unsafe food, and will read articles online to see how to spot it, and then share their findings with one another. They give each other recommendations from friends, research online: What is trustworthy? What can we do? What possibilities are there?



I joined a mother in the field who produces her own vegetables for her son. She grows organic vegetables, which takes a lot of time and money, but she has no trust in the supermarkets. Trust is the main issue. Can you trust a stranger, the government, etc.? They usually have a greater trust in their friends and their extended circle of connections, including their mommy groups. I have been in contact with members of the Fudan Mommy group, which consists of about 500 moms. They might trust the recommendations of other members in this group, despite not knowing each other personally. However, the members are all in the same social circle, and all being parents, they might believe in each other's ethical incentives, and follow them over online recommendations, such as those on food safety websites like Zhihu (a Chinese version of reddit).

“She grows organic vegetables, which takes a lot of time and money, but she has no trust in the supermarkets”

Q: Have you reached any conclusions so far?

A: I'm just starting to analyse my data, so far working with the conceptual frameworks of ethics, trust, purity, and knowledge. I have ideas that I want to investigate, such as what does safe food mean in relation to ethics? I want to understand how safe food plays into the ethics of relationships, e.g. parent-child relationship or friendships, as well as the urban consumers' imagination of the stranger, the producer.

Q: How has the Nordic Centre helped you?

A: Great chocolate! Haha, you always have chocolate from different countries. But the best thing about being at the Nordic Centre is having the opportunity to be given an office space with other visiting scholars. It lets you get out of the field every now and then, where you can read and write on your project, and the staff is also super helpful. They have helped me with getting my visa sorted, and also given me a lot of good connections.

Nordic Centre would like to thank Kyle Jakobsen for all her great work this spring semester as our intern, including this piece, and wish her the best of luck in her continued studies at the University of Copenhagen!

Call for activity grants from SIU — autumn 2017

Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) has published updated guidelines for activity grants for Norwegian studies at universities abroad.

Activities which may receive grants include the organizing of conferences and seminars, student excursions, guest lecturers and further development of the teaching of Norwegian language/literature at the institution. [Application form here, deadline September 15](#)

Call for funding applications: Nordic projects at universities worldwide, 2018

The Coordinating Committee for Nordic Studies Abroad (SNU) invites universities worldwide to apply for funding for Nordic cooperation projects. The funding may for example be used on cultural events, guest lectures, conferences, and testing of new course concepts. The projects will have to include at least three Nordic countries / languages and will aim to promote interest in the Nordic countries as a region. The announcement applies to projects carried out in 2018. Write to sveu@si.se before the deadline on October 15, 2017. [Read more here.](#)

NC programme manager speaks at UN Women event with Nordic Consulates

On Friday, June 16, the Nordic Consulates in Shanghai joined forces with Hangzhou International Exchange and Services Center to hold a HeForShe event, an initiative from UN Women. Each of the Consulates was represented by one speaker, with NC programme manager Magnus Jorem booked by the Norwegians.

Magnus focused his remarks on LGBT people, and how relatively rapid progress — in terms of both rights and cultural acceptance — is possible, with a key ingredient being public visibility of these minorities. He mentioned examples from both Norway and China on progress for LGBT people, including legislative victories in Norway for both gays and lesbians and for trans people, increased media coverage in Chinese media, including transwoman Jin Xing, one of China's biggest TV stars.

The event took place at the Danish Consulate, and was attended by a predominantly Chinese audience coming from a variety of companies, NGOs, and other institutions.

Sino-Finnish Joint Learning Conference at University of Helsinki

In recent years, China and Finland have been building up an extensive co-operation scheme in education, called Sino-Finnish Learning Garden, signed by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Finland in 2015. Sino-Finnish Joint Learning Innovation Institute (JoLII) was established by the University of Helsinki and Beijing Normal University as an elementary part of the Learning Garden co-operation scheme in November 2015. The institute is a network of nine Finnish universities and several Chinese universities who want to work in cooperation for future schools and high quality education.

