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A Window to the Nation A Welcome to the World

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On Top of the World 60 Years of Transformation in Tibet

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1949 to 1959: Laying the
Foundation for a New China

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Cross-Continental
Craftsmanship



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Cover caption

July 26, 2018: A senior spins prayer wheels on
the Thousand-Buddha Mountain in Lhasa, Tibet.
by Duan Wei/China Pictorial



by Li Xueren/Xinhua

↑ Important Progress in Trade Talks

February 15, Beijing: Chinese President Xi Jinping (center) meets U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who made the trip to Beijing for a new round of China-U.S. high-level economic and trade consultations, at the Great Hall of the People. President Xi revealed that “important progress for the current stage” was made during the two-day talks.



IC

← Joint Global Efforts

February 16, Munich, Germany: German Chancellor Angela Merkel addresses the 55th Munich Security Conference. In a passionate speech, Merkel said the international political structure built after World War II could not be smashed but instead reformed in a multi-lateral way. She also suggested Germany learn from China about its practices in development cooperation with African countries.



VCG

← Forbidden City Lights Up

February 18, Beijing: The Palace Museum, or the Forbidden City, tests new lighting systems. The museum extended its opening hours into the evening on February 19 and 20 in celebration of this year's Lantern Festival. It was the first time the museum was open to the public for free at night in its 94-year history, and the first time the ancient buildings in the Forbidden City were decorated with lights on a large scale at night, the museum said.

→ China Clones Gene-edited Monkeys

January 22, Shanghai: Cloned monkeys with circadian rhythm disorder at the Institute of Neuroscience under the Chinese Academy of Sciences. China cloned five monkeys from a gene-edited macaque with circadian rhythm disorder, the first time that multiple monkeys have been cloned from a gene-edited monkey for biomedical research. Scientists made the announcement on January 24, with two articles published in *National Science Review*, a top English-language scientific journal in China.



by Jin Liwang/Xinhua



VCG

← Chinese Wisdom at WEF

January 23, Davos, Switzerland: A “Dalian Night” reception during the 2019 World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting, highlights Chinese culture with its decorations. From January 22 to 25, this year's forum attracted global elites to discuss “Globalization 4.0.” Chinese wisdom was again featured prominently at the meeting. Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan called on countries to work together to shape the global architecture in the age of the fourth industrial revolution with the vision to create a better future for all mankind.

China's Economy Keeping Steam

Text by Wan Zhe

China's economy has not lost momentum considering that the country's reforms have been orderly and unceasing. Only more proactive reforms can bridge to a better future.

China's economy in 2018 can be characterized by three features: relatively strong resilience, steady reform of the capital market and increasingly lower institutional costs.

Amid an increasingly complicated situation at home and abroad and fiercer disputes in trade, China has generally fulfilled its main targets in economic development in 2018: The growth rate of its GDP reached 6.6 percent, the urban surveyed unemployment rate stayed at around five percent, foreign trade volume hit a new high, economic restructuring continued progressing, emerging industries maintained relatively fast development, and the urbanization rate increased steadily. All indicators point to the high resilience of China's economy.

The resilience of China's economy can also be seen in flexible policies. Since mid-2018, uncertainty in the economy has increased, so China has changed its macro policies accordingly. Monetary policy was adjusted to "prudent" and policymakers stressed that to ensure liquidity in the market, fiscal policy should be loosened. The government vowed to enact more policies such as cutting taxes and administrative fees, investment and infrastructure projects have been expanded, and the environment for

doing business has been improved. China has further removed obstacles impeding trade and become more open to the world.

Facing a complicated and volatile external situation, China should harness more domestic fuel and dynamism in its economy. China's reform has entered a deep-water zone, and mountainous pressure lies ahead. However, the reform is still ongoing and more potential for China's economy has yet to be tapped.

The capital market has always been a focus of the government's work in economic development. However, only recently was it mentioned at the Central Economic Work Conference as an area that affects the whole picture, which evidences the significance of the capital market in China's economic development and restructuring.

In recent years, the reform of China's capital market is heading for "internationalization, legalization and marketization." From the perspective of internationalization, two-way opening of China's capital market has steadily progressed. In terms of legalization, China has adhered to strict supervision in accordance with the law and constantly improved basic systems of stock issuance, listing and delisting. While improving relevant laws, regulations and

regulating institutions and cracking down on violations of laws and regulations, China has effectively protected the legitimate rights and interests of small and medium investors. On marketization, China has maintained normal issuance of new shares, regulated refinancing of listed companies, curbed excessive financing, supported mergers and acquisitions with industrial integration as the focus, and streamlined examination and approval procedures, all of which give the capital market more power in its role in serving the real economy.

It should be noted that the reform of the capital market has achieved early results while withstanding tremendous pressure. Although the capital market is temporarily at a low valuation due to changes in internal and external environments, the prospects for value investment and long-term investment remain promising.


Considering the progress of the five major tasks (cutting excessive industrial capacity, destocking, de-leveraging, lowering corporate costs and improving weak links), the first three have been completed, and China has made concrete efforts to improve weak links. Lowering corporate costs will be a focus of future economic policies, and China will also focus on the reduction of institutional costs. This reduction should include multiple aspects:

The first is cutting taxes and administrative fees. Since last year, China has repeatedly stressed reducing taxes and administrative fees, but ordinary people haven't seemed to witness any effect. Due to local governments' effort in debt clearance, real estate purchase restrictions and other policies, they are not in a good financial position. Few local governments are willing to "reduce administrative fees," and they have barely reduced the actual

burden on local enterprises. For the future, it is necessary to intensify efforts to rectify and change fiscal revenues and earnestly reduce taxes and fees for enterprises.

The second is improving administrative efficiency. In the past few years, "streamlined administration and decentralization" and "reduction of approval affairs" have achieved good results, but better administration will happen not only through decentralization but also with the provision of better services. We must work hard in administrative process design and management, reduce institutional costs of doing business and improve the abilities of administrators at all levels, so government affairs are more open, procedures are reasonable, and management and supervision are effective.

The third is promoting the rule of law. Marketization and legalization are key to reducing institutional costs. The Central Economic Work Conference released requirements of "marketization and legalization." Marketization must be guaranteed by rule of law. Otherwise, enterprises and individuals will not be willing to become involved in long-term investment, the market will not be able to operate in a healthy manner, and economic power and vitality will not be truly released.

China's economy has not lost momentum because the country's reforms have been orderly and unceasing. Only more proactive reforms can secure a better future. 

The author is a member of the Academic Committee of the Pangoal Institution and chief economist of China National Gold Group Co., Ltd. This article is reprinted from ce.cn.

蜗牛奖 Snail Award

Edited by Li Zhuoxi

The "Snail Award" is not an honor but a crown of shame—a specially designed punishment to draw attention to poor


performers. In 2018, several provinces and cities in China bestowed the "Snail Award" on government departments that were hesitant and inefficient in their work, to hold them accountable. After the success of the "Snail Award," some other awards were created such as the "Hedgehog Award" for those with bad attitude in service and the "Ostrich Award" for leaders with little sense of responsibility.



On April 18, 2018, Bichuan Primary School in Lishui City, Zhejiang Province was granted a "Snail Award" for a five-month delay on its playground construction. VCG

大数据杀熟 Big Data Profiteering

Edited by Li Zhuoxi

A recent survey of over 2,000 participants showed that 51.3 percent had fallen victim to internet enterprises that take advantage of regular customers through the use of big data. The enterprises can create an accurate "user portrait" based on enormous user information and data collected on internet platforms and charge higher prices to more capable or eager buyers. 



According to research, several internet platforms providing services such as bookings for flights, movies, tickets and hotels as well as online shopping and tourism have taken advantage of regular customers through the use of big data. VCG

Major Topics Forecast for 2019 “Two Sessions”

Text by Yi Mei

The annual “two sessions” have always enjoyed intense focus from both the public and media.



Nantong Port in Jiangsu Province. The port welcomed a busy first month of 2019, with the amount of handled cargo reaching nearly 25 million tons, up 20.4 percent over the same period of the previous year. VCG

The second session of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC) and the second session of the 13th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), collectively known as the “two sessions,” will open on March 5 and March 3, respectively.

As the annual sessions of China's top legislative and advisory bodies, the two sessions, involving thousands of NPC deputies and CPPCC members, have always drawn intense scrutiny from both the public and media.

This year, China's economy will clearly be a hot topic at the two sessions considering it is already in the spotlight of both domestic and international media. Against a backdrop of increasing uncertainty and rising

protectionism globally, China's economy faces great challenges despite a sturdy performance last year with a year-on-year GDP growth rate of 6.6 percent, totaling US\$13.6 trillion. The 7th round of trade talks between China and the United States, has just finished. The Trump administration announced it would delay the tariff increase on China now scheduled for March 1. It was positive news for China's economy. But considering pressure on China to deliver a domestic economic transformation, economic issues will easily make the top of the two sessions' agenda.

China is striving to become a “moderately prosperous society in all respects” by 2020, just before the centennial anniversary of the founding of the

Communist Party of China. Achieving this goal would require all rural residents living below the current poverty line to be lifted out of poverty by 2020. It would mark the first time in China's history that extreme poverty is eliminated. In 2019, the goal is to raise 10 million rural residents above the poverty line. All signs point to poverty reduction becoming a hot topic at the two sessions. Around a billion Chinese people have worked their way out of poverty over the last four decades of reform and opening up, which was first introduced in China in 1978. Those still left under the poverty line are the targets of China's current poverty reduction efforts. NPC deputies and CPPCC members are expected to contribute great wisdom and plentiful suggestions on this topic.

As one of the “three critical battles” China must fight, pollution control has in recent years been emphasized by the Chinese government and captured mounting public concern. In the most recent years, China's environment has seen gradual improvement. To address air, water and soil pollution, the Chinese government has designed and enforced a ten-point list of measures for each and achieved solid progress. The pursuit of a clean environment is not only a public health issue but also conducive to China transferring its economic development mode from energy-intensive to greener and higher-quality. So, environmental protection will inevitably be heavily discussed at the two sessions.

Since he took office in 2012, Chinese President Xi Jinping has vigorously promoted anti-corruption to build a “clean” government. China has strengthened government supervision and auditing-based oversight, taking steps to investigate, prosecute and address violations of law and regulations and severely punishing those engaged in corruption. The anti-corruption campaign has snowballed into a crushing tide with stronger and growing momentum. How to take the anti-corruption campaign to the next level and consolidate its fruits remains a key topic to be discussed at the two sessions.

In the government work report he made in 2018, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said, “All of our work is work for the people.” People's livelihood has always been the concern of the Chinese government, which adheres to the vision of people-centered development. So, issues that concern the people most—education, employment, healthcare, social security and order—need to be properly addressed to ensure the people feel richer, happier and safer. Additionally, improving the living standards of Chinese people will boost individual consumption and reduce China's economic growth's



February 28, 2019: A workshop of Xintao Textile Co., Ltd. in Huzhou City, Zhejiang Province. After investing 20 million yuan (US\$2.5 million), the company became equipped with AI-based technology that helps it realize green production and diversify its products. VCG



February 10, 2019: Customers buy fruit at a supermarket in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province. During the 2019 Spring Festival holiday, household consumption in China exceeded one trillion yuan (US\$125 billion), up 8.5 percent year-on-year. VCG

dependence on exports. So, new policies concerning people's livelihood may be released at the coming conferences.

The Chinese government has actively pursued coordinated development of Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei and development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, designed and implemented related plans, and undertaken numerous key projects. Also the country has planned to develop major city clusters and pursued more balanced development of small, medium and large cities as well as small towns. It is obvious that coordinated development will also be on agenda of the two sessions. 



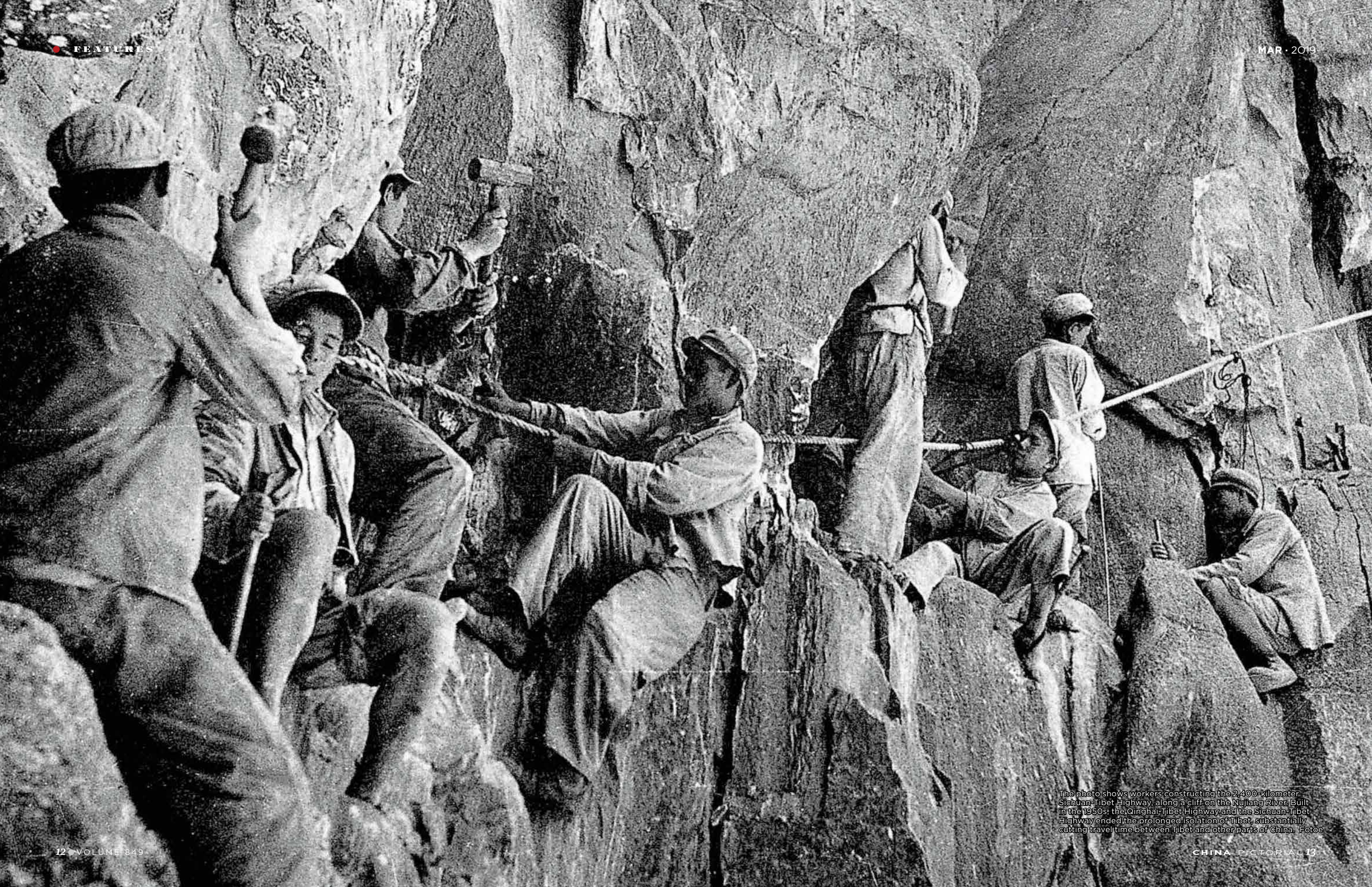
On Top of the World

60 Years of Transformation in Tibet

Text by Wen Zhihong, Gong Haiying and Hu Zhoumeng

"Today, as we plainly describe the effort to 'overthrow the system of feudal serfdom' in Tibet, most don't realize the people underwent a radical emancipation of the mind."

