



**NASK**  
NEWSLETTER

**TRADITION  
FOR  
SUSTANCE  
SYMBOLIC  
MEANINGS OF  
THE  
LUNAR NEW  
YEAR  
LIFE OF FOREIGN  
WORKERS IN  
TAIWAN SEEN  
THROUGH FILMS  
MESSAGE FROM  
DIRECTOR OF  
KUASIA  
PAKISTAN  
CULTURE  
DAY**



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### MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF KUASIA

Dr. Sebnem Koser Akcapar, Associate Professor in Sociology



Photo taken near Angkor Wat Temple in Siam Reap, Cambodia

*Namaste. Salaam. Konichi wa. Ni hao...* Having lived in Asia for many years and travelled extensively across the continent, it was my dream to establish an Asia Center in Turkey focusing on the large continent's unique cultures, traditions, change in societies, politics and economy. Koç University made this dream come true. Since our inception in early 2017, we organized many academic seminars, talks, and conferences as well as cultural events with the invaluable help of our students and faculty. As China has become a global power in the world and Chinese language is the most widely spoken language, we also facilitated Mandarin classes as of Fall 2017 for KU students.

I welcome especially our new body of NASK (Network of Asian Students at Koç University). NASK is a clear showcase of our diverse and talented students hailing from different countries in the region – Singapore, India, Pakistan, Japan, Cambodia, and China, among others. We certainly would like to have a growing body of students from Asia at our university and more Turkish students getting familiar with the continent by exploring and traveling to the region through global exchange opportunities and taking up courses on Asia. This first newsletter and articles on Taiwan, Pakistan, Japan, and China will bring you a glimpse of the continent.

Enjoy.

Sebnem



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF NASK

Mustasim Azhar



The increased globalization and international exposure have made exploring new cultures and lifestyles all the more important. People from diverse ethnic or geographical backgrounds could now interact, develop dialogue and experience worlds, unbeknown before. It is rare, and super difficult, to study or understand every culture, therefore, necessitating the need for a collaborative platform where students can meet and know more about each other and the world beyond. Personally, I realized the need for reaching Turkey and coming across staggering questions like; "So where exactly on the map is Pakistan?", questions that really hit you by surprise and make you think. But it was a blessing these questions were asked. They show the urge, the will, the drive to know more about one another. We need to be more aware, question and clear away any and all stereotypes (if they exist) and inform about our identities or heritage to others. These topics we normally do not cover in our coursework or everyday lives and it is the simple interactions with one another that make us more knowledgeable, more aware, more sympathetic to the world around us. Similar like many other students who wanted to tell their stories, express their cultures and present an actual picture of their regions, for better understanding, I also wanted to express myself, while understanding others around me. During my experiences here, I realized that many students are more aware of Europe or the Americas, as compared to Asia. Therefore, the urge to build a collaboration platform to not only acquaint and understand my fellow Asian students but also amplify the communication of their intellectual as well as cultural capital, directed me towards the creation of NASK (The Network of Asian Students at KU).

Celebrating diversity at Koç University, NASK serves as a platform to unify all Asian students studying at different departments and hailing from different countries. The network allows students to interact with peers having both similar and diverse ethnicities, from nearby and distant neighbors. Such a specialized platform provides a sublime opportunity for better idea mobility and exchange of cultural, political and economic intellect at KU.



Currently, there are almost 100 international students at Koç University from Asia - more than any other continent - either as undergraduate, exchange or full-time graduate students. Their mere presence and the anticipated increase in the number of Asian students at KU called for the formation of a dedicated student community operating under the umbrella of KUASIA. This not only allows students from different parts of Asia to acquaint among themselves but also provides the university with an opportunity to learn more from the unique aura each individual brings.

This newsletter is one of the many steps, towards easing out the process of constructive dialogue and cultural communication, we plan to take. Diverse topics from different nations are discussed by students from Asia. Hope you like it. Shukriya, Dhanyavaad, Teşekkür, Xièxiè, Arigato, Thank you.

