

5 China Dreaming

Representing the Perfect Present, Anticipating the Rosy Future

Stefan Landsberger

Abstract

As China has developed into a relatively well-off, increasingly urbanized nation, educating the people has become more urgent than ever. Raising (human) quality (素质) has become a major concern for educators and intellectuals who see moral education as a major task of the state. The visual exhortations in public spaces aimed at moral education are dominated by dreaming about a nation that has risen and needs to be taken seriously. The visualization of these dreams resembles commercial advertising, mixing elements like the Great Wall or the Tiananmen Gate building with modern or futuristic images. This chapter focuses on posters, looking at the changes in contents and representation of government visuals in an increasingly urbanized and media-literate society.

Keywords: visual propaganda; governmentality; normative propaganda; Chinese Dream; Beijing Olympics 2008

Sometimes one still encounters hand-painted faded slogans in the countryside urging those working in agriculture to learn from Dazhai, or to energetically study Mao Zedong Thought. By and large, political messages and the images they use have disappeared from Chinese public spaces, in particular in urban areas. Yet, the production of these images, of what we would call propaganda, has not stopped; the government remains committed to educating the people, as it has over the millennia. Compared to the first three decades of the People's Republic, the messages have shifted to moral and normative topics, and their visualization has become much more sophisticated than in the earlier periods. This is partly because they

have to compete for the public's attention with omnipresent commercial advertising, a point also emphasized by Meiqin Wang in the previous chapter. As Yomi Braester (2010: 270) has noted in his analysis of Chinese cinema, the distinction between state propaganda, art and commercial entertainment has become blurred; this also is the case with printed propaganda (posters). Many of the crude and blatantly revolutionary images have been commercially appropriated and successfully turned into 'real' art (*vide* Wang Guangyi and other less famous artists) (De Kloet, Chong, and Liu 2008: 24). Along with the appropriation in contemporary art, the increased media literacy of the population has forced those responsible within the government and party for moral and political education to reassess both the contents of and techniques implemented in their campaigns.

Visual propaganda in public spaces in the past decade and a half has increasingly been dominated by dreaming about the perfect present and a rosy future where China has risen and needs to be taken seriously on the global scale. The visualization of these dreams, whether they are about a perfect city, about the Olympics, the Harmonious Society, or just about China, often follows the template of a well-designed commercial campaign. Mixing well-known visual elements like the Great Wall or the Tiananmen Gate building with modern or futuristic images like the Shanghai Expo 2010's China Pavilion is considered the best method to convey China's ever evolving dreams. However, these images often lack the impact that marks commercial advertising with which they are in competition; indeed, the government's messages (propaganda) seem to have been touched less by globalization than other cultural products (Braester 2010: 288).

This chapter will look at the development in contents and representation of (printed) *government posters* in the urban environment, in particular in Beijing, over the past decade, aimed at a population that has become increasingly urbanized and media literate. Through formal analysis of the aesthetics, composition and themes of selected posters that exemplify the variety of most important themes present in urban public space, and with Foucault's understanding of governmentality (1991: 95), I posit that the current official imagery is dominated by new approaches and ideas along with aesthetically appealing, positive, locally embedded messages for building the better future. As such the imagery contributes to the reconstruction of society in China and its affirmative reception abroad. The government posters in the urban environment are a significant element of the spatial tactics of beautification of urban public space which has been an ongoing process, under both material and social rubrics, since the end of the 1990s (Broudehoux 2004). The study of official aesthetics dominating urban public

space in China and how the socio-political transformations have altered its imagery, benefits the in-depth understanding of how representations of urbanization are negotiated in other forms of visual arts, as discussed in the previous chapters, as well as to the urban interventions negotiating its dominance, as will be examined in the next part of this edited volume.

Visual Propaganda

When discussing propaganda, I follow the definition provided by Esarey et al. (2016: 2) as 'Party-state communication designed to inform or educate citizens with the objective of guiding their thoughts and actions and increasing public support of the regime's leadership, policies and ideology.' As I elaborated in an analysis of Chinese educational propaganda, 'The moral education of the people has been viewed historically as a function of good government in China' (Landsberger 2001: 541). At its Gutian Conference of 1929, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) decided to develop a communication strategy to reach distinct social groups with different cultural backgrounds, occupations and levels of education. Each target group had to be addressed in terms of its own psychology and experience, linking political issues with everyday life, while all communication had to have time quality (Foucault's understanding of governmentality (1991: 95),) and local quality (地方性); without these qualities, the message was irrelevant or unintelligible (Holm 1991: 18-23; Zhonggong dangshi zhuyao shijian jianjie 1982: 187-191). Propaganda served as a conveyor belt to pass on officially sanctioned information to the masses. Visual propaganda and posters, in particular, was given an important role in reaching a population that was to a large extent illiterate; it supported and amplified the messages presented in slogans, newspapers, radio broadcasts, movies, songs, literature and poems. As part of the concept of the mass line, first formulated by Mao Zedong in 1943, propaganda served to 'take the ideas of the masses [...] and concentrate them, [...] then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own' (Mao 1967: 119; see also Landsberger 1995: 33-36).

An almost continuous stream of mass movements addressing national, international, political, moral and social topics marked the Maoist era (1949-1978), and these movements were accompanied by striking visual propaganda, often designed by the most talented, usually professionally trained artists and designers. This 'flow of campaigns' (Cell 1977: 46) unfolding at the national and the local levels, in rural and urban areas, had to

strengthen the support for the CCP, to deepen the understanding of the new ideology that guided China, and to promote unity and economic production. The posters were 'designed and produced to provide information, change attitudes or even behaviours – in short, [...] to impose a regime of truth' (Landsberger 2013: 379; Landsberger 1995: 36-61). The recent research has further elaborated the varied cultural forms of propaganda and people's varying attitude to them, continuing to the post-Mao era (Mittler 2012).

With Deng Xiaoping's ascendancy to power in 1978 came an almost complete depoliticization of society. Government communication did not cease but decreased in occurrence and intensity. It now served to broadcast the unprecedented liberalization of society. To do so, its tone, style and contents changed completely (Landsberger 1995: 65-94, 99-202). In the 1980s, in particular, the often bewildering reforms and modernizations had to be publicized widely in order to acquaint the people with them and their implications. Socio-political transformations in the post-1989 period have altered the need and forms of propaganda and thought work which continue to be essential tools for legitimating the power of the CCP (Brady 2008). As China has developed over the past two to three decades into a relatively well off, increasingly urbanized nation, with a corresponding increase of what is considered a (middle) class of consumers, educating the people has remained a major concern of the government. The new forms, techniques and strategies in the age of globalization have complicated the common understanding of propaganda into the realms of diversified 'soft power' reaching across the borders (Edney 2014). As Xiaomei Chen (2017: 1) elaborates:

in a postsocialist state with 'capitalist characteristics' such as the PRC, 'propaganda' can no longer be simply dismissed as a monolithic, top-down, and meaningless practice characterized solely by censorship and suppression of freedom of expression in a totalitarian regime. Instead, propaganda can be studied as a complex, dialogic, and dialectical process in which multiple voices and opposing views collide, negotiate, and compromise in forming what looks like a mainstream ideology – and indeed functions as such – to legitimize the power state and its right to rule.

However, under Xi Jinping, who became state and party leader in 2012, the educational function of the mass line has been taken up vigorously again (Xinhua 2013a, 2013b, 2013c). In practice, this has meant the return of propaganda messages in the media, and of propaganda posters in the streets.

