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Director's Words:

With its rapid speed of development, China has become a country that can no longer be ignored in the current world. Of course, behind this remarkable developmental performance, there are still problems, confusions and stereotypes from outside. A platform of voices from different communities to construct the figure of a healthily developing China becomes a necessity nowadays. At the same time, more and more Chinese learners all around the world have become interested in Chinese culture and tradition. *Confucius Says* not only provides Chinese lovers a glimpse into modern China and Chinese society, but also give Chinese students an opportunity to reflect modern-day China's situation in a variety of fields.

Confucius Says is a bilingual (Chinese/English) seasonal E-magazine, aiming at promoting intercultural communication between China and other nations. People will talk about any issues in either their own language or the language that they are learning. The magazine relies on the collaborative nature between native Chinese speakers who are studying in America and English speakers who are learning Chinese. The target audience is all the youth on campus. This magazine belongs to TC@Penn.

TC@Penn (Teaching Chinese@Penn) is a student organization that aims to promote Chinese language and culture. We provide free Chinese tutoring services on a weekly basis, translation services, Chinese classes, workshops and cultural events to Penn students and staff. Our organization is sponsored by the GSE (Graduate School of Education) and GAPSA (The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly).

If you are interested in writing for our magazine, please send your article to confucius.yue@gmail.com. The deadline for submission of articles for the next edition is Thursday, March 20, 12pm. All submissions should be sent electronically. Essays on any particular topic may be written either in English or Chinese and should be at least 300 words or characters long, respectively. Please include your preferred name (either your real name or pseudonym), your face photo, your self-introduction and pictures related to your article before the deadline. (Revised by **Mike Gimbel**)

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Mike Gimbel I am very pleased to be a part of *Confucius Says Magazine*. I have been teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages for 16 years in the Philadelphia area. During that time, the majority of my students have been Chinese. I have also had the pleasure of teaching in China several times, to visit many places in China. In addition, I have been working to help people with mental and physical disabilities for over 40 years. mikegimbel@hotmail.com

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我叫**一心(Ethan Fogel)**。 I'm a transactional/bankruptcy lawyer at Dechert LLP, an international law firm, where I also head our Philadelphia office's pro bono activities. In a prior life I was a TESOL teacher in Belgium. I am addicted to the study of languages and have really enjoyed learning Mandarin and meeting Chinese friends for the past few years. 我也很喜欢唱中国歌，看中文书。 ethan.fogel@dechert.com



The Importance of Studying Chinese Literature

In my field, I am accustomed to inquisitive responses from people when they first hear what I am studying in grad school. Outside of China, and to most of those not within the field of East Asian studies, Chinese literature is a subject that simply doesn't come up all that often. I can only imagine how random a choice of research topic it must sound to many people, and I understand this.

I am only bothered when people respond with incredulity. In these cases, people seem almost annoyed, or at least bewildered, that I haven't chosen to study something more conventional. "Why in the world Chinese literature?" I have on occasion been asked. "Why not French? German?" These kinds of responses imply that there could be no good reason to justify choosing Chinese literature over such esteemed literary legacies as those mentioned above. Why Chinese literature, indeed? Is it just some odd-ball subject chosen by academic hipsters who want to be "different" from their literary peers? Is it chosen primarily because of China's prominence on a global scale? Perhaps the answer to one or both of these questions is "yes" for some people, but neither is true for me. The reality is that, like in any other field, people come to the study of Chinese literature for many different reasons. In my case, I didn't come to it because China is a world power or because I'm a hipster or because I have some kind of orientalist obsession with "Chinese culture," in all its diverse varieties. Conversely, I study Chinese literature precisely *because* I still receive incredulous responses when I tell people my research topic.

For a complex array of social, political, historical, and cultural reasons, literatures written in Western European languages and Russian dominate the popular literary scene in the United States. That is to say, if an American is familiar with any national literature outside of his or her own, it is likely to be a tradition written in one of these languages. I hope that these literary legacies will continue to attract students who are passionate about studying them for years to come. Translations of literatures written in languages other than those of Western Europe and Russia, however, still tend to be underrepresented in this country. While more "conventional" literatures such as French, English, and German are just as worthwhile a study as they ever were, I long ago discerned that my personal calling was to devote my life to do what I could to continue the process of introducing Chinese literature to my native country, to help share the import of this magnificent tradition with at least one nation outside of China's borders.

I understand that one factor that keeps readers away from Chinese literature is the language barrier. Still, although work always remains to be done, English translations available today are more varied than they ever have been. I encourage you, the next time you're looking for a good novel, to consider a translation of a work originally written in Chinese. I would be remiss if I admonished you to read more Chinese literature and didn't give you some direction in accomplishing this goal. Here are some recommendations of books I really like, and their translations, to get you started in your readerly exploration:

Collected Works of Lu Xun, translated by Yang Hsien-Yi and Gladys Yang

Love in a Fallen City, by Eileen Chang, translated by Karen S. Kingsbury

Soul Mountain, by Gao Xingjian, translated by Mabel Lee

Finally, for those of you who would like to go even further and learn to read Chinese literature in its original language, I promise you that the study of Chinese is immensely rewarding. It is difficult, but don't let that fact dissuade you from embarking on the journey to learn it, if it's a path you feel called to follow.