Each year JoLII organises conferences in China and Finland. This summer, the University of Helsinki welcomes all researchers, teachers, and companies to participate at the conference on August 28. [Read more here.](#)



NHH furthers collaboration with ACEM and SJTU

Words Kine Robertsen, NHH

On June 1, 2017 Rector Frøystein Gjesdal of Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) had the honour of hosting Professor Zhou Lin, Dean of Antai College of Economics and Management (ACEM), Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), in Bergen. The purpose of the ACEM visit was to confirm the long-lasting partnership between the two institutions, and make way for further collaboration within education and research.

NHH and ACEM can look back on several years of successful cooperation within Master- and Bachelor-level student exchange. In 2016 the two institutions received funding from the highly competitive Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility programme for a joint project including student and staff mobility to further strengthen this cooperation.

Plans for the future include PhD-level student mobility and the development of a PhD-level Double Degree within Logistics and Operations Management, as well as research collaboration. These plans were confirmed and formalized by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during the visit.



Frøystein Gjesdal and Zhou Lin

Norwegian China Law Centre opens at University of Bergen

On May 4, the University of Bergen officially opened the Norwegian China Law Centre with a conference in the university aula, featuring discussions and talks on China — and the importance of collaborating with the country within a wide range of academic fields — by researchers, students, and politicians.



Photo: Eivind Senneset, UiB

The centre, which was founded back in February, will support and advise other entities and individual scholars affiliated with the University of Bergen who would like to establish and develop cooperation with Chinese universities.

The activities conducted by the centre will aim to increase the knowledge of Chinese law, and to foster a better understanding of the Chinese legal system, in the Norwegian society at large, and in particular among academics, PhD-candidates, students and members of the industry and business community.

UiB Rector Dag Rune Olsen, Law Faculty Dean Asbjørn Strandbakken, and Renmin University Dean Han Dayuan, pictured here, cut the ribbon to celebrate the occasion.

String of delegations visit Nordic Centre

In spring and early summer, in addition to all the academics visiting, Nordic Centre held a string of events with delegations from government (and ones formerly of government), inviting Nordic and Chinese students and researchers to meet with them for discussions about various topics.

On May 26, we hosted a public talk with Secretary General of Nordic Council of Ministers, Dagfinn Høybråten, who presented a new initiative by the Nordic prime ministers addressing the UN 2030 Sustainability Agenda: Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges. At the same event, the Mayor of Gothenburg — which is sister city to Shanghai — Ann-Sofie Hermansson spoke about the collaboration between these two cities, focusing on research and education. Both speakers answered questions about these international collaborations from the audience, and on what makes the Nordic region special — a remarkable level of trust being an answer they both agreed on.



That same day, Nordic Centre also co-hosted, along with Fudan Development Institute (FDDI), the launch of a Chinese-language book by Dagfinn Høybråten, 北极光照耀桃花仑: 一个挪威家族的中国情, (“Northern Lights at Peach Flower Hill — A Norwegian Family in Love with China”), based on his great-grandfather’s founding of the first Western hospital in the Hunanese city of Yiyang — a feat celebrated and honored by the local community today — with connections to his own work heading Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.



