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Alibaba

Crocodile of the Yangzi

How Jack Ma conquered China's internet
Apr 9th 2016

Alibaba: The House That Jack Ma Built. By Duncan Clark. Ecco; 287 pages; \$27.99 and £18.99.

Vocab

1. **crocodile** n. 鳄鱼 A **crocodile** is a large reptile with a long body and strong jaws. Crocodiles live in rivers and eat meat.

NOT since John Rockefeller has a businessman defined a country's **transformation** as well as Jack Ma does. Rockefeller's Standard Oil capitalised on the rise of **petroleum** and the internal-combustion engine, a **combination** that powered a century of American greatness. He became America's first billionaire and its richest man **by far**. Through both ruthless dealing and **visionary philanthropy**, he came to **personify** American capitalism.

Vocab

1. **transformation** n. ~ (from sth) (to/ into sth) a complete change in sb/ sth (彻底的) 变化, 改观, 转变, 改革

e.g. The way in which we work has **undergone** a complete **transformation** in the past decade. 在过去的十年里, 我们的工作方式经历了彻底的变革。

2. **petroleum** n. 石油; 原油 **Petroleum** is oil which is found under the surface of the earth or under the sea bed. Petrol and paraffin are obtained from petroleum.

3. **combination** n. 结合; 联合; 混合 A **combination of** things is a mixture of them.

e.g. ...a fantastic **combination of** colours. 多种颜色的绝妙混合

4. **by far** 到目前为止; 远, 非常 (与比较级或最高级连用)

5. **visionary** adj. original and showing the ability to think about or plan the future with great imagination and intelligence 有眼力的; 有创见的; 有远见卓识的

e.g. a visionary leader 有远见卓识的领袖

6. **philanthropy** n. 慈善; 捐助 **Philanthropy** is the giving of money to people who need it, without wanting anything in return.

7. **personify** v. 是...的典范; 集中体现; 象征 If you say that someone **personifies** a particular thing or quality, you mean that they seem to be a perfect example of that thing, or to have that quality to a very large degree.

e.g. She seemed to **personify** goodness and nobility...她宛如善良和高贵的化身。

Alibaba, which Mr Ma and a handful of **collaborators** started in a **cramped** apartment in Hangzhou in 1999, is now one of the world's biggest internet companies. It utterly **dominates** e-commerce in China, and has also **made inroads** into internet finance, cloud computing and **logistics**. Its flotation in New York in 2014

was the biggest public offering ever, and with a fortune worth perhaps \$23 billion, Mr Ma is one of China's richest men.

Vocab

1. **collaborator** n. 合伙人 a person who works with another person to create or produce sth such as a book 合作者；协作者；合著者

2. **cramped** adj. a **cramped** room, etc. does not have enough space for the people in it 狭窄的；狭小的

3. **dominate** v. to control or have a lot of influence over sb/ sth, especially in an unpleasant way 支配；控制；左右；影响

e.g. He tended to dominate the conversation. 他不时左右着交谈的内容。

4. **makes inroads into** PHRASE 短语 侵袭；侵入 If one thing **makes inroads into** another, the first thing starts affecting or destroying the second.

e.g. In Italy, as elsewhere, television has made deep **inroads** into cinema. 在意大利,跟在别处一样,电视严重影响了电影市场,夺走了大批观众。

5. **logistics** n. the practical organization that is needed to make a complicated plan successful when a lot of people and equipment is involved 后勤；物流；组织工作

e.g. the logistics of moving the company to a new building 把公司搬迁到一座新大楼的过程中需要进行的组织工作

Sentence

Alibaba, which Mr Ma and a handful of collaborators started in a cramped apartment in Hangzhou in 1999, is now one of the world's biggest internet companies.

主干: Alibaba is now one of the world's biggest internet companies.

which Mr Ma... 这个非限定性定语从句的先行词是 Alibaba, 这么写能及时把主语的意思解释明白

How did a poor boy who barely scraped into a teacher's college manage this? Like Rockefeller, Mr Ma spotted a confluence of technologies and market opportunities. The rise of the internet came just as China was gearing up to join the World Trade Organisation in 2001. Duncan Clark, an expert on China's technology sector, explains the result in a fascinating new book: Mr Ma "stands at the intersection of China's newfound cults of consumerism and entrepreneurship".

