

HONG KONG
YOUNG
WRITERS AWARDS
2015



New Tales of the Pearl River Delta

The Anthology of The Hong Kong Young Writers Awards



Non-Fiction Group 1

Macau

American International School, Baek, Chloe – 8, Non-Fiction 1

Macau is a wonderful city. It has a lot of hotels and buses that go to the hotels. In the hotels there are swimming pools. Sometimes in the hotels there is also a Kid's Club. There are lots of buffets in the hotels. In Macau they make yummy egg tarts.

Riding the boats gives me sea sickness but I still love the boats. When the boat ride gives me sea sickness a man sings with a guitar and makes me feel good. The shopping malls are cool. They have yellow walls and new people who I don't know.

Macau is so spectacular! New people, new foods, and new clothes. Shopping in the malls and taking pictures to remember. Macau is the best world. But I live in Hong Kong.

The Pearl River Delta

American International School, Cao, Charmaine – 6, Non-Fiction 1

The president of China, Deng Xiaoping, decided to reform and open up the Pearl River Delta in 1978. The P. R. D. covers Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Zhuhai and other cities.

I went to Shenzhen of the Pearl River Delta during Winter Break. It was a very beautiful city and very near Hong Kong. I flew a kite at Square Lianhuashan Park with my family. There were so many people flying a kite. They were so happy. I also visited the statue of Deng Xiaoping with my family. I love Lianhuashan Park in the Pearl River Delta!

Pearl River Delta

Western Academy of Beijing, Chiang, Angela – 8, Non-Fiction: Group 1

The Pearl River Delta which is located at the south-eastern tip of China is one of the fastest growing areas in Asia. It is an area that has a lot of wealth, diverse population and rich history. Home to the cities like Hong Kong and Macau, it is a mix of European ideas and Chinese culture. Most importantly, Hong Kong acts as an international center of finance, culture and history.

Hong Kong has lived through many major events. For example, starting from the 1800s to the 1930s, the British traded clocks with the Chinese in exchange for tea. Unfortunately, there was a large fight over the opium trade, which led to the First Opium War and Britain taking over Hong Kong. During this time, the British made several changes to the city and Hong Kong developed greatly. Christian missionaries built many schools and churches, thus introducing Christianity into the community. During the Japanese occupation in World War II, Japanese troops invaded the city and created a new government. Fortunately, Britain took back Hong Kong at the end of the war and restored peace to the city.

From the 1950s until the 21st century, Hong Kong grew to become a city full of opportunity. When the communist revolution of 1949 turned China into a battlefield, thousands of Chinese immigrants fled to Hong Kong, creating many cheap workers. Several foreign businesses also moved their offices from Shanghai to Hong Kong, creating many new jobs. Several decades later, the economy continued to expand as the manufacturing industry employed more workers. Hong Kong created the right for men and women to have equal pay.

Today, Hong Kong continues to expand as a port city and an international financial center. For example, Hong Kong has hundreds of multi-national companies headquartered within the city. From 1982 to 1997, Hong Kong had an unemployment rate of only 2.5%. Unfortunately, during the Asian Financial Crisis from 1997 to 2002, Hong Kong's unemployment rate rose up to 6%. However, Hong Kong's strong economy recovered quickly and unemployment rates average at only 3.3% as of 2014. Hong Kong still remains as a city with a mixed cultural population with the number of foreigners increasing from only 14,384 in 1996 up to 26,881 in 2010.

Hong Kong's diverse cultural heritage can also be clearly seen through its various attractions. Although Hong Kong has many Chinese temples, it also has a variety of other religious buildings. For example, St. John's Cathedral, the Jamia Mosque and the Happy Valley Hindu Temple all serve as examples of how Hong Kong's diverse population celebrates many different religions such as Christianity, Islam and Hinduism as well as Buddhism.

As you can see, Hong Kong is a global center of business, a multi-cultural location and a site of great history, supporting its amazing development and growth in the Pearl River Delta.



Non-Fiction Group 2

My Day

Christian Alliance S Y Yeh Memorial Primary School, Yeung, Yu Sum – 10,

Non-Fiction: Group 2

I wake up in the morning at six o'clock. I ride on mummy's car for half an hour to the Shenzhen wan Port. It takes ten minutes to cross the border. I then take 618 mini bus to school.

First lesson starts at half past eight. I write my handbook during recess. I take my lunchbox with me to school. I like my lunchbox. It's yummy! I read books and do my homework during recess. I am dismissed from school at three-thirty.

Daddy picks me up at the covered-playground. We take minibus back to the Shenzhen wan Port. Daddy then drives us back home in the Bao Nan district.

I have dinner at home. My favourite is fish soup. It looks white like milk, so we call it milk soup.

I do my homework after dinner. I wash myself. I pack my school bag by myself. Mummy checks my homework. I eat fruits then I brush my teeth and go to bed.

Jewels Along Pearl River Delta

Clearwater Bay School, Li, Megan – 9, Non-Fiction: Group 2

I am *Forest Pearl*, an ancient green boat with silver specks. I heard from another boat, *Charming Thunder*, that there is a place called Pearl River Delta (PRD) in China, at the tail of Pearl River, where it flows to The South China Sea. I set an adventurous mission for myself, sailing through the PRD. Yes, I keep a diary. I am literate and like to pass my travel stories along.

Pearl River Delta

The Pearl River was called the Pearl River because many pearl-coloured shells lie at the bottom where it flows through the city of Guangzhou.

I read that eleven major cities frame the PRD: Zhaoqing, Jiangmen, Foshan, Zhongshan, Zhuhai, Macao, Guangzhou, Dongguan, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Huizhou. I planned my course through three major cities: the forever Chinese Guangzhou, the once English Hong Kong, and the formerly Portuguese Macau—the most important trading ports around the PRD bay. I think the PRD, with its two previously colonized cities, is very special. I heard many languages and saw a mix of cultures on my journey.

Guangzhou

I started from Guangzhou, which can be romanized as Canton. I read that Guangzhou is the third biggest city in China, with an area of 2870 square miles and a population of 12.78 million, a wall of people! Being a major trading port and an extraordinarily busy city, Guangzhou has 11 districts. I saw many amazing buildings, like the energy generating Pearl River Delta Tower. Its state flower, the Red Cotton Tree, can be eaten many ways, including as curry or tea. The tree has spines with numerous flowers. The flowers littered my deck. I was very sweaty even though I was floating. The PRD is unusually humid, being close to the Equator. Guangzhou produces many types of art, which shopkeepers sell on the street. Among these are Olive Sculpting and Wood sculpting. The two main languages spoken are Cantonese and Mandarin. I found some other interesting facts about Guangzhou. For example, do you know that there is a big African population in Guangzhou, some of whom I saw on the street?

Goodbye Guangzhou.

Macau

Cruising down from Guangzhou, passing Zhongshan, I found the Macau Peninsula, connected to the Islands Taipa and Coloane by bridges. They form Macau, which has many fewer people and is much smaller than Guangzhou. Macau covers barely 12 square miles and has a much smaller population of 624,000. I read that Portuguese settled at Macau in 1557. Between 1887 and 1999, Macau remained a Portuguese colony. It is a part of China now. Considered one of the richest cities in the world, Macau relies on gambling, tourism and manufacturing. Its city flower is the delicate and fragrant Lotus. Macau is sub-tropical and humid. I continue to sweat. A tourist brought me an elaborately decorated porcelain lotus flower that cost one Macanese Pataca, which is 0.125 US Dollar. The sellers spoke Cantonese, Mandarin and Portuguese.

I waved farewell to Macau.

Hong Kong

I started my engine again, sailing east across the bay from Macau to Hong Kong. I landed in Hong Kong's Victoria Harbor, an important key and witness to Hong Kong's success.

I saw high-rise apartment buildings like a grey-bamboo forest standing proudly from flat ground. I saw hordes of busy people, lush trees and massive mountains.

Hong Kong has a huge population of seven million condensed within 100 of its 426 square miles. That's why extensive mountains coexist with skyscrapers. Hong Kong was a British colony between 1842 and 1997, except when occupied by Japan between 1941 and 1945. It returned to China in 1997. Regarded as

an important financial centre, Hong Kong has one of the highest incomes per person in the world. Still, there are lots of poor people on the street. I saw homeless people, mostly close to subway entrances. Its city flower, the Hong Kong Orchard Tree, has a five-petaled bauhinia flower, which is normally pink with a center crown petal of darker color. Poking up from the center, the stamens smell like sickly sweet honeysuckle. Most coins have the flower on them. I looked around the wet market, where everyone uses HK Dollars of similar value to Macau's Pataca. Here everyone speaks either English, Cantonese or Mandarin.

A million Yellow Ribbons

In Hong Kong, I encountered Umbrella Revolution. Demonstrators were so clean and organized. Police stand in a fenced off area, and people press cold packs to their necks to cool themselves. The police and demonstrators have an uneasy truce. There are reporters and signs everywhere, stuck onto walls. People gave speeches. Things like bottled water were free. On handle rails there are yellow ribbons, some cloth, and some plastic. I joke that we could lick the railings if the ribbons were made out of cheese, though it was a hot day so it might melt. Many people carried umbrellas.

Dusk settled over the river. I sang a song on the way home ...

The Pearl River Delta,
Where the milky river flows
Before it enters the sea;

The towering buildings, busy ports,
Pockets of serenity in these cities,
Miraculous:

Guangzhou, with propelling growth engine and soaring skyscrapers
Stunningly energetic,
With its people and satellite cities,
Cosmically powerful.

Striking Macau, with European forts and churches,
Truly transnational,
With crescent bay and islands
Refined and relaxing.

Their sister Hong Kong,
Impressively compact;
With lavish green mountains and all its flats,
Astonishes with heavenly delights.

The Pearl River Delta!
An important economic zone,
A cultural Janus,
A power house,
Is unique for a boat to see.

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The Golden Delta of Guangdong

International College Hong Kong–Hong Lok Yuen, Renaud, Anae – 10,

Non–Fiction: Group 2

The Pearl River Delta is also known as the Golden Delta of Guangdong, it is formed by three major rivers, the North River, East River and West River. It covers 39,380 km² of China's land, and is 2,400 km long. As a result it is the third longest river system in China.

The river flows through many different cities and towns such as Hong Kong, Macau, Guangzhou and Shen Zhen. The area contains a colossal amount of population that is about 120,000,000 people.

The river delta was an important stop in the famous Silk Road, far back in the 13th century. It is also significant for exchanges of goods. Until the mid–1980s, most of what today is the Pearl River Delta Special Economic Zone was mostly farm land. There are around ten bridges on this river, that along with the tunnels connect the south and north banks of the river with the district of Fangcung.

The river is very polluted, with sewage and industrial waste from factories and fuel exhaust and oil spills coming from boats, nearby. Therefore there is unfortunately not much wildlife living by these polluted filthy waters. Although there is not much wildlife living there, there still are some pink dolphins and fish swimming and splattering around.

The Pearl River Delta has become the world's workshop and has been successful at producing goods like electronic products and plastics. Since it is located near the sea and shore, it is also easier for shipping goods worldwide.

The Pearl River got its name from all the pearl coloured shells that lie at the bottom of the river, in the section that flows through the city of Guangzhou. In Chinese, the Pearl River Delta is written as (珠江三角洲), meaning “three corners of a land coming together, forming a huge land mass”. Pearl is regarded as a precious item, therefore the name Pearl River Delta, shows that this special area is really meaningful to China, for both local and national reasons.

The Pearl river Delta

Kennedy School, Lau, King Hin – 8, Non-Fiction: Group 2

The Pearl River is a river running through Guangdong, Guangzhou and the Special Administrative Regions of Macau and Hong Kong. The Pearl river, also known as the Golden Delta of Guangdong is made up of three rivers, the Xi, Bei and Dong Jiang. The Pearl River Delta is a high density area with about 120 million people living in the area as of 2010. It flows to the South China Sea through Hong Kong which is a main financial capital of the world and also a business and multi-cultural hub. Hong Kong is a SAR {Special Administrative Region} and was ruled by the Japanese and the English before. Hong Kong has many different kinds of people living in the city. It also has a very good transportation network with Buses, Trains, taxis, minibuses, MTR {Mass Transit Railway} and also a historical ship called a Sampan which can transport passengers as well as freight. Hong Kong also has an airport which is the world's 11th in Passenger traffic and 1th in Cargo traffic. New projects for the city are the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, South Island Line, Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, Hong Kong-Zhuhai and Macau Bridge and the proposed third runway for the Hong Kong International Airport. Hong Kong cuisine varies a lot, whether you want Thai, Japanese, Chinese, Korean or any other kinds, you can find it all over Hong Kong. Hong Kong is truly a wonderful city and full of excitement and fun. It is very lucky to live in Hong Kong. Another wonderful city that is along the Pearl River Delta is the city of Guangzhou in Mainland China, though it is not as famous as Hong Kong many people come here too. The most famous and tallest building in Guangzhou is the Guangzhou TV Astronomical and Sightseeing Tower, more than 600 metres high and it is the fifth tallest freestanding building in the world. Guangzhou has very good transport system with almost 260km of metro! The vehicles running on the roads in Guangzhou are mostly run on LPG fuel to provide a better and cleaner air for Guangzhou. The Guangzhou Baiyun Airport is the official airport of Guangzhou, with two runways of 3,600 metres and 3,800 metres, It is a very busy airport. Guangzhou is also a wonderful city with a picturesque skyline that amazes thousands. The Pearl River Delta also runs through Macau which is a small city, but is very cultured. Like Hong Kong it is also an SAR {Special Administrative Region}. Ruled by Portugal from the mid-16th century until 1999. It is one of the most densely populated region in the world. As some people know the most famous attraction in Macau is the Ruins of St Paul's. Built in 1602, it was the remains of the Cathedral of St Paul's also known as Mater Dei in Portuguese, it was built to honor St Paul the Apostle. Macau's cuisine are a mixture of their local cuisine and Portuguese cuisine. The transport in Macau is also very easy to get to because the main transport In Macau there are three main types of transport, Air, land and sea. Being in China and alongside the Pearl River Delta is a very good experience, China is a truly an amazing country I really like China!

