



LUND UNIVERSITY

Applications of Cultural Analysis in Marketing in a Mainland Chinese Context

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Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences
TKAM01 - Spring 2010**

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Abstract

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Although China is changing rapidly, Chinese values and culture change much slower than economic statistics. Simultaneously, interests in culture have grown dramatically in marketing study and practice worldwide, however culture is by and large the least investigated part in terms of marketing in mainland China. Therefore, how can cultural analysis be employed for marketing to map and understand the Chinese young adults? And what contributions can it make to marketing in mainland China?

Through investigation of two cases targeting Chinese youth, this thesis aims to provide insights into applying cultural analysis in the Chinese context. Hence the distinguishing contributions that cultural analysis can make to marketing become evident. The first case, Branding Green Copenhagen in mainland China will present the practice of analyzing culture and reflections on transnational marketing. The second case, investigation of China Youthology will illustrate an application of cultural analysis which reflects the indigenous marketing. Drawing from the analyses of two cases, along with interviews of four experienced cultural analysis practitioners, this thesis will discuss ethnography as the core research method and distinguishing contributions of cultural analysis.

Cultural analysis provides a thick description through the investigation of a nuanced and detailed culturally constructed world, as well as, individual actions. It serves to attain a cross-cultural understanding at both the transnational and intra-national level. As a result, cultural analysts can make contributions to marketing using various skills, such as: data organization and qualitative research, ability to uncover the cultural meaning in context, and the flexibility to revise ideas as new meanings emerge. With some adjustments to Chinese context, cultural analysis will play an important role in mapping and revealing the meaning of culture for the practice of marketing in the mainland Chinese context.

Keywords: cultural analysis; Chinese young adults; marketing; ethnography; mainland Chinese context; applying cultural analysis.

Acknowledgments

This thesis is the outcome of a two-year study, resulting in: dreams and loneliness, reading and thinking, traveling and conducting fieldwork, writing and rewriting. During these two years, many people have assisted me, either through school or in fieldwork. I would like to give my warmest thanks to all of them in general and to some of them in particular. Without the inspiring discussions I have enjoyed with them, however, this thesis would never come about.

-To my supervisors, Professor Lars Eric Jönsson and Professor Hakån Jönsson for their inspiring, responsible and patient guidance through the whole process of writing.

-To Professor Tom O'Dell for his initial encouragement and inspiration on my orientation.

-To my distinguishing informants, Doctor Karina Graffman, CEO of InCulture, Mr. Mads Holme, senior consultant and manager of RedAssociates, Ms. Helen Yu, research manager of China Youthology and Mr. Aske Juul Lassen, lecturer of Copenhagen University, for their kind support.

-To China Youthology, the anonymous corporation for whom this case study was undertaken, and especially Ms Helen Yu for her constant support.

-To all my classmates of MACA08, especially Murevet Irem Sirin, Zhang Jing, and Li Jia for their kind reading and comments on the manuscript.

-To my friends Jasmine Talei and Zhang Jing for their kind and careful proofreading.

I would also like to express my gratitude for all the teachers in MACA program. Their dedication to creating a bridge to connect academics and the business world is greatly appreciated. They have served as my inspirational guide on this journey through cultural analysis. Special thanks to my husband, Zheng Peng. I love him and I apologize for my absence during the past two years. I dedicate this thesis to him although he deserves much more.

Lund, 2010-05-27

Gong Yubei

Table of contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of contents	iv
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The problem and the study objectives	1
1.2 Methodology	3
1.3 Reader's Guide	4
2 CULTURAL ANALYSES	5
2.1 Exploration of cultural analysis	5
2.2 The field of study of cultural analysis in mainland China	11
3 MARKETING	13
3.1 Marketing in general	13
3.2 The previous studies of YA market in mainland China	16
4 CASE STUDIES	19
4.1 Branding "Green Copenhagen in mainland China"	19
4.1.1 The practice of research	19
4.1.2 Cultural analysis: towards cross-cultural understanding in transnational marketing	29
4.2 A domestic story of China Youthology: A model for applying cultural analysis in mainland China?	33
4.2.1 Introduction to China Youthology	34
4.2.2 Cultural analysis: towards cross-cultural understanding in indigenous marketing	37
5 ANALYSES	41
5.1 Reflections on conducting ethnography in marketing research	41
5.2 Distinguishing contributions of applying cultural analysis to marketing	47
6 CONCLUSIONS	52
REFERENCES	57
ENDNOTES	67

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The problem and the study objectives

Culture as it determines people's perspective and influences people's behavior is the platform on which a brand equity and market position stand. Though an examination of the contents of ABI-Inform, one of the largest business literature databases, shows that interests in culture has grown dramatically (Nakata, 2009, p. 5), it is by and large the least investigated part of the marketing process (see Nakata and Bilgin, 2009). They reached this conclusion after assessing 587 articles in leading scholarly periodicals with respect to marketing and international business. At the same time, most marketers acknowledge that "branding and market position are both outcomes of, and makers for, cultural position, which is the grounding value of products, services, ideas, and experiences" (Cultural Studies & Analysis, 2006). This deficiency as well as the importance of culture in marketing calls for a combination of cultural analysis in marketing process.

Cultural analysis serves to figure out the underpinning values by seeking to understand and map trends, influences, effects and affects within cultures through streams of investigation. In terms of the concept of culture, it is like "a black hole in which we become intellectually immobilized unless we are first careful to define the terms in which we wish to analyze it" (Moeran, 2003, p. 88). For cultural analysis which follows the tradition of cultural anthropology/ethnology and adopts ethnographic methods, culture is infinitely divisible. The whole societies as well as different kinds of organizations, business corporations, communities and even soccer teams have its culture. What's more, culture is infinitely flexible. Its meaning is always being negotiated and renegotiated by those involved (Moeran, 2003, p. 88). The identical view is hold by Patricia L. Sunderland and Rita M. Denny that there have been strong efforts against cultural essentialism. Individuals (or groups) are not pawns of the social or the cultural; rather, they are simultaneously its agents and its pawns, its creators and its destroyers, its advocates and its adversaries (2007, p. 14). Therefore, culture can be best analyzed in the context and in the discourse between related actors. In this thesis, cultural analysis will be applied in the context of mainland China to understand the Chinese young adults (YA) and hence explore its meaning for marketing. By marketing, its concept and process will be presented in general and the YA market in particular to serve as a background for this thesis.

The objective of this thesis is to look into the application of methods and theories of cultural analysis in association with marketing to young adults in mainland China. Hence, the distinguishing contributions that cultural analysis can make to marketing become evident. The expected readers of

this thesis are marketing researchers, analysts, and consultants whose field is in mainland China. All in all, this thesis is based on case studies. It analyzes an empirical case from author's previous project and a domestic case of China Youthology. After analyses of both cases in relation to the interviews of experienced cultural analysis practitioners, the practice of ethnography and application of cultural analysis in marketing will be discussed.

The study target group is the Chinese young adults (YA) who are generally persons between the ages of 20 and 40. However, the age limitation varies from different authorities. For this thesis, the young adults reduce to those who age from 20 to 30, born between 1980 and 1989. They are often called the after 80's generation in mainland China or China's Generation Y (Michael Stanat, 2006). Choosing this target group for the following two reasons:

- a. Demographically, they have a large population, more than 200 million (Stanat, 2006, p. XV). What's more, they make up about 50% of the country's current working-age population (Lynton & Thogersen, 2010). They are a very promising generation in terms of the purchasing capacity and social influences.
- b. Two turning points in mainland China make them totally different from the previous generations. One is the only one child policy carried out in 1978 and another is the open door policy in 1979. They experience and witness tremendous social and economic change from a socialist producer economy to a capitalistic consumer economy. They are a brand new generation.

The research question of this thesis is how cultural analysis can be employed for marketing to map and understand the young adults (YA) and what contributions it can make for marketing in a mainland Chinese context. Culture and marketing are very broad concept and practices. In order to explore the answer for the research questions, few sub-questions have to be asked.

Sub-question 1: What is the situation of the study of cultural analysis in mainland China?

Sub-question 2: How has the YA market been studied?

Sub-question 3: How can cultural analysis be applied into understanding the young adults?

Sub-question 4: What can distinguish the practice of cultural analysis from other disciplines in marketing?

Sub-question 5: What are the challenges and opportunities for application of cultural analysis in marketing in mainland China?

1.2 Methodology

Applying cultural analysis in marketing practice is a three-layered communication. As figure 1.2 illustrates, cultural analysis as a bridge connects the communication among each section through understanding each part by various investigations. The first layered communication is a one-way communication, that is, it collects data from consumers and marketplace. Cultural analysts analyze them and give feedback to them through the marketing practice by the marketers. The second layered communication is a mutual communication with marketers. Cultural analysts understand marketers and help them understand the consumers and marketplace. The third layered communication is the one between the marketer and consumer/marketplace. They seldom talk directly; instead cultural analysts as a bridge communicate between them. Then, marketers reply to consumers and marketplace through marketing practice. Obviously, the three-layered communication is crucial for a successful marketing practice. Cultural analysis serves as a bridge to connect the consumer and marketplace with marketer and makes sure the first two layered communication fluent, whereas it cannot guarantee the effective communication in the third layer, that is, between the marketer and consumer/marketplace for it does not participate in the implementation process. These communications also indicate the fact that cultural analysis is especially applicable and valuable in marketing research which helps provide the facts and direction that marketers need to make their marketing decisions.

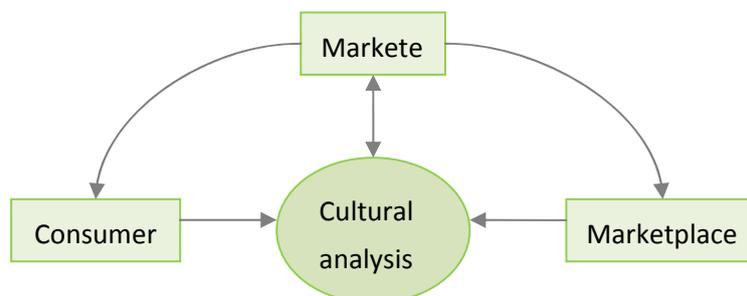


Figure 1.2 Communication among each section

To conduct marketing research, cultural analysts carry out various investigations. Similar to other market researchers with a background in fields such as marketing and sociology, cultural analysts have adopted the qualitative approach. Since this thesis is based on case studies, desk research is the primary method. For the first case, Branding Green Copenhagen, the author employs in-depth interviews and an online survey research. For the second case, China Youthology, the author adopts desk research to analyze its narratives and products. Besides, four interviews with ethnographers from China Youthology¹, Inculture² and Red Associates³ are conducted, presenting a picture of the practice of ethnography as well as indications for carrying out ethnographic research in marketing.

1.3 Reader's Guide

This thesis has been organized, first with the aim of developing a theoretical framework utilizing previous studies and related literature in cultural analysis and marketing. Moreover, this thesis will examine two cases. Chapter one explains the objective, research questions and methods, and receivers of this thesis. Chapter two centers on cultural analysis and discusses its situation in mainland China. In Chapter three, a general picture of the whole marketing system is presented, in particular, previous studies of the Chinese YA market. Chapter four is devoted to case studies. Presentation and reflection on two cases are presented respectively. The first case discusses the practice of cultural analysis in transnational marketing, whereas the second one investigates a domestic case, China Youthology, in order to gain insight into the application of cultural analysis in indigenous marketing. Then in chapter five, insights from the analyses of the two cases in association with interviews with four experienced cultural analysis practitioners are delineated concerning the practice of ethnography and the distinguishing contribution of cultural analysis to marketing. In the last chapter, challenges and opportunities are attended for practicing cultural analysis in a mainland Chinese context.

2 CULTURAL ANALYSES

2.1 Exploration of cultural analysis

In order to apply cultural analysis, the foremost aspect is to clarify the essence of it. Next, it is important to determine the types of theories utilized to guide the analysis, and the kinds of methods employed in investigation. It's very interesting to notice that many universities in Europe and the United States provide master programs for cultural analysis. In UK, one year full-time Master of Arts in Media and Cultural Analysis in Loughborough University aims to offer "a comprehensive understanding of social sciences media and cultural analysis"⁴. Social and Cultural analysis (SCA) in New York University in United States clarifies itself that SCA "is trans disciplinary in nature. It combines topics and methods drawn from the humanities and social science to analyze the relationships among individuals, groups, institutions, governments, economies, and environments"⁵. In Netherland, Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) in University of Amsterdam provides a two-year master program to dedicate "to the interdisciplinary analysis of culture at large"⁶. A jointed program Master of Applied Cultural Analysis (MACA) by Lund University in Sweden and Copenhagen University in Demark follows the tradition of anthropology/ethnology. MACA makes it quite clear that it is a "hands-on programme that will teach you how to conduct cultural analysis, solving concrete problems in corporations, public institutions and NGO's. You will be trained in ethnographic field work, in organizing projects and communicating results"⁷. These classifications in different universities indicate that cultural analysis is a new and developing field; moreover it reveals at least the essence of cultural analysis, the interdisciplinary characteristics. Cultural analysis alone can be the tool to understand and map trends, influences, effects and affects within cultures; or it can be combined with other disciplines like media or social sciences to better understand a specific area. To understand the emerging field of study, a comparison to cultural study and cultural anthropology will shed some light on it. The following will present a general introduction of each discipline and the comparisons afterwards.

Cultural Study can be traced back to 1950s when it appeared as a field of study in Great Britain out of left-Leavisism, a form of literary studies named after F.R. Leavis. Then Richard

Hoggart further developed the study by founding the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (henceforth CCCS) (During, 2007) and brought social analysis – sociology – into alignment with Leavisite literary criticism. In the 1970s, cultural study was forged as a discipline by CCCS (Saukko, Paula, 2003, p. 4), which has its origin in literary studies and authorized a focus upon popular culture as an "object" worthy of academic study. In 1992, the journal *Cultural Studies*, edited by Larry Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler, begins by claiming that cultural studies is “an interdisciplinary, trans-disciplinary, and sometimes counter-disciplinary field that operates in the tension between its tendencies to embrace both a broad, anthropological and a more narrowly humanistic conception of culture. It is thus committed to the study of the entire range of a society’s arts, beliefs, institutions, and communicative practices” (1992, p. 4). This statement embraces almost everything in this discipline, just as Jonathan Culler commented that “its defining principle is to resist exclusion on principle, as a matter of principle” (1999, p. 336). No matter what, “one of the aims of this discipline is to understand culture in its relation to power. It analyzes the various social and political structures of different countries and how they interact with the world as a whole” (Crystal, n.d.). It explores “the historical possibilities of transforming people’s lives by trying to understand the relationships of power within which individual realities are constructed” (Lawrence, 2005). And it “examines the role of representation in language, image, and text as both productive and reflective of cultural power relations” (Goldberg & Greenberg, 2004, para. 6). Though cultural study has become a popular course at universities and colleges worldwide, this young discipline remains a “highly contested field of intellectual debate and self-revision” (Cultural Studies, n.d.).