Vocab

1. **spot** v. to see or notice a person or thing, especially suddenly or when it is not easy to do so 看见；看出；注意到；发现

e.g. I finally spotted my friend in the crowd. 我终于在人群中看见了我的朋友。

2. **newfound** adj. 新发现的;新找到的 A **new-found** quality or ability is one that you have got recently.

3. **cult** n. a way of life, an attitude, an idea, etc. that has become very popular (对生活方式、看法、观念等的) 狂热, 时尚, 崇拜

e.g. An extraordinary **personality cult** had been created around the leader. 在这位领导人的周围兴起了一场异乎寻常的个人崇拜。

4. **consumerism** n. 消费主义 **Consumerism** is the belief that it is good to buy and use a lot of goods.

e.g. They have clearly embraced Western **consumerism**. 他们显然完全接受了西方的消费主义观念。

5. **entrepreneurship** n. 企业家的身份 (或活动) **Entrepreneurship** is the state of being an entrepreneur, or the activities associated with being an entrepreneur.

Sentence

How did a poor boy who barely scraped into a teacher's college manage this?

一个疑问句，完全的交代了背景：poor boy, 并且成绩一般：barely scraped into a teacher's college

It began with Mr Ma's **homesick** search for a **pint** of Chinese **lager**. As an English translator, he got the chance to travel to Seattle in the mid-1990s and to use the internet for the first time. Told that one could find anything in the world online, he searched for "beer". He found American beer, German beer and so on, but no Chinese beer. His country was, it seemed, living in the dark ages. That gave him the inspiration he needed.

Vocab

1. **homesick** *adj.* sad because you are away from home and you miss your family and friends 思乡的；想家的；患怀乡病的

e.g. I felt homesick for Scotland. 我思念故乡苏格兰。

2. **pint** *n.* 一品脱啤酒 If you go for a **pint**, you go to the pub to drink a pint of beer or more.

e.g. He sits down and reads the paper, then goes out for a **pint**. 他会坐下读报，然后出去喝一杯啤酒。

3. **lager** *n.* 拉格啤酒，贮藏啤酒，贮藏啤酒（一种淡啤酒） **Lager** is a type of light beer.

e.g. ...a pint of **lager**... 一品脱拉格啤酒

Sentence

His country was, it seemed, living in the dark ages.

这种一路逗号的形式...完全可以不分逗号嘛：He think that his country seems to be living in the dark ages.

但是...他这么写...似乎比较精干...

With liberalisation would come rising incomes and global travel, reasoned Mr Ma, and soon hundreds of millions of Chinese would clamour for the goods and services enjoyed by the comfortable classes elsewhere. Unlike those in America, the land of Sears and Walmart, China's retail chains were **fragmented** and **stodgy**. This, Mr Ma **calculated**, meant that e-commerce could quickly become a potent force.

Vocab

1. **liberalisation** *n.* 自由化；自由主义化；放宽限制

2. **clamour** *v.* ~ (for sth) (formal) to demand sth loudly 大声（或吵闹）地要求

e.g. People began to clamour for his resignation. 人们开始大声疾呼要求他辞职。

3. **fragment** *n.* a small part of sth that has broken off or comes from sth larger 碎片；片段

e.g. Police found fragments of glass near the scene. 警方在现场附近发现了玻璃碎片。

4. **stodgy** *adj.* serious and boring; not exciting 滞涩的；古板的；枯燥无味的

e.g. They're not cultured or interesting, they are boring **stodgy** old things. 他们没修养，很乏味，是一群无聊古板的老家伙。

5. **calculate** *v.* =estimate to guess sth or form an opinion by using all the information available 预测；推测

Sentence

With liberalisation would come rising incomes and global travel, reasoned Mr Ma, and soon hundreds of millions of Chinese would clamour for the goods and services enjoyed by the

comfortable classes elsewhere.