The Pearl River Delta

Peak School, Kong, Ree Nie – 10, Non-Fiction: Group 2

The Pearl River Delta: Introduction–

The Pearl River Delta (or named in Chinese– ‘Zhu Jiang San Jiao Zhou’) is in the Guangdong province of South China. It is named the ‘Pearl River **Delta**’ because of the pearl-like shells at the bottom of this magnificent river. The Pearl River Delta is the third longest river in China. It covers an area of 2,900 square miles (7,500 square kilometres). It stretches from Guangzhou (Canton) to the Special Administrative Region of Macau. The Pearl River Delta is a large area consisting of a number of streams and canals in between rice paddies. It is a large urban district made of a continuously built area. It has a stable economy and is now one of the major exports and manufacturing areas at global levels. They supply us with rice from paddy fields, they help grow crops and help us in economy as well. The Pearl River Delta consists of a provincial capital city (Guangzhou), two special economic zones (Zhuhai and Shenzhen), nine cities, sixteen county-level municipalities, and the special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau. Consequently, most of the cities that make up the Pearl River Delta area are in the Guangdong province, although there is a section of the Fujian province that is also part of this active economy hub.

The Pearl River Delta: Features–

The Pearl River Delta covers an area of almost 3000 square miles while it flows in its tranquil pace. But sometimes, the Pearl River Delta isn’t always as calm and smooth, instead it can be violent and rough as the water laps around the sides of the confounding river. When the wind viciously whirls the water into turbulent waves, overlapping bridges, cliffs and bridges, the Pearl River Delta cautiously makes its way into the South China Sea. Unfortunately, now, the Pearl River Delta is now moderately polluted. Twigs, plastics, aluminium cans, mould, dirty bags of plastic from landfills, animal droppings and even sewage water contaminates the water. The polluted area is slowly becoming full of rubbish and dirty objects floating around. The sewage water is getting rancid and smelly, the dirty objects are gradually rotting. Luckily, people sometimes organise beach clean-ups as well as sea clean-ups to get rid of these foreign substances that damage the water quality and make the water undrinkable and very dangerous for organisms around the area to live in. But on the other hand, some waste can dissolve in the water and be broken down into pieces and eventually dilute, or they can be dispersed. Or, they can even be recycled as food for plants and microorganisms. Obviously, the Pearl River Delta has formed positive and negative issues to discuss, debate and consider on.

The Pearl River Delta: Economy–

The Pearl River Delta is an incredible economic zone and have been regarded as one of the growth engines that contributes to the general development in Southern China. The Pearl River Delta domestic companies, as many foreign countries concentrate on targeting its rapid economic development. They have a stable supply of food (rice, vegetables, corn, etc.) Guangdong and in particular, the Pearl River Delta has seen a massive growth since its revolutionary change in economy. The profiles of industries along the banks of this delta are electronics, IT and household appliance products. In fact, the success of China’s manufacturing industry can be attributed to the growth of this

The Pearl River Delta: History

The Pearl River Delta initially seems to be an entirely, modern aged city, dominated by the wealthy Hong Kong, and the economic-minded Shenzhen

Back in the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping's (a Chinese revolutionary and statesman) visionary ideology was the reason the Special Economic Zones were created to bring a phenomenal change to a free-market (tax-free economic zone). The rapid development of the Pearl River Delta also marks the end of the industrial revolution in Hong Kong, it was during this time when thousands of operations have moved their offices to the delta. At the beginning, most of the companies concentrating on the Pearl River Delta are mainly light-industries (for examples: toys, pottery, shoes). It was only during the 1990s when the area began to attract more resourceful and heavy-based companies, to employ more skillful and high technology-based employees.

The Pearl River Delta: Culture

The Pearl River Delta itself holds many cultural beliefs and values which are influenced by the Cantonese (Guangzhou) Culture. The delta has included different Chinese groups, such as Teochew (Chaozhou) which is one of the most commonly found clan in this area. Other clans which live around the area are Cantonese, Fujian and Hakka.

These different cultural backgrounds are also influencing the types of cuisines found in this area. However the majority are Cantonese style dishes which are stir-fried or steamed. Roasted meat such as barbecued pork and chicken are also the most popular food.

Fast Fact Files:

- The Pearl River Delta leads into the 'South China sea', which is part of the Pacific Ocean.
- A delta is an area when the mouth of a river meets an ocean, sea, estuary or reservoir.
- As the river flows into the sea, it picks up lots of debris and residue. All of that gets carried right at the mouth of a river, where it is finally carried by the ocean's current, waiting for it to be found, thrown away, or recycled.
- Deltas are normally triangular. Due to the waste and residue blocking the river, not allowing the water to slide past, small slits are formed to
- The surrounding population (including Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Macau border, Shenzhen, western Zhuhai, Dongguan, Fujian, Foshan, Zhongshan) is almost as large as Germany (100 million).
- Millions of Chinese have left their homes to earn a living at GuangDong.

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Books, encyclopaedias, guide books-

- The Rough Guide to - China
- My Big Book of the World

New Tales of the Pearl River Delta

Po Leung Kuk Hong Kong Taoist Association Yuen Yuen Primary School,
Choi, Nick – 11, Non-Fiction: Group 2

The Pearl River Delta (PRD), also known as the Golden Delta of Guangdong, is formed by three major rivers, the Xi Jiang, Bei Jiang and Dong Jiang. The PRD has been one of the most economically dynamic regions of the People's Republic of China since the launch of China's reform program in 1979. The abundance of employment opportunities created a pool of wealthy, middle-income, consumers with an annual income which puts them among China's wealthiest.

The Pearl River Delta is slowly growing into a megapolis. But back in 1978, it was mainly agricultural, occupying only 0.45% of the area of China. Since then, it has seen some of the most rapid urban expansion in history. In about 30 years, it has become the heart of the Chinese economy and accounting for nearly one tenth of the whole country's economy. During that time, its urbanization rate increased drastically from 28% to 83%, making it one of the most densely urbanized regions in China.

The Pearl River Delta has become a workshop and is a manufacturing headquarters for products such as electronics, toys, and a range of other products. Because of this, the Pearl River Delta has been nicknamed "the workshop of the world". The "Made in China" tag has become famous because of the Delta which provides so many products to the world.

Privately owned companies has developed very quickly in the PRD Economic Zone and are playing an important role in the region's economy, especially after 2000, when the development environment for private-owned companies had been greatly relaxed. Nearly 5% of the world's products were produced in the Pearl River Delta in 2001, with a total export value of USD \$289 billion. Over 70 000 Hong Kong companies have factories there.

Although the Pearl River Delta is very successful in the business department, it is notoriously polluted by sewage and industrial waste. Much of the area is frequently covered by a brown smog. A large part of the pollution is brought by factories run by Hong Kong manufactures in the area. The pollution is also a great danger to the Chinese White Dolphins which live in the Pearl River Delta.

In 2007, the World Bank approved a \$96 million loan the PRC government to reduce water pollution in the Pearl River Delta. In 2008 it was announced that ¥48.6 billion was spent on the river to clean up the river.

In a city as money-centric as Hong Kong, the Pearl River Delta megacity's influence on our economy seems a natural place to start. Even with the rapid emergence of the Mainland over the last 30 years, Hong Kong remains the financial stronghold of China. But, it isn't, according to some, a foregone conclusion that Hong Kong will remain as the power centre of a future PRD megacity.

Cities of the Pearl River Delta

Singapore International School, Siauw, Peter Theodore – 10, Non-Fiction: Group 2

The Pearl River Delta is a gargantuan area of the Guangdong Province that surrounds the Pearl River estuary, the last part of the enormous Pearl River, where it finally ends and empties into the South China Sea. It is a rapidly developing area, with a whopping population of approximately 57 million people. After the economic liberalisation of the 70s, the once sleepy backwater has now become a principal economic and manufacturing region. Many well-known major cities of China call the Pearl River Delta home. A handful of them are shown below here:

Hong Kong (香港)

Our home sweet home. It is a bustling metropolis officially named Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), a special area of China that has its own government. With a minuscule area of merely 1104 km², it is known as one of the most densely populated areas on Earth, with around 7.23 million people residing here! Boasting an expansive and picturesque skyline and a deep natural port, it is celebrated for its relatively stable society and for being one of the world's best and most influential international financial centres with a strong and powerful free trade economy. With hundreds of shopping malls, Hong Kong is a shopping haven, known for its minimal taxes on luxury goods, sending flocks of people making a beeline for the city. Hong Kong also has numerous heavenly, beautiful landscapes such as the vibrant and lively Hong Kong Island and the scenic view from the Peak. However, it has also been plagued by many problems, such as soaring astronomical property prices and the recent Occupy Central movement, which disrupted and sent ripples throughout society.

Hong Kong did not attain its success easily. For a long time, it was in the hands of the British. Hong Kong Island became a British colony in 1842, after the defeat of the Chinese in the First Opium War and the signing of the Nanking Treaty, which ceded Hong Kong Island to China. In 1858, after the Chinese defeat in the Second Opium War, they were again compelled to cede Kowloon to the British. In 1898, the New Territories were granted to the British for a 99 year lease, lasting until 1997. In 1984, the Sino-British Convention was signed, securing the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997 and its future with a special status as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) for 50 years, until 2047. Three cheers for our fantastic Hong Kong!

Guangzhou City (广州市)

The vast city is the capital of the Guangdong Province (广东省), a province situated in southeast China. Formerly named Canton by the British, the city is a major transport hub for the nation and has a gigantic trading port. It is not as densely populated as Hong Kong, with only around 14 million residents in a city of about 11300 km². Similar to Hong Kong, it owns an impressive skyline and a vibrant community, and also has a spectacular view of the Pearl River (珠江), which flows through the city. In the late 1990s, there was an influx of Africans into Guangzhou, causing the African population to increase constantly, crowning it as the city with the largest African population in the whole Asia! The city has also been host to numerous global events, such as the 2010 Asian Games. It is also the hometown of the well-known Canton Fair, a biannual trade fair held in Guangzhou. The city is associated with a unique myth related with goats, thus earning it the nickname of "Goat City" (羊城). It has numerous attractions. In the middle of the Pearl River, there is an island – Shamian (Shameen) Island (沙面岛), which was once a concession to the British and French governments. They have since returned it to China, but they left behind numerous pieces of Western architecture, creating a relaxed atmosphere reminiscent to Victorian

Britain – utterly peaceful, with magnificent granite buildings lining the quiet streets. However, Guangzhou is not just filled with artefacts dating back from the bygone era and yesteryear – it has numerous pieces of modern architecture and amusement parks, the most famous of all definitely being Chime-Long Paradise and Chime-Long Water Park. Both owned by the same group, they boast a safari park filled with exotic creatures, a gobsmacking circus with performers performing all sorts of interesting tricks and shows. It also contains tens of attractions using state-of-the-art technology, such as roller-coasters, slides and tunnels – you name it, they have it! The city is full of life and is astounding.

Zhuhai City

It is famous for its tranquil and marvellous coast. A famous tourist destination, it is sometimes nicknamed the Chinese Riviera. It is a bustling city but is also tranquil, and was found to be the most liveable city among the hundreds of thousands of cities in China! Adjacent to Macau, the city is known for the vast expanses of its Gongbei Underground Shopping Mall, which interestingly is right next to the Gongbei Border to Macau. The New Yuanmingyuan (Summer Palace) was built here, to recreate Yuanmingyuan, once the famed and distinctive Summer Palace of the Chinese Emperor. The Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, an ocean-themed amusement park similar to its counterpart in Guangzhou can also be found here. The coast of Zhuhai is also a well-known landmark, known for its breathtaking views of the Pearl River Delta. It does not have a multitude of attractions, but is a very wonderful place.

Dongguan City

A prominent industrial city full of factories ,it produces and exports numerous goods. It has been known respectively as some of China’s and the world’s most innovative and dynamic city. The manufacturing hub mainly manufactures electronics and communication equipments, and once produced the majority of the world’s shoes. However, the tourist attractions are few, if any.

