

Introducing Anthropological Method



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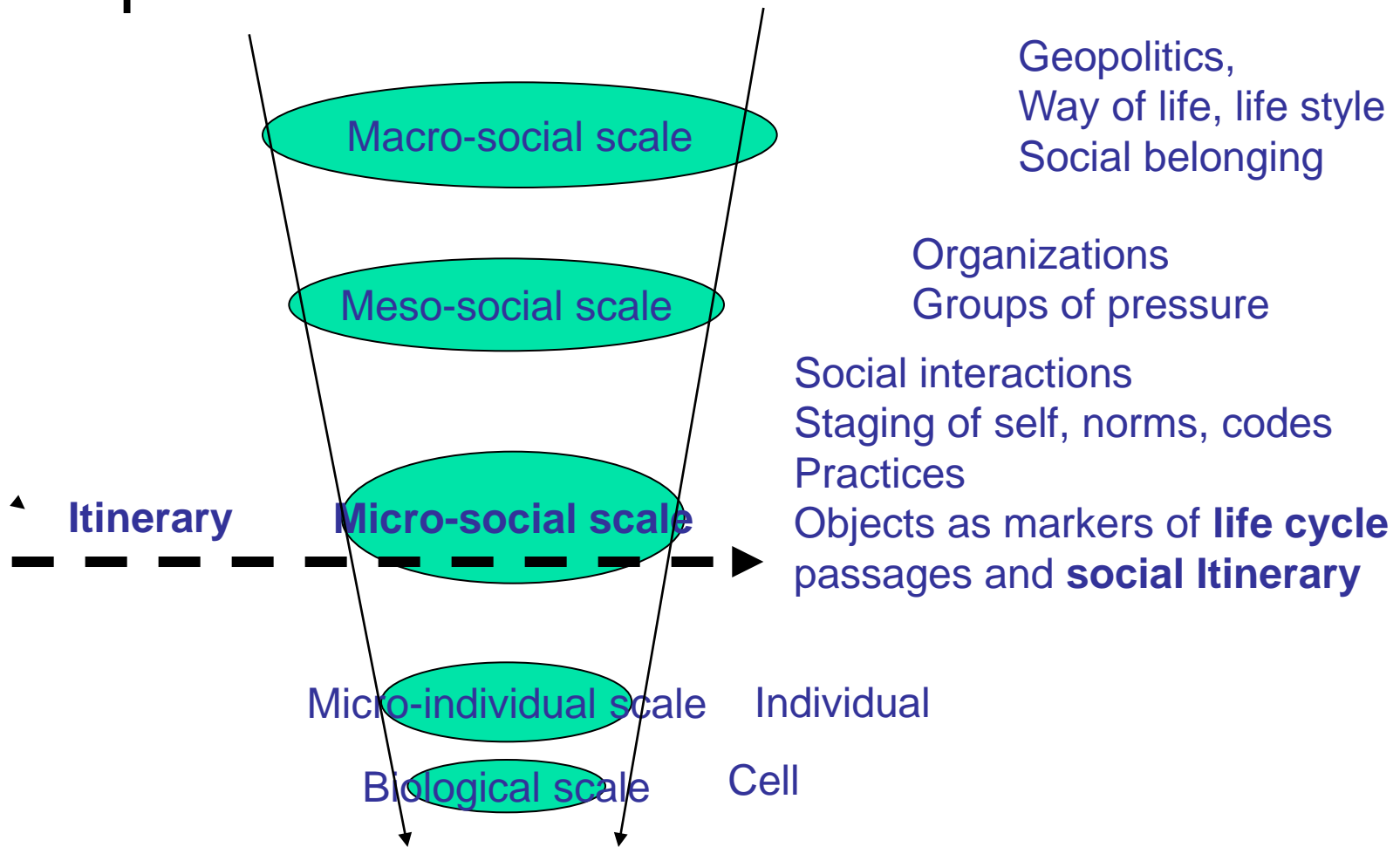
www.argonautes.fr

D. Desjeux, 2006, *La consommation*, PUF, Ques sais-je?
D. Desjeux, 2044, *Le sciences sociales*, PUF, Ques sais-je?
S. Alami, D. Desjeux, I. Garabueau-Moussaoui, *Les méthodes qualitatives*, PUF, Ques sais-je?