In any case, next time you encounter somebody who has chosen to study a national literature that doesn't have a huge presence yet in the United States, please don't react with incredulity. All national literatures are worthy of study. Recognizing this is the first step to understanding the importance of researching Chinese literature.



Gina Elia is a second-year PhD student in the School of Arts and Sciences, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations. She specializes in modern Chinese literature, specifically in examining how both Christian and non-Christian Chinese authors employ Christian motifs and texts in their literature. In her spare time, she enjoys creative writing, reading stuff other than Chinese literature, and eating cheese. ginaelia@sas.upenn.edu

A Brief Note on Educational Assessment in the Sui Dynasty

Every year, millions of Chinese high school students take the dreaded three-day *Gaokao*, or the National College Entrance Examination. This test, a central prerequisite to entrance into the vast majority of Chinese universities, is undeniably important. While the origins of the *Gaokao* can be directly traced back to the 1952 National Matriculation Test, standardized testing has a long history in China. Indeed, its ancient antecedent is found in the Sui Dynasty (Ebrey, 2010).

Though “imperial examinations” can be seen as beginning broadly with the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) and reaching their fullest manifestation in the later Song Dynasty (960 – 1279 CE), the first nominally impartial system of independent examinations occurred during the brief Sui Dynasty (581 – 618 CE) (Yanming, 2003). Previous to this, local aristocrats had nominated candidates to the Imperial bureaucracy, and these candidates were largely drawn from the ranks of the nominators themselves. Based on their perceived merits applicants were actually divided into nine grades by the local aristocracy (Lewis, 2009).

Beginning with the Sui Dynasty, however, a series of examinations were given to jobseekers. After years of political turmoil as the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420 to 589 CE) were dismantled, the Sui rulers were eager to limit the power of ancient aristocratic families and the imperial claimants they produced (Miyazaki, 1981, p. 9). Though the candidates were still nominated by “local elites” (Elman, 2000, p. 133), the emperors viewed these examinations as an important check against nepotism and the aristocracy. The exams were rigorous, requiring character memorization, the ability to write rhetorically proficient essays in the classical tradition, and extensive reading within that same tradition (Elman, 2000, p. 298). Moreover, the Court instituted specialty examinations, with six degrees (Elman, 2000, pp. 42-44) ranging from law to those conferring important governmental posts (Haifeng, 2000). These exams ultimately helped commoners achieve important positions within the dynasty (Feng, 2007).

The Sui Dynasty’s existence was ultimately quite brief. Massive building projects and an ill-fated invasion of the Korean peninsula led to an uprising resulting in the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE). The imperial examinations, however, lasted nearly 1,300 years. They were modified and adapted to meet the political needs and realities of subsequent dynasties. The Tang Dynasty, for instance, saw the test become more standardized throughout the empire and, later, required original poetic compositions. The exams also spread to nearby countries. The *guageo* examinations of the Korean Goryeo and Joseon Dynasties were directly influenced by the Chinese imperial examinations. Likewise, the exams influenced the selection process in Japan and Vietnam. Indeed, some have seen the Sui system as influencing testing in 19th century Imperial Britain (Teng, 1943). Though the Sui Dynasty lasted less than forty years, their educational impact was widespread and long lasting.



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Is The Western Way Better?: The Appropriation of Chinese Culture by Meiguo

Preface

Because of globalization, cultures are almost always “borrowing” from each other. Think about colonization, for example. Historically, the colonizers such as the US, Great Britain, Spain, and France invade other lands and the native people of that land are forced to assimilate to the Western World’s culture. When the US was colonized, Native Americans had to change their lifestyles to “fit” with the American colonists.

Anytime a culture is influenced by another culture, something called cultural appropriation occurs. Cultural appropriation is literally the appropriation of a foreign culture by a given culture. In more recent years, however, cultural appropriation has taken on a negative connotation as a result of the inappropriate appropriation, or as I like to say, the “inappropriation” of the foreign culture. This typically involves the incorrect application of a piece of foreign culture within the context of a native culture when a native culture takes a piece of the foreign culture. For example, there has been a rising trend in America where people are beginning to wear Hindu bindis, the red dots or ornaments that Hindus wear in between their eyes. Within the context of the Hindi culture, bindis have great religious significance¹. They represent the energy of the sixth chakra of concealed wisdom, and for Americans to casually wear them as part of a fashion trend, is an example of cultural inappropriation.