主干: reasoned Mr Ma

With liberalisation would come rising incomes and global travel 这里的 with 是随着的意思, 谓语是 would come

and soon hundreds of millions of Chinese... 和前面 with 并列, 谓语是 would clamour

He was right. China's online consumers are now the world's most voracious, buying over \$14 billion-worth of goods on Alibaba's platforms on just one day last year (a promotion known as Singles' Day). That is far more than Americans purchase on Cyber Monday, when online retailers heavily discount goods for Christmas shoppers. Alibaba now sees some 3 trillion yuan (\$464 billion) in e-commerce transactions flow yearly through its portals, triple the figure seen in 2012.

Vocab

1. promotion n. (尤指通过广告进行的) 促销, 推广, 推销 A promotion is an attempt to make a product or event popular or successful, especially by advertising.

e.g. Ask about special promotions and weekend deals too. 也问一问特别促销和周末特价的情况。

2. portal n. 门户 (网站) On the Internet, a portal is a site that consists of links to other websites.

Sentence

China's online consumers are now the world's most voracious, buying over \$14 billion-worth of goods on Alibaba's platforms on just one day last year (a promotion known as Singles' Day).

主干: consumers are now the world's most voracious

buying over \$14 billion-worth of goods... 现在分词, 做定语, 可以理解成非限定性定语从句: which buy over...

on Alibaba's platforms on just one day last year 两个介词 on, 介词用的好, 表达起来很顺畅

The cult of the entrepreneur is strong in China too. Though state-owned enterprises and national champions lumber on, it is private enterprise that has created nearly all net new urban jobs in China over the past two decades, and private firms account for perhaps two-thirds of all economic output. China is producing millions of new entrepreneurs each year, and (unlike Rockefeller, who was widely reviled as a monopolist) Mr Ma is idolised by them.

Vocab

1. enterprise n. a company or business 公司; 企业单位; 事业单位

e.g. state-owned/ public enterprises 国有企业; 公共事业单位

2. lumber v. to move in a slow, heavy and awkward way 缓慢吃力地移动; 笨拙地行进

3. revile v. to criticize sb/ sth in a way that shows how much you dislike them 辱骂; 斥责

e.g. What right had the crowd to revile the England players for something they could not help...? 观众有什么权力因为英格兰队员们无能为力的事情而斥责他们?

4. monopolist n. a person or business that has a monopoly 垄断者; 专卖商; 垄断企业

5. idolize v. =worship to admire or love sb very much 崇拜; 热爱

Sentence

Though state-owned enterprises and national champions lumber on, it is private enterprise that has created nearly all net new urban jobs in China over the past two decades, and private firms account for perhaps two-thirds of all economic output.

这里: A and B lumber on 这里 lumber 用的很有意思, 即国有企业和 national champions 缓慢的发展着

主干: it is private enterprise that 强调句。that 后面的成分很明显, 创建了几乎所有的新的城镇岗位在中国过去的20年里。

and private firms account for... 谓语 account for
economic output 经济产出

eBay for lunch

How did he come from nowhere to overcome such American rivals as Yahoo (which later became a big investor in Alibaba) and eBay? The answer lies in the most powerful cult of all: a team of **martial-arts** heroes with Jack Ma as its leader. Alibaba's campus in Hangzhou features numerous artistic references to Jin Yong, a celebrated writer of martial-arts novels. Employees take nicknames from his novels and other **pulp** fiction, and use these names for internal communication. Team-building exercises regularly have employees doing **handstands**, and office romances are often made official at mass weddings (pictured), witnessed by Mr Ma. The company's **philosophy** is a "six-vein spirit sword", and during an interview conducted last year at his headquarters, Mr Ma several times got up to **punctuate** his answers with an actual sword from his wall.

Vocab

1. **martial-art** n. 武术 A **martial art** is one of the methods of fighting, often without weapons, that come from the Far East, for example kung fu, karate, or judo.

2. **pulp** adj. 故事或小说) 粗制滥造的, 庸俗刺激的, 耸人听闻的 People refer to stories or novels as **pulp** fiction when they consider them to be of poor quality and intentionally shocking or sensational.