The photo shows Tibetans reading a newspaper. After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, modern education took root in the region with a rising number of formal schools as well as increasing night schools, seasonal winter schools and newspaper reading groups.
by He Shiyao/China Pictorial



The photo shows workers constructing the 2,400-kilometer Sichuan-Tibet Highway, along a cliff on the Nujiang River. Built in the 1950s, the Qinghai-Tibet Highway and the Sichuan-Tibet Highway ended the prolonged isolation of Tibet, substantially cutting travel time between Tibet and other parts of China. Fotoe



In many scholars' view, the most prominent force driving Tibet's development has been the transformation of the social system. The shift from serfdom to a socialist system brought radical changes to productivity and production relations in the region. Given ownership of land and livestock, Tibetan farmers became highly motivated. This 1959 photo shows ordinary Tibetans who were given houses, land, livestock and production tools. by Chen Zonglie/CFB

Tibetan native Wande Khar has worked for China Tibetology Research Center (CTRC) for decades. He was born and grew up in Hezuo City in Gansu Province's Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. In the late 1970s, Tibetan language education had just been officially introduced to local schools. After graduating from high school, Khar became a teacher in a local primary school.

A year later when the *gaokao* (national college entrance examination) resumed in China, he enrolled in Northwest Minzu University. In 1988, he graduated with a bachelor's degree. By that time, CTRC had been established for only two years. Khar ventured to Beijing to join the research center which eventually became China's most prestigious institution for Tibetological studies.

A few years ago, Khar was approached by an elderly European woman while attending an academic exchange event in France. She showed him a 1984 photo of Xigaze in China's Tibet Autonomous Region and asked whether the area remained as poor and underdeveloped as decades ago. "I suggested she visit Xigaze again and take another photo for comparison," he recalls. "In the eyes of many Westerners, Tibetans were a very vulnerable group, and



August 2007: Wande Khar (second right) takes a photo with herders from nearby Gegyai County at the foot of Mount Kailash in Ngari, Tibet. The herders came to circle the mountain as a pilgrimage. courtesy of Wande Khar

based on inadequate sensory experience and imagination, they seem to think Tibet stopped developing."

However, after six decades of modernization and transformation, Tibet has indeed achieved self-sufficiency in grain production and supply, developed modern industry from scratch, and enjoyed convenient transportation facilities, with all low-income farmers and herders covered by the social security system. Increasing numbers of Tibetans educated elsewhere are returning home to support local development. Moreover, Tibet is known as one of the regions with the best environmental quality in the world and



Since the democratic reform of Tibet, the region has built a sound educational system with Tibetan features and ethnic characteristics, offering pre-school, primary, middle and high schools as well as vocational, adult training and higher education. This 1960 photo shows Sonam Chodron, whose parents were serfs, in class at a local school. by He Shiyao/China Pictorial



Four scholars from China Tibetology Research Center participate in a group interview with *China Pictorial*. From left to right, they are Tsering Yangdzom, Wande Khar, Li Jian and Yang Tao. by Chen Jian/China Pictorial

remains a world-renowned tourist destination featuring distinct, abundant religious and cultural heritage.

From the peaceful liberation of Tibet in the early 1950s to the launch of Tibet's democratic reform in 1959 and the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965, Tibet has kept in step with the country's epoch-making changes. Alongside the great liberalization and development of its productive forces, the autonomous region has accumulated abundant social wealth and transformed the traditional mindsets of locals.



The photo shows Tibetan textile workers in 1960. Abundant in wool and cashmere, Tibet has developed a long-standing textile industry.
by He Shiyao/China Pictorial

“Radical Emancipation of the Mind”

Mount Qomolangma, known as Mount Everest in the West, attracts some 60,000 tourists each year, providing plentiful opportunity for local farmers and herders to improve their livelihood. At an altitude of more than 5,000 meters, the Qomolangma base camp in Tashi Dzom Township, Xigaze’s Tingri County offers services such as tents, camp carts, yaks and workers for transporting supplies, as well as tour guides. In August 2016, Yang Tao, a scholar from CTRC, spent a week conducting a survey there. He found that due to limitations of capital thresholds and yak numbers, it was hard for poor locals to benefit from tourism development, so Yang suggested optimization of the tourist revenue sharing mechanism of the base camp.

Income distribution is an inevitable topic in all sorts of economic theories. Six decades ago, it would have been unimaginable to form

a revenue sharing mechanism involving the government, investors, farmers and herders in Tibet, let alone institutional optimization that aims to benefit more poverty-stricken farmers and herders.

Recently, four Tibetological researchers from CTRC—Tsering Yangdzom, Wande Khar, Li Jian and Yang Tao—were interviewed by *China Pictorial*. The researchers agreed that the democratic reform that started six decades ago has been the most profound and radical social reform in the history of Tibet and laid the groundwork for the modernization of Tibet’s social system.

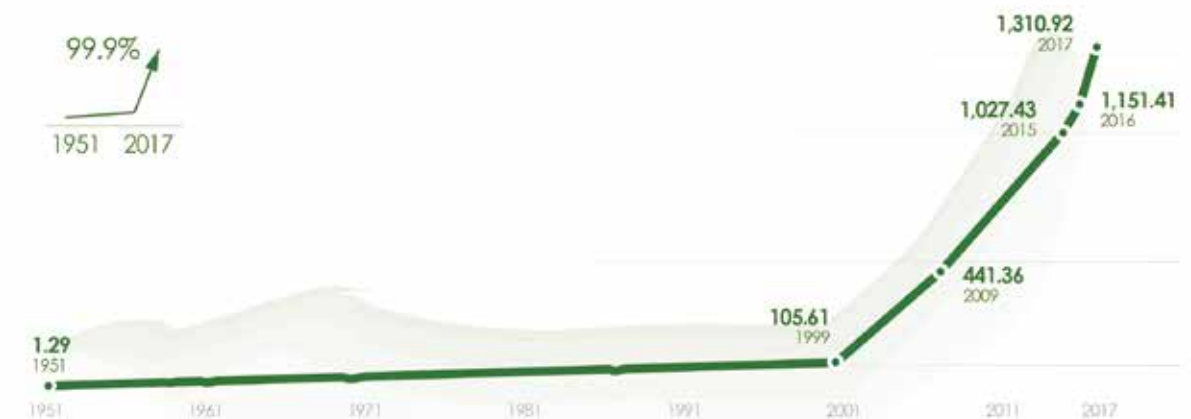
Originating in the 13th century, the feudal serfdom system enforced a strict hierarchical structure in Tibet. Lords accounted for less than five percent of Tibet’s population and maintained ownership of the vast majority of production means, while serfs and slaves who accounted for more than 95 percent of the total population lacked production means and personal freedom. In his book *Old Tibet Faces New China*, French Tibetologist Alexander David-Neel wrote, “All the farmers in Tibet are serfs saddled with lifelong debt, and it is almost impossible to find any who have paid off their debts.”



Yang Tao (left), a scholar from China Tibetology Research Center, and a Tibetan woman who operates the tent restaurant behind them. In August 2016, Yang conducted a survey at the Qomolangma base camp and interviewed local Tibetans engaged in tourist service on how the boom of tourism had impacted their lives and the local ecological environment. courtesy of Yang Tao

GDP of Tibet Autonomous Region (1951-2017)

GDP in unit of 100 million yuan (now around US\$14.8 million)

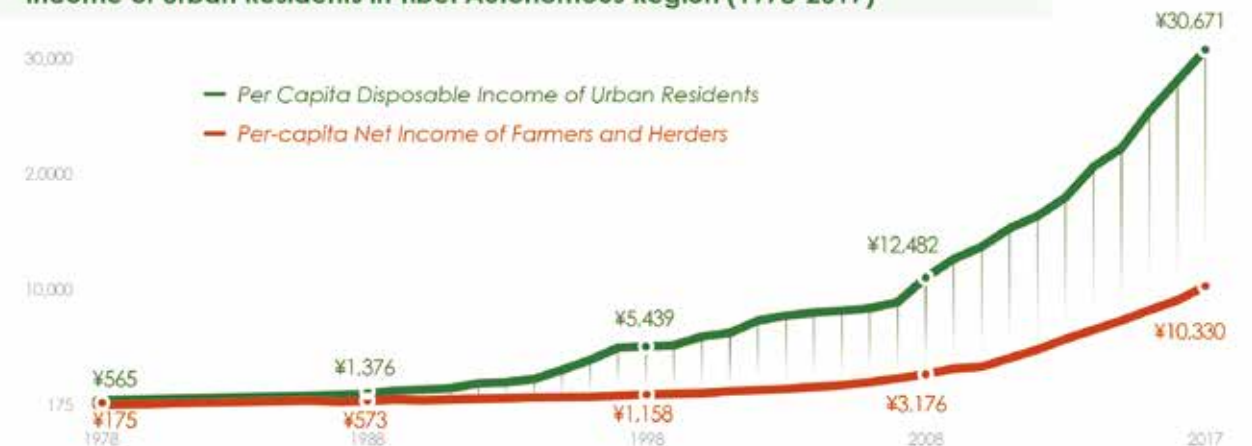


Per Capita GDP of Tibet Autonomous Region (1959-2017)

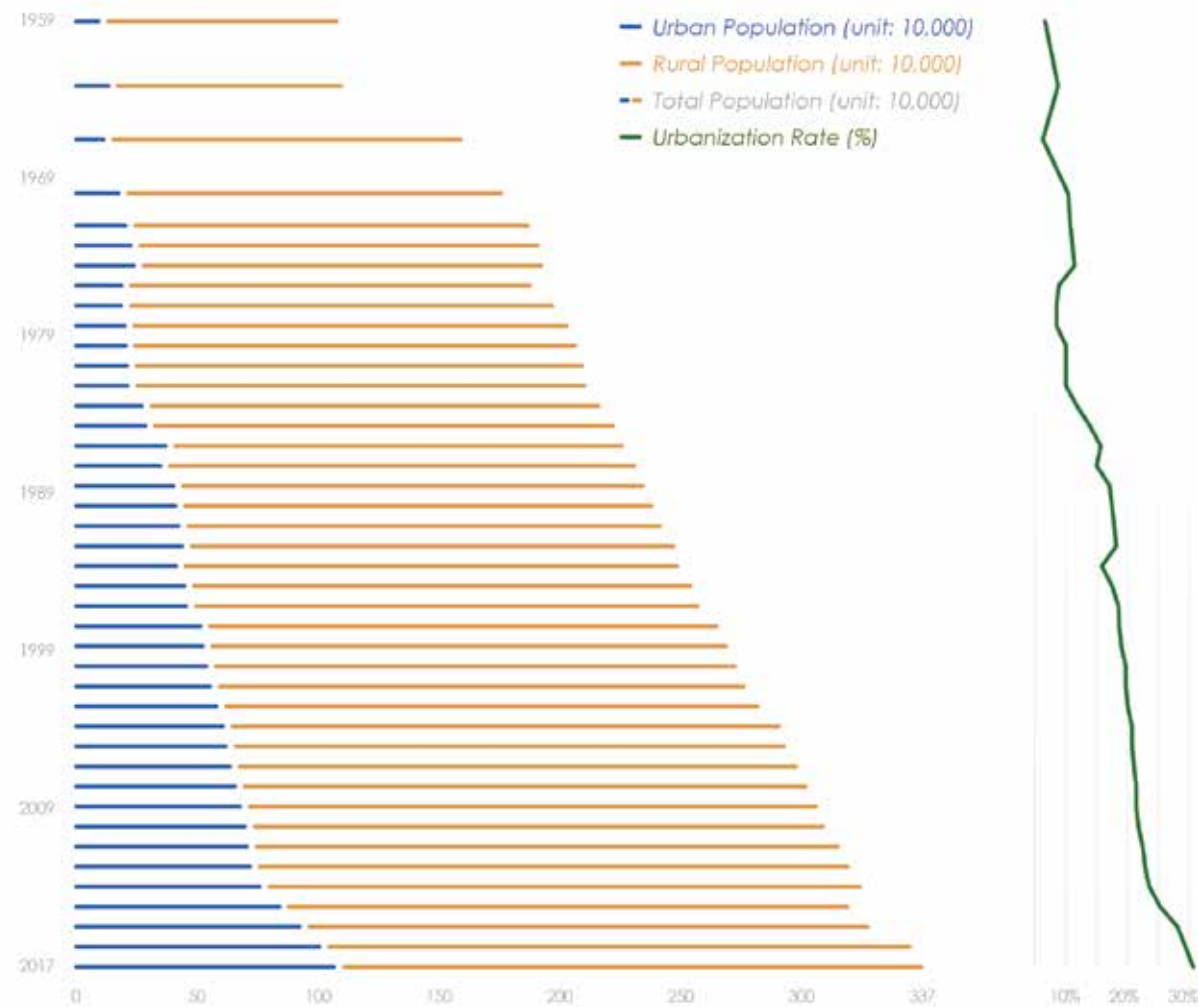
Per capita GDP in unit of 10,000 yuan (now around US\$1,480)



Per Capita Net Income of Farmers and Herders and Per Capita Disposable Income of Urban Residents in Tibet Autonomous Region (1978-2017)



Population Structure and Urbanization Rate of Tibet Autonomous Region (1959-2017)

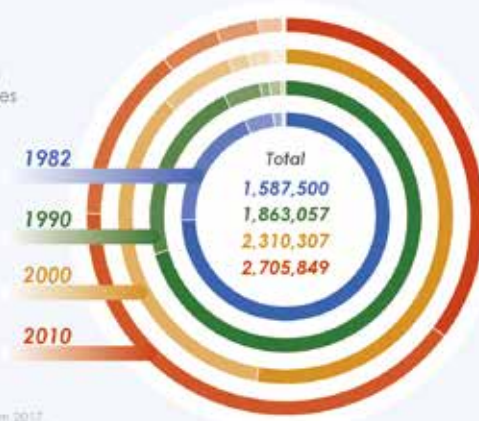


Education in Tibet Autonomous Region

Literate population (persons)	Primary school graduates (persons)	Junior high school graduates (persons)	High school graduates (persons)	Vocational school graduates (persons)	College graduates (persons)	Master's graduates (persons)
1,179,885	308,436	68,232	22,925	-	8,022	-
1,311,613	407,939	84,524	22,301	24,263	12,417	-
1,221,503	796,442	165,957	42,418	50,430	33,557	-
925,237	1,098,468	385,793	131,027	93,704	68,266	3,354

Source: Tibet Statistical Yearbook

NOTE: Given that official statistics for 2018 have not yet been released, the most recent data available dates from 2017.



Designed by Zhang Xuedan



Tibetan women donning new clothes for the annual Horse Racing Festival in 1963. The festival, with a history of more than five centuries, is an important local entertainment and trading activity. by Ru Suichu/China Pictorial

In Yang Tao's eyes, the most prominent characteristic of Tibet's development is institutional reform creating a strong driving force. "Democratic reform enabled Tibet to shift from a feudal serfdom system to a socialist system, not only bringing radical changes to productivity and production relations, but also giving ordinary farmers land and livestock and considerably boosting their enthusiasm for agricultural production."

Wande Khar believes that the democratic reform eliminated the feudal personal independence relationship that had existed in Tibet for centuries and enabled serfs to become independent persons, which is the most important cornerstone for Tibet becoming a modern society.

Tsering Yangdzom grew up in Lhasa. Thanks to substantial improvement of educational facilities after the peaceful liberation of Tibet, she had access to quality education from primary school to college. She once worked as a teacher at Tibet University. In



Tsering Yangdzom (second left) on a research trip to Shuanghu County in Nagqu, Tibet. courtesy of Tsering Yangdzom

1988, she joined CTRC and became Khar's colleague. Yangdzom has paid great attention to the disruptive influence of Tibet's democratic reform on people's minds. "Today, as we plainly describe the effort to 'overthrow the system of feudal serfdom' in Tibet, most don't realize the people underwent a radical emancipation of the mind."

Assistance and Communication

Due to high altitudes, cold weather and uneven population distribution, Tibet suffers higher costs for industrial development and human resources than many central and coastal regions. According to Yang Tao and Li Jian, the harsh natural environment is a core factor impeding Tibet's endogenous development and self circulation. Tsering Yangdzom stressed that traditional culture and ethnic sentiment of Tibetans make them less enthusiastic about commercialization, so reform is evidently promoted from top to bottom.