This use of omnipresent normative stimuli by the Chinese government is described in Foucault's understanding of governmentality (1991: 95), Foucault's

notion of governmentality (1991: 95). Governmentality is produced, amongst others, by a comprehensive media strategy that aims to create a model citizenry, not by force and law but rather through a multifaceted set of strategies, tactics, and discourses produced by a whole variety of authorities and institutions that regulate, manage, and guide the minds and bodies of citizens to behave as desired by the ruling authority. Ane Bislev notes that when it comes to the Chinese Dream, due to the fact that it also has been adopted and adapted by commercial interests and popular culture, the concept has gained a life of its own that is not directly related to its original political content (Bislev 2015: 591). Josef Mahoney (2014: 30) considers the Chinese Dream as a framing discourse, an 'open, positive framing narrative designed to draw others into line and/or context.' He sees similarities with and quotes Anne-Marie Brady who considers the propagation of concepts like the Chinese Dream as part of the party's continuing attempts at 'thought management.'

Presently, the government's desires are focused on the need to raise the quality (*suzhi*, 素质) of the population, which has become a pre-eminent concern for officials, state educators and concerned intellectuals. As Gary Sigley (2009: 538) pointed out, '*suzhi* has become one of the most omnipresent categories for categorizing and valuing the human body and human conduct in contemporary China.' The Chinese Dream incorporates this concern, as well as building further on the political campaigns that preceded this particular effort, such as the Three Represents, Harmonious Society and Scientific Development (Bislev 2015: 587). A very large part of the communication practice by the party-state now takes place through the medium of television; as opposed to earlier educational efforts, many of the messages are consumed in the relative privacy of one's home (Landsberger 2009; Esarey et al. 2016). This makes this latest return of government-sponsored posters to the urban landscape particularly interesting. As opposed to the publicity promoting the Olympic Games – an event – these posters are put up with the intention to provide guidance for urbanites struggling to find meaning in present-day consumer society. Their messages are amplified by commercial posters and utterances reiterating elements of the Chinese Dream, by video clips in the subway system extolling the Chinese Dream and civilized behaviour, by slogans on banners gracing overpasses, among others. Despite the rising importance of new media and Internet in terms of controlling and disseminating appropriate information flows for the education of the public, the need to reconstruct an alluring city image for global competition has become ever more important. 'In contemporary China' as Jacob Dreyer (2012: 50) maintains, 'the most forceful language that the government can speak is the language of controlling the urban

space itself.' The premeditated control of urban aesthetics as a whole, and the positive messages introduced into the urban fabric are essential tools of socio-political and cultural reconstruction.

Olympic Dreaming

Propaganda under Xi Jinping is dominated by the concept of the Chinese Dream. Although Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought remains constitutionally enshrined as the PRC's guiding ideology, its hold on society has decreased in many respects. A discursive space has emerged in which dreaming can take place; this is not considered a metaphysical activity but instead 'is meant to determine China's new political direction, and to provide the correct formula that will generate a sense of national belonging in China, and will lead to China's perfection as a nation and as a global civilisation' (Callahan 2017: 255). The term 'dream' (梦想) itself already appeared in various visual propaganda themes and cultural products that appeared around the recent turn of the century, and presently even reality shows on television employ the 'dream' theme in their titles to amplify the concept (De Kloet and Landsberger 2012; Braester 2010: 284, 294). The 'dream' made its first appearance in conjunction with China's hosting of the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The event served as proof that the country had become 'an equal member of the global community' (Davies 2009: 1058; Lee 2014). To analyse the imagery of the Chinese Dream, we thus have to start with the Olympic Dream.

Olympics-related imagery appeared in public spaces as early as 2001, when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) selected Beijing to host the 29th Games in 2008. The slight of losing the 1993 bid for the 2000 Games still smarted. Where had things gone wrong then? Why had China not been taken seriously at the time? With great enthusiasm, a new bid had been prepared and widely disseminated in the media. This included visual materials that aimed to sway the IOC delegates' decision and to drum up support among the home audience, in particular the one in Beijing (Chinese Posters Foundation 2014a). In the meantime, the idea that China deserved the Games, and that organizing them was a destiny or even a human right in itself, circulated continuously in the media at home and abroad (Polumbaum 2003). The nation was made aware that the organization of the Games served as one big commercial message (Hou 2003: 324), intended to 'attract the "eyeballs" of millions of media viewers [...] to raise the national profile through successful delivery of the Games' (Heslop, Nadeau, and O'Reilly 2010: 424).

Both popular and official Chinese discourses increasingly and strongly referred to this Olympic 'Dream,' a concept that made its first appearance in a 1908 article entitled 'On Sports Competition,' published in *Tianjin Youth* magazine (Hwang and Chang 2008). It was clear that organizing the Games and economic development, then and now, meant being taken seriously on the world stage. The slogan 'One World, One Dream' (同一个世界同一个梦想), the motto for the Beijing Games, alluded most openly to the 'Olympic dream'; it was repeated almost like a mantra and was plastered in a dazzling array of reiterations all over urban and rural China. Even though originally intended for publicity directed at the rest of the world (Brady 2009), the sheer omnipresence of the 'dream' trope eventually made it part of the domestic discourse.

Finding Its Way into the Popular Imagination: National Propaganda

The imagery associated with the Games was present in urban areas; its various manifestations depended on the organizations responsible for its production and display. Visual materials directly produced by or under the auspices of the Beijing Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games (BOCOG) found their way to the glass-and-steel MUIs (mobilier urbain pour l'information), outdoor information panels used for advertising or public information. Over the years, more of such locations have become available, in particular near and in subway stations and other transportation hubs. With the rapid expansion of the urban infrastructure, transport advertising (growing number of stations; bus and subway car surfaces; billboards at airports and in railway and subway stations; video screens in subways and trains, etc.) has become more widely available, offering more opportunities for state, municipal or commercial messages and/or images.¹ The occasional use of this 'street furniture' for normative propaganda purposes started as early as the 1990s. The explosive growth of smartphone ownership and Internet use has produced even more sites for such communications; according to the most recent official data, by January 2015 there were 557 million mobile Internet users, making up more than 80 per cent of the total number of 649 million Internet users (China Internet Network Information Center 2015).

¹ Zeng Jun (chairman), Zhang Yujing (audition and production department manager) and others, in interview with author, at JCDcaux/Beijing Top Result Metro, Beijing, 6 August 2012. See also JCDcaux (2014).

The MUPIs and other designated locations carried Olympics-themed posters, while the various constituent campaigns that were organized to turn the Games into a success produced hoards of visual materials that found their way to other display opportunities. The most important sub-campaigns were those devoted to the 'Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics, and Humanistic Olympics' (绿色奥运科技奥运人文奥运), addressing different aspects to make the Games stand out in both Western and Chinese eyes. The posters dealing with the high-tech and green aspects of the Olympics focused on the various grand construction projects, such as the Water Cube (Natatorium), the Bird's Nest (the National Stadium) and the various infrastructural projects, which included subway lines and a new departure hall at Beijing International Airport.

The ones dedicated to the humanistic or 'people's' angle easily meshed with earlier campaigns devoted to spiritual civilization that former leader Jiang Zemin had advocated and had been running since the late 1990s. In particular the ones that focused on promoting civilization and raising the quality (*suzhi*) of the population resonated with these efforts and included citizen guidelines and community compacts (Brady 2009; Dynon 2014: 32). Raising the quality of the population was seen as one of the preconditions to host the Olympics successfully (Zhou, Ap, and Bauer 2012: 196). By ensuring nationwide support for the event; by promoting hygienic behaviour; by stressing good manners, even table manners; and by promoting the widespread use of English to facilitate communications with foreign visitors, in short, by establishing 'winning manners,' winning the Games would be accomplished (Shi 2006; De Kloet, Chong, and Landsberger 2011: 121-123).

