

The Fraudulent Foreign Auto Industry in China

外国汽车工业在中国的欺诈行为

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CHINESE ENGLISH

In the past 8 years in China, there have been about **170 auto recalls by joint venture manufacturers and foreign brands**, with Mercedes, Toyota, Honda and Nissan doing most of the recalls. Out of about **9 million recalled cars**, more than 7 million were Japanese; roughly one million were American and about one million European. By contrast, **China's many domestic brands have had to recall products only 7 times in the past few years, recalling only about 200,000 autos.** In light of these facts, it would seem that the current wisdom in the West about Chinese autos.

在过去的8年里，中国共发生了约**170起合资制造商和外国品牌的汽车召回事件**，其中梅赛德斯、丰田、本田和日产召回了大部分。在大约**900万辆被召回的汽车中**，超过700万辆是日本人；大约一百万是美国人，大约一百万是欧洲人。相比之下，**中国许多国产品牌在过去几年中只召回了7次产品**，仅召回了约**20万辆汽车**。鉴于这些事实，西方目前对中国汽车的看法似乎是正确的。

In one year, about 19 million autos were sold in China, resulting in 80 recalls involving 2 million vehicles. In the same year 13 million autos were sold in the US, resulting in about 600 recalls involving 15 million vehicles. China has far fewer recalls compared to the US car market, though in some part this is true because foreign automakers are masters at 'misreading' China's laws and regulations, using those misunderstandings to evade consumers' claims. **Japanese automakers Toyota, Honda and Nissan often exclude the Chinese market when recalling faulty models in other countries, and the Americans are known to do the same.**

一年内，中国售出了约 1900万辆汽车，导致 80起召回事件，涉及200万辆汽车。同年，美国售出 1300万辆汽车，导致约 600起召回事件，涉及1500万辆汽车。与美国汽车市场相比，中国的召回数量要少得多，尽管在某种程度上这是真的，因为外国汽车制造商善于“误读”中国的法律法规，利用这些误解来逃避消费者的索赔。日本汽车制造商丰田、本田和日产在其他国家召回故障车型时，经常将中国市场排除在外，众所周知，美国人也会这样做。

On their consumer day program, **CCTV** noted that auto recalls are common in the US, and credited the US with creating the world's first auto recall system. But they **failed to perform any research** and foolishly succumbed to American propaganda, thereby missing the fundamental point which is that the US government initiated these consumer protections only to avoid a popular revolution. Huge numbers of people were dying on American roads every year from cars that were fundamentally unsound, the problem reaching a crisis with Ralph Nader's book about GM's Corvair. It was only then that the recall system was legislated. **The Americans didn't do it because they were morally superior or adhering to "universal standards"; they were instead forced into it because their automakers were criminally insane.**

中央电视台在消费者日节目中指出，汽车召回在美国很常见，并称赞美国创建了世界上第一个汽车召回系统。但他们**没有进行任何研究**，愚蠢地屈服于美国的宣传，从而错过了一个根本点，即美国政府发起这些消费者保护只是为了避免一场民众革命。每年都有大量的人在美国道路上死于根本不健全的汽车，拉尔夫·纳德关于通用汽车 Corvair的书使这个问题陷入了危机。直到那时，召回制度才得以立法。美国人这样做并不是因为他们在道德上高人一等或坚持“普遍标准”；相反，他们被迫这样做是因为他们的汽车制造商精神错乱。

As noted above, **out of about 9 million recalled cars in China, more than 7 million were Japanese.** With Japanese autos becoming notorious for low quality, many Chinese car dealers and distributors have been permanently dumping these brands, especially after **a consumer backlash pushed sales down by more than 60%, reducing Japan's market share from 30% to 7% in one month.** One industry authority said "I have never seen so many dealers desert Japanese brands. The psychological impact on buyers and dealers is unparalleled. (Japanese) Automakers have to figure out a way to address it, otherwise it will do long-term harm."