Below I have outlined some aspects of Chinese culture that Americans have westernized. They are examples of cultural appropriation, but I will leave it up to you to decide if they are examples of cultural inappropriation as well.

Food

Food is arguably the most integral part of one’s culture. Americans have been notorious for culturally appropriating other cultures’ cuisines. I’m sure that you have been to a “Chinese” restaurant in the states. Maybe you’ve been to Oriental Express or to Spring Garden. Regardless, unless the Chinese restaurant you went to was in Chinatown, the food you ate was probably not authentic. At most Chinese restaurants in America, recipes of traditional Chinese dishes are altered. In fact, some recipes are even made up. Think about fortune cookies. These end-of-the-meal snacks were an American invention.¹ Think about Orange Chicken you eat at a Chinese buffet. The traditional soy sauce and orange peel flavoring was swapped for the thick American orange-chili sauce. Are these American renditions of Chinese food examples of cultural inappropriation? You decide.



Left: Image 1: A Fortune Cookie typical in an American Chinese restaurant; Courtesy of Wonderopolis.org **Right:** Image 2: An American Chinese Buffet: Most of the dishes offered are not part of traditional Chinese cuisine: Courtesy of Wikipedia Images

Film

Traditional cinema has been greatly westernized as seen in the case of Hollywood Kung Fu movies. Kung Fu movies originated in Asia as part of the Chinese culture. The first Kung Fu movie, *The Adventures of Fong Sai-yuk* (Part 1: 方世玉打擂台; Part 2: 方世玉二卷之胡惠乾打機房)¹, was made and produced in Hong Kong in the late 1930’s. Forty to fifty years later, Hollywood adopted this genre of film with stars such as Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee. These Hollywood films had, and presently still have, themes centered around American culture as opposed to Chinese culture. In fact, Hollywood sometimes even misrepresents parts of the Chinese culture. They might, for example, accredit a tradition such as a tea ceremony to the wrong Asian culture. Kung Fu simply has become another type of action movie that Hollywood has to offer. Is this cultural inappropriation?



Above: Image 3: Bruce Lee, Hollywood Kung Fu star; Courtesy of Daigo.org

Fashion

Fashion is one of the most popular aspects of one’s culture that is appropriated by that of others. Walking in to almost any store, you can see fashion from Paris, Milan, and Madrid advertised. Chinese fashion has influenced American culture. Chinese slippers, for example, acted as the influence for Cotton Mary Janes and Mesh Slippers. Americans have also taken interest in the Chinese cheongsam 長衫, finding it to be sexy and flattering. The cheongsam, however, is traditionally a long dress worn to preserve modesty (it is a descendant of the qipao 旗袍)¹. Although I have only ever seen Americans wear cheongsam(s) on Halloween to be “dressed like a Chinese,” some pop culture stars such as Gwen Stefani and Katy Perry have embraced these traditional dresses. Is the sensuality innate in the American version of the cheongsam an example of cultural inappropriation?



Left: Image 4: An American Cotton Mary Jane influenced by traditional Chinese Slippers; Courtesy of Urban Outfitters **Right:** Image 5: America’s Chinese Mesh Slippers; Courtesy of Wholesalecentral.com **Middle:** Image 6: Katy Perry wearing her cutout version of the cheongsam at the 2011 MTV’s Video Music Awards; Courtesy of MTV

Conclusion

Cultural appropriation is a reality. When appropriating a piece of a foreign culture, as long as the traditional context of that piece of culture stays intact, much good and understanding can result. However, when cultural inappropriation occurs, cultural insensitivity prevails and conflicting interests naturally arise. Ultimately, it is up to the members of a culture to reflect upon the influence you have had on other cultures and the influence other cultures have had on you. You then must decide if cultural inappropriation has been committed and how to resolve this wrong-doing of a foreign culture.

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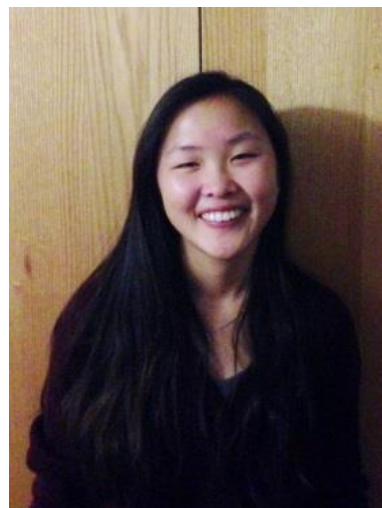
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Hi, my name is **Caroline Clark**, and I am from Woburn, MA. I am currently a freshman in the College of Arts and Sciences looking at a major in Communications and a minor in Consumer Psychology. I am very excited to be an editor of *Confucius Says*, and I am currently enrolled in my second semester of Chinese at Penn. Please feel free to contact me at clarkcar@sas.upenn.edu. I hope you enjoy the magazine!