The Official BOCOG Posters

The BOCOG-designed posters for the 2008 Olympics show that most of them were designed with an eye on established visualization practices, with global commercial advertising standards in mind. They were published in three series: 'Theme Posters (Sophisticated Beijing for a Harmonious Olympic Games, three posters),' 'People's Posters (Smiling Beijing and Inclusive Olympic Games, three posters),' and 'Sports Posters (Robust Beijing to Exceed the Dreams, ten posters).' All have the official Beijing 2008 logo in the top-left corner. They are slick, non-confrontational, cross-culturally recognizable and with high production values, judging by the amazing quality of the prints and the paper used. This was not without reason. According to Zhao Yanxia, deputy director of the BOCOG Culture and Ceremonies Department,

speaking at the official public presentation of the campaign materials on 18 July 2008, the posters had to act as ‘a visual representation of commerce and culture’ (Xinhua 2008).

Discussing the three ‘Theme Posters’ at the same presentation, Zhao Meng, the art director of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, added that the designers had kept close to the ideas of a ‘Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics and People’s Olympics.’ While the posters embodied the philosophy of ‘One World, One Dream,’ the artists also wanted to bring out elements of Chinese culture. Indeed, according to Zhao Meng, to this end, the style of traditional Chinese painting was used in order to highlight the significance of the Beijing Games, juxtaposing images of the highly publicized newly constructed Olympic venues (Water Cube, Bird’s Nest) that would become visual icons in themselves, with the classic landmarks (Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven) that for many both at home and abroad were synonymous with China (ibid.). In the case of Figure 5.1, it is difficult to make out how traditional Chinese painting has been used in the juxtaposition of the Forbidden City’s Hall of Supreme Harmony and the Bird’s Nest. The balloons wafting upwards may be reminiscent of the mists in landscape painting, as is the striking emptiness of the image.

The three ‘People’s Posters’ can be considered visual representations of culture, although one can argue that the images have been chosen with a non-Chinese audience in mind. Nonetheless, when asked, many Chinese liked them as well.² The first poster shows a young girl in a silk, fur-lined traditional vest, holding two red paper lanterns emblazoned with the Games’ logo, with the Forbidden City’s Gate of Supreme Harmony in the background (Figure 5.2). The colour red predominates, indicating that the Olympics are (going to be) a joyful occasion. The fireworks in the sky amplify this. The other two posters of the series feature a young male Beijing Opera player in full costume with the Great Wall in the background; and an elderly lady presenting a red paper cut with the words ‘Beijing 2008,’ with the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests in the Temple of Heaven complex and doves of peace in the background.

According to Zhao Meng at the same occasion, ‘The smiling faces of the kids, the young people and the elderly, highlight the passion and fraternity of Chinese people to demonstrate that Beijing reaches out to the whole world. This is the classic edition of the philosophy of “One World One Dream”’ (ibid.). These posters arguably ‘touch all the right buttons’ in the sense of positioning them as unmistakably Chinese. One can critique them

2 Information based on fieldwork in Beijing during summer 2007 and spring 2008.

Figure 5.1 Designer unknown. Title: *Tong yige shijie tong yige mengxiang* (One world, one dream). Publisher: Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad. Date of publication: July 2008, ISBN: 978-7-80716-715-0. Nr. of copies printed: 200,000. Available online: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-07/18/content_8570590.htm

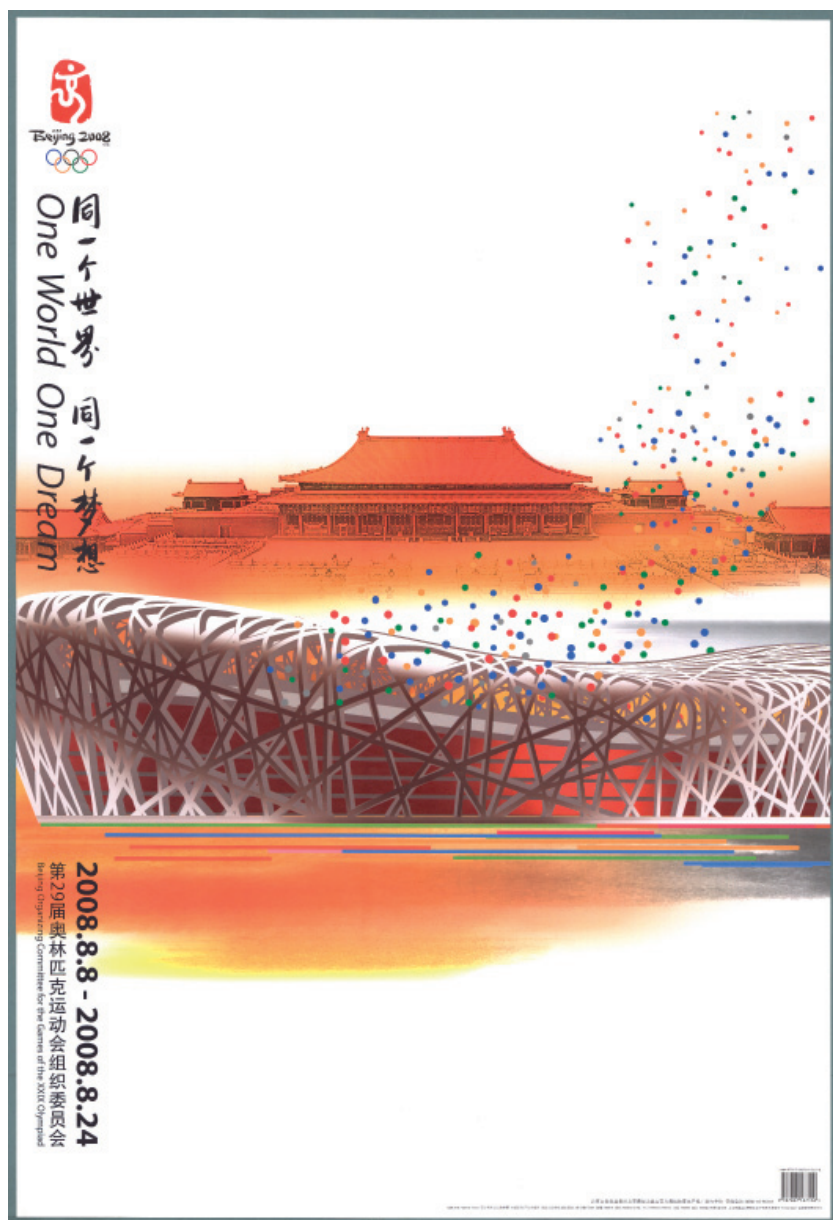


Figure 5.2 Designer unknown. Title: *Tong yige shijie tong yige mengxiang* (One world, one dream). Publisher: Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad. Date of publication: July 2008, ISBN: 978-7-80716-715-0. Nr. of copies printed: 300,000. Available online: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-07/18/content_8570590_1.htm.



as examples of self-Orientalization and dismiss them as illustrations of ‘a changeless, nostalgic, mythical and feminized China that speaks to a Western Orientalistic imagination’ (Yan and Santos 2009: 296), but that would miss the point of their sophistication. As Huang Songshan writes, these elements are part of a “touristic China” or “staged China” rather than a “self-Orientalized China” (2011: 1191).

