



On the 19<sup>th</sup> of November we met with a group of Chinese human rights lawyers at the Haarlem station. They arrived together with the two lawyers from Hong Kong who have organized this trip and meetings. We were also supported by a very good interpreter in the Mandarin language.

We started by visiting the Teylers Museum, the oldest museum of Holland, dating from the Enlightenment period at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The colleagues were very interested in the prehistoric animals like mammoths which have been found in Holland. The guide of the museum also showed the cranium of the so-called Peking man who is extinct now. This cranium is lying in the same department as the so-called Java man.

Walking along the typical Dutch canals, the Chinese colleagues showed much interest in the very old historic houses and the official protection of these monuments. We understood that in China there does not exist such protection by law and government. In China many old historic houses have been destroyed to make place for skyscrapers. Sometimes historic houses are newly rebuilt for tourists .

The visit and meeting afterwards was organized by our Foundation to introduce the Chinese colleagues to the work of the Foundation Day of the Endangered Lawyer.

The lawyers explained about their difficulties in working for human rights in the mainland China. The lawyers present came from all different parts of China.

The group of Chinese lawyers was quite young of age and full of energy .

The first lawyer told us he was imprisoned for insulting Mao.

The time he had to serve in prison was very harsh. For months he had to sleep on a wooden floor with no space to move because there were too many prisoners in the room.

A second lawyer did Falun Gong cases and defended persecuted Christians from the underground home church. He also defended a human rights activist who spread forbidden poetry.

Another lawyer was very active with filing complaints, by example against discrimination on the work floor. By complaining against the government he risks trouble and persecution. He was also involved in the land cases for the building of new skyscrapers. Continuously, people in China are forced to leave their land. He explained that forced eviction in some cases led to the death of people who didn't want to leave their land.

Another lawyer who we met already in Hong Kong told us about the bizarre accusations the lawyer can expect against himself when he's doing human rights cases against the government.

We also met the lawyer of Jian Tian Yang, the human rights lawyer who has just been sentenced to two years in prison. He was also forced to apologize on national television, just like the lawyer Wang Yu, which was very humiliating.

The sixth lawyer started as a commercial lawyer and was now filing complaints against the government. He did many cases where people were forced to leave their land to make place for new buildings. By searching on the Internet he came into contact with human rights Treaties and this motivated him to change his work. Like the other colleagues, he was very driven to fight for people who were detained unlawfully.

Another female lawyer from South China was involved in discrimination cases.

This female colleague works on a lot of anti-discrimination cases: women discrimination, discrimination of disabled persons, discrimination of LGBT.

In 2012 they started the first trial on anti-discrimination...

She explained that one in 10 Chinese is suffering from hepatitis B and that there is a lot of discrimination for this group in getting jobs. She said that the government of China might leave this critical work in peace, because it could mean good publicity to the Chinese government abroad.

On the other hand, she stated, the government doesn't like complaints or trials which might criticize the government.

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Many lawyers have been persecuted for doing these complaint cases and they were sentenced to jail on the accusation of subverting state power.

With the group, we spoke inter alia about the case of Wang Yu and her lawyer Li Yuhan who disappeared recently.

Many lawyers have lost their permits because of doing these cases!

The 2 lawyers from Hong Kong are supporting this Chinese human rights lawyers group. They promote exchange of people and work together with lawyers from Taiwan in this work.

They support and promote the Chinese lawyers with their difficult human rights work.

The lawyers group states that it seems to be important to the Chinese government what the opinion from other countries is about the Chinese policy on different areas.

The Chinese government doesn't want to be seen as money investors only.

Our guests want our advice about their work. We advise them to create - together with Chinese universities - more networks with universities all over the world.

We can support them with other networking with lawyer and human rights organizations.

At the moment they form an unofficial group of human rights lawyers. They explain that many more lawyers were very interested to come to Europe. They had to make a choice. They have to be very careful, they stated! So we cannot give names in this report and we cannot send any pictures to avoid persecution of this group of lawyers.

Even travelling abroad with this group of eight lawyers can already be suspect.

They are very motivated to learn from colleagues abroad and to follow courses.

We thank our colleagues for their openness and for their interesting visit. We express our wish to meet each other in the future; they prefer to have contacts indirectly through the lawyers from Hong Kong for security reasons!

They invite us to come visit them in China and are very interested to continue with our exchanges in the future.

Mr. Symone Gaasbeek-Wielinga, Secretary-general of the Foundation Day of the Endangered Lawyer

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