南京的吃食（一）

These two articles introduced some great typical refreshments in Nanjing, a historical city in China. Similar to Philly, Nanjing used to be Chinese capital. It is an awesome city, although it is not as modern as Shanghai or New York. I spent my four undergraduate years there. To some degree, Nanjing is like my second hometown. The refreshments introduced in these two articles are meaningful to me not only because they are incredibly yummy, but also because they reflect my love of Nanjing. If you are going to visit China someday, Nanjing is a good option especially for those who are interested in Dr. Sun Yat-sen.

说起南京，还真替它如今的地位感到尴尬。作为六朝古都，十朝都会，南京在中国的历史上的地位就算排不过北京，总也比上海强。可现在，金陵王气却似乎销声匿迹：和正牌帝都北京相比，南京不过是个旧都，或者说得更准确一些，南京终究是个废都；和财大气粗的上海相比，南京又似乎显得土气了些，没有上海的那股子招摇和风光；和同处江南的苏州相比，南京又似乎野蛮了点，粗糙了点，够不上江南的那般水灵和精细。但就是这样一个什么都比别人稍逊一筹的城市，带给了我难忘的四年，难忘的大学四年。

和南京城一样，南京的吃食也似乎比其他城市稍逊一筹，没有那么刻骨铭心，也没有那么声名远扬。由于南京的地理位置，南京菜兼具了淮扬菜的大气和苏帮菜的精细，坐地取材，辅以平民家常的烧法，便成道道美味。更重要的是，食客们往往不需要花上大价钱，便能在街头巷尾一些不起眼的旮旯里享受一番舌尖饕餮，这大概是南京的吃食最接地气之处了。虽说不上魂牵梦萦，但离开南京数月，有那么几味南京吃食，却还是摄人心魄。

金陵小笼包与鸭血粉丝汤

南京的街头，几乎遍地可见金陵小笼包与金陵鸭血粉丝汤的金字招牌。一年四季，这些店里的食客总是络绎不绝。就像牛奶是咖啡的伴侣，金陵小笼似乎也是鸭血粉丝汤的必备佐食。

和苏州上海的小笼包一样，金陵小笼包皮薄馅多，汤汁鲜美。肉馅主要分鸡汁和蟹黄两种。鸡汁鲜美，蟹黄醇厚。吃小笼包，讲究皮、馅、汤汁同时入口为佳。若有食客嫌汤汁过烫而弃掷勺中，单食其皮馅，可就失去了品味金陵小笼的终极要义。吃小笼包，南京民间有口诀：“轻轻提，慢慢移，先开窗，再喝汤”。汤汁的浓郁，配以馅的细腻，皮的韧劲，舌尖别有一番滋味。

单吃一笼小笼包，怕是吃不饱。不打紧，辅以一碗鸭血粉丝汤一定能满足食客的胃。和小笼包一样，鸭血粉丝汤的食材同样都是些触手可及的原料：粉丝，鸭胗，鸭血，油豆腐，葱花，蒜蓉。出锅的时候，晶莹剔透的粉丝做底，中间厚厚的铺一层事先处理好的鸭胗，再

垫上一层热气腾腾的红棕色鸭血和黄油豆腐，撒上一把葱花和蒜蓉，色香味，各方面有模有样，便成南京城一道招牌。有些食客喜食酸味或辣味，亦可稍点一二香醋或辣油，同样美味。如此般，鸭子的荤腥气与葱花和蒜蓉的素香中和，鸭胗的粗糙口感与粉丝的细滑相辅，食客吃得不亦乐乎。

和正宗的苏帮菜相比，金陵小笼和鸭血粉丝汤毕竟还是平民了些，土气了些，登不得大雅之堂，上不得国宴。但平凡正也是平民家常菜的特点——虽出不了大彩，但也出不了大错。当你不知道该吃些什么的时候，一笼小笼包外加一碗鸭血粉丝汤总不会错。这份平平凡凡，简简单单，就像秦淮河边，城墙脚下世代生活着的南京人们，不张扬，日子却也过得优哉游哉。



Images retrieved from <http://www.nipic.com/show/1/55/5e5b78c548fd87aa.html>

<http://www.mafengwo.cn/i/954567.html>

小龙虾

如果说小笼包算不上南京的典型吃食，那么小龙虾一定算。和其他海鲜河鲜相比，小龙虾大概是最不上档次的水产。但就是这样不起眼又似乎有些低贱的食材，却被聪慧的南京人做成了又一道美食。

夏季是吃小龙虾的季节。一到四五月，街边的食铺馆肆会挂上亮眼的招牌——小龙虾上市，欢迎品尝。于是，南京马台街一带，在初夏的夜晚，总是漫溢着浓郁的香辣龙虾与热烈的啤酒混合的味道。