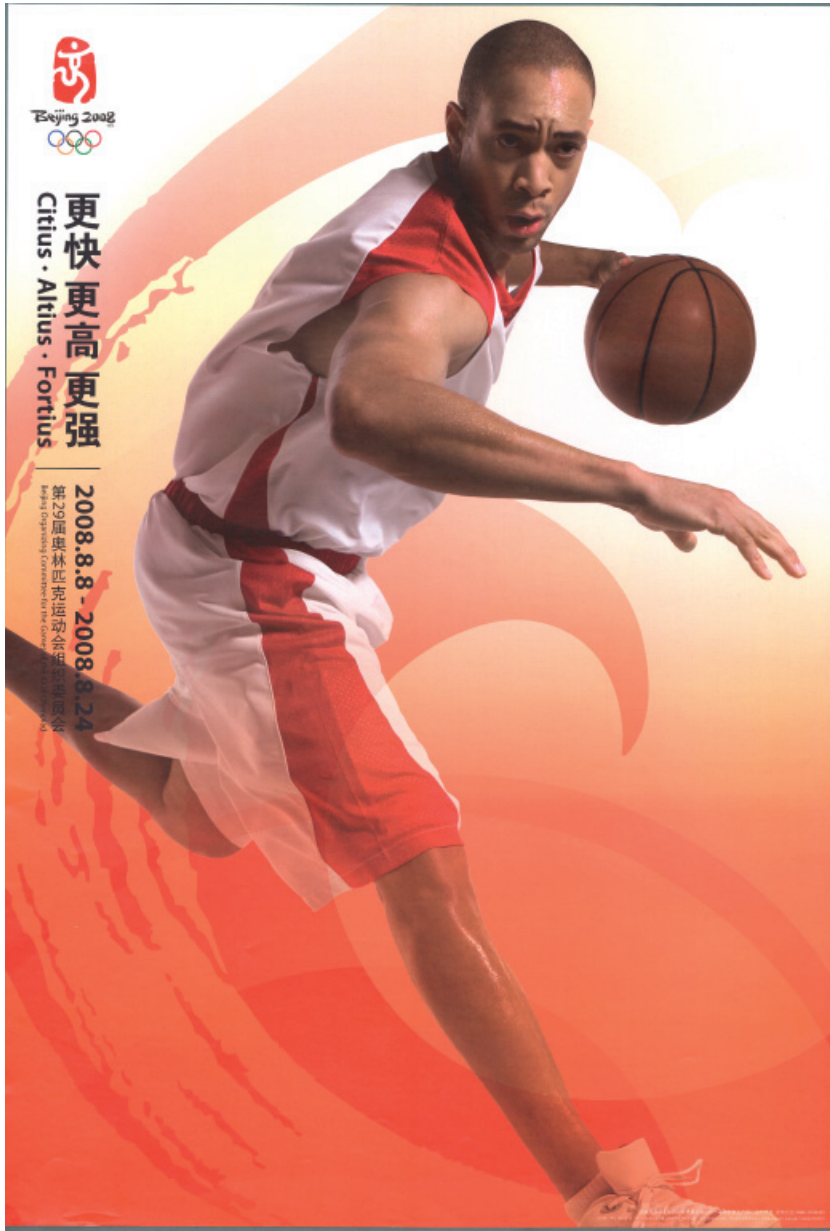
The ten ‘sports posters’ are grouped together under the Olympic motto of ‘Citius – Altius – Fortius’ (Faster – higher – stronger). They almost all feature *Asian* athletes and could have been produced for any other sports or Olympian event taking place anywhere on Earth. Exceptions are two posters that focus on basketball, each showing a basketball player who might be black (African-American?). The precise reasons behind this choice of focus are unclear; they were not explained by representatives from the All-China Sports Federation and the Chinese Olympic Committee.³ However, the Olympic discipline of basketball probably was intentionally linked to the US National Basketball Association competition, wildly popular in China, with its large number of black star players (Figure 5.3). The athlete’s pose and the swirls suggest the great speed associated with basketball. Even though these Games were intended to show that China had arrived on the global stage, and the appreciation and respect from foreign countries and visitors were much sought after, foreigners seldom appear in the Olympic posters. It had to be clear that China organized these Games without outside help, further demonstrating that the nation had attained the international status it craved.

Finding Its Way into the Popular Imagination: Local Propaganda

Lower levels of city government (for example, the Beijing Chaoyang and the Beijing Dongcheng District Committees) used materials much less sophisticated to mobilize support for the Olympics in their respective areas: a variety of posters, banners and billboards was prepared by local, or lower-level governments for the event. These posters and other materials clearly do not have production values as high as the BOCOG posters, as the local governments’ budgets were not as bottomless. Content wise, the posters differ in many respects as well. The Chaoyang posters, for example, represent the Olympics as a social rather than an international sports event, showing

3 Representatives of the All-China Sports Federation and the Chinese Olympic Committee, in interview with the author, in summer 2007 and in spring 2008.

Figure 5.3 Designer unknown. Title: *Geng kuai geng gao geng qiang* (Citius – Altius – Fortius). Publisher: Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad. Date of publication: 2008. Print nr.: 780716.36. Available online: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-07/18/content_8570590_2.htm



camaraderie among the (ordinary) people, including a very explicit word of welcome for foreigners.

The texts on the hoardings around construction sites and banners attached to viaducts crossing the five ring roads or spanning smaller side streets and allies, generally did not differ much from the official slogans and expressions of support for the Olympics, ranging from 'Seize the opportunity of the century to realize the dream of the century' (拥有百年机遇实现百年梦想), 'Welcome the Olympics, be civilized and follow the new trend' (迎奥运讲文明树新风) to 'I participate, I contribute and I am happy' (我参与我奉献我快乐).⁴ The banners and posters consistently praised the level of civilization and quality of the districts and their inhabitants, although one official, when interviewed, stated that the more frequent the praise, the more lacking this *suzhi* actually seemed to be.⁵

Finding Its Way into the Popular Imagination: Commercial Propaganda

Messages produced by commercial entities, ranging from national industry and services leaders to global corporations paralleled the saturation of public spaces and media with Olympic imagery and slogans. Most of the large commercial entities – even those from the same economic sector, relinquishing exclusive sponsor rights for an opportunity to show patriotic commitment – acted as sponsors of the event, ranging from Lenovo, Haier, Li Ning, China Mobile, China Unicom, China Telecom, Tsingdao Beer, Yanjing Beer, Mengniu, Yili and Wahaha to various banking establishments. Global corporations like Volkswagen, McDonald's, Johnson & Johnson, Kodak, Panasonic, Samsung, Coca-Cola, Adidas, Pepsi and many others joined in. These commercial entities put up commercial advertising that, aside from its commercial intentions, often seemed indistinguishable from the BOCOG-produced messages, both in sentiment and in form and content (Brady 2009). A major difference was that the commercial messages made more abundant use of the same Chinese sports celebrities they had already contracted for endorsements. Liu Xiang, the athlete who had astounded sports fans worldwide at the 2004 Athens Olympics with his Olympic record on the 110-metre hurdles, becoming the incarnation, or at least the face of Chinese

4 Information based on fieldwork in Beijing during summer 2007 and spring 2008.

5 Cheng Baogui (Chaoyang District Nanmofang Area official) in interview with author, Beijing, 3 August 2012.

Olympic success (Davies 2009: 1040-1042); Yao Ming, the basketball player who had attained global fame when playing for the Houston Rockets; the diver Guo Jingjing; and many others drummed up support for the event while pitching goods and services. The official publicity/propaganda institutions on the other hand could count on the participation of (popular) cultural, entertainment and arts celebrities like the actor Jackie Chan (Cheng Long), the singer Liu Huan, and father-and-daughter painting team Liu Yuyi and Liu Haomei (Braester 2010: 282).

Harmonious Society

The Olympic propaganda coexisted with other normative (propaganda) messages. The most important one was the concept of the 'Harmonious Society' (和谐社会) that Hu Jintao had launched in 2004 and that became national policy in 2006. Coinciding with the propaganda preparations for the Games and playing a significant role in their background, the 'harmonious society' spelled out China's domestic ambitions and gave an impression of its international intentions (Hubbert 2013: 424). Over the years, it had been difficult to define what the 'harmonious society' entailed, although initially it included references to democracy, the rule of law, justice, amity, and vitality (ibid.: 430). Many Chinese and foreign observers saw the term as a throwback to Confucian times or as an attempt to bridge the gap between those who had benefitted from the reform policies and those who had not. Despite the opacity of the term harmonious (ibid.: 425), many people were quite adamant to point out what was *not* harmonious in society, thus opening up a discursive space for debate between potentially opposing and contesting views and practices while at the same time mediating these oppositions and contestations.