Since the early 1980s, the Chinese government has formulated and implemented a series of major measures conducive to the development of Tibet and the well-being of Tibetan people by upholding the principle of catering to actual local conditions and putting people's livelihood first. For this reason, government-backed national assistance is the most prominent feature of Tibet's modernization. This is also a policy and measure for regional coordinated development with Chinese characteristics, which is rare worldwide.

In March 1984, the second National Conference on Work in Tibet passed a decision to organize governments of nine provinces and municipalities and several ministries and departments of the central government to construct 43 projects that Tibet urgently needed, especially public establishments such as power plants, schools, hospitals and cultural centers. Some of these projects later became landmarks in Lhasa such as the Lhasa Hotel, Tibet People's Hall and Tibet Public Art Museum. Primary statistics show that by the end of 2018, nearly 10,000 assistance programs had been carried out in Tibet, nearly 8,000 officials had been dispatched to work in the autonomous region, and more than 30 billion yuan (US\$4.48 billion) in aid funds had been allotted to Tibet.

The first time Tsering Yangdzom left Tibet to study elsewhere in 1978, her family spent 61 yuan (US\$9.1) on her ticket from Lhasa to

Chengdu. "That ticket cost what my mother earned in two whole months." One of her classmates once asked her, "Do you eat rice and drink tap water at home?" Feeling discriminated against, young Yangdzom angrily answered, "We don't eat or drink!"

With limited interactions and exchange taking place, such misconceptions were not uncommon back then. Not until the early 1980s were large-scale institutional aid projects benefiting Tibet launched across the country. Concrete action has also revealed channels and opportunities for mutual understanding and cultural integration between Tibet and the rest of China. Just as the Tibetan civilization has repeatedly integrated with other civilizations throughout history, mutual recognition between Tibet and the rest of China is also increasing.

On the celestial burial platform of the

famous Drikung Thil Monastery, a Tibetan asked Yang Tao whether the Han people considered sky burial cruel. Yang replied, "Of course not. That's the real eternal home." The Tibetan gave him a thumbs-up. On the way back, the Tibetan driver asked Yang what sounded good for dinner. He said anything would be fine, even just soup. "If you refuse to eat their food, they will think you don't respect them. That driver assured me that I really do respect their customs."

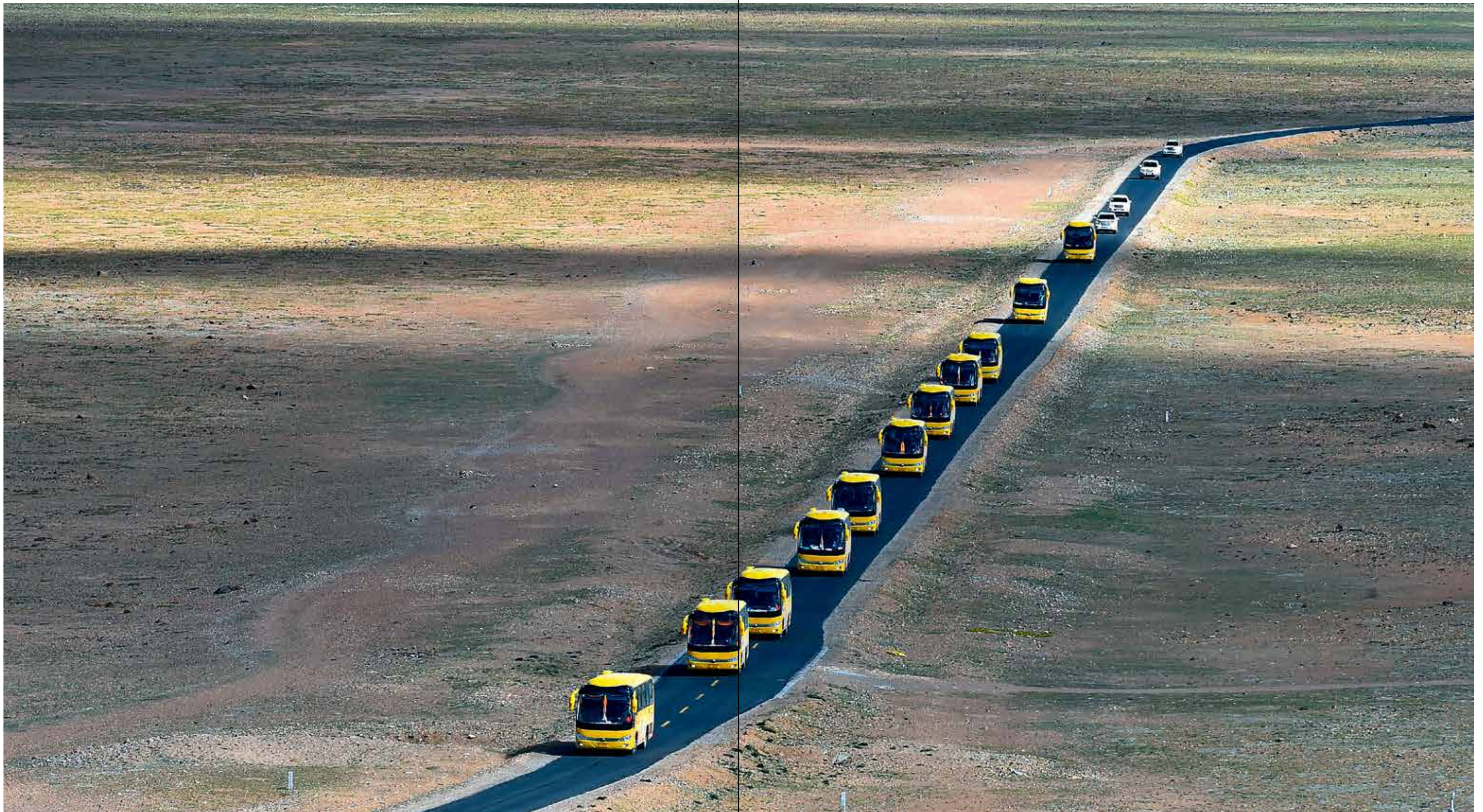
Because it is hard to grow vegetables in alpine areas, the traditional Tibetan diet usually consists of highland barley and meat. During a survey in Bainang County, Tibet's Xigaze City, Li Jian discovered that Shandong Province, a major producer of vegetables, had

been supporting Bainang since 1995. In addition to sending officials to aid Tibet, a group of Shandong farmers also ventured to Bainang to teach locals how to grow vegetables. Today, Bainang has become the largest plateau greenhouse vegetable base in Tibet, with annual sales exceeding 100 million yuan (US\$14.8 million). More and more Tibetans are beginning to embrace and eat vegetables.

Li stresses that Tibet's uniqueness means that the autonomous region cannot directly copy the development modes of other parts of the country to solve its problems. According to him, however, alongside aid projects, new ideas and experiences are flowing into Tibet, fueling new development concepts.



The 43 aid projects launched in Tibet in March 1984 were focused on public welfare including construction of power plants, schools, hospitals and cultural centers, of which the Lhasa Hotel, Tibetan People's Hall, Tibet Public Art Museum have become landmarks in Lhasa. The 1985 photo shows Tibetans greeting workers with an aid project launched by eastern Jiangsu Province on a construction site. by Cheng Xi/Xinhua



From June 10 to 18, 2018, residents in Rungma Township, Nyima County, Nagqu City moved 1,000 kilometers away to Lhasa for an ecological relocation program. Rungma Township was the first demonstration area for ecological relocation in high-altitude regions. This photo shows a caravan of vehicles taking the residents of Rungma Township to Lhasa on June 18, 2018. by Jogod

Vision of a Moderately Prosperous Tibet

A herder named Rigzin lived in a village in northern Tibet's Rungma Township, Nyima County, about 1,200 kilometers away from Lhasa. The village is within the core area of the Qiangtang National Nature Reserve at an average elevation of 5,000 meters. The scenery is beautiful, but the harsh conditions are not friendly to human residents. Many villagers suffered from rheumatism and heart diseases, and the average life expectancy was less than 60 years. Without the necessary conditions for developing public services, the township even had not a single vegetable shop. Because of its extremely fragile ecological environment, Rungma Township became the first pilot project for ecological relocation in Tibet.

On June 18, 2018, after voluntary relocation, Rigzin's family and 240 other households moved into a village in the suburb of Lhasa. The resettlement site was built with total investment of 226 million yuan (US\$33.8 million), and a modern agricultural and animal husbandry demonstration park under construction, which covers an area of more than 30 hectares, will offer adequate job opportunities.

In the late 1970s, Deng Xiaoping, chief architect of China's reform and opening

up, proposed a vision of building a "moderately prosperous society." The report to the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2020. As Chinese President Xi Jinping pointed out, building a moderately prosperous society in all respects should be based on the situation of specific areas. However, with a vast territory and different situation in different areas, productivity varies, so the goal for prosperity should be different at various levels.

Yang Tao argues that instead of indicators like GDP, three standards for "moderately prosperous" are more important in regions inhabited by ethnic minorities: improvement of people's living standards, environmental protection and poverty elimination.

Li Jian points out that as the only provincial-level region with contiguous poor areas and a vast area with extreme poverty, Tibet should not only raise



June 17, 2018: Rigzin (left) and his wife Karma Detso, together with other herders from Rungma Township, move to the suburbs of Lhasa. by Jogod



June 18, 2018: Local villagers in Gurum Township, Lhasa's Doilungdeqen District welcome the newly arrived migrants from Rungma Township. by Jogod



June 18, 2018: Rigzin (center), a former herder in Rungma Township, poses for a photo with his family in front of their new house. by Jogod

150,000 impoverished people out of poverty, but also ensure that infrastructure facilities like roads and other basic public services are available to all.

In addition to the large-scale support by the central government and local governments, the new direction for poverty alleviation in Tibet should be enhancing local impoverished people's abilities to create wealth. Tibet boasts very unique landscapes, which makes it an ideal place for tourism and special industries such as plateau farm products processing. Li once visited the industrial park for modern animal husbandry in Tibet's Cogen County. The introduction of modern production techniques has created many jobs and provided locals the opportunity to earn a stable

income and climb out of poverty.

Li stresses the innovative power of young people in the age of internet. "Tibetan millennials who received higher education have led the local farmers to become involved in emerging industries. By developing industries such as planting Tibetan medicinal plants and manufacturing tourism souvenirs, they help the poor earn more money." The South Asia channel has drawn Li's special attention recently. With the construction of the South Asia channel and the Belt and Road Initiative projects, Tibet will become the crux of cooperation instead of a landlocked remote area and gain location advantages that will produce more fuel for development.



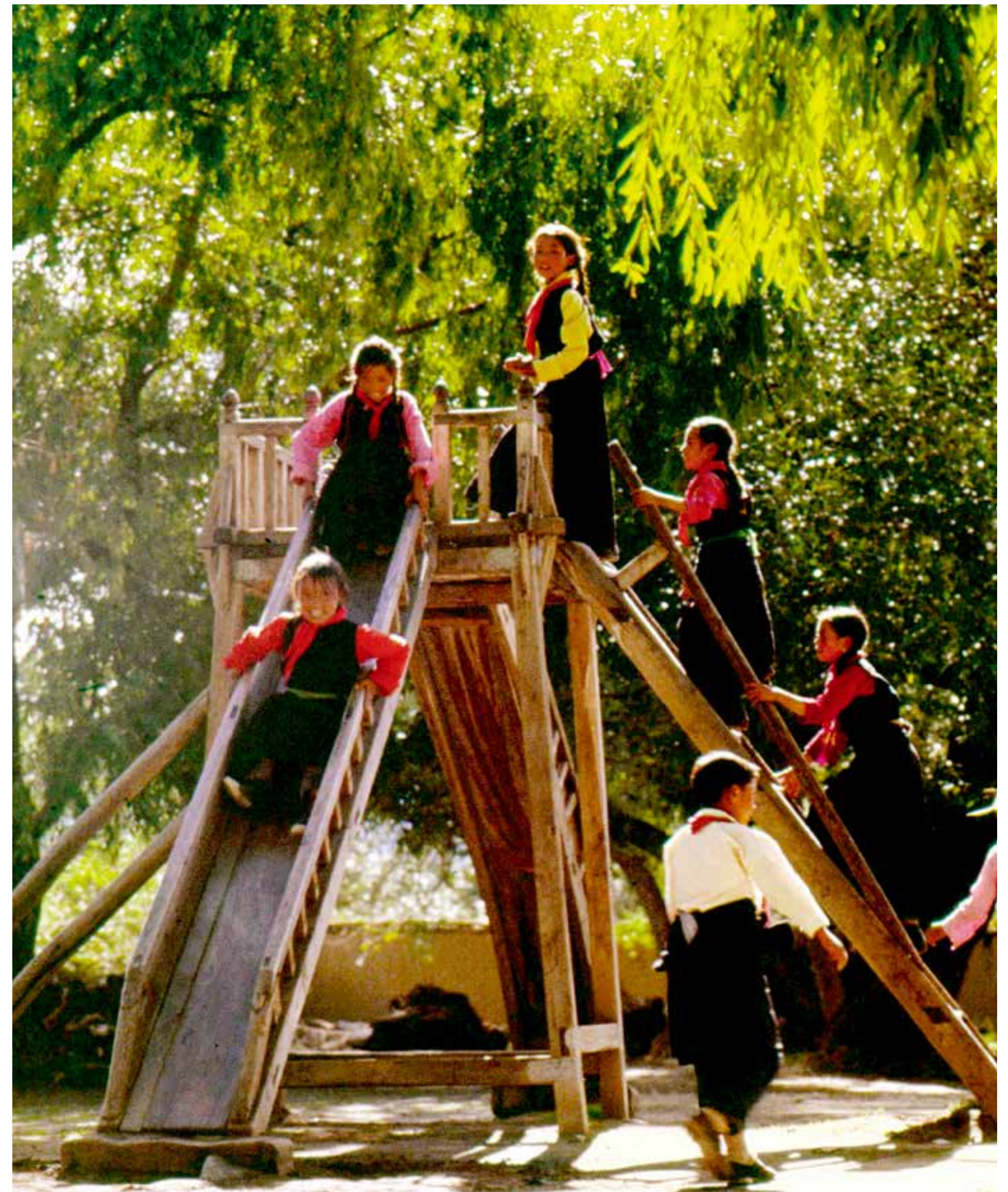
Dranang County has taken on a new look after the democratic reform of Tibet. Blackboard newspaper began to appear on the streets in its townships and villages in 1960. by He Shiyao/China Pictorial

Living Standards Leap: Education and Medical Services

Scholars at CTRC once conducted a family-based survey in Chamdo, eastern Tibet, to find out what parents expect their children to do for a living after they grow up. The survey, covering herders, farmers and urban residents, suggests

that the most sought-after professions are doctors and civil servants.