如上所述，在中国约 900万辆召回汽车中，超过 700万辆是日本汽车。随着日本汽车因质量低劣而臭名昭著，许多中国汽车经销商和分销商一直在永久性地倾销这些品牌，尤其是在**消费者的强烈反对导致销量下降了 60%以上**，使日本的市场份额在一个月从 **30%降至7%**之后。一位行业

权威人士表示：“我从未见过这么多经销商抛弃日本品牌。对买家和经销商的心理影响是无与伦比的。（日本）汽车制造商必须想办法解决这个问题，否则会造成长期伤害。”

I must say the deterioration in the quality and reliability of Japanese autos was a surprise, though perhaps it shouldn't have been. **When Japan restarted its consumer manufacturing after the Second World War, all Japanese products were atrocious.** Nothing worked. Things either didn't work at all, or if they did work they immediately broke. Colors ran, fabrics frayed, electronics failed or melted. Everything was cheaply-made. The early models of Japanese autos were laughable, the second generation a distinct improvement but still quite substandard. I am aware of no products not fitting this description. And it wasn't because the Japanese didn't try; they just didn't have the skills or knowhow to make good products. But they persevered and constantly improved, and **one day the world awoke to realise that Japanese products were some of the best in the world**, certainly far better than anything the US could produce and sometimes as good as or better than Germany.

我必须说，日本汽车质量和可靠性的下降令人惊讶，尽管这可能不应该发生。当日本在第二次世界大战后重新开始消费制造业时，所有的日本产品都很糟糕。什么也没用。事情要么根本不起作用，要么如果起作用了，就会立即破产。颜色褪色、织物磨损、电子产品故障或熔化。一切都是廉价制造的。日本汽车的早期型号很可笑，第二代有了明显的改进，但仍然不合格。据我所知，没有不符合此描述的产品。这并不是因为日本人没有尝试；他们只是不具备制造好产品的技能或知识。但他们坚持了下来，并不断改进。有一天，全世界都意识到，日本的产品是世界上最好的，当然比美国能生产的任何产品都要好得多，有时甚至比德国好。

But that was yesterday. For reasons I don't pretend to fully understand, **the Japanese abandoned their respect for quality in an unusual way. They didn't follow the Americans in a downhill quest to make things more cheaply; they still made expensive parts but made them so carelessly and recklessly that manufacturing flaws emerged seemingly everywhere,** while the quality control became so slipshod that flawed products were shipped from Japanese factories by the millions in so many industries. The problems first seemed to surface in electronics, with items like cameras and computers that had glaring manufacturing faults and were clearly substandard, but shipped and sold nevertheless. Astoundingly, these firms often denied the flaws in their products and in many cases stubbornly refused repair or replacement, doing substantial damage to the nation's reputation, a problem that is increasing. **Japanese autos have gone from some of the best in the world to some of the worst, in less than a generation.**

但那是昨天。出于我不完全理解的原因，日本人以一种不同寻常的方式放弃了对质量的尊重。他们没有跟随美国人走下坡路，追求更便宜的产品；他们仍然制造昂贵的零件，但制造得如此草率和鲁莽，以至于制造缺陷似乎无处不在，而质量控制变得如此草率，以至于许多行业的数百万人从日本工厂运出有缺陷的产品。问题似乎首先出现在电子产品上，相机和电脑等产品存在明显的制造缺陷，显然不合格，但仍在运输和销售。令人惊讶的是，这些公司经常否认其产品存在缺陷，在许多情况下顽固地拒绝维修或更换，对国家声誉造成了严重损害，这一问题正在加剧。在不到一代人的时间里，日本汽车已经从世界上最好的汽车变成了最差的汽车。

In 2014, Toyota issued some huge worldwide recalls involving almost 6.5 million vehicles for a host of different problems spanning about 30 different models, and **in China Honda alone accounted for more than half of the total number of recalled vehicles.** The major Japanese firm that produces airbags for many brands of cars, is involved in a total recall of **millions of defective airbags that would likely fail when needed, yet the factory continued to ship that same model long after the problems became known.** They have also attempted to dodge government safety regulations. The US Transportation Department levied a substantial fine on Toyota for failing to report safety defects in the company's cars; apparently the company intended to avoid the issue by pretending it didn't exist - a disturbing trend apparent among many Japanese manufacturers in the recent past. I would say **the most sensible course of action would be to abandon Japanese products in their entirety,** not only for the shoddy quality but perhaps even more for the inexplicably obstinate determination to deny obvious faults, and even more to defiantly refuse repair or compensation. This has gone far beyond a simple matter of quality control in one corporation, and **appears more a kind of perverted national plan to commit industrial suicide.**