Meanwhile, Gothenburg Mayor Ann-Sofie Hermansson met

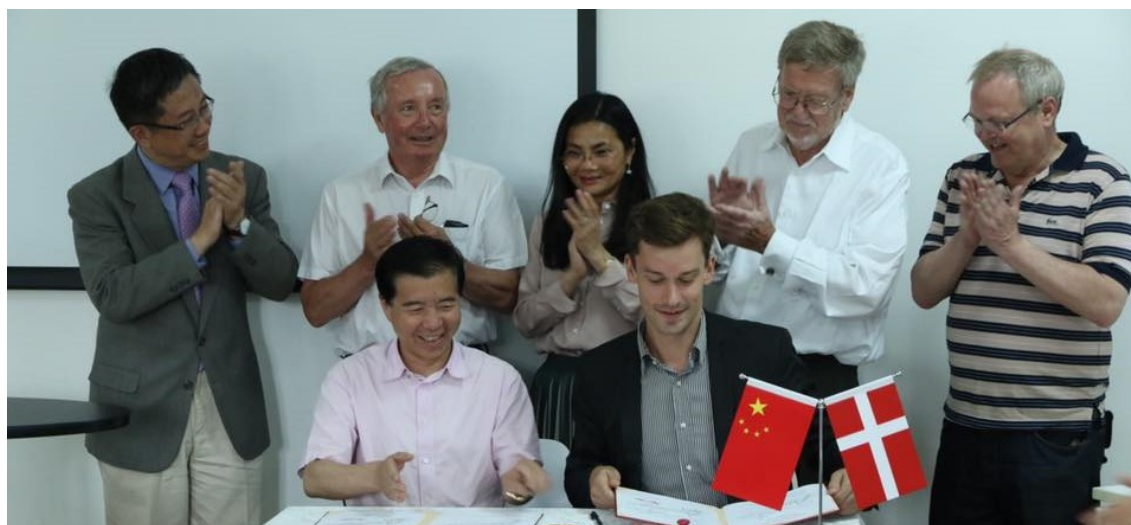


with Fudan University's School of International Relations and Public Affairs (SIRPA) to learn more about student mobility between Gothenburg University and Fudan University, with two presentations a Chinese and Swedish student on their study experiences in Gothenburg and Shanghai, respectively.

On June 2, we hosted a public lecture by Per Stig Møller, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2001-2010), who has also been Minister of Culture and of the Environment at various points. Mr Møller talked about major global challenges facing the world — including demographic, environmental, and economic ones — through the metaphor of a captain navigating around four icebergs.

The occasion for Mr Møller's visit to Shanghai was to unveil a statue of H.C. Andersen at the brand-new H.C. Andersen theme park in Shanghai, located close to Nordic Centre. After the June 2 lecture, programme manager Magnus Jorem signed a memorandum of understanding to collaborate with the Andersen Park on educational and cultural matters. It is an understatement to say that the fairy tales of H.C. Andersen are widely known in China. Stories like The Emperor's New Clothes and The Little Mermaid have been popular in China for a century, and 安徒生, as he is known in Chinese, is among the very best known foreign cultural figures in the country of all time, a major cultural bridge between the Nordic region and China.

In the penultimate government-related visit of the summer (with the notable exception of Ragnar Baldursson, Deputy Head of the Icelandic Embassy, who will lecture our summer course students on the Sino-Icelandic Free Trade Agreement on July 13) Swedish Minister of Higher Education and Research Helene Hellmark Knutsson visited Nordic Centre **on June 15** to meet students from Fudan University and Shanghai International Studies University studying Swedish, along with a group from the Swedish Consulate, including Consul General Lisette Lindahl (see picture on previous page). The Minister took questions from the students in both Swedish and English over some "fika" sweets, focusing on the importance of continuing to increase international student mobility. In the end, she kindly presented Nordic Centre with a wonderful present — a compilation of albums by ABBA, the most popular Scandinavian band of all time. We can only say: Thank you for the music!



Realizing a New Silk Road

The Belt and Road Initiative moves forward

In the wake of the May 2017 Belt and Road forum in Beijing, the now-dubbed "Belt and Road Initiative (B&R)" is entering a new phase of infrastructure-project implementation and charm offensive to drum up support for new projects around the world, particularly in Europe. But many challenges lie ahead on the new Silk Road.

Words Mads Vesterager

In 2013, China's president Xi Jinping announced a major new foreign policy initiative geared at financing infrastructure in and trade routes between China, the rest of Asia, Europe, and parts of Africa – i.e. to build a new "economic silk road" and a "21st century maritime silk road". What has become the Xi administration's signature foreign-policy initiative represents a new direction for Chinese strategy and presence in the world.



The Belt and Road Initiative, as it is now called, is China's effort to navigate the dire straits of the middle-income trap, curb over-capacity in state-owned enterprises, and strengthen China's influence in global politics, as the country tries to restructure its economy from production to a more service-based model.

So far, the strategy has seen the creation of new multilateral institutions, such as Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB), increasing cooperation and trade with nations, notably central Asian countries, as well as the "statesmanship of Chinese leaders."