The Pearl River Delta is truly a significant area of the Guangdong Province and China!

The Pearl River Delta Ports

Western Academy of Beijing, Godde, Oskar – 9, Non-Fiction: Group 2



http://wikitravel.org/en/Pearl_River_Delta

The Pearl River Delta is an estuary where the Pearl River flows into the South China Sea. The river delta is formed by three major rivers, the Xi Jiang (West River) the Bei Jiang (North River), and the Dong Jiang (East River). 1 The term Pearl River Delta also refers to a huge network of cities that covers nine prefectures of the province of Guangdong, namely Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Foshan, Huizhou, Jiangmen and Zhaoqing, and the SARs of Hong Kong and Macau. 2!

The Pearl River Delta has a long Maritime story to tell. From Centuries there were fishing villages dotted along it's banks. Today thousands of ships pass through the delta every year. The Pearl River Delta is considered the biggest metropolitan area in the world (with population of 120mn) and could be considered the biggest container port market in the world. 3!

1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_River_Delta!](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_River_Delta)
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_River_Delta!
3. <http://www.port-investor.com/prd-market/>



<http://www.economist.com/node/1382626>

Ports in the Pearl River Delta!

As of 2012, seven of the busiest ten ports in the world were in the People's Republic of China. The Pearl River Delta ports of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou were ranked 3, 4 and 5 in the world according to the list of the world's busiest container ports. 1

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_world%27s_busiest_container_ports

Ships which travel on the Pearl River Delta

Bulk carrier



A bulk carrier is a specially designed ship to transport unpackaged bulk cargo. Bulk carriers carry such goods (grains, coal, ore and bulk steel).

Bulk cargo is loaded into a big cargo hold in the ship and then there is a hatch like door on top.

Bulkers come in different sizes.

Crews can be from three people on the smallest ships to over 30 on the largest.

Container ship



Container Ships carry cargo in freight containers. Cargo is packed into containers and loaded onto these massive ships. Container ships come in different sizes. The world's largest container ship is the MSC Oscar and is 395.4 metres long, and 59 metres wide. This is equal to the size of four combined football fields. Oscar can carry 19,224 containers. Most ships operate with between 18 and 26 crew.

1. <http://maritimesecurity.asia/free-2/maritime-security-asia/worlds-largest-container-ship-msc-oscar-with-19224-teu-capacity-christened>

2. <https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20121226205019AAZUK11>

Pictures: http://mpckr.blogspot.com/2010_11_24_archive.html !

<http://felixstowedocker.blogspot.com/2015/01/cscl-globe-felixstowe-arrival-for.html> !

Pilot Boat!



A pilot boat is a small boat that is used to take the pilots to the large ships. Some pilots are taken out by helicopter to the ships

Tug Boat!



A tugboat is used to push or pull the vessels in and out of the harbours, and up and down the Pearl River Delta.

Help on land

Forklift



A forklift truck (also called a lift truck, a fork truck, or a forklift) is a powered industrial truck used to lift and move materials short distances.

Cranes



Gantry crane



A container crane (also container handling gantry crane or ship-to-shore crane) is a type of large dockside gantry crane found at container terminals for loading and unloading intermodal containers from container ships. The gantry crane and overhead crane are smaller, as both lift their cargo between their legs. The way you can tell them apart is a gantry crane is often wheeled on rails.

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forklift_truck
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Container_crane

Pictures: <http://www.portpictures.nl>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Container_crane

www.tradeindia.com www.clarkequipment.com www.silive.com

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gantry_crane

Reach stackers



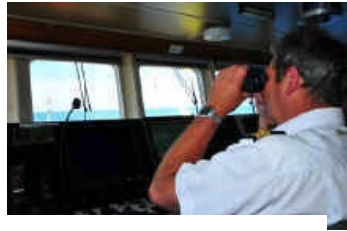
A **reach stacker** is a vehicle used for moving and stacking shipping containers in small terminals or medium-sized ports. Reach stackers are able to transport a container short distances

very fast and stack them on top of each other, in rows.

Meet The Pearl River Delta Crew!



The chief mate is responsible to the Captain for the safety and security of the ship.



A sea captain can be called a captain, master or shipmaster. They must be a licenced mariner. The captain is responsible for everything and everyone on board the ship. 1

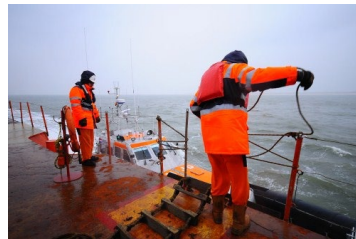


The chief steward directs, instructs, and assigns personnel.

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_captain
 2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_mate
 3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seafarer%27s_professions_and_ranks#Steward.27s_department
- Pictures: <http://www.portpictures.nl>



A stevedore, dockworker, docker, dock labourer, wharfie, wharf rat, and/or longshoreman is a waterfront manual labourer in loads and unloads ships. 1



The pilot is a mariner who goes onto the big ships coming into port. These pilots have to steer the ships through the ports on the Pearl River Delta to the docking and undocking at the ports. Piloting is compulsory in the Pearl River Delta for general ships 3000 gross tonnes and above and for all gas carriers. 2



The chief cook and participates in the preparation and serving of meals; determines timing and sequence of operations required to meet serving times; inspects for cleanliness and proper storage and preparation of food.

1. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stevedore>
 2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maritime_pilot
 3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seafarer%27s_professions_and_ranks#Steward.27s_department!
- Pictures: <http://www.portpictures.nl>



It is very difficult and dangerous for ships to load and unload the bulk cargo. On the larger ships it can take up to 120 hours to unload. Container ships have special cell guides and lashing equipment in the under deck compartments which helps in giving a secure stowage for sea transport.

Pictures: <http://www.portpictures.nl>



Non-Fiction Group 3

Consanguinity of the Pearl River Delta

Discovery College (Primary), Woo, Nicole – 13, Non-Fiction: Group 3

The force of the mighty river washed away a dead tree stump onto land. In front of it was the stunning Dong Jiang, one of the vast rivers forming the Pearl River Delta. When ‘the delta’ is mentioned, People with a business mindset may think of a fast-growing economy and numerous supply of work force, whereas an environmentalist may think of the endangered Chinese White Dolphin. But, there is another thing that we may not recognize about the Pearl River Delta – the people.

Just like the dead tree stump, did the native fishermen from Hong Kong originate from the Pearl River Delta too? As recalled, a few hundred years ago, Hong Kong started out as a fishing village. Do we have any connection with the people of Pearl River Delta? Or in contrast, have the people of Hong Kong migrated to the cities along the Pearl River?

Religion, tradition’s taboo, language, living style and uniqueness are all components that can answer the question above. By figuring out the differences and similarities, it can be proven whether these fishermen come from the same origin as the people of Hong Kong.

(1) Religion

Hong Kong and Pearl River native fishermen have the same religion. Fishermen from Northern Guangdong (Xiamen and Shantou) have a unique practice in the way they cook chicken for god worshiping. They are not allowed to cut the intestine of the chicken nor do they bend the legs of it, as they deeply believe that it will make the boat sink due to the broken ship’s hawser (or called “rigging”). It is also said that the workers on the boat will break their legs if they bend the chicken’s legs.

But, neither the fishermen in Hong Kong nor Pearl River have this kind of belief. So, it can prove that the people in Hong Kong are not from Northern Guangdong area.

In addition, there are two kinds of fishermen – the salt-water fishermen (Sea fishermen) and the fresh water fishermen (River fishermen), and their religions are absolutely different too. The salt-water fishermen worships Hung Shing, and this is why Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dong Guan have a lot of Hung Shing temples. However, the fresh water fishermen worships the god of dragon and those temples are widely located along the Yellow River (known as 黄河) and Yangtze River (also known as 长江). It could be that Hong Kong and Pearl River fishermen are of the same religion. Furthermore, if we look into the history of the Hung Shing temple in Hong Kong and China, you will discover that the oldest one in HK is located at Ap Lei Chau and was built in 1773. The oldest Hung Shing temple in China can be found in Pearl River (near Guangzhou) and was built in 594. Thus, it seems like the fishermen brought this religion to HK a long time ago.

(2) Tradition’s taboo

Taboos in both locations are the same! According to the habit of the fishermen, the most obvious tradition they have regarding eating fish is that they will not flip the fish over even when one side of fish is completely eaten. This rumor is widely spread among movies and books, but many fishermen today admit that it is not a habit and is complete nonsense. They will even cut the fish into pieces for easy cooking on the boat.

Secondly, under the patriarchy society of the fishermen, it is vitally important that female fishermen can’t step on the bow (front of a boat), especially when she has menstruation. The reasoning behind this taboo is unknown, but these two traditions are the same as the fisherman in Pearl River Delta.

(3) Language

Both the fisherman in Hong Kong and Pearl River Delta speak the same language – Cantonese (to be exact, it should be “dialect”). However, fisherman call their language “Local Dialogue” (本地話) and the other people who speak Cantonese speak “bai hua” (白話). There is difference between these two dialogues in terms of pronunciation. From overhearing two fishermen speak, it is not hard to observe that both people speak the same dialogue.

Furthermore, if you ask the fishermen in Hong Kong about their origin or home village, it is likely they will tell you that their grand-father came to Hong Kong from Dong Guan, Panyu, Shenzhen, Macau or Zhuhai, which is the area we call Pearl River Delta today.

(4) Living Style

The design and style of shack is identical for both the fishermen in Hong Kong and Pearl River. Many people will agree that fishermen live in boats. However, this perspective is incorrect. Working fishermen will stay on the boat but their children and aged family members live in a house. Their house is normally built along the coastline and over the water; it is called a “shack” (棚屋). The shack is supported by the wooden pile, which is deeply driven into the water. Alongside, there will be stairs on the sea-side of the shack which gives easy access to the boat.

Although the shack is not very big, they will spare the largest room in the center for accommodating their god; the four corners are two bedrooms (rear right and left), kitchen at the front right and the front left as a bathroom. Coincidentally, this is the exact style and arrangement used in Pearl River Delta.

(5) Uniqueness

The unique ballad of Pearl River is exactly like the one in Hong Kong. Different original inhabitants have their unique signature symbol, for instance, aboriginal dresses and/or special tattoos. However, fishermen don't have anything special on their appearance. Their uniqueness is their ballad or song. The ballad is called “Salt Water Song” (鹹水歌), which is used for interesting communication between boats. There is no pre-set format, dedicated musical instrument or even structured melody. Normally, it is most often sung unaccompanied, like “Acappella”. And the meaning or purpose of the song is about love, family and the sea. Amusingly, you can only find this kind of ballad among the area in Pearl River delta and Hong Kong.

To recapitulate in short, the ancient Hong Kong people undoubtedly have originated from Pearl River Delta because they have so much in common. In other words, we are all from the same root. But curiously enough, there are a lot of people in Hong Kong who complain about the travelers from China and biasedly call them “Locusts”, as well as discriminating the new immigrants from China and labeling them as a non-productive group. Would you treat your sister or brother the same way at home?

It remains a puzzle after pondering over this issue a hundred times: We are members of this society whether people acknowledge it or not, but we continue to discriminate against and marginalize others. Some people experience rejection on a daily basis, and although they continue to overcome barrier after barrier, it is not a way of life that any person should have to encounter. We are talented individuals who want to be able to give back to our communities. Why not use them to improve this nation? Why not help the forlorn? Why can't we be more forgiving, embracing and generous? To ring the curtain down, blood is thicker than water. This problem is much bigger than people want to acknowledge... “We” and “They” are human beings who deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and after all, “We” and “They” aren't so different after all.

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Water Sustainability in the Pearl River Delta

Hong Kong International School, Lam, Nicholas – 12, Non-Fiction: Group 3

The Pearl River Delta is an area around the Pearl River estuary where the Pearl River flows into the South China Sea near Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou. It has some very dense urbanized areas and is one of the main hubs of China's economic growth. As the Pearl River Delta grows, the region is widely known as an emerging megacity. Also, the Pearl River Delta contains a fresh water source that 70% of Hong Kong uses. In Hong Kong we mainly rely on this source of water because Hong Kong doesn't have enough rainwater.

Because the Pearl River Delta is rapidly growing in population, there are a few environmental factors that make water sustainability a problem. Most significantly, demand for more water is increasing. Secondly, chemical contamination is destroying fresh water decreasing its supply. Next, global warming increases the height of the sea level causing erosion, which leads to salt intrusions. The last issue is the most destructive; the increase of salinity further decreases the quality of our fresh water. These factors are some of the big reasons why our supply of water isn't going to be enough for us in the future.

The first issue facing the water supplied by the Pearl River is the increase in demand for water. As the population of cities in the Pearl River Delta such as Shenzhen grows, more people will demand even more water. On the other hand, we waste much of our water like when we take long showers or keep our sink faucet running. Almost 58 million people in 2020 will use fresh water from the Pearl River Delta. However, the Pearl River can only give a certain amount before there's not enough fresh water for everyone.