Regards,

Mustasim



## LIFE OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN TAIWAN SEEN THROUGH THE FILMS: *I HAVE IT MAID* AND *PINOY SUNDAY*

Yao Hsaio, Taiwan  
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The population of foreign workers in Taiwan continues to increase after the legalization of hiring blue-collar foreign workers in 1992. By the end of 2017, the number has exceeded 670,000. These people are often called *wailao* in Taiwan, which is the abbreviation for "foreign labors" in Chinese, and it only refers to those working in productive industries and social welfare. As Shu-Ju Ada Cheng explains in her article, *wailao* are mostly from Southeast Asia, and they are often considered culturally and religiously different from the Taiwanese. Besides, since they are hired for doing the so-called 3K (dirty, dangerous, and unskilled) jobs, people associated *wailao* with poverty, criminality, lower work ethics, and backwardness. These two reasons are why foreign workers are still a neglected group in Taiwan's society. However, more and more people start to notice the issue of foreign labors, and producing a documentary is one of the most common and effective ways to gain attention. *I Have It Maid* (2014) is a documentary that focuses on runaway domestic service workers and the reasons behind their runaway actions. In contrast to the realistic documentary, *Pinoy Sunday* (2009) is a drama about two Philippino workers of productive industries. The comic and fictional feature of the movie provides another way to understand the situation and feeling of foreign workers in Taiwan. Both films are directed by non-Taiwanese directors, who are also foreigners as the characters do and see Taiwan with a more subjective perspective. Through the two films, we can glimpse foreign workers' lives and the situation they face.

*I Have It Maid* is directed by Alex Wolfgram and Nick Vaky, two Americans who were graduate students of National Chengchi University in Taiwan. By talking with several runaway household workers from the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam, the documentary shows the dilemma these foreign housemaids are facing and the problems of the domestic service system in Taiwan.



The English title uses the pun "have it made" to point out the general attitude of employers who hire housemaids-"I have a maid and she will take care of everything." One of the main problems of domestic service is that most of the workers live in their employers' homes, and their workplaces overlap their private spaces. In this way, they are deprived of not only their private space but also their free time. Many eventually become 24/7 workers who are always on call for everything at any time, even though in the contracts they are only responsible for taking care of one elderly family member. For example, Vicky in the film was hired as a domestic worker, but then she had to clean a three-floor house where nine people live and go help at the family restaurant afterwards. Every day she worked till four o'clock and woke up at nine to work again. Another problem is that if the job is to take care of the elderly at home, the working time is hard to regulate. Many elderly have abnormal daily routines, so the workers have to adjust their own and work after midnight. Also, the workers need to deal with incidents which could happen at any time. The other problem is that taking care of people is a job that is hard to be ruthless. In the film, one worker mentions that even when she had a day off on Sunday, she stayed and took care of the grandma because there was no one else home. She stayed there due to her conscience. To sum up, it is very common that employers abuse these workers, intentionally or inadvertently, to do extra tasks, work overtime, and treat them as a commodity rather than humans. Simultaneously, the system and policies are also a problem to be solved. The particularity of domestic service makes it difficult to be regulated by law, and thus the workers are not subjects to legal protection. The broker system also puts these foreign workers at a disadvantage situation: they cannot change their employer freely and easily. Comparing the interviews of the workers, the brokers, and the government officials, it is obvious that when the workers are facing difficulties such as abuse, sexual harassment, runaway is the only choice they have. At the end of the film, the directors give suggestions to improve the phenomenon of runaway workers in Taiwan.



*I Have It Maid* Poster (2014)





Comparing to documentaries, movies about foreign labors in Taiwan are much less. *Pinoy Sunday*, directed by Malaysian director Wi Ding Ho, is one of the three. The protagonists of the movie are two Filipinos, Manuel and Dado, who work in a factory in Taipei and their only day-offs are Sundays. The story is about they trying to take a red sofa, which they found on street, back to their dormitory. The title of the movie is interesting: while the English one is *Pinoy Sunday*, the Chinese one means "Taipei Sunday." The two languages represent the two groups of people, English for Philippines and Chinese for Taiwanese. It shows that people are watching the same movie with different perspectives, just like people in the same city on the same Sunday are leaving completely different lives. Inspired by *Two Men and a Wardrobe* (1958), the scene of two men carrying giant furniture walking around the city is also used in this movie. The main prop, the red sofa the protagonists find randomly, is a symbol of home. The insistence of taking the sofa back to make the dormitory more home-like indicates their desire for home. For two aliens living on a foreign land, the most desirable thing is home. According to Ho, since the use of bed would be too sensual, sofa represents the simple satisfaction home provides. However, the huge red sofa seems to be out of place on the gloomy streets in Taipei. Its bizarre appearance and existence not only reveals the fantasy feature of the movie, but also shows that Manuel and Dado's desire of building an alternative home here is unrealistic. In the end, they fail to bring the sofa back to their dormitory and end up falling asleep on the sofa, floating in the river. In their dreams, they are back to their hometown, as happy as they were in childhood. Although they fail to create their home on the foreign land, they fulfill their desire through imagination. The movie does not aim to criticize or reflect social issues but presents the daily lives of foreign workers with some fantasy elements. For the audience of foreign workers, it is a movie for them; for the Taiwanese, it is a movie to get closer to these foreigners who are part of Taiwan's society in a relaxing way.