Li Jian and the other three scholars found that the development of modernity is altering local people's everyday lives through their own research in Tibet. Education is a crucial driver for developing a modern society in Tibet. Before the democratic reform of Tibet, the region lacked schools in the modern sense and less than two percent of school-age children had access to education. But now a sound educational system with Tibetan features and ethnic characteristics has taken shape, including pre-school, primary,



Education is a crucial driver of the development of modern society in Tibet. After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, Tibetan children and youngsters were granted greater access to education and more opportunities to pursue personal development. This photo shows students playing in the campus of a primary school in Lhasa in 1966. by Ru Suichu/China Pictorial



With maturing medical agencies and the establishment of a disease control and prevention system, Tibetan people have seen a remarkable rise in life expectancy from 35.5 years to 68 years as their health conditions have substantially improved. This photo shows members of a medical aid team from northeastern Liaoning Province making rounds with local doctors at Nagqu People's Hospital on March 15, 2018. Xinhua



May 24, 2018: Students in Lhasa perform scientific experiments at a touring science and technology exhibition. According to the 2019 government work report of Tibet Autonomous Region, the gross enrollment rate of kindergartens stands at 77.9 percent, the graduation rate of compulsory education at 93.9 percent, the gross enrollment rate of high schools at 82.3 percent. by Liu Dongjun/Xinhua

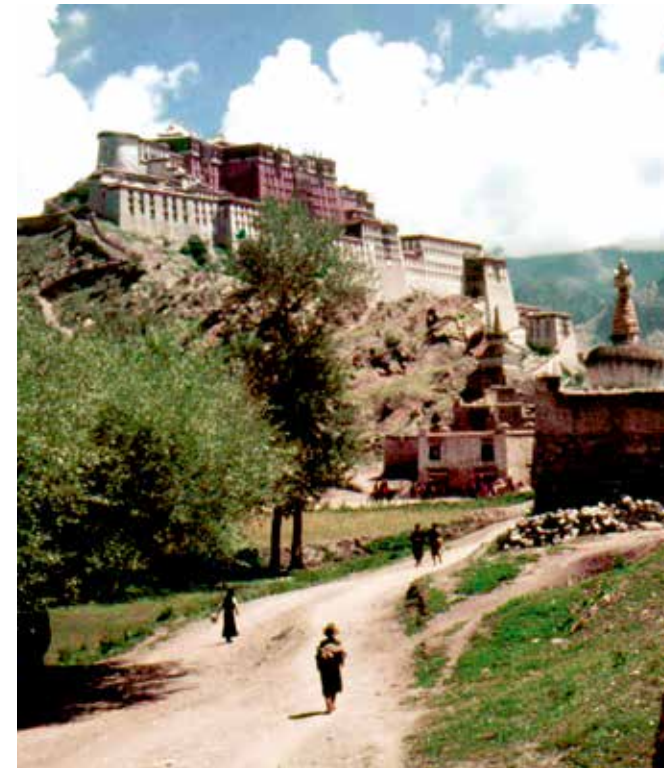


September 18, 2018: Students play basketball in a primary school in Gegyai County, Ngari, Tibet. Tibetan students now enjoy diverse physical education classes and extracurricular sports activities. by Liu Dongjun/Xinhua

middle and high schools as well as vocational, adult training and higher education. Many Tibetan scholars such as Tsering Yangdzom and Wande Khar have become leading figures in the areas of their studies. Young Tibetans now have greater access to education and more opportunities to pursue personal development.

After the launch of China's reform and opening up in the late 1970s, increasing numbers of farmers and herders began swarming into cities in search of jobs and business opportunities. The information and skills they acquired in the process returned to make a positive impact on the social development of Tibet. In Li Jian's eyes, Tibetan society has benefited substantially from educational development and changing population structure especially since 2000. "The number of farmers and herders with fundamental education has risen dramatically in Tibet. Equipped with basic scientific and cultural knowledge, they are more productive than the previous generations, and also more socially inclusive."

Looking back on her childhood in Lhasa, Tsering Yangdzom says, "Back then the only hospitals we could visit were the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Hospital and Lhasa People's Hospital. But now there are dozens in Lhasa." Before the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951, just three poorly equipped



The photo on the left, taken by He Shiyao of *China Pictorial* in 1955, shows pedestrians on a dirt road in front of the Potala Palace. The right, taken by Zhu Xingxin in 2019, shows a tourist taking a selfie near the palace. As one of the grandest architectural masterpieces in Tibet, the Potala Palace has witnessed tremendous transformation of the region across the past six decades.

official medical institutions were available alongside a few private clinics. The ratio of medical staff to the total population in Tibet was a paltry 0.4 for every 1,000 people. Because of chills and lack of oxygen in the high-altitude region, even a cold or dysentery could be deadly, and an outbreak of smallpox or typhoid fever could easily kill thousands.

In the early 1950s, the Chinese People's Liberation Army began to offer medical services to Tibetans as they trekked through the region. When the 21st century arrived, a healthcare system featuring free medical services covered all counties and more than 96 percent rural townships in Tibet. With maturing medical agencies and the establishment of a disease control and prevention system, Tibetans have seen great progress in health conditions and a remarkable rise in life expectancy from 35.5 years to 68 years. "Green medical passages" have been built in many herding areas, such as Damxung County in central Tibet, which Yangdzom visited with Yang Tao in 2011. "Patients who need more

treatment are transferred to larger hospitals in cities or even Lhasa. Regular checks are performed on clinics in rural areas to ensure expired drugs are pulled off the shelves," said Yangdzom.

Partly because of the local religious culture, many Tibetans formerly resisted both Western and traditional Chinese medicine. Instead, they looked to deities for recovery or only trusted Tibetan medicine. Yangdzom and Khar both noted that educational and medical development, which Tibetans value more since the democratic reform, has introduced the benefits of modern civilization. "After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, doctors from other parts of China helped locals tackle their health problems. Tibetans eventually accept that they should see a doctor when they get sick. In the past, a cold or dysentery could be deadly for some Tibetans, but after they tried granules or berberine for colds, they realized that medicines can cure and that such diseases didn't mean a death sentence."



The photo taken on January 15, 2017 shows black-necked cranes in the Karze reservoir in Lunzhub County, Lhasa City. Tibet has become the world's largest winter habitat for black-necked cranes, attracting more than 80 percent of the world's total. by Liu Dongjun/Xinhua

Saving Mountains and Rivers

“Where else in the world has 40 percent of the land been set aside in nature preserves in twenty years? How hard is it to reverse a steady decline in number of endangered species? The industrious Tibetans achieved it,” wrote former U.S. President Jimmy Carter in the preface of the book *Across the Tibetan Plateau: Ecosystems, Wildlife, and Conservation*.

In Yangdzom and Khar’s memories, Tibet once embraced a great leap in industrial construction. During the “cultural revolution” period (1966-1976), dozens of non-ferrous metals, rare metals and non-metallic ore were found in the region, but massive exploitation was eventually terminated, mostly due to ecological protection concerns.

Tibet has tremendous ecological significance. It is the source of rivers flowing through China, South Asia and Southeast Asia and the climate regulator for China and even the eastern hemisphere of the planet. An important gene tank for protecting Earth’s biological diversity, it is home to over 9,600 types of wild plants, 798 types of vertebrates and nearly 4,000 types of insects.



Li Jian, a scholar from China Tibetology Research Center, during a trip to Ngari, Tibet to research cultural heritage protection in September 2013. During the research trip, he stayed in a tent for one night at a herders’ camp, with an altitude of 4,600 meters, located at the foot of Mount Kailash in Burang County. courtesy of Li Jian

However, the ecological environment is extremely fragile on the plateau. It takes as long as several years in certain areas of Tibet to grow grass that can be restored within a single year in areas with lower altitudes. The dilemma of balancing economic development and environmental protection was identified by European countries and the United States during the early period of industrialization and in eastern China in the 1980s and 1990s. Tibetans realized the importance of coordinating economic growth and natural resources and environment as early as the 1970s.

Benefiting from the proliferation of green development policies, Tibet has kept most of the region untouched, with 47 natural preserves at all levels that cover Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon, Mount Qomolangma, Lake Manasarovar and more world-known tourist attractions.

Along with environmental protection have come economic gains. Emerging industries such as ecological tourism are thriving in Tibet thanks to its strength in natural resources. In 2018, 33.68 million tourist visits to Tibet generated revenues of 49 billion yuan (US\$7.3 billion), which accounted for about 34 percent of its GDP. “Tibet is better integrated into the entire Chinese market, and the country’s demand for improved living standards and ecological products have injected strong momentum into Tibet’s economic development,” Yang Tao noted.

Concepts of environmental protection from the West were introduced to China in the 1980s, and have integrated with and been restructured by traditional values about nature in the country. In the eyes of Tibetans, there is a worldly space in nature behind the deified concepts that can be utilized for survival. Modern concepts of environmental protection mingle with local values about nature through communication between locals and outsiders as well as within local communities. Traditionally, farmers and herders in Tibet chop wood for household use, but those living in Lulang Town, Nyingchi City have spontaneously taken the role of forest rangers. During a research tour to Lulang in June 2018, Yang noted that local awareness of ecological protection has grown with the tourism boom. “They are earning more money because of thriving




This August 2017 photo shows Tibetan macaques walking near a group of people in Gongbo Gyamda County, Tibet. In recent years, the population of Tibetan macaques has been rising thanks to local measures to protect the ecological environment and strengthen public awareness of environmental conservation. by Zhang Rufeng/Xinhua



December 3, 2017: A snow leopard is filmed by infrared cameras in the valley of the Nujiang River in Chamdo, Tibet. Xinhua

tourism. To keep their hometown attractive to tourists, they actively fight behaviors that could harm the forest. Protecting woods has even been added to the local code of conduct.”

The Dagze Industrial Park, located in eastern Lhasa, is home to more than 1,200 companies that involve production of Tibetan food, handicrafts with ethnic characteristics, refined processing of agricultural and animal products and new energy. In 2017, its industrial output hit 1.28 billion yuan (US\$191 million). The industrial park has implemented low-carbon and recycling transformation in recent years to promote clean production technologies, raise energy efficiency, reduce resource consumption and strengthen waste recycling. In Yang’s view, “green economic engines” as such are critical for balancing economic development and ecological protection in Tibet. 

Pictures from the Heart

Text by Yi Mei Photographs by Jiang Zhenqing

"I was moved more by the humanity of the region and its people than by their devotion."

Jiang Zhenqing, winner of the Golden Statue Award for China Photography, the top award of its kind in China, is known for his work in Tibet. He first ventured there in 1987 and was enchanted by its breathtaking scenery and devout people. To record what he saw, Jiang picked up a camera. More than three decades have passed, and Tibet is preserved not only on his film but in his heart.

"The first place I visited in Tibet was Ngari," reveals Jiang. "It was October and already really cold in Tibet. Despite altitude stress and harsh conditions—I had to stay overnight in a collapsing monastery in the extreme cold—I was amazed by Tibet's snowy mountains, rivers, prayer stones, monasteries and worshipers. I could not help but take pictures."

Since then, Jiang has returned to Tibet nearly 30 times. At first, he looked for different or novel scenes on the plateau, and his photos captured the mysterious and artistic aspects of the land and locals. After becoming more acquainted with some Tibetan people and eating and sleeping with them, his views about the region and people changed.

"We are not so different," he asserts. "We just live in different places and practice slightly different religion and customs, but we share the same emotions and feelings such as aspirations for a better life and love for



In this picture, Jiang Zhenqing combines a Mandala painting from the Sakya Monastery with Tibetan worshipers he photographed.

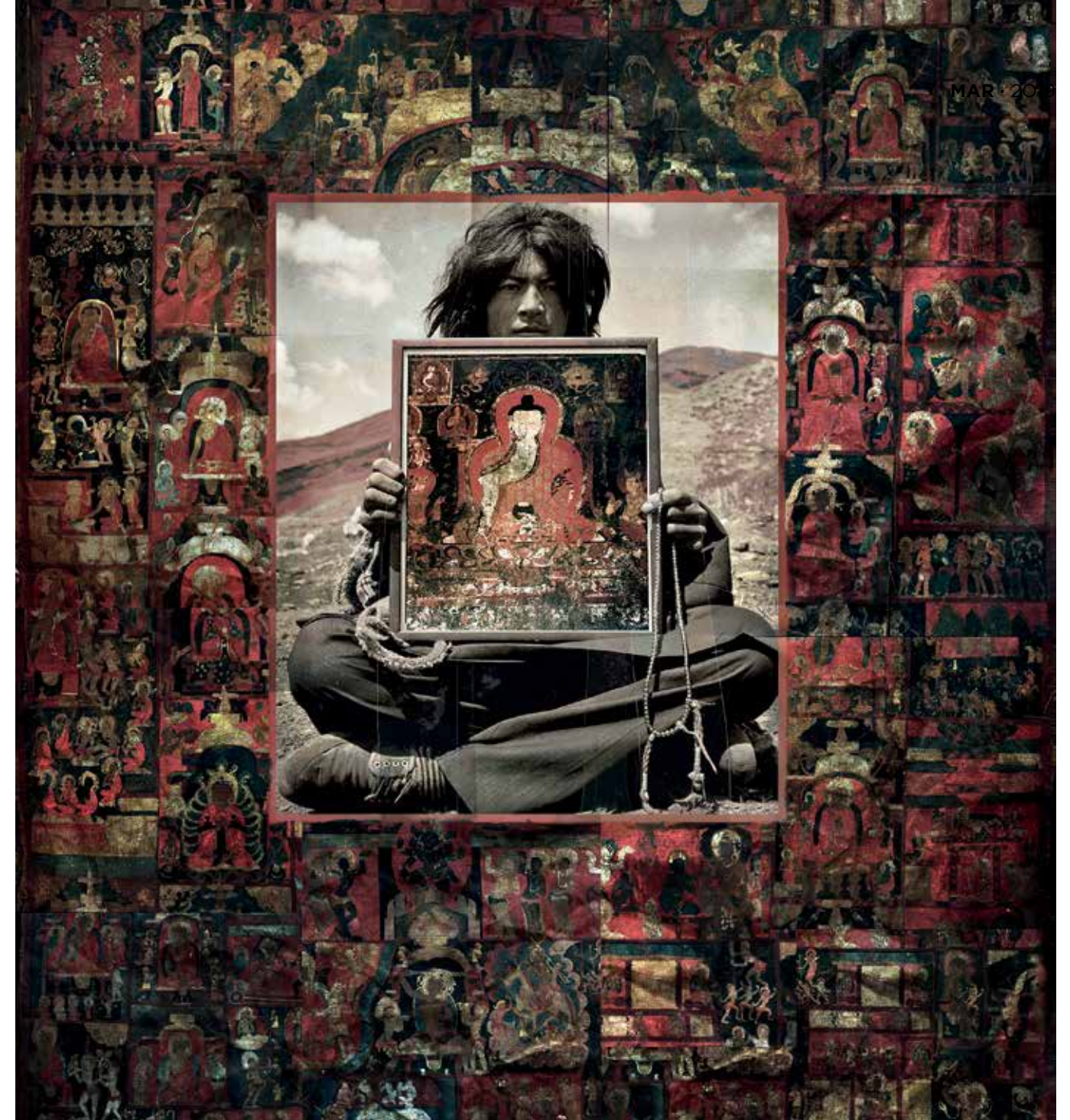
families. Tibetan people also have a secular life.” Gradually, Jiang moved on from shooting things that were “different” and started using his camera to record genuine Tibetan people and their lives. “I was moved more by the humanity of the region and its people than by their devotion.”

Considering his outstanding performance, the Tibet Federation of Literary and Art Circles entrusted Jiang to shoot wall paintings in ancient monasteries, Mani stone

carvings and folk arts as part of a drive to better protect them through the creation of digital materials. Consequently, Jiang has visited almost all the ancient monasteries in Tibet and has photographed frescos and thangkas dating back to the Yuan (1271-1368), Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties painted by Nepalese and Chinese (both Tibetan and Han) artists. “Enduring altitude stress, I climbed up and down ladders and worked in old dim and



One part of a wall painting from the Tashilhunpo Monastery depicts a peaceful Buddhist land with people talking about Buddhist doctrine, crossing a river and doing business. The background is snowy mountains in Tibet. Photographer Jiang Zhengqing puts them together in the picture.




The picture's background is part of a thangka dating back to the 12th century from the Riwoche Monastery in Tibet's Qamdo Prefecture. The young Tibetan is holding a photograph of a Buddha statue on Gyantse Dzong Mountain.

chilly monasteries,” recalls Jiang. “Those exquisite paintings have weathered several hundred years, and some are decaying, so documenting them was an urgent task. I was happy to contribute what I could.”

Above and beyond shooting relics, Jiang has endeavored to display them to the public. In recent years, he introduced the idea of “conceptual photography” using photographs he has shot in Tibet over last three decades to create three-dimensional effects with the help

of digital technology.

“Often, I pair portraits of Tibetan people with a fresco or thangka to offer a glimpse into natives’ spiritual life and the peaceful Buddhist world,” explains Jiang. “I hope my work draws more attention to the protection of Tibet’s traditional cultures of both great artistic and religious value.” Attention is just what Jiang’s efforts produce: His acclaimed prints have been purchased by many collectors from both home and abroad. 