2012 05 Beijing Min Zu University

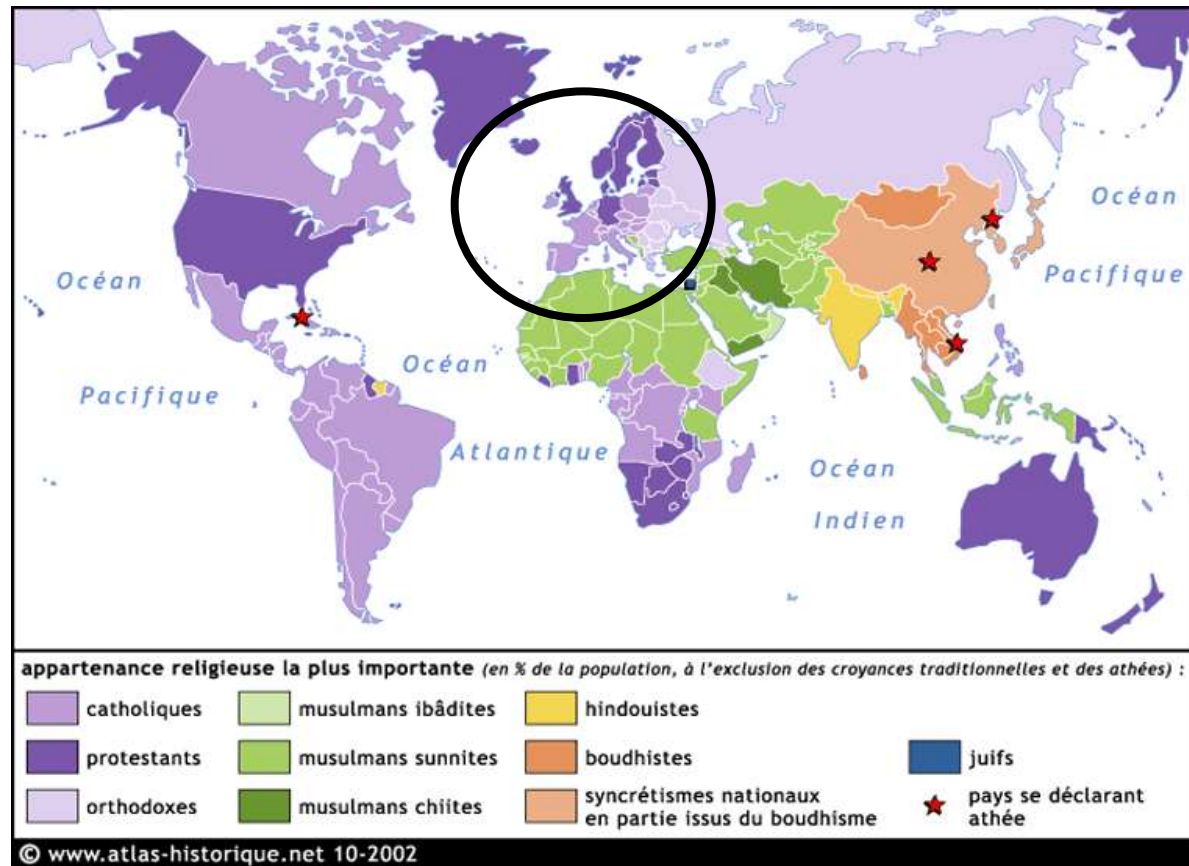
Five main scales of Observation

Geopolitics

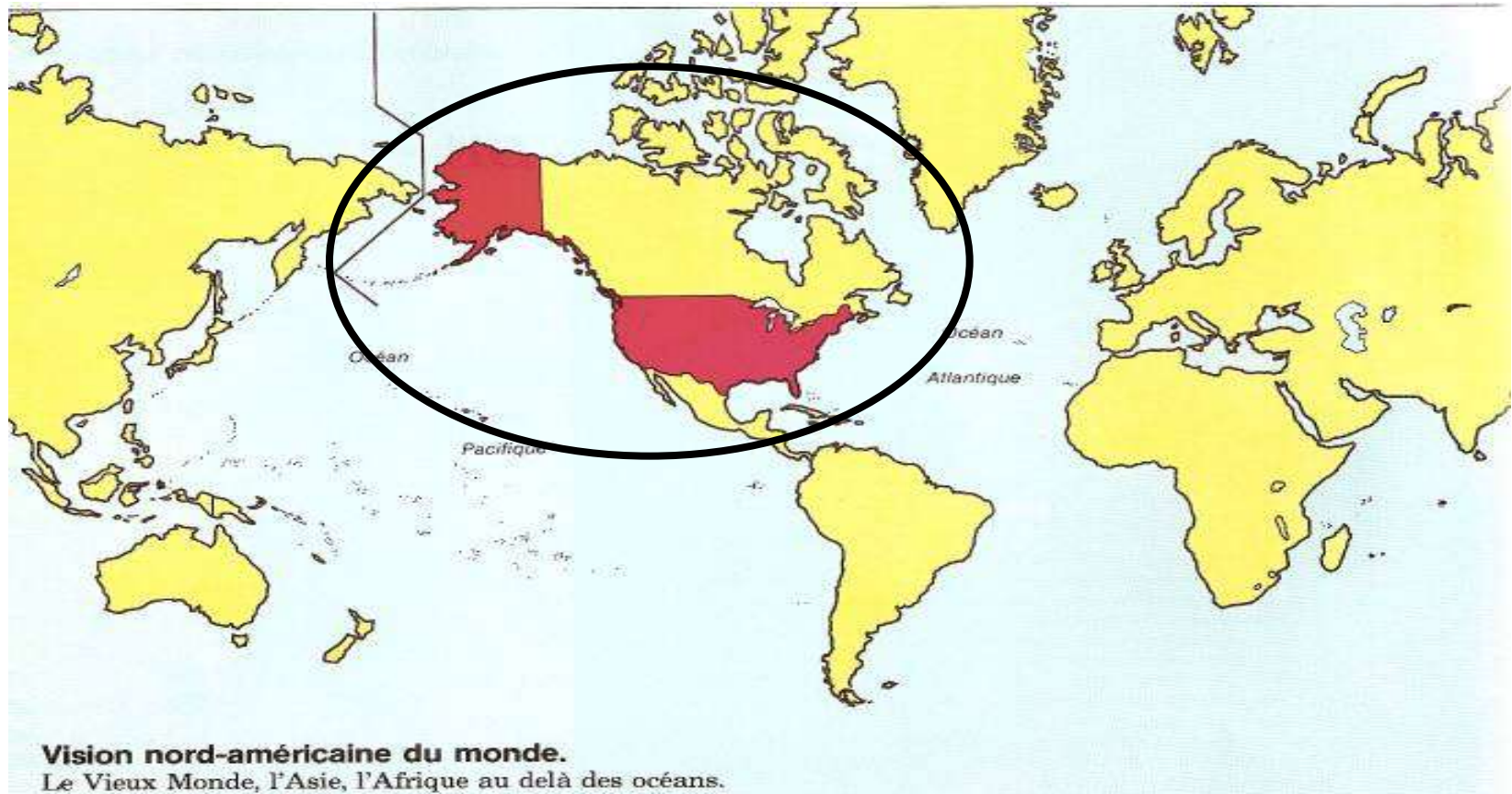


Macroscale of observation

A traditional Euroropean point of view: Europe seen as the middle of the world Asia as far East