Image retrieved from http://www.hbtv.com.cn/column/2013/0516/340723_5.shtml

龙虾小，肉虽不多，但却又厚又肥。一盘洗净的小龙虾，蒜蓉少许，花椒少许，辣椒少许，大火入锅，一道香辣小龙虾便可瞬间成为夏季南京餐桌上的主角。那种红灿灿的颜色，火辣辣的味道，配以啤酒泡沫的瞬间刺激感，整个灵魂似乎都在升腾。吃龙虾，男女老少围坐一台，仪态啊风姿啊都不要了，他们放弃了文雅吃法——用筷——直接双手剥壳送入口中。吃完满手的红油与热辣，唇齿满载一晚的鲜美与欢腾，大伙满足得前俯后仰。



Yang Du: Majoring in Chinese language and literature in Nanjing University for my undergrad, I am deeply obsessed with Chinese traditional culture and customs. Raised in the Confucius-oriented Chinese cultural background, I highly value modesty and honesty. Yet at the same time, I am also a big fan of dynamic American culture, which upholds independence, freedom, and individualism. Particularly, I am interested in movies, especially Stanley Kubrick's classics.

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边缘光影——席慕容诗集读后感

Introduction of Xi Murong:

Born in 1943, Xi Murong is a poet, essayist, and painter. She is well-known for the spiritual resonance to touch the inner heart of people in her love poems.

最近一段时间迷上了席慕容的文字，虽然只是隔几天读一段，却体会了别样的读书心情，说不清道不明，所以才想用笔来描绘。“边缘光影”其实是席慕容一首诗的题目，我觉得很贴切，便借用于此。因为感觉自己正徘徊在她的世界边缘，而那无意中“窥见”的，令人惊艳的光影，自然是她的诗，她的文，她的情感了。

席慕容，多美的名字。慕容、慕容，仿佛天生就是诗意与唯美的化身。很多人知道席慕容，是因为《一棵开花的树》，我也一样。当初是第一次接触到这种风格的诗篇，惊讶于原来诗的意境可以这么纯美，原来文字也可以这么纤巧地组合在一起，只觉得这位诗人是个多愁善感、心思细腻的女子罢了，而这种文字读罢一篇也已足够。

如今才知当时的看法过于片面。在读了她的诗集、文集后，我的惊讶是“一波未平，一波又起”。

一个年轻的女子写出柔美的词句并不奇怪，因为她的眼中看到的全是美好的事物。而一个女子如果自始至终写着美好的词句，并且让每一个读者都觉得即使有哀愁有喟叹仍旧美好而自然，就十分令人惊讶了。席慕容恰恰就是这样，一本诗集，从她的十六岁读到她的五十三岁，我不得不承认生活的艰辛，时光的流逝从未让她逐渐迟钝于对美的感知，丧失对美的追求。因为她对美的捕捉能力并没有随时光褪去，而是永远能够恰到好处地表现她的心境，比如她在五十三岁时写到：“原来人生只合虚度/譬如盛夏疯狂的蝉鸣/譬如无人的旷野间那一轮皓月/譬如整座松林在阳光蒸腾下的芳香/譬如林中的你/如何微笑着向我慢慢走来/衣裙洁白/依旧在那年夏天的风中微微飘动/仿佛完全无视于此刻的/桑田沧海。”读着这样的文字，仿佛在品一盅微苦而清香的茶，仿佛透过这层层美好易碎的瞬间触摸到了五十三岁的她的心，仿佛看见她含着泪，一读再读那被命运装订得极为拙劣的青春。这种感觉真的很微妙，美好与伤感竟能如此丝丝相扣吗？

后来，在读了《永远的诱惑》一文后，我似乎明白了她为什么没有放弃对美的追求，为什么她文字中一直饱含着富于生命气息的美好与鲜活的情感。这篇散文述说了她每次去纽约都会搜罗一切被自己看上眼的画具和画材，结果仅是水彩和粉彩的本子就需要做两个又大又方的铁柜子来装它们。朋友问她一辈子画得完这么多本子吗？她说不一定。但是，

就是因为有了这些本子放在自己眼前，才能引诱她去画一辈子，最后她写道：“我不能预知将来会画出什么样的作品，我只知道眼前必须要坐到画架前面去，画架上有我新钉好的画布，有一张全新的空白在诱惑着我，有一个全新的开始在等待着我。”

终于明白，生无所息的席慕容，不懈追求的席慕容，有着一个油画家的构图视角，色彩运用独到的席慕容，本该写着诗意而唯美，唯美而哀婉，哀婉而鲜活的文字。不是因为她名叫慕容，而是因为她是独一无二的席慕容。



Image retrieved from
<http://www.youyin.com/liuwei/yy1>



Kejin Zhu is obsessed with English poetry and Chinese classic literature. Previously she desired to study comparative literature, but now she is a first-year graduate student at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania. Li Qingzhao and Christina Rossetti are her favorite Chinese poetess and English poetess respectively. kejin@gse.upenn.edu

布拉格、人类、我

布兰奇·杜波斯：“不管你是谁，我总仰赖着陌生人的仁慈。”