Paleontologist Xu Xing China's Dinosaur King

Text by Hu Zhoumeng Photographs courtesy of Xu Xing unless otherwise credited

After winning a series of “coin tosses” that determined his fate, Chinese paleontologist Xu Xing is working in full force to unveil the mysteries of dinosaurs.



Xu Xing digs out fossil fragments from the ground deep in a desert in northwestern China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region during a field survey in August 2005. Xu and his team discovered important fossils of *Limusaurus inextricabilis* and *Haplocheirus* during the field survey.

Xu Xing is a well-known name in paleontology. A 2012 article published in the British science magazine *Nature* stated: “As he revolutionizes ideas about dinosaur evolution, Xu Xing is helping to make China into a paleontological powerhouse. Xu has named 60 species so far—more than any other vertebrate paleontologist alive today.”

Xu ended up devoted to paleontology by accident. Born in Ili in northwestern China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in 1969, Xu dreamed of becoming a physicist when he was young. At the age of 18, he enrolled in Peking University. With only a few options back then, he was assigned to the department of paleontology. After graduation, he joined the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). While in school, Xu attempted to transfer to the economics department and learned computer sciences himself for a while. Not until the third year of his postgraduate program did Xu begin to experience

close contact with dinosaur fossils, which sowed seeds of interest in paleontology that gradually bloomed in his heart.

Xu likens his relationship with paleontology to a couple who “married first and fell in love later.” “After I really dove into paleontological research, I realized how interesting it is to examine fossils and write papers,” he explains. For more than two decades now, his work has focused on the research of dinosaurs dating back tens of millions of years.

Searching No-Man's Land

Xu prefers working outdoors over spending all day in the office or laboratory. Fortunately, researching dinosaurs requires both lab work and fieldwork—Not only do paleontologists observe fossils under a microscope, analyze data with a computer and write papers in the office, but they also collect fossils in the wild.

Since the late 1990s, Xu and his crew have conducted field surveys almost every year, leaving footprints in provinces and autonomous regions including Xinjiang,

Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Inner Mongolia, Hebei, Shandong, Yunnan and Hunan. The places they visit are usually located in deserted areas. A field survey can last as long as 70 days, and even the shortest takes a few weeks. The size of a survey team ranges from a dozen up to more than 30 members. The area of an excavation site varies from dozens of square meters to tens of square kilometers. During expeditions, Xu and his crew often live in tents for months. Sometimes their camp is set up hundreds of kilometers from the nearest water source, and the crew must transport supplies every week. Xu remembers once trekking through the wilderness for more than 20 days, after which his socks could “stand” on their own due to being soaked in sweat and dirt for so long.

Under the scorching sun, crew members often walk 20 to 30 kilometers to search for fossils in deserts. They face various dangers in the wild including car accidents and insect bites. Once, the brake hose of the vehicle carrying Xu and two foreign scientists broke after running downhill for half an hour



August 2011: Members of a China-U.S. joint survey team pose for a photo at their base camp in a desert in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Professor James M. Clark (7th left, back row) from George Washington University has been a research partner of Xu Xing (5th right, back row) for many years. Since 2000, they have conducted scientific expeditions in regions like Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia almost every year.



A fossil of *Limusaurus inextricabilis*, discovered by Xu Xing and his team in Junggar Basin, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, in August 2005. Four years later, they named the dinosaur genus *Limusaurus inextricabilis* in a paper they published in the Britain-based scientific magazine *Nature*.

A rendering of *Limusaurus inextricabilis* by Portia Sloan. About 1.7 meters in length, this genus of dinosaur lived in the Jurassic Period 160 million years ago. Like birds, it lacked teeth and featured a beak, short forelimbs and thin, long hind limbs.



Fossils of the claw of *Limusaurus inextricabilis*. Through comparative research of dinosaur fossils and modern avian embryos, Xu Xing and his team concluded that the innermost “thumb” and the outermost “little finger” of dinosaurs were gradually lost as they evolved into birds.



on a mountainside in Junggar Basin, Xinjiang. “We were lucky because our car had already reached the foot of the mountain at that moment,” Xu recalls. “It would have been disastrous if the brake went out 30 minutes earlier when we had just started down the long slope.”

For paleontological researchers like Xu, harsh working environments remain bearable, but the greater challenge is overcoming trips in which they come up empty. Although scientists can choose the sites for fieldwork based on geological conditions, existing research and their experience, the process of excavating fossils in the wild remains full of uncertainty. Xu reveals that at least a third

of their field surveys ended up with no discovery of any fossils with research value.

But Xu is lucky because his team has often discovered valuable fossils and specimens in places where others previously found nothing. For instance, Xu and his crew discovered fossils of four never-before-seen dinosaur species in Inner Mongolia’s Erenhot, where several foreign survey teams had previously worked. Of the findings, *Gigantoraptor* was listed as one of the Top 10 Scientific Discoveries of 2007 by *Time* magazine.

“Some findings happen by chance,” Xu admits. “But these chances would never emerge if we didn’t insist on fieldwork.”

The smallest dinosaur fossil Xu ever discovered was a small tooth almost invisible to the naked eye. In microfossil excavation sites, crew members often must lie on the ground with their heads and eyes almost touching dirt and rocks. One of the biggest fossils Xu excavated was from a sauropod dinosaur. The rock wrapping the fossil weighed six to seven tons. “The fossil wasn’t a complete skeleton,” Xu explains. “If it was complete, the dinosaur’s neck would stretch to nearly 15 meters.”

When he was young, Xu spent three to four months a year doing fieldwork. The delight of discovering dinosaur fossils came at the cost of devastation to his health. Lengthy work in the wilderness

resulted in his knee problem and gastroenterological disorders. Once, while carrying a 50-kilogram pack of plaster, Xu seriously injured his waist—an injury which continues to plague him to this day. Even so, the 50-year-old paleontologist still cannot resist the allure of nature and conducts field surveys every year. Xu believes that the only way to find answers to the questions still haunting him is to personally investigate the places where dinosaurs lived.

Modern Living Dinosaurs

Excavating and finding fossils is merely the first step of paleontological research. “When you have rice, how do you cook it?” Xu asks hypothetically. “Interpreting

information and data depends on a scientist’s skills.” For Xu, scientific research is like playing a game involving finding interesting questions and then solving them. The “game” to which Xu has devoted the most energy is researching the origin of birds.

As early as 1868, British naturalist Thomas Henry Huxley concluded that birds evolved from dinosaurs, a theory now widely accepted. However, in 1995 when Xu began his career as a paleontological researcher, the theory remained a hypothesis clouded in doubt. For instance, the archaeopteryx is believed to have lived in the late Jurassic Period 150 million years ago, but fossils of bird-like

dinosaurs can only be dated to the Cretaceous Period that started 145 million years ago. Many believed that the hands of bird-like dinosaurs had three fingers, with the outer two fingers were lost during the course of evolution. Modern theory on avian embryo development suggests that birds have three digits (like fingers) in their wings, with the innermost “thumb” and the outermost “little finger” lost during the process of evolution.

“The best way to dispel doubt is to find more evidence and make more analyses,” Xu grins. After years of field surveys, his team discovered not only many fossils of Jurassic bird-like dinosaurs that lived earlier than the archaeopteryx,

but also some fossils of *Limusaurus inextricabilis*, an herbivorous theropod dinosaur. Research of the fossils of this theropod indicated that bird-like dinosaurs didn't lose their two outer fingers but the thumb and little finger. The three fingers in the middle remained—just like today's birds.

In past decades, Xu has been endeavoring to shed more light on the relationship between birds and dinosaurs. With more and more valuable fossils discovered around China, a basic theoretical framework that birds evolved from dinosaurs has been gradually established.

In 2000, Xu and other researchers including CAS Academician Zhou Zhonghe discovered some fossils of *Microraptor* in western Liaoning. The feet, toes and claws of *Microraptor* were similar to those of some tree-perching birds. Through years of research, Xu concluded that *Microraptor* had an asymmetric plumage structure, just like birds with strong flying ability. Moreover, the dinosaur had not only its forelimbs and tail covered with feathers, but also hind limbs. That means it has four wings. Fossils unearthed in Liaoning, Hebei and Inner Mongolia in the subsequent decade showed that many other dinosaurs and even some of the earliest birds featured four wings.

"In the very beginning, dinosaurs lived on the ground, and later some began to perch on trees and evolved into species with all four limbs as wings. As their forewings became stronger and stronger, their hindwings gradually disappeared. Eventually, they evolved into birds," Xu explains. "In this sense, dinosaurs never really went extinct."

Flowing Knowledge

"The lack of information exchange is the biggest obstacle



Xu Xing stands amidst replicas of dinosaur fossils at the Paleozoological Museum of China. Founded by the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, the museum houses fossils of various prehistoric vertebrates including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, as well as Paleolithic specimens and replicas. by Chen Jian

impeding scientific research," Xu asserts. "Back in the 1960s and 1970s, China lagged in terms of paleontological research capacity and methods. After the country's implementation of reform and opening-up policy, the rise of the internet opened a new window for Chinese researchers, making it much easier to share foreign research methods and achievements. As a result, paleontological research merged into a 'fast lane' in China."

In the mid-1990s, Xu installed a

dial-up modem to the computer in his office at his own expense so he could email foreign colleagues to ask for references, consult on scientific concepts and methods and ask for feedback on his papers. James M. Clark, a professor of paleontology at George Washington University, was one of the earliest foreign scholars to write back to Xu.

"At the time, my tutor Zhao Xijin and I were researching fossils of *Oshanosaurus*, a genus of *Therizinosaurus*," Xu recalls. "Back

then, it was commonly recognized that *Therizinosaurus* lived in the Cretaceous Period, but our fossils indicated that the species could be traced back to the Jurassic Period. Professor Clark inspired me by mentioning that the finding could be used to research the origin of birds. Although the fossils do not provide irrefutable evidence, they still indicate that bird-like dinosaurs might have existed in the Jurassic Period."

Xu's paper documenting this finding was published in *Journal of*



July 2017: Xu Xing lectures on dinosaurs at Zhejiang Museum of Natural History in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang Province.

Vertebrate Paleontology and *Nature* as a major breakthrough of his early-stage research. Later, Xu and Clark became close partners. Since 2000, they have conducted scientific expeditions in regions like Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia almost every year.


"Dr. Xu has a wonderful combination of relentless drive for dinosaur fossils and a deep knowledge of their anatomy," Professor Clark once remarked. "What has impressed me most, though, is how good he is at working with people."

"Biological evolution is a hot topic worldwide," Xu says. "Paleontology is a science that has little practicality. However, you are more likely to find answers to the unknown world if you forgo practicality in research."

Over these years, Xu has attended academic conferences in many countries such as the United States, Britain and Argentina and published nearly 250 papers in Chinese and English. "A basic characteristic of scientific research is to publish papers openly for counterparts to comment."

In Xu's opinion, knowledge should not be confined to academic

circles, but spread throughout the public. He took an active role in the establishment of natural history museums such as the Erlian Basin Cretaceous Dinosaur National Geopark in Inner Mongolia, the Zhucheng Cretaceous Dinosaur National Geopark in Shandong and the Changji Dinosaur Museum in Xinjiang. Moreover, he has participated in popular science programs on television and radio and authored mainstream articles and essays on popular science. His *Dinosaurs Flying to the Blue Sky* has become standard curriculum for Chinese primary-school students. Xu is particularly fond of disseminating knowledge about dinosaurs to children, in hopes of inspiring them to explore the secrets of nature. Visitors to his office at the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology will witness several handwritten letters taped to his filing cabinet with greetings and questions from children.

"Scientists like to ask questions, as do children," Xu smiles. "Children's potential is infinite, and their abilities could be beyond our imagination." 

A New Year for Retirement Communities

Text by Li Zhuoxi Photographs by Guo Shasha

As the “senior wave” hits China, the traditional pension mode is also subtly changing.

Data from China’s National Bureau of Statistics shows that in 2017, a total of 241 million people living in China were aged 60 and older, accounting for 17.3 percent of the country’s total population. As the world’s first country with over 100 million senior citizens, China is facing a severe aging problem.

As the “senior wave” hits China, the traditional pension mode is also subtly changing. Ahead of the 2019 Spring Festival, Taikang Yanyuan, a high-end retirement community in Changping District of Beijing, was engulfed by a festive atmosphere. This year, more elderly people were staying here to observe the festival.

Retirement Begins with Learning

Chen Yiyuan, who is 84 years old, and his 85-year-old wife Sun Liufang

were among the first residents of the retirement community. With the support of their children, the couple moved here in July 2015. A senior university has been organized in the community. Courses vary from Sudoku, cloth art, painting, music and calligraphy to teaching residents to use WeChat, mobile banking and online shopping. Teachers are all residents in the retirement community. Every day, the couple checks the schedule for classes they are interested in. Chen himself also became a teacher to share his professional expertise by offering aerospace lessons to residents.

Asked how they planned to spend the Spring Festival, Sun said, “We have decided to stay here for the Spring Festival. Our children and grandchildren will come to meet us for a reunion dinner. Our schedules are full, and we don’t want to



Two elderly people chat in the garden of the Taikang Yanyuan retirement community. Over 80 percent of the seniors in this community have chosen to stay back for the Spring Festival in 2019.



Meng Fanmin's embroidery works and her husband Liu Baokai's gourd pyrography works. The large oil painting on the wall behind them was also created by Liu. The couple are enthusiastic about art and their home is decorated with their works. The retirement community has held exhibitions for them.

miss out on the activities and classes offered by the community."

New Concept of Senior Care

Meng Fanmin, 76, has been living in the retirement community for more than three years. "Our generation has many deep-rooted prejudices about retirement," she admitted. "Most still believe that only those without children end up in nursing homes. They have little knowledge about retirement communities, imagining poor conditions and insufficient labor. They have no clue about the rapid development of domestic elderly

care in China."

"The community is our new home, where we will spend the Spring Festival," Meng said, adding that during the festival, they would enjoy the company of both their children and friends in the community. With the arrival of the Laba Festival (the 8th day of the 12th month in the Chinese lunar calendar), a festive atmosphere erupted as celebration activities were organized every day in the community, making it a place even livelier than their own homes.

Injecting Life into Time

Zhang Jiaqing, now in his 90s, is as vigorous as ever. Within several days prior to the Spring Festival, he welcomed relatives, friends and students in waves. Despite the flow of visitors, his daily routine would not be broken: Twice a day, he drives an electric cart nicknamed "little BMW" from the living quarters to the nursing area to see his wife Li Huan.

Zhang and Li are typical Chinese empty nesters. Their son and daughter moved abroad. A few years ago, Li was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. As her condition worsened, Zhang became unable to take care of




Zhang Jiaqing and the daughter of his friend who came to visit him. Zhang usually meets friends and relatives in his room in the retirement community during the Spring Festival.



A variety of entertaining games are organized in the retirement community to celebrate the Spring Festival. The picture shows Chen Yiyuan shooting balloons.

her himself, so she moved into the medical center for treatment. One year and a half ago, after negotiating with their children, Zhang decided to move into the retirement community with his wife.

"The Spring Festival is around the corner," he proclaimed. "Another year passed in the blink of an eye. Staying alive is no longer enough—we want to live with dignity." Zhang is satisfied with his wife's current situation. Senior care, in a simple sense, is "giving them time to live." Today, the elderly seek a higher spiritual pursuit of "injecting life into time," according to Zhang. 

Mountain Heroes

Text by Ru Yuan Photographs by Cheng Xueli

Through reform, a more professional Chinese fire and rescue team with greater capabilities to save victims from fires and many other disasters as well as provide incident stabilization in forest fires, floods and hazardous material releases will emerge.

The No. 1 squadron of Chengdu forest fire services division patrols Qingcheng Mountain early one morning. One of the most important Taoist centers in China, the mountain is a key area for fire prevention.

On the first day of 2019, 31-year-old Tang Tianjun and his teammates from the No. 1 squadron of the Chengdu forest fire services division buttoned up their uniforms and headed to Qingcheng Mountain to perform rounds. About 70 kilometers from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, lies Qingcheng Mountain, a UNESCO World Heritage site known as one of the birthplaces of Taoism and a key area for fire prevention.