Cultural anthropology or ethnology is one branch of anthropology (the holistic study of humanity), which investigates how variation in the beliefs and behaviors of members of different human groups is shaped by culture, sets of learned behaviors and ideas that human beings acquire as members of society (Lavenda & Schultz, 2007, p. 4). “While some anthropologists make it their career to scour the earth for eons-old human remains, cultural anthropologists study social structures and living habits of peoples and cultures around the world” (Gansle, n.d.). One of its distinguishing characteristics is that the anthropologists have to spend an extended period of time at the research location which is called fieldwork. They live with indigenous groups to study their entire way of life. They study how people within the culture dress, how they maintain oral hygiene, what they eat, how

they dispose of solid waste, their religious rituals, interrelations between families and those of the opposite sex, how they obtain their food and their indigenous land rights (Gansle, n.d.). Moreover, cultural anthropologists often specialize even further into various sub-fields of anthropology, such as health and medicine, business and industry, education and so on. The specialization in a particular field requires the anthropologists to master the language of the related field as well. Modern cultural anthropology has its origins in, and developed in reaction to, 19th century ethnology. Or even now, some scholars view cultural anthropology the synonym as ethnology. Cultural anthropology roots in theories from the evolutionism and historical particularism in the 19th century, to the functionalism and structuralism in the 20th century, from neomaterialism to ecology at present (McGee, R. Jon & Warms, Chard, C, 2007). These theories are not exclusive to anthropology; instead they are the theoretical tradition for anthropology, linguistics, social sciences and cultural studies.

Based on the work of Berger, Douglas, Foucault, and Habermas, culture is a “distinct aspect of social reality, the patterns of which are subject to observation and theoretical interpretation”. Therefore, cultural analysis is “the study of the symbolic-expressive dimension of social life”. The subject matter of cultural analysis is in the objective acts, events, utterances, and objects of social interaction. “The appropriate level of analysis is the patterns among these artifacts of interaction, rather than efforts to reduce culture either to the internal states of individuals or to the material conditions of societies” (Wuthnow et al, 1991, p. 259). Mieke Bal explained “as a critical practice. It is based on a keen awareness of the critic’s situatedness in the present, the social and cultural present from which we look, and look back, at the objects that are always already of the past, objects that we take to define our present culture”, thus she summarized it with a phrase “cultural memory in the present” (1999, p. I). Therefore, cultural analysis differs from cultural study in that it gives emphasis to the study of culture dynamics. It explores the questions such as how a certain culture adapts to its surroundings through the use of its culture, how the given culture makes the environment more accommodating, how the given culture helps its members survive the environment or how the everyday culture is expressed and performed. Moreover, cultural analysis is not primarily focused on popular culture or on the present (Culler, 1999, p. 345). Instead it is “the reflection on the constitution of the past, the reflection on our own implication in the object of analysis” (1999, p. 339). In this sense, cultural analysis emphasizes a reflexive process. It must be constantly

questioning presuppositions—examining own assumptions and points of view and inquiring what we think we know and why we think we know it.

Cultural analysis, in association to the Master of Cultural Analysis (MACA), takes the approach of anthropological cultural analysis. Within anthropology, cultural analysis along with ethnography serves to understand sociocultural phenomena and practice. “‘Culture’ and ‘society’ are at the heart concepts with long histories, and long histories of disagreement among specialists (Sunderland & Denny, 2007, p. 52). Cultural analysis has always been an analytical approaching point to a question. As an independent field of study, cultural analysis differs from cultural anthropology in its emphasis on analysis. For one thing, it is not a must to make long-term participant observation in the field to do a good cultural analysis. Its analysis can be done by doing “close reading” of archives and cultural objects without going into the situated field. For another, “‘analysis’ gives precedence to detailed examination of cultural objects as they exist and function today, over historical reconstruction, causal explanation, or aesthetic periodization” (Bal’s study as cited in Neubauer, 1999, p. 287). In contrast, cultural anthropology stresses the empirical study of collecting data and recording them. A good cultural anthropological work can be a documentation of a certain cultural reality without analyzing it. In a word, cultural analysis shares a lot with cultural anthropology, but it focuses on analyzing data rather than recording them. Like cultural anthropology, the interdisciplinary requirement is indispensable for cultural analysis to “formulate the necessary articulations between transnational theories, disciplines and objects of study”⁸. It’s necessary for cultural analysts to engage their analysis in another discipline, which can be philosophy, physics, medicine, business and industry and so on. However, in terms of MACA, the applicability of cultural analysis is emphasized. Therefore, conducting fieldwork is a part of training in this program and other courses are combined with traditional ethnological training, such as project managements and communication with stockholders.

The relationship among cultural studies, cultural anthropology, sociology and cultural analysis is illustrated in figure 2.1. These three disciplines, namely, cultural study, cultural anthropology (or ethnology) and sociology are like three separate and overlap circles. They are independent discipline with distinguishing aim and study focuses, while they share some theories and methods in common.

And when culture is the focus for study, cultural analysis as an approach of investigation will be employed by all of them. Therefore, the grey colored part stands for cultural analysis which has been a part of each discipline as an analytical approach and maintains its distinctive emphasis on interdisciplinary analysis at the same time.

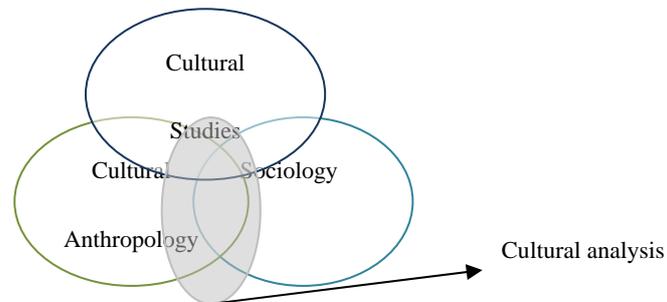


Figure 2.1 the relationship illustration

As cultural analysis is a new and developing field of study, its theories and methods have been defined and redefined. Like anthropology, “it would be difficult at any rate to find agreement about the purpose, theory and method” (Pink, 2006, p. 10) amongst all anthropologists. Since the founding of Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) in University of Amsterdam, the notion cultural analysis as a discipline has been doubted and critiqued. Fruchtl as a representative for a group of scholars expressed his uncertainty about this discipline, “for cultural analysis, like ‘cultural studies’ and (the German) Kulturwissenschaften, emerged in the last forty years (in the 1960s in Birmingham, as ‘new historicism’ in the 1970s/80s on the US-American west coast and finally in the 1990s), challenging the well established disciplines and trying to express something new”. He believed the new studies constitutively cannot be defined or express themselves “within the boundaries of a (single) discipline”, therefore they are anti-disciplinary while under the disguise of multi- or inter-disciplinarily, a discipline ‘in between’ (2008, p. 53). Mieke Bal responded to his doubt by refuting the notion of anti-discipline. For her, inter-discipline is not a way of anti-discipline. “It engages other disciplines, on their own terms, but it does so selectively” (2008, p. 66). Fruchtl criticized the concept of method and theory of cultural analysis which doesn’t have a ground in philosophy, while “philosophy is the expert of these concepts, cultural analysis indirectly also depends on philosophy” (2008, p. 54). Mieke Bal responded to his criticism first by explaining the status of philosophy in

relation to theory. She believed that “rather than considering philosophy as a master discourse, consisting of a body of canonical texts, cultural analysts have a much more flexible, mobile relation to philosophy. Philosophical texts are part of that large and, on principle, unbounded corpus of texts we call theory” (2008, p. 63). Then she delineated the point of theory in cultural analysis by quoting a text from Culler:

I have called theory the nickname for an unbounded corpus of works that succeed in challenging and reorienting thinking in domains other than those to which they ostensibly belong because their analyses of language, mind, history, or culture offer novel and persuasive accounts of signification, make strange the familiar, and perhaps persuade readers to conceive of their own thinking and the institutions to which it relates in new ways (as cited in Bal 2008, p. 63).

In their eyes, theory is unbounded and “hence not limited to a canon that conceals the open-endedness of theory, may appear to be intimidating, but it is precisely that intimidation that opens our minds” and makes the discourses we don’t know or understand become new understanding possible. Therefore philosophy is no longer a master-discourse, but just one partner in a discussion (2008, p. 63). In this sense, though “working past disciplinary lines is a wonderful idea - a wonderful, dangerous, expensive idea” (Germano, 1999, p. 333), the interdisciplinary characteristics make the theories for cultural analysis flexible. “Flexible” means there is no dominate theory for cultural analysis; instead it can employ theories from various disciplines, like philosophic thinking, psychological norms, business theories and so forth, as long as they can facilitate the analysis of culture. The MACA program as well as other programs related to cultural analysis takes the same standpoint. Their curriculum introduces theoretical traditions in humanities and social sciences which root in traditional philosophy and embraces contemporary theories of culture and society.

Though universities which provide cultural analysis study agree on the flexible theory strategy, they take different approach to conduct cultural analysis which can be reflected in their teaching staff, curriculum and the name of the program itself. For ASCA, it brings together scholars active in literature, philosophy, the fine arts and popular culture, comparative religion and cultural anthropology. For Loughborough University in UK, cultural analysis is closely related to media as

the program called Media and Cultural Analysis. In New York University, the Social and Cultural Analysis program (SCA) houses and integrates sub-programs in Africana Studies, American Studies, Asian/Pacific/American Studies, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Latino Studies, and Metropolitan Studies. For MACA, both Lund University and Copenhagen University train their students in ethnographic fieldwork and put great emphasis on the practice. In any case, the concept of culture has assumed enormous importance in our understanding of the interrelations between social, political and economic structures, patterns of everyday interaction, and systems of meaning-making. Cultural analysis is aiming at understanding this interrelations, structures and everyday patterns. As a MACA student, the writer of this thesis will discuss the application of cultural analysis based on the MACA guidance following the anthropological tradition.

2.2 The field of study of cultural analysis in mainland China

Cultural analysis alike cultural study is an exotic subject in mainland China where there is no single program or discipline in the universities called cultural analysis or cultural study. Whereas, they exist as a course for other programmes and disciplines. In the most prestige university, Beijing University, cultural study is a course for Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies. Most universities provide cultural study course to majors in language and literature with an emphasis on cross-cultural analysis. It stagnates in the structure of literature-cultural study/criticism. Moreover, mass culture separates from cultural studies, and belongs to communication and media study.

The reason for the under-development of cultural study let alone the new trend in cultural analysis lies in historical, social, political and ideological contexts. First of all, cultural study as well as cultural analysis is an interdisciplinary study which demands the knowledge of other disciplines as well. However, many disciplines in social sciences and humanities are of a sluggish growth. Let's take cultural anthropology as an example. In 1916, a book entitled *An Introduction to Anthropology* was published in China 13 years after the term cultural anthology occurred in the United States. "During the 1930's and 40's cultural anthropology developed very rapidly in China. However, by 1949, after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, cultural anthropology was labeled a 'bourgeois social science' and thus was eliminated as an academic field of study" (Tong, 1996, para. 2). Many disciplines in social sciences were closed down. From 1978 on, "slight changes and

reforms have been on the way, while there was some lifting of restrictions and less necessity to conform to the established ideology” (1996, para. 3). However, social science and humanities still have been dominated by the Marxian philosophy. Though many scholars try to adopt multiple theoretical perspectives, the Communist Party of China requires the whole society including the academic field insist on four cardinal principles, namely, “insist on Marxism and Mao Zedong's thought; insist on socialism; insist on the leadership of the communist party; insist on proletarian dictatorship” (1996, para. 17). This principle of political correctness can be best illustrated in many reports, for example, *THIRTY YEARS OF STUDIES ON ETHNOLOGY IN CHINA* (2008) published by academic authority, CASS (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences). However, it is more like a book to praise the great leadership of the communist party than a book to summarize the works done in the thirty years. Inevitably, this political correctness hinders academic development.

Historically, “traditional Chinese intellectuals believe that learning is for use. In other words, if you study something, you have to apply it in practice; otherwise acquisition of knowledge is futile and unnecessary” (Wang, 2006, p. 70). Therefore, some disciplines which have practical or economic values develop dramatically in mainland China. Whereas disciplines in Social Sciences and Humanities creep along the direction carved out by western scholars slowly. This can be best exemplified by the government guiding principle. Many times, Premier Wen Jiabao stressed that “economic growth should take precedence over democratic reforms for the foreseeable future; a period that he appeared to indicate could stretch to 100 years” (Elegant Simon, 2007). In mainland China, the economic growth weight much heavier than the social development. Therefore, it's not surprise that Social Sciences and Humanity studies lag behind.

3 MARKETING

As mentioned above, though culture determines people's perspective and influences people's behavior, it is most often the least understood part of the marketing process. Many have come to be aware that "branding and market position are both outcomes of, and markers for, cultural position, which is the grounding value of products, services, ideas, and experiences" (Cultural Studies & Analysis, 2006). In order to apply cultural analysis into marketing, a general comprehension of marketing is necessary and in particular, the Chinese YA market will be reviewed from previous studies.

3.1 Marketing in general

Marketing is a complex and crucial practice for the success of a product and further the success of a company. In this chapter, it is not going to cover all aspects of marketing process; instead it will present a general picture of which is closely related to the aim of applying cultural analysis. Therefore, three concepts are introduced, that is, the definition of marketing, the process of marketing and interaction between marketing and culture.

Marketing is managing profitable customer relationships. The two fold goal of marketing is to attract new customers by promising superior value and to keep and grow current customers by delivering satisfaction (Armstron & Kotler, 2009, p. 37). Broadly defined, "marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large" (AMA. 2007). Today, marketing is transferring from 'use'-value-centred past to a more 'sign'-value-centred present (Gay & Pryke, 2002). Marketing of goods and service is a meaning making process. It tries to create meaning for goods and services and at the same time caters to receivers' meaning taking. Therefore, analyzing culture come to the fore for marketing study and cultural analysis can play an important role in achieving the goal of creating meaning for customers and of mapping and understanding the meaning consumption (customer).

Marketing process, in practice, can be segmented into the following five steps, which is based on Armstrong and Kotler (Armstrong & Kotler, 2009, Figure 1.6) and Market Planning (Marketing teacher, 2000). The detailed segments in marketing are presented in Figure 3.1.1. Regarding cultural analysis, the analysts may observe and analyze the interactions among companies, marketplace and customers during the implementation process; their suggestions may influence the conducting of plans; however they don't take part in actions. Cultural analysis is most applicable in the first two processes, namely, Analysis and Strategy. Nowadays, cultural analysis is also more and more employed in the process of product and service design.

