

高润婧：我的在华成长之路

Ko Yunjeong: My Study Journey in China

文/高润婧 (By Ko Yunjeong)



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一、引言

我叫高润婧 (KO YUNJEONG)，来自韩国的留学生，目前在北京林业大学攻读艺术设计专业。来到中国刚刚满一年，但我和这个国家的缘分，远不止于此。

小时候，我曾在北京生活过一段时间。那段记忆虽然已经有些模糊，但有一些感受却始终留在心里：街上的人们不急不躁，邻里之间互相打招呼，空气中

I. Introduction

My name is Ko Yunjeong, a South Korean student pursuing a master's degree in Art and Design at Beijing Forestry University. It has only been a full year since I came to China, yet my connection with this country runs much deeper.

As a child, I lived in Beijing for a period of time. Though those memories have grown faint, certain impressions have stayed with me ever since: people on the streets moving at a gentle



高润婧在成都都江堰

Ko Yunjeong was in Dujiangyan, Chengdu.

总有一种说不上来的松弛感。大家都和善、从容，日子过得有滋有味。那时候我还小，说不清那是什么，但现在回想起来，那就是我最初感受到的“生活气息”。

长大以后，我一直想回到北京看一看。不只是故地重游，更是想亲身体验一下：北京这座城市，是否还保留着我记忆中的那种温度？

在我的设想里，未来的生活应该安顿在一个让人感到舒适的城市。而研究生阶段，正好可以作为一个好的时机，让我从学习和日常生活的侧面，慢慢去感受、去验证、去回答自己心中的那个问题。于是，我来了。

二、学业篇：课堂内外的收获与观察

来中国之前，我对这里的教育有过各种想象。真正坐在大学的教室里之后，我发现最大的不同，不是

pace, neighbors greeting one another, and an indescribable sense of ease in the air. Everyone was kind and unhurried, living life with warmth and substance. I was too young then to put it into words, but in hindsight, that was my first taste of genuine everyday vitality.

As I grew older, I often longed to return to Beijing. It was not just a matter of revisiting a familiar place, but of experiencing for myself whether the city still held the warmth I remembered.

I have always imagined settling in a city that feels comfortable and welcoming in the years to come. Graduate school presented the perfect opportunity to explore, observe, and reconnect—through my studies and daily life alike—to answer the question I had held in my heart for so long. And so, I came.

II. My Academic Journey: Insights and Growth In and Beyond the Classroom

Before coming to China, I had formed many ideas about its education system. Once I actually sat in university classrooms, however, I realized the biggest difference lay not in language barriers, but in the approach and rhythm of learning.

In class, we cover a great deal of content related to history. At first, I was somewhat confused: as an art and design student, why devote so much time to the "past"? Gradually, though, I came to understand that this is not simply a matter of accumulating knowledge, but of inheriting cultural depth and heritage.

Another striking difference is the teaching style. Chinese classrooms strike me as highly academic, with a strong emphasis on building theoretical foundations. In South Korea, by contrast, nearly every course requires completing a full-fledged project—teachers focus more on what you "produce". Here, I have written far more papers and developed much deeper critical thinking. I have slowly come to see that a work of art is a form of "expression", while a paper is a form of



高润婧在北京林业大学校内的银杏大道

Ko Yunjeong was on the ginkgo avenue within the campus of Beijing Forestry University.

语言的障碍, 而是学习的方式和节奏。

课堂上, 我们会学到很多历史相关的内容。一开始我有些不解——作为一名艺术设计专业的学生, 为什么要把那么多时间花在“过去”的事情上? 但慢慢地, 我意识到, 这并不仅仅是知识的堆砌, 而是一种文化底蕴的传递。

另一个让我印象深刻的差异, 是教学风格。中国的课堂, 给我的感觉是偏向学术派的, 非常注重理论知识的积累。在韩国的课堂上, 每一门课几乎都要拿出一个完整的作品来——老师更看重你“做”出了什么。而在中国, 论文写了很多, 思考也变得更加深入了。我渐渐明白, 作品是“表达”, 而论文是“理解”。两者都很重要, 但中国的教育让我补上了以前不太重视的那一块。

除了日常课程, 学校会提供很多可以额外学习的平台。这一点让我觉得很惊喜。在韩国的時候, 大部分学习都围绕课程展开; 而在这里, 只要你想学, 总有机会接触到不同领域的老师和创作者。我开始慢

"understanding". Both matter greatly, yet Chinese education has strengthened the part I once paid little attention to.