The second threat to the Pearl River's water is chemical contamination. This means that chemicals such as heavy metals, organic pollutants and plastics are polluting our water supply. As more and more industries start to grow, more factories will exacerbate the problem. All companies certainly need water to function. However, where does the water go after it's been contaminated? The wastewater gets dumped back into the Pearl River, contaminating the river with hazardous chemicals. In addition, humans also contribute to chemical contamination by inadvertently or purposely discarding pesticides, sewage, plastics, and other seemingly harmless things like sunscreen in our water. It's very important that we keep our water safe so that we could use it.

Another risk is global warming. By polluting the air, we increase the temperature. Over 68% of our fresh water is stored in icecaps and glaciers. When the temperature goes up, these icecaps and glaciers start melting. If all the ice melted, the oceans would rise about 70 meters. The constantly increasing height of the sea level changes the topography and moves the salt into the fresh water river, which is called intrusion.

The change of topography can happen by eroding areas because the rising sea level is washing away the ground. At the same time, deforestation is happening. Some areas in the Pearl River don't have enough solid ground to keep the ground sturdy due to the cutting of trees for activities like farming. Since the sea level is rising, water is able to take dirt with it making little pockets for salt to intrude in. Slowly but surely, salt is slowly creeping up our river lowering the quality of our water.

There are many possible solutions to minimize the impact of our water sustainability problem such as reusing reclaimed water, increasing the price of water, and planting more trees. Although very broad, these solutions are doable and they can change how everybody lives in the Pearl River Delta.

The first solution is to reuse reclaimed water. As the water is being treated, there are two main paths where the water can go after being used. The first path is to discharge the water to a body of water or lake. The second path is to reuse. The most common methods for reusing are landscaping irrigation, groundwater recharge, industrial recycling, recreational and environmental reuse, as well as non-potable uses such as fire

protection, toilet flushing and air conditioning. This path is important because this will allow us to recycle the water we already used, or in other words, use the same water for multiple tasks.

Companies that supply water could also increase the price of water. This solution is not as fair because it could be tough for poorer people. However, this means that people who receive the water will appreciate water more and won't use as much. This gives more fresh water to other people who also need the water. Significantly, raising the price doesn't cost money to implement. It also gives consumers a choice on how much water to consume.

An interesting solution is to plant more trees. Due to deforestation, some areas near the Pearl River are eroding and slowly, large pockets of salt are intruding into these eroded areas. However, by planting more trees, the ground under the new trees could be more solid and the sturdy roots could make it so that it's harder to erode away. As a result, less salt will contaminate fresh water and intrude the Pearl River in general.

Everyone can make a difference, even if it's as simple as taking shorter showers. It is vital to take care of our water and to make the Pearl River Delta a sustainable place to live. From doing less laundry to watering plants less, there is so much everyone can do. Even students can make a difference in the water they utilize by not letting the faucet run while brushing their teeth. Again, while we still can, we should try to help alleviate this water sustainability problem, not just in the Pearl River Delta but also in every other fresh water source out there.



Shortlisted

The Power of Things Past

Sha Tin College, Chan, Yoki – 11, Non-Fiction: Group 3

Introduction

The Pearl River Delta is one of the most successful regions in China. Indeed, its achievements, against unfavourable odds, are unparalleled within the country and the world. It represents a model which others can follow in times of complicated and delicate circumstances. However, as shown by recent events in the delta, this success is belied by persistent disharmony. This disharmony is manifest in myriad ways, from the structure of government and politics to the disconnect between its neighbouring communities. One need not look further than history to find the cause of the conundrum. As we shall see, this fabric of history stretching some five thousand years is littered with splits and tears and is a reflection of the state of the delta today: a collection of regions whose connections are also marked by deep disconnect. However, as we shall see also, answers lie in that same history.

The Past of the Pearl River Delta

Astonishingly, the history of the Pearl River Delta did not start in Pearl River but in the fertile plains of yet another river, Yellow River. There, the Huaxia, the ancestors of all Han Chinese, formed a civilization. Centuries passed, and the Huaxia migrated throughout China with some heading south. Along their journey, the Huaxia encountered peoples of many indigenous ethnicities. When they arrived at the mouth of Pearl River in the southern coast of China, they were no longer the same people who left the valley of Yellow River. They were a melting pot of diverse ethnicities, varied cultures and manifold histories. There are in fact no “locals.” Already, this sowed the dynamism and diversity still manifest in the Pearl River Delta today.

Yet being the opening of a main river in the southern coast of China, the delta was an obvious attraction for travellers from around the world, especially those traveling through the South China Sea to destinations in northern Asia. Indeed, the delta was a strategic location for establishing trade routes between mercantile countries of Europe and resource-rich countries of Asia. During the first half of the 16th century, Portuguese merchants and sailors gradually settled in Macau on the western side of the mouth of Pearl River by paying rent to Chinese officials. But fewer than three hundred years later, through less amicable arrangements of the two Opium Wars, the British acquired Hong Kong on the eastern side and the Portuguese further expanded their territory. Both Hong Kong and Macau became European colonies, separating them from the rest of the delta. Despite the split, this secured the delta's indelible mark on the map of global commerce by making seafaring cheaper and safer.

In the tumultuous first decade of the 20th century, the dynastic system that rule China for two thousand years was toppled by a revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his political party, the Kuomintang. Overnight, China, the Middle Kingdom, was a kingdom no more. However, the inexperienced party lacked political and military power to fill the shoes of the dynastic system. By 1916, opportunistic warlords carved up China into smaller regions and ruled with violent force. China saw endless and bloody infighting between warlords. Yet during the same time, the Kuomintang made the city of Guangdong in Pearl River Delta as the capital of China. With its labyrinthine channels and mountainous countryside sheltering the young government, the plans of the successful reunification of China in 1928 were drawn and started.

Yet the peace was cut short as the Japanese occupied Guangzhou and surrounding regions in 1938 at the dawn of the Second World War. By 1939, Japanese forces had captured almost all strategic points along the South China coastline. The Kuomintang government, and thus the capital of China, retreated to Shaoguan north of Guangdong, and Hong Kong, a British colony, became a safe-haven for activities supporting the resistance against Japan. Before long, this precarious situation ended when even the colony succumbed to

Japanese forces on Christmas day of 1941. The occupation of most of Pearl River Delta, except for Portuguese Macau, continued until the surrender of Japanese forces after Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed on August, 1945. China and the Pearl River Delta were liberated but Hong Kong and Macau remained under foreign rule, the delta as splintered as before the war.

The end of the Second World War did not bring peace to China but led to yet another war. After fighting the Japanese together, the Kuomintang and the Communists fought among themselves. After more bloody battles, the Communists triumphed and the Kuomintang went on exile on the island of Formosa, now known as Taiwan. Hong Kong saw an exodus of a million people from the Pearl River Delta Region, Shanghai and other commercial centres of China fearing persecution by the Communist. The sudden migration and defection of huge numbers of people into the colony only forced tighter border controls, intensifying the colonies isolation. Hope for the reunification of the delta returned when the Communists implemented the “Open Door Policy” in the late 1970s to free the economy of Shenzhen, Hong Kong’s neighbour, to foreign entities. Less than a decade later, China and Britain agreed on Hong Kong’s return to China in 1997, further strengthening the reunification of the Delta.

The year arrived and Hong Kong was reunited with China becoming a Special Administrative Region; likewise, Macau in 1999. Yet this reunification is merely symbolic. The deep split within the Pearl River Delta still exists and cannot be undone by mere paperwork. More radical changes have to be done to solve the conundrum the Pearl River Delta presents.

The Future of the Pearl River Delta

Indeed, the future of the delta is characterized by the need to tie loose ends borne out of its past. It would mean uniting three separate regions each with its own culture, history, language, lifestyle, forms of government and politics. In other words, the three different governments, with the help of the central government in Beijing, must integrate regions that for hundreds of years were separate, indeed, worlds apart. As the Pearl River Delta reunited China in the past, in future, China will reunite the Pearl River Delta.

To that goal, the Hong Kong–Zhuhai–Macau Bridge is under construction and is due to open in 2016 while the proposed Shenzhen–Zhongshan Bridge is scheduled to be completed in 2021. The two projects will bridge the opposite side of the mouth of the Pearl River Delta at both upstream and downstream regions. These projects makes cross–border transport much faster and cheaper leading to greater integration of the different communities of the delta in several ways, cultural, economic, political and so on.

However, reunification of the Delta does not only mean to connect Hong Kong, Macau and the rest of the delta. Massive disconnect are also present between coastal urban and rural areas of the delta in economic development and quality of life. The Guangdong government plans to merge towns and cities to form “city clusters” by streamlining local governments and constructing infrastructures to distribute wealth into the inner rural regions of the delta. The goal is for even economic development to prevail by 2020, with every region of the delta developing at the same pace and complementing each other.

Unsurprisingly, the push towards greater integration and development of the delta is not without harm. Construction over and reclamation of the sea deals a huge blow to marine life as seen in the 60% population decline of Chinese White Dolphins alone. The land does not fare any better as 28% of the soil in the delta region is affected by heavy metal production. This means that some places, they couldn’t plant crops because of the pollution. Some areas had problems with cadmium–polluted rice, such as provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi. The latest report says 50% of the land in Guangzhou has been polluted. The amount of smog is only testament to the state of the air.

Conclusion: Present Actions

However, the future sketched above only goes so far. Physical connection of the delta is necessary but not sufficient. This essay represented the history of the delta not only to show the cause of the splintering of delta but to also offer a simple alternative view of that history to provide the much–needed social connection. While history has separated the Pearl River Delta, isn’t that history nonetheless singular? Then,

don't we all belong to one and the same history? This becomes even more urgent as history also shows that everyone in Pearl River Delta today is migrants from either another river, from another town or from another country. It is that history that binds the delta, not geography, not ethnicity.

Then we are only as separate as we believe.

Inspirations

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We are suffering! Is the development of the Pearl Delta worth the consequences?

SKH Lam Woo Memorial Secondary School, Cheung, Fu Chuen – 15,

Non-Fiction: Group 3

Located at South eastern China, there is an area named the Pearl River Delta of area approximate to 56 thousand square kilometres. It was once a small village in the rural area, where the residents depended on agriculture and aquaculture to earn a living. However, over the past 100 years, the Delta has experienced unprecedented changes no matter in economic, industrial, political and social aspects. Seemingly, the changes are beneficial. One may say, “Our total GDP has seen unexpected breakthroughs over the past 30 years. From governmental data, it has increased by nearly 30 times.” Indeed, the performance of economy has been desirable, which is undeniable. In fact, when Deng Xiaoping introduced the market reforms in the late 1970s, the area started its constant and steady rise in GDP. Most would attribute this momentous transformation to rapid industrialization, which has brought the area prosperity and wealth. Now, all of us can see people using iPhone on the streets, and using computers no matter for work or daily-life communication. However, are there any undesirable consequences to this area incurred by the economic upsurge?

Since the end of the Second World War, factories have been set up in the area, resulting in the sharp increases in job vacancies and productions of goods, including textile, coal burning as well as ore mining. It has brought material wealth, as well as the advancement of the technology and transportation nowadays. Nonetheless when the situation is regarded from the environmental and social perspective, it could be quite worrying and disappointing. As we shall see in subsequent paragraphs, the costs resulted from such economic advancement on medical costs, habitats destruction, pollutants clean-up should not be slightly overlooked. In fact, those factories are the sources of the serious pollution here!

The source of pollution started from the burning of coal, which is one of the main energy reserves for the production of electricity to drive machines alike. In the power stations, not only electricity is produced, but those harmful, or even toxic gases like sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, which contribute to the formation of acid rain, are also emitted. Acid rain corrodes infrastructure, does harm to crops and kills aquatic life. It also arouses concerns on public health, including the formation of acidic substances that can penetrate into lungs and absorbed by blood vessels. Patients with chronic respiratory diseases, like bronchitis and asthma, may show symptoms such as difficult breathing, which put life at risk. Back to the acid rain here, reports of acid rain have been frequent and the problem is deteriorating. According to the China Daily, a report in 2012 shows that five cities like Shenzhen, Foshan and Shunde in the Delta were found to be heavily polluted by acid rain in the first half of that year, increasing from four in the same period in 2011. As a result, public health is at risk.

In addition to that, greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide typically, are emitted. Carbon dioxide, by nature, traps heat inside the atmosphere. Global warming phenomenon is intensifying. Moreover, the emissions of pollutants will likely destruct the habitats of certain kinds of animals, which is a serious threat to the habitat of local wildlife, for example, the Chinese white dolphins cannot withstand the polluted environment in their habitats of the Delta, harming the survival directly. Some species imminent to extinction will then go extinct. The natural balance of proportions for species cannot be healthily maintained. The ecosystem will be unbalanced. At this point, one may say, “The ecosystem is only concerning the wild animals. If some species happen to extinct, it would have nothing to do with us.....” If you have ever popped up thoughts similar to the one above, then you have possibly misunderstood the operation of the ecosystem. In fact, in the ecosystem, all participants (including human) are tightly interrelated. They interact with one another as well as the environment. Based on these interactions, food chains, which are the feeding relationships of organisms, are established. Nonetheless, the food chains are destructed as a result of the extinction of some species. For instance, frogs feed on mosquitoes. However, frogs go extinct. Then, the ecosystem becomes unbalanced with the rapid increase of mosquitoes. Many potential problems may arise. Infectious diseases like malaria may be spread by mosquitoes, again threatening the public health. Humans too will eventually suffer.

