Unity in Diversity
Indian Researchers in Europe

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Personal Introduction

Parents

Sister

Passions

Music

Tai Chi

Social dancing
I come from ..
Education and Training

BE in Mechanical Engineering from Jadavpur University Calcutta, India (1994 ~ 1999)

Intern and marketing manager at Crompton Greaves ltd. India (1999 ~ 2001)

Director of small Business. Airoclean Corp. Calcutta India (2001 ~ 2002)

PhD in polymer Engineering at the University of Tennessee, USA (2002 ~ 2007)
Diversity in India united by *Raaga* and *Taala*

- A classic music video (1988) introducing the diversity in Indian culture with a touch of religious traditions, united through the common thread of classical and modern music.

- *Mile Sur Mera Tumhara Dosur Bane Hamara*  
  *(When my melody and yours unite a chorus is created)*

*States were initially divided based on language.*

*Follow pointer to associate music to region.*
Some Cornerstones in Indian History and Why Are They Important Now!

• Vedic Age (1750-500 BC)
• Gautama Buddha (500 BC)
• Ashoka (325-182 BC -Buddhist India)
• Patanjali Yoga Sutras (1st Century AD)
• Islamic invasion (12th Century AD)
• East India Company (1757-1857)
• British Raj and independence movements (1858-1947)
• Division of British India and formation of Pakistan
• Bangladesh (1971)
Motivation for Research studies in Europe and in USA

Two separate motivations guide two separate psychological groups.

• State of art research infrastructure and guidance.
• Strong association with industry.
• Nature and Culture. The adventure of working abroad.
• Work in Europe and return to India for permanent position.
• Work in USA and settle down there.
• Europe is preferred for physical sciences while USA is preferred for engineering and technology.
• Recently I see a change in the trend. USA has lost its appeal in the last decade.
Passions that Unite Indians Abroad

- Spirit of Adventure and Romance
- Movies
- Music
- Cricket
- Politics
- Food
- Science and Technology
- Spiritual Philosophies
Some Facts About Indians-Common Mistakes and Stereotypes

- We do not understand each other's language and culture but we appreciate them.
- The 2001 Census recorded 30 languages which were spoken by more than a million native speakers and 122 which were spoken by more than 10,000 people.
- Around 8 classical scripts and associated literature.
- We talk with each other in English.
- Religious boundaries are routinely crossed by arts and culture.
- Women’s rights is a sensitive issue with hundred shades of grey.
What we are Proud Of

- Zero
- 8 Nobel prizes, 8 Grammy, 1 Oscar life time award, 4 Booker prizes, 5 Pulitzer prizes, 27 Beauty pageant winners!
- Classical arts and architecture
- Philosophy and Spiritual Traditions
What We Are Ashamed Of

• According to the National Crime Records Bureau 2013 annual report, 24,923 rape cases were reported across India in 2012.
• Female foeticide: 108.8 men : 100 Women in 2011.
• Hygiene and sanitation.
• Growing religious fundamentalism.
Attitude Towards Women Among Researchers

Personal stories:

1. Academic hierarchy.
2. Who will marry a physicist woman!
Intercultural Difficulties

1. Romantic relationships
2. Food
3. Racial discrimination
4. Bar culture
5. Family structure
6. Human resources
Support Systems Abroad

1. Romantic Relationships
2. Food
3. Cultural attractions (Social Dance, Music)
4. Nature and adventure sports with friends
Questions please?
“It’ll take another 20 years to close the gap.”
Chinese Researcher Abroad: Difficulties & Challenges

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7th EURAXESS CONFERENCE, Heraklion, Crete
27 – 29 April 2015
Outline

◦ What
◦ Why
◦ How
The boom of going abroad since 1979

80s
The boom of going abroad since 1979

90s
The boom of going abroad since 1979

- 21st century
Why do we work abroad?

- Destination
- Career
- Professional skills
- Family
- Living environment
Challenges faced by Chinese researchers abroad

◦ Food
◦ Knowledge & Skills
◦ Employment & Career
◦ Family
◦ Friendship
◦ Wellbeing
Food

- Challenging to consume western food on daily basis
- Western version of Chinese food
- Availability of authentic Chinese restaurants
- Asian supermarkets
Knowledge & Skills

(Chinese 4th year doctoral candidate, U.K.)