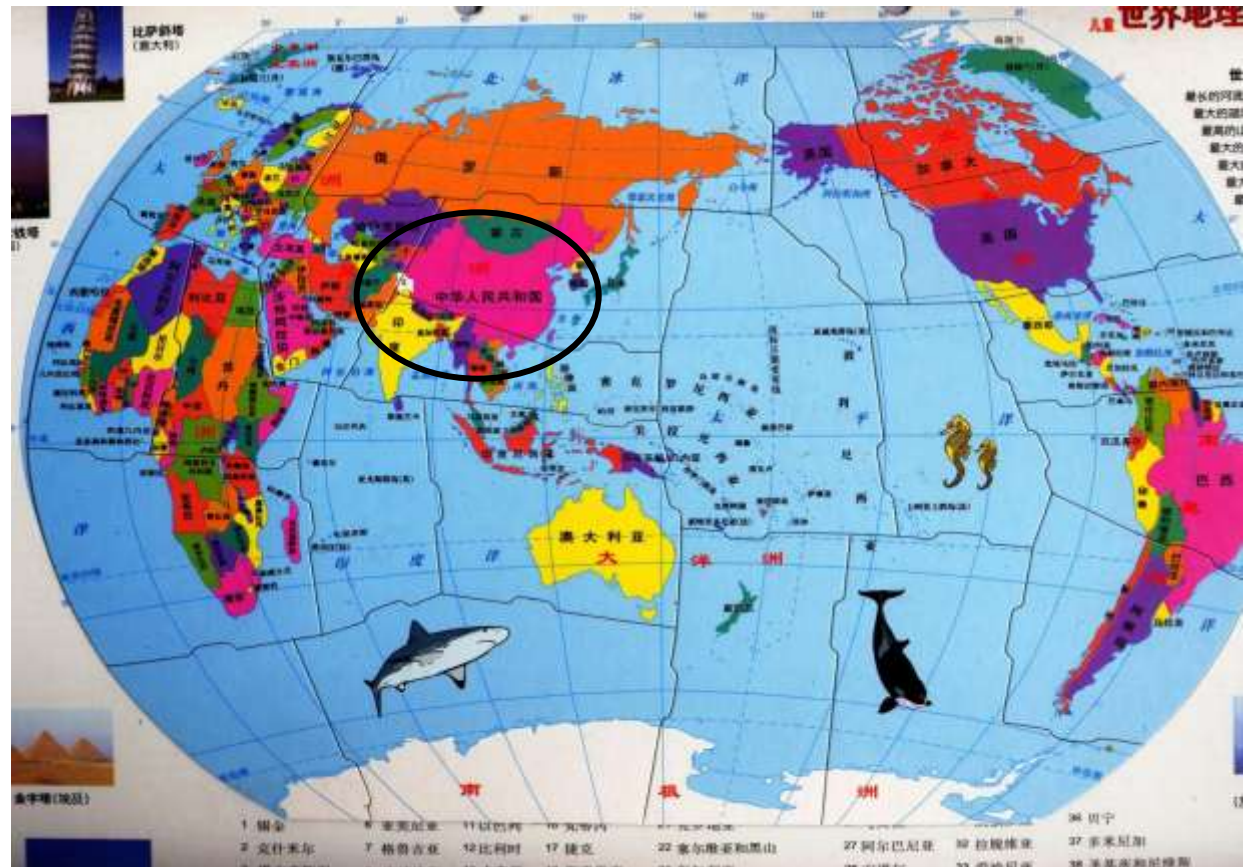


An American point of view: Asia is very closed