Moreover, construction work often produces sewage, which is discharged into the waters of the Pearl River Delta without proper treatment. According to the State Environmental Protection Administration of China, exceeding 80% of China's coastal waters, rivers and lakes are polluted with different types of industrial waste. Often, the sewage contains toxic chemicals like mercury and lead. When aquatic life consumes the contaminated phytoplankton or zooplankton, the toxicity accumulates in their bodies. Under the feeding relationship, the toxicity is passed up along the food chain. When seafood is served, we are actually taking in the toxicity. It is common to see Chinese, particularly Cantonese ones, ordering seafood as the main course of the meals dined out. Cases of food poisoning will thrive. Consequently, human will eventually be the ones to bear the undesirable consequences.

However much we have benefitted from economic growth, no one has calculated the costs we have to pay in the future for destroying the environment. No one has calculated the added medical costs of people living in such a polluted region, let alone the cost of losing biodiversity on the Earth. No one has calculated the cost to clean up pollutants? Aren't we being too utilitarian, ignoring our moral and our long-term disadvantages? Still, many of the costs cannot yet be anticipated, posing a potential crisis for financial downturn in the future. Despite the GDP growth, the potential costs incurred are also very high, together with the threats for public health, food safety and so on. Is the growth really worth the consequences? It may appear that economic development and environmental pollution are mutually exclusive, but actually, they can coexist. As long as they can take advantages and cover the disadvantages from each other, they are undoubtedly able to "get along well". Although the Authority has started to concern about local pollution, reports of unsatisfactory air quality and acid rain still exist. The province government could have done better to combat pollution. Actually, a few successful examples of having economic development and environmental pollution together have been set all over the world. The typical example would be the Cheonggyecheon located in the South Korea. The river was once a notorious one which was filled up with rubbish due to industrialization. To solve the pollution, the Korea government came up with a plan to achieve environmental conservation and economic development together. The air quality there has since improved, with the climate and environment being more comfortable. Therefore, as the biggest economic entity in the world, China could have protected its environment much better. Moreover, as citizens residing in the Pearl River Delta, we are supposed to have a say on environmental policies. Perhaps we can give our suggestions. It is really up to our choice to hide our opinions and let the pollution affect us adversely, or is it the appropriate time for us to stand firm and voice it out?

A Brief Biography of My Grandfather

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Non-Fiction: Group 3

Introduction

The Lee family started in Sanshui, Guangdong. My grandfather lived in Hong Kong for most of his life. He started his business there and met my grandmother there. His children worked in Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Zhuhai... The family has never left the Pearl River Delta.

Early Childhood

My grandfather's name is Lee XiaoHung. He was born in the 1920s in Sanshui District. He was the youngest at home and had two older brothers. He lived with his grandparents and grew up in a small village in Sanshui. Sanshui is a place that is surrounded by three rivers, the Xi Jiang, Bei Jiang and Sui Jiang. Coal, oil and slate was found in the surrounding areas in Sanshui. It is also an important producer of food for the Guangdong Province, especially fruits. The Lee family owned a dim sum restaurant in the centre of the village. They sold dimsums like shrimp dumplings, lomaigai and shumai. The Lee family were quite rich at that time.

According to my grandfather, despite Sanshui's proximity to Guangzhou and other Pearl River Delta cities, Sanshui remains a relatively poor place and the income of the people were lower than that of the people in other cities. People in Sanshui only earn a few yuan a month during the Republican years.

My grandfather did not have the privilege to go to school, so he helped his father in the dim sum restaurant since he was 7 years old to get ready to inherit the restaurant, and he read newspaper too learn how to read and write in his spare time instead of going to school.

Starting a New Journey

When my grandfather was in the late teen time, my great-grandfather decided to move to Hong Kong and start his business again because he thought that the money they were earning was not enough. My great-grandfather heard that it was easier to do business in Hong Kong. Just like many people in the village, they moved to Hong Kong.

They packed their things. They did not bring much, just the necessities, with clothes, money and food they needed. They then waved goodbye and left the place where they were born and grew up.

In the whistle of the train and steams floating in the air, they finally arrived at Hong Kong. They arrived during the Second World War and people living in Hong Kong were under the control of the Japanese, but the station and street were full of people wearing beautiful cheongsam and stylish clothes. People there were much busier than that in Sanshui.

Living in Hong Kong

They then settled near the southern harbour and opened a dim sum restaurant at Queen's Road East. The war continued. Many people dying but they couldn't do anything. The Japanese soldiers killed a lot of people, according to my grandfather, at midnight, everyone would shut the door carefully since the Japanese soldiers would let the hungry dogs out to the street and eat the beggars who did not have a shelter. The Japanese were cruel. They robbed the citizens and raped the women in the city. My grandma needed to put mud on her face to prevent the Japanese from taking any interest in her.

Business and income

My grandfather did not succeed his father's business of running a restaurant. He started his own business of repairing and selling watches in the shop which my great-grandfather left him in Queen's Road East, the name of his shop was 'Lee Hung Ki'. His business went well and most of his customers were Japanese. The income of the watch shop was quite high, making roughly \$2,000-4,000 a month.

Marriage

My grandfather made business with a big company which produced cloth, and that was the first time my grandfather and my grandmother met. My grandfather soon fell in love with my grandmother. My grandmother, Ling Ailian, was the daughter of the boss of the big company, but my grandfather just owned a little shop in Sheung Wan. The parents of my grandmother did not allow them to marry. They soon did not let them see each other, so, they eloped. My grandmother went away from home, bringing nothing but just the love for my grandfather. They had a simple ceremony at the city hall with some of the relatives attending. After they got married, both of them worked in the watch shop and settled in an apartment in

Wan Chai. The place was enough for two people to live in. Later, they had four children and the couple still ran the watch shop.

Children

My grandfather and grandmother had four children. They are named Datyeung, Danyi, Danyau and Datshun. The eldest son, went to learn starting his own business in printing as soon as he graduated from F7. He then had his own family with two daughters and owned a printing company in China. He was successful and was earning quite a lot of money. But the eldest son seldom visited my grandfather.

The second son of my grandfather, who is Danyi, learned to repair watches since he was a kid. He even worked in other watch companies when our home was not doing so well financially. He took good care of the whole family. He then got married and had a son and a daughter. He mainly worked as a judge of watches in large companies. He judged how much the watches should be priced. Everyone was confident in the decisions he made. He was quite successful at work.

The third son is called Danyau. He worked in my grandfather's shop, but later, he suddenly moved to Canada.

The youngest son is Datshun. Since he was the youngest, grandfather took extra good care of him and got him the best education, clothes and flats... My grandfather wanted him to become a lawyer, so that he can have a good and stable income. But Datshun started his own business of printing in cities in the Pearl River Delta. He had factories in Shenzhen, Dongguan and Guangzhou. He later got married and had a daughter.

My grandfather did not need to worry about them.

The Market Crash

During the 70s, Hong Kong's economy grew really fast. New stocks were on every day. People were addicted to investing, including my grandfather. The public were suffering from a kind of disease which was simply named 'stock illness'. The investors during this period numbered 500,000. My grandfather was also addicted to investing. The first few times, he won. But later, he lost. In order to concentrate on investing, he left his watch business and became a full-time investor. That was the toughest period for the home. Mouths had to be fed, expenses were needed for children's education and activities. But my grandfather was addicted to the stock market and did not work.

Finally, my grandmothers stopped him and told him he should focus on his own business, but not investing all the time. My grandfather refused and argued with her. My grandfather thought my grandmother had no rights to order him because she was just a woman. He thought he did not need to listen to what a woman said. They argued loudly and once my grandfather even slapped my grandmother on her face. This worsened their relationships and he even thought of divorcing Grandmother. But a month later, he took my grandmother's advice and stopped putting a fortune on investing stocks but focused on his own business.

The Hang Seng index kept on soaring, but not for long. And in March 1973, the market crashed. Many people were left bankrupt. Urban legend had it, that the Castle Peak psychiatric hospitals became full-house once the market crashed. One of the friends of my grandfather got bankrupt, too. He was left with no money, family and job, and he chose to end his life. That was a tragedy.

His later Life

My grandfather closed down his shop and retired in 1989. That was a period of harmony. Under the British administration, the security and reliability of British law and governance, Hong Kong was able to flourish as a centre for international trade. People became rich and the quality of life was much better than that under the Japanese control. After retirement, my grandfather had a comfortable life with my grandmother. They went yum cha together every day and my grandfather even opened a table tennis centre, gathering the people who loved table tennis, then taught and trained students to exercise and to join competitions. He made his life busy and meaningful even he thought had retired.

Sunset

My grandfather spent lots of his time taking care of me and wanted to see me grow up and get married. But on 21 December 2011, he passed away in a hospital. I still remember the moment I got this message as the school Christmas party finished. I was heartbroken and I couldn't stop the tears running down my face. When I cried, I thought of the memories with him. I clearly remembered the time he bought me the toy bunny I had always wanted, the first time he scolded me, the first time he cooked for us, the time we planted together and waited for the flowers to bloom. I still remember the first time I argued with him and how he comforted me when I was sad. I still remembered the texture of the skinny hands holding me when my father scolded me. He was always by my side, supporting me unconditionally. He was a successful father,

grandfather and businessman to us. He set up his own shop and earned money to bring up his children. He looked after his children with love and care. He was strict and could be a little emotional, but you could always learn from him. And he would share his experiences with you and passed onto you the knowledge that no textbooks can teach. He is the greatest grandfather in the world, who I admire, who I love and who I will never forget.

Conclusion

My grandfather, Lee Xiaohung was born in Sanshui in the 1920s, he came to Hong Kong when he was in his late teens. He learned to repair watches and started his own business. He was married to a woman called Ling Ailian. They had four children. He retired in the 1989 and set up a tables tennis centre to keep himself working. He looked after his grandchildren and died in the 2011.

His life ended. He left us for another place. He left, but his ideas didn't. The knowledge he passed onto us will be passed from generation to generation.





Non-Fiction Group 4

New Tales of the Pearl River Delta

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When you spot a Zǒu Mǎ Dēng on a traditional Chinese folk craft market, you will not be able to resist admiring the delicate, gleaming lantern adorned with revolving images. Imagine if the lantern featured The Pearl River Delta, you would be taken on a virtual journey that involves modern cities packed with towering skyscrapers, contrasted by quaint seaside villages with a touch of nature and picturesque landscapes, separated merely by a narrow creek.

The junction of the Xi, Bei, Dong, and Pearl rivers in southern Guangdong province gave rise to the extensive low-lying and second largest delta in the nation, which covers an area of 2,900 square miles, criss-crossed by a network of tributaries and distributaries of the Pearl River. It may not be ranked first in terms of size, but its favourable geographical location which opens the gateway to the Southeast region, has earned it the title of the “South Door of China”.

The large expanse of territory of the river delta is home to over 50 million people of diverse ethnic groups who embrace different dialects, be it Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka or Hokkien. The Pearl River Delta witnessed the constant alternation of generations, in the ever-changing history of the rise and fall of dynasties, revolutions and colonial rule. The region today continues to be sufficed with traces of its rich cultural and historical traits. Across the bustling, dynamic cities of Hong Kong and Shenzhen, lies the pleasant Cuiheng Village in Guangdong, with attractions not limited by its scenic and mountainous location, but is also renowned for being the birthplace of the Republic of China’s first president Sun Yat-sen. The Dapeng Fortress in Shenzhen preserved temples and mansions constructed in the Ming Dynasty and showcased the architecture by our wise ancestors and the religious culture of China. The glow of the prosperous city Guangzhou cannot shield the elegance of Chikan Town near it. Wandering in the European Street, one would be intoxicated with admiration of the architecture. Houses with a gentle touch of western style embody the fusion of Chinese and European culture when western trends were brought to China in the late 19th century. These are just a few reasons on how the Pearl River Delta appeals to tourists and backpackers from around the globe, trying to catch a glimpse on its unique blend of culture.

The river delta has been an important contributing factor of China’s economic developments and advancements throughout its history, with its role as the starting point of the famous Maritime Silk Road which dates back to the 13th century as proof. However, the story of the river delta as one of the leading and fastest-growing economic regions had not unfolded until The Chinese government adopted the policy of Reform and Opening in the late 1970s. The government designated the Pearl River Delta region as the experimenting area for the initiative which aimed to promote economic liberalisation. Special Economic Zones (SEZs) were formed in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamen, along with the introduction of taxation benefits, such as tax breaks and preferential tax rates. Regional governments in these cities were granted more powers to make its own decisions in terms of tax, labour and the allocation of resources. These privileges were viewed as a golden opportunity for many foreign investors who saw the prospects of China’s resourceful and immense market. They brought along capital, technology and management skills to open factories and corporates, sowing the seeds to the thriving of China’s manufacturing industry, entrepreneurship and financing. The GDP of the river delta region climbed from US\$8 billion in 1980 to over US\$200 billion. This figure, along with the reputation as the “Golden Delta of Guangdong”, bears testimony to the economy successes of the Pearl River Delta.