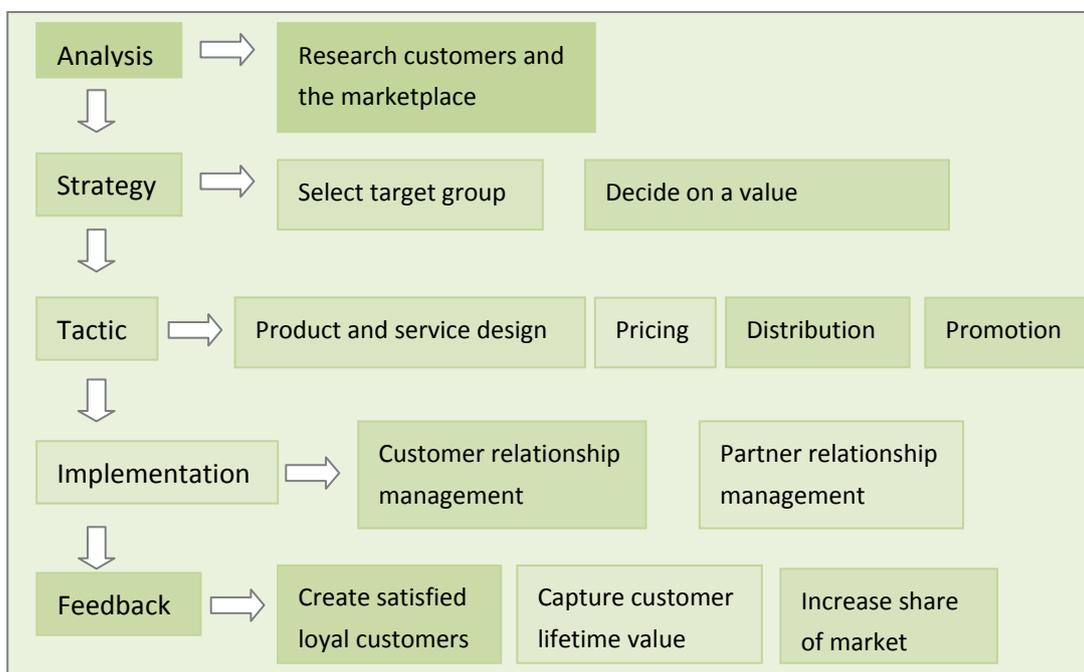


Figure 3.1.1 Model of the marketing process. Adapted from *Marketing: An Introduction* (9th. ed.) by Armstrong, Gary & Kotler, Philip, 2009, Pearson Prentice Hall.

Marketing interacting with culture. It is a tradition that employing cultural analysis in marketing especially in transnational settings. In this tradition, culture is viewed mainly to play the role of an externally given antecedent variable that explains similarity and difference among national markets and, hence, provides the foundation for the differentiation or generalization of various marketing activities (Askegaard, Kjeldgaard and Arnould, 2009, p.101). Most often, this view is based on a Hofstede tradition that helps and predicts the problems or potential misunderstandings

arising from different cultural backgrounds in a marketing exchange relation. In 1980, Geert Hofstede published his study *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values* based on survey study of 88,000 employees in 72 countries (an updated version encompasses an additional ten countries and three regions in 2001). In this study, Hofstede put forth “a new and parsimonious conceptualization of culture, accompanied by measurements and indexed”; further, he proposed five universal values occurring to varying degrees in each country: individualism, masculinity, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation. “The framework translated the rather amorphous idea of culture into a tractable construct amenable to empirical research” (Taras & Steel, 2009, p. 3).

Another mainstream cultural framework applied in transnational marketing is Hall's (1976) high and low context view. As an anthropologist, Hall used secondary data, personal interviews and direct observations of group and individual behaviors in Japan, the United States, England and other countries. In his view, “high-context groups prefer complex, embedded, indirect forms of messaging (e.g., silence); whereas low-context persons emphasize direct, expressive, and transparent styles (e.g., verbal repartee)” (Nakata & Bilgin, 2009, p. 71). This cultural framework commonly appears in international marketing and business textbooks.

Triandis's (1989) theory of individualism-collectivism ranks third after Hofstede (1980, 2001) and Hall (1976), according to Nakata and Bilgin's assessment on the frequency of cultural theories in global marketing research. Triandis argues that cultures can reflect the dominant individual personality in a society, specifically preferences for sampling information. For a society sharing individualistic culture, they prefer to sample information about themselves; if most attend to information about others or the self in relation to others, the society has a collectivist culture (2009, p. 71). Another two cultural frameworks appears quite often in marketing (applicable to transnational marketing) are theories of linguistic relativity by Whorf and McCracken's (1986) cultural categories of time, space, nature and person as the fundamental coordinates of meaning that organize the phenomenal world.

With a picture of marketing environment in mind, the process of conducting its research is illustrated in Figure 3.2.1., which explains clearly how cultural analysts carry out their research.

Ideally, the entire process is conducted by the cooperation of company's marketing section and researchers. However, in most cases, the marketing section of a company only takes part in the first stage which begins with a problem and the last stage that is to present the solution. For the researchers, they develop concrete plan for solving the program, outline sources of existing data, make specific research approaches and choose study sample and instruments. Then they put all plans into actions. After analyzing the data collected in the actions, they translate the insights into solutions and present to the company's marketing section. Usually, a marketing research is confined by the time and budget. However, the field of business is different from the academic field which sometimes spends decades to conduct a research. Therefore, there is hardly any perfect marketing research in business and at the same time the business world has been constantly changing. This situation is in return the reason for extensive and continual marketing research.

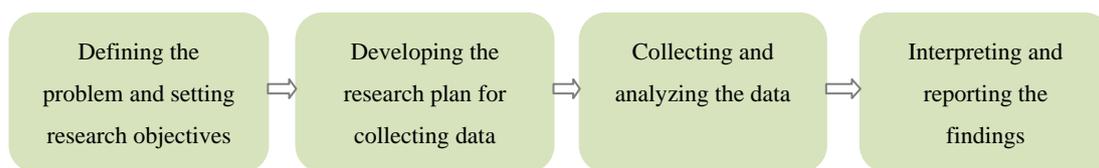


Figure 3.1.2 The marketing research process. Adapted from *Marketing: An Introduction* (9th. ed.) by Armstrong, Gary & Kotler, Philip, 2009, Pearson Prentice Hall.

3.2 The previous studies of YA market in mainland China

As mentioned in Introduction, the young adults are those who age from 20 to 30, born between 1980 and 1989. They are often called the after 80's generation or China's Generation Y. However, compared to western countries, generation study is a quite new phenomenon in mainland China. Most studies about this generation have been done by foreign organizations and authors. Few indigenous studies can be found. Considering their young age and purchasing ability, the market is promising. And the study of the young people can teach lesson for the study of younger generation since they share some characteristics in common. Therefore, the employment of cultural analysis will contribute to marketing to the young adults.

The constructed image of this generation has been altering. During the advancing years, "they have been branded spoilt, materialistic and self-centered and accused of lacking a sense of social

responsibility” (Wang, 2009). But those opinions have all but been reversed by an eventful 2008 in which they came under the spotlight not only during the worldwide Olympic torch relay, but also during the Beijing Games and volunteered to boost earthquake relief efforts following the May 12 disaster in Sichuan Province. “Now many are dubbing them patriotic, persistent, caring and responsible. So which is the real after-80s generation” (Wang, 2009)?

Many studies have been done aiming to help understand the generation as a whole, or gain insights for better management, or get marketing tips. The different approaches to looking into them will help understand this generation. Generation study has a long tradition in western countries, which concerns the generation characteristics and differences with other generations. Many terms arise like the World War II Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, Millennials (Arnsperger, 2008) and General A (Douglas Coupland, 2009). Born in the same period, with the similar social, economic and political influence, one generation does share something in common and hence differentiates from others. In this perspective, there are popular 100 characteristics (Game, 2009) of 80’s generation. It is concluded by Wang that they are patriotic, independent, Internet savvy with diversified opinions. They are also rebellious and critical of things at home and abroad. They don’t accept injustice or unfairness. They are focusing on trying to establish themselves, trying to find jobs and scraping together enough money to buy their first car or house. They live in a constant competition environment (2009).

Management study is another approach to understanding these young people. Arnsperger (2008) clarified the workplace characteristics of different generations in USA and hence presented suggestions of how to recruit and retain each generation. Follow suit, many studies in management pay attention to this generation. For example, IBM Universum and Egon Zehnder International presented a research report for HR managers (2008) to understand and manage China’s Generation Y. In this report, it studies the workplace characteristics of them, their need, and the management strategies. Four concrete suggestions are provided: creating conditions to help maintain the balance between work and life; giving Gen-Y employees’ promotions or a change of job functions every two years; providing competitive pay and additional housing subsidies and establishing idols. Likewise,

Deloitte China concluded from their research about managing 80's generation that a flexible management is advisable (Miao & Zheng, 2009).

Most of marketing studies also come from foreign organizations and authors. The first book about this generation, *China's Generation Y*, written by Michael Stnat in 2005, introduces the China's young people to people outside of China. William J. McEwen paints the statistic picture of this generation in *Marketing to China's 'Generation Y'* (2005). In contrast, the indigenous coverage of them mostly concern their living and working situation. As the first generation who have to pay education tuition, afford the accommodation whose price is extremely high now by themselves, find their own job instead of former school's allocation, they are under extremely pressure. The social and economic transformation is an opportunity as well as a challenge for this young generation and the same to the practice of marketing. In the following cases in Chapter 4, cultural analysis will be applied in marketing research for this YA market. And the distinguishing contributions that cultural analysis makes will become clear.

4 CASE STUDIES

Previous studies have been done in mapping these young adults. In this chapter, they will be investigated as the subject as well as the context for the practice of cultural analysis. For the first case, “Branding Green Copenhagen in mainland China” gives a clear narrative of the way of applying cultural analysis in transnational marketing study. The second case, study of China Youthology will tell a domestic story and discuss the application of cultural analysis in indigenous marketing research.

4.1 Branding “Green Copenhagen in mainland China”

4.1.1 The practice of research

In 2009, the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP 15 was held in Copenhagen, which brought Green Copenhagen to the fore. Wonderful Copenhagen (WoCo), the official tourism site of Copenhagen has been trying to make a green image of Copenhagen since then. They introduce the green environment, green accommodation, green transportation and green energy and their aim is to make Copenhagen the leading environmental capital in 2015. How can they realize their dream? Will other countries like China pay for the “green” concept? Several groups of MACA students from both Lund University and Copenhagen University took part in their research. One group tried to answer the question of green transportation, presented concrete suggestions, and even drew a Green Map for cyclers. Another group focused on the Green Accommodation, did fieldwork in various green hotels and brought forward suggestions. My team looked into the Chinese outbound tourists and explored their understanding and expectation for Green Copenhagen.

According to the product life cycle (PLC) theory (Armstron & Kotler, 2009, p. 278), this project is on the second stage of a product (here refers to Green Copenhagen): introduction. In this stage, we don’t initiate a project to see whether green and Copenhagen matches each other or what color that the Chinese associate with Copenhagen; instead, we are expected to figure out how to bring this green concept to the Chinese. In other words, as cultural analysts, we should interpret the Chinese culture to WoCo; and present suggestions for translating the concept that WoCo wants to build to Chinese context. My team, made up of three Chinese girls, planed the project together with the same aim, research questions and schedule. Due to different background, each of us explored a

specific area to answer the research question. For Jiao Dan⁹, she was a tour guide in Copenhagen and has connections with tour agencies; therefore, she was assigned to analyze the Chinese outbound group tourists. Zhang Jing¹⁰, with background in media, focused on the image production and perception of Copenhagen. Because of previous teaching experience, I have many connections with young adults; thus I select the independent Chinese outbound tourists as my target group.

After making the general project plan, each team member made her own sub-plan. For the independent outbound Chinese tourists, the overall objective is to present a better understanding of them and the version of Green Tourism which they expect, and hence make suggestions of how to create a distinctive Green Copenhagen image targeting them. To obtain this goal, research questions were defined and plan for collecting data was designed.

In terms of independent tourists, they refer to free and independent travelers who prefer to travel in small groups or typically as individuals. They eschew mass tourism and the package holiday concept promoted by travel or tour agencies, in favor of a more individualistic and fluid approach to travel. The independent Chinese outbound tourists are young people mostly below 35 years old. The number of independent Chinese outbound tourists has been increasing rapidly especially after 2005 due to the wider range of destination choices and the growth of family income. There are other reasons like the rise of low cost airlines in Europe and convenience of information searching because of the internet offering suggestions and ideas. For example, a hostel recommendation in France from a fellow independent tourist, across the globe, who has been there yesterday can be relayed and sourced instantly.

Independent tourists are different from those taking part in the organized group tour; they make travel plans and carry them out independently. Three reasons for choosing this group of people for a) little knowledge about them compared to the study of the group tour; b) increasing number of individuals going abroad for various reasons- business, education, leisure, etc.; c) young (under age 35). According to the Tax Free World Association-ACNielsen (TFWA-ACNielsen) 2005 survey, “36% of the Chinese outbound travel population is dominated by individuals between 20 to 29 years of age” (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2004b). They “are potentially a more ‘showy’ generation who are more ‘adventurous’ than mature respondents (age 35+). [...] This is the upcoming generation who will become the main Chinese travel market” (Sparks & Pan, 2009, p. 483). What’s more, they are

present or future elites who are able to influence Chinese mainstream. In other words, their travel experience and opinions will influence the mainstream opinions toward a travel destination.