This year marks the 14th year that Tang's squadron has carried out fire prevention duties in the forested areas of Qingcheng Mountain. The team is also responsible for protecting nearby areas including the Dujiangyan scenic spot, known for its time-honored irrigation and flood control project constructed around 256 B.C. that is still in use today.

A typical day for firefighters on Qingcheng Mountain starts quite early. A morning briefing on the overall fire strategy for the region is held before firefighters head off to different areas to patrol. After the briefing, personnel are dispatched to their respective areas, fully outfitted with firefighting equipment. Qingcheng Mountain is home to more than 30 peaks, with the tallest, Laojunge, being nearly 1,300 meters high. It makes patrolling no easy task. During holidays, especially major Chinese festivals when tons of people stream into the Taoist temples on the mountainside to burn incenses and pray for good luck, work becomes even heavier.

Another part of fire prevention work on Qingcheng Mountain involves the popularization of fire prevention knowledge among both employees of the scenic spot and Taoist priests. "You wouldn't believe that many Taoist priests are actually quick learners on how to use fire



A firefighter teaches Taoist priests to use fire extinguishers. Qingcheng Mountain is home to abundant Taoist temples, which makes the popularization of fire prevention knowledge among Taoist priests very important.



1. Firefighters pose for a group photo. In late 2018, they switched from their former olive-green uniforms to new blue ones.
2. An old lady gives fruit as a gift to a firefighter for helping her up to the mountaintop.
3. Firefighters on duty at Qingcheng Mountain immediately enter first-level operational readiness for rescue efforts after a 5.3-magnitude quake hit Gongxian County of Yibin City, Sichuan Province on January 3, 2019.
4. Fully equipped firefighters on patrol.
5. Helping tourists is another part of firefighters' work at Qingcheng Mountain.

extinguishers,” grinned Tang. “And they are obviously good students when it comes to protecting their temples from fires.” Tang and his teammates frequently share information about fires, safety and how to respond to emergency situations. They disseminate fire prevention knowledge to every group in the community.

After fighting fires for more than 10 years, this year is a bit different for Tang and his teammates. On December 26, 2018, they switched out their former olive-green uniforms for new blue ones. More importantly, alongside fire prevention and firefighting, their workload now includes more rescue efforts.

The change came as a result of China’s ongoing reform of its firefighting system. In March 2018,

a plan on institutional restructuring of China’s State Council resulted in the establishment of the Ministry of Emergency Management. Incorporating functions of many former ministerial-level agencies, the new ministry is responsible for compiling and implementing emergency management plans as well as organizing rescue and relief for disasters and workplace accidents. It also oversees comprehensive management of the fire and rescue service. China’s firefighters, who previously were part of the military, became fire and rescue teams under the new ministry.

For Tang and his colleagues, the change required them to receive further training and become more professional. Now the team not only rescue victims from fires, but also

from many other hazardous conditions such as automobile crashes and collapsed structures. They need to provide incident stabilization for forest fires, floods and hazardous material releases, just to name a few, and work quickly to reduce dangers and minimize damage.

To prepare for the new situation, Tang and his teammates now receive daily systematic and rigorous training. They learn and practice skills after their daytime duties. While professionalization of firefighting has long been standard in the United States and some European countries, China started late. “We need to work fast to catch up with them,” asserted Tang. “We will try our best to save lives as well as minimize damage to property and the environment.” 

The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 marked the dawn of a new era for the Chinese nation.

Over the course of the seven decades since, generation after generation of Chinese people have recorded the progress and changes in the country with their cameras. For the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, let's pass through the light and shadows to take a look at landmark events during the past 70 years with photographs to refresh our memories of the nation.

1949 ►► 1959

Laying the Foundation for a New China

Concept by China Pictorial

Edited by Li Zhuoxi Photographs courtesy of CFB unless otherwise credited

Just after the People's Republic of China was founded, Chairman Mao Zedong lamented the country's poor manufacturing industry. "What can we make now?" he asked. "We can produce tables, chairs, teapots and tea cups. We can also grow grains, grind wheat, and make paper. But we cannot produce a single automobile, plane, tank or truck." His words reflected China's poverty and weakness at that time, and the urgent need to lay a solid foundation for economic development.

After a decade of recovery from 1949 to 1959, a stable situation gradually emerged in New China. During the First Five-Year Plan period (1953-1957), Chinese people built their first truck, first transistor, first large-size machine tool and first jet plane. China also creatively completed the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce. The establishment of a basic socialist system marked the most profound and significant social change in Chinese history and laid the foundation for future development and progress.



MAR · 2019

1949

On October 1, 1949, a ceremony celebrating the establishment of the central government of the People's Republic of China was held at Tian'anmen Square in Beijing.

The founding of the People's Republic of China is the greatest milestone in Chinese history and one of the world's greatest events of the 20th century. It ended a history of a few exploiters ruling the working-class people and imperialists enslaving all ethnic groups of China. Since then, Chinese people have become masters of their own country, and the Chinese nation has turned the page on a new chapter in history.

1950

After land reform, poverty-stricken farmer Gao Caiguan in Changqiao Village, Gaozhao Township of Jiaxing County, Zhejiang Province, was allocated 0.2 hectares of land as his own as well as a water buffalo to share with three other families. He put his boy on the back of the buffalo for the trip home.

Before 1949, China maintained a feudal land system that severely hindered development of the rural economy and Chinese society. On June 30, 1950, China promulgated *Agrarian Reform Law of the People's Republic of China*, announcing the abolition of feudal land ownership and the implementation of farmer land ownership. By the end of 1952, the land reform was completed in most parts of the country. About 300 million farmers, who previously had little or no land, were allocated nearly 47 million hectares of land and other productive resources.



1951

In January 1951, troops of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army joined forces with guerrilla troops of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) active behind enemy lines, south of the Chongchon River in the DPRK.

On June 25, 1950, the Korean Civil War broke out. On June 27, the U.S. government launched a full-scale war against the DPRK. In spite of repeated warnings from the Chinese government, the U.S. military came quite close to Yalu and Tumen rivers on the border between the DPRK and China, and bombed Chinese cities and villages on the border, threatening China's national security. Under such circumstances, the Central

Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) made the historic decision to resist U.S. aggression and aid the DPRK as they protected Chinese homes and defended the country. China's victory in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea won the country a relatively stable and peaceful environment for further economic development and social reform.

1952

On July 1, 1952, some 300,000 locals celebrated the opening of the Chengdu-Chongqing Railway at the Chengdu Railway Station. The Chengdu-Chongqing Railway was the first railway independently designed and built by China, with all construction materials domestically produced. A great breakthrough in the history of Chinese railways, the completion of the Chengdu-Chongqing Railway held great economic significance. The railway traverses the Sichuan Basin and promotes exchange of goods in southwestern China.



1953

In October 1953, a seamless pipe mill under Anshan Iron and Steel Group, constructed with the help of the former Soviet Union, began operation. The picture shows an expert from the former Soviet Union checking electrical installations with Chinese workers.

In 1953, China began to implement its First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957). During those five years, the former Soviet Union assisted China in constructing 156 key projects in fields like military industry, chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, energy and medicine. Relatively complete systems for China's basic industry and national defense industry were established, which laid a foundation for the country's industrialization.



1954

On October 1, 1954, a parade to celebrate National Day carried a model of the *Constitution of the People's Republic of China* through Tian'anmen Square in Beijing.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, *The Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference*, which was passed in September 1949, served as a provisional state constitution. However, with the gradual recovery of the national economy, the task of strengthening political construction was put on the agenda. On September 15, 1954, the first session of the First National People's Congress was held in Beijing, during which the first *Constitution of the People's Republic of China* was adopted.



1955

The first Asian-African Conference, also known as Bandung Conference, was held in Indonesia's Bandung from April 18 to 24, 1955. The picture shows then-Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai delivering a speech at the conference.

This was the first meeting held independently by Asian and African countries with an aim of seeking peace. Then-Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai led the Chinese delegation to the meeting and proposed the principle of seeking common ground while shelving differences, which was highly influential in the success of the conference. The Bandung Conference enhanced other countries' understandings of China's foreign policy and created conditions for the establishment of diplomatic relations between some Asian and African countries and New China. It also laid a good foundation for the further development of ties between China and Asian and African countries.



1956

In January 1956, Kunqu Opera *Fifteen Strings of Coins* made its debut in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province. A sensational masterpiece that ushered in a renaissance of Kunqu Opera, it created a miracle by "saving a genre of traditional Chinese opera with one play."

On May 2, 1956, China officially announced the policy of "letting a hundred flowers bloom" for literary and artistic work and "letting a hundred schools of thought contend" for scientific work. This campaign promoted the flourishing of the arts and the progress of science in the country.



1957

Cars crossed the Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge on October 15, 1957, as the bridge officially opened to traffic. The Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge was one of China's 156 projects aided by the former Soviet Union. It started construction in September 1955 and officially opened to traffic on October 15, 1957. It was the first bridge to cross the Yangtze River in China and the first road-rail bridge built over the river after 1949. The bridge connected the Beijing-Hankou Railway with the Guangzhou-Wuchang Railway, which were previously separated by the Yangtze River. The link completed the Beijing-Guangzhou Railway system and played a major role in promoting China's economic development.

1958

On May 12, 1958, the trial production of China's first domestically produced sedan, the Dongfeng car (the predecessor of the brand Hongqi), succeeded. Serenaded by warm applause, the Dongfeng car cruised away from Changchun First Automobile Works.

The successful production of Chinese homemade sedans marked big progress for the country's automobile industry. From then on, the country's car manufacturing developed rapidly from scratch.



Xinhua



1959

On September 25, 1959, industrial crude oil reserves were found in Songliao Basin in northeastern China by the country's oil exploration team. Discovered just before the 10th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the oil field was named "Daqing," meaning "grand celebration."

The discovery of the Daqing Oil Field upended the long-standing belief that "China lacks oil." Before 1949, China drilled only three small oil fields in Yumen of Gansu Province, Duzishan of today's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and Yanchang of Shaanxi Province and two gas fields in Shengdengshan and Shiyougou in Sichuan Province. With annual crude oil output of only 100,000 tons, China imported most of the oil it used. In 1960, despite tremendous domestic difficulties, China harnessed abundant manpower and resources to tap the Daqing Oil Field and began developing its oil industry independently. By 1963, the country had basically achieved self-sufficiency in oil supply.

Information sourced from *History of the Communist Party of China*



A still from *The Orphan of Zhao*. Wang Xiaoying features a strong modern sense and unique expression of the cruelty of vengeance in the Sino-Greek bilingual version of the play.

The Orphan of Zhao Hamlet of Classical Chinese Literature

Text by Wang Xiaoying

The Sino-Greek bilingual version of The Orphan of Zhao features a strong modern sense and unique expression of the cruelty of vengeance, giving European audiences a taste of the tragic power of human nature.

news agency, introduced the performance in a special report: "Actors from both sides performed in their mother tongues, but the dialogue was fluent and seamlessly connected, and thrilled both spectators in China and Greece." The Athens-Macedonian News Agency, a Greece-based national agency, announced the show as "China's Hamlet coming to Greece!"

A Modern Portrait of Vengeance

The Orphan of Zhao is a *zaju* ("variety play") opera attributed to Ji Junxiang, a Chinese dramatist from the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). It is a well-known tragedy from ancient China. *The Records of the Grand Historian*, written by historian Sima Qian of the Han Dynasty (202 B.C.–220 A.D.), contains a chapter on the events endured by the Zhao family in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.). Minister Zhao Dun

and General Tu'an Gu were two of the most influential subordinates of Duke Ling of the Jin State. Tu'an Gu framed Zhao Dun and slaughtered 300 members of the Zhao family. Soon thereafter, a decree was forged to order the death of Zhao Dun's newborn grandson, orphan Zhao Wu. The child was entrusted to physician Cheng Ying who worked for the Zhao family. Cheng Ying consulted retired Minister Gongsun Chujiu and decided to sacrifice his own child to save the Zhao orphan. Cheng raised the orphan early on, and since General Tu'an Gu lacked any children of his own, he eventually adopted the Zhao orphan without knowing his identity. At the age of 20, Zhao Wu killed Tu'an Gu to avenge his family.

Based on historical records, Ji Junxiang flavored the script with imagination and fiction to create strong dramatic conflict with stunning aesthetic effects that

The *Orphan of Zhao*, considered the *Hamlet* of classical Chinese literature, was staged at the National Theater of Greece from November 18 to December 2, 2018. Chinese and Greek artists performed one of China's greatest tragedies in their respective languages. And for the first time, a Chinese director instructed professional actors in the national theater of a Western country on telling a Chinese story.

The play sparked wide attention from drama circles in both countries. Xinhua, China's official



A still from *The Orphan of Zhao*. Chinese and Greek artists performed the tragedy in their respective languages, complementing each other to create a unique artistic style in the play.



A still from *Richard III*, directed by Wang Xiaoying. The play received abundant attention and applause when it was premiered at the London Globe during the 2012 Globe to Globe Festival.



A still from *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, directed by Wang Xiaoying and performed by Australian artists in 2016. The play by German modernist playwright Bertolt Brecht derived from a *zaju* ("variety play") opera from the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) and contains many Chinese elements.



During the rehearsal of *The Orphan of Zhao*, director Wang Xiaoying (left) exchanges ideas with Greek actors.

touched the hearts of countless Chinese people for centuries. The story has inspired dozens of adaptations, including those by Voltaire and William Hatchett. It won a worldwide reputation comparable to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

When contemporary Chinese dramatists adapt *The Orphan of Zhao*, vengeance is always the theme. Modern values question "an

eye for an eye," but both herbalist Cheng Ying and the Zhao orphan review the bloody past and accept the cruel reality before they struggle with the dilemma of seeking revenge or letting the past go.

In this adaptation of the play, Cheng Ying no longer shoulders the traditional sense of "morality." He makes a promise to "rescue orphans" as an ordinary doctor

until the situation forces him to sacrifice his own son and start taking steps to embark on the tragic road to becoming a hero. Cheng has the most motivation to seek revenge, but it is he who really reflects and eventually stops himself. Giving up on the idea of revenge requires great kindness, which has become the contemporary interpretation of traditional virtues and a traditional solution to the contemporary dilemma.

But can traditional virtues really solve the difficulties of today? An unprecedented ending was designed for the bilingual version of *The Orphan of Zhao*: At first, the orphan cannot bring himself to kill his adoptive father who had raised him for 16 years. When Cheng Ying raises his sword, he chooses to give up on revenge with the line, "How can my benevolent hands become those of a killer like you." But in the end, the orphan still kills Tu'an Gu in the same way that the latter killed his biological father

and family. The orphan of Zhao ultimately becomes a man as cruel as Tu'an Gu.

In this version, viewers can see how heroes are born, but not how hatred can be dispelled. It is difficult to expect that the goodness and nobility of individuals can eliminate the hatred in the world and human nature. This is a deeper tragedy. In extraordinary predicaments of life, struggling human nature shines and embodies tragic values in the modern sense.

Chinese Drama on the International Stage


The Sino-Greek bilingual version of *The Orphan of Zhao* inherits the genes of two ancient drama styles and organically fuses them into a complete tragic masterpiece.

The two Chinese actors used traditional opera performance methods such as language rhythm and body movements to express the tragic characters'

complex and violent emotions. Stage designs such as a simple table and two chairs against a backdrop of the famous Chinese painting *A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains*, traditional Chinese opera costumes and simple ancient masks all bring out a sense of Chinese aesthetics. Symbolic Greek drama traditions included a multi-functional chorus with unique "introduction and narration + exclamation and comment" at critical moments and performance of *The Song of a Mother* and *The Song of Heroes* in Greek musical style to invoke a poetic stage atmosphere. The production was designed to invite the audience to participate in moving the plot forward in "God's View."