The 'harmonious society' took raising the people's quality as point of departure. Thomas Boutonnet (2010: 123) succinctly summarized the harmony project as follows:

The 'Harmonious society' depicts a society where everyone is dedicated to a larger whole – the Chinese nation – regardless of his/her own social or economic situation. [...] Social inequalities are presented as natural consequences of the differences that make all individuals unique and different from one another other in nature. This 'Harmonious society' specifies and defines a 'new man' who is able to abide by this new order and who is characterized by a set of moral virtues such as self-sacrifice,

law observance or disregard for luxury and leisure. This 'new man' is a civilized citizen, disciplined by the state's 'socialist' values, and is called to dedicate him/herself to the development of his/her country.

The presentation of China as a 'harmonious society' added to the concepts used in materials that set out to spread and support the Olympic dream. More problematic than the Olympics-focused campaigns, however, was the question what the 'harmonious society' should look like or how it could be visualized; one could not point to plans for grand structures like the Bird's Nest, nor was there a clear date scheduled for its completion. To put it differently, it is easier to show what that 'harmonious society' is not, than what it is.

With stability as one of the main constituent factors of harmony, its visualization had to fall back on the well-known and well-tested elements, or propagemes (Mittler 2008: 470), that had come to symbolize post-Maoist, reform-era China over the years. These propagemes included the Great Wall; the Tiananmen Gate building; doves of peace; flower arrangements; urban renewal (in the sense of discarding old buildings and replacing them with ambitious high-rises), and happy people enjoying prosperity. The official 'harmonious society' images sometimes combined these highly symbolic elements with an image of Hu Jintao, dressed either in business suit or in a Sun Yat-sen jacket. Generally speaking however, in the decade of the Hu administration, party and state leaders were conspicuously absent from propaganda materials.

Dreaming of China: Anticipating the Rosy Future

Since Xi Jinping has come to power in 2012, the main topic of government communications and propaganda has been the concept of the Chinese Dream (中国梦). Xi introduced his vision of the Dream shortly after he was elected into office. The Dream initially sounded just as elusive as Hu Jintao's Harmonious Society and nobody seemed to know what it entailed beyond 'realizing a prosperous and strong country, the rejuvenation of the nation and the well-being of the people' (Lim 2013). Since then, it has been fully embraced in political and popular culture and gradually, more concrete definitions have emerged. Under the shorthand of the 'rejuvenation of the nation' or 'great renewal,' the Chinese Dream has been presented as a comprehensive concept that consists of four parts: a Strong China (economically, politically, diplomatically, scientifically, and militarily); a Civilized

China (equity and fairness, rich culture, high morals); a Harmonious China (amity among social classes); and a Beautiful China (healthy environment, low pollution) (Kuhn 2013).

According to Jin Yuanpu, writing on the *Civilization Magazine* page of CNTV,

It embraces Chinese politics, Chinese philosophy, Chinese culture, the concerns of modern Chinese society; it includes Chinese history and the collective memory of the Chinese people, especially the memories of both the difficult times and Liberation experienced in the modern era. It is a vivid representation of the immediate experience and the real lives of the people, of development and social transformation. It embodies China's development goals, national consensus, future prospects and plans for the way ahead. It is a condensation of Chinese thought, spirit and wisdom. It embraces the economic, political, cultural, social and ecological aspects of China's modern civilization.

The Chinese Dream, however, is not only rooted in the past:

A thousand people may have a thousand different Chinese dreams. What, then, does the Chinese Dream boil down to? The Chinese Dream is one of liberation, reviving the nation, modernization; it is a dream of wealth and strength, democracy, civilization; of justice, prosperity, success; a people's dream. It is a dream of peace across the Taiwan straits, of national unity; a dream of reform, of decent living standards for all, of a stronger China. (Jin 2013)

The state institutions and departments responsible for publicity and propaganda immediately organized study meetings and seminars and to produce articles, visual materials, television programmes, public service advertisements, popular songs, events and activities aimed at educating the population (Callahan 2017: 255; Lee 2014; China Civilization Office 2013). Chinese Internet and Weibo (microblog) users (netizens) on the other hand jumped at the opportunity to hijack the term for their own uses (Carlson 2013). Who, after all, can deny that a Chinese (netizen) is Chinese and that s/he has the right to define her/his own Dream? This has unleashed an enormous amount of creativity and tongue-in-cheek critiques in popular culture and on the Internet, where the Dream has come to include clean air, political rights, and reproductive rights, among others (Henochowicz 2015).

Chinese Dream Imagery

With the adoption of the Chinese Dream as the guiding ideology of the Xi era, government-sponsored images returned in the public domain. These images, published as posters, can be divided roughly in two groups: posters produced for official spaces, that is, party, government and army offices at all levels, meeting rooms, etc.; and materials created for use in public spaces, that is, for MUPIs and similar street furniture, billboards, rotating electronic or gigantic LED screens, hoardings and scaffolding erected around construction sites, and so forth (Lee 2014). The imagery and the messages of these two groups are significantly and strikingly different from each other. They are also a world apart from the images that were produced for the Olympics.

The official materials, those produced and distributed for use in official spaces, are modelled on, amplify as well as echo the well-known themes of previous campaigns. These posters tend to be large-sized and glossy, replete with the propagemes of the Great Wall; the Tiananmen Gate building; doves of peace; flower arrangements; modern cityscapes, etc., but also the China Pavilion at the Expo 2010 in Shanghai. Some of them show China's developing military might, including the first aircraft carrier *Liaoning*, and its desire to reclaim territories currently not under its administration, such as the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Many carry images of the aerospace industry and the successful space programme, which serve as apt metaphors. As a matter of course, Xi himself features prominently on these posters, both in Western-style suit and Sun Yat-sen jacket, prompting some observers that Xi has become almost as prominent as Mao had in the past.⁶ This stands in opposition to the lukewarm endorsement Hu Jintao seemed to give to his Harmonious Society. On some posters, Xi is shown together with prime minister, Li Keqiang, on others he is accompanied by all members of the Politburo, showing a firm commitment to the Dream concept by the nation's governing body.

The posters generally carry slogans closely associated with the Dream, such as 'The Chinese Dream: A strong nation – A national revival – A prosperous population' (中国梦国家富强民族振兴人民幸福). The lofty elements mentioned by Jin, such as 'democracy, [...] justice, prosperity, success' (Jin 2013), find their way only very occasionally into the representations; instead, the posters deal with other aspects of Xi's political programme such as the fight against corruption, extravagance and 'empty talk.' Despite the posters'

6 Intellectuals, government workers and entrepreneurs in interviews with the author, Beijing, 8 April and 7 May 2015.

overall sophisticated impression, they do not stand close scrutiny from a technical point of view: on some posters, identical photographs of Xi have been flipped, with the result that the parting in his hair appears sometimes on the right side, sometimes on the left, etc. The stunning public service posters for the Chinese Dream that were exhibited in Beijing in July 2014 by the Chinese Photographers Association, on the other hand, illustrate that shortcomings of this kind are not necessary and that such materials can also be produced with the highest design standards in mind (Gao and Yao 2014).