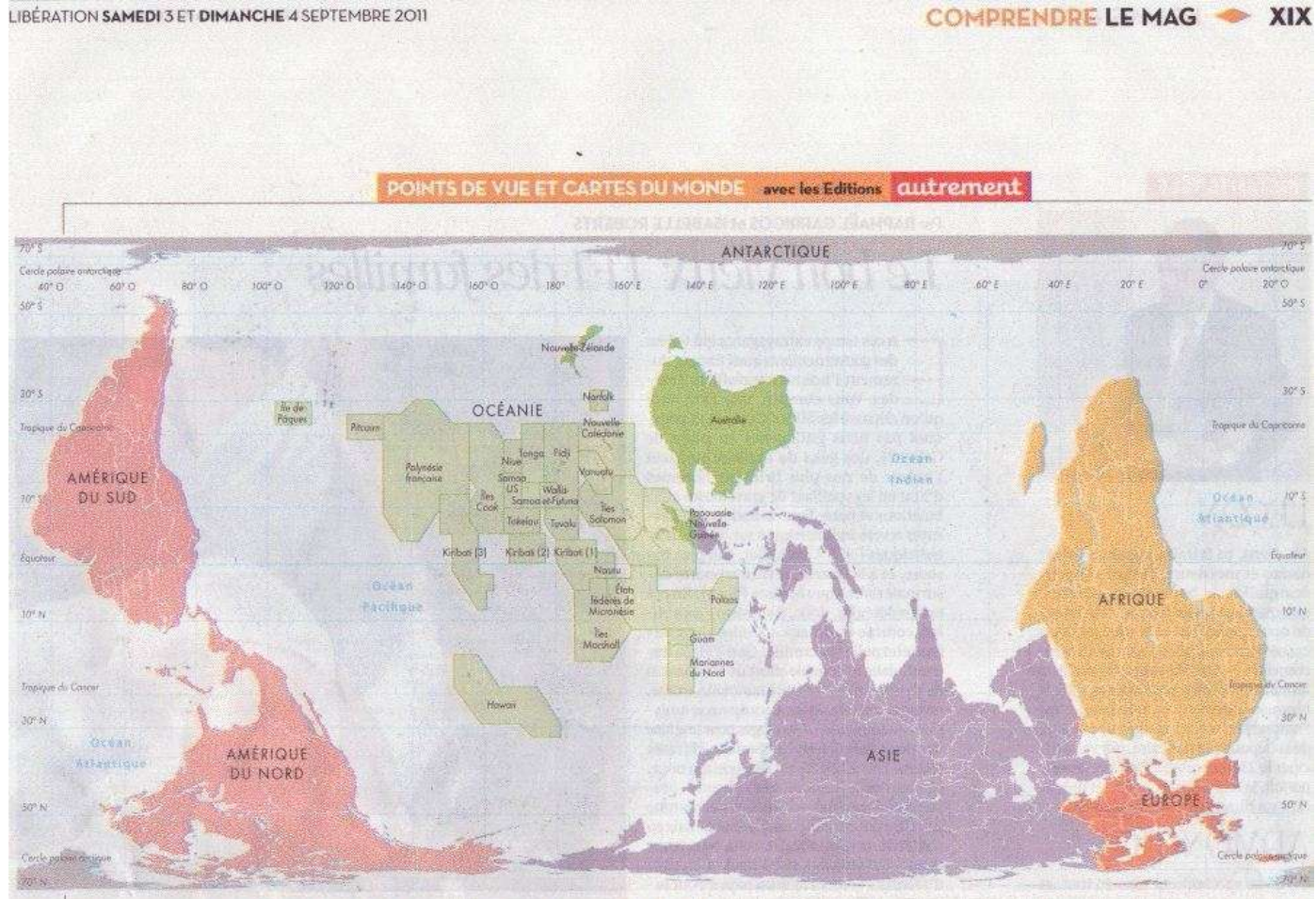


(by Gérard Chaliand and Jean Pierre Rageau, *Atlas Stratégique*, Fayard, 1983)

