

Let the Internet merge into the river of ideas

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Ladies and Gentleman,

A major agenda of this conference is to discuss and formulate a new roadmap for human sciences in the 21 centuries. As an Internet company from China, Tencent is honored to be part of the discussion among humanists from around the world, and picture, together with you, the future of human sciences.

P1 Preserve vanishing cultures

On 1 August, before I left for Liege for this conference, my colleagues in China launched an online initiative called, “Preserving Vanishing Cultures”, urging internet users to record cultures that are disappearing from their life. What prompted us to start the project is a piece of music we obtained from a village in the clouds. The village, A’ ermai, sits 3000 meter above sea level, almost totally cut off from the outside world. The singers are mostly in their 70s and 80s, young people are leaving, and the music in this village is facing distinction. One question has been lingering: As an Internet company, what can we do about it?

P2 The Convergence of platforms (配王者荣耀)

Pan-Entertainment and the convergence of multiple platforms: online games + online literature + anime + films + music + videos + eSports (PPT标题及内容)

In the past decades we have witnessed drastic and disruptive changes to our society, brought about by advances in technology. These changes are accelerating. Everything we know is being replaced, and displaced, by new emergences. This is especially true in China. As children my generation got to welcome the introduction of television to China. Now we are worried that our kids and ourselves are too much hooked to mobile phones.

Mobiles Phones are changing people’ s life in China. They are used for games, music, reading, shopping, ticketing, even for house calls for your puppy’ s haircut. We are moving towards a cashless society. In major cities even street food vendors would accept mobile payment today. All

this is made possible largely because of a Tencent application called Wechat. Simply put, Wechat is a super application that has the combined functions of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Amazon, to name just a few. It has 938 million monthly active users from around the world. QQ is another instant messaging tool of Tencent. With 861 million monthly active users, QQ is more popular among the younger generations who are always looking for something trendy and funky.

With so many users connecting with each other and with the world around them, mobile Internet has even changed what it means to be “present”. As I said yesterday, Tencent is the largest game company in the world. At this very moment, millions of game players are experiencing “connected presence” in our mobile game *Honor of Kings*, enjoying a sense of online community, though they are geographically distributed, from China, South Korea, Thailand, Viet Nam, Turkey, and other countries across the world.

This is certainly something to be proud of. In the past decade, especially the last five years, we have worked really hard to develop and assemble the building blocks of a system that we call pan entertainment. This system brings together different media formats and content platforms: games, anime, literature, film and television, music and eSports. New connections create new content. They cross-fertilize and co-evolve, generating a broad array of cultural products. The innovation generated through connecting different modules, and the cultural impact of our pan entertainment system, have gone beyond our wildest dreams.

P3 connections between people

generate more creative ideas, flatten creative production and nurture a more receptive readership and audience with a stronger sense of identity.  
(PPT 标题及内容)

Tencent’s pan entertainment system has become a prototype for the convergence of internet and culture in China. The system does not only bring different modules and formats together, it connects people together, building links between creators, between consumers, and between consumers and creators. We call this new emergence “Creators Economy”, hugely different from the economic models we are familiar with.

First, More people are participating in it. Our online literature platform now has more than 4 millions registered writers providing content to 600 millions readers. As I said yesterday, most of these content providers are not professional writers. However, they have created around 10 million literary works, and this number is growing at every minute.

Our anime platform has 90 millions users looking for content to stream, and the total screening has amounted to more than 10 billion. Unbelievable!

What is peculiar about these platforms is that there is not a clear boundary between creators and users. Most creators update their products and interact with users on a daily basis, who subscribe to and comment on content. Some of these users would adapt these content or start to write their own work and become creators, even gurus, as successful creators are called online in China.

Second, the Internet has reconfigured production. Creators are now directly facing their users. A flatter and more efficient way of production is emerging. Big data is playing a more important role in production.

Third, users are linked with each other more closely than ever. They share, collaborate, and form into fan groups around popular creators and their works. These works find it easy to have a ready audience and readership when converted into other formats.