3. **handstand** n. a movement in which you balance on your hands and put your legs straight up in the air 倒立 (动作)

4. **philosophy** n. a set of beliefs or an attitude to life that guides sb's behaviour 人生哲学; 生活的信条 (或态度)

e.g. Her philosophy of life is to take every opportunity that presents itself. 她的处世态度是不放过任何呈现眼前的机会。

5. **punctuate** v. to interrupt sth at intervals 不时打断

Mr Ma does not believe in religion or communism, saving his faith for a kind of inclusive capitalism. Unlike the founders of other big Chinese internet firms, Mr Ma distributed shares to employees from the beginning, and continued to find ways for them to cash in during Alibaba's spectacular rise. As a result, his share is smaller than that held by **comparable tycoons**. Western technology founders like Google's Larry Page and Sergey Brin and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg structured share offerings so that they retained a tight grip on their creations. Mr Ma formed a partnership before Alibaba's **flotation**, and shares control with several dozen colleagues.

Vocab

1. **comparable** adj. similar to sb/ sth else and able to be compared 类似的; 可比较的

2. **tycoon** n. 大亨; 巨头; 大实业家 A **tycoon** is a person who is successful in business and so has become rich and powerful.

e.g. a **business/ property/ media tycoon** 产业大亨；房地产巨头；传媒钜子

3. **grip** n. =**grasp** an act of holding sb/ sth tightly; a particular way of doing this 紧握；紧抓

e.g. to **loosen/ release/ relax your grip** 松手

4. **flotation** n. (公司的)股票发行，上市 The **flotation** of a company is the selling of shares in it to the public.

Sentence

1. saving his faith for a kind of inclusive capitalism.

可以理解成 a kind of inclusive capitalism save his faith. 即：他信仰的是 a kind of inclusive capitalism

2. Western technology founders like Google's Larry Page and Sergey Brin and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg structured share offerings so that they retained a tight grip on their creations.

主干： A and B structured share offerings

a tight grip 这里的用法很美妙，控制一样东西的时候可以这么比喻

creations 即公司，用 creation 来表示，这家公司，是他们创造的，当然 creation 也可以理解成作品，造物物： [*count noun*] a thing which has been made or invented, especially something showing artistic talent

Mr Ma rejects Milton Friedman's **nostrum** that "the business of business is business", namely that companies exist only to make a profit and that **philanthropy** should be strictly personal. He has set up a philanthropic fund, but uses Alibaba itself as a vehicle for social change, helping people book doctors' visits, for example, or selling cheap water-testing devices and encouraging his customers to upload results for big-data analysis. Given his ambitions, perhaps it is a good thing that Mr Ma plans for Alibaba to flourish "at least 102 years": begun in the last year of the 20th century, it may yet leave a mark on the 22nd.

Vocab

1. **nostrum** n. an idea that is intended to solve a problem but that will probably not succeed 并非灵验的招数；不会奏效的计策

2. **philanthropy** n. the practice of helping the poor and those in need, especially by giving money 博爱；慈善；乐善好施

3. **philanthropic** adj. 慈善的；捐助的 A **philanthropic** person or organization freely gives money or other help to people who need it.

Sentence

He has set up a philanthropic fund, but uses Alibaba itself as a vehicle for social change, helping people book doctors' visits, for example, or selling cheap water-testing devices and encouraging his customers to upload results for big-data analysis.

主干： He has set up a philanthropic fund

helping people book doctors' visits 是指 a vehicle 去 help，可以还原成 which help people...

or selling cheap... 这里这么长，表达的却很清楚卖便宜的 water-testing devices 并鼓励他的顾客为了大数据分析上传结果

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Alibaba Crocodile of the Yangzi

阿里巴巴：长江之鳄

How Jack Ma conquered China's internet.

看马云如何征服中国互联网。

Alibaba: The House That Jack Ma Built. By Duncan Clark. NOT since John Rockefeller has a businessman defined a country's transformation as well as Jack Ma does. Rockefeller's Standard Oil capitalised on the rise of petroleum and the internal-combustion engine, a combination that powered a century of American greatness. He became America's first billionaire and its richest man by far. Through both ruthless dealing and visionary philanthropy, he came to personify American capitalism.

