



Reserapport - Dongying, Kina september 2015

Gerd Sävenstedt



Background

In 2013 Piteå and Dongying signed a 5-year Letter of intent in order to give us time to develop our relations and explore areas for cooperation. At that time Mats Berg – chief executive officer and Gerd Sävenstedt – Head of international relations visited Dongying in the Shangdong Province, a coastal city in the north of China. The economic growth is among the highest in China, based mainly on the oil resources in the Shengfield oil- fields.

Dongying was founded in 1983 and is today a middle-sized Chinese city with more than 2 million inhabitants. Here you find a number of enterprises in one way or another linked to the oil industry. At the same time they are striving towards becoming an ecological city.

They are interested in developing the public sector where they hope to learn from us and we can see areas where we gain experiences, knowledge, and inspiration and hopefully also develop business relations in some areas.

In 2014 a delegation from Dongying visited Piteå and during two days we had a number of study-visits and many discussions. Now it was time for us to go again. After their visit we expected to see two teams at Pitea Summer games but due to financial reasons they withdraw, but hopefully in 1916 there will be at least one team. This time the delegation was headed by Helena Stenberg, Vice-mayor, and she went together with David Sundström, Head of business and local development and Gerd Sävenstedt, Head of international relations.

Piteå Municipality paid for the tickets and the hosts for all expenses while we were in Dongying.

When I am writing the report I have been at home for a little more than a week. I did not take any notes but my pictures are my diary as the program we got before we arrived was changed a number of times. Everything is filtered through my memory but I have also gained information by Company web pages. The report is based on what we saw, heard and experienced.

To be a foreigner



When you arrive to a big airport as the one in Beijing, it is very easy to feel lost. It looked like my suit-case was anyhow, but luckily it came - long after all the others. I suspect it was checked in the customs due to two hard-bread packages which I had carried as a gift for Mr. Cui, the former Chinese consul to Sweden, which has been from the start a match-maker in our relation with Dongying. Mr. Cui is still very active in our relation with China and he also visited Piteå last year together with the Chinese delegation.

I think Beijing is the biggest airport I have been to, but due to good information it is quite easy to come to the area for taxi. We were not even outside when we were met by a taxi –driver who offered us his services and a price of around 600 CNY, about 800 SEK for the transport to Beijing. I had learnt the lesson last time and knew he was overcharging us. I agreed with a middleman to pay 150 and when we came to the hotel I asked the driver to sign a receipt. He saw that I had written the number of the cab in the receipt, so he refused and I could pay according to the meter, which was around 100 CNY, including 10% tip. There was never a discussion when you took a cab in town to the airport, it was always according to the meter.

On the way back from Dongying we made another overnight stop in Beijing and David realized at the hotel that his telephone was left in the taxi. To find a specific car in a 20 million city- a challenge, but Mr. Cui succeeded and an hour later the telephone was back in David's pocket.

Dongying

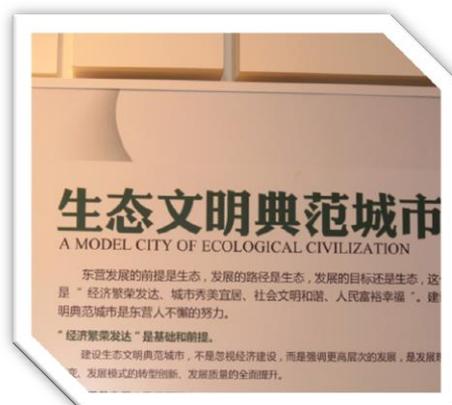
It is only a short flight to Dongying. Dongying Dongying is from our perspective growing fast. To my understanding they have an easier situation than many other cities as the land has not been developed earlier and all the land belongs to the government

Dongying City planning exhibition hall



I don't know what I expected when we said that we wanted to have a session about city planning – but it was not this, a big exhibition hall where you could see the past, the present and the future.

Here they show the links to Sun Wu, one of the greatest war strategists in the history. He was from this area and even if you plan for the future it is really important to know from where you are, where you are right now and where you want to go. The present is dominated by the Shengli Oil Field, the second largest in China. As the companies pay taxes to the Municipality, Dongying is a wealthy Municipality where the planning is striving towards being a model city of ecological civilization.



City planning is an important item on the agenda. Besides having their own department they also use consultants, both Chinese and expatriates. The ecological model city they are building should enable the citizen to live a good life, both during the work and on their free-time.