A chinese point of view: China as *zhong guo*

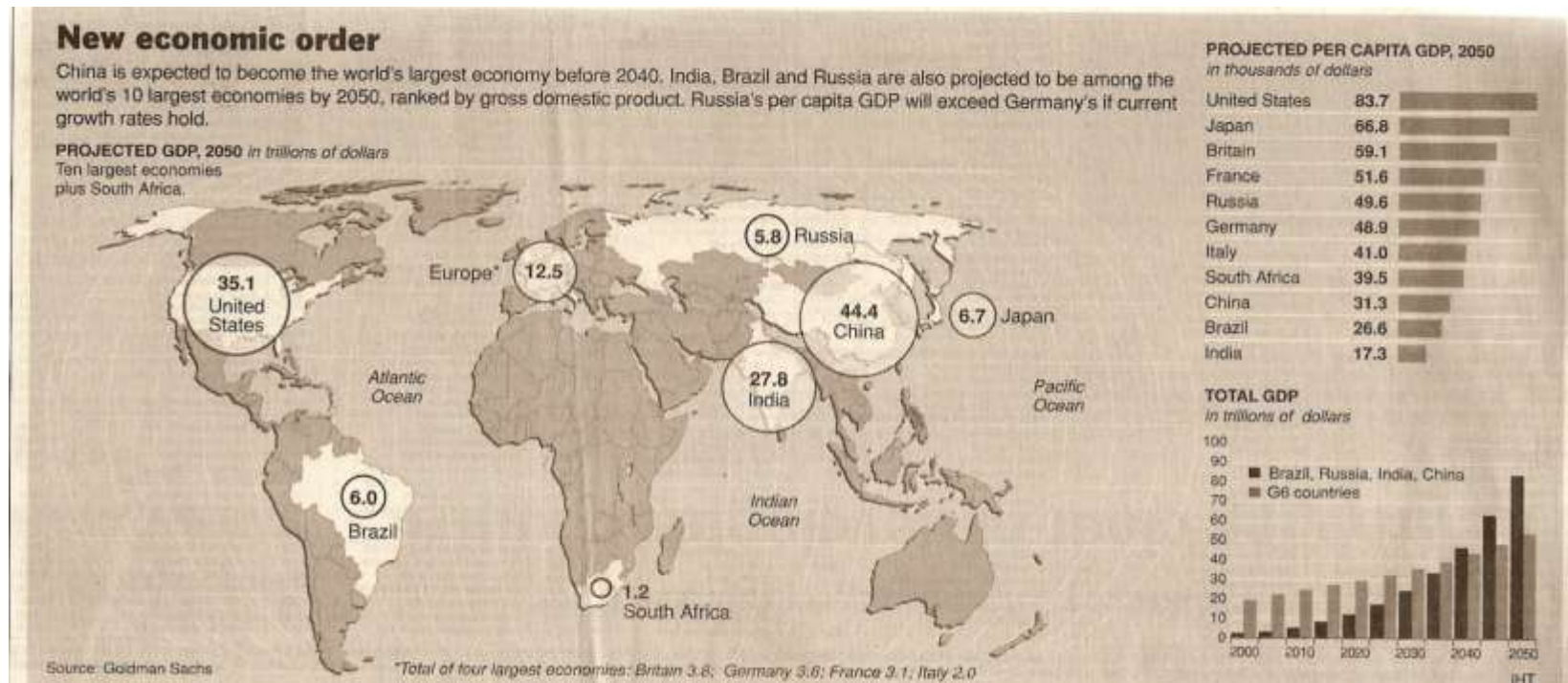


A Chinese puzzle for children



Nowadays there are several « middles of the world »