The Chinese Dream in Public

What, then, of the posters published for use on the streets in major cities across China that were first presented on Beijing's Tiananmen Square in July 2013 (Johnson 2013; Li 2013)? These posters have become so omnipresent that one can argue that propaganda has returned into the lives of the people with full force, as Meiqin Wang shows in her chapter on photographer Ni Weihua, who chronicles its upsurge in the urban environment in his photography. The China Civilization Office under the CCP Central Propaganda Department (中共中央宣传部 中央文明办主办) has made Chinese Dream materials available online as high-resolution downloads for reprinting or for use on various media. They range from posters to banners and desktop images for personal computers and smartphones, thus ensuring a unity of contents that has been seen seldomly in Chinese propaganda campaigns and that leaves no room for alternative interpretations. Since the inception of the campaign, many more posters have been published, which points to a dynamic approach to the unfolding campaign and suggests opportunities for campaign flexibility. Unfortunately, not all of the later additions encountered in the streets can be found on the Civilization Office's website, which seems not to have been updated since its inception in 2013.

Aside from materials stressing the Dream in myriad forms, other poster sets address sub-campaigns such as patriotism and love for the party; the environment; normative models and traditional culture. These sub-campaigns are presented as part and parcel of the broader Dream initiative and their visualizations follow the same template. The propaganda sections of many if not most of the gated communities in urban China have put up their own versions of Chinese Dream campaigns, using the images they have downloaded in various forms and formats on the grounds of their communities. Despite differences in appearance, the contents provided by the China Civilization Office ensure uniformity. Moreover, banners

with Dream-related slogans again grace overpasses and entrances. Even the Beijing subway has put up its own Chinese Dream poster (中国梦-地铁梦) and many other organizations and economic entities have produced various media products supporting the Dream.⁷

The posters encountered on the streets ‘typically feature a stark white background, a QR code, a red stamp seal adding a flourished imprimatur, and a subtle frame of red text designating the folk art style and the government body responsible for their design’ (Lee 2014); none of them show Xi Jinping, as opposed to the ones produced for use in official environments. Their contents, according to Joyce Lee, are

a post-Mao bricolage of Confucian morality, traditional Chinese ideals, socio-economic adaptations, historical grievances, and everyday social activities. Captions [...] are couched in non-ideological terms designed to amass wider appeal and mark a move away from hardline propaganda. Figures and tableaux [...] emphasize rural livelihoods over urban lifestyles. Epithets and images extoll Confucian values [...]; other themes include thrift, economic prosperity, springtime renewal, and a Chinese way of life centered in honesty and sincerity. (Lee 2014)

To convey these themes and sentiments, the posters make widespread use of ‘traditional Chinese paper cuttings [...] Yangliuqing woodblock prints [...] Taohuawu wood carvings [...] [and] [r]ed-cheeked figures such as the one in the campaign’s primary image are made by the Nirenzhang clay sculpture workshop in Tianjin’ (Lee 2014). In short, posters showing reassuring and comforting images drawing on traditional symbols crowd the urban gaze.

Nirenzhang (Clay Man Zhang) clay sculpture has been produced in Tianjin for more than 200 years and is considered traditional folk art. According to Ian Johnson (2015), ‘for many Chinese, they evoke a sentimental vision of their country in much the way of Norman Rockwell’s depictions of America.’ The figurine designed by Lin Gang shown in Figure 5.4 has become popularly known as Meng Wawa, Baby Meng (Dream). With the accompanying slogan ‘Zhongguo meng – wode meng’ (The Chinese Dream – my dream), she has come to serve as the mascot of the campaign. One encounters her poster most often; she also serves as something of a presenter in the televised public service announcements devoted to the Chinese Dream that are broadcast in prime time (Yi 2013: 6-7, 179, 200, 202).⁸

7 Information based on fieldwork in Beijing during spring 2015.

8 Ibid.

Figure 5.4 Designer: Public Service Advertising Art Committee; figurine designed by Lin Gang. Title: *Wode meng* (The Chinese Dream is my dream). Publisher: China Internet Television Station. Date of publication: 2013. No print number. Available on website of the Civilization Office under the CCP Central Committee: http://www.wenming.cn/jwmsxf_294/zggygg/pml/zgmxl/201309/t20130930_1501267.shtml



A number of the posters makes use of the paintings and cartoons by the late Feng Zikai, who was prosecuted during the Cultural Revolution but posthumously rehabilitated in 1978 (Barmé 2002). Many feature peasant paintings from a variety of regions noted for such artistic expressions, such as Wuyang, Henan Province; Longmen, Guangdong Province; Kunming, Yunnan Province; and Jinzhou, Liaoning Province. One specific group of peasant painter designers that was called upon to contribute to the Dream effort hails from Huxian, Shaanxi Province. The Huxian peasant painters played an important role in propaganda poster production in the first half of the 1970s (Chinese Posters Foundation 2014b), and one of the Chinese Dream posters is designed by none other than Liu Zhigui (b. 1945) (Chinese Posters Foundation 2015), who was a famous member of the earlier Huxian design team (Figure 5.5) (Yi 2013: 31). Liu's design, showing a son washing his father's feet while being observed by his own son, resembles his earlier poster art that was characterized by revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism. Now it promotes filial piety (*xiao* 孝), but it lacks the high level of workmanship that characterized his earlier work. The works of the younger generation of Huxian artists which one encounters on the streets, on the other hand, is more reminiscent of naïve art.

All posters have accompanying texts that strengthen the message. The inclusion of (often large) bodies of text on posters in general testifies to the successful eradication of illiteracy. Many of these texts consist of aphorisms or quotes, but the majority is adorned by short poems expanding on the theme of the image, some 150 in all; many of these have been written by Xie Shaoqing, who goes by the pen name Yi Qing. Aside from writing pro-government blogs, Xie has also published a number of books devoted to Mao Zedong (Yi 2013; Lee 2014). When I discussed the posters and their contents as encountered in the streets of Beijing in Spring 2015 with people passing by, many indicated that they found the sentiments expressed in the poems either irrelevant or naïve, while others found them apt and comforting and largely agreed with their intentions.⁹

Critical evaluations of the Chinese Dream materials are not easy to find, but some Chinese writers see them as nothing but a vehicle to spread Xi Jinping's words; to praise and extol Chinese civilization; to spread the basic values of socialism; to utter true words instead of empty phrases; and to create a harmonious, beneficial social orientation. In other words, the posters do little to raise the people's quality in a concrete sense. Some critics identify more concrete shortcomings: the materials are too much oriented on

9 Ibid.

Figure 5.5 Designer: Public Service Advertising Art Committee; image designed by Liu Zhigui. Title: *Zhonghua meide – Xiao* (Chinese virtue – filial piety). Publisher: China Internet Television Station. Date of publication: 2013. No print number. Available online on website of the Civilization Office under the CCP Central Committee http://www.wenming.cn/jwmsxf_294/zggygg/pml/ctmdxl/201309/t20130929_1500525.shtml



the past; and there is a gap between what is propagated and daily reality. In short, they lack time quality and local quality. A more fundamental problem pointed out by the critics is that while the majority of the materials can be seen in urban areas, they almost solely deal with an idealized, rural reality, and as such do not engage with what the intended audience is concerned about (Li and Deng 2014: 124, 125). When I questioned my own respondents about what types of materials could be observed in the countryside or even smaller cities, many of them made it clear that the propaganda utterances there were different, more educational, and focused more on providing information and knowledge that benefitted the people.¹⁰