The country continues to make its endeavours to maintain the region’s competitiveness economic-wise. Apart from the privileges empowered by policy initiatives including the accession to the WTO in 2001 and the signing of CEPA between the Mainland and Hong Kong in 2003, cross-boundary infrastructure developments are drawn into the blueprint for the prospect of the Pearl River Delta. Large-scale construction projects under the spotlight such as Hong Kong–Zhuhai–Macao Bridge, Guangzhou–

Shenzhen–HK Express Rail Link are being carried out at full steam to improve the transport network and regional integration.

The story of the Pearl River Delta might strike as plain sailing, but there are clouds on the horizons. The rapid pace of development has placed great strains on the river delta. Industrial activities, which demands the consumption of a great amount of fossil fuels, are the major source of air pollutants including carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. These pollutants are responsible for environmental problems such as acid rain and toxic photochemical smog, posing threats to people's health. Heavy metal wastes produced by factories wind up in the oceans and rivers, polluting the soil and thus the agricultural produce. According to official data from the government, land suitable for the growing of uncontaminated crops only takes up about a 60%. Moreover, wind and water blows and flows as nature intended, spreading the pollutants across borders, turning the local problem into a regional, even global one.

Marching in the direction of economic development, regional governments are motivated to achieve the goal by exploiting every inch of land for new and grand development projects. Meanwhile the central government is setting up urban development offices in different cities, with the aim to renovate the “three olds”— old towns, factories and villages. As a result, many traditional country cottages with tile roof top and shrine for the ancestors, are replaced by uniform street planning, neat buildings. Behind the prosperity of these modernized elements, lies the pity to witness the fading of the culture endemic to the Pearl River Delta.

As China creates the new tale of the Pearl River Delta, the government has expressed its awareness of the urgency and severity of the environmental challenges. To retrieve the blue sky and clean air that are being concealed by soot and dust, the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan was introduced. It set up viable and progressive carbon emission reduction targets. The amount of air pollutants released by factories is restricted and reliable data of the air pollutant level is released, so that environmental groups are able to monitor the air quality more accurately. Besides, governments of the mainland and Hong Kong combined their efforts to alleviate the problem. The Hong Kong–Guangdong Joint Working Group on Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection convenes annually to report the progress and construct a work plan for the coming year. In addition, the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong and Hong Kong collaborated in 2008 to establish a water quality data model for the Pearl River region. The environmental problems are getting under control, with a decrease in pollutants in recent years.

To preserve the valuable cultural elements in the Pearl River Delta, the government has begun to take it under consideration during city renovations and development projects. Shawan Town, in Panyu, Guangdong, is an example to show the effort and determination of the government. Under its method of “Taking preservation as the main lead with partial renewal”, the Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics was strictly enforced. The renovation improved the internal road network, infrastructure, entertainment facilities for tourism, while keeping the ancestral halls of different families untouched. Museums such as the Shawan Ancestral Hall Cultural Exhibition and the Memorial Hall of Academician He Binglin were established to showcase the valuable cultural and historical heritage. In this way, old towns can benefit with increased revenue of tourism and better living standards, while keeping its original local customs intact.

With the resolute will of the government, determined spirit of the strong nation resembling an awakening lion, new tales of the Pearl River Delta can be composed, preserving the ever–lasting, breath taking beauty and dynamic captured in that precious lantern.

Embracing A Pearly Future

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The Pearl River Delta (PRD) is comprised of nine cities: Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan, Zhuhai, Zhongshan, Huizhou, Jiangmen, Foshan, and Zhaoqing, along with two special economic zones (SEZ), namely Hong Kong and Macau. It has a total area of 42.8 sq km and is home to about 100 million people. The overall GDP of the PRD region was equivalent to the 16th largest economy in the world in 2012, ahead of Indonesia, Turkey and the Netherlands, and just a little behind Korea. As one of China's leading economic and manufacturing region, the PRD accounts for 11% of China's total GDP and up to one third of China's exports in 2013. This unique area has always been and will continue to experience massive progression; the different cities around the PRD are in full power to move forward and become the leading channel for trade and exports, achieving megatropolis status. As a soon-to-be powerful region with a booming economy, the PRD rivals the likes of Yangtze River Delta or Beijing. Needless to say, the role played by each city and the intricate relationships among them are also under revolutionary changes. There are new adventures and new challenges to face every day.

The PRD has played a major role in foreign trade since the Maritime Silk Road era, through the time of tea clippers into modernized China today. In 1757, Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty set up the Canton System. Canton, now known as Guangzhou, was the only port in China that was open to foreign trade, with Chinese merchants known as "Hong" managing all the trading in the port. After the First Opium War (1839–1842), some "Foreign Hong" rose to fame in Hong Kong; one of the earliest "Foreign Hong" established was Jardine Matheson & Co. These "Hong" became the backbone of the young Hong Kong economy when Hong Kong was established as a British Colony. Thereafter, the development of the PRD cities got comparatively slower than that of Hong Kong. A significant turning point came in 1978, when a small processing workshop that made handbags for export to Hong Kong opened in Dongguan and became the first export processing business in China. The ground breaking opening of China, spearheaded by economic reforms piloted by the late Deng Xiaoping, officially commenced. In 1980–84, Deng formed seven SEZs around the country, of which three – Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai – were in the PRD region and were intended to be the test areas to bring the rest of the country forward. Due to their unique location, the three SEZs in the PRD received great support from Hong Kong and Taiwanese investments. In no time, the area represented one of the most rapid urban expansion stories in human history. The PRD is, no doubt, one of the most economically dynamic regions in the People's Republic of China. Since then, the economic ties between Hong Kong and the PRD region have become closer than ever before.

The cooperation between Hong Kong, still a British colony at the time, and the PRD cities, did not stop at the economic level. Soon, the unstoppable growth extended to transportation, tourism, education, medical services, and even environmental protection. In the last 30 years since the opening up of China, the nation's GDP per capita has increased from Rmb381 in 1978 to Rmb41,908 in 2013, equivalent to a growth rate of 110 times. This phenomenal jump has never been achieved by any other country, let alone a country as large as China, in modern history. However, Guangdong has overtaken other parts of China with an even more impressive growth rate of 158 times – its GDP per capita rose from Rmb369 to Rmb 58,540 and rocketed above the average by 40%. This is a clear reflection on the region's upgrade of production processes and a focus on industries. The PRD now accounts for approximately one third of China's trade value.

To understand the evolution of the PRD, one must dwell deeper into the breakdown of the GDP. After the open door policy took effect in 1978 and before China gained access to the WTO in 2001, the nine cities in the PRD focused mostly on manufacturing, thus earning itself the reputation as China's "workshop to the world." Much of this output, such as electronics, toys, garments and textiles, plastic products and a range of other goods, was the outcome of foreign direct investments – investments made by foreign entities – and was geared for the export market.

Following China's entry into the WTO, the signing of Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) between the Mainland and Hong Kong in 2003, and various other policy initiatives to enhance economic cooperation between Guangdong and Hong Kong have strengthened the economic growth of the PRD beyond traditional manufacturing. This signifies the beginning of a new journey for the PRD.

The development of infrastructure and logistics has been instrumental to the success of the PRD. The entire region is now well connected by highways; any city or town in the region can be conveniently reached by car. For example, Guangzhou is a major hub with connections to anywhere in China. The Chinese government has proposed further plans to build a "one-hour living zone" with labyrinths of roads, tunnels, bridges across the delta, as well as intercity and intercity railways totalling more than 4,000km. This is no small feat, considering that the entire region is geographically larger than Denmark or Switzerland, with a wide, muddy river to traverse in the middle. Moreover, the 140km long Express Rail Link with terminus in West Kowloon in Hong Kong will reduce the travel time between Hong Kong and Guangzhou to a mere 48 minutes when it is operational in 2015/16. There is also the 35.6km long Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, the world's soon-to-be longest sea-crossing bridge-tunnel, scheduled for completion in 2017. This man-made wonder will cut the driving time from Hong Kong to Macau or Zhuhai down to 30 minutes from three hours previously!

Air travel is just as efficient. There are currently five airports in the PRD region, with major international airports situated in both Guangzhou and Hong Kong. The Hong Kong International Airport in Chek Lap Kok opened in 1998 while the Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport opened in 2004. Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Macau all have large, modern airports constructed or greatly expanded since 1990. Some of the low-cost international carriers would fly to Macau or Shenzhen because these airports have lower landing fees than those in Hong Kong and Guangzhou. Zhuhai, on the other hand, handles domestic flights almost exclusively. In 2016 Guangzhou will open another commercial airport in Nansha. These airports are not competing with one another; rather, they have all found a niche for themselves and created opportunities for cooperation.

Amidst the massive ongoing construction and development, efforts have been made to assess the impact on the region's environment. The Environment Protection Department of the Hong Kong SAR and Guangdong Provincial Environment Monitoring Centre established the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network in 2005. The network includes 16 automatic air quality monitoring stations within the Delta. This Quality Monitoring Network aims to provide accurate data to help the two Governments appraise the air quality and pollution problems in the PRD region and devise appropriate control measures. It also provides the public with information on the air quality of various places in the region.

Education is among the most important factors in the PRD's quest to maintain continuous growth. The University of Hong Kong (HKU) has acknowledged that today's education needs to engage and benefit from internationalization. To better integrate Hong Kong into China, HKU has a worldwide China program that allows students to participate in different academic and internship programs at universities and corporations in the Mainland. A HKU-Shenzhen Institute of Research and Innovation campus was set up in Shenzhen in March 2011. They aim to promote hi-tech R&D, knowledge transfer and industry incubation, all of which have attracted considerable funding from the National Basic Research program of China and the Shenzhen Science and Technology Program. Similarly, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) was granted permission by the Ministry of Education to establish and implement a new, non-profit, higher education institution in Shenzhen, admitting and preparing an ultimate student population of 11,000 in the fall of 2014. The ultimate goal is to make it a preferred research location in Shenzhen.

Medical development is also emphasized. Recently, a 160-million-yuan hospital funded by Hong Kong opened in Shenzhen. It is hoped that this facility, run the 'HKU way', will eventually influence the mainland for a much-needed health care reform and an entirely new hospital system. The project will also even the demand for international standard medical services within Guangdong and Hong Kong. The service quality is more efficient than that of Shenzhen's public hospitals, while the fees are 30 percent lower

than those at hospitals in Hong Kong. If specific drugs are not available at the hospital, patients have access to a supply from Hong Kong hospitals. There is also an international base for scientific research and professional training.

The future of the PRD can be summed up in two words – cooperation and integration. Each city in the PRD has to identify its strengths and position itself strategically for further development, and the same time, making up for one another's shortfall.

Hong Kong needs to find a new identity within the restructured system of cooperation in the PRD region. It is believed that the special gains and preferential treatment Hong Kong has been receiving as a 'middleman' to China will soon diminish as China's financial strength improves further. According to Mr. Chan Man-Hung, Director of the Public Policy Research Institute of Hong Kong Polytechnic University, "Hong Kong will play new roles and act as a meeting point to start dialogues, develop collaboration, finish business deals, and serve as an innovation incubator." However, as Hong Kong does have a number of advantages in decision-making processes, legal, financial and tax systems, it will continue to prosper as an international business hub and maintain competitiveness in finance, trade, logistics, and professional services.

Macau has carved a niche for itself since its handover in 1999. Once a small Portuguese colony, it has developed a notable tourist industry that boasts a wide range of hotels, resorts, stadiums, restaurants and casinos. It is currently the highest-volume gambling center in the world with an approximate revenue of 360.8 patacas (USD\$45 billion) in 2013, compared to USD\$11 billion in Las Vegas (Nevada).

Guangzhou is the capital of the Guangdong Province. Its development capability is ranked 3rd among cities in China, only behind Beijing and Shanghai. Through continuous optimization and upgrading of its existing industrial sector, Guangzhou will accelerate its shift to the tertiary sector. In 2013, the service industry accounted for almost 65 percent of the city's GDP, and will continue to grow in significance.

Shenzhen is one of the fastest growing cities in the world. The port in Shenzhen is now the second busiest in China, behind Shanghai's. Its industries are more focused on high tech development: BYD and Huawei are very successful cases. BYD, founded in 1995, is considered a pioneer in China's electric vehicle industry. It was listed in the top among the 2010 Bloomberg Business Week Tech 100 companies. Another notable example is Huawei Technologies Co Ltd. Founded in 1987; it is a Chinese multinational information and telecommunication technology (ICT) solutions provider. In 2010, it recorded a profit of RMB23.8 billion (3.7 billion USD). Its products and services have been deployed in more than 140 countries and currently serve 45 of the world's largest 50 telecoms operators.