A Scene from *Pinoy Sunday* (2009)





From *I have It Maid*, we understand the phenomena of foreign household workers running away. The problem of domestic service needs to be solved from the system itself and the attitude of the employers. As for *Pinoy Sunday*, we can have a glimpse of the lives of foreign workers in Taipei, and it reminds the Taiwanese that these foreigners are also a part of the society. As the number of foreigner labors will continue to increase, they are not only affecting the economy but also the culture. Through these two films, as well as the others, people can learn more about foreign workers and dynamics they have brought to the society.

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## **THE LAND OF RISING SUN: ASPIRING A CONTINENT & LOSING A GREAT DEAL INSTEAD**

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Some believe that the World War II started in 1939 when Germany invaded Poland, however many historians argue that the world tensions, or the World War, started in September 1931 when Japan invaded Manchuria, China. The following essay encompasses the events initiated by The Pacific War which led to nuclear warfare and the unconditional surrender of Japan (major belligerents were USA & Japan). This was fought over a vast area that includes Pacific Oceans & islands, Southwest Pacific, China and South East Asia.



By 1935, Japanese Military strategists concluded that the Dutch East Indies, because of their rich oil reserves, were of considerable importance so started to map a conceptual “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” while building the military presence in various parts surrounding China. This resulted in oil, iron and steel embargo from US, Britain and the Dutch governments,



knowing that oil accounted for 80% of domestic consumption which would halt Japanese plans to expand in the region. Military propagandists influenced Japanese media and referred the embargo as American-British-Chinese-Dutch encirclement. The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters faced a choice between giving up invaded territories or economic collapse and subsequently decided to go to war with western allies during the summer of 1941.

The main objective of Japanese military high command was to seize key locations in Asia and build defensive perimeter to counter the attacks from the allied forces. Moreover, the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii was to buy time for Japanese military to complete the defensive perimeters. The long-term goal was to negotiate for peace where the allies will recognize Japan as a regional power because a total victory against the USA was next to impossible.



The attack on pearl harbor on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941, was a serious blunder as Japanese failed to eliminate strategic targets which would subdue the American Pacific fleet. The attack united the American people, who were initially against the idea, in favor of war. Therefore, the USA, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, Netherlands and China declared war on Japan.





Resources drained allied forces, except the USA, were committed in Europe, North Africa, Middle East, etc., therefore, they failed to provide serious resistance to the Japanese military. British lost two major battleships off Malaya in December 1941. Thailand surrendered to Japanese forces within 5 hours of invasion and formally allied on December 21. Simultaneously, Hong Kong was attacked and fell on Dec 21. Wake Islands and Guam, which were American bases, also fell to Japanese at the same time. In January 1942, Japan invaded Burma, New Guinea, Dutch East Indies, Manila, Solomon Islands, Kuala Lumpur and Rabaul, which led to the resignation Sir Archibald Wavell as Pacific Commander in Chief for Allied forces and the appointment of General Douglas MacArthur. In February, Singapore was surrendered by Indian, British, Dutch and Australian soldiers. March and April brought victory to Japanese navy over the British Naval fleet posted by the coast of Ceylon which opened the theatre for Indian assault and in May 1942, Philippines was surrendered by US and Filipino soldiers. Japan now controlled vast areas from Central Pacific to the Indian Ocean, however, was short in resources to defend them.