Les PIB en Trillions de \$ 2050



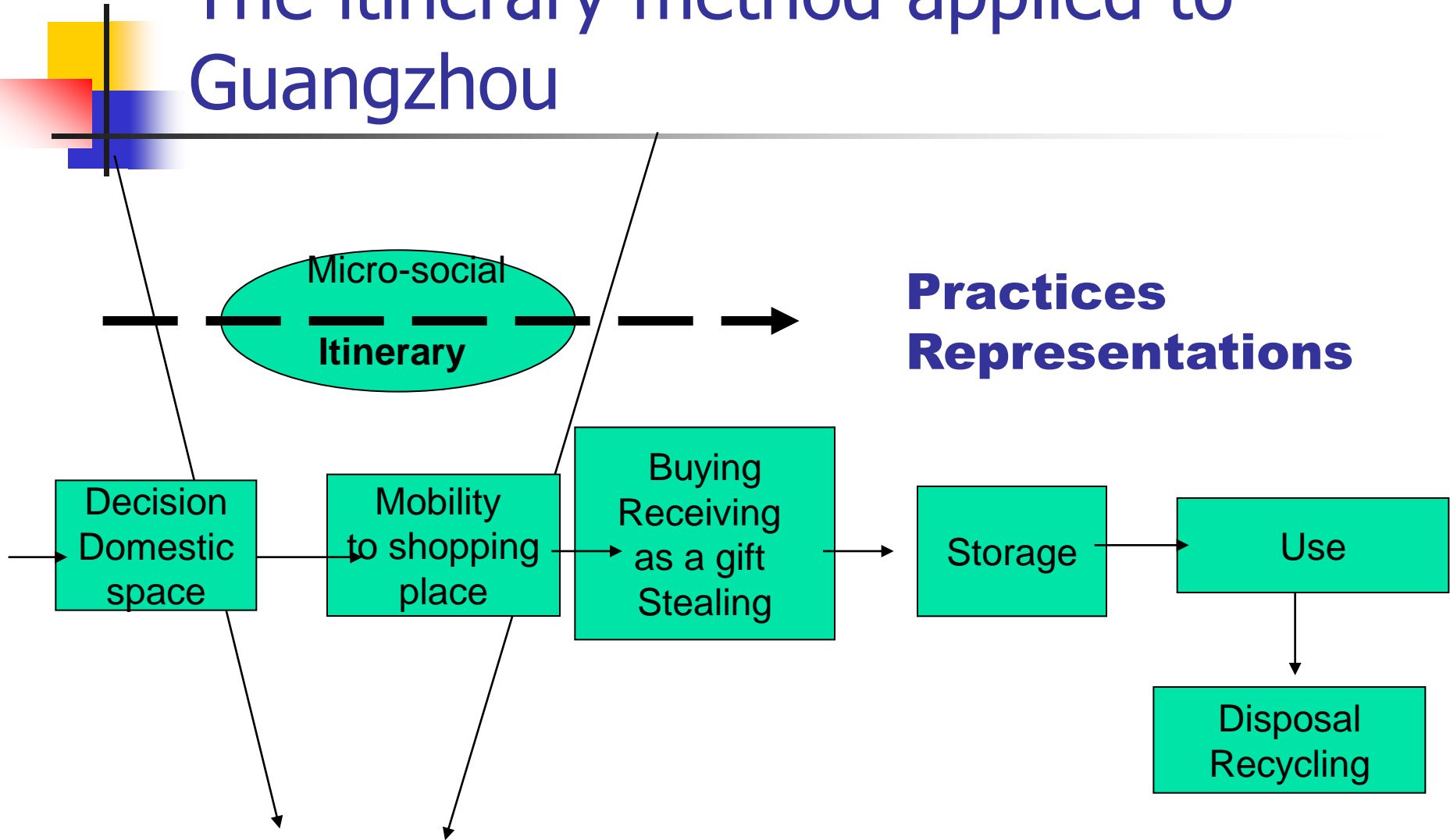
(IHT, JULY 10, 2004)



The micro-social scale of observation

Material, social and cultural
constraints

The itinerary method applied to Guangzhou





Three main methodological principles to carry out a qualitative field study on consumer behavior

- Discovering the relevant scale of observation
- Following an itinerary of decision making process in the home space
- Distinguishing practices from representations
- Differences between representations and practices are explained by material, social and symbolic constraints



Method

- Photography and on-site interviews
 - Photos of the neighborhood context
 - Photos of building entrance, stairway, doorway, electric wires, objects
 - Photos of all the rooms
- In depth interviews
- Observation
- Focus groups

Shopping and eating Itinerary: starting shopping



Bringing a limited amount of money



A shopping bag

It is an every day shopping process based on limited means in 1997

Mobility



Shopping by foot



The old Guangzhou

Shopping



Unwrapped meat



Choosing living shrimps



Protecting her money
In the pocket

Living animals as sign of quality



Choosing living chicken



Ready to be eaten

Going back home



Cooking as a long process in a small space

Frying



No oven

It is a good example of the importance of looking at uses from a western point of view