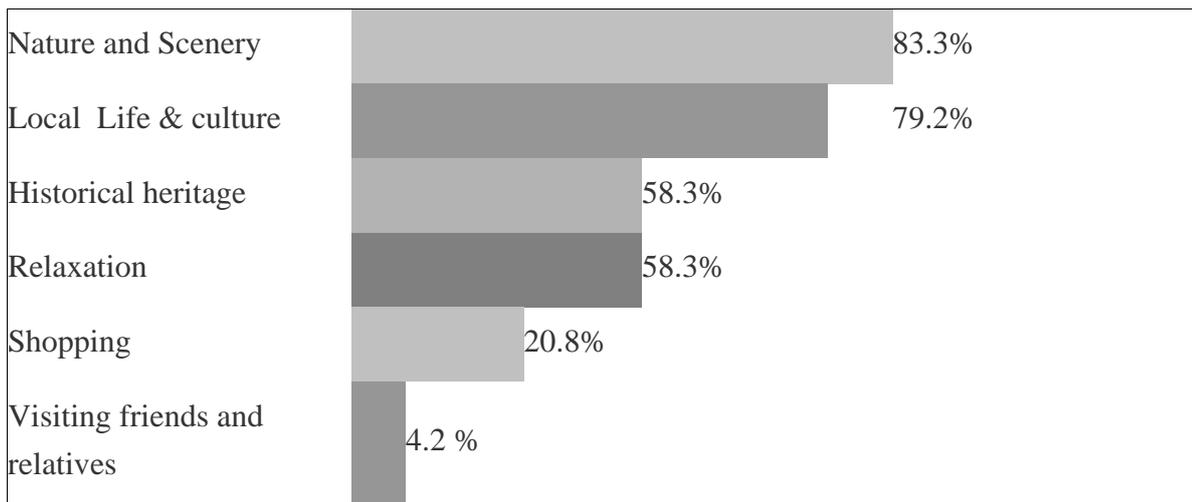
Data were collected through a mix of desk research and qualitative approach, especially ethnographic method. The first thing was to review the former studies and reports to have a general picture of what Copenhagen looks like in Chinese tourists' mind and how Copenhagen has been branding itself in China. Unfortunately, there is no indigenous report about the Chinese tourists in Copenhagen. The materials that I collected come from foreign studies, like the journal article and agency reports. For example, China White Paper (2006) from STB (Scandinavian Tourist Board) made detailed and extensive study about the Chinese tourists and presented the results in 144 figures and 21 tables. WoCo did its own research on the Chinese tourists who come to Europe. Its report includes the amount of money that Chinese tourists spend in Copenhagen, the attractions for them, their impression of Copenhagen, and so on. "Essentially, Copenhagen fulfilled their expectations" (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2004b). However, there are some reservations. According to WoCo: "1) Chinese tourists are impressed by the historical architecture of the city but do not find the European heritage to be as rich and exciting as other European cities, such as Rome, Paris or London. 2) They find their experiences have been hindered by language. There are few signs marked in Chinese. 3) Hans Christian Andersen is a significant figure to them but they could not experience him or his fairy tales in Copenhagen" (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2004b).

WoCo's study's target group is those who have been to Copenhagen, which presents a half picture of how the Chinese perceive Copenhagen. However, how do those who haven't been to Copenhagen perceive it? What is the image of Copenhagen in independent tourists' mind? What's more, there is no mention of Green Copenhagen in those reports. How to convey Green Copenhagen in Chinese market? How can we make sure the idea of Green Copenhagen appeal to the Chinese, in my case, to the independent Chinese tourists? To solve the research questions in a limited time (in one month), various methods were employed, reviewing previous studies results and conducting a survey to get the big picture of Copenhagen in Chinese young people's mind, interviewing and observing key informants to get detailed description.

Survey was made on www.surveymonkey.com by the author. Ten questions were designed regarding personal background, travel experience, traveling purpose, traveling spending proportion, factors affecting destination decision, information sources and Copenhagen impression. 26 total started surveys of which 5 are uncompleted. The survey respondents are young (below 30 years old) and well educated (college education or above). And they are found through my personal connections, that is, my previous students and friends. The interviewees and survey respondents are from several cities in China, Shanghai (50%), Sichuan/Chongqing (33%) and other midland cities (27%). They are chosen based on four categories (aiming to cover all types of Chinese independent tourists): those on business trip, international students, travelers for fun from mainland China and those without overseas traveling experience. The survey indicates an imbalance that high percentage of people from Shanghai has been abroad (87%); whereas only 50% have the overseas experience from Sichuan/Chongqing. And 23% out of the 26 survey respondents have been to Copenhagen.

Generally speaking, for Chinese independent tourists, the most important purposes for visiting a place are the nature 83.3% and distinctive culture 79.2% (see figure 4.1.1.1). There is a similar conclusion to the report from STB (Scandinavian Tourist Board); the top 2 motivations for Chinese tourists to travel to Nordic countries are culture and nature. While, speaking of attractions of Copenhagen 80% respondents choose culture whereas environment accounts for 40% (see figure 4.1.1.2). They are aware of the fact that Copenhagen is not famous for natural scenery. Hence they choose culture. To be more specific, culture in Copenhagen is related to the fairytale and local life. Their image of Copenhagen is so vague that is hardly qualified as an image at all. Aside from little mermaid, most of them do not know how to describe or label Copenhagen as a whole. They remain the impression back to the story from Hans Christian Andersen and most of them cannot associate Copenhagen with the color green. According to the survey, 35.3% of respondents associate Copenhagen with color blue. Then 23.5% can link green with Copenhagen and 17.6% choose red and yellow respectively.

Applications of Cultural Analysis in Marketing in a Mainland Chinese Context



Respondents 24

Figure 4.1.1.1 Purpose for traveling in general

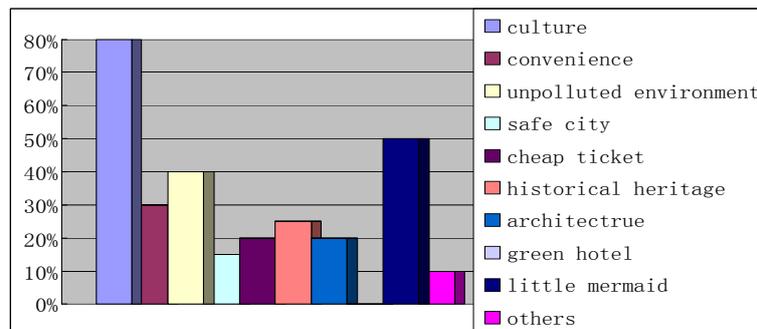


Figure 4.1.1.2 Attractive factors in Copenhagen

In order to fill in the gap between existing Copenhagen concept and the Green Copenhagen that the WoCo tries to promote, in-depth interviews have been conducted. The interviewees are different from the survey respondents in one aspect that they all have experience of traveling abroad. For interviewing is not aiming to gain a general picture of Copenhagen in Chinese young people’s mind, instead, interviewing serves to figure out the bridge to fill in the gap between the existing Copenhagen concept and the Green Copenhagen image. Those who have the overseas experience have a better understanding of cultural differences and hence will put insights into transnational branding through their own experience rather than through their assumption. Therefore, these interviewees are experienced independent tourists or have a lot of knowledge about the independent tourists. The means for carrying out interviews vary. One of them is a face-to-face interview and others are via MSN or Tencent QQ (with more than 100 million users, it’s the first major instant

messaging software in China according to Business Internet China¹¹). Interviewees are chosen based on two criteria: 1. interviewees who have experience abroad, through independent travel, not to Copenhagen, 2. interviewees who belong to one of the sub-groups, such as, international students, those on a business trip and travelers from mainland China. More specifically, four interviewees are international students, three of whom have been to Copenhagen. The fifth interviewee is on a business trip and stays more than half a year in Copenhagen. The sixth interviewee from mainland China has been to many European countries but without visiting Copenhagen. The seventh interviewee whose tour guide book published in China in 2009 is a tour guide in Paris particularly a guide for independent tourists. Unanimously, the interviewees expressed the similar opinion that Copenhagen is just one of Nordic cities, there is nothing special. As Han Xianyu, a master student in Oslo University said: “I will not recommend Copenhagen to my friends. It’s beautiful like other Nordic countries, however apart from that there is nothing special.” Another interviewee, Qiang on a business trip in Copenhagen commented, “I will recommend Norway first in terms of visiting Nordic countries. Visiting Copenhagen once is enough.” ZhuYin working in South China Airline Company, her impression to Copenhagen represents the mass, vague impression in the Chinese minds “I haven’t been to Copenhagen, but I am looking forward to going there. It must be clean, few people and beautiful. But I will go there after I have visited other European countries.”

The survey and online interviews have been formulated and carried out in Chinese which are translated into English by me afterwards. The reason for choosing Chinese as the language for the research is that it can present questions and get the answers as accurate as possible. Of course, there remains the problem of meaning missing in the translation. Therefore, the original transcript is kept for the purpose of further consultancy if necessary. Another point is that most of the interviews are conducted online. Choosing the method of internet ethnography for a) having the access to large and diverse independent travelers. According to the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), online population has expanded to 298 million; b) due to the independent tourists’ characteristics of young. For young people, the cyber world has the equal importance as the real world; c) putting myself in the tourists’ position. The top one way of information searching is from internet. Other researches have also reported “the fairly high levels of internet use as a way of sourcing information about the target destination” (Sparks & Pan, 2009, p. 492). And for each

interview, questions regarding method are asked. Surprisingly all the interviewees approved this method. They express that doing interview online is convenient and speaks forward. Besides, the most important point is the content of the interview rather than the form of conducting it.

Of course, net-ethnography is efficient and time saving. However, there remain many problems. For example, people sometimes are inconsistent in doing and saying. To examine how individuals see and experience the world, it is necessary to investigate the *why* and *how* of decision making, not just *who and what*. Hence, smaller but focused samples are needed (Given, n.d.). In-depth interview and observation serve to fulfill this aim. Due to limited time, only one observation has been carried out in the form of “shadowing” two tourists wandering around Copenhagen and “walk and talk”. I grasped and noted down the whole process of experience from their information searching to the actually walking around. Their process of making an independent traveling is illustrated in diagram 4.1.1.3. The prominent information source is www.go2eu.com, a Chinese website. It is built based on information provided from the users rather than from tour operators. 100% independent travelers in my study consult this website and design their traveling according to the suggestions on this website. The main reason for the huge register user (over 150,000 according to data provided by the website itself) is that it provides practical and detailed even nuance information for traveling and tips for saving money in trip. For example the users will share the discount information range from shopping to cruise. The users also can find the updated information about when the museum will be free for visiting in various destinations. I just name some of them. It is a Chinese version of Lonely Planet.

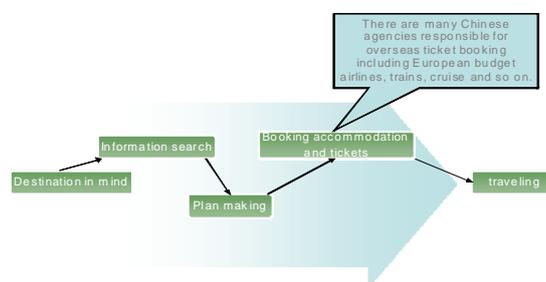


Diagram 4.1.1.3 the process of making an independent traveling abroad for Chinese tourists

After collecting data from desk research, survey, interviews both online and off-line, and observation, analyzing and interpreting these data is the another crucial process. The results of survey were presented in forms of diagrams (diagram 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.1.2 and another diagram about color association is described in words above). As six out of seven interviews were conducted through instant message online, decoding these interviews didn't cost much time for the transcriptions were ready. The "shadowing" part was taken in forms of notes. Therefore, all data have been prepared in written form. After coding and categorization, two conclusions have been achieved:

Firstly, the Chinese expect Copenhagen to provide a comprehensive Green Copenhagen, not just the environmental aspect. For the Chinese, besides the environmental and ecologic consideration, Green Tourism could also be:

-- *Economical*. Saving money and traveling economically.

-- *Tourist-oriented*. Comfort and convenience are highly evaluated.

-- *Life style*. Compared with the stressful life in China, Danes are regarded as leading free and healthy livings. Even the Chinese use the word Green to describe the life in Copenhagen. Chinese tourists who have been to Copenhagen express the similar opinion that the little mermaid is a little bit disappointing, the scenery is not splendorous, but living in Copenhagen is fantastic. People go outside to have a cup of coffee in the afternoon; joggers could be the senior, the young or a father rolling the baby-cart; the bus, toilet and many public facilities are highly human-friendly. This is a city designed under the principle of people oriented.

Secondly, the survey and interviews show that the Chinese independent tourists either have a vague image of Copenhagen or no image at all, which mainly because of the indirect promotion. Denmark is promoting itself in the Chinese market as one of the Nordic countries. Therefore, for most Chinese, they have a general idea of North Europe, but they cannot distinguish Denmark from other Nordic countries. What's more, among the five countries, only Norway has its independent Chinese website called the Official Site in China which is accessible through searching with Chinese words. In contrast, tourist can only approach to the official Chinese introduction of Denmark from

the link to the Royal Danish Embassy, Visitdenmark.dk and beiou.org (the STB website).

Unfortunately, there is no Chinese option on Visitdenmark, the official tour website. In a word, though Denmark has been branding itself in china, but they are more engaged in dealing with the travel agencies; whereas, the public are not exposed to direct information. They have to find the information by themselves. While most of them will not do so, for they have easier access to other destinations.

Based on the research results and through idealization with group members, three recommendations were provided for WoCo. First of all, there should be a clarification of Green items in Chinese. For example, what is green hotel? No informant in my research heard of green hotel before. What's more, most of them think that they would not sacrifice their interest for living in a hotel without air-conditioning. They would like to do something good for the environment, but in the condition of no self-sacrifice. They have no idea that they will stay comfortably without air-conditioning in summer. For another, cycling is the green transport means which Green Copenhagen has been recommending strongly. While the Chinese are afraid of cycling in a completely strange country. What are the regulations? Where should we go? In order to realize the green ideal, there should be more practical solutions. With very simple steps, Green items could be accepted by the Chinese quickly. Website is the first choice. The clarification of green hotel, the cycling regulation and cycling map can be presented on the Chinese website where the potential tourists can get access easily.

Secondly, to fulfill Chinese expectation for green tourism in Copenhagen, the image should comprise the local lifestyle. The Chinese are impressed by the slow life in Copenhagen, which contrasts to the intense life in China's big cities. This suggestion can be achieved through visual method like a short video on the official website or TV commercials in domestic channels in China.

Lastly, in terms of vague impression, one effective way is to create an official Chinese website, which will make it convenient for the Chinese to search for the information. When the Chinese put in the Chinese characters of Copenhagen, they can find the official Chinese website directly. At the same time, STB (Scandinavian Tourist Board) are making the marketing strategy to 2012 in china. According to the STB-Annual-Report-2008, the strategy includes increasing exposure of Nordic

countries on the mass media. Of course, Copenhagen can take advantage of this to create a green image.

During the data collecting and analysis process, team members once in a while will get together in person or online to discuss everyone's progress and give suggestion to each other. After gaining individual results and recommendations, team members discussed and compromised with each other. What kind of data will be used in presentation to clients? What kind of presentation will be adopted in what form? The marketing research is very important, and the presentation to the clients is also a significant part. Presentation to the clients is not just a report about what we have done and what we have found out; it is more like a show to attract and persuade the clients with our findings and analysis. Conveying research findings to the clients is very important; however it is more about the skills of presentation and impression management than about the cultural analysis. Therefore, it will not be fully discussed in this thesis. For this project, PowerPoint Slide was adopted as the means to present our research results and recommendations. The front page of the PPT is presented below.