2014年，丰田在全球范围内进行了一些大规模召回，涉及近650万辆汽车，涉及约30种不同车型的一系列不同问题，仅在中国，本田就占召回汽车总数的一半以上。这家为许多品牌的汽车生产安全气囊的日本大公司参与了数百万个有缺陷的安全气囊的全面召回，这些安全气囊在需要时可能会失效，但在问题被发现很久之后，该工厂仍在继续运送同一型号的安全气囊。他们还试图规避政府的安全规定。美国交通部对丰田公司处以巨额罚款，原因是该公司未能报告其汽车的安全缺陷；显然，该公司试图通过假装不存在来避免这个问题——这一令人不安的趋势在最近的许多日本制造商中很明显。我想说，**最明智的做法是彻底放弃日本产品，不仅是因为质量低劣，也许更重要的是因为它莫名其妙地固执地决心否认明显的缺陷，甚至更大胆地拒绝维修或赔偿。**这远远超出了一家公司简单的质量控制问题，**更像是一种变态的国家自杀计划。**

As recently as seven or eight years ago, Japanese autos had some of the highest residual values in the industry, with most brands retaining about 40% of their original value after four years. That appears to be changing. It is worth noting that the more expensive brands lose their value much faster than do the basic models, brands like **Mercedes and BMW, Infiniti and Lexus, losing as much as 60% of their value in only three years.**

就在七八年前，日本汽车的剩余价值还是业内最高的，大多数品牌在四年后仍保留了约40%的原始价值。这种情况似乎正在改变。值得注意的是，价格更贵的品牌的价值损失速度远快于基本车型，如**梅赛德斯和宝马、英菲尼迪和雷克萨斯**，仅在三年内就损失了高达**60%**的价值。

The figures for American brands are typically much worse - American-branded automobiles typically lose nearly 50% of their value in the first year. Here is a sample for one GM Buick model in North America:

美国品牌的数据通常要糟糕得多——美国品牌的汽车通常在第一年就损失了近50%的价值。以下是通用别克在北美的一款车型示例：

Year Retained cost % Resale Value

0 (New) 100% \$35,465.00

1 48% \$17,023.20

2 40% \$14,186.00

3 32% \$11,348.80

4 26% \$9,220.90

年度留存成本%转售价值

0 (新) 100%35465.00美元

1 48%17023.20美元

2 40%14186.00美元

3 32%11348.80美元

4 26%9220.90美元

This is why so many people in North America buy used cars - they let the first owner lose 50% or 60% of his money. And this is why everyone in Canada or the US or Europe can afford to buy a car. A 10-year-old auto costs very little, but can still operate well. I bought my first car when I was 18 years old, and paid \$400. Any high-school kid can work at McDonald's for the summer, and save enough money to buy a small old car of some kind. **The reason North American cars lose so much of their value is that the quality has always been so low the cars became a 'throw-away' item.**

这就是为什么北美有这么多人购买二手车的原因——他们让第一位车主损失了 50%或60%的钱。这就是为什么加拿大、美国或欧洲的每个人都能买得起汽车的原因。一辆使用 10年的汽车价格很低，但仍然可以很好地运行。我 18 岁时买了第一辆车，花了 400美元。任何一个高中生都可以在麦当劳工作一个夏天，省下足够的钱买一辆小型旧车。**北美汽车失去如此多价值的原因是质量一直很低，以至于汽车成了“扔掉”的东西。**

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 - **CCTV Consumer Affairs Program**
 - **中央电视台消费者事务节目**
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Each year China's CCTV broadcasts a consumer affairs program in which it targets some of the more egregious consumer frauds occurring in the country, generally dishonest schemes by foreign companies to take advantage of uninformed Chinese consumers. **The program is excellent, and very necessary.** This excellent program has only

one flaw, which is that it is broadcast only once a year. China needs one of these a week, to properly educate consumers about the traps waiting for them when dealing with most foreign companies. There are of course some Chinese companies that have conducted frauds or engaged in dishonest behavior, but **most of the consumer frauds in China, and certainly all of the large ones, almost without exception, have been conducted by foreign companies, most of those being Jewish-American.**

