



E-paper\Comment

Look at history to see the future

By Zhang Ying | China Daily Europe | Updated: 2017-01-20 07:27



My recent piece of work on de-globalization and China-WTO issues was published by China Daily and picked up by Eureporter. I received lots of feedback, either favoring globalization or against Chinese social-economic-political directions and its "fake" stance of openness, non-discrimination, and equality....

The opponents' opinions are strong but I am actually very pleased to see China become the subject of discussion.

It shows how much attention it has generated, which might ironically be at a similar level to that which emerged after Brexit and the Trump victory. It looks like we won't be bored this century and deprived of tremendous transitions and changes.

The Western world and its media, most of the time, don't reflect what the real China was and is, and don't understand seemingly-complicated Chinese phenomena. It is disappointing to see that many opinions from the West are influenced by the media, so that its citizens, politicians and decision-makers have been sadly misled about China's comprehensive phenomena for example on the recent topic of China's (non) market status on WTO regulations. Even so, I believe we should have a shot at understanding to those opinions.

As a deep believer in Buddhism and Taoism, with which most Chinese were born with and raised, discrimination is not at the root of our values. On the contrary, we value connectiveness and collectivism, cooperation and the toleration of differences.

Chinese culture was not cultivated to judge others by using its own value system. Neither, I believe, do our friends in the West.

However, it does not always appear to be so. Why is that? How is it that we can share the same fundamental belief in doing the best for our people but at an institutional level we grow apart?

The majority of people in the West do not have enough information on what China is and where it has been, which influences the way the country is seen and understood.

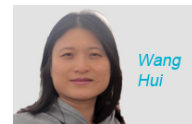
Some raise the issues of freedom, equality and openness as a "weapon" to judge Chinese performance and its role and contribution to globalization and world prosperity. Do they understand the sacrifices and costs that China has paid?

At times, those biased attitudes and opinions have been too extreme and too shallow. We were born differently and developed differently but we have the honor of co-existing on the same planet with certain rules. We need to respect the rules and continue to develop positive energy to improve things for the sake of this planet's wellbeing.

Those wrongly using and supporting the concept of so called anti-discrimination and equality


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should open their eyes and take a step back to review the antecedents and consequences of real discrimination and inequality in some countries. Discrimination comes from inequality and should be prioritized for discussion at a global level.

Why are some countries / people chosen to make rules and some countries / people chosen to be badly or unfairly treated? Why are some countries / people arrogant to order others about?

We should learn to respect others and not forcibly impose our values on them.

China 1,500 years ago was ruled by the Tang Dynasty and that era was its most prosperous, as the largest economic and civilization contributor to the world. Openness to the world, the embracing of variety and collaboration were default values, similar to what USA has done for the past 300 years and the EU agreed to cherish when it was set up.

Discrimination was disapproved of in China's Tang Dynasty and onwards. Countries trading with China were well-treated, not just as friends and partners, but as family. Prosperity was sought together and evil thoughts were fought together.

However, during China's Qing dynasty 300 years ago, anti-globalization and protectionism dominated and bloodily dragged the wealthy dragon back to nothing, as a nobody. People were extremely poor, without status and identity. The country was plundered and lost its dignity.

The story of our shared history is cruel but true. It clearly mirrors the present and accurately predicts the future.

When we look at history, the only variables for us to consider are the time and the mentality.

So what does this tell us about de-globalization? How should we adjust our values, thoughts and behavior to become more responsible and moral, and create a virtuous path for the benefit of us all?

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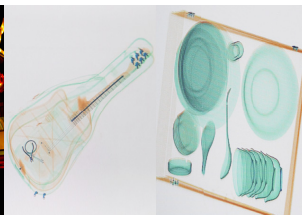
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