4.1.2 Cultural analysis: towards cross-cultural understanding in transnational marketing

It is a tradition that employing cultural analysis in conducting transnational marketing. Many cultural theories and analytical approaches have been utilized in marketing as discussed in Chapter 3.1. In the case of Branding Green Copenhagen, culture is studied as an artifact that carries meaning. Consumer goods, a physical object, a piece of information, or an experience, are vehicle of cultural meanings. Consumers choose and then make use of these cultural meanings. In other words, “cultural meaning is drawn from a culturally constituted world and transferred to a consumer good. Then the meaning is drawn from the object and transferred to an individual consumer”. Therefore, cultural meaning is located in three places: the culturally constituted world, the consumer good, and the individual consumer (McCracken, 1986, p. 71). In terms of Branding Green Copenhagen, this project is aiming at conveying a constructed cultural meaning, that is, Green Copenhagen, to the Chinese consumers. However, each culture has its own “set of culturally constituted meanings that provide understandings and rules for its members and may often seem unintelligible to others” (Douglas & Craig, 2009, pp. 127 -128). Therefore, the successful meaning transformation of Green Copenhagen has to take a transnational overview. The cultural meaning is not only constructed in a Copenhagen context, but also defined by the Chinese context. As to the consumer good, essentially the selling point is not the city of Copenhagen; rather it promotes a green lifestyle. In this sense, the green lifestyle or green tourism is not only constructed by Copenhagen, but also defined by the Chinese. Do the Chinese perceive the green lifestyle the same as the Danes? Does this green concept appeal to the Chinese tourist? How to promote the Green Copenhagen in mainland China?

In essence, this project deals with how to convey a packaged culture (multiple cultural meanings) to another culturally constructed world (the mainland China). In order to answer the above questions, culture is a decisive factor. For a nation-state, language, religion, food, family structures, friendship practices, political behavior and all other social phenomena are considered to be in the confine of national culture. Culture is jointly created and yet influences how a group of people interact amongst themselves” (Ooi, 2007, p. 113). From Hofstede’s study as well as other scholars, it is well acknowledged that there are distinct cultural diversities among nations. These national cultural diversities stem from the etics, roughly speaking, are ideas, behaviors, items and concepts that are culture general i.e., universal according to Triandis (as cited from Gullestrup, 2006,

p. 27). The understanding of culturally constructed world both in Copenhagen and China seeks primarily into the national etics, the cultural general. For Copenhageners, “green” has been already a part of their lifestyle. They even cannot realize how environment-friendly could be. They bath in sun sitting on grassland in a park or everywhere. They lodge in a green hotel without air-conditioning. They pick up an apple from ground and eat it without washing it. Plenty of examples elaborate the fact that green lifestyle is part of their everyday life. In contrast, the Chinese will find these daily nuances astonishing. In China, people take umbrella to avoid sunshine. They cannot imagine a hotel without air-conditioning. The grassland in a park or anywhere is for sightseeing only, no stamping on it. They peel the apple to remove the farm chemical before eating it. These contrasts tell how different the physical and cultural world they are. Then for branding a Green Copenhagen, what kind of Danish culture should be packaged to be promoted in the Chinese market? “What cultural elements should be marginalized and what should be accentuated” (Ooi, 2007, p. 115)?

Four interlinked characteristics of “packaged cultures” have been discussed by Ooi (2007). The first one is that the packaged culture can represent the cultural identity and highlights unique and interesting cultural elements (2007, p. 116). In this way, culture can be a distinct entity for drawing boundaries between cultures. In terms of Copenhagen, it’s about branding this distinction, which can make the Copenhagen stand out in the global tourism market. That’s why Little Mermaid is indispensable for Copenhagen, though it has nothing to do with green. “This uniqueness is communicated in the brand, which often emphasizes the historical, social and cultural values of the host society” (Ooi, 2004, p. 112).

The second characteristic of packaged culture is closely related to the mediators. “Culture mediators are people and agencies who interpret another culture for others. They inform and educate people” (2007, pp. 115-116). With the development of information technology, this mediator could also be a website or a text message. There are many ways to convey the message that a packaged culture wants to express. Hence with this information, the tourists have the framework to imagine the destination before they visit it. “Studies have shown that tourist approach a tourism site with their own pre-visit interpretations, and this process enriches their tourism experiences”. The mediation helps tourists develop a coherent, consistent and meaningful sense of place (2004, p. 113). In the case of Green Copenhagen, the packaged culture has to apply to the pre-visit interpretations. Cultural

analysis helps to map consumers' behavior and lifestyle and hence detects the mediator for the marketer who can inform the consumer via them, like the third recommendation we made for WoCo.

The third characteristic lies in the fact that “packaged cultural are selectively and persuasively constructed and are presented in ways that can be received in preferred ways.” (Ooi 2007, p. 116) Therefore, this practice offers not only a series of images but also packaged selections of attraction. Speaking of Copenhagen, which attractions should be packaged? Apart from the little mermaid and respect to the green concept, the green lifestyle can be a good selling point in the Chinese context. But how to make it persuasive takes efforts. Our first and second recommendations for WoCo provide solutions to the problem.

The last characteristic of packaged culture is that “the relevance of the packaged culture to the reader is also highlighted” (2007, p. 116). This focuses on the public perception of the place. To be more specific, the relevance to the consumer is part of the “image modification process” (Andersen, Prentice & Guerin, 1997, p. 463). Many people rely heavily on their own perceptions when they decide where to go. These perceptions are based on their experiences and what they have learned from different sources, such as news stories, travel programs, movies, stories from friends and relatives, etc. Branding and marketing campaigns aim to become one of these sources that could shape people's perceptions, and also change the stories originating from other sources (Ooi, 2004, p. 111). Cultural analysis can serve to map the readers (consumers) to unfold their image medication process. In the case of Green Copenhagen, we interact with the “readers” on and off-line and observe their description of Copenhagen experience in blogs, newsgroups and in real life. The immersing in the field promotes a better understanding by considering the “saying” and “doing”. Based on this concept reader (consumer) - oriented, we made these three recommendations to WoCo, that is, clear clarification of Green items in Chinese, comprising local lifestyle as one of packaged culture and of green concepts, and improving website's role as mediator.

In practice, the strategy for packaging a culture is illustrated in figure 4.1.2, as overlapping two graphs to achieve the most economical and efficient way to construct one culture package to fit into another culturally constructed world. The indicator for each graph is put under it. The quadratic form (number 1 and 2) stands for the cultural package that Copenhagen wants to promote; the circular

shape (number 3) refers to the cultural meaning that the Chinese hold and expect for Copenhagen. In this case, Copenhagen's culture is exporter, while Chinese context is the receiver. It's impossible to totally change a cultural structure, that is, change a circle into a square. Or it's difficult to adjust the receiver's culture to suit the exporter's. Therefore, the circle remains fixed and the square has to alter. When a cultural package from the perspective of Copenhagen is too broad, it can interact with Chinese culture in the form of number 4. But promoting much more than the Chinese can absorb is not economical. Narrowing the package of cultural package as illustrated in number 6 is more economical consideration. It's the other way around. When the cultural concept is too narrow like graph number 2, it meets with Chinese understanding and expectation as illustrated in number 5. The problem is that the branding strategy is not effective, in other words, it's not attractive enough to appeal to the receiver. In this situation, graph number 7 suggests a way of broadening the package to cater to the receiver's appetite. In these ways, a practical branding strategy can be made, and at the same time, the original cultural concept (the quadratic form of the graph) is intact which can still distinguish it from other competitors. It can be seen that Branding Green Copenhagen belongs to the second packaging strategy where the culture package that WoCo provides is limited; hence broadening the package will make the city branding more effective.

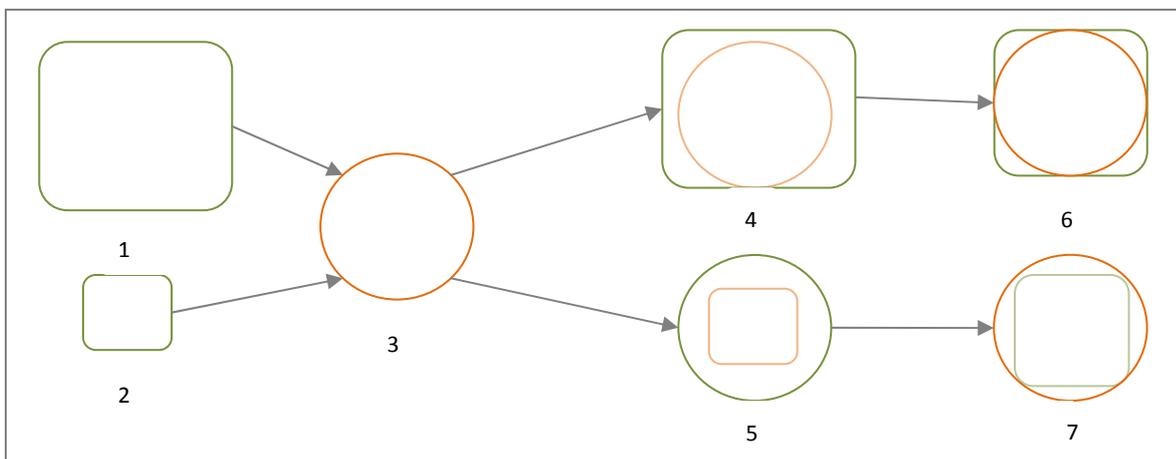


Figure 4.1.2 Cultural packaging strategy.

“Investigations of marketing relations across cultures have traditionally focused on culture as a background variable, a collection of essential character traits, habits, practices, categorizations, and so forth within a given domain that would explain the approach to and degree of acceptance of various marketing practices from abroad” (Askegaard, Kjeldgaard and Arnould, 2009, p. 104).

Cultural analyses serve to investigate and detect appropriate cultural elements for packaging and marginalizing according to a given time, and in a given context. Unlike the study from Hofstede and other cross-cultural studies, cultural analyses employ qualitative research which aims at a given sample. It takes time for the cultural analysts to “being there” to map the study object. Therefore, a large amount of sample is hard to achieve and unnecessary. A carefully chosen sample can tell underpinning cultural meaning even sometimes there are just five or six cases. If culture is compared to an onion (Eugene Bunkowske’s culture onion metaphor [THY537, n.d.]), cultural analysis is devoted to investigating each layer of the onion rather than the depth of it. Most cultural studies in transnational marketing like Hofstede, Hall, etc. try to peel the onion and distinguishing the cultural similarities and differences in every aspect, namely, values, beliefs, world view and ultimate allegiance. On the contrary, cultural analysis focuses on the outside layers, artifacts and behavior. It will not make survey to categorize cultural individual’s attitude or feeling toward a product or an event. It looks into the artifacts that used by the cultural individuals and the behavior of how they use them. It will not send out thousands of survey or questionnaire to informants for categorizing (that doesn’t mean the cultural analysts are poor at it); instead, cultural analyst will spend a day or a week even a year or so in shadowing and documenting several key informants. The mainstream cultural studies in transnational marketing focus on the depth of the “onion”; whereas cultural analyses pay attention to the details of “onion” where there is a small spot on the first layer, or the color differs from one part to another on the same layer. In this respect, cultural analysis serves to get a cross-cultural understanding through providing another and nuanced approach to understand the culturally constructed world and the individual consumer.

4.2 A domestic story of China Youthology: A model for applying cultural analysis in mainland China?

In recent years, we have become increasingly aware of the different types of cultural dissimilarities, and such differences gain an increasing significance in our daily lives as we co-act more and more with people belonging to different cultures. The different culture is not only the dissimilarities between nations, but also the peculiarities and uniqueness of collective types of homogeneities. These types could be various forms of organizations, trade groups, and different

generations. In this chapter, an indigenous youth trend spotting company is introduced to explore the application of cultural analysis in intra-national context, which will put some light on analyzing culture in indigenous market context.

4.2.1 Introduction to China Youthology



China Youthology, is a Beijing-based boutique consultancy that works on consumer insights for marketing, communications, and product design targeting Chinese youth. It conducts market research as well as consulting services. It can be traced back to 2008 when their official blog was opened¹². As one of the few indigenous consulting organizations, it states clearly their position with young people. Looking into their staff, except the two founders, three out of four employees are called ethnographer, which is a rare case in indigenous companies. From its positioning of itself and testimonials, as well as its exposure on various foreign SNS communities (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.), it's easy to see that it primarily aims at foreign companies as clients.

Their researches are closely put in the time frame, that is, it focuses on the youth under the current context. For example, *Bird Nest Generation- Beijing Olympic and Youth*¹³ (China Youthology, 2008) was scripted in the same year when Beijing was hosting Olympic Games. *China Youth Report* (Zafka & Lisa, 2009) was published in the pictorial, *Modern Weekly-Citylife*. Another milestone report, *China Youth Trends and Business Implications* (Lisa & Zafka, 2009), presents a general picture of Chinese youth. Cyberspace has long been a research object and arena for China Youthology. *Social Networking Sites (SNS) and Chinese Youth* (China Youthology, 2009) is the first indigenous report investigating this territory. What's more, their research field is based only in metropolises, like Beijing and Shanghai. Of course, this strategy is determined by marketers whose primary concerns are those with consuming capacity. Lastly, their research angle looks into the comparatively 'frontiers'. As band players themselves, the two founders have connections with various artists, craftsmen and young entrepreneurs. In their eyes, youth culture is lead and influenced

by the young artists or the like. The understanding and popularization of these artists and their work will guide the trend among young people, which clarified in one report *Anatomy of 'Chao Ren'* (Hipsters) (Lisa, 2010). Therefore, specifically speaking, their youth culture can be interpreted as youth popular culture. Their research views and angle can be illustrated in Chart 4.2.1. extracted from their official website.

Apart from carrying out traditional marketing research, they create innovative way to get intimate to their target groups, that is, holding workshops and events in Qing Gong Guan. According to themselves, “Qing Gong Guan is designed to be ‘office’ plus ‘space’ for youth plus ‘platform to bridge’” (Lisa & Zafka, 2009b). It serves as part of the field for youth research (‘field’ for ‘fieldwork’) as they put it. ‘Youth Lounge’ will be held regularly which “is similar to Focus Group Discussion, but more casual, flexible, participant-oriented, and involving more generative tasks”. ‘Space for youth’ means that Qing Gong Guan is utilized as a venue for various workshops and events such as young people’s exhibitions, shows, parties and so on. Regarding ‘platform to bridge’, it aims at bridging the brands and youth culture by holding Saloons. For example, they invited college students and marketers (Pepsico and Lining¹⁴) to share their experience in a saloon.