《阿里巴巴：马云的基业》是邓肯·克拉克的作品。自约翰·洛克菲勒以来，还没有哪个生意人像马云一样，对国家转型的影响力如此巨大。洛克菲勒的美孚石油公司获得成功，得益于汽油的需求增加，以及内燃机技术的突飞猛进，正是这两点的结合造就了美国的伟大世纪。他成为美国历史上首位亿万富翁和美国迄今为止最富有的人。凭借不留情面的经营作风和具有前瞻性的慈善事业，他成为了美国资本主义的化身。

Alibaba, which Mr Ma and a handful of collaborators started in a cramped apartment in Hangzhou in 1999, is now one of the world's biggest internet companies. It utterly dominates e-commerce in China, and has also made inroads into internet finance, cloud computing and logistics. Its flotation in New York in 2014 was the biggest public offering ever, and with a fortune worth perhaps \$23 billion, Mr Ma is one of China's richest men.

1999年，马云和几位合伙人在杭州一间狭小的公寓里创立了阿里巴巴。如今，阿里已跻身全球最大互联网公司行列。阿里巴巴不仅完全主导了中国电商市场，还进军了互联网金融、云计算和物流领域。2014年阿里巴巴在纽约上市，首次公开募股规模达史上最大。马云凭借市值约230亿的个人资产成功跻身中国首富行列。

How did a poor boy who barely scraped into a teacher's college manage this? Like Rockefeller, Mr Ma spotted a confluence of technologies and market opportunities. The rise of the internet came just as China was gearing up to join the World Trade Organisation in 2001. Duncan Clark, an expert on China's technology sector, explains the result in a fascinating new book: Mr Ma "stands at the intersection of China's newfound cults of consumerism and entrepreneurship".

一个勉强进入师范大学的穷小子如何做到了这一切？同洛克菲勒一样，马云洞察到了技术和市场机遇的契合。2001年，互联网兴起，当时中国正准备加入世贸组织。研究中国科技业的专家邓肯·克拉克在他引人入胜的新书中对这一结果进行了阐释：马云“站在了中国新掀起的两股热潮——创业和消费主义的十字路口”。

It began with Mr Ma's homesick search for a pint of Chinese lager. As an English translator, he got the chance to travel to Seattle in the mid-1990s and to use the internet for the first time. Told that one could find anything in the world online, he searched for "beer". He found American beer, German beer and so on, but no Chinese beer. His country was, it seemed, living in the dark ages. That gave him the inspiration he needed.

一切都源于马云对家乡窖藏啤酒的思念。20世纪90年代中期，他有幸以英文翻译的身份前往西雅图并首次接触到互联网。在得知网上什么东西都能搜到后，马云对“beer”(啤酒)进行了搜索。他找到了美国啤酒、德国啤酒以及其他种类啤酒，却唯独没有中国啤酒。祖国，在他看来，还处于黑暗时代这为他创立阿里提供了所需要的灵感。

With liberalisation would come rising incomes and global travel, reasoned Mr Ma, and soon hundreds of millions of Chinese would clamour for the goods and services enjoyed by the comfortable classes elsewhere. Unlike those in America, the land of Sears and Walmart, China's retail chains were fragmented and stodgy. This, Mr Ma calculated, meant that e-commerce could quickly become a potent force.

马云推断，随着贸易的自由化，收入增加，全球旅游产业兴起，很快就会有数以亿计的国人叫嚷着，要与其他国家生活舒适的阶级享有同样的物资和服务。不像美国遍地都是西尔斯百货和沃尔玛，中国的零售连锁店分散且死气沉沉。马云推测，这意味着电子商务不久就将成为一股强大的力量。

He was right. China's online consumers are now the world's most voracious, buying over \$14 billion-worth of goods on Alibaba's platforms on just one day last year (a promotion known as Singles' Day) . That is far more than Americans purchase on Cyber Monday, when online retailers heavily discount goods for Christmas shoppers. Alibaba now sees some 3 trillion yuan (\$464 billion) in e-commerce transactions flow yearly through its portals, triple the figure seen in 2012.