Beyond regular coursework, the university offers an impressive array of additional learning platforms. This came as a pleasant surprise. Back in Korea, most learning centered strictly on required classes; here, as long as you are willing to learn, there are always opportunities to engage with academics and creators across diverse fields. I have begun making full use of these resources. Even attending a lecture only loosely related to my major often brings unexpected inspiration.

Academic challenges still remain, of course. But after this past year, my greatest realization is that I am learning not only professional skills, but also an entirely different way of thinking. And this transformation began right in the classroom.

III. Life in China: Experiencing a Diverse Culture Through Travel

If the classroom has allowed me to understand



高润婧在成都玉垒关城墙下

Ko Yunjeong was standing beneath the Yueli Guan city wall in Chengdu.

慢利用这些资源，哪怕只是去听一场和自己专业不太相关的讲座，也常常会有意外的收获。

学业上的挑战当然还在，但这一年下来，我最大的感受是：我不只是在学习专业知识，更是在学习一种不一样的思考方式。而这种变化，是从课堂开始的。

三、生活篇：行走中国，感受多元文化

如果说课堂让我理解了“理论上的中国”，那么旅行，则让我真正走进了“生活里的中国”。来中国这一年，我利用假期去了不少地方。每一座城市都像一本书，翻开之后，读到的是不一样的故事。

平谷：北京的另一面

来北京之前，我以为这座城市就是高楼、车流和

China in theory, traveling has let me truly step into China in life. Over the past year, I have visited many places during my holidays. Each city is like a book, revealing a unique story as you turn its pages.

Pinggu: Another Side of Beijing

Before coming to Beijing, I pictured the city only as skyscrapers, busy traffic, and endless neon lights. That changed completely the day I went to Pinggu.

Although it is still part of Beijing, it feels nothing like the capital I had imagined. Gone are the crowded subways and towering office blocks. In their place are vast farmlands, quiet hills, and a leisurely pace of life. The air smells of earth and vegetation, with the occasional bark of a dog, as the whole town basks lazily in the sun.

In that moment, I realized Beijing has more

永不熄灭的霓虹灯。直到有一天，我去了平谷。

它明明还在北京，却和我想象中的北京完全不同。没有拥挤的地铁，没有望不到顶的写字楼，取而代之的是大片的农田、安静的山丘，和慢悠悠的生活节奏。空气里有泥土和植物的味道，偶尔传来几声狗叫，整个镇子都懒洋洋地晒着太阳。

那一刻我忽然觉得，北京不止一面。它可以是最繁华的都市，也可以是最朴素的田园。这种巨大的反差，反而让我对这座城市多了几分亲近感——原来它也有“喘口气”的地方。

杭州：恰到好处的融合

杭州是我去过的第一个南方城市。它给我的感觉是：一切都刚刚好。

这座城市把现代化的繁华和自然的风景融合得非常自然。有一线城市的便利与热闹，却又不让人觉得压迫；有深厚的历史文化建筑，也有让人心静的西湖园林。最让我意外的是，这些东西并不是东一块西一块地拼凑在一起，而是互相呼应、彼此衬托。走在湖边，转身就是热闹的街市，再走几步，又进入了安静的小径。这种“融合”不是生硬的，而是一种很从容的相处方式。

唐山：让传统“活”起来

去唐山之前，我对这座城市的想象很模糊。但真正站在河头老街的时候，我被那些穿着古装、扮演角色的工作人员吸引力，把古老的建筑真正“盘活”了，变成了一个有故事在发生的地方。

唐山宴也让我印象深刻。梨园里有人在唱戏，戏台下面，各种特色小吃像摊位一样摆开。吃饭、听戏、看热闹，全搅在一起。你一边吃着东西，一边听着台上的腔调，哪样都不耽误。这种把地方特色和旅游体验结合在一起的方式，让我觉得特别聪明，也特别有人情味。

than one face. It can be a bustling metropolis, yet also a simple, peaceful countryside. This striking contrast has only drawn me closer to the city—I now know it has places where it can "catch its breath", too.

Hangzhou: A Perfect, Natural Harmony

Hangzhou was the first southern Chinese city I visited. To me, it felt like everything about it was just right.

The city blends modern prosperity with natural scenery in a remarkably organic way. It offers the convenience and vibrancy of a first-tier metropolis, yet without feeling overwhelming. It boasts deeply historical architecture alongside the serene gardens of West Lake. What surprised me most was that these elements are not haphazardly pieced together, but echo and complement one another. Walking along the lake, you turn a corner and find yourself in a lively market street; take a few more steps, and you slip into a quiet path. This kind of integration is never forced — it is a calm, effortless coexistence.