This has changed our means of production, and communication, it has also generated new ways of thinking and story telling. The changes technology is bringing to the cultural sector are still panning out in front of us. One thing we are sure is that just like the Industrial Revolution brought textile machines, assembly lines as well as Hollywood and MacDonalD, the Information Revolution led by the internet will transform both our economy and our culture. We are witnessing this historical transformation to take shape now in the field of arts and humanities.

#### P4 connecting mainstream culture and subcultures

Connections are making online expressions more open and diverse. Subcultural content such as emoticons and games are travelling across cultural and national boundaries, consumed by most people with a mobile phone, blurring the line between mainstream culture and subcultures.

In China there has been a niche for Taoism-based fairy-chivalry fantasy novels. This genre has become a hit online. Many novels are adapted into films, television dramas and games. They are translated by websites in the US for subscribers to read for a fee.

For example, on Tencent' s anime platform, the most popular is an

original anime work called the Fox Spirit Matchmaker. In Chinese fairy tales, fox spirits are fox-turned young, beautiful yet evil girls. The creator of the Fox Spirit Matchmaker, Xiaoxi, appropriated the image and made it into a pure, innocent and daring girl. Audiences love it and it is now exported to Japan.

Every period of time in history has its signature cultural form. In China, we have Tang Dynasty poems, Song Ci-poems, Yuan Dynasty drama, and novels of Ming and Qing Dynasties. We believe cultural forms native to the internet, such as online literature, anime, games and eSports, will play a bigger role in the future.

#### P5 The Next Idea

Nurture and foster values-based innovation in a networked economy (PPT 标题及内容)

At the moment, the Tencent network, with creators at the centre, is stilling gaining momentum and evolving. We are doing very well in linking creators and users, and between users themselves. We are doing less well in linking creators and professionals, linking creators and creative resources. Our support infrastructure for creative innovation is still nascent.

To better support creators, we launched a new initiative five years ago. This initiative, Next Idea, started as an innovation competition, has morphed into a bridge linking the Tencent content platform and external creative resources, and an incubator of innovation towards which these resources gravitate.

In 2016, NEXT IDEA created quite some buzz working with the Palace Museum, which provided images of their collection to users to adapt and appropriate. In the user-generated products, emperors don't only perform RAP, they also become funny popular emoticons. The hundred-year old Palace Museum finds its way into the everyday life of Chinese people with a totally different face.

Through this project, we have realized that traditional culture, when presented in ways receptive to the younger generations, could also be cool, popular, and relevant in our daily life. This year, we will work with the Great Wall and bring it closer to young people. Our panel tomorrow afternoon will provide you with more information about the Great Wall project.

P6 Believe the power of connection, believe the power of culture

We are in a time of rapid technological advances and unprecedented changes. We are in a time of abundance and agony. As Yuval Harari says, “ We are more powerful than ever before, but have very little idea what to do with that power” .

This is alarming. Nobody knows what lies ahead in the future. However I believe the power of collective intelligence, the power of links and connections, the power of culture. I believe the stories and arts that have touched us, and the values that have bonded us for thousands of years will empower us to have control of our own common destiny.

The great historian Arnold Toynbee once said, ‘Mankind is surely going to destroy itself unless it succeeds in growing together into something like a single family ’ . According to him, for this we need to understand each other and each other’ s history, because, “ Man doesn’ t live just in the immediate present. We live in a mental time-stream, remembering the past and looking forward-with hope or fear, to an ongoing future” . The Internet has created more possibilities for cultures and peoples to understand each other, and more possibilities to us to shape and build a shared future.

This is why I am here today. I hope to work together with you to picture our shared future. Tencent has joined hands with UNESCO in the Open Digital Library on Traditional Games, which leverages ICTs to archives, protects and develop ‘traditional games’ , a form of intangible cultural heritage. We have made headway in this initiative and we are experimenting to incorporate traditional games into today’ s online games. We believe we should not only preserve traditional culture, we need to find a way to give them new life and new expressions in the new technological settings. Tencent will respect the power afforded by technology, put it to good use, to enrich cultures and improve lives.

Go back to the village in the clouds. The music is now archived in our “discovering music ” project, and in the future, we will launch special albums on our music platform for intangible culture heritage. Thank you very much.