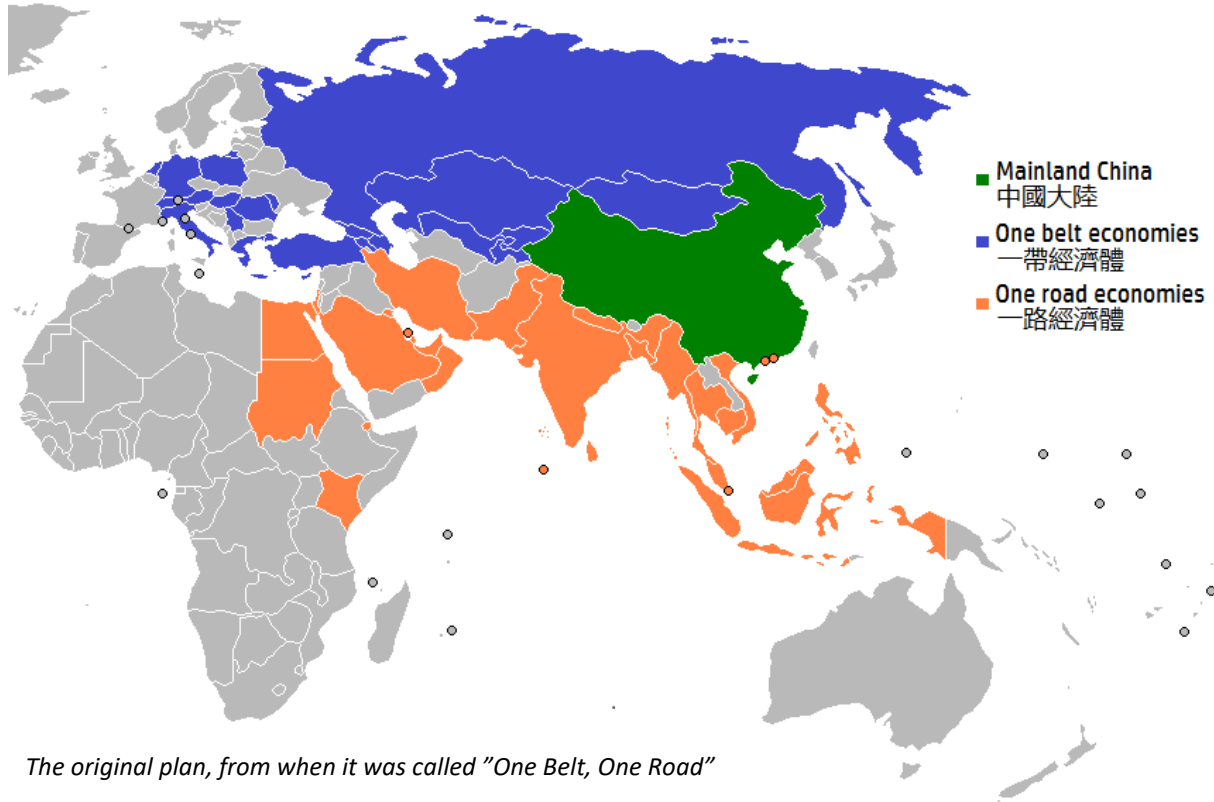
Scope

With the setup of AIIB, China is indicating that the B&R will operate within the framework of existing multilateral institutions, a mechanism which Beijing expects will grant the legitimacy it needs to extend the initiative to Europe.

At the forum, China showcased a power plant in Britain and the port of Piraeus in Greece as some of the most important projects so far. These projects have been carefully chosen to reflect the progress which the B&R Initiative has had in Europe, to draw in more European investments and cooperation related to B&R. Europe remains China's most important market and trade partner, making the integration of European countries crucial for the success of the B&R.



With his speech in Davos, Xi Jinping heralded a new role for China to play on the world stage and what future Chinese leadership could entail. With the rise of American protectionism under the Trump administration and the recent retreat from the Paris Climate agreement, China has been handed an easy global policy victory,



since much of the world is now looking to China to take up the mantle of global leadership on fighting climate change.

Risks

Potential power aside, China still needs to realize infrastructure projects around the world to create genuine trust in Chinese intentions, something which it has been reluctant to do out of the fear of negative press backlash. To realize these projects, China needs to navigate region-specific problems, where Chinese presence could easily be seen as tilting the power balance. Projects in Pakistan have just recently been subject to attacks by the Taliban, and kidnappings of Chinese personnel. In addition to this, China is walking a tightrope in Central Asia, with Kazakhstan in particular, which is historically Russia's sphere of influence.