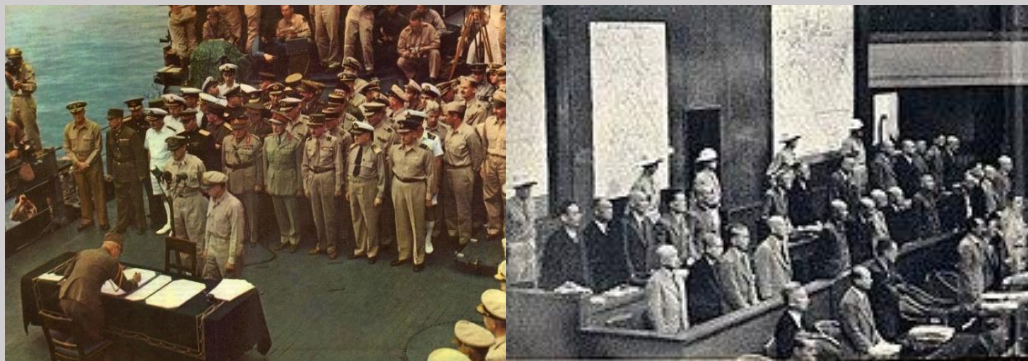


The turning point in the Pacific War came in April 1942 when the US conducted an air raid also known as the Doolittle Raid (named after Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle) on Japanese lands instigated due to the Pearl Harbor attack. Even though no major strategic targets were attacked, it casted doubt in Japanese military's leadership to defend their homeland and contributed towards the Japanese decision to invade Midway Island on June 4, 1942. There US and Japanese naval fleet came face to face resulting in loss of Japan's Combined Fleet and the invaders were in defensive mode from thereon for the rest of the war. Furthermore, the battle of Philippines on June 20, 1944, between naval forces of the US and Japan resulted in the annihilation of remaining Japanese navy and gave US the control of Saipan and Tinian, which became the US military bases and are in flying range to mainland Japan, so the US aerial bombing raids were carried out on the industrial cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Kobe, etc. to disrupt the Japanese war effort. The US had the means to use its industrial potential into planes, ships and trained military personnel, whereas Japan lacked in adequate industries, technology, training programs for military, naval resources, etc. and continued to fall behind in every aspect of war. It was getting relatively easier for Allies to move towards the Japanese mainland and the goal was to launch strategic air attacks, maintain naval blockades and execute an invasion. Submarine warfare from allied forces also proved to be decisive against Japanese in the Pacific war. Submarines accounted for an elimination of 1,200 merchant ships from 1942 to 1945 and most of them were shipping oil from East Indies for the war. Furthermore, 200 Japanese naval destroyers were also eliminated.





The final stand-off between Japan and US came at the Japanese islands of Okinawa & Iwo Jima in 1945 where both sides suffered heavy casualties, however with final defeat to Japan. In July 1945, Allied leaders issued a formal warning to Japan to surrender or face “prompt and utter destruction” and instead of prolonged campaign of air raids and naval blockades from allies, nuclear bombs were dropped by the US on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6<sup>th</sup> & August 9<sup>th</sup> of 1945, which resulted in the deaths and casualties of 250,000 people. Consequently, Japanese Emperor Hirohito announced Japan’s willingness to unconditionally surrender to the formal ceremony taking place on September 02, 1945.



General MacArthur was appointed the supreme commander of Japan and was given the task to rebuild the Japanese society and set up International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) to try the Japanese leaders who were responsible for the war. Japanese royal family was not persecuted, however, major leaders in cabinets such as Prime Minister, Chief of Intelligence, War Minister, etc. were sentenced to death while 16 other defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment. The total casualties on both sides were as follows:

Japanese:	2,000,000
<b>Allies</b>	
American:	6,000
Filipino :	27,000
Australian:	45,000
New Zealander:	17,500
Dutch:	17,000



Nearly 40% of the built-up area of Japan was obliterated and 30% of the urban population lost their homes. Hiroshima and Nagasaki suffered lasting damage due to atomic bombing and the consequent radiation. 80% of the Japanese merchant marine was lost due to the Pacific War. Compared to military relief in Europe, Japanese never received such assistance. Furthermore, the likes of Marshall Plan, which was a relief of 13 Billion USD to war-torn Western Europe to rebuild the economy and promote world peace, was never structured for the countries situated in Pacific.