“A the beginning teaching was very difficult because my style of teaching was typical Chinese teaching which was pass on the knowledge to the students. I could get really nervous because I would worry about my language. The students didn’t engage well. […] Now it’s my third year of teaching and I finally felt that there was a breakthrough. I can make little jokes and make things more fun for them to learn.”

(Yang & McCmob, 2013)

(original quote not available at the moment due to journal publication. Presentation will be updated once the article is published.)
Knowledge & Skills

- Language
- Teaching
- Publication
- Funding application
Knowledge & Skills

(Findings on Chinese students, U.K.)

◦ “extremely reluctant to question others’ opinions. […]”
◦ “more inclined to respond to “factual-recall” questions rather than the ones that required logic and critical thinking”.
◦ “reproductive approach to learning involving activities such as “summarization” and “imitation.”
◦ “struggle with the concept of learning critically and analytically and find it difficult to conceptualize the role of teacher as a ‘moderator or facilitator’.”

(Bodycott & Walker, 2000; Ballard, 1997; Evans & Tregenza, 2002; Pherali, 2012)
Knowledge & Skills

(Chinese lecturers, U.K. & Ireland)

◦“… We always complete a given task very well. No problem.”
◦“…Perhaps I will not be as competent if you ask me to design or propose a task.”
◦“However, if you give me a task, I will do my best to solve it.”
◦“… Chinese culture, in my view, is always discipline system, so your imagination, creativity is limited.”
◦“…Unlike when I was post-doc just needed to follow my boss, I need to lead my team here which has been very challenging for me.”
Different Cultures of Learning

- The education systems of the East and the West come from two very different traditions of learning

- East – Confucius
  - A student should **respect** and **follow** the ideas of scholars who are thought to be good models (e.g. Confucius)
  - A student should be **humble**
  - A student should **work hard**

- West – Socrates (a Greek philosopher)
  - A student should **analyse**, **evaluate**, **question** and **criticise** all knowledge they encounter, without concern for the source of the knowledge
  - A student should **develop** and **defend** their own opinions or points of view
Different Cultures of Learning
Student perceptions of Chinese education

- Inherited concepts of learning
  - Learning requires:
    - *kuxin* 苦心 effort
    - *xuxin* 虚心 humility
    - *yongxin* 用心 reflection

_Wang, Lihong (2010)_
Different Cultures of Learning
Student perceptions of Western education

- Concepts of learning identified by Chinese students during the course of UK studies:
  - *rong hui guan tong* 融会贯通 (integral comprehension, organising and building relationships between concepts and subjects)
  - *bioada geren guandian* 表达个人观点 (expressing personal opinions)
  - *canyu* 参与 (participating (verbally challenging or openly confronting ideas))
  - *pipan sikao* 批判思考 (critical thinking)

Wang, Lihong (2010)
Employment & Career

- Application of research skills
- Career paths in academia & industry
- Job application skills
- Contract types
Family

- Wife
- Children
- Parents

(original quote not available at the moment due to journal publication. Presentation will be updated once the article is published.)
“…but our circle of life is still restricted to Chinese people in London. To be honest, it’s very difficult to, you know, to for us to make friends who are as close as our Chinese friends in this country with English people. It’s very difficult”.

(Jiang, X et al, 2010)
Friendship
Communication & Conversation Topics

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Friendship
Communication & Conversation Topics

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Friendship
Social Activities

(original quote not available at the moment due to journal publication. Presentation will be updated once the article is published.)
Culture of Socialization

- 聚餐 (dine together)
- Chinese drinking culture (敬酒, 劝酒)
Culture of Socialization

- Leisure activities
Wellbeing

- Medical system
- Stress
- Mental health
Diversities in Experiences

(original quote not available at the moment due to journal publication. Presentation will be updated once the article is published.)
Review
Key Challenges

- Food
- Knowledge & Skills
- Employment & Career
- Family
- Friendship
- Wellbeing
Support Needed