1997, Photos by D. Desjeux

An optimized use of space

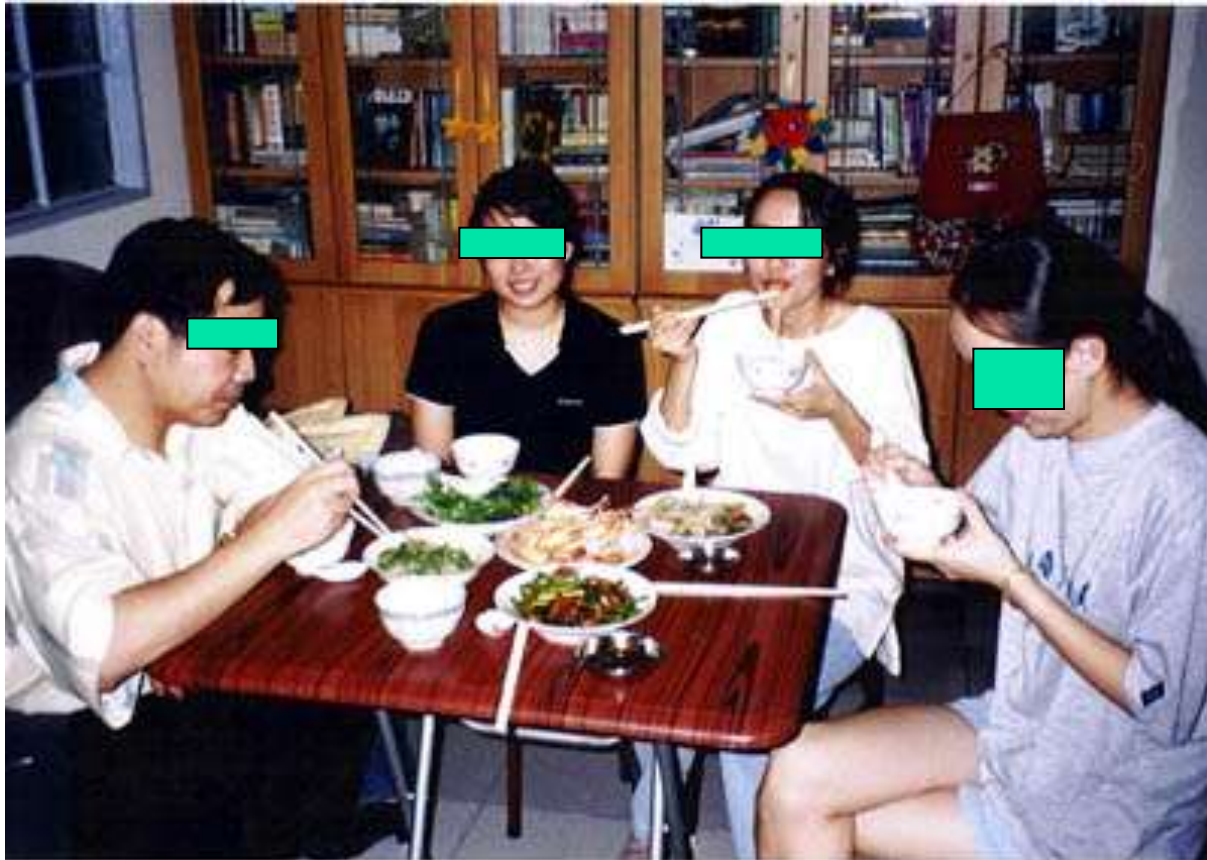


A collective meal



Chopstick tips
are displayed
outside the
table as
hygienic
practice

Picking in the same bowl



Eating



Having more rice



**No napkin
Left over
on the table**

Washing up





Understanding the three levels of constraints which weights on goods shopping and uses

- **Material:** size of the household space, income of the family, system of material objects
- **Social:** conflicts, cooperation and social transactions, strategies and social norms
- **Culture:** Imaginary, religion, values, social status, meaning of objects

Material constraints: little space for storage

- A student bedroom in 1997 at Guangzhou University:
- How to cope with limited space for seven students
- There is no room for more goods





Social constraints: Entering a structured household space

- Goods become integrated into 3 domestic spaces:
 - public
 - private
 - intimate
- Uses and the ways of storing goods within these 3 spaces depends on three social norms.
- what is:
 - Prescribed
 - Permitted
 - Forbidden
- Goods are organized depending on 3 ways
 - Displayed
 - left visible
 - hidden

An example of what is allowed to be displayed, left visible or hidden depending on the culture

In public

- displayed



2000, USA, displaying the American flag

- left visible

2004, Israel, weapons visible when shopping



- hidden



2003, Algeria, hiding hair

But cultural norms could be reinterpreted from its first cultural use when going into another culture because its meaning is changing