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## **TRADITION FOR SUSTENANCE: A CASE IN SUCCESSFUL ETHNIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP BY AFGHAN MIGRANTS**

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Refugee crisis and catering to the displaced migrants is one of the biggest issues faced by the world today. The number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people around the world topped 65 million in 2017, as per the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Whether due to economic, health or political uncertainty, these people are forced out of their homes and struggle to adapt to the new conditions. They not only have a hard time finding means to sustain life but also often face resistance by the local communities. Similar was the case with Afghan migrants who crossed the borders to escape harsh living conditions and find a new home in Pakistan.

An estimated 1.6 million registered Afghan refugees and approximately 2 million undocumented Afghans reside in Pakistan, amounting to one the world's biggest refugee population (Human Rights Watch). An open border provided them safe-haven in the northwestern province of Pakistan "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa". Finding means of livelihood was a major hurdle for them after coming to Pakistan. With tradition and customs dictating men to be head of household, they carried more pressure to not only support themselves but the entire family. Being not well-educated made the process even more challenging and practically impossible to find employment. This social exclusion and high barrier into the job market directed them towards starting their own businesses, which led to the initiation of one of the most successful ethnic entrepreneurship stories in history.

Ethnic entrepreneurship is defined as "a set of connections and regular patterns of interaction among people sharing common national background or migration experiences" (Waldinger, Aldrich, and Ward 1990, p. 3). It occurs when members of a certain community set up their own businesses due to denied entrance in the primary job market. Therefore, to avoid





falling to the bottom of the economic barrel, the immigrants turn to self-employment activities of a specific type- those of a highly liquid nature with low barriers to entry. Entrepreneurs with higher levels of involvement in the ethnic community will report "more traditional" cultural values of high collectivism, high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, and a high predisposition for the "work to live" philosophy. They utilize co-ethnic resources, such as community ties or prior knowledge of a specific skill to increase the profits of their businesses. Traditionally, these ethnic businesses are known to serve the needs of a specific community and do not grow to influence the larger resident population. But the businesses set up by the Afghan immigrants present a different story. Not only did they serve the needs of a specific community but also created a demand for their product among the resident population living in other parts of Pakistan.

Appreciating their Pakhtun roots, many Afghan migrants coming into Pakistan started producing traditional sandals, known as 'khussas'. These slip-on sandals, normally have a flat sole with toe cap bearing traditional patterns. Handcrafted, intricately stitched designs on the exterior present a beautiful mosaic of tradition, culture and craftsmanship. Multiple kinds of patterns can be witnessed, ranging from fine cloth cut-work to pearl embellishments. For men, traditionally, some variants carry a curve on the tip of the toe cap, representing pride and strength in the community.



What once was a staple footwear for a specific community, through profound craftsmanship has since grown into a popular festive wear for the entire region. Around Pakistan, these sandals are extremely popular and the demand exponentially increases during the wedding and *Eid* seasons. Especially during wedding days, the brides and grooms wear these sandals and the more extravagant the better. There are normally long queues witnessed at the small stores selling these sandals especially on the night before the religious festivals of *Eid*. The immense success of the *khussa* presents a prime example of how a refugee population is able to dig deep into its ethnic roots, build upon their own expertise and expand it into a cultural phenomenon. Knowing that they were not that well educated for the white-collared jobs, the migrants pursued something that had been passed onto them from their forefathers.



*"My father established this shop and I have been coming with him since my childhood. He taught me how to stitch the leather and create these shoes, same as his father before him." (Yawar Hayat, 25, Lahore).*

*"I take great pride in this shop. This is our skill and makes us unique. I did not get any education since my father brought me and my brothers to the shop to help him out. He told us, we will be running this shop after him. Now even though he has passed away but due to the skill he passed to us, all 5 of my brothers have our own shops in Lahore, Peshawar and Charsada." (Gulbahar Khan, 37, Lahore).*



They did not give in to the new atmosphere or mold themselves to suit the home population. They did not disown their cultural heritage in a quest to seem more similar to the new community instead they decided to celebrate their diversity and operate in a niche which gave them a unique launch-pad. Their diverse interests provided a new product to the resident population. This not only provided them with a source of livelihood but rather augmented the traditions of the region, making it more culturally rich.