- Staff induction
- Mentor
- Training
- Support for family
- Mental health support
- Women in academia
Thank you.
CULTURAL CONNECTIONS: FROM CONFUCIUS TO CREATIVITY

Andrea Střelcová
EURAXESS Links China
OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

PART I: CHINA NOW

PART II: CHINESE CULTURE IN KEYWORDS

PART III: „ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT“

CONCLUSION
INTRODUCTION

• EUROPEAN IN CHINA
• INTEGRATION IS DIFFICULT BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE
• GOOD NEWS: „EAST ASIAN“ CULTURE
• „BAD“ NEWS: HARD TO GENERALISE
PART I

CHINA NOW
PART I: CHINA NOW

• CHINA IS A VAST COUNTRY OF MANY CULTURES
  • NORTHERN VS. SOUTHERN CHINA, CITY VS. COUNTRYSIDE
  • HK, MC, TW + CHINESE COMMUNITIES ELSEWHERE (SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA)

• DIVERSITY AS IN EUROPE.
  • THINK OF CHINA AS A CONTINENT!
  • BIG NATION WITH OLD, RICH CIVILISATION, „MIDDLE KINGDOM“
PART I: CHINA

CONFUCIUS: TRADITIONAL CULTURE

SOCIETY IS UNEQUAL AND COMPETITIVE

CREATIVITY: MODERN CULTURE

CONTRASTS AND CONSTANT CHANGE
PART I: CHINA NOW

CHINESE GOING GLOBAL – ROLE OF MOBILITY

TECHNOLOGY IS EVERYWHERE

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ARE LEAP-FROGGING!
PART I: CHINA NOW

• WOMEN
  • PRESSURE TO GET MARRIED, NOT TO PURSUE CAREER.

• MEN
  • PRESSURE TO BE SUCCESSFUL, PROVIDE A HOUSE AND A CAR.

• MEN AND WOMEN
  • OFTEN AN ONLY CHILD
  • THEY FACE PRESSURE FROM FAMILY TO LOOK AFTER PARENTS
  • WELL EDUCATED
  • OFTEN AFFLUENT AND URBAN
  • ABROAD = SUCCESSFUL
PART II

CHINESE CULTURE IN KEYWORDS

INFOGRAPHICS CREDIT: YANG LIU, „EAST MEETS WEST“
PART II: CHINESE CULTURE IN KEYWORDS

• ANGER AND DISSATISFACTION

• FACE — RESPECT

• LOSING FACE - PROVING WRONG IN FRONT OF OTHERS CAUSES EMBARRASSMENT
PART II: CHINESE CULTURE IN KEYWORDS

HIERARCHY
• POLITENESS TO SUPERVISORS, ELDERS
• OBEDIENCE
PART II: CHINESE CULTURE IN KEYWORDS

HARMONY

PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH TO MAINTAIN HARMONY
PART II: CHINESE CULTURE IN KEYWORDS

GUANXI = YOUR NETWORK

POLITENESS, COMPLEXITY OF SELF EXPRESSION
PART III

„ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT“
PART III: „ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT“

• HOW TO MAKE SURE YOUR MESSAGE WENT THROUGH?
• ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS
• MAKE EVERYTHING CLEAR AND OBVIOUS
• LISTEN TO SUBTLE SIGNS (MIGHT SIGNAL DISAGREEMENT)
• HOW TO CRITICISE: MAKE SUGGESTIONS!
• PUT IT INTO WRITING
PART III: „ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT“

• CHINESE RESEARCHERS ARE IN EVERY COUNTRY
• IT’S A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE CHINESE CULTURE BECOMES AN INTEGRAL PART OF GLOBAL CULTURE.
• BUT SO FAR WE KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT CHINA
• ALLOW CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ...
• ....BUT DON’T EXTRAPOLATE!
CONCLUSION

• CULTURE IS FLUID
• CULTURAL NORMS ARE ARBITRARY
  ..... BUT THAT DOESN’T MAKE INTEGRATION EASIER
• LET’S UNDERSTAND BETTER AND TRY TO ENGAGE

• ....谢谢！XIE XIE!