中国中央电视台每年都会播出一个消费者事务节目，针对中国发生的一些更严重的消费者欺诈行为，这些欺诈行为通常是外国公司利用不知情的中国消费者的不诚实计划。这个节目非常棒，非常有必要。这个优秀的节目只有一个缺陷，那就是一年只播一次。中国每周都需要一个这样的机会，让消费者了解在与大多数外国公司打交道时等待他们的陷阱。当然，也有一些中国公司进行了欺诈或从事了不诚实的行为，但**中国的大多数消费者欺诈，当然还有所有大型欺诈，几乎无一例外，都是由外国公司进行的，其中大多数是犹太裔美国人。**

Most Chinese are very appreciative of these consumer programs. One consumer expert quoted in a Financial Times article said, "The Chinese government was traditionally more concerned about companies' interests, and would cover up corporate scandals if it thought they would result in losses or damage an industry's reputation". I don't know if that were ever true, but it certainly is true no longer because the problems have gotten entirely out of hand. But the FT did manage to locate a dissenting voice in the person of **Qiao Mu, a journalism professor at Beijing Foreign Studies University**, who claimed CCTV's programs were "controversial" and that they were a bad thing because "It panders to a certain type of nationalism" and targets only foreign companies. Mr. Qiao is entitled to his opinions, but to suggest that foreign companies should be off-limits to exposure of frauds and other criminal behavior because that might inspire the wrong kind of "nationalism", is too nonsensical to bother refuting. Perhaps when a BMW dealer charges him 100,000 RMB to replace a 10 RMB auto part, he'll feel differently. **And perhaps in the meantime the Beijing Foreign Studies University should re-evaluate its hiring practices.**

大多数中国人都非常欣赏这些消费项目。英国《金融时报》的一篇文章援引一位消费者专家的话说，“中国政府传统上更关心公司的利益，如果认为公司丑闻会导致损失或损害行业声誉，就会掩盖这些丑闻”。我不知道这是否是真的，但肯定不再是真的了，因为问题已经完全失控了。但英国《金融时报》确实找到了**北京外国语大学新闻学教授乔木的反对声音**，他声称中央电视台的节目“有争议”，是一件坏事，因为“它迎合了某种类型的民族主义”，只针对外国公司。乔有权发表自己的意见，但如果说外国公司应该禁止暴露欺诈和其他犯罪行为，因为这可能会引发错误的“民族主义”，那就太荒谬了，无法反驳。也许当宝马经销商向他收取10万元更换10万元汽车零部件的费用时，他会有不同的感受。也许在此期间，北京外国语大学应该重新评估其招聘做法。

In several of its broadcasts, CCTV focused in large part on the auto industry, the unfavorable publicity thankfully producing positive results for countless hundreds of thousands of Chinese auto buyers. The program revealed **a great problem with fraudulent overcharging for repairs**, especially among the so-called luxury brands, as well as **foreign automakers that were knowingly selling large numbers of cars with defective major parts, strenuously avoiding recalls or free warranty repairs**, and often denying the very existence of problems in spite of large numbers of customer complaints. As if this weren't bad enough, these events were concurrent with

vast **conspiracies to fix auto and parts prices** and violate most portions of the country's anti-trust laws, these latter investigations resulting in fines of billions of RMB.

在几次广播中，中央电视台在很大程度上关注了汽车行业，谢天谢地，不利的宣传为成千上万的中国购车者带来了积极的结果。该计划揭示了一个巨大的问题，即欺诈性的维修滥收费用，尤其是在所谓的豪华品牌中，以及**外国汽车制造商中，他们在知情的情况下销售大量主要部件有缺陷的汽车，极力避免召回或免费保修，并经常否认问题的存在**，尽管有大量客户投诉。似乎这还不够糟糕，这些事件与**操纵汽车和零部件价格的大规模阴谋**同时发生，并违反了该国大部分反垄断法，后一项调查导致了数十亿元人民币的罚款。