Dongguan is a major manufacturing hub. The largest industrial sector is the manufacturing of electronic and communication equipment. International companies with facilities in Dongguan include DuPont, Samsung Electronics, Nokia, Coca-Cola, Nestlé and Maersk. The city suffered significant loss of economic activity from the impact of the 2008 global financial crisis. However, with resilience and progressiveness, Dongguan will continue to restructure its industrial sector into an independent, innovative centre.

Zhuhai, which benefits from its proximity to Macau, has also developed a tourism industry over the past couple of years. It opened a new theme park called Cheung Lung in 2014. It also has the first and only aviation industrial park in Guangdong. With that, the city targets to build a unique flight industry including aircraft manufacturing, general aviation operating services, business aviation and flight training. Zhuhai has been hosting aviation airshows. The first AERO ASIA, for example, will take place in Zhuhai in October 2015.

Zhongshan focuses on light industry. Guzhen in the northwest of Zhongshan city has transformed into the largest production base and wholesale market of lighting fittings in China and is one of the top specialized markets of light fittings worldwide. The products are not only sold domestically, but also popular worldwide, with large markets in the U.S, the Middle East, South Africa, and Europe. Guzhen is expected to further develop into the 'International Lighting Capital'.

Huizhou's economy ranks sixth among the cities in the Guangdong Province. Its two major industries, electronics and petrochemicals, accounts for 63.7% of the city's total industrial output. TCL, Desay, Qiaoxing and Foryou Group, which specialize in the manufacturing of telecommunication equipment and electronic products, are the largest firms based in the city.

Jiangmen mainly focuses on heavy industries. It is the home for China's largest motor production base with presence of leading makers such as Grand River Group, Guangdong Tayo Motorcycle Technology, and Heshan Guoji Nanlian Motorcycle. However, textiles and garments, electric home appliances, ceramics and furniture manufacturing are also important industries in the city.

Foshan is a key exporter of mechanical and electrical products, which make up 54.4% of the total export value in Foshan. This city is also a large foreign-trade partner with Hong Kong. Since 1992, this city has been home to a state-level development zone for the Foshan High-tech Industrial Development Zone designed to develop optical-mechanical- electronic integration, electronics, information technology, and new materials.

Zhaoqing, neighbors to Foshan and Jiangmen, is a diverse industrial city held up by nine pillars – three emerging, three traditional and three potential. The emerging pillars being electronic information, machinery, oil refining and petrochemicals, the traditional pillars being textiles and garments, food and beverage, and construction, leaving us with paper making, pharmaceuticals and auto parts as the potential pillars.

However, a number of challenges, such as rising labour costs, air pollution, appreciation of the renminbi, mainland economic slowdown, lie ahead for the PRD.

Guangdong Province has drafted new rules and regulations to allow migrant workers to negotiate salaries and related benefits annually. The draft has been submitted to the Guangdong Provincial People's Congress for review in Sept 14. If the new rules are passed, they will definitely increase production costs.

The PRD is notoriously polluted with sewage and industrial waste treatment facilities failing to keep pace with the growth in population and industries in the area. Factories in the area bring about a large portion of the pollution. Much of the area is frequently covered with brown smog.

From July 2005 through June 2013, the RMB has appreciated by 34% on a nominal basis against the USD and by 42% on an inflation adjusted basis. Pricing of exports from China will gradually rise as the yuan strengthens, making all products labelled 'Made in China' more expensive. However, recent moves indicate that the appreciation of the yuan will slow down over the next few years, thus reducing some of the pressure on exporters.

Increase in non-performing loans (NPLs) in the PRD is also a concern, according to Raymond Yung, head of PwC's China financial service unit. NPLs in PRD grew at the fastest pace among the key regions in China during the first half of 2014, by 30.7 percent, which is an alarming trend.

Despite the challenges, the PRD tomorrow will look starkly different from the PRD yesterday or the PRD today. Premier Li Keqiang has made restructuring the Chinese economy a priority of his in the years to come, and, with the blessing of the central government, the PRD will be part of the grand plan to ensure the country's prosperity going forward. His recent visit to the region mirrors the symbolic visit of the late Deng Xiaoping to the south back in 1992. This time, Li spearheaded a number of new initiatives for the PRD, including approval for Webank – the first online banking service to be based in Shenzhen, the setting up of a stock trading link program for the Hong Kong and Shenzhen exchanges, and establishment of the Guangdong Free Trade Zones (FTZ) in Nansha, Shenzhen and Zhuhai following the Shanghai pilot FTZ, to name a few. These initiatives reiterate the importance of the PRD within China and will propel the region into the 21st century. To ensure a smooth transition from a manufacturing based economy to a

diversified trading and financial centre, the nine cities, as well as Hong Kong and Macau, must cooperate and collaborate in order to deal with the change in external environment and other challenges as the PRD expands its role. It is comforting to know that these cities began to adopt different strategies several years ago to enhance their efficiency and competitiveness. They are on the right track, and the future is promising.

Many years ago when the Pearl River Delta region was still largely undeveloped, Hong Kong was seen as the “pearl” of the delta. Hong Kong played the role of the master and the rest of the delta, the apprentice. Going forward, the individual cities will be equals as they search for their unique pearl while simultaneously racing for the big pearl together. Blessed with an entrepreneurial workforce, a strong education system that increasingly embraces research and development, and ample venture capital, the PRD will thrive to become a role model in modernisation and innovation. It will be a win-win situation of mutual benefit for all the cities in the region.

(2998 words)

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A Resplendent and Refulgent Sapphire

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From a vast and unadorned rural area to a plethora of illustrious and sophisticated metropolises; from mediocre villages to one of the most prosperous regions in China; from a stark Chinese territory to a spectrum of east-meet-west cities...there is undoubtedly no sheer luck. Encompassing Hong Kong, Macau and nine other municipalities, namely Guangzhou, Shenzhen and their proximity, the Pearl River Delta (PRD), without which humans' life would have been every inch discrepant, has been toiling to contribute to the economic, cultural, social and various developments in the mainland. Over the torrent of time, the long-established history of the Pearl River Delta has been swaying and swinging intriguingly and sparkingly, captivating every of our heart.

Spanning a total area of over 39,000 square kilometres, the Pearl River Delta played an indispensable role in agriculture, fishery and other labour-intensive primary industries in ancient China. Farming, cattle ranching and fishery were the predominant sectors, alongside with some trivial and trifling trading activities. No sooner had the Silk Road, which was built aiming at facilitating trading between China and European and South-east Asian countries, been erected in the Tang Dynasty than the Pearl River Delta commenced to act as the trading hub of China. Notably owing to its vicinity to the sea, the delta even became the cornerstone of the maritime Silk Road, contributing to China's economy at that time.

Whereas culturally, despite the existence of a variety of dialects, namely the Hakka dialect, Hoklo dialect and so on and so forth, traditional Chinese culture still reigned the region. Having been a part of China until the late Qing Dynasty, it is understandable and imaginable that the Pearl River Delta was immersed in Chinese customs. For instance, many of the people there upheld the common morality of Chinese, like filial piety, believed in the existence of gods and spirits and taught children to avoid saying unsuspecting words to others. With the dearth of penetration of western culture, Chinese culture ferociously and autocratically ruled China, leading to numerous miserable tyrannies, for example, the foot-binding practices of women and the prevalence of phallocracy, an extreme belief that males are predominant and superior.

Not until China had been invaded by western powers in the past century did the situation and role of the Pearl River Delta begin to transmute. The humiliating defeat of China in the Opium War and the decline of military and national strength of China ended up in the cession of enormous territory to western powers, with Hong Kong ceded to Britain while Macau ceded to Portugal. Having made through plights and predicaments, like the Second World War and the Chinese Civil War, the communists, which acquired a sweeping victory in the civil war, were determined and committed to ameliorate China's economy. To everyone's astonishment, Tang Siu-ping, the leader of China in 1978, sagaciously announced and implemented the reform and opening-up policy, which unprecedentedly liberalised China's economy and trading by setting up coastal Special Economic Zones with lower tariffs and looser trading regulations.

Implausibly, the opening-up policy reaped a resounding success, attracting countless foreign trade and foreign investment and transforming into the pillars of the prosperity of today's Pearl River Delta. In this time and age, rarely do we see farmland and fisheries in the delta. Replacing them is a splendid array of secondary and tertiary industries, notably the production sector, banking and finance sector and even scientific research and development. Not only have the incredibly huge foreign direct investment and free trading created limitless job opportunities in the Pearl River Delta, but they also allow China to earn a desirable profit and account for over one-tenth of China's total real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), boosting the per capita GDP of China from merely a few hundred US dollars in 1980s to over US\$8000 in 2008.

On top of that, the Chinese authority even launched a scheme to merge the nine municipalities in the Pearl River Delta Region into one, creating a 'megapolis' so that each region will share a closer economic tie with one another and collaborate in business activities by a more systematic and comprehensive division of labour. For instance, Guangdong will be specializing in the automobile production owing to the lower land rent, while Shenzhen majoring in computer technology due to the relatively advanced and mature information and communication technologies. Hence, production or business costs can be minimized while

efficiency and profit can be maximized, benefiting the economy of the Pearl River Delta Region, and even that of the entire China.

Alongside the afore-mentioned economic benefits, the associated cultural merits should not be neglected, too. With Hong Kong and Macau having been the colony of Britain and Portugal respectively, foreign cultures have diffused all over these two places, particularly revealed by the Portuguese buildings in Macau and the prevalence of the use of English in Hong Kong. When the two foreign countries governed Macau and Hong Kong, they brought into their own clothes, food, designs, language and other kinds of cultures, which gradually integrated with the local ones to become a unique blend. This blend will then slowly permeate into China and change the ingrained culture there. Furthermore, the opening-up and freer economy in the Pearl River Delta have encouraged limitless foreign companies, like the Disneyland and Starbucks, to invest there. These multinational enterprises directly inject brand new elements into China's culture, altering her food and other cultures from stem to stern. All of the above-mentioned factors will oil the wheels of cultural integration in China. Not only does such an integration contribute to the shaping of a unique and invaluable local culture, but most importantly, it prevents the excessive distension and irrational worshipping of a certain kind of culture, and thus avoids the occurrence of the mentioned tragic 'tyrannies'- like foot-binding and phalocracy.

Socially, significant advantages could also be brought by the Pearl River Delta to the entire China. With the mentioned scheme of merging the nine municipalities in the Pearl River Delta Region, not only will China enhance the infrastructure and transportation networks in the region, but she will also abolish the household registration system there. Under the current system, a person's entitlement to medical, educational, and housing benefits and welfares are based on their household registration and only people with urban household registration can enjoy the above rights in cities. This has hindered hundreds of thousands of people living in rural areas from migrating to cities and venturing into the labour force. Yet, with the abandonment of the household registration system, the differentiation between rural and urban household registration will be eliminated and more rural population will be willing to immigrate to urban areas to live and to work due to the access to the welfare only enjoyed by the urban citizens currently. Meanwhile, the infrastructure and transportation networks will also be enhanced by establishing labyrinths of roads, tunnels, flyovers across the delta, as well as intra- and inter-city railways totalling more than 4000 kilometres, in view of providing people in the delta with an 'one-hour living zone'. Consequently, people from rural and other urban parts of China and even overseas will be attracted to move to the delta because of its convenience. The in draught of immigrants and enhanced infrastructures are prone to promote and speed up the urbanization in China in the long run.

When it comes to tourism, the Pearl River Delta is also glittering and remarkable. Hong Kong, being part of the delta, has often been complimented as a food and shopping paradise for visitors. Macau appeals to the huge volume of tourists every year with its multi-coloured and brilliant casinos as well as the mouth-watering and appetizing snacks, like the peanut candies and almond cookies. Shenzhen has even been rated as 'one of the world's thirty-one must-visit destinations' by The New York Times. All of these unveil the fact that the Pearl River Delta has long been widely-acclaimed and fabulous in tourists' eyes and tourism is de facto blooming there.

Without a shadow of doubt, the delta could not have flourished and excelled in so many domains without a sound and fair legal system to protect various stakeholders' rights. Most regions of the delta are ruled by Chinese constitutional law while Hong Kong adopts the common law, which is honoured and employed internationally. This provides Hong Kong with a golden opportunity to attract a multitude of foreign investors and tourists, who, under a trusted legal system, do not have to be petrified of having their rights infringed. Were the Pearl River Delta a lustrous sapphire, the reliable legal system would be the sander which keeps the surface of the sapphire smooth and gleaming.

Lamentably, beset with a host of thorny problems, this glistening sapphire is currently scratched and its gleam is vanishing. Over the past couple of years, the delta is awash with numberless headaches, ranging from economic to cultural and even environmental aspect.

Economically, the widening disparity between the rich and poor is one of the most deep-rooted problems in the delta. The Gini coefficient, an index measuring the degree of wealth disparity, in many regions of the delta has reached an alarming level. The figure in Hong Kong has even once hit 0.53, drastically exceeding her counterparts- Shanghai and Singapore.