Tangshan: Bringing Tradition to Life

Before I visited Tangshan, I had only a vague impression of the city. Yet when I stood on Hetou Old Street, I was immediately drawn to the staff in traditional costumes performing lively scenes. They truly breathed life into the ancient architecture, turning it into a place where stories unfold every day.

Tangshan Feast also left a strong impression on me. Performers sang opera in the Liyuan courtyard, while stalls serving local specialties lined the area beneath the stage. Eating, listening to opera, and soaking up the lively atmosphere all blended harmoniously. I could enjoy my food while appreciating the opera melodies, fully engaged in every moment.

This way of combining local culture with immersive tourism strikes me as particularly clever and deeply heartfelt.



高润婧在杭州西湖

Ko Yunjeong was at West Lake in Hangzhou.

西安: 走在历史里

如果说有一座城市让我真正感受到什么叫“文化底蕴”，那就是西安。

城墙给我的冲击最大。站在上面往下望，你能想象这里曾经发生过什么。整座城市保留了很多有历史感的建筑，那种古代特有的屋顶结构，在眼前一片片铺开。到了晚上，灯笼亮起来，古老的气息一下子就被点燃了。还有那条挂满古诗的街道——走在下面，抬头就是诗句，仿佛回到了一千年前的长安。

在西安，历史不是被锁在博物馆里的，而是活在街道上、空气里、砖瓦之间的。

Xi'an: Walking Through History

If there is one city that has truly shown me the meaning of cultural heritage, it is Xi'an.

The city wall left the deepest impression on me. Standing atop it and looking down, I could almost picture the events that once unfolded here. Many historic buildings have been preserved across the city, with their distinctive ancient rooflines stretching out before me. When evening comes and the lanterns light up, the ancient atmosphere is vividly brought to life. Then there is the street lined with classical Chinese poems. Walking beneath them, I felt as if I had stepped back into Chang'an a thousand years ago.

In Xi'an, history is not locked away in museums. It lives in the streets, in the air, and in every brick and tile.

Chengdu: Ease and Authentic Living Vibe

Chengdu was the most unique stop on my travels. If other cities allowed me to see their culture, Chengdu made me feel a way of life.

People set up small tables by the roadside and sit down to drink and chat casually. I joined in too, striking up conversations with complete strangers. No one found it odd, nor did anyone stare judgmentally. Whether you were a foreigner or a local, sitting together meant sharing a drink and a lively chat.

I call this feeling authentic living vibe—not performative enthusiasm, nor polite friendliness, but genuine, vibrant everyday warmth. In Chengdu, I learned to slow down.

Tianjin: The Many Possibilities of Architecture

My first impression of Tianjin comes from its architecture.

Most of the city's Republican-era buildings have been preserved—not as isolated showpieces, but as whole blocks and entire streets that still feel alive. Walking along them, I could sense that these old structures are not revered "relics" on display,

成都: 松弛感与“活人味”

成都是我此行最特别的一站。如果说其他城市让我“看到”了文化,那成都让我“感受到”了一种生活态度。

路边随便支个小桌板,人们就可以坐下来喝酒聊天。我也试着加入,和完全陌生的人说起话来。没有人觉得奇怪,也没有人刻意打量你——你是外国人也好,本地人也罢,坐在一起就是一顿酒、一场龙门阵。

我把这种感觉叫做“活人味”。不是表演出来的热情,也不是客套的友善,而是一种很真实的、热气腾腾的生活气息。在成都,我学会了慢下来。

天津: 建筑的多重可能

天津给我的第一印象,来自它的建筑。

这里的民国风格建筑大部分都被保留下来了,不是一栋两栋的样板,而是一片一片、整条街整条街地活着。走在街上,你能感觉到那些老房子不是被供起来的“文物”,而是仍然在呼吸、仍然在被使用的生活空间。更有意思的是,新盖的建筑也延续了那种风格,不会让人觉得突兀。新与旧之间不是割裂的,而是一种自然的对话。整座城市看起来和谐统一,同时又非常有特色。

我还看到了一些瓦房、教堂,这些特殊的老建筑被保留得很完整。它们不只是漂亮的“背景板”,而是真实地站在那里,告诉路过的人:这里曾经发生过什么,这里的人们曾经怎样生活。站在它们面前,我突然意识到,建筑的可能性远远不止“住人”或“办公”那么简单。它可以承载历史,也可以启发未来。