In 2015, CCTV's consumer program contained a portion on dealer honesty when finding faults and conducting repairs. I suppose it should be admitted that auto dealerships in many countries are essentially criminal enterprises, more marauding pirates than product salespeople, so it isn't surprising to find the same problems in China. CCTV and government inspectors are performing an invaluable public service in creating faults in cars, then delivering them to dealers to watch the outcome and see which dealerships charge exorbitant fees to resolve minor problems. CCTV reported that 16 of 22 dealers cheated them badly, while the government inspectors reported 7 of 12 dishonest dealerships. CCTV particularly exposed Nissan, Shanghai Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz dealers falsely reporting or exaggerating problems with vehicles so they could charge high repair fees. Here are a few typical examples from reports in the Shanghai Daily:

2015年，中央电视台的消费者节目包含了一部分关于经销商在发现故障和进行维修时的诚信。我想应该承认的是，许多国家的汽车经销商本质上都是犯罪企业，抢劫的海盗比产品销售人员多，所以在中国发现同样的问题并不奇怪。CCTV和政府检查员正在为汽车制造故障提供宝贵的公共服务，然后将其交给经销商，以观察结果，并查看哪些经销商收取高昂的费用来解决小问题。中央电视台报道称，**22家经销商中有 16家严重欺骗了他们，而政府检查员报告了 12家不诚实经销商中的 7家。中央电视台特别曝光了日产、上海大众和梅赛德斯-奔驰的经销商谎报或夸大车辆问题，从而收取高昂的维修费。**以下是《上海日报》报道中的几个典型例子：

- - - Shanghai Mercedes dealer, **Shanghai Dongchi Auto Repair Co.** on Zhaohua Road charged a customer almost 28,000 RMB to replace a part, when the repair should have cost about 100 RMB, according to the Shanghai Consumer Rights Protection Commission.
 - A Shanghai BMW dealership, **Shanghai Fande Auto Sales and Service Co.**, charged a customer 100,000 RMB to repair fictional problems with the gearbox of a car, when all that was wrong was a faulty heat sensor.
 - CCTV reporters disconnected an ignition coil in a Nissan Teana and sent the car to a **Nissan dealer in Hangzhou**, who charged 1,000 RMB for what should have been a 30-second 'repair'. The service man named Ma suggested an urgent repair was necessary and was quoted as telling the customer "More serious problems will occur if it is not fixed immediately, like cold may lead to pneumonia if it is not cured".

- Another **Nissan dealer in Hangzhou** charged 3,000 RMB for the same 'fault', claiming to the customer that all six ignition coils and spark plugs needed replacement. Another Nissan shop in Anhui charged almost 500 RMB to replace that same disconnected ignition coil.
- Three **Shanghai Volkswagen dealers in Tianjin** charged 1,500, 700 and 800 RMB for the same disconnected coil in VW Passat cars. All dealers claimed all the spark plugs needed replacement.
- A **Mercedes-Benz dealer in Hefei** charged more than 10,000 RMB for the same disconnected ignition coil and added many other "necessities" like cleaning and replacing filters.
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- 据上海市消费者权益保护委员会称，**上海梅赛德斯经销商、位于昭华路的上海东驰汽车维修有限公司**向一位客户收取了近 28000元的更换费用，而维修费用本应约为 100元。
- **上海宝马经销商上海范德汽车销售服务有限公司**向一位客户收取了 10万元人民币的维修费，当时一辆汽车的变速箱出现了虚构的问题，而所有的问题都是热传感器出了故障。
- 央视记者断开了一辆日产天籁的点火线圈，并将车送到了**杭州的一家日产经销商那里**，该经销商收取了 1000元人民币的“修理费”，本应是 30秒。这位名叫马的服务人员表示有必要进行紧急维修，并告诉客户“**如果不立即修复，会出现更严重的问题，比如感冒如果不治愈可能会导致肺炎**”。
- **杭州的另一家日产经销商**因同样的“故障”收取了3000元，并向客户声称六个点火线圈和火花塞都需要更换。在安徽的另一家日产汽车店，更换同样断开的点火线圈，收费近 500元。
- **上海大众在天津的三家经销商**对大众帕萨特汽车的同一个断开线圈收取 1500、700和800元的费用。所有经销商都声称所有的火花塞都需要更换。
- **合肥的一家梅赛德斯-奔驰经销商**为同样断开的点火线圈收取了超过 1万元的费用，并增加了许多其他“必需品”，如清洁和更换过滤器。