《欲望号街车》

田纳西·威廉斯

人生中时常会遇到困难或意料之外的情况，可是在这时候，不要失望。你相信吗，在困难时仍可以遇见幸运？我跟你讲一个我的亲身经历。

对任何的事情我都喜欢好好地准备并计划。一日游也不能没有计划地去，更不用说没有计划地到外国去旅行，但是两年前，我居然意外地造访捷克。在 2009 年 12 月，我计划到巴塞罗那去参观几个有名的景点，像圣家大教堂，毕加索博物馆，兰布拉大道这些地方。到那时候为止，我没去过欧洲，所以我很期待去这趟旅行。

我应该先从肯尼迪国际机场飞到布拉格转机，然后去巴塞罗那。但因为纽约大雪的关系，纽约有航班延误，从纽约起飞的飞机就不能在布拉格准时降落。结果，我错过了在布拉格的转机航班。我没办法，要留在布拉格八个钟头，等下一班到巴塞罗那的航班。在那个时候，我觉得又受挫又麻烦。我不但没有任何计划到布拉格去旅行，而且没有捷克朋友，又不会讲捷克语。可是在飞机场等八个钟头没有意思，一点儿乐趣也没有。我在飞机场想了一想，决定最好去城里。

在没去过的外国，自己独身一人从飞机场到城里是个冒险。我找到公共汽车站以后，在那儿紧张地等着公共汽车来，担心会坐错公共汽车。好在我突然听到有人在讲中文。我看了看周围才发现在讲中文的人是两位年轻的女生。简直太幸运！一看到她们，我马上在我的脑海想一想怎样用中文问她们，“Is this the correct bus to the center of the city?”虽然我有一点害羞，可是我鼓起勇气对她们用我的破中文问，“请问，这个巴士是去城市的中心吗？”从这那么短的一句话开始，更多句子就发芽了。一位女生回答了我的问题，然后我们三个就陆续介绍自己，还解释我们在布拉格的原因。那两位女生都是中国人。一位，叫丽春（假名），是捷克的留学生，她在布拉格学习捷克语半年多了，所以已经习惯了布拉格的生活。另一位是来布拉格拜访丽春并且参观布拉格。

过了十几分钟公共汽车终于到了。我们三个一起坐公共汽车到城里。在车上，我一边跟她们交谈，一边欣赏着路上的风景。为了让我听懂她们说的话，她们跟我慢慢地讲中文并且用比较容易的单词，所以她们讲的话我差不多都能听懂。整个坐公共汽车的这段时间，我心想，“哇，我们克服了语言障碍。”

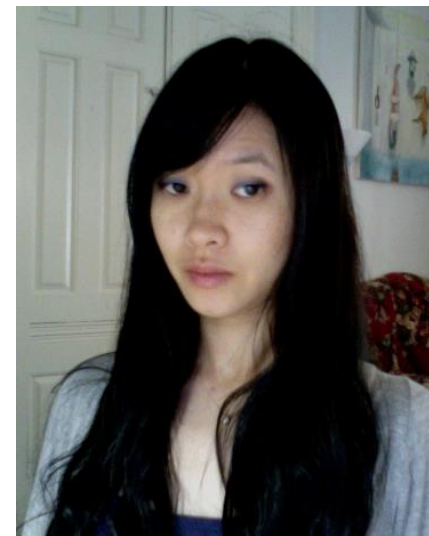
在布拉格城里，丽春成为了我和她的朋友的导游，她带了我们去参观几个名胜古迹：总统的宫殿、几个政府建筑物、教堂等等。由于每个建筑都有圣诞的装饰所以特别漂亮。我边看着这些建筑，边听着丽春解释这些建筑的历史，奇怪的是，她讲的我大都能听懂。天黑

以后我们到了给我印象最深的景点：查理大桥。在大桥上，遥远城市散发出的光芒尽收眼底。大桥下，深蓝色的伏尔塔瓦河有如明镜。眼前美丽的夜景令我屏息，又感到精神特别好。

最后我们到了老城广场，在广场的中间有一棵又高又大的圣诞树。在广场里还有布拉格最有名的圣诞市场，因此那儿比较拥挤热闹。可以看到许多小贩们在那儿兜售着点心饮料和圣诞商品。小吃的气味让我感到很饿，来到布拉格一直到那时候都还没有吃东西。可是因为我没想到换钱，我没有捷克现金所以不能买食物。似乎是丽春感觉到我想吃东西，她买了个捷克传统糕饼给我，告诉我她想让我尝尝当地的风味小吃。她已经帮助了我很多，我那里还好意思让她买东西给我吃呢？她非给我那个小吃不可，因为据她说，我是个客人。终于，我还是接受了那个小吃，感激地吃了它。其实那个小吃马马虎虎的，但是因为那是丽春给我的（并且我特别饿），我觉得格外好吃。