他的确是对的。中国线上消费者已然成为世界上最大的消费群体，仅去年双十一促销日一天阿里平台的交易总额就达140亿多美元。这远超美国网络星期一的成交额。网络星期一期期间线上零售商会给圣诞购物的消费者们大打折扣。阿里的电子商务平台目前的年成交额约为3万亿人民币（合4640亿美元），是2012年成交额的三倍。

The cult of the entrepreneur is strong in China too. Though state-owned enterprises and national champions lumber on, it is private enterprise that has created nearly all net new urban jobs in China over the past two decades, and private firms account for perhaps two-thirds of all economic output. China is producing millions of new entrepreneurs each year, and (unlike Rockefeller, who was widely reviled as a monopolist) Mr Ma is idolised by them.中国的创业热潮同样势头强劲。尽管国有企业和龙头企业仍在缓慢发展着，过去二十年来私有企业几近创造了中国所有的城镇净增就业岗位，占到经济总产出的三分之二左右。中国每年诞生数百万新企业家（不像洛克菲勒背负垄断者的骂名），马云十分受他们推崇。

How did he come from nowhere to overcome such American rivals as Yahoo (which later became a big investor in Alibaba) and eBay? The answer lies in the most powerful cult of all: a team of martial-arts heroes with Jack Ma as its leader. Alibaba's campus in Hangzhou features numerous artistic references to Jin Yong, a celebrated writer of martial-arts novels. Employees take nicknames from his novels and other pulp fiction, and use these names for internal communication. Team-building exercises regularly have employees doing handstands, and office romances are often made official at mass weddings, witnessed by Mr Ma. The company's philosophy is a "six-vein spirit sword", and during an interview conducted last year at his headquarters, Mr Ma several times got up to punctuate his answers with an actual sword from his wall.

他是如何从无名小卒做到超越美国的竞争对手雅虎（后成为阿里巴巴重要投资者）和亿贝？答案在于一股最为强大的崇拜热潮：马云领导着一个具有侠客精神的精英团队。阿里杭州园区有着无数和著名武侠小说作家金庸相关的艺术元素。员工从金庸小说以及其他通俗小说中取昵称，用作内部交流。团队建设时员工们通常会被要求做倒立，公司内部恋情则会在马云的见证下以集体婚礼的形式公开。阿里巴巴的公司理念是“六脉神剑”。去年马云在阿里总部接受采访时曾多次中断，起身摆弄墙上挂的真剑。

Mr Ma does not believe in religion or communism, saving his faith for a kind of inclusive capitalism. Unlike the founders of other big Chinese internet firms, Mr Ma distributed shares to employees from the beginning, and continued to find ways for them to cash in during Alibaba's spectacular rise. As a result, his share is smaller than that held by comparable tycoons. Western technology founders like Google's Larry Page and Sergey Brin and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg structured share offerings so that they retained a tight grip on their creations. Mr Ma formed a partnership before Alibaba's flotation, and shares control with several dozen colleagues.

马云既不信仰宗教，也不信仰共产主义，他信仰的是一种具有包容性的资本主义。与其他中国互联网巨头创始人不同，马云在公司创立之初将股权分配给员工，并且在阿里惊人的崛起过程中不断寻找可以让他们变现的方法。这样做的结果是，他自己的股份小于类似的业界大亨。西方的科技公司创始人，比如谷歌的拉里·佩吉和谢尔盖·布林，脸书的扎克伯格，都精心调整股票发行模式，保留对公司的主导控制权。阿里发行股票前马云与几十个同事成立了合伙人关系，因此与他们一起控制股权。

Mr Ma rejects Milton Friedman's nostrum that “the business of business is business”, namely that companies exist only to make a profit and that philanthropy should be strictly personal. He has set up a philanthropic fund, but uses Alibaba itself as a vehicle for social change, helping people book doctors' visits, for example, or selling cheap water-testing devices and encouraging his customers to upload results for big-data analysis. Given his ambitions, perhaps it is a good thing that Mr Ma plans for Alibaba to flourish “at least 102 years” : begun in the last year of the 20th century, it may yet leave a mark on the 22nd.

米尔顿·弗里德曼的经典论断是“做生意就是要赚钱”，他认为公司存在的唯一目的就是盈利，而慈善事业应该严格划分为个人事务。马云不认同他的看法。他设立了一个慈善基金，利用阿里作为社会改革的工具，帮助人们预约医生看诊，或是售卖便宜的水质测试仪器，并鼓励客户上传结果以供大数据分析之用。考虑到马云的雄心抱负，或许让阿里兴盛“至少102年”的计划是一件好事：始于20世纪之末的阿里，说不准在22世纪也能留下深远影响。