After ensuring fluency and proficiency through cooperation in performance, Chinese and Greek actors complemented each other to create a unique artistic style in *The Orphan of Zhao*. This highlights the true artistic value

of the "cross-cultural drama." The collision and exchange between different cultures formed a new and distinctive cross-cultural artistic language.

For a long time, most Chinese dramas were performed in traditional Chinese forms on the international stage. Foreign audiences would appreciate Chinese traditional art's long and rich history but wouldn't grasp the modern development and vitality of Chinese dramatic arts. Chinese contemporary culture and art should not only retain its solid cultural traditions but strive to enter the international cultural context. The only solution is for the ancient and profound Chinese drama to truly take center stage in global mainstream culture. 

The author is deputy president of China Theater Association and a renowned director from the National Theater of China.

Homes Where Hearts Belong

Text by Gong Haiying

Every folk house in China is the fruit of artisans' meticulous and laborious efforts, embodying the deep love Chinese people have for their homes.



Drawing Traditional Folk Houses, a book compiled by Mao Ge and published by Tsinghua University Press in January 2019.

China has a vast territory and a multitude of ethnic groups. On the long road of history, various folk houses with unique characteristics have sprouted across the country.

In 2005, Mao Ge, then an architecture student, began studying Chinese folk architecture with Luo Deyin, an associate professor of the School of Architecture at Tsinghua University.

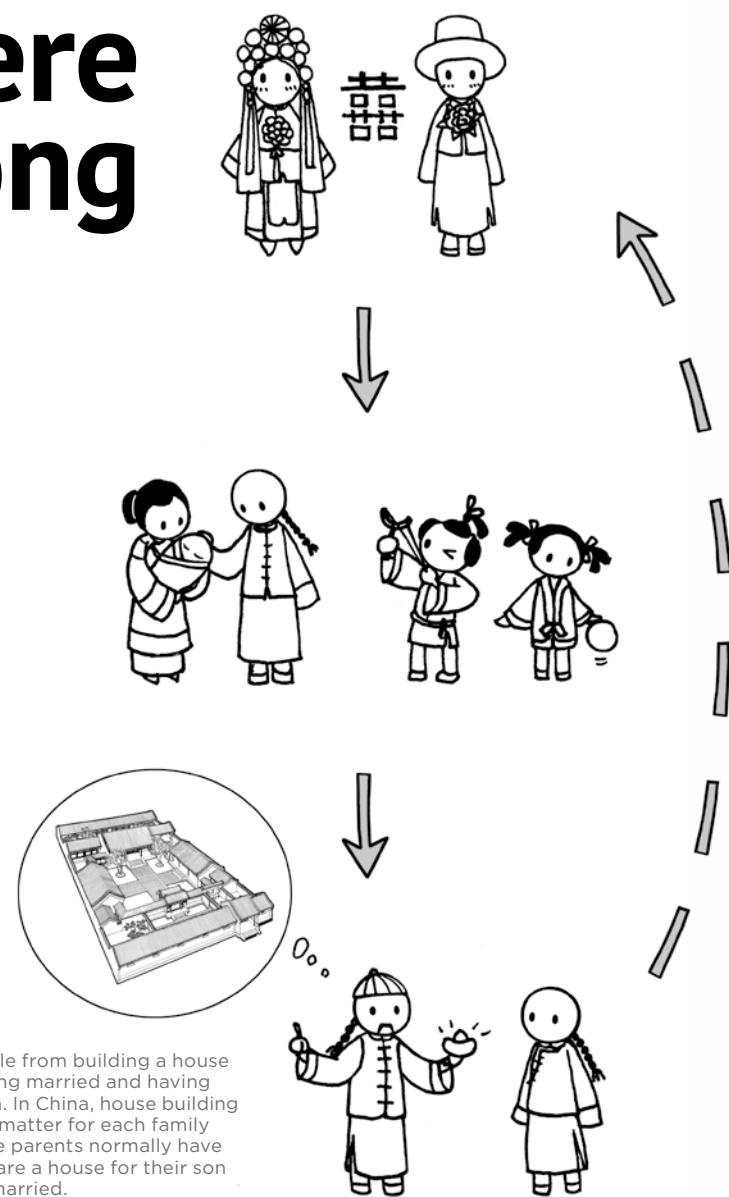
After visiting many villages in China and seeing many kinds of folk

houses, she realized that each house, with its distinct regional characteristics, was the result of artisans' meticulous and laborious efforts. In those houses, she could feel the deep love local people have for life, regardless of ethnic group, and whether rich or poor.

With the fast development of urbanization in the 1980s, reinforced concrete became the most important building material in China. Although the question of

how to protect and develop traditional residential buildings has drawn wide attention and evoked heated discussions, the number of folk houses has continued declining. Along with their disappearance, the traditional construction techniques, building tools and other related architectural knowledge are also being forgotten.

After becoming so deeply attached to traditional folk houses, Mao ventured to the Polytechnic



The cycle from building a house to getting married and having children. In China, house building is a big matter for each family because parents normally have to prepare a house for their son to get married.

Institute of Milan in Italy to continue her studies of architectural protection. She started hoping that more and more people, especially youngsters, would understand the charm of folk architecture and become inspired to join in protection efforts.

Born in the 1980s, Mao grew up reading comic books and eventually realized that we are in an era of "fragmented information" in which people prefer to read with pictures rather than text, which gave her the idea to compile a book introducing construction knowledge on folk architecture primarily through images to kindle more interest in the subject.

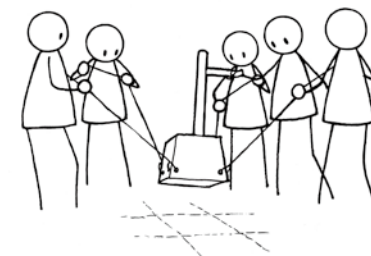
Mao noted that the construction process for traditional Chinese homes depended considerably on available special techniques, and embodied the great wisdom of the working people of ancient China. Various rituals and customs related to architecture carry abundant information about traditional culture, while also reflecting people's hopes and longing for a better life.

By referencing many academic books on traditional folk houses that contain systematic architectural information and abundant construction blueprints and photos, Mao completed *Drawing Traditional Folk Houses*, an educational book with simple and interesting illustrations and easy words to introduce basic knowledge of traditional Chinese folk architecture to young people, including teenagers.

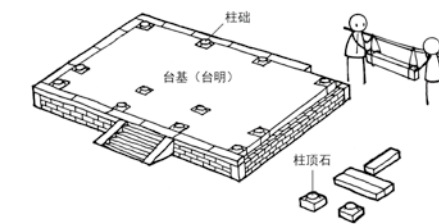
By sharing information on the origin of Chinese architecture and general construction procedures and introducing eight representative types of traditional Chinese folk houses including *siheyuan* (residential quadrangles) in Beijing, cave dwelling courtyards in central Henan Province and *tulou* (earthen buildings) in



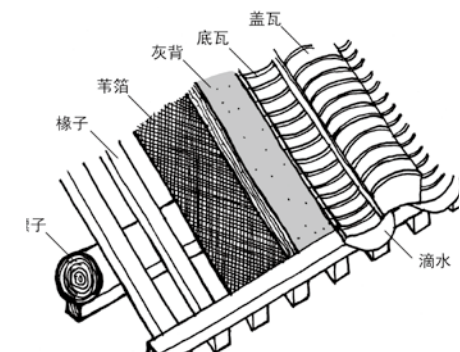
Before building a house, the owner (left) invites a geomancer to give advice on the orientation and shape of the house and an auspicious date for construction. Geomancy is a mysterious art with a long history in China and a certain scientific basis.



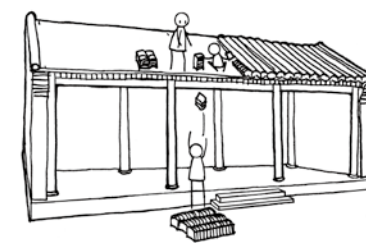
In ancient China, the foundation of the house had to be tamped solid by manpower, layer by layer with tools. A common way of tamping earth in modern times is having four people pull ropes to manipulate a big stone tamper with another person steering.



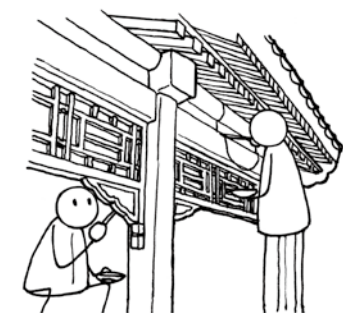
A neat and hard foundation is important for a house, which becomes more solid and beautiful when covered by bricks and stones.



A drawing of the tiled roof structure of a Beijing *siheyuan* building.



When building a house, workers on the ground throw tiles up to constructors on the roof, and the process is called "flying tiles."



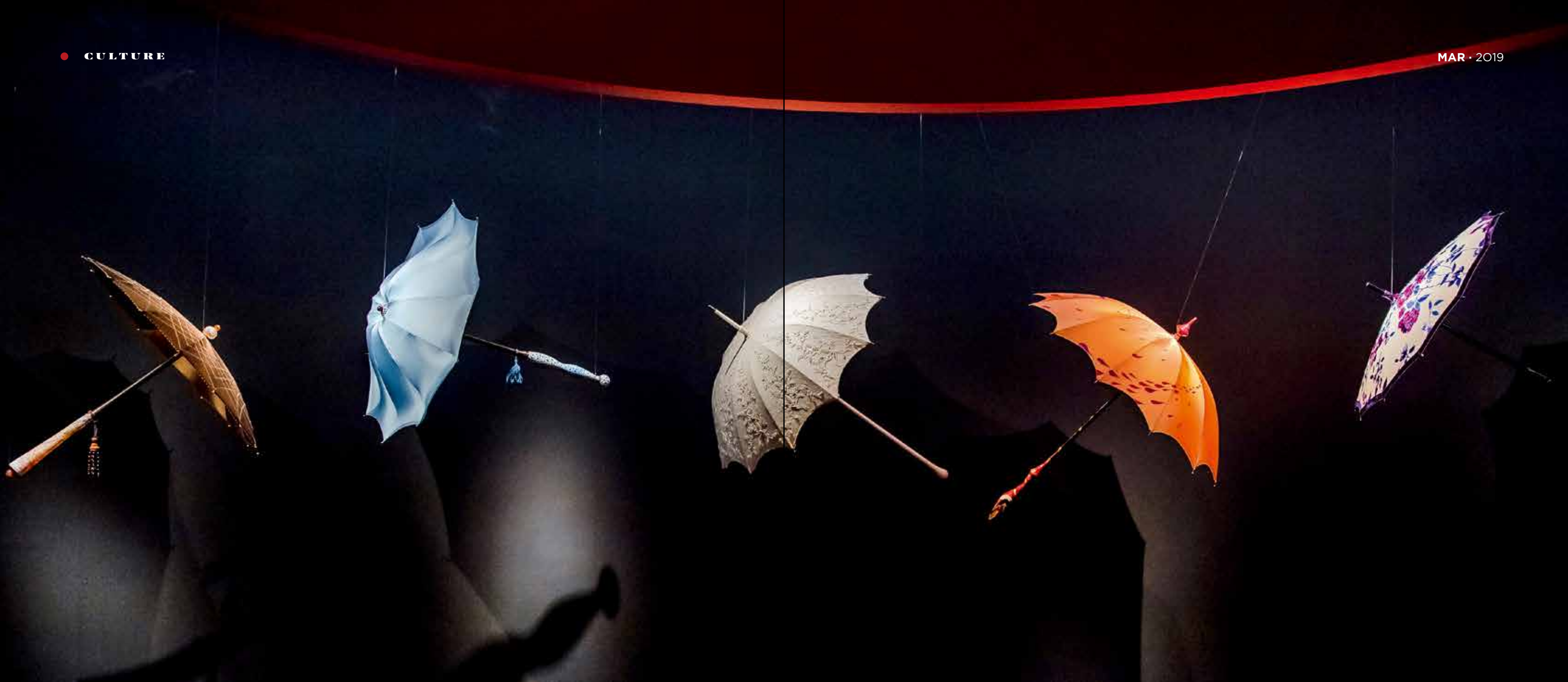
In fancy *siheyuan* buildings, people often draw landscapes, figures, flowers and bird patterns or the Chinese character "fu," meaning "good fortune" and "happiness," on the beam ends and other spots in the house.

southeastern Fujian Province, the book captures the unique residential culture of China.

In the preface, Professor Luo wrote that in the era of rapid development of urbanization and astonishing disappearance of the folk architecture, such a book is particularly valuable to convey the value of folk architecture to the public, especially young people. He also expressed hope that the book would play a positive role

in promoting Chinese traditional architectural culture and preserving existing structures.

The author holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from Tsinghua University and a master's degree in architecture from the Polytechnic Institute of Milan, Italy. She currently works for Tsinghua Tongheng Urban Planning and Design Institute in Beijing. She is also the author of *Drawing Old Houses and Three Manors in Gongyi*.



Cross-Continental Craftsmanship

Text by Yi Mei Photographs courtesy of the National Museum of China unless otherwise credited

The exhibition “Wonder Lab” was unveiled at the National Museum of China, presenting masterpieces from French and Chinese craftsmen.

The exhibition “Wonder Lab,” held at the National Museum of China, presents masterpieces from French and Chinese craftspeople.
by Guo Shasha

A Chinese book on craftsmanship dating back 2,500 years recorded the detailed contents of 30 crafts in six categories including carpentry, dyeing, polishing, metalworking, ceramics and leather making, and defined “craftsman” as “inheritor of the things that saints created.”

Recently, the exhibition “Wonder Lab,” themed “the beauty of Chinese and French

craftsmanship,” was unveiled at the National Museum of China, presenting masterpieces from 15 top French handicraft masters and 11 prestigious Chinese craftsmen and cultural heritage inheritors. The 180 exhibits include ceramics, straw weaving, leather and feathers, shadow play, folding fans, folding umbrellas and woodblock watermarks, among other materials and types.

Spirit of Craftsmanship

“The rapid development of science and technology and the wide application of modern machines free mankind’s hands and extend our wisdom,” proclaims Wang Chunfa, director of the National Museum of China. “Technology also helps highlight how charming handicraft works with distinct features and national attachment are.” He considers the exhibition a response



Corolla by Nelly Saunier, dried feathers & acetate, 2017. by Guo Shasha

to public aspirations for exquisite handicrafts and a profound demonstration of the “spirit of craftsmanship.”

This exhibition embraces the concept of “craftsmanship” by displaying traditional French and Chinese handicrafts

by contemporary masters. Some invited artists are inheritors of family techniques and some learned from great masters. But they all enjoy decades of experience and deploy advanced skills, standing out through bold creation and modern aesthetics based on

traditional genes.

The exhibition includes five sections and juxtaposes similar works from both countries, providing a space for dialogue between them. Employing various materials, master artists broke the hedges between artworks and functional

objects, creating unlimited possibilities in new fields. Additionally, they set instructive dialogues between elements in nature: water and rain, air and wind, fire and sun, earth and soil, which gave birth to a world full of charm and imagination. Meanwhile, artists reviewed ancient techniques like carving and printing and injected new life into them, providing the audience with a fresh artistic experience.

“Regardless of nationality, as artists, we are responsible for passing down traditional cultures by sharing them,” says Gan Erke, inheritor of Huizhou lacquerware, one of China’s national intangible cultural heritage items. “I hope that this exhibition helps people focus on the passion and universal emotion shared by all people, which is conveyed by the exhibits. I also hope the whole of society pays more attention to craftsmen—an ‘endangered species.’”

Sino-French Cultural Communication

The year 2019 marks the 55th anniversary of the establishment of Sino-French diplomatic relations. At the opening ceremony of the exhibition, Jean-Maurice Ripert, French ambassador to China, opined that without cultural communication, there would be no cultural diversity in the world and without cultural diversity, there would be no freedom for creation. So, cultural exchange between the two countries plays an important role in promoting world cultural communication.