The CCTV program featured a segment on **Jaguar Land Rover**, noting the company was selling models in China with faulty gearboxes, JLR eventually having to recall nearly 40,000 expensive Range Rovers, the Western media calling this "the first casualty of a renewed state media assault on foreign automotive brands". But the company was accused mostly of refusing to respond to customer complaints, which typically involved a sudden loss of speed and reverse gear faults, the problems existing even after the gearboxes were replaced, indicating a serious basic design flaw. Land Rover stupidly denied the existence of problems and accused customers of 'driving too fast'. But CCTV proved that Land Rover was fully aware of the problem and had issued internal "confidential" notices to its engineers. Land Rover's response was the typical MNC rubbish propaganda about core values, and expressing their 'gratitude' to CCTV for publicly exposing their rubbish automobiles.

中央电视台的节目中有一个关于**捷豹路虎**的片段，指出该公司在中国销售变速箱有故障的车型，捷豹路虎最终不得不召回近 4万辆昂贵的路虎揽胜，西方媒体称这是“**官方媒体再次攻击外国汽车品牌的第一个受害者**”。但该公司主要被指控拒绝回应客户投诉，这些投诉通常涉及突然失去速度和倒档故障，这些问题甚至在更换变速箱后仍存在，这表明存在严重的基本设计缺陷。路虎愚蠢地否认存在问题，并指责客户“**开得太快**”。但CCTV 证明，路虎完全意识到了这个问题，并向其工程师发出

了内部“机密”通知。路虎的回应是典型的跨国公司关于核心价值观的垃圾宣传，并对CCTV公开曝光他们的垃圾汽车表示“感谢”。

Then we had Volkswagen. I would begin by stating that **VW had for several generations been a great company**, producing generally small cars but of good quality accompanied by good service and a reassuring amount of honesty. **No more. VW today gives all the signs of its management consisting of 50% European bankers and 50% Italian Mafia.** In 2015 and 2016, VW were exposed in the US in an immense, years-long fraud of falsifying fuel economy and other data, and were projected to be liable for fines in the billions of dollars, as well as more than \$10 billion in shareholder lawsuits claiming the criminality of the company's executives was responsible for the 40% drop in the stock price. China has also had its share of VW dishonesty and fraud, and I have seen nothing to convince me the situation will change.

然后我们有了大众汽车。我首先要说的是，**大众几代人以来一直是一家伟大的公司**，生产的汽车通常都很小，但质量很好，服务也很好，诚实守信。**不再。如今，大众给出了其管理层的所有迹象，该管理层由 50%的欧洲银行家和 50%的意大利黑手党组成。**2015年和2016年，**大众在美国被揭露了长达数年的伪造燃油经济性和其他数据的巨大欺诈行为**，预计将被处以数十亿美元的罚款，以及超过 100 亿美元的股东诉讼，声称公司高管的犯罪行为是股价下跌 40%的原因。中国也有大众的不诚实和欺诈行为，我没有看到任何东西能让我相信情况会改变。

In 2015 many Volkswagen customers in China were having apparent problems with what appeared to be serious oil leaks and with complaints of leaked oil pooling in the engine tray, a condition that would easily become a fire hazard. Customers complained that VW dealers ignored their complaints, telling owners such leaks were normal, but such leaks are not normal and are indicative of a serious flaw. It was discovered that VW had recalled almost 100,000 cars in several other countries for precisely this problem, suggesting the issue was a widespread flaw in oil seals or some such. It was only due to CCTV's consumer affairs program that this issue was brought into the public light and the company agreed to deal with it properly. VW, of course, didn't care to comment publicly on the matter.

2015年，**大众汽车在中国的许多客户都遇到了明显的问题**，他们似乎严重漏油，并抱怨泄漏的机油积在发动机托盘中，这种情况很容易成为火灾隐患。客户抱怨大众经销商**无视他们的投诉**，告诉车主此类泄漏是正常的，但此类泄漏不正常，表明存在严重缺陷。人们发现，正是因为这个问题，大众在其他几个国家召回了近 **10万辆汽车**，这表明这个问题是油封中普遍存在的缺陷。正是由于中央电视台的消费者事务节目，这一问题才被公之于众，公司同意妥善处理。大众当然不愿意公开评论此事。