Back to their research methodology, “China Youthology approaches consumer insights at 1) the historical and ongoing macro context (economic, social, cultural), 2) the major youth communities of music, sports, fashion, gaming, technology, art & literature, social volunteer, etc. and 3) individual level (with integrated understanding of online and offline experience). Methods employed include online and offline qualitative and quantitative” study (China Youthology, 2008b). As the slogan says, “a holistic and in-depth understanding of youth market through full-hearted, long-term, immersive dedication”, they divide research approach into three layers, the macro, the

- **Categories**
 - [Type](#) (54)
 - [What's Up?](#) (22)
 - [So What?](#) (25)
 - [China Youthology News](#) (23)
 - [Methodology](#) (6)
 - [Great Minds Think Alike Or Not](#) (4)
 - [Qing Gong Guan](#) (5)
 - [Cool Areas](#) (30)
 - [Music](#) (10)
 - [Fashion & visual arts](#) (10)
 - [Sports](#) (10)
 - [Technology](#) (6)
 - [Social volunteer](#) (2)
 - [Animation](#) (3)
 - [Topics](#) (22)
 - [Internet & Web2.0](#) (8)
 - [Beijing Olympic](#) (6)
 - [Creative culture](#) (11)

community and the individual. The macro refers to social, cultural, political, economical effects. By community, as a new emerging phenomenon in mainland China, it usually refers to online community though the participants may involve in offline interactions with each other sometimes. Because of less restrict censorship online community is more open and easier to reach out to others than in real world. Therefore, great amount of online communities soar and become the social network for communication. For example, Douban.com although launched 5 years ago, has over 30 million unique users a month and ranks 24th. Popular Chinese social media site (Douban, 2010). Lastly, the approach to individual pays attention to specific individuals who stand for the group of others. Their methodological thresholds come from the application of psychology, sociology and anthropology.

Their focus on China's youth has produced many reports. One of their comprehensive studies of the young people is revealed in a report titled *Reading a Book of Paradoxes: China Youth Trends and Business Implications*. This report presents a picture of youth trend by contrasting the contradiction. Although "trend research is usually criticized for 'only scratching the surface' or 'not representative'", but they feel confident from the acknowledgement from their costumers, like multi-national companies. Here, the trend explores deep-rooted changes in values and lifestyles and they believe that these changes noticeable in 2008 will continue over the next couple of years. Apart from the research standpoint, their target group is young people, 18 to 30 years old and the context is in metropolises.

In this report, five trends are depicted and three layers for each trend are discussed, that is, 1) the background and the sociocultural and economic triggers, 2) the nuances that lead to a deeper understanding, and 3) implications for brand marketing with cases. The first trend is called *New Citizen, from 'little emperors' to a 'bird nest generation': making small differences by social participation*. This trend is brought under the spotlight in 2008 when Olympic Games were held and Sichuan earthquake took place. Young people took initiative in participating in the events. The second caption is *New Chinese, from 'globalization' to 'post-globalized Chinese': growing confidence in identity*. Similar to the conclusion that China's young people are modernized but not westernized (Lynton & Thogersen, 2010b), this trend talks about the young who are trying to find their identity by looking back to Chinese cultural heritage. *New Geek, from 'cool' to 'geeky': deep-ization of hobbies and empowerment of communities* is the third trend. In this chapter, it begins with

definition of geek, and then discusses the internet empowered community. The forth trend is about *New Entertainment, from 'fun-seeking' to 'creativity-seeking': remarkonomy*. It suggests a creativity-oriented marketing strategy which makes things 'remarkable' to seduce economy. The last trend is titled *New Life, from 'indulgence' to 'sustainability': pains of modernity and risk awareness*. This chapter calls for quality product in the wake of the notorious food safety issues in mainland China.

China Youthology is specialized in mapping and understanding young consumers. They are one of the few indigenous companies employing ethnography as the core research method. Their analytical approach to culture is accordant to the approach of cultural analysis. China Youthology can be a model for analyzing culture for cultural analysts in mainland China. More empirical research should be carried out, such as going to their office to observe daily practice and participating in their activities. Due to the time limitation, those works remain untouched; therefore further research is strongly suggested.

4.2.2 Cultural analysis: towards cross-cultural understanding in indigenous marketing

Cross-culture goes beyond the national boundaries and it can be analyzed at levels above and below that of the nation. As Taras & Steel have noted that within-country variations in cultural values have been well documented, it is questionable that geographic boundaries are optimal for clustering cultures. Analyses of cultures of socio-economic classes, professions, or generational cohorts are probably much more meaningful than analyses of national or regional cultures (2009, p. 50). Richard Jenkins (1997) conducted cross-cultural analysis in one country, the United Kingdom, by region (Wales vs. Northern Ireland), religion (Protestant vs. Catholic), ethnicity (Irish vs. Scot), and language (Gaelic vs. English). Similarly, culture analysis can move up in scope, referring to a continent (Africa), region (Southeast Asia), trading bloc (European Union), hemisphere (Southern) and a universal phenomenon (the global culture) (Nakata, 2009b, p. 250). In some cases, Douglas and Craig found out that similarities have been found in similar demographic groupings in different countries, which suggests a certain degree of independence between the context and shared values. They presented examples of some groups such as teenagers, young adults and environmentally concerned consumers who show strong similarities in different regions or countries throughout the world (2009, p. 131). In this sense, cross culture can be the stereotype of existing cross geographic

boundaries, like nation-state; it can also go across demographic, socio-economic dimensions for clustering cultures and subcultures. In terms of marketing, these clustering cultures and subcultures, “such as ethnic, sociodemographic or other groupings, exist within countries and often have their own distinctive interests, consumption, and purchasing behavior patterns” (Douglas & Craig, 2009, p. 131). This view corresponds with the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) that “explores the heterogeneous distribution of meanings and the multiplicity of overlapping cultural groupings that exist within the broader sociohistoric frame of globalization and market capitalism” (as cited from Nakata & Bilgin, 2009, p. 74). This conceptualization does not deny the influence of national culture, but admits that other determinants produce behavioral consequences too. The investigation of these determinants also takes a cross-cultural perspective. Here the cross culture could be at micro-level social formations, such as subcultures and brand communities, or at macro-level social transformation, such as difference among generations. “Marketers may find this view of culture to be more powerful and comprehensive description of consumer...helping to explain what appears at times to be the idiosyncratic actions of people” (Nakata & Bilgin, 2009, p. 74).

In the context of mainland China, culture analysis grows in cross-cultural soil. For one thing, there are distinguishing variables in geographic dispersion. There are 4 municipalities, 22 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, which comprises 50 ethnic groups and produces about 200 languages. For another, China is in the period of social and economic transformation. People add new elements and dislodge old ones. Therefore, the traditional cultural elements are enforced or adapted; the new cultural elements are resisted or coherent with the culture that adopts it. Above all, cultures intermingle through time and space. They are rarely pure. Cultures do mix and cultural borrowing is general and noticeable or disguised (Usunier & Lee, 2005, p. 35). In other words, cultures in any nation-state, any geographic boundary, and any social-economic or ideological context have a cross-culture character in nature. Cultures no longer posit in a vacuum (some of them had been isolated before colonization); they are greatly enforced, and adapted in globalization. When we look at Chinese young people, free from the geographic boundaries due to the development of transportation and information technology, their culture is confronted with multiple influences in the context of indigenous transformation and globalization.

For China Youthology, their research has focused on those young adults in urban areas, interjecting a bias toward similarity as well as reflecting their exposure to trends and lifestyle in other

countries through television, Internet, e-mail, social networking, etc. They are trying to explore this culture specific, the young, and hence provides research-based consultancy for conducting marketing practice in mainland China. Their investigation of this generation has to look into counterparts in other countries and other generations at home, which roots in their macro research approach. Even in the same generation, diverse cultural communities are spotted, which consequently, requires a research approach to looking into community. For example, different SNSs (Social Net Sites) represent diverse communities with diverse cultures. The young hang out in douban.com differ from those in tianya.com. The former group is usually labeled as arty young people; the latter group is regarded as social problem inclined Fen Qing (angry youth). Concerning the large population of the young adults (about 200 millions) as well as social-economic transformation, these diversities and emerging cultural groups are quite common. To understand the Chinese youth, it requires to take a cross-cultural perspective, that is, looking into these diverse cultural communities. In this way, a comprehensive and an in-depth understanding of the Chinese young can be achieved.

The cross-cultural understanding approach in intra-national marketing that discussed in this chapter posits culture in an evolving and mutual effects theory. Nakata (2009b) discussed two epistemological structure of culture. The first one reviews culture as cognitive, bounded, immutable, coherent, and unified entity with strong causal force. She named this cultural paradigm an *idealist-superorganic epistemological structure*. In this vein, culture exists above the level of individuals and groups, and it plays a stabilizing and integrating role, sanctioning certain modes of living and dissuading others (2009b, p. 254). The second cultural paradigm considers culture as weakly bounded, changeable, unsettled, disjunctive, and more than cognitive – ontology present. She calls this structure the *realist-organic epistemology* which is depicted in Figure 4.2.2. (2009b, p. 256). From the study of China Youthology as well as my own experience, we view cultural structure this way which “shifts the emphasis from a metaphysical impersonal force to a thoroughly social dialectic among humans” and makes “culture directly observable as customs, artifacts, actions, and symbolates instead of indirectly through surrogate constructions such as values, ideals, and personality” (2009b, p. 256). Another mark in this structure is that, “given traits such as mutability and discontinuity, culture is an evolving complex of ideas, actions, and beliefs. Closer examination reveals not a tight homogeneous whole but a loose heterogeneity; there are subcultures, a federation of sorts, all interacting, imprinting, and affecting one another” (2009b, p. 256). The mutual effects go

both ways to and from people and the larger culture. What's more, "social institutions act as material intermediaries, as in the idealized- superorganic structure, but permit influences in both directions" (2009b, p. 256). In this vein, cultural analysis is applicable as there are observable artifacts and behaviors. Furthermore, because of the mutual effects, the cross-culture perspective and understanding is indispensable for the understanding of a given culture.

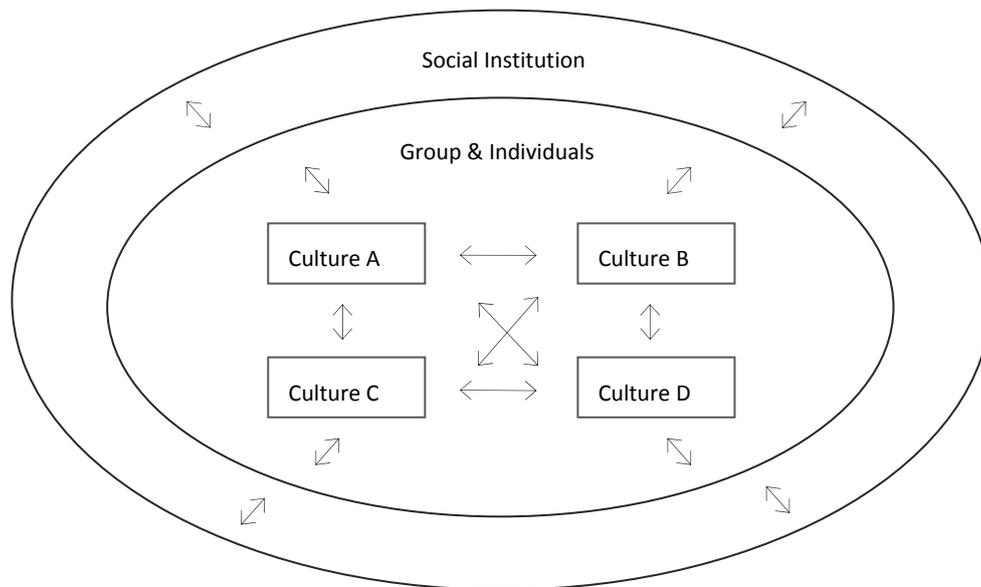


Figure 4.2.2 Realist-organic epistemological structure. Extracted from Reflexive Considerations of Culture Theories in Global Marketing In Nakata, Cheryl. (Ed.). *Beyond Hofstede: Cultural Frameworks for Global Marketing and Management*, 247-277.

5 ANALYSES

In this chapter, ethnography as the core research method will be discussed from the previous case studies and interviews of experienced practitioners. What's more, the method's adjustments to Chinese context will be exemplified. And the distinguishing contributions of cultural analysis in marketing practice will be unfolded.

5.1 Reflections on conducting ethnography in marketing research

Ethnographic method has been employed both in my research for Branding Green Copenhagen and for China Youthology as a major research approach. In fact, ethnography has been widely hired in various fields and become a frequently used tool for present researchers from social science, to anthropology, from management study to marketing research so on and so forth. Therefore, what does ethnography mean for cultural analysis? Simon Roberts as well as other anthropologists expressed the same concern, "certainly most of these methods, with their explicit or implied affinity to ethnography, are grounded in a contextual understanding of people (or in this case, consumers)". But the separation of method from theory, techniques from their conceptual underpinnings will reduce ethnography to "a limited set of methods that requires little theoretical expertise, no discipline-based qualifications, and little training" (2006: 87). Another concern from the analyses of cases is about the validity of research result. As China Youthology states in the preface of *Reading a Book of Paradoxes*, "we did not invest in a quantitative survey for this paper. But the trends discussed here can be validated by publicly available 'data'". And in my case of Green Copenhagen, how can I make sure that the data from in-depth interviews and observation will reveal the meaning rather than scratch the surface? How to guarantee the validity of research result and provide insights to the clients? The last concern is about research results delivery which involves the relationship between researchers and clients. Since the analysis of culture is based on qualitative investigation, that is, in the field, does the relationship differ from others of doing natural scientific and quantitative researches?

In order to answer those questions, four experienced ethnographers have been interviewed respectively. In fact, most of them don't introduce themselves as ethnographers. With management background, H (2010) from China is the only one who calls herself ethnographer, and she has been

in consulting field for three years. K (2010) from Sweden has been doing anthropological consulting for seven years. She insists in introducing herself as anthropologist. With BA in Ethnology, M (2010) from Denmark prefers to introduce himself as strategy consultant. And both for M and A (2010), they believe the job title depends on who they are talking to. A calls himself thesis student for at present he is working on a thesis, though he has been doing consulting for more than two years. In this thesis, they all are called ethnographers for they use ethnographic method in conducting research and also three of them, except H from China, have background in anthropology or ethnology.