Concluding Remarks

The urban landscape again is festooned with official imagery in a way that has not been seen for a long time. The imagery is devoted to the Chinese Dream, and more specifically the rejuvenation of the nation. From the viewpoint of Foucault's ideas on governmentality, it sets out to make sure that the people understand that achieving their private dreams is predicated on realizing the national dream, yet at the same time that by achieving their private dreams the national dream will come true as well (Bislev 2015: 591). Yet, as outlined above, it is not easy to define the exact focus of the Chinese Dream. What steps need to be taken to realize this Dream, other than following the promptings by the government? The images produced for the Dream campaign do not attempt to mobilize into action. They consciously hark back to an often idealized past, but clear indications of the Dream are not forthcoming. Many people find the visual components of the posters in public spaces quite pleasing, relatively unobtrusive, familiar and non-confrontational as they are.¹¹ Although the posters clearly lack the time quality and local quality that were considered essential in earlier times, they are easily taken for granted; given that their slogans and poems are generally appreciated, there is no reason to assume that their messages are not passed on. Moreover, in many instances, the images hide the less desirable aspects of urbanization, as when and where they obstruct the view on less favourable cityscapes, such as building sites or inhabited, but run-down housing stock occupied by migrant workers or slated for

10 Propaganda officer, Peking University Communist Youth League, in interview with the author, Beijing, 5 May 2015.

11 Information based on fieldwork in Beijing during spring 2015.

demolition. Given their official nature, they moreover seem to be largely, but not completely, protected from graffiti, thus contributing to the more colourful, more orderly impression that the streets make. Seen from these divergent perspectives, the campaign as a whole seems to work quite well. Yet there are also considerable numbers of urban people from all walks of life who resent this visual bombardment, stating that it is just 'garbage,' indicating that they do not like the images, that the funds involved in rolling out the campaign could be put to better uses benefitting the ordinary people, that they find the poems sappy and that the more frequent the exhortations, the falsier the sentiments expressed.¹²

An even more explicit focus on themes directly touching on the lives of urbanites could appeal to more people and generate a more positive response across the board. Some Chinese Dream posters pay attention to environmental issues but appear less frequently. Paying greater attention to urgent problems such as air pollution would certainly pay off and generate a positive feedback. On the other hand, in the rapidly changing urban environment, a more concentrated focus on reviving traditional behavioural patterns such as respect and care for the elderly very much resonates with popular concerns. Figure 5.6, designed by Ren Mingzhao from Wuyang County, Henan Province, shows a boy and a girl helping an elderly, bow-legged lady with a cane cross the street while protecting her from the rain with an umbrella. The slogan 'People who respect the elderly obtain happiness' is clearly intended to re-establish a basic value in society, or at least among its youngest members, like Liu Zhigui's feet-washing scene also attempted.

The strategy of addressing issues that concern the people rather than what politics demand means a structural change in the way in which the audience is approached, with public service advertising of whatever kind no longer serving as propaganda but as an actual channel for communication. If the Xi administration were serious about reviving the mass line mechanism, such a change in strategy would not only acknowledge popular concerns, the increased knowledge of the audience and its media literacy, but would also improve its messages, as some of the Chinese Dream campaign critics assert (Li and Deng 2014: 126, 127). While the Dream itself may not materialize in all its complexity, its campaign materials thus could play a major role in raising the quality of the people. But one thing is clear: the Chinese Dream in all its opacity has found resonance with the target audience.

12 A worker, in interview with the author, Beijing, 16 May 2015.

Figure 5.6 Designer: Public Service Advertising Art Committee; image designed by Ren Mingzhao. Title: *Ren jing lao ji de fu* (The people honour the old for their own happiness). Publisher: China Internet Television Station. Date of publication: 2013. No print number. Available online on website of the Civilization Office under the CCP Central Committee http://www.wenming.cn/jwmsxf_294/zggygg/pml/tmdxl/201309/t20130929_1500644.shtml



Bibliography

- Barmé, Geremie (2002) *An Artistic Exile: A Life of Feng Zikai (1898-1975)*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Bislev, Ane (2015) The Chinese Dream: Imagining China. *Fudan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 8: 585-595.
- Boutonnet, Thomas (2010) 'Harmonious' Consumer Society Exposed: Visual Cacophony and Schizophrenia on Beijing's Street Billboards in 2006. *Journal of Chinese Studies/Revista de Estudos Chineses* 6: 117-134.
- Brady, Anne-Marie (2008) *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Brady, Anne-Marie (2009) The Beijing Olympics as a Campaign of Mass Distraction. *China Quarterly* 197: 1-24.
- Braester, Yomi (2010) *Painting the City Red: Chinese Cinema and the Urban Contract*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Broudehoux, Anne-Marie (2004) *The Making and Selling of Post-Mao Beijing*. New York: Routledge.
- Callahan, William A. (2017) Dreaming as a Critical Discourse of National Belonging: China Dream, American Dream and World Dream. *Nations and Nationalism* 23(2): 248-270.
- Carlson, Benjamin (2013) How the Communist Party Sells Xi Jinping's 'Chinese Dream.' *Global Post*, 18 August. <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/asia-pacific/china/130815/communist-party-xi-jinping-chinese-dream>, accessed 23 June 2014.
- Cell, Charles P. (1977) *Revolution at Work: Mobilization Campaigns in China*. New York: Academic Press.
- Chen, Xiaomei (2017) *Staging Chinese Revolution: Theater, Film, and the Afterlives of Propaganda*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- China Civilization Office (2013) Jiang wenming shu xinfeng gongyi guanggao [Practice culture, establish a new practice public service advertisements]. CCP Central Propaganda Department. http://www.wenming.cn/jwmsxf_294/zggygg/, accessed 22 August 2014.
- China Internet Network Information Center (2015) The 35th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China (January). <https://cnnic.com.cn/IDR/Report-Downloads/201507/P020150720486421654597.pdf>, accessed 5 July 2015.
- Chinese Posters Foundation (2013) Beijing Olympics 2008 – The official posters. <http://chinese posters.net/themes/beijing-olympics-official.php>, accessed 5 July 2015.
- Chinese Posters Foundation (2014a) Beijing Olympics 2008. <http://chinese posters.net/themes/beijing-olympics.php>, accessed 5 July 2015.

- Chinese Posters Foundation (2014b) Huxian Peasant Painters. <http://chinese posters.net/themes/huxian-peasant-painters.php> accessed 5 July 2015.
- Chinese Posters Foundation (2015) Liu Zhigui. <http://chinese posters.net/artists/liuzhigui.php> accessed 5 July 2015.
- Davies, David J. (2009) 'Go China! Go!': Running Fan and Debating Success during China's Olympic Summer. *International Journal of the History of Sport* (26)8: 1040-1064.
- De Kloet, Jeroen, Chong, Gladys Pak Lei, and Landsberger, Stefan (2011) National Image Management Begins at Home: Imagining the New Olympic Citizen. In Wang, Jian (ed.), *Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 117-133.
- De Kloet, Jeroen, Chong, Gladys Pak Lei, and Liu, Wei (2008) The Beijing Olympics and the Art of Nation-State Maintenance. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs – China aktuell*, 37(2): 5-35.
- De Kloet, Jeroen, and Landsberger, Stefan (2012) Fandom, Politics and the Super Girl Contest in a Globalized China. In Zwaan, Koos, and De Bruin, Joost (eds) *Adapting Idols: Authenticity, Identity and Performance in a Global Television Format*. Farnham: Ashgate, 135-147.
- Dreyer, Jacob (2012) Shanghai and the 2010 Expo: Staging the City. In Bracken, Gregory (ed.) *Aspects of Urbanization in China: Shanghai, Hong Kong, Guangzhou*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 47-58.
- Dynon, Nicholas (2014) Civilisation-State: Modernising the Past to Civilise the Future in Jiang Zemin's China. *China: An International Journal* 12(1): 22-42.
- Edney, Kingsley (2014) *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda: International Power and Domestic Political Cohesion*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Esarey, Ashley, Stockmann, Daniela, and Zhang, Jie (2016), Support for Propaganda: Chinese Perceptions of Public Service Advertising. *Journal of Contemporary China* 103: 101-117.
- Foucault, Michel (1991) Governmentality. In Burchell, Graham, Gordon, Colin, and Miller, Peter (eds) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 87-104.
- Gao, Yinan, and Yao, Chun (eds) (2014) Collection of 'China Dream' Public-Spirited Ads I, II, III, IV, *People's Daily Online*, 11 July. <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/n/2014/0711/c98649-8754057.html>; <http://english.people.com.cn/n/2014/0714/c98649-8754909.html>; <http://english.people.com.cn/n/2014/0712/c98649-8754561.html>; <http://english.people.com.cn/n/2014/0713/c98649-8754719.html>, accessed 8 August 2014.
- Henochowicz, Anne (2015) I Love the Chinese Dream; A Coffee, Please, and Cream. *China Digital Times*, 6 February. <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2015/02/love-chinese-dream-coffee-please-cream/>, accessed 7 February 2015.