不知不觉时间到了，我要跟亲切的丽春和她的朋友说了再见，跟美丽的布拉格说再见。我自己一个人坐公共汽车回机场去了。

对我来说，布拉格是世界上最华丽的城市。从 2009 年 1 月到目前为止，我的电脑桌面上的图片一直是布拉格的照片。要是有机会再到布拉格去，我一定会去。从我的布拉格经验，我深刻体会到语言诚然是个有力的工具—语言把我和那两位中国人连在一起。布拉格不但丰富了我的人生，而且布拉格让我发觉到人类的善良。我永远不会忘却布拉格的绮丽，也永远不会忘却丽春的善意。(Revised by Yang Du)



Lan Ngo is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education. A former English as a second language teacher, her research interests focus on the language and literacy practices of immigrant students and English language learners in the United States. In 2012, she received the U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship to study Chinese in Beijing.

中国作者的版权

The article raises the question, "How can Chinese authors survive, considering the copyright issues in China?"

在上学期的一门基础经济学课上，有一堂课老师讲到版权问题。她谈起在韩国的经历：仅第二堂课，班上就已经人手一本复印版的教材，搞得她自己都哭笑不得。作为班上仅有的两个中国人，我和朋友珊珊于是自然地被问到中国是不是类似的状况。在大略地解释了中国人其实不是很看重版权问题之后，我们被老师的问题哽住了。她说：如果你们的书都很容易被盗版的话，那作家岂不是都要饿死了？

这是我第一次反思中国的版权问题，抛开文化问题不谈，既然中国盗版盛行，中国的作家靠什么吃饭呢？然后仔细想想，发现那些知名的学者其实很少有只靠写作赚钱的。比如靠百家讲坛（几年前在中央电视台很火的一档文化节目）发家的几个知名学者，赚钱的途径主要靠电视讲座，其次是参加各种访谈节目，被邀请四处讲座报告……出书于他们而言，只是一个几乎不需要附加投入（内容几乎只是电视讲座的手稿）但是回报相对丰厚（他们由于电视讲座已经出名，会有很多慕名买书的读者）如果再加上几次签售，那“写书”的收入就更加丰富了。

当然，这只是部分作家的现状，未必所有作家都是这样的赚钱模式。我仍在持续地纠结这个问题，希望能找到这个问题更好的答案。



Ronggui Su, is a Master of Science in Education Candidate at the University of Pennsylvania. She is now working as the vice president of communication at Chinese Student Support Network at Penn. She has been volunteering at Youth Build Philadelphia charter school since 2012 as a teaching assistant for math and language art classes. Her passion for her work is encouraging her classmates in education to view English as a communication tool rather than merely as a course in school.

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上海空气污染问题有感

刚刚抵达上海浦东机场的时候，我便注意到空气质量很糟糕。事实证明，就在那天，上海空气 PM2.5 指数已经达到 200 了。幸好我离开美国之前特意准备了一些 N95 口罩。为了健康着想，我马上戴上了口罩，然后发现空气中弥漫的那种味道立即消失了。虽然大家都已知道空气污染会影响健康，但是据我观察，大部分的上海人并没有戴口罩。也许这证明了空气污染问题还是很容易被人们忽视。作为公共卫生学的研究生，我在上海的两个星期里，还是只戴了两天口罩，更不用说普通的老百姓了。因为戴口罩很麻烦，即使是比较昂贵的口罩，戴起来也不舒服，而且不一定适合每个人的脸型。

在上海的时候，我想知道哪一类人群最注重空气污染的问题，所以我询问了在上海的朋友。她告诉我，注重空气污染问题的人绝大部分为年轻人。因为年轻人是现代社会中网络使用率最高的人群，而由于科技的发展，我们日常生活中的讯息，主要都是通过网络来进行传播的，包括空气污染的问题。所以大部分年轻人，都对环境污染有着更高的防范意识。

根据她说的话，我个人觉得中国空气污染的问题会随着这个人群逐渐成为中国社会发展的中坚力量而慢慢得到改善。因为当这些年轻人成长为中国的公务员，商人，还有政治家的时候，会本着环保的可持续发展观念来发展中国的经济。(Revised by Kejin Zhu)

Steven Brooks: I am a first year Master's in Public Health student. Previous to coming to UPenn I was living and working in China for 4 years - 2 years in Shanghai as a High School teacher and 2 years in Kunming working for an NGO and studying Chinese. I'm interested in Environmental Health research, advocacy, and policy. stevegbrooks@gmail.com



Is Learning English a Waste of Time?

When I was enjoying a croissant and orange juice one morning last December, a headline in the New York Times caught my eye and drove my joyful mood away. The heading was: "Beijing Plans to Trim English Portion of College Entrance Exam". The article reports Beijing's view that English does not merit such a crucial portion of the college entrance exam, since it seems not as useful as people have expected it to be. According to China Youth Daily, a newspaper run by the Communist Youth League, learning English is a waste of time since "most people don't require English in their work, and spending so much time and energy on studying English is wasted". A waste of time? Then what have I been doing for these 15 years (I started to learn English at the age of 7)?