A more serious issue occurred two years earlier, where large numbers of VW cars were plagued with a defective DSG transmission that would cause engine power failures or result in the car accelerating or decelerating while driving, a serious and potentially deadly condition. From my information, VW denied for some time the transmission was flawed, and apparently refused to face or deal with the problems. At least one owner whose car suddenly lost power and stopped on the highway claimed the dealer told him

the transmission was not responsible for the power loss. Drive train defects can occur to anyone, but this one had a different flavor. I read **industry reports claiming VW had manufactured hundreds of thousands of this new transmission model before realising it had a major design defect that could not be repaired, meaning the transmissions would have to be scrapped** and a new model designed and manufactured. **The reports claimed VW would not install this defective transmission in its cars in Europe but instead shipped them all to China for installation in autos manufactured there.** If these facts are correct, this would lead one to speculate the company made a conscious decision to (1) protect its reputation in Europe and (2) avoid the losses of replacing defective transmissions by installing them in its autos in China, hoping Chinese consumers would be sufficiently inexperienced and uninformed, and could be bullied into accepting flawed merchandise.

两年前发生了一个更严重的问题，当时大量大众汽车都受到 DSG 变速器故障的困扰，这会导致发动机功率故障，或导致汽车在行驶时加速或减速，这是一种严重且可能致命的情况。根据我的信息，大众在一段时间内否认变速器有缺陷，显然拒绝面对或处理这些问题。至少有一位车主的车突然失去动力并停在高速公路上，他声称经销商告诉他变速器不对动力损失负责。传动系故障可能发生在任何人身上，但这次有不同的味道。我读到**行业报告称，大众在意识到其存在无法修复的重大设计缺陷之前，已经制造了数十万辆这种新型变速器，这意味着变速器将不得不报废，并设计和制造新的变速器。报道称，大众不会在欧洲的汽车上安装这种有缺陷的变速器，而是将其全部运到中国，安装在那里生产的汽车上。如果这些事实是正确的，这将导致人们猜测，该公司做出了一个有意识的决定：（1）保护其在欧洲的声誉，（2）通过在中国的汽车中安装有缺陷的变速器来避免更换有缺陷变速器的损失，希望中国消费者足够缺乏经验和无知，并可能被胁迫接受有缺陷的商品。**

In any case, VW strongly resisted a recall, eventually whining that it would cost hundreds of millions of dollars to replace all those transmissions. Well, that's what happens when you create a bad design and don't test it properly, there being no reason consumers should suffer for a manufacturer's mistakes. Eventually the Chinese authorities ordered VW to accept its legal obligations or endure the publicity of a forced recall. I thought that to be a surprisingly gentle response, since in most other nations, including VW's home of Germany, there would have been heavy fines for an attempt to bury a serious drive train defect. VW did offer to extend the warranty, which is a useless gesture in such a case, and it was noted that **VW offered Chinese buyers a shorter warranty than it offers its customers in other countries, and further that VW regularly performs warranty repairs with used or refurbished parts** - a rather dirty practice that should be both illegal and carry severe punishment.

无论如何，大众强烈抵制召回，最终抱怨更换所有这些变速器将花费数亿美元。好吧，当你创造了一个糟糕的设计，但没有正确地测试它时，就会发生这种情况，消费者没有理由为制造商的错误而痛苦。最终，中国当局命令大众接受其法律义务，否则将被迫召回。我认为这是一个令人惊讶的温和回应，因为在大多数其他国家，包括大众的家乡德国，如果试图掩盖一个严重的传动系缺陷，就会被处以巨额罚款。大众确实提出延长保修期，在这种情况下是一种无用的姿态。有人指出，**大众向中国买家提供的保修期比向其他国家的客户提供的保修更短，此外，大众定期用旧零件或翻新零件进行保修维修，这是一种相当肮脏的做法，应该是非法的，并受到严厉惩罚。**

It isn't clear if Chinese authorities were aware of the scale of this problem, but in any event the volume of customer complaints prodded CCTV to include this issue in one of

their consumer affairs program, after which it became clear the transmission was indeed hopelessly defective. In the end, **VW was forced to recall almost 400,000 vehicles to replace the transmissions and install rewritten software - free of charge - at a cost of up to 10,000 RMB per car, for a total of about 4 billion RMB or \$600 million.** The company claimed this second massive recall occurred because it "misjudged the scope of the defective units", a claim I find difficult to accept. Volkswagen was China's top selling automaker in 2014, and one would think the company would prefer to protect its reputation, but it seems not. Once again, if these facts are correct, and they appear to be, **China has once again become the world's garbage can.**