Elderly care



China is facing a big problem, a growing elderly population linked to the one-child family policy that has been in place since 1979. In China the child has a responsibility to care for the parents. And they do – if they can. One of the women I met told me that she, together with her siblings, just had bought an apartment to her parents. Her husband and his siblings had the responsibility for his parents, but as she said – we are anyhow lucky, we have jobs and we have siblings. In 2013 roughly 166 million were over 60 years old.

Many of the grandmothers leave their work in order to care for their grandchild as there is a very limited system of public childcare and pre-schools. One of the women I met told me that her mother-in-law both stayed with them and took care of the child. Recently there has been a minor change in the system; if both come from a 1-child-family you can file an application for a second child.

Dongying is very interested in cooperation in the area of elderly care as they realize that the local government can foresee a bigger responsibility. They try to stimulate private entrepreneurs to open care centers for old people but so far without success, my guess is that they can't see any good business in the area.

Anyhow there are a number of private elderly centers, mainly activity centers. We visited one. With a membership card for roughly 5.500 SKr you had access to all group activities which were offered. If you needed private consultations or treatments you had to pay extra.



Classes – health

Mahjong

Karaoke



To prepare for a competition

And for fun

And for well-being

SANFENG ENVIRONMENT –Household waste to energy



In order to become an eco-city it is important that the waste is taken care of and re- used, as here to electricity. The town is clean and you can't see waste littering the streets. Here at SANFANG environment the household waste is taken care of and energy is produced. Trucks are more or less constantly running through the gates and we could see when it was dumped in a big pit which was the first stop in the process. Due to David we are a number of steps ahead of them in the process and here they could learn from us. Their capacity is high and their capacity is not fully used.

Highland Shengli Xinda Industrial Group

Many factories are in one way or another linked to the oil industry. This is one. They are producing pipes and tanks in fiberglass reinforced plastics, surface pipes, downhole tubing, mortar pipes and storage tanks in different sizes used for drilling.



All factories we visited were very clean. Security also seemed to be high on the agenda. Outside were planted a lot of trees with apples. They have roughly 1 600 employees at different braches. Here like at many other big factories, housing was provided as part of the benefits. If you would prefer to live outside the salary did not increase.

Mayors meeting



Helena Stenberg and

Zhao Haozhi

The mayor of the Dongying is responsible for the prefecture, which administers 5 county-level divisions, including 2 districts and 3 counties. These are divided into 43 township-level divisions, including 23 towns, 13 townships and 7 sub-districts.



A meeting was arranged between the two mayors and the setting for these meetings is different from ours. A big meeting room with upholstered chairs along the walls in the room and where we from Piteå and other special participants were seated at special places.

It was a speech both from Mrs. Stenberg and Mr. Haozhi who stressed the importance of good relations and exchange of knowledge and experiences. Mrs. Stenberg also stressed the importance of making the ideas we have come true and made a new invitation for a football team to come to Piteå in 1916.

Exchange of gifts where done. Helena received a plate with her portrait and Mr. Haozhi a lithograph of Piteå with an invitation to join the delegation coming next year.



After a quick dinner we went to a performance at the Snow Lotus Opera House, inaugurated last year. Two German artists; Ekaterina Afanasieva a Harpists, and Catherine Swanson a classical singer, who sang Wagner, Mozart and other European masters. A tradition so far from the Chinese ones. When I asked my neighbor at the concert how this type of music was received he said that the young generation accepted it much better than the older one. In the audience I saw mainly younger people and also children. The price for a ticket was about 200 s.kr and as a civil servant is paid monthly about 5 000 S.kr, I assumed that these performances are for those who have more money.

We also got a guided tour and at another stage a group of young local people were practicing for a performance. Helena was interviewed by the local media.

As our day had started before four o'clock in the morning we were quite exhausted when we went to bed.

The oil city

The Shenli oil fields were discovered in 1961, located in the prefecture and has a daily production of 103 000 m³. Besides that they import oil from the Middle East. During these days the 8th Dongying International Petroleum and Petrochemical Equipment and Technology Exhibition takes place in a conference center with an exhibition hall, extremely big. We participated in the opening session of the conference. We started off with a tour at the fair where salesmen were marketed oil drilling equipment, from small things to really big.

There is a University linked to the oil industry and during this conference many of the students were hosts at this conference.



The opening ceremony was quite different from an opening ceremony at home.

