

## **Research on the National Iconographies and Cultural Heritage Values Forged by the Wuhan Yangtze Great Bridge**

**Furan Cao**

PhD Candidate of National Research Center for Cultural Industries in Central China Normal University (2015-2018)

Visiting Research Student of Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage in University of Birmingham (2016-2018)

As the longest river in Asia and the third-longest in the world (the longest to flow entirely within one country worldwide), Yangtze River holds an extremely significant role in the history and economy, as well as the culture and national character of China, which has been taking as the cradle of Chinese civilization (also known as “Huaxia” civilization). And especially as the very first bridge of it in real sense, the Wuhan Yangtze Great Bridge, listed as Chinese Major Historical and Cultural Site Protected at the National Level and initially listed as Chinese Architectural Heritage in Twentieth Century, not only forged the national iconographies but also the Cultural Heritage Values both for the locals and also for the whole country. This paper firstly makes an introduction in three aspects: 1. The importance of and the hardships, dreams of constructing bridges of Yangtze River 2. The three stages of the construction of bridges across the Yangtze River (①35 AD~1853 ②1950~1957 ③1991 up to now) in Wuhan ( known as the *City of Bridges* and *Museum of Bridges*) 3. The reasons to take the Wuhan Yangtze Great Bridge as one single stage. After that, in the second part, the National Iconographies forged by the very bridge will be analyzed via three points: 1. As the epitome of Mao Zedong Era’s spirit (the symbol of innovation and struggle for new life) 2. As the token of people’s doughtiness 3. As the catalyst of Wuhan’s cultural pattern shift: from city of Dock Culture to Great Wuhan. Finally, values forged by the very bridge on cultural heritage will be researched in six ways: 1. The perfect combination of functions and architectural aesthetics 2. Great values on industrial heritage tourism 3. Enormous changes on patterns of people’s daily life (dialects, leisure activities, sense of belonging etc.) 4. Great values on cultural relics 5. Great values on economy(bridge industries, commercial brands etc.) 6. Great values on literature (poems etc.)