Apart from that, the cutthroat competition from its counterparts like Singapore also threatens the leading status of the delta in Asia. With a welfare-rich immigration policy and brain drain from Singapore,

measureless professionals and talents have been lured to settle down there, reducing the supply of erudite and well-trained persons to the delta, which will eventually limit the potential of development and the competitiveness of the delta. What fuels the flame is the diminishing of foreign tourists visiting the delta owing to a gloomy and questionable global economy. The delta is said to be faced in a quandary which is infested with both internal troubles and external challenges.

Cultural homogeneity is another problem tormenting the delta. Undeniably, it is sensible and conducive to introduce new foreign culture so as to enrich ours. However, too far is as bad as not enough. The influx of foreign culture can easily undermine the local ones, or even massacre it. Take food culture as an illustration, the inrush of McDonald's has introduced to Chinese the fast food culture. However, McDonald's, being a chained and listed company, can enjoy economies of scales and thus can obtain raw materials and produce food at a cost much lower than small catering companies. It can then sell its food at a more affordable price and customers will be more inclined to purchase from it. Small catering companies offering authentic food may face a drop in business and in serious case, a higher possibility to wind up owing to a loss. As a consequence, local food culture may be eliminated, leaving the foreign ones monopolising the whole market. The above theory also applies to other kinds of culture and will lead to a manipulation of foreign cultures, which, academically, is named as cultural homogeneity.

The last problem, which is also a notorious one, is the grim pollution problem. In winter, when we venture into the street in Hong Kong, it is extremely common to be surrounded by a suffocating photochemical smog which blurs our vision. In winter, Hong Kong is affected by the offshore monsoon wind from the north of it, which is the Pearl River Delta. The monsoon carries plenty of fatal and diminutive air pollutants, for example sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide, from the delta to Hong Kong, which proves the widespread effect of the air pollution in the delta on itself and its propinquity. Light pollution is another severe problem too. With the escalating rate of urbanisation and economic activities, it is inevitable to experience a surge of domestic and commercial lights, which if not regulated at night, can provoke insomnia and jeopardise one's physiological and mental health, as suggested by not few experienced physicians and urban planners.

Assailed by the multifarious can of worms, how can the delta endure and cross the hurdles in front of it? How can the delta find its own way? As the adage goes, when there is a will, there is a way. So long as it espouses and endorses the following measures, it may be able to maintain its competitiveness, or even edge out its contender.

To deal with the wealth disparity, the authorities concerned must design both short-term and long-term policies. In the short run, it is advisable to provide the underprivileged with direct financial subsidy and welfare so as to help them to make ends meet; in the long run, it is vital to promote universal education. As the saying goes, knowledge is power. Only by ensuring the access to free education of the disadvantaged can they have a chance to climb up the social ladder, and thus upgrade their quality of life by earning a better salary. As a consequence, the wealth disparity can then be minimized.

To keep abreast with the fast-paced and fierce competition, the delta should launch some talents-retaining scheme. For instance, the related authority can offer scholarship for potential adolescents to study overseas for their undergraduate and postgraduate studies on condition that they must return to the delta region to work for a certain number of years. This can develop potential students amid ensuring a stable supply of talents in the desired field. In the meantime, it should also actively explore other kinds of economic activities. For instance, it can actively develop eco-tourism, a form of tourism involving visiting picturesque, breath-taking and relatively undisturbed natural areas. The Danxia Mount, which is prestigious for its red glutinite and rocks, can be a fascinating spot for eco-tourism. Nonetheless, it is of paramount importance to regulate the volume of such tourism so as to avert damaging or devastating the ecology.

To protect the delta from cultural homogeneity, it is crucial to aid local small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs). Subsidies like tax relief, tax allowance and preferential loans can be granted to potential SMEs for running and expanding their business. Not only can this secure and retain local culture, but it, allowing the survival of SMEs, can curb monopolisation by multinational enterprises and hence increase the competition within the market. This can drive all the companies to strive to increase products' quality in order to stand out in the market, and ultimately benefiting consumers there.

Pollution has been a hard nut to crack to nearly every place in the world. Intractable may it seem, it can be alleviated by more stringent government regulations and cross-border collaboration. Each local government should set a more rigorous emission standard for vehicles, factories and power stations. Vehicles which have been used for more than a decade should undergo mandatory check-up every year to ensure a

legitimate emission standard. Factories and power stations should install desulphurization machines and scrubbers to reduce the amount of air pollutants discharged. Local governments can join hands together to clamp down on smuggling of shoddy vehicles and low-end fuels for power generation. When it comes to light pollution, the government can impose laws to regulate the light intensity of commercial lights at night in accordance with the maximum intensity humans can be exposed to without imperilling their health. Offenders will be liable to fixed fine and recidivists should even be imprisoned.

In a nutshell, the Pearl River Delta has had a time-honoured history, which rooted in ancient China and has been elongating merrily and magnificently. During its history, step by step, plight after predicament, it has been transforming from numerous remote rural villages to a spectrum of mesmerizing metropolises, homing and feeding hundreds of thousands of people in China. It is doubtlessly alike extracting a sapphire from its ore: initially it is merely a bulky, sandy, lacklustre rock. Yet, with a top-notch sander, with a skilled craftsman, with meticulous burnishing, its impurities are removed, its bulkiness is gone, its lustre is revived. The resplendent and refulgent sapphire lies in our hands now. As time goes by, it may face ordeals and clefts again, scratching on it and causing wear and tear. Yet, nothing is impossible to a willing heart. With determination and tenacity, it can be polished and scintillate once again. The history and tale of the Pearl River Delta lies in our hands now. It is we who can decide if it will perish, or flourish.

It is we. It has been we. It will always be we.



The Non-sustainable Relationship between the Pearl River Delta, Hong Kong and Macau

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I.

The Pearl River Delta is a region consisting of nine cities including Guangzhou and Shenzhen in China which has a large population. It acts as an important economic and financial pillar to development of Southern China, bringing a GDP of RMB\$ 4372 billion to China in 2011. Moreover, the Pearl River Delta region gains a geographical advantage—being close to Hong Kong, a mature economic hub, which leads to frequent cooperation's between two regions, such as CEPA and the construction of Guangshen Expressway since 1997. In 2011, the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary was suggested; it was proposed that a connected belt with join Hong Kong and Shenzhen with country parks or wetlands and Hong Kong Express Rail Link. Meanwhile, the lack of promotion from the government leaves many people clueless about the whole plan.

II.

There appears to be a lack of consultation for the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary. In a recent interview with Mr. Albert Lai Kwong Tak, the founding chairman of the Hong Kong People's Council for Sustainable Development, which is an organization that gives advice on sustainable development strategies, he criticizes how very few Hong Kong citizens were involved in the whole planning. 'Though many new concepts are used in the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary,' said Mr. Lai, 'Hong Kong people don't even know them. Then why doesn't the Planning Department explain the details to us?' Mr. Lai's anger, frustration and sorrow because of the fact that citizens of Hong Kong are not allowed to have any say in their future was obvious. He also mentioned that Hong Kong people own the right to choose the direction of this development plan takes. "Yet, all the government does is just disappoint me." When it was first suggested in 2011, the official public consultation period only lasted for 27 days, including the Lunar New Year Holiday, the time provided made one queried whether it was possible for the public to read through the details of the plan and express their opinions to the Planning Department. Being the chairman of an organization which emphasizes sustainable development, Mr Lai undoubtedly puts much emphasis on the quality of living environment of Hong Kong. And now, this indeed "non-livable" project just violates his belief.

The limited channels for the public to voice their opinions to the officials on this plan is one of the concerns for town planner Mr Stanley Ng Wing Fai as well. Ng suggested, "I understand that urban planning in the Mainland is usually decided by the government officials only and they implement them with little consultation, this is one of the disparities of political system between Hong Kong and China, but why don't they try to allow more public and professionals to join the consultation? I believe that it will be beneficial to all stakeholders." With the small number of people allowed to discuss the plan, it is difficult for it to be without defects. Besides, Hong Kong citizens were not granted the right to make decision, so, it finally came to the failure of meeting their needs. During the discussion of the plan, opinions of Hong Kong people seem to be often ignored. From Mr Lai, it is learnt that in the recent meetings for the plan, it has been decided that only the Guangdong and Beijing representatives were the responsible units for the investigation, while the Hong Kong people would remain as consultants only. One of the problems of the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary is that the participants are limited to a small of group of people, mainly those professors from universities or government officials. One cannot help but question whether the limited ideas from this group of public are sufficient for the government on the two sides of the borders to make suitable choices.

Insufficient social participation on the proposed implementation of the plan from people from different areas associated with it is indeed an area of concern for many. Mr. Yuen, a Hong Kong citizen around 50 years old, who is still passionate on political affairs, especially, the Hong Kong part in the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary, supports this plan very much and sees an importance for the development in Hong Kong. However, Mr Yuen was more concerned about the amount of chances for Hong Kong and

Macau citizens to participate in the plan. He said indignantly, “The importance and influence of Hong Kong and Macau should not be deprived due to small area being affected in the plan. All relevant regions including Guangdong, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Macau should be given equal opportunities to discuss together in order to improve the details of the plan.” In the public consultation forum on 29th January, 2011, the audiences were only allowed to voice their opinions in a few sentences, it became unclear if the government is willing to give the general public opportunities to participate into the modification of the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary.

Not only is there a problem of lack of consultation, but Mr. Stanley Ng also mentioned, “social harmony may also be disrupted after the plan is carrying out.” When Hong Kong Express Rail Link is constructed, the transport network will be more convenient, more mainlanders living in the inner parts of China may pay a visit to Hong Kong. Yet, a large cultural disparity between two regions is hard to ignore. Conflicts between Hongkongers and Mainlanders are not uncommon. At the Anti-Individual-Visit Scheme protests in February and March, Hong Kong protestors were seen hurling insults at the Mainland tourists for affecting their livings negatively. It remains a question whether the Hong Kong Express Rail Link, part of the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary, will bring harmony or more disharmony.

Apart from the disruption of Hong Kong’s social harmony, the Express Rail Link also presents itself as a threat to the natural environment. It is proposed that country parks and wetlands in Hong Kong and the Mainland be connected. In the meantime, a new high speed railway will be built to connect Shenzhen. The senior environmental protection manager of WWF Hong Kong Ms Li Mei Wa said “The organisms can only have polluted fish or algae as food”, it is believed that their health quality will be worsened and they may find it unbearable to live in a place filled with rubbish, dust and noise, leading to the moving away or even death of aquatic life in Hong Kong.

Not only will the living conditions of the wild be negatively affected, the living conditions of citizens of Hong Kong are also likely to be adversely affected. According to the plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary, residential property area with new concepts and new town will be established, risking the worsening of one of the very serious social problems in Hong Kong—high flat price problem. Mr Stewart Leung Chi Kin, the vice-chairperson of The Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong said, “in the past few years, the construction cost has been increasing for 60% and I expect even the land price decreases, at least 3 to 4 years is needed for the reduction of the construction cost, which means there is no room for the reduction of flat price in short term.”

III.

Some may suggest that the Plan for Livable Bay Area of Pearl River Estuary helps boost the economic development of Hong Kong. In fact, it also helps preserves Hong Kong’s intangible heritage. According to the plan, Cultural villages will be promoted to strengthen tourism. It is indeed nice to hear that the government has considered the cultural conservation in the plan. Hong Kong is dubbed a cultural desert because the primary objective of the city is economic development. With new elements added, like the “Village of Culture” in the plan, the originally monotonous Hong Kong can become more attractive and the residents are capable of having a more balanced lifestyle. It absolutely helps improve the international image of Hong Kong. In the “Village of Culture”, which aims at preserving important historical and cultural values, the government was advising to make good use of Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage to promote the popular leisure tourism. Among all, Tai O, the renowned fishing town, became one of the options. Mr Tsang Tak Sing, the Secretary for Home Affairs said, “The simple living style, the Dragon Boat Water Parade as well as stilt houses in Tai O have made it appealing to show the specific culture and facilitate the development of leisure tourism in Hong Kong.” After setting up the “Village of Culture”, not only can the cultural treasure be grouped together and safeguarded, we can also pass them to our next generation and allow them to study on our past continually. On the other hand, the type of tourism Hong Kong used to promote mainly involves shopping and sightseeing, it is high time for the government to develop the new one, like the cultural tourism mentioned in the plan, it is believed that it can attract more visitors and bring Hong Kong a considerable amount of income. However, it remains to be seen whether that the “Village of Culture” could reach the objectives of preserving those historical and cultural values eventually. A lack of strong measures to protect the beautiful and magnificent exhibits being damaged by tourists due to curiosity or a different in culture may do harm instead of safeguard our precious culture.

IV. Conclusion

While the “Village of Culture” in the plan helps cultural conservation and promotes the leisure tourism in Hong Kong, the plan fails to meet the needs of Hong Kong citizens. Attitudes towards environmental concerns may well be one of the areas where Hong Kong and the mainland diverge the most; social harmony is again at risk. Ultimately, one cannot help but question whether the plan will turn out to be one of many big white elephants in which people’s real needs often take a back seat.

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