- Heslop, Louise A., Nadeau, John, and O'Reilly, Norm (2010) China and the Olympics: Views of Insiders and Outsiders. *International Marketing Review* 27(4): 404-433.
- Holm, David (1991) *Art and Ideology in Revolutionary China*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Hou, Jianmei (2003) Renwen Aoyun yu rende sizhi fanzhan zhanlüe [People's Olympics and the Strategy to Develop the People's Quality]. In Peng, Yongjie, Zhang, Zhiwei, and Han, Donghui (eds) *Renwen Aoyun* [People's Olympics]. Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 301-341.
- Huang, Songshan (2011) 'China, Forever': Orientalism Revisited. *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(3): 1188-1192.
- Hubbert, Jennifer (2013) Of Menace and Mimicry: The 2008 Beijing Olympics. *Modern China* 39(4): 408-437.
- Hwang, Dong-Jhy, and Chang, Li-Ke (2008) Sport, Maoism and the Beijing Olympics: One Century, One Ideology. *China Perspectives* 73: 4-17.
- JCDecaux (2014) 2013 Reference Document. <http://www.jcdecaux.com/sites/default/files/assets/document/2016/09/jcdecaux2013referencedocument.pdf>, accessed 15 January 2016.
- Jin, Yuanpu (2013) The Chinese Dream: the Chinese Spirit and the Chinese Way. *Civilization Magazine*. <http://english.cntv.cn/special/newleadership/chinese-dream05.html>, accessed 31 January 2014.
- Johnson, Ian (2013) Old Dreams for a New China. *New York Review of Books*, 15 October. <http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2013/oct/15/china-dream-posters/>, accessed 6 November 2013.
- Johnson, Ian (2015) A Chinese Folk Artist's Descendants Are Split by the Government's Use of Their Family Legacy. *New York Times*, 5 December. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/06/world/asia/a-chinese-folk-artists-descendants-are-split-by-the-governments-use-of-their-family-legacy.html?_r=0, accessed 18 August 2016.
- Kuhn, Robert Lawrence (2013) Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream. *International Herald Tribune*, 4 June. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/05/opinion/global/xi-jinpings-chinese-dream.html>, accessed 29 January 2014.
- Landsberger, Stefan (1995) *Chinese Propaganda Posters: From Revolution to Reform*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe.
- Landsberger, Stefan (2001) Learning by What Example? Educational Propaganda in Twenty-first-Century China. *Critical Asian Studies* 33(4): 541-571.
- Landsberger, Stefan (2009) Harmony, Olympic Manners and Morals – Chinese Television and the 'New Propaganda' of Public Service Advertising. *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 8(2): 331-355.
- Landsberger, Stefan (2013) Contextualizing (Propaganda) Posters. In Henriot, Christian, and Yeh, Wen-hsin (eds), *Visualising China, 1845-1965: Moving and Still Images in Historical Narratives*. Leiden: Brill Publishers, 379-405.

- Lee, Joyce (2014) Expressing the Chinese Dream. *The Diplomat*, 28 March. <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/expressing-the-chinese-dream>, accessed 12 May 2014.
- Li, Wei, and Deng, Jiaohua (2014) Dangdai gongyi guanggao chuanguo zhong de chuanguo wenhua yuansu jueze yanjiu – dui Zhongguo meng gongyi guanggao chuanguo de fansi [Research on the selection of traditional cultural elements in creating present-day public service advertising – Reviewing the creation of Chinese Dream public service advertising]. *Wenxue shenghuo – Yishu Zhongguo* [Literature life – art in China] 968, 124-127.
- Li, Xiang (2013) Tiananmen guangchangde ‘Zhongguo meng’ huayi shiqing [The poetic charm of Tiananmen’s Chinese Dream]. *Zhongguo wenming wang*, 12 July. http://hxd.wenming.cn/blog/2013-07/12/content_184971.htm, accessed 31 January 2014.
- Lim, Louisa (2013) Chasing The Chinese Dream – If You Can Define It, *NPR*, 29 April. <http://www.npr.org/2013/04/29/179838801/chasing-the-chinese-dream-if-you-can-define-it>, accessed 29 January 2014.
- Mahoney, Josef Gregory (2014) Interpreting the Chinese Dream: An Exercise of Political Hermeneutics. *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 19: 15-34.
- Mao, Zedong (1967) Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership. In *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung, Vol. III*. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 117-122.
- Mittler, Barbara (2008) Popular Propaganda? Art and Culture in Revolutionary China. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 152(4): 466-489.
- Mittler, Barbara (2012) *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.
- Polumbaum, Judy (2003) Capturing the Flame: Aspirations and Representations of Beijing’s 2008 Olympics. In Lee, Chin-Chuan (ed.), *Chinese Media, Global Contexts*. London: Routledge Curzon, 57-75.
- Shi, Yongqi (2006) *Aoyun liyi* [Win manners, win games]. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe.
- Sigley, Gary (2009) *Suzhi*, the Body, and the Fortunes of Technoscientific Reasoning in Contemporary China. *positions* 17(3): 537-566.
- Xinhua (2008) Beijing 2008 Olympic Games Posters Available July 20. *Xinhuanet*, 18 July. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-07/18/content_8570590.htm, 18 July, accessed 31 January 2014.
- Xinhua (2013a) CPC’s ‘Mass Line’ Campaign Not a Short-term Movement. *News of the Communist Party of China*, <http://english.cpc.people.com.cn/206972/206976/8325279.html>, 15 July, accessed 5 January 2015.
- Xinhua (2013b) *People’s Daily* Editorial Stresses Stronger Ties with Masses. *News of the Communist Party of China*, 1 July. <http://english.cpc.people.com.cn/206972/206974/8305468.html>, accessed 5 January 2015.

- Xinhua (2013c) Xi Demands Implementation of 'Mass Line' Campaign. *People's Daily Online*, 10 December. <http://en.people.cn/90785/8479207.html>, accessed 5 January 2015.
- Xinhua (2014) Chinese Dream. *Xinhuanet*. <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/special/chinesedream/>, accessed 31 January 2014.
- Yan, Grace, and Santos, Carla Alameida (2009) 'China, Forever': Tourism Discourse and Self-Orientalism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 36(2): 295-315.
- Yi, Qing (2013) *Shi hua Zhongguo meng* [The Chinese Dream in poems and images]. Beijing: Hongqi chubanshe.
- Zhonggong dangshi zhuyao shijian jianjie* [Short introduction to important events in the history of the CCP] (1982). Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe.
- Zhou, Yong, Ap, John, and Bauer, Thomas (2012) Government Motivations for Hosting the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 10(2): 185-201.

About the author

Stefan Landsberger

Associate Professor of Contemporary Chinese History and Social Developments at the School of Asian Studies, Leiden University Institute of Area Studies

S.R.Landsberger@hum.leidenuniv.nl

<http://chineseposters.net>

Stefan R. Landsberger has one of the largest private collections of Chinese propaganda posters in the world. He has published widely on topics related to Chinese propaganda, and maintains an extensive website exclusively devoted to this genre of political communications.