The interview begins with a description of a typical day for ethnographers. For the senior ethnographers (more than four years experience in this field), meeting with clients are routine. They are involved in all procedures of a project and sometimes will do fieldwork themselves. And for all of them, team meeting is the most regular practice. The next question concerns their most satisfied case. They express satisfaction when the product really makes a change and has value for the clients. At the same time, good relationship with clients will bring satisfaction too. Regarding the unsatisfied case, the reasons vary. Failure to meet clients' expectation, constraints in conducting research, the power-alternation in a company, poor communication with clients all can end up with a failure. K gave a concrete case. One client had a strong opinion toward the result beforehand. However, her team turned in something that didn't match the client's pre-perception, which leads to the failure of the project. A gave another case. He felt most frustrated when good data collected in the fieldwork didn't bring a good result. The unsuccessful project mainly due to the poor communication in that the team leader didn't explain clearly to the client what they were doing.

The following five questions concern the distinctive characteristics of good ethnographers. The first question is about the difference between ethnographers and other researchers. In the field of marketing and management consultancy, the ethnographers are good at fieldwork and their theory background guides a different way of thinking. Moreover, good ethnographers will put much time in analyzing the data. While other self-claimed ethnographers don't have the cultural analysis tool to analyzing the data collected from observation. Theory is another important ingredient for good ethnographers. K thinks that theory is like a backpack. You go outside, and you can put a lot of things inside. They all agree that it's unnecessary to explain the theory to clients, but sometimes they do. Theory is embedded in the way they do the thing. And most of time, different projects require different theories. You can pick theory everywhere as long as it can help the project. The third

question asks about the challenge for ethnographer in business world. It's very interesting that the challenges for the junior ethnographers (experience less than 4 years) are the problems that the senior ethnographers find.

For example,

Junior: challenge is to get the client understand what you are doing.

Senior: some cannot translate insight into product for clients.

Junior: clients always want numbers. Challenge is that we have to do something we are not good at, like quantitative data.

Senior: some are not trained naturally in business.

K also pointed out that the challenge is that some self-claimed ethnographers probably will ruin this market for their results are shallow and people will lose the interest to know real ethnography. For their understanding of cultural analysis, M believes that it has to do with history. Cultural analysis needs to look back to get better understanding of today. For A, analyzing culture means analyzing everyday life. And cultural analysis needs curiosity both for the world, the theory and the method. Finally, they give suggestions for future ethnographers and cultural analysts. A strongly recommend a solid theory basis and good impression management. M thinks that one has to make sure that this business is what he or she really wants to do. K emphasizes that the more practical training the better. And as ethnography is trendy these days, real ethnographers should fight for their knowledge.

The interviews serve as a shortcut to get the most demanding questions from experienced ethnographers. Three conclusions can be reached for being a good ethnographer. 1) Practice. Studying ethnography from a textbook is not enough for good ethnographers. Over time, practice in the real market will serve as a significant lesson regarding how to utilize the tool to collect and analyze the data. Furthermore, it is important to consider that differences exist between the business world and academia that can be pragmatic. Hence, practice in real market is the most efficient learning mechanism in becoming more result-oriented. 2) Theory. It's like the air. People don't talk about it and can't see, touch, smell it, but it's vital. Every discipline has its theory tradition which guides the outlook. Therefore, ethnographers should hold their theory tradition in culture, social science and humanities. However, in the business world, good ethnographers should integrate theory from other disciplines as well. For example, one ethnographer is doing consultancy in the field of technology. At least this ethnographer has to know the language of that field for efficient

communication. Therefore, solid basis of their own knowledge combination with the knowledge of other discipline will make a difference for becoming good ethnographers. 3) Communication. As many interviewees mentioned in their satisfied and unsatisfied cases, communication is a crucial element. Ethnographer A even claimed that 70% of time at work spending in talking. It seems there is no big problem in communicating with informants. By contrary, communication in the team and communication with clients take greater effort. Team work is the foundation in the present consulting practice. In most cases, team members are from distinctive background and communication is important for the success of a research. On the other hand, communication with clients is more complicated. For one thing, it's important to get a sufficient communication to understand clients' want and reason. In this way, the following research work will be is on the right track. For another, conveying the result to clients needs both content and techniques. Good data, analysis and result will be accepted with proper interpretation and with the help of audio, visual or other techniques. It is like a test to convince the examiners as well as like a show to attract the audience.

Another point from interviewing these experienced ethnographers is that they have been keeping an eye on the area constantly; here area refers to the 'intersection' between business and anthropology. Ethnography for them is "a field-based, empirical research strategy that uses multiple methodologies (especially, but not exclusively, direct observation) to depict in fairly minute detail a people's way of life (or some aspect of that life), incorporating insider understandings of the meanings attached to shared behavioral patterns, as well as descriptions of those patterns" (Kedia & Willigen, 2005, p. 254). From their practice, ethnography is an approach that systematically document and interpret human cultures in action and it has been applied normally in two ways. One is called "shadowing". Wolcott described that shadowing someone else is like a detective following someone (cited from Czarniawaska, 2007, p. 24). In other words, shadowing is a non-participate observation with mobility (2007, p. 56). Another way to do ethnography these days is called "immersion" or participatory observation. As Hy Mariampolski pointed out that immersion as a way to understand people, the researchers should get as close as you can to someone's reality, stay experience-near (2005).

Looking back to the first question about the role that ethnography plays for cultural analysts. With knowledge of culture, ethnography will make another vantage for cultural analysts who not only hold a distinctive angle of view, but also can exert ethnography. On the other hand, the practice of ethnography by cultural analysts will bring out best analytical result because ethnography requires the research in a field. Barbara Czarniawska presented three advantages for “stepping into” the field. First of all, both the actions and the accounts of action abound in the field. Cultural analysts can comprehend the full context of data and data collecting by stepping into the field. Secondly, “people in the field of practice both produce and consume a multitude of accounts and all types of narratives produced elsewhere.” It will be easier to analyze data later by observing the process than by merely speculation. Finally, going to the field can be a way of limiting research material to manageable proportions. The cultural analysts can select material that they find relevant for their practice (2008, p. 10). It can be concluded that fieldwork based ethnography is indispensable for conducting cultural analysis.

Validity of ethnographic result, like quantitative one, is determined by the practice of the researcher. Unlike quantitative study based on standardized procedure for collecting and analyzing “hard data”, there is no programized procedure for collecting data and no ruler mark to test the “soft data” that qualitative research provide. However, different discipline and research method with different aims differ in criterion. In marketing, quantitative tools are usually used to understand consumer demographics and purchase. These approaches aim to describe what (is being purchased, where, and by whom). On the contrary, ethnography as one of qualitative tools can explain why (are consumers are not reacting favorably to its products or services) (Kedia & Willigen, 2005, p. 234). A good or valid qualitative result is measured by whether it can answer the “why” question; whether it can provide an enforceable solution for a problem. On the other hand, both qualitative and quantitative results can be best achieved through the practice of researchers. For qualitative researchers in marketing field, several criteria are for desirable to make a valid practice of qualitative research. 1) general knowledge of culture and culture theory; 2) competency in the practice of ethnography; 3) specialized knowledge of particular cultures and languages (2005, p. 221); 4) understanding the business language and code (Hult, 2008, p. 79). Valid ethnographic study can be realized by the practice of qualified researchers who immerse in the field and present thick

description that reveals a reality. It should not be ethnographers' first concern that which information can be used for a marketing practice; whereas it's the ethnographers' responsibility to provide as detailed and objective description of a reality for marketer's consideration.

The last question regarding the relationship between ethnographers with clients has been answered by the interviewees. Unlike many other researches in natural science or quantitative research, ethnographic studies require the participation of the clients involve in the whole process to get a valid result and better understanding of the result (see Schwarz & Holme, 2009). The character of ethnographic research determines that clients have to be the co-worker or participators, which differs it from other research in terms of the relationship between ethnographers and clients.

Adjustments to a Chinese Context

Common knowledge of ethnography is shared by ethnographers worldwide; however the application of it varies in degree in different context. Regarding the mainland Chinese context, some adjustments are made for achieving a qualified result. Several examples are presented as follows. The first adaptation to the Chinese context stem from the fact that China is still a high context country. Though young people are much more open than the elder generation (see studies from China Youthology, Lynton & Thogersen, 2010), they still prefer a relatively indirect expression way. "More open" refers to the content of messaging. The young unlike their parents are more open to topics. Most of them no longer conceal their political attitude and are willing to share their opinions and interests. However, their expression takes an indirect way. As cyber world becomes an important part of their life together with the popularizing of mobile technology, instant and text messages are the primary ways of communication. Many young people talk much more online or via text message than in real life. This is the reason that China Youthology and my own studies concerning this generation pay high attention to the net world. The second adaption comes from the culture theory that China is a collective society. Although, today's youth are self-centered and inclined to show their personality (see Wang 2009, Zafka & Lisa, 2009, Lisa, Li & Zafka, Zhang 2009), collectivist is rooted since China is still a socialist country. In general, collective society shares a stronger need for group affiliation, whether to family, school, work group, or country than individualist society. Therefore, communities are one of the three layers of studying contexts for China Youthology.

What's more, in order to get a better understanding of the youth, China Youthology introduced Qing Gong Guan, a physical site for the youth to interact with each other, which is not common in other western ethnography-oriented research companies. Qing Gong Guan acts as a site for the youth to perform themselves and as a site for ethnographical observation. The third adaption to the Chinese context originates from Chinese social psychology - "face". "Face" is the respectability that one person gets from others or shows to others. In interaction, people cooperate in maintaining face on the mutually vulnerability of face. Young Chinese still care about their "face". Therefore, it is an especially important issue in conducting ethnography in China. "Face" is a mutual issue. On the one hand, it's about the face of the informants. In order to save their own face, the informants intend to provide polished information. On the other hand, it's about the face of the researcher. For saving the researchers' face, the informants will try to cater to researcher's pleasure. Based on this understanding, China Youthology tries to make Qing Gong Guan a public site where young people interact with each at ease. The fourth adaption is born of public knowledge of ethnography and ethnology. Most of the exposure of ethnography and ethnology are in the educational channel in the form of documentary. The public lacks of the knowledge of its practice in business world. Therefore, it takes much time to explain to the informants or the clients what an ethnographic research is about and what it can do for them.

It can be seen that ethnography as a research approach can present thick description of everyday life and people's action. And with minor adjustments, this ethnography will serve for the Chinese market. Then what can distinguish the practice of cultural analysis in marketing research?

5.2 Distinguishing contributions of applying cultural analysis to marketing

Anthropological practice in the private sector has expanded as globalization has gathered strength over the past two decades. Yet, since the practice of anthropology is still quite new, most companies will not put an advertisement that reads 'anthropologist wanted', don't to mention the cultural analysis. In most cases, the anthropological practitioners as well as cultural analysts have to explain to the companies what they can do and how they differ from other professionals. Especially in mainland China, the acknowledgement of this practice is limited. Therefore more efforts need to put into the "sell" part. For cultural analysts, they need to make their unique benefits clear and

known and how they provide understandings that other discipline cannot and what the advantages of this are to a client and employer. The following contrast quoted from Nolan's work (2003, p. 14) will illustrate the fundamental differences between a technical expert and an anthropologist practitioner.

Technical Expert	Anthropologist practitioners or cultural analysts
Usually deals with things. Outcomes are expressed as facts and expert opinions.	Usually deals with people. Outcomes center on cultural meanings and interpretations.
The expert 'owns' his domain. He or she is expert because of his or her mastery of subject matter. The expertise is located in the person of the expert.	Expertise is located in the project context itself. The anthropologist possesses certain skills, but is primarily a conduit or an interpreter for meanings arising from this context.
Knowledge is bounded by disciplines and subject areas. Facts are 'objective' and neutral.	Knowledge is a social construct, and not always conventionally bounded. The process of generating knowledge and meaning is a dialogue.
The expert is presumed to know, and must claim to know, regardless of any uncertainties.	The anthropologist is also presumed to know, but it is not the only person to have relevant knowledge. Uncertainties can be a source of learning for all stakeholders.
The expert keeps a certain distance from the client, and maintains the expert's role.	The anthropologist must enter into the client's thoughts and feelings.
The expert looks for respect and status from the client.	The anthropologist looks for openness and a real connection with the client.

In sum, the anthropologist practitioners as well as cultural analysts have strengths in the following aspects.

Skills in doing qualitative research. According to Sarah Pink, North American applied anthropology textbooks outline a series of established methodologies as part of the skills set,

including participant observation, key informant interviewing, surveys, questionnaires, participatory action research, rapid ethnographic assessment, needs assessment, social impact assessment, focus group research, and social network analysis (2006, p. 14). Most of them are qualitative research, but this doesn't exclude the employment of quantitative study. For applied anthropology and cultural analysis, ethnography remains a key approach. As ethnography searches for and provides details and conclusions that are unexpected or counterintuitive sometimes, it is exciting, fresh and trendy in the business world these days. It is capable of discovering that which has previously been hidden or unknown and may even contradict a decision maker's intuitive understanding (Kedia & Willigen, 2005, p. 255). Thus ethnography has been appropriated by consultants and practitioners from various fields. For cultural analysts and anthropologists and the like, the way to beat others who claim to do ethnography in business world is to conduct it for best results. Fieldwork is the first criterion for conducting good ethnography. They spend time in the field to capture detailed and nuanced portrayals of the field and the people and convey a sense of being there through the thick description. Often, financial constraints and time pressures limit the actual time on the site. But once a cultural analyst or an anthropologist has been doing applied work in the same area for some time, it becomes her or his field. Their previous ethnographic work can compensate for the limited time on the site. The second criterion is contextualizing findings. Ethnography relates human thought and behavior to the multiple contexts in which people are situated, including contexts of history, geography, environment, society, politics, and economics and so on (2005, p. 256). This competence to link data to contextual factors is the holism requirement of anthropology. There are many other criteria for doing good ethnography, such as utilizing multiple methods and techniques, offering a model or theory, emphasizing both what people say and what they do, looking closely at how language is used and protect the people we study (2005, pp. 254-257). However, the two criteria depicted above are especially unique for cultural analysts and anthropologist practitioners alike.

Skills in organizing data. Cultural analysts and anthropologist practitioners are good at fitting data together to form patterns. These data can be gained from previous research literature. They are good at locating those literatures on diverse aspects of the practice, and know how to evaluate the quality of that literature in terms of their own needs and interests. Also, the data can be first-hand from interviewing key informants, and material from fieldwork. But in practical, sometimes, some

material are hard to get even you know where they are. For example, in mainland China, many statistics and reports are not open to the public. In this case, personal connection with insiders will be of great help. And at the same time, this situation asks for a more extensive fieldwork to compensate for the lack of sufficient official statistics.