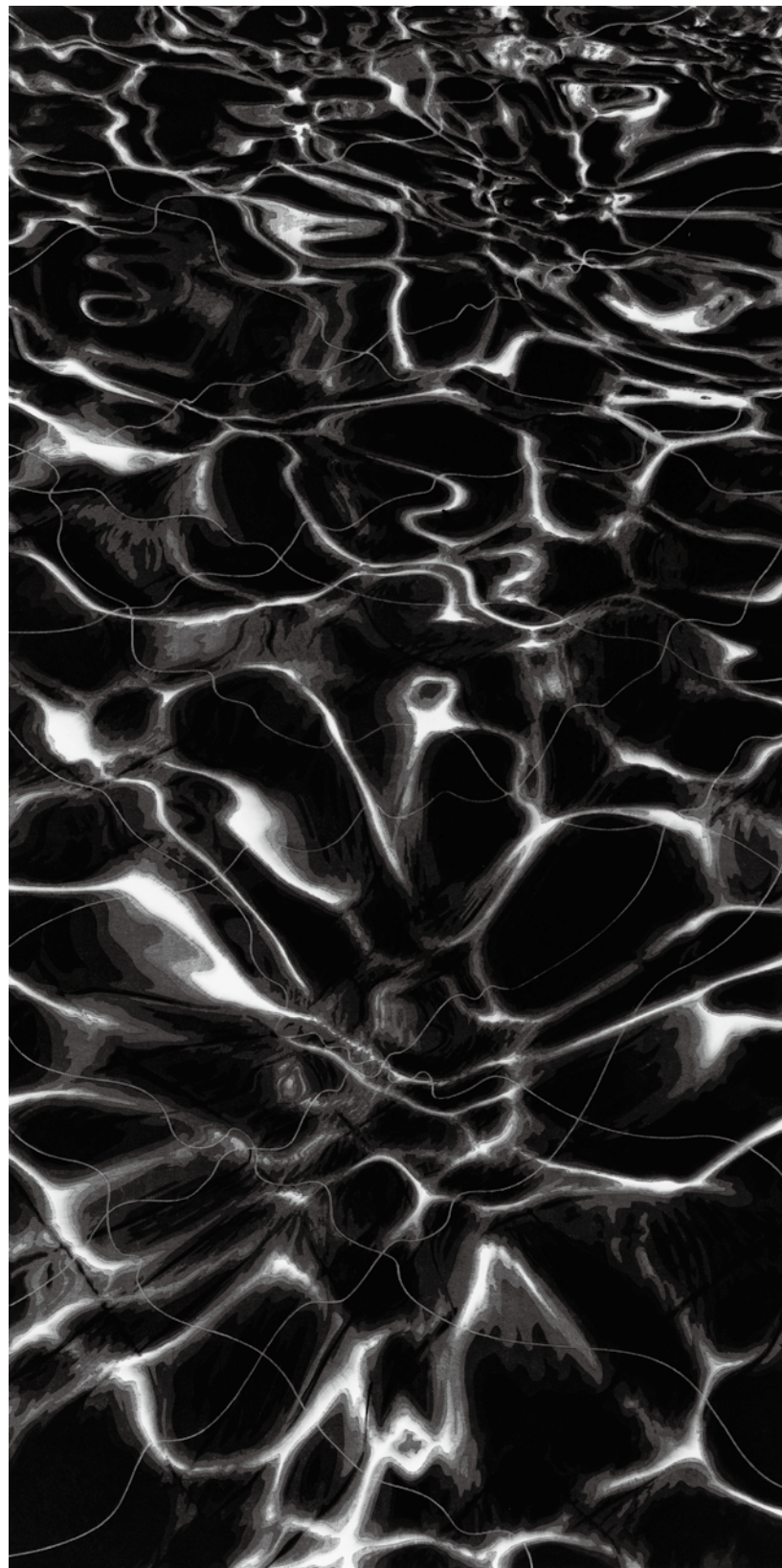
In 1906, French missionaries from the Daughters of Charity arrived in Haimen City (now Taizhou), bringing Western chasing and drawn thread work, referred to as “Catholic Church embroidery” to locals. “Catholic Church embroidery blended with local skills and evolved into the Taizhou genre



The Creation by Wang Jianzhong, glass, 87×26×60cm, 2016.



Infinite by Nathanaël Le Berre, brass sheet & black patina, 2014. © Eric Chenal, HEART & Crafts



The Valley of Roses by Chen Qi, xylograph, 179×89.5cm, 2015.

of embroidery with strong local features,” says Lin Xia, a third-generation inheritor of Taizhou embroidery. “This was one of the earliest fruits of Sino-French communication in handicrafts. Usually, embroidery adds threads to cloth, but the Taizhou style both cuts and adds items to cloth. I hope to use modern artistic language and modern techniques to present traditional crafts and breathe fresh air into them.”

Lina Gohtme, French designer of the exhibition, revealed that the Forbidden City was an inspiration for her design. “The color of the wall in the first hall is the same red as the walls in the Forbidden City,” she notes. “I hope the audience can enjoy different experiences and get surprises every time after they pass a gate, just like when they travel around the Forbidden City.”

Some French artists involved in this exhibition have connections to China, which have enabled them to foster deep emotions about the nation. Some even leverage Chinese elements as their main creative inspiration.

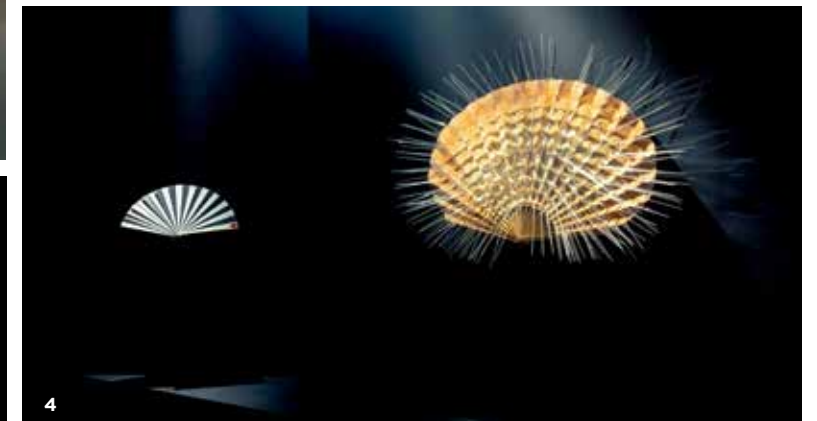
Conferred “Master of Art” of France in 2006, Pietro Seminelli is a cabinet maker and interior designer. He happened upon the traditional clothing of China’s Miao ethnic group at an exhibition in France and was amazed by its pleating techniques. He eventually applied the pleating into haute couture and interior design. “I feel a kind of ‘destined connection’ with Miao clothes,” says Seminelli. “I fell in love with them at first sight. I long to visit Guizhou to see with my own eyes how Miao women make those fantastic costumes. Here, I brought some of my works that salute Miao women.”

French “Master of Art” Sylvain Le Guen and his Chinese counterpart Wang Jian both build folding fans. Guen made his first fan when

he was 10 years old and became passionate about the history and symbolism of fans. Wang became an apprentice of literati fan-making in Suzhou at the age of 16. “Guen employs a wide variety of designs and materials, giving his fans a great visual impact and making them

eye-catching,” says Wang.

“Wang’s works are no doubt the finest fans in the world,” declares Guen. “The techniques he inherited enjoy a time-honored history and remain very exquisite. His work has been a tremendous inspiration to me.”



1. *Drum* by Jean Girel, ceramic, 24×31cm, 2018. © Eric Chenal, HEART & Crafts
2. *Lacquer Plum Vase with Red Gold Spot* by Gan Erke, 20cm in diameter and 42.6cm in height, 2013.
3. *Series of Thousand Waves like Snow World* by Zhu Bingren, copper, 140×35×65cm, 2018.
4. *Sea Urchin* by Sylvain Le Guen, painted aluminum, silk & quills in acetate, 9×110×40cm, 2014. © Eric Chenal, HEART & Crafts
5. *Eclosion* by Nelly Saunier, natural & dyed feathers, wood, 250×120cm, 2017. by Guo Shasha
6. *Hidden Place* by Nelly Saunier, natural feathers, 100×100×100cm, 2009. © Philippe Chancel, HEART & Crafts

Spring Festival Diaries

Text and photographs by Mithila Phadke

For Spring Festival, Beijing dons its best and brightest colors, making it my favorite time of the year.

The first to go were street food stalls. Suddenly one morning, my favorite *jianbing* (thin pancake made of millet flour, etc.) lady and the guy on the corner slinging the best pork-and-chive *jiaozi* (Chinese dumpling) in town were nowhere to be found. Soon, the smaller grocery shops began closing, then the bigger stores, followed by restaurants and cafés. It started getting harder and harder to find a cab, the bus queues began thinning out, and the rows of empty seats on the subway presented an apocalyptic scene. And so it continued, the bustling city of 21.5 million rapidly emptying out and becoming the quietest it had been all year round. The majority of Beijing's residents—migrants from all over the country—returned to their hometowns and families to celebrate Chinese New Year, also known as Spring Festival. By the time February 4, Chinese New Year's Eve, rolled around, Beijing reached its yearly apex of tranquility. The Year of the Pig had arrived, and in homes across China, generations of families were celebrating around a table piled high with food and drinks.

On this night two years ago, just a few months after I had moved to Beijing from Mumbai, a group of new friends and I decided to organize a dumpling-making

night. We rounded up necessary supplies such as dumpling ingredients, tons of snacks and wine and *baijiu* (liquor) to toast at midnight and assembled at my Chinese-American friend Jenny's home. She had learned how to make dumplings from her grandmother ages ago and became our “tutor” for the evening, teaching us how to make the filling, then pleat and fold the dough into *jiaozi*. However, given our absolutely terrible culinary skills, our work produced more “balls of dough that vaguely resemble *jiaozi*” than actual *jiaozi*. Either way, they tasted delicious. After dinner, we set out to Houhai Lake to view fireworks. The entire city was decked with red-and-gold lanterns, and the joyous mood consumed everyone. I had even caught a glimpse of my otherwise-grumpy neighbors smiling earlier in the day. The weather was chilly, and we sat huddled on the edge of the completely frozen lake eating dumplings and sipping *baijiu* every few minutes to warm up. Thanks to the Hangover-To-End-All-Hangovers the next day, none of us dared to engage in such a celebration again for at least an entire year.

Over the rest of the holiday week, I visited Harbin in the far, icy northern province of Heilongjiang to see the annual ice & snow festival, which is one of my favorite memories of China to date. My first



The author at a temple fair in Ditan Park.

Spring Festival, filled with friends, great food and good cheer, ended up with setting the bar very high for all future Chinese New Year celebrations.

The second year, I went south instead, and Chinese New Year's Eve ended up as an adventure again, but of a slightly different kind. My boyfriend, who I met in Beijing, accompanied me on a trip to Shanghai. We arrived in the southern city late on Chinese New Year's Eve, having completely forgotten that most places would be closed. We arrived at a restaurant for dinner only to find it shut and couldn't find a taxi anywhere. Just as we were beginning to stomach the possibility of walking for hours to our hotel, rescue came through. We finally found a cab operated by a festive driver who, after learning of our predicament, took us to a restaurant he knew that was miraculously still open. Our meal of delicious *sheng-jianbao* (pan-fried stuffed buns) was a fitting welcome to Shanghai. Over the course of the next week there, including a day trip to Hangzhou, we had a wonderful time. The entire city was united in its celebratory spirit. We even bought an ornate “fu” (meaning “happiness”) poster to stick on our doors back in Beijing.

That year I started to grasp how massive the roughly 40-day-long *chunyun* (Spring Festival travel



All of Beijing is decked with red lanterns during Spring Festival.

season) is. The sudden emptying out and quiet because of *chunyun* happens in cities all over China, but due to Beijing's sheer size and frenetic activity, it's most apparent there. Not only does a large part of its population go back to their hometowns, but many of its foreign residents also travel home or elsewhere for a vacation. If you happen to stay in Beijing over the Spring Festival holiday week, you better stock up on groceries and other supplies in advance because most places will close for business. A few foreign-owned restaurants and supermarket chains may remain open but it's best to be prepared. During the month, I tend to endure brutal *malatang*

(a spicy Sichuan-style food) withdrawal symptoms.

At the end of the day, Beijing during Spring Festival is my favorite time of the year, perhaps even more so than Beijing in autumn, which may be an unpopular opinion. It's truly something else. Everything looks a little bit brighter, and everyone is happier and a bit more patient. Temple fairs, lined with rows and rows of shops and food stalls, are organized at some of the city's loveliest tourist spots such as the Summer Palace and Ditan Park. Venturing into the hallowed Daoxiangcun traditional bakery to buy sweet treats is one of my favorite activities around Spring Festival. My first time there, I stood in one of many endless lines, nervous

about what exactly I should buy—it seemed like too many choices! A young Chinese man in the line next to mine spoke English. We got talking and he pointed and described almost every single sweet to me. By the time my turn arrived, I knew exactly what I wanted. “The gift boxes are meant to be packed tightly,” he told me. “If there is any room left between sweets, people buy smaller ones to fill in. The idea is for the boxes to be overflowing to symbolize surplus and prosperity.”

This year ahead of my third Spring Festival in China, I again purchased one of the bakery's special sweets shaped like a pig. Like its inspiration, it was absolutely delicious, as I hope the coming year turns out to be.

Dream Builder with a Pen

February 24 – March 13, 2019
The Vision Hill Arts Center, Tianjin

This exhibition displays watercolor and line-drawing paintings for movie sets by Chinese film artist Yang Zhanjia including his original sketches and video materials to jumpstart his career as a film artist, his most important works and other items that showcase his creativity.

Yang has worked with famous Chinese directors such as Chen Kaige, Ang Lee and Zhang Yimou to design film sets for their masterpieces.

Yang graduated from the Department of Architecture and Art of China Central Academy of Arts and Crafts, the former Academy of Arts and Design of Tsinghua University. With profound architectural art accomplishment and professional skills, he is the first person to adopt architectural drawing methods in the Chinese film industry.



Poster for the "Dream Builder with a Pen" exhibition.

Kitchen God Folk Culture Exhibition

January 28 – April 15, 2019
Zhengyangmen Gate Tower, Beijing

This is a fascinating and down-to-earth exhibition of folk culture and customs related to Spring Festival that allows people to see, listen, taste and have fun. By displaying more than 90 old objects, traditional woodcut New Year pictures, Peking Opera facial masks, hand-painted comic books and popular animation collected from the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the exhibition focuses on the story of the kitchen god, also called the "stove god," derived from ancient Chinese legends.



By displaying more than 90 old objects from people's daily lives, the exhibition focuses on the story and culture of the kitchen god.

Xu Qu: Chaos

February 22 – April 20, 2019
Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong

This exhibition presents the artist's latest paintings and soft black rubber sculptures. The painting works are organized in three groups, namely, *Dust*, *Magnetic Field* and *Star Orbits*. Each painting depicts a map of the world and explores an image of Earth from mankind's perspective of space.

The sculpture series includes *Miracle Weapons*, *Travel*, *Insight* and *Voyager 1*. It reconstructs the mechanical elements of spacecraft so that viewers can re-imagine and review human exploration of the vast unknown universe.



Star Orbits, acrylic on canvas, 250×600×6 cm, 2017.

The Real Deal Is Talking with Dad: Chen Ke Solo Exhibition

December 22, 2018 – March 24, 2019
Yuz Museum, Shanghai

This exhibition presents more than 20 works of mixed-media paintings and installations. Through re-creation of old diaries and objects, Chinese artist Chen Ke discusses youth, identity and family with careful observation and profound insights of life.

Born in Sichuan Province in 1978, Chen graduated with a master's degree in oil painting from Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts and currently works and lives in Beijing. Her works have been exhibited in many art galleries and institutions in Hong Kong, Switzerland, France and other countries and regions.



The Youth, oil painting, crackle glue, mirror, old woodenware, paper clay on board, 244 x 90 cm, 2018.



Dad and Alarm Clock, oil painting on alarm clock, 20×14×7 cm, 2018.



Orchid in Cup, coaster with oil painting on canvas, 86×66 cm, 2018.

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