China is now in a position, where even sub-optimal security projects will get the go-ahead to show China's commitment to the Belt and Road Initiative. This will be the next immediate challenge for this pursuit.

Will the projects be implemented successfully and attract other nations to the New Silk Road, or will Beijing get stuck in a quagmire of local resentment caused by good intentions and poor execution?

The outcome of this will be crucial for overall B&R success.

From Student in Sweden

to Branding Associate in China

Questions by Murphy Chen

Last year, Leo Hu was part of a group of visiting economics students from Lund University that Nordic Centre annually sets up a company-visit-focused programme for. One of the companies in the programme was brand-strategy and market-growth firm Brandigo (formerly Adsmith). Today, Brandigo is Leo's employer. We asked Leo some questions about his own background in China and Sweden, and how the visit to Nordic Centre led to his current job as Branding Associate.

Q: Could you briefly tell us about your educational background?

Leo Hu: I studied Business Administration at the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology for 3 years and attended an exchange programme of Borås University in Sweden in the fourth year of my bachelor study. The initial purpose was just to experience study life in another country. I had never left Shanghai for a long period of time before, and was looking forward to adventure. After the one-year exchange programme in Borås, I enjoyed the academic environment and also hoped to further my study in Sweden. So I applied for the master's programme in International Economics with a focus on China in Lund University, and fortunately got enrolled.



Leo Hu, photo: Brandigo

Q: As a student, you took the Lund Economic Course at Nordic Centre in 2016 and visited Brandigo, what's your first impression of the company?

Leo Hu: To be honest, my first feeling was confusion and suspicion. My confusion was whether this presentation had any connection with the economics course we had, since marketing is more closely related to business than economics. Plus, I was suspicious of the qualification of the presentation, because the presenters sharing experience in marketing in China are expats who looked like explorers from abroad with little knowledge about China. But after the presentation and Q&A, I changed my mind. Marketing especially for B2B requires insights from economics and industry development. Everything now in China is possible including successful marketing by expats. In fact, this is not easy, as a successful marketing strategy in China does not only require knowledge of China, but also deep-accumulated expertise in marketing, sensitive insights on market- and social development, and bold creativity based on feasibility. Quite frankly, the presentation from Brandigo embodied all these qualifications and impressed me with insightful ideas about WeChat for branding strategies, which motivated me to work with these "professional expats" in Shanghai.

Q: Do you have a specific goal or field in mind when you applied for a job in China and why did you choose Brandigo instead of other opportunities? What's your first reaction when you got the offer from Brandigo?

Leo Hu: Most of the candidates in first-tier cities of China would like to get a job with satisfactory salary and welfare, acceptable workload and job stability. For me, I was more concerned that whether the job could provide practical experiences or professional skills so that I would be able to handle different challenges in related fields. I believe what a graduate needs to achieve is not only a good salary, but also experience from professional training and various real-life challenges.



The company visit that started it all! Rooftop of Adsmith, now called Brandigo.

Brandigo is the only company I had visited before I made an application decision. Thanks to the visit, I knew more deeply about a company including its mission and vision, expertise, working environment and potential colleagues. This was a precious experience. When I got the offer I was excited for sure. I still remember that I started this new journey in Brandigo immediately, just four days after I came back from Sweden!

Q: Do you think the programme of Lund's Economics Course was helpful in developing students' career paths?

Leo Hu: There is always a gap between academic research and business practice, the theories of economics we have learnt at school are also different from the actual business operating. What the Lund economics course contributes to my career development is a way of thinking and analyzing. In the light of cautious academic research, I've gotten used to evaluating and conducting analysis from various aspects, which enabled me to get deeper and more comprehensive insights when I was doing market research for Brandigo.

Q: Do you have some advice for students who want to work in China?

Leo Hu: For foreign students who want to apply for jobs in China, language is one of the biggest challenges. If you don't speak the language, there would be a change that you could miss out a lot of information to know about China and to learn more about Chinese culture. Almost all my foreign colleagues at Brandigo speak Chinese really well and have a good understanding of Chinese culture and modern society. My suggestion is once you decide to work in China — and before you actually apply for the jobs — try hard to learn Chinese.