在天津,我第一次认真地去想一个问题:一座城市应该怎样对待自己的过去?不是推倒重来,也不是锁进玻璃柜——而是让旧的东西继续活着,让新的东西学会尊重。这大概就是天津教会我的事。

哈尔滨: 不一样的热情与美学

哈尔滨在我去过的所有中国城市里,是一个非常

but living, breathing spaces still in daily use. More remarkably, newly built structures echo this architectural style, blending in without feeling out of place. The old and the new exist not in separation, but in natural dialogue. The city feels harmonious and unified, yet distinctly unique.

I also saw well-preserved tile-roofed houses and churches. These special old buildings are more than just picturesque backdrops; they stand as living testaments, telling passersby what happened here and how people once lived. Standing before them, I suddenly realized that architecture offers far more possibilities than simply housing people or offices. It can carry history and inspire the future.

In Tianjin, I seriously asked myself for the first



高润婧在杭州的照片

Photos of Ko Yunjeong in Hangzhou.

特别的存在。

它的建筑风格有点巴洛特，但又不太一样。地铁站尤其让我印象深刻——不是普通的装修，而是那种裸露的钢架结构，工业感十足，有种冷峻的美学气质。

城市的气质是冷的，人心却是热的。哈尔滨给我最大的感受就是“热情满满”。从出租车司机到路边的阿姨，每个人都愿意跟你说话、帮你指路。在那样一个寒冷的地方，人与人之间的温度反而更高。

小结

走了这么多地方，我渐渐发现，每一座城市的风格都不太一样。但它们有一个共同点：既保留了文化的色彩，又融合了现代人的生活。不是拆掉老的、盖

time: How should a city treat its past? Not by tearing it down and starting over, nor by locking it away in glass cases—but by letting the old continue to live, and by teaching the new to respect what came before. That, I suppose, is what Tianjin taught me.

Harbin: A Unique Kind of Warmth and Aesthetics

Among all the Chinese cities I have visited, Harbin stands out as truly one of a kind.

Its architecture bears hints of Baroque style, yet with a character all its own. The subway stations left a particularly strong impression—far from ordinary decoration, they feature exposed steel frames full of industrial character, possessing a cool, understated aesthetic.

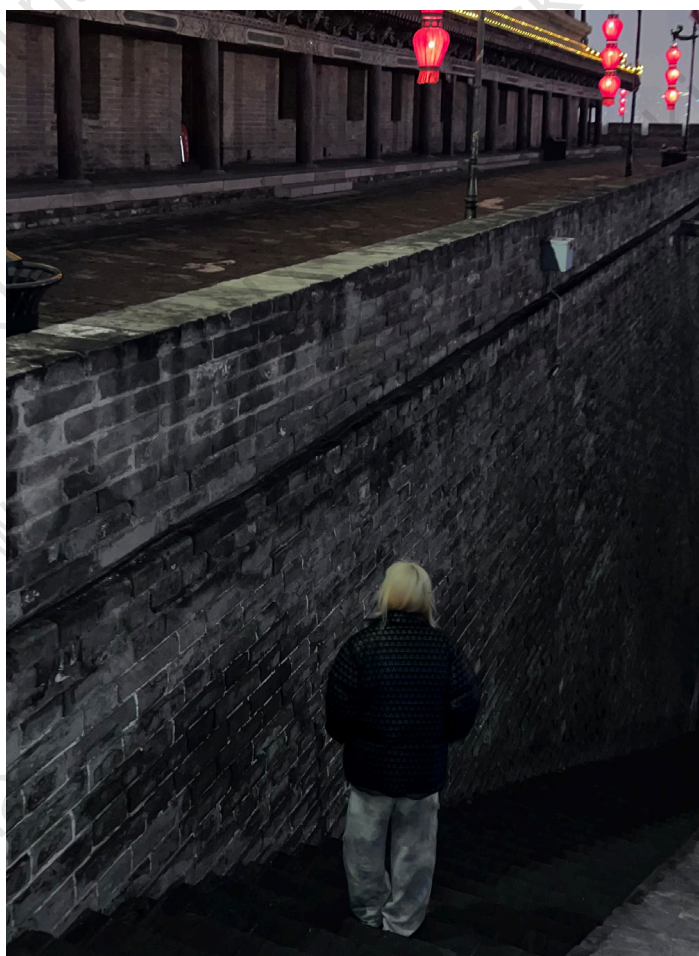
But while the city's atmosphere may feel crisp, its people are warm-hearted. Above all, Harbin struck me as a place brimming with warmth and friendliness. From taxi drivers to passersby on the street, everyone was happy to chat and help with directions. In such a cold climate, the warmth between people shines even brighter.