American and French bathrooms:
toilet paper stored in an intimate space



Photos by D. Desjeux



China storing of sanitary paper
in the living room, a public space

The boom of consumption in Guangzhou : from 1997 to 2012



Friendship department store,
a former public state store
in 1997 in Guangzhou



A new mall in Guangzhou
in 2006

The signs of the middle class rising income in China



A modern middle class flat in 1997



the same middle class
in a new flat in 2006

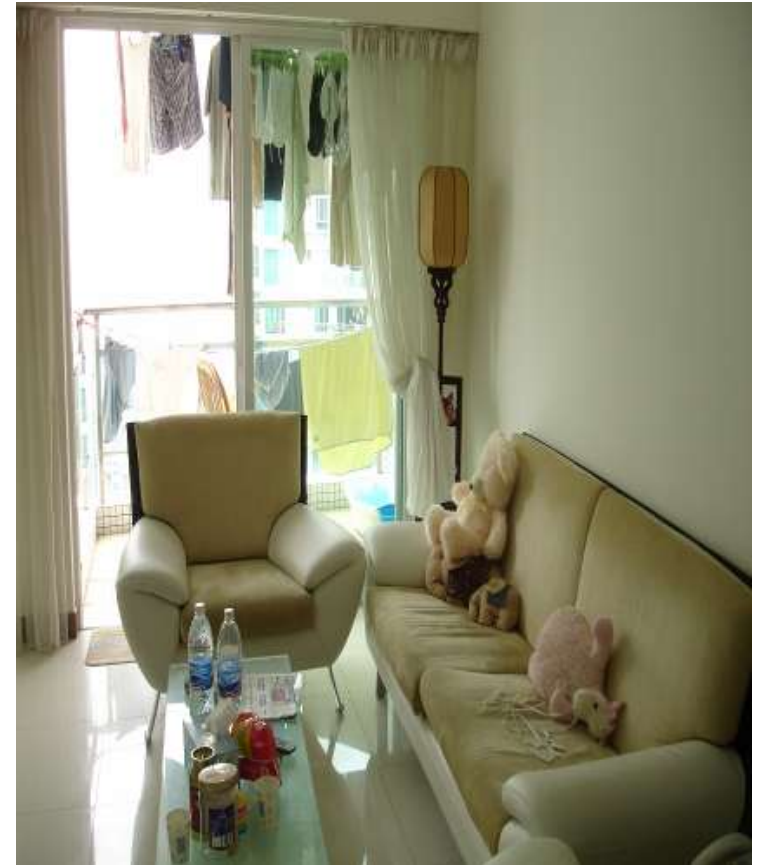
Flat entrance in 1997: wires are visible, 2006 material are more expensive, wires are invisible. The signs of modernity

2005

1997



1997, Living with neon, 2006, without neon and new material (wood vs. cloth)



The dining area: from wood to plastic

1997



2006



1997, the kitchen: no fridge, no oven



saucepan



Vegetable colander



wok



Knives
Pair of scissors

Cooking block

2005, oven, fridge and cooking hood entering the kitchen



Bathroom 1997-2005

1997



2005



**Nowadays western toilettes
are could be seen as signs
of social distinction**

1997 the bathroom



Minimum equipment



Only a few products

2006: well equipped



2011, Guangzhou, another middle class family with few changes



Mobility, urban circulation



2011-04, Hangzhou-Shanghai bullet train



2008 Guangzhou, 2nd street level

The middle class



2011-04 Shanghai, Starbucks Coffee



2008-04 Guangzhou, child's drawing table

Luxury goods, upper middle class



2010-11 Guangzhou, upscale cosmetics



2011-04 Shanghai, window. French quarter

But tradition is still there: lift
without 4, 14, 24 (3A, 13A, 23A)

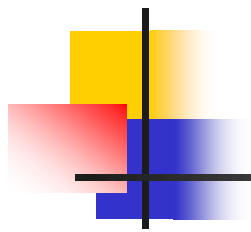


Chinese calendar



Meet friends
Dig earth
Build the roof

Don't get married
Don't go to the
hair dresser



19

1428 شوال SYAWAL 28
甲辰龍九月運程1964年生人，百尺竿頭，更進一步。
甲子鼠九月運程1984年生人，瓶兒帶水，後已誤人。

宜				FRIDAY		丁未水成日		吉神方位		忌	
祭祀		每日相送		星期五		九月大		貴神西北		理整	
訂婚		歲煞西		三十日		十四小		吉門東北		髮甲	
入學		冲牛		丁亥年		子日亥時		每日胎神		星日命擇	
會友		西 47		子日亥時		子日亥時		意房內		午節互緣	
生年		西亥		子日亥時		子日亥時		廟東		丁巳	
丁巳		西亥		子日亥時		子日亥時		本日		辛丑	
每		西亥		子日亥時		子日亥時		生相		丁巳	
日		西亥		子日亥時		子日亥時		年冲		辛丑	
月		西亥		子日亥時		子日亥時		本日		丁巳	

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Buddhist practices in Guangzhou



Guangzhou, 2012 : new mall, new restaurant with public and private shopsticks and vine





Conclusion: Shopping as the result of a domestic use

- Instead of focusing on motivation, pleasure and individual what is a relevant angle of observation
 - Anthropology focuses on what organized the behavior of consumers beyond the intention of individuals
 - Conformity (and transgression) of social norms are observed
 - Buying an object is conditioned by use in the home which is conditioned by social norms.
- Thank you for your attention