About 50 people were placed at the stage where a presentation was done. Each one of us had a number where we should be standing. Helena as the mayor was on the first line. I have not a clue of what the presenter said but a number of the participants, including the Dongying Mayor, had a speech.

I suppose that one purpose of the conference was to develop contacts. There were businessmen, investors, researchers and politician participating. We met a group from the Chamber of Commerce in Haiti and Bahamas, people from Africa and South Americas. Besides that there were a number of seminars in which we did not participate.

International relations



Dongying has many international relations, with sister-cities both in the USA and South Korea and a letter of understanding with 17 different cities in the world. There is a department for Foreign Affairs where roughly 40 people are working with International relations. We were taken to Garden Expo Garden, a park under construction which is designated for international relations. If I remember right the area was 1 km². We were taken around in this really nice park where you both could get your daily exercise and enjoy the beauty.

Here they want to collect art gifts from their different international partners and as our Mayor was the first one to plant a friendship tree in the park we have to figure out how we want to be remembered in this park.

The wetlands



Due to the deterioration of the ecological environments, eco- compensation has increasingly become a concern in China. In Dongying there is an area, the estuary of the Yellow River, which is preserved and has become a sanctuary for wild birds, like the black stork.

The Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve was established in 1992 and is dedicated to protect the newly formed wetland eco-system, and rare and endangered bird species in the Yellow River estuary. Here is today 368 kinds of birds and the number has from the establishment increased from 2- 6 million - even if we saw very few. A large amount of sand and mud carried by the Yellow River, form about about 1333 ha of new land here every year, making it the youngest land in China.



Invited to Mr. Chen Guangfeng



Normally you meet at restaurants, even friends and families but we were invited to the director at Dongying Municipal Affairs and Overseas Chinese Affairs Office. We felt really honored. He lives in a new house, as he gave their old apartment to their son when he got married a couple of years ago.

-It is a tradition he said, that parents should provide housing to their son when he gets married and then on the other hand the son should provide for his

parents when they are getting old.

He lives in a big, very nice house, traditionally furnished. On the first floor was a big reception area, and on the second and third floor bedrooms and other rooms. Outside in the garden he and his wife were growing their own vegetables and they also raised their own ducks. It was a very relaxed



evening where we had time to talk about our cooperation and how we should proceed. Next year we expect both a football team and a team from the Municipality to be here at the same time.

During the afternoon he had painted calligraphy, which he presented to us, which described how he looked at us.

Tyre production

Wanda BOTO tyre, a part of the Wanda group- one of the 500 top national industrial enterprises in China produces tyres for both cars, buses and trucks. With 2 500 employees they produce more than 150 sizes and patterns. The biggest market is domestic but they have been exporting to more than 120 countries. We also visited the ware house where we saw tyres from the floor to the roof and more or less all export was from the harbour not too far away.

They have imported test equipment from both USA and European countries but their winter testing is made in Holland. There is also a research center and a Postdoctorial Working Station and they have a close cooperation with some famous national Universities and colleges and high technical research institutes.



.Employees are encouraged to use their creativity



Research lab

SNTON



We visited both the tyre factory and Snton two years ago. As in many other companies there are show-rooms who present the company and the concepts. SNTON Steel Cord Co, established in 2003 is part of a high-tech enterprise. In the company there are many branches but here it was steel cord and refined chemicals. The concept for the enterprise is devotion, harmony and innovation and has been awarded a number of prizes.

SNTON steel cord includes four factories and has a total production capacity of 400, 000 ton per year.

We visdited the company two years ago and was the told that this government owned company was the second largest cord production company in China.

- *I am so nerveous for this is not my job, said the girl who made an excellent presenation of SNTON*

Qing Feng Park

We visited another really big recreational park with a man made lake and areas where you could play and stroll around. You can hire a 2-seater pedal car and be taken out in a speedboat at the lake.





Playground



A square with family names



To spend time together

Mushrooms and mushrooms



A short visit at a mushroom factory to see the production. If it is clean on factories we had visited, this was superclean, at most places, It was as we were in a lab but the smell of mushrooms was telling us something else. They grown them in glass bottles and they are mainly used for the domestic market from where there is a great demand.

Huatai Group- paper for News



We visited the Company, the leading newprint producer in China, which has a history since 1976. We saw photoes from how it looked then and could follow the history to a modern factory and the leading producers of newspaper in China.