The news was released and soon caused an uproar in society in Mainland China. Two opposite voices emerged. One agreed with China Youth Daily, while the other attached importance to English learning. To address this issue, I would first invite you to put aside whether learning English is a waste of time, and think about why we learn a language. Why do individuals learn languages? Ronald Wardhaugh (1972), a distinguished linguist, defines language as "a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication". In this sense, people learn their first language in order to communicate and live in society. Then, why do people learn other languages? Some people would say without hesitation that we learn second or third languages for communication as well. They might also point out that since we learn English just for communication, maybe English is not that critical, and some would even contend that as long as we have translators, language learning becomes even less important. However, do we learn language only for communication? In other words, is language just a vehicle for communicating? Of course NOT! Language is not a series of static symbols that convey meaning. Language is a door through which we can get access to a world with a similar or different culture, literature, society, politics and economy. As a translation major student in my undergraduate years, I deeply understand that language, in some occasions, is untranslatable. It is quite different to read a novel in translation and in its original version. Furthermore, language is not static. If we acquire a culture's language, it would be much more convenient for us to understand its pop culture. As Paulo Freire, a leading advocate of critical pedagogy, put forward, people who know English are empowered in a way than those who don't are not. Language, from this perspective, is an instrument of power. Individuals who acquire English are therefore more empowered than those who don't.

As an education major graduate student and future English teacher, I firmly believe that learning English can never be a waste of time. English is not static forms to memorize by rote. English is not only a vehicle for communication, but also an instrument of power that empowers people who know it with access to its culture, society, politics and economy. And that is WHY we will never say "no" to English studying. (Revised by **Gina Elia**)



Dear all, I am **Wei Yi Li**, a 22 years old girl from Nanchang, China. I studied translation in my undergraduate years, and have keen interest in reading and translating traditional Chinese literature. As a first-year TESOL student at Penn GSE now, I focus on language acquisition and education, and my dream is to learn different languages. "Wei Yi" in Chinese has a homophonic meaning as "the only one", but what I would like to be is the opposite. I want to be one of you, sharing and discussing opinions and articles together as an editor. weiyi1@gse.upenn.edu

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Studying Abroad in China

Alisha Sud is a junior at the University of Vermont who recently returned from spending seven months at Yunnan University in Kunming, China. I sat down with her to discuss her experiences as an American college student studying in China and to hear some of the highlights from her time abroad.

Why did you choose to study abroad in China?

After declaring Chinese as one of my majors in college, it became clear that spending a few hours in class during the week was not enough to improve my reading and writing skills as well as oral communication. I wanted to take a semester to immerse myself in an environment where my only option was to converse with native speakers.

How did living in China affect your Chinese language skills?

There were very few English speakers outside of my university's campus, so everyday activities involved learning new words or phrases to get my message across. I always made an effort to work new grammar or vocabulary into conversations in order to solidify my understanding of those concepts. In the end, my conversational and comprehension skills far surpassed those of my reading and writing. It was also extremely educational to hear how certain patterns of speech are used in everyday language- I got a lot more out of that than I did from textbooks.

What was the biggest adjustment from living in the US?

Because Chinese society isn't as information obsessed and driven by the media as a lot of Western countries are, I often felt a little out of the loop and isolated. In the end, I came to appreciate my lack of exposure to sensationalized news.

What was the best part of living in China?

The best part about China was making friends in unexpected places. A lot of Chinese people were often fascinated by the fact that I was able to speak Mandarin. I tried to strike up conversations with everyone I met and was introduced to a lot of interesting people this way. I found that people were generally very encouraging and helpful when they realized I was studying Chinese.

What advice do you have for students considering study abroad in China?

Make as many Chinese friends as you can and take them up on all of their offers to spend time together- not only will your Chinese skills drastically improve, but this is how you will be able to experience modern Chinese society to the fullest. Instead of letting your observation of cultural differences dictate your time in China, learn to accept and engage in cultural practices that are new to you. I think you'll find that you're able to adapt to new situations a lot more easily and that you have a newfound sense of self-sufficiency. I wish that sometimes instead of questioning things I found new and unusual, I had appreciated being in the present moment -- your time abroad will fly by much faster than you expect!

Emily Brewer is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences, majoring in History and East Asian Area Studies. Born and raised in New Hampshire, Emily began studying Mandarin Chinese her senior year of high school and her fascination with Chinese history, culture, and society has blossomed ever since. She made her long overdue first visit to China this past summer, sharpening her language skills and immersing herself in Chinese life through Columbia's program in Beijing. She hopes to return to China for further study and research after graduation, and is considering a career in law.



Kunming



Alisha in China