The profound success of such a business presents a framework for providing livelihood to the displaced migrants around the world. Their skillset must not be evaluated according to the metrics used for the home population, but it must be realized that they bring in something different, something unique and given their distinct skillset it is possible that they may even outperform the resident population. Whilst they provide a new flavor to the saturated marketplace, they also offer more opportunities for the development of a domain that was unfamiliar to the locals in the past. Therefore, appreciation of diversity not only leads to a well-coordinated community but also lays the groundwork for ethnic businesses to take flight while adding more colors to the culture and economy as a whole.



Peace Out! ☺

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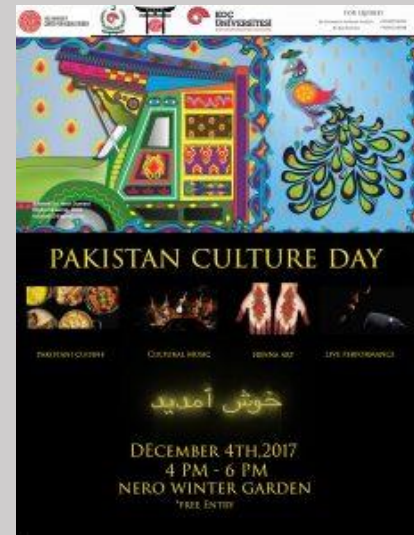


## PAKISTAN CULTURE DAY

Celebrating the ethnic diversity at Koç University, Pakistan Culture Day was held at Koç University Rumelifeneri campus on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2017. KUASIA collaborated with the Pakistan Student Association (PSA) and the Network of Asian Students at Koç University (NASK) in organizing this event, which familiarized the Koç students and faculty with the country's affluent traditions. Authentic Pakistani cuisine, cooked by the students, was offered to the attendees, providing them with a flavor of the popular dishes from the land of spices. These dishes included chicken biryani, *samosas*, as well as sweet delights like *kher* and *halwa*, well complimented with the traditional tea.

The event also had live performances on traditional songs added to a live *qawwali* session, paying tribute one of South Asia's greatest singer, the late legendary Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. The audience was also treated to Henna Art, applied by the immensely talented Pakistani students, which proved to be one of the highlights of the night. The Turkish students and faculty members were amazed witnessing the significance of henna in another culture, while experiencing unique South Asian designs being made from it.

Considering the high attendance, it can be concluded that the event made a significant positive impact in acquainting the global audience at Koç with the culturally rich lifestyle of Pakistani people. KUASIA and NASK plan on conducting more such events in the future.





## INTERVIEW WITH MR. LI YANG, DANCER FROM MACAU

Lok Hang Abraham Chan, Hong Kong  
Intern at the Center for Asian Studies (KUASIA)



From Left to Right: Dancer Li Yang with Lok Hang Abraham Chan

The dance performance *Under Skin* was successfully held at the SGKM Auditorium on February 21. It was co-organized by the TORK Dance Company, Four Dimension Spatial Dance Company (China), KUASIA and SGKM. Led by four dancers from Macau: Hoi Kei Kei, Li Yang, Kamen Ng and Lao Pui Lon, the show allowed a night of cultural exchange between different cultures. At the end of the program, I had the privilege to interview Mr. Li Yang. The interview was conducted in Mandarin.

Q: What inspires the composition and performance of *Under Skin* in Turkey?

A: Our choreographer is from Turkey. He created this show when he was invited to our event in Macau. It is a pity that he is not here with us tonight. He is now staying at the hospital because of a back injury. We performed this dance work in Macau last year, and he wanted us to be on stage again for the Turkish community. Our dance work is a mixture of Chinese dance, which I selected, and modern dance. We wish our viewers enjoy our product of east and west.

Q: Can you introduce your work to our readers?

A: The name of my performance is *Yun* (韵). I studied Chinese dance for my degree, and this work includes components from Chinese opera, taichi and also other genres of kungfu. The prop I used is called *Zhi* (雉). It's often worn on the hats of Peking opera and Cantonese opera performers. Since it's impossible to wear that hat while dancing, I played it like a tool. I performed *Yun* because the Turkish choreographer who I mentioned earlier demanded our application of Chinese elements. And I also believe the audience here would like it.