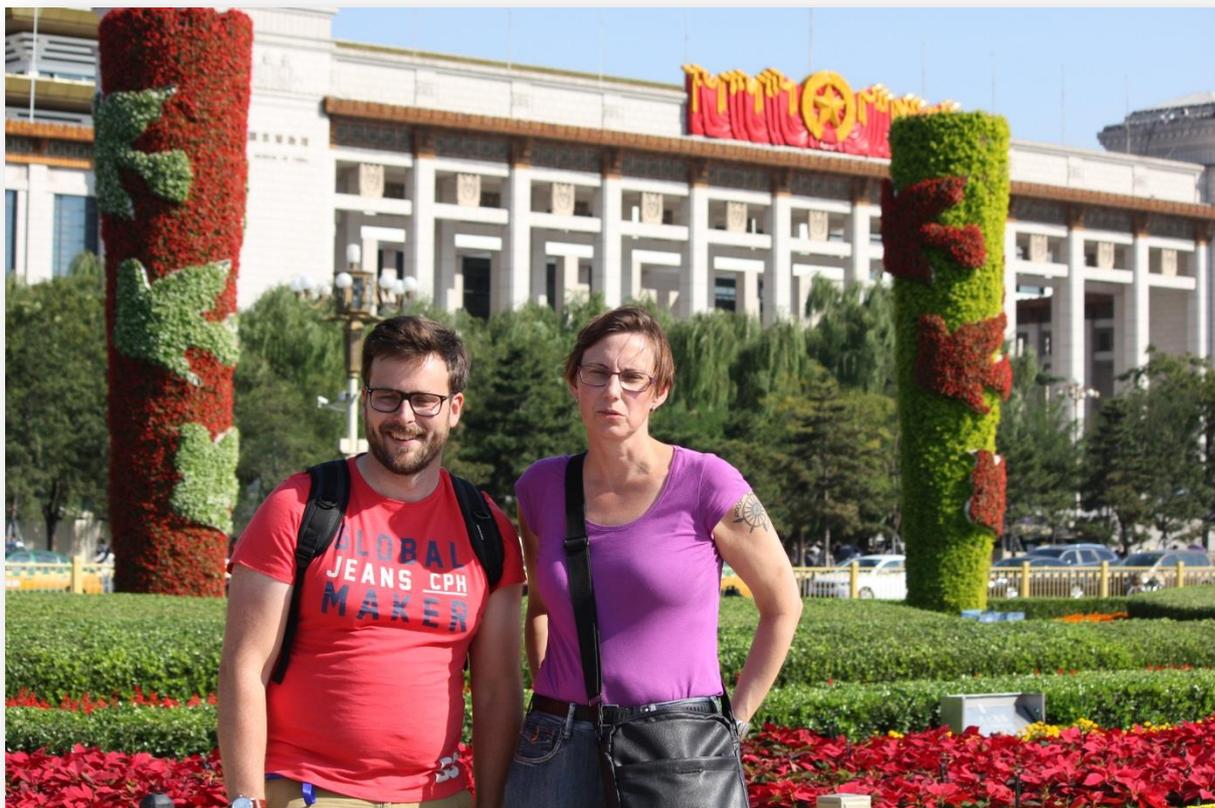
The speed of the modern machines is 2 000 meter a minut in the Voith newsprint line they are using.

A show and testing area



In Dongying we saw big areas with solar panels and we also visited a factory for production.

On the way to our last dinner in Dawang town we made a stop to see an area for solar panels and small windmills. 11 different companies exposed their products and there were also a field with minor wind-turbines. We were a bit confused as it only seemed to be a show area for different companies and no research linked to it.



David Sundström and Helena Stenberg at the Square of Heavenly Peace "Tiananmen Square"

Reflections;

It is interesting to follow a city who wants to be an ecological model city. Beautiful and recreational areas are important in this development as well as cultural arenas. The big Snow Lotus Opera House is used both by professionals and amateurs.

China as a whole won't reach their environmental goals. Many cities are polluted, the water is polluted, the land is polluted and industries pollute. Here you can't see any of that. You see a clear sky and environmental issues on the agenda.

At every factory we visited concepts and ideas were presented, sometimes in a more simple form and in other places high-tech. That makes it easier to understand who they are and who they want to become.

Hopefully departments in our Municipality will take the chance to develop relations, exchange experiences and knowledge. Elderly care is their priority one, but also cultural exchange is of interest.

There is also a great interest for visiting our part of the world as a tourist.

They are extremely good hosts, we have a lot to learn from them.

They are serious in their relation with us and I hope we are with them because there is a potential for a long term strong relation.