Brief Summary

Having traveled to so many places, I have come to realize that every city has its own distinct character. Yet they all share one thing in common: they preserve their cultural heritage while integrating it seamlessly with modern life. It is not about tearing down the old to build the new, nor about treating historic sites as mere displays while developing the modern elsewhere. Instead, it is about letting the past and present converse with each other, and allowing history to live on in the present.

IV. Conclusion

Before coming to China, I asked myself: Would this be a suitable place to live and work long-term? A year later, the answer is not yet fully clear, but the question itself no longer weighs on me as much. Over this past year, I have come to realize that



高润婧在西安城墙上

Ko Yunjeong was on the city wall of Xi'an.

新的,也不是把老的当成摆设、新的另起炉灶——而是让彼此对话,让历史活在当下。

四、结语

来中国之前,我问自己的问题是:这里适合长期生活和工作吗?一年之后的今天,这个问题的答案还没有完全清晰,但问题的本身已经不那么重要了。因为在这一年里,我渐渐意识到,重要的不是找到一个“标准答案”,而是过程中的每一次发现、每一段连接。

学业上,我学会了用一种更深入的方式去思考。从最初对论文的不适应,到慢慢体会到理论梳理带来的沉淀,我开始理解中国教育中那种对“根”的重视。艺术设计不仅仅是创造好看的作品,更是理解作品背后的人和时代。

旅行中,我遇见了太多意料之外的风景。在杭州,我看到了古今如何温柔地共存;在唐山,我见证了传统如何被智慧地激活;在西安,我走进了历史的呼吸之间;在成都,我尝到了松弛与真实的味道;在天津,我发现了建筑的多种可能;在哈尔滨,我感受到了寒冷中的热烈。每一座城市都在告诉我:中国不是一个单一的标签,而是一幅由无数色彩交织而成的长卷。

最让我感慨的,是每一次出发都会有新的发现。哪怕只是走在北京的一条老街上,也可能撞见一家从未注意过的小店、听到一段陌生的方言、遇到一个愿意停下来跟你聊天的陌生人。每次都会有新鲜事物等待我去发现,这让我想与这里的羁绊更深入。

我不知道未来会不会长期留在这里。但我知道的是,我已经不再把自己当作一个“路过的人”。我开始认真记住地铁站的名字,开始习惯用中文点餐时不再犹豫,开始在某一个普通的下午,突然意识到——这里的生活,已经成了我的生活。

研究生阶段还有时间,我还会继续走、继续看、继续问自己那个问题。但不管答案是什么,这段经历本身,已经是我人生中很重要的一部分。

what matters is not finding a single "right answer", but every discovery and every connection made along the way.

Academically, I have learned to think with greater depth. From my initial discomfort with academic papers to gradually appreciating the substance shaped by theoretical reflection, I have come to understand the emphasis Chinese education places on one's cultural and intellectual roots. Art and design is not merely about creating visually appealing works, but about understanding the people and the era behind them.

During my travels, I encountered countless unexpected landscapes. In Hangzhou, I witnessed how ancient and modern coexist in gentle harmony; in Tangshan, I saw how tradition is intelligently revitalized; in Xi'an, I walked amid the living breath of history; in Chengdu, I experienced ease and genuine human warmth; in Tianjin, I discovered the endless possibilities of architecture; and in Harbin, I felt heartfelt warmth amid the cold. Each city has taught me that China cannot be reduced to a single label. It is a long scroll woven from countless vibrant hues.

What moves me most is that every journey brings new discoveries. Even walking down an old street in Beijing, I might stumble upon a shop I had never noticed, catch a snippet of unfamiliar dialect, or meet a stranger willing to stop and chat. There is always something fresh waiting to be found, and this deepens my desire to forge a closer bond with this land.

I do not know if I will settle here long-term in the future. What I do know is that I no longer see myself as just a passer-by. I have begun to memorize the names of subway stations, to order meals in Chinese without hesitation, and to realize on an ordinary afternoon that life here has truly become my own.

I still have time ahead in my graduate studies, and I will keep exploring, observing, and asking myself that same question. But whatever the answer may be, this experience has already become an invaluable part of my life.