Q: Are there any obstacles hinder your preparation?

A: Time limit. All of us, except the other guy (Lao Pui Lon), are working as dance teachers in Macau. It's a challenge to balance our work and training. We started our preparation half year back, and we've been able to practice intensively since our arrival about ten days ago. Thankfully, the people around me make me better. Tan and Sernaz are our teachers. They helped us not only with dance composition but also took good care of us during our stay here. Also, I really enjoy the time with my team. Our chemistry and joy are indispensable to our performance. Lastly, I appreciate all the efforts made by our photographers.

Q: Unlike the other performers, you're not originally from Macau. Would you mind to talk briefly about yourself?

A: I'm from Heilongjiang in mainland China, and I received my bachelor in dance directing with the field of teaching at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music. When I was a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student, a previous teacher of mine in Macau recruited me to perform at a celebration of the 10th anniversary of Macao's reunification with China. After the end of a one-year contract, I decided to stay and am working as a dance teacher in Macau before now. I'm also participating in a dance team, which is contributing to the society with voluntary work in the form of teaching events.

Q: Do you have any cultural shocks in Macau?

A: A lot. Macau is a compound of Chinese and European culture. Due to her colonial history by the Portuguese, European culture is deeply rooted in Macau. Mainland China is mainland China. We don't have much European culture. Even in our art industry, we seldom employ European elements. Contrastingly, artworks in Macau can be welcomed by both the east and the west. I can perform Chinese dance, but I've to practice the western style of dancing.

Q: Tonight's show covered a lot on Macau's affairs, from her history to the props such as lemon tea. Since you're from Heilongjiang, do you find yourself related to the performance?

A: I do. I consider myself as a half-Macanese as I've been staying there for almost eight years. I'm also able to speak and understand some Cantonese. In fact, Arts have no borders. If you can understand the content, you can perform it to the audience.



Q: How's the situation of promoting the art industry in Macau?

A: Very tough. We're facing barriers in all sectors: financial, venues, human resources, the pool of audience, etc. The art industry requires everyone to support. Like the necessities, achievements of the art industry don't grow on trees. It's exhausting, yet we've to keep pushing forward. Fortunately, there are many hardworking dancers in Macau. We're not fighting for money, but for our professional spirit.



Q: What would you recommend our readers if they come to Macau?

A: First of all, don't gamble. Macau is a big casino island. Second, you can learn how Chinese and western elements merged with each other. It's very obvious. You'll see on your left Chinese architectures and western on your right. Additionally, food culture. We have every cuisine in Macau. The travel industry is also quite developed here. There are many tourist attractions. Regrettably, there's room for improvement in our art industry. For that reason, we're still moving onward.







## SYMBOLIC MEANINGS OF THE LUNAR NEW YEAR

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Lunar New Year, also known as the Chinese New Year and the Spring Festival, is a festival celebrated by the East Asians. Each lunar year is assigned sequentially by one of the twelve zodiac animals: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit (replaced by Cat in Vietnam), Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. Since February 16, 2018, it has been the Year of the Dog. Ornaments for the New Year can be found in many East Asian businesses and even in overseas Asian towns including the Chinatowns and the Koreatowns in North America.



The New Year not only symbolizes a time for holiday or entertainment, but it also represents the traditional Chinese ideology and values. The celebrations demonstrate the aspiration for good fortune. The original intention of lighting firecrackers and launching fireworks 2000 years ago was to scare away evil spirits. The red paper-cuts and couplets placed on the windows and doors are often designed with the theme of prosperity. And some orthodox individuals go to the temples to pray for a

prosperous year. In addition, the New Year illustrates a desire for a new start. Hoping for serendipity, many East Asians buy new clothing and cut their hair before the New Year. In some territories such as Hong Kong, families clean their apartments spotlessly to sweep away the adversities and to welcome good luck. Furthermore, the Lunar New Year stands for family unity. Most families reunite for the annual dinner in the New Year's Eve and visit their relatives during the holiday season. Not to mention, watching the CCTV New Year's Gala broadcast has also become a culture in mainland Chinese families since the 1980s. It is recognized by the Guinness World Records as the most watched television program. In the end, I wish you all a happy Lunar New Year with good fortune and wealth.