Ability to uncover the cultural meaning in context. Nolan suggested this advantage over others in that the practitioners or analysts understand that culture is the key to many of the patterns we see and to many of the problems we try to resolve. They gain their understanding inductively from the ground up rather than applying theory from above. “Meaning is not imposed on the situation, but emerges slowly over time from the situation. Anthropology generates meaning through a process of discovery of what is there, rather than verifying or confirming what we might assume is there” (2003, p. 10). Therefore, they have to go out and talk to people involved and build up a picture of what things look like. ‘There’ refers to the context. Without an accurate understanding of the context, the raw data are relatively meaningless. Nolan took the gesture of winking as an example. Without the knowledge of a context, ‘winking at you’ can hardly be understood for a person in a strange city.

Used to contradiction and complexity. Donald Schön’s metaphor described the topography of practice as a wet and messy swamp with dry knoll rising out of it.

“On the dry ground, high above everything else, problems are solved in a relatively clean and smooth fashion, using research-based theory and technique. The problems on the high knoll tend to be technically interesting but relatively unimportant to humanity at large. Down in the swamp, however, the problems are disordered, messy, and confusing, and usually resist purely technical solutions. But this is where the most important human issues lie, the ones that cannot be solved by technique and theory alone, but through a combination of professional artistry and direct engagement with the issues” (cited from Nolan, 2003, p. 9).

For example, an engineer knows how to build roads, but his technical knowledge almost always needs local cultural understanding in order to work effectively. Cultural analysts and anthropologists can reveal the story of how villagers’ use patterns affect the roads. Here, the technical knowledge to

build the roads is the dry knoll and the anthropological approach can carve out a way in the swamp. Cultural analysts and anthropologists not only document and present the story, but also they explore the logic and coherence behind it, which can sometimes bring innovative insight by reminding the fact that all arrangements are essentially arbitrary and all assumptions open to question (2003, p. 11).

Flexible to revise ideas as new meanings emerge. Unlike most specialist experts who attempt to manage and direct a situation, cultural analysts and anthropologists tend rather to want to interact with it and to learn what it is important to know through interaction. In most situations, both the problems and solutions to the problems must be constructed, in other words, built up through interaction and negotiation between the practitioner and the surrounding context. This process of interaction and negotiation is termed *reflective practice* by Schön (cited from Nolan, 2003, p. 9). In each situation, the surrounding context is diverse, therefore the problems with which many cultural analysts and anthropologists engage ask for new learning and new thinking, both of which take place in situ. The reflective practice requires them to make learning a priority, and to keep plans and arrangements as flexible as possible at the early stages of engagement. Even mistakes occurred in the research process can be treated as opportunities to learn.

Ability to learn native languages and subcultures. Here the local language doesn't restrict to a nation-state language, such as English or Chinese; rather 'native language' comprises various domains of practice. When the project is dealing with medicine company, they are expected to learn some basic language in that field and hence gain the understanding of subcultures. For most cultural analysts and anthropologists, they have to take part in various projects in diverse industries. What's more, in the case of mainland China, the native language includes local dialect. For there are many provinces and almost every province has its own native language. For example, there is Shanghai dialect in Shanghai, Sichuan dialect in Sichuan province and Cantonese in Guangdong province. Therefore, it needs awareness that the language does have an important factor in people's characteristics and behaviors. Obviously, the cultural language diversity has to be put into account when they conduct fieldwork in China.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Cultural analysis has long been a core analytical approach in anthropology, cultural study and sociology. Its holistic view and emphasis on ethnographic research method provide much insight for marketing in terms of consumer research, product or service design and overall marketing mix which includes promotion (advertising), packaging, placement in the market and pricing. As the research target group in this thesis concerns a particular market segment, the YA market in mainland China, this thesis concludes with challenges and opportunities for application of cultural analysis in this context. These challenges and opportunities are labeled as Gold Mine, Culture Shift, Global and Local, Ambiguous identity and Restricted Zone. Before the presentation, a general picture of the YA's life is depicted in the following story from TIME (Elegant, 2007).

Six friends out on a Friday evening, the seafood plentiful, the conversation flowing. Maria Zhang — big hoop earrings, tight velvet jacket and a good deal of meticulously applied makeup - starts to describe an island that everyone is talking about off the east coast of Thailand. It has great diving, she says, and lots of Chinese there so you don't have to worry about language. Her friend Vicky Yang is hunched over a borrowed laptop, downloading an e-mail from a pesky client on her cell phone. An actuary at a consulting firm, Vicky needs to close a project tonight. While she phones a colleague, the dinner-table conversation moves on to snowboarding ("I must have fallen a hundred times") to the relative merits of various iPods ("Shuffle is no good") and the sudden onrush of credit cards in China. Silence Chen, an account executive with advertising giant Ogilvy & Mather in Beijing, tells the group he recently received six different cards in the mail. "Each one has a credit limit of 10,000," he says, laughing. "So suddenly I'm 60,000 yuan richer!" The talk turns to China's online shopping business, before that is interrupted by the arrival of razor clams, chili squid and deep-fried grouped.

When I read this, it surprises me for it mirrors many young peoples' life including myself. The young Chinese are the drivers and chief beneficiaries of country's economic boom and the government has been trying its best to keep the swelling middle class happy. In most cases in marketing field, when speaking of mainland China, we are talking about precisely the urban China;

while little concern is paid to the rural. Likewise, the YA market that has been discussed in this thesis is contextualized in the urban area.



“According to a recent survey by Credit Suisse, the incomes of 20-to 29- year-olds grew 34% in the past three years, by far the biggest of any age group” (Elegant, 2007). “Population demographics make it essential to understand the priorities of Chinese employee born in the 1980s: they make up about 50% of the country’s current working-age population” (Lynton & Thogersen, 2010).

These reports and statistics are widespread in business world. It exactly can compare the YA market to a Gold Mine for both foreign and local business. Therefore, there has been growing interest in mapping this generation. On the other hand, the exploration and explanation for this generation is insufficient since the generation concern is quite a new term in China. These studies come along with the foreign investment and the history of it is recorded just for at most three decades. What’s more, a demographic cohort tells the dramatic transformation that YA generation differs from the older, which will make a sustainable investigation. The studies of this generation can last for quite long time from their young age till their later years in life. In this sense, the YA market is a gold mine for the cultural analysis.



As many previous researches conclude, the YA generation is modernized in appearance but not westernized inside (Lynton & Thogersen, 2010b). Though they still hold traditional values, culture shift is occurring. As the solo child in family, most young adults get used to self-interested. The traditional value of collectivism gives way to individualism slowly. For the older generation,

cooperation, shared responsibility, and social harmony take precedence over individual goals such as personal growth and personal satisfaction (Doucet & Jehn, 1999, p. 560). For them, individualism is a negative word and regarded as the “western poisonous herb”. Nowadays, most YA openly claim that they are selfish and another Chinese old saying is widespreading “Ren bu wei ji, tian zhu di mie. (When people do not look out for themselves, heaven will expel and earth will destroy them)”. For these young people, it’s hard to ask them to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the collectivity. But this doesn’t mean that they don’t care about others, which has been proved in national events like

Beijing Olympic Games and the afterwards Sichuan Earthquake. Another shift results from the same reason that being the only child in family. Many studies in management research discover that this generation doesn't respect for the hierarchy. China has a very long history as a feudal society, which produces deep-rooted respect for hierarchy. However, the YA don't comply with hierarchic rules as the previous generations. They will respect you on the condition that you deserve it. Two examples of the cultural shifts have been depicted here. For the cultural analysts, the shifts in culture are an opportunity. Though a study of the YA market probably needs more time and energy since the stereotype of traditional Chinese culture which is widely acknowledged by people, especially by foreigners, has been changing slowly, new cultural analysis is required to map and understand the brand-new generation. The previous literature about the Chinese culture can be a reference; rather, the insights should rely on the first hand material from fieldwork and lasting cultural analysis.



“Think globally and act locally” is the hot slogan in business world, but how to achieve it remains a question. Cultural analysis can serve to accomplish this goal. The communist China following suit with its own brand of market economics brings millions of new consumers into the global marketplace.

Foreign companies throng into the Chinese market. In this situation, cultural analysis serves as a bridge or interpreter to connect or translate the foreign concept to the Chinese context and vice versa. Cultural analysts' knowledge of culture will identify cultural differences that affect product design. What's more, detailed understanding of consumer as well as the market determines which products and services can be sold in a generic version or which need few or even significantly alteration. Take the Branding Green Copenhagen as an example. It aims to promote it in mainland china as an environment-friendly city. However, it will not appeal to the Chinese. Though China is severely polluted and the Chinese ask for greener environment, they won't pay for going far away to enjoy 'Green experience' for just a moment. Therefore, the Green Copenhagen has to cater to the Chinese appetite with broadening its package to contain more green concept. What's more, cultural analysis has in-depth understanding of customer's lifeways, preference and symbolic systems that should be reflected in marketing decisions and materials. Especially, the cross-cultural interpretation of symbols is indispensable. Because the meaning of symbol is arbitrary and culturally constrained, any symbol from a word, to a material artifact may possess distinctive meaning. A good

example in marketing is the French automobile Peugeot. Its Chinese name BiaoZi, means looking good. However, the pronunciation is also similar to bitch. Many Chinese people make fun of it even today. For the YA market, it's good on the one hand that they tend to follow suit with the western culture and purchase goods with foreign brands; on the other hand, they have more choices than ever before. Therefore, the detailed and nuance investigation will help detect the light spot in the market and at the same time help avoid cultural mistakes.



Like the situation in many other countries, applied anthropology, let alone the applied cultural analysis in private section has an ambiguous identity. It has been struggling between the academic world and the business world. In mainland China, as traditional Chinese intellectuals believe in learning for use, applied anthropology has come into being since its being. “It began with a mandate to study the political-economy of ethnic groups in frontier/border regions in the 1920’s and 1930’s for national security reasons, and it continues today with the objective of cultural preservation and comprehensive development to raise living standards and bring these groups more fully into the national economy” (Wang & Young, 2006, p. 70). Till now, the objective for applied anthropology is to “serve the people” and the practice focuses on minority studies, the studies of rural-urban divide, and the studies of disparities between regions (Zhou, 2004, p. 133). This application of anthropology belongs to public section. However, there is a blank between the private section and the academy. It is not alone for applied anthropology. In general, there are barely interactions between social science, humanities and the business world. As H (2010), the ethnographer who I interviewed said that the ethnographers in business field in mainland China all have overseas studying experience. The indigenous training doesn’t cultivate the students to serve for this purpose. On the other hand, almost all the ethnographers or anthropologists are employed by foreign companies in mainland China, which is a quite interesting situation that the anthropology has been employed by foreign companies to study the local people. In a word, the gap between the ‘pure’ and ‘impure’ anthropology doesn’t exist, because there is no ‘impure’ anthropology at all in terms of applying it in private sections. Therefore, when conducting it in business world like marketing, the practitioners have to make great efforts to explain their identity apart from the research project both

to the clients and to the informants. But at the same time, the underdevelopment situation provides a greater space for the application of cultural analysis in private sectors.



Economic booming in communist China is due to valuing economic growth over any other thing. However, the political issue is the restricted zone. The communist Party is very sensitive to these issues. If you want to do business in China, you have to follow their rules. At the same time, most YA hold the same opinion that “there is nothing we can do about politics, so there is no point in talking about it or getting involved”. For most young people, they are apolitical pragmatism and they more worldly than their predecessors. For cultural analysis, this is a concern when looking into the macro environment. Google teaches a lesson for doing business in mainland China. When the company’s credo is contradicted to the communist’s politics, it’s a question of ‘to be or not to be’. Therefore, for doing cultural analysis in mainland china, one has to have the political sensitivity. However, this challenge could also bring opportunity. As cultural analysis looks into and provides detailed description, it is good at revealing nuance and sensitive area. For conducting business in mainland China, especially for foreign companies, cultural analysis will help companies make business decision considering those details.

To summarize, through the study of two cases, it can be concluded that cultural analysis as a new and innovative analytical approach can bring insights to marketing in the mainland Chinese context. On the one hand, though interests in culture have grown dramatically, it is by and large the least investigated part of the marketing process. Especially in mainland China, there is little attention paid to such research in academy. Only few indigenous companies conduct cultural analysis as a main part in marketing process. On the other hand, China is changing rapidly, but Chinese values and culture change much slower than economic statistics. In this vein, cultural analysts can provide insights into and make contributions to marketing with their skills in organizing data and doing qualitative research, ability to learn native languages and subcultures and uncover the cultural meaning in context, and flexibility to revise ideas as new meanings emerge. With some adjustments to the Chinese context, cultural analysis will help the marketers make their decision confidently in marketing practice in mainland China.

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Applications of Cultural Analysis in Marketing in a Mainland Chinese Context

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Applications of Cultural Analysis in Marketing in a Mainland Chinese Context

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Endnotes

¹ Chinayouthology is a Chinese consulting company focusing on Chinese young people. See their website <http://www.chinayouthology.com/en/> accessed 2010/2/8

² Inculture is a Swedish consulting company. See their website <http://inculture.com/> accessed 2010/3/18

³ Red Associate a Danish consulting company. See their website <http://www.redassociates.dk/> accessed 2010/3/18

⁴ Media and Cultural Analysis in Loughborough University <http://lboro.ac.uk/prospectus/pg/courses/dept/ss/mca/index.htm> accessed 2010/3/21

⁵ Social & cultural analysis in New York University <http://sca.as.nyu.edu/page/home> accessed 2010/3/21

⁶ Cultural Analysis (MA) In University of Amsterdam <http://www.studeren.uva.nl/ma-cultural-analysis/object.cfm/objectid=C962C541-369C-4DA4-9CA67A77294345B6> accessed 2010/3/21

⁷ Master of Applied Cultural Analysis <http://www.lu.se/cultural-sciences/education/master-of-applied-cultural-analysis-maca-> accessed 2010/3/21

⁸ Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis <http://www.hum.uva.nl/asca/> accessed 2010/3/22

⁹ Jiao Dan, a Chinese girl, studying in Copenhagen University, one member of MACA program.

¹⁰ Zhang Jing, background in Media and right now takes two programs in Lund University. One program is MACA, and another one is Movie Production.

¹¹ Tencent QQ. Retrieved from <http://www.business-internet-china.com/instant-messenger/china-news/tencent-qq-announced-a-breakthrough-of-100-million-current-users.php>

¹² China Youthology's Blog, see http://chinayouthology.com/blog/?page_id=807 accessed 2010/3/29

¹³ Bird Nest is the nickname for the main stadium of holding Beijing Olympic Games.

¹⁴ Lining, an indigenous sports brand well-known to Chinese households. See Company website <http://www.lining.com/EN/home/index.html> accessed 2010/3/29