目前尚不清楚中国当局是否意识到这一问题的严重性，但无论如何，大量的客户投诉促使中央电视台将这一问题纳入其消费者事务节目，之后很明显，传输确实存在无可救药的缺陷。最终，**大众被迫召回近40万辆汽车，免费更换变速器并安装重写软件，每辆车的成本高达 1万元人民币，总计约 40 亿元人民币或 6 亿美元。**该公司声称，发生第二次大规模召回是因为“误判了缺陷部件的范围”，我很难接受这一说法。大众汽车是 **2014年中国销量最高的汽车制造商**，人们会认为该公司更愿意保护自己的声誉，但事实似乎并非如此。再一次，如果这些事实是正确的，而且看起来是正确的话，**中国又一次成为了世界的垃圾桶。**

VW had another serious issue a year earlier with its cars in China, this time with apparently defective rear axles that could rupture under certain conditions, with potentially fatal results. Chinese authorities spent considerable time examining this problem, interviewing thousands of customers, collecting evidence of more than 10,000 malfunction events, and performing on-site inspections in many cities, as well as conducting lengthy discussions with company officials and having independent inspection companies perform tests. VW's first offer was to simply attach a small metal plate to the trailing arm of the suspension, but most owners found this unacceptable and wanted a suspension replacement. In the end, Volkswagen announced a recall of almost 600,000 Sagitar sedans and imported Beetles in China due to risks of broken rear axles. The company claimed the axles and suspensions would be perfectly safe provided the cars did not suffer any side or rear impact accidents, not entirely comforting to the owners.

一年前，**大众在中国的汽车**又出现了另一个严重问题，这一次的后桥明显有缺陷，在某些情况下可能会断裂，并可能导致致命后果。中国当局花了大量时间研究这个问题，采访了数千名客户，收集了 **10000多起故障事件**的证据，在许多城市进行了现场检查，还与公司官员进行了长时间的讨论，并让独立的检查公司进行了测试。大众的第一个提议是简单地在悬架的拖臂上安装一块小金属板，但大多数车主认为这是不可接受的，并希望更换悬架。最终，大众汽车宣布在中国召回近 **60万辆**速腾轿车和进口甲壳虫，原因是存在后轴断裂的风险。该公司声称，如果汽车没有发生任何侧面或后部碰撞事故，车轴和悬架将是完全安全的，这对车主来说并不完全是一种安慰。

After denying the problem existed, it was discovered that VW was also recalling its cars in the United States to fix the same suspension issue, for a total of more than 1 million vehicles in the two countries, so this was a bit more than nothing. As well, it seems that VW's claim of suspension problems existing only in autos that had experienced a side collision was also untrue since many customers denied that assertion, and surveys indicated that a great many autos with this same problem had never been involved in a collision of any kind. To add insult to injury, **VW**

made yet another of those despicably arrogant and racist comments we see so often in China:

在否认问题存在后，人们发现大众汽车也在美国召回其汽车，以解决同样的悬架问题，在这两个国家总共召回了 **100多万辆汽车**，所以这有点像什么都没有。此外，大众声称悬架问题只存在于发生过侧面碰撞的汽车中，这似乎也是不真实的，因为许多客户否认了这一说法，调查表明，许多有同样问题的汽车从未发生过任何类型的碰撞。雪上加霜的是，**大众再次发表了我们在中国经常看到的卑鄙傲慢和种族主义言论**：

"It has been determined that the suspension arm broke because the driver continued to drive the car although the axle had been damaged in an accident. If you just keep driving with a bent axle the suspension arm can break. We are talking about a very severe rear-end collision after which a driver in Europe would take the car to the workshop, but in China they don't."

“已经确定，悬架臂断裂是因为司机继续驾驶汽车，尽管车轴在事故中受损。如果你只是在车轴弯曲的情况下继续驾驶，悬架臂**可能会断裂**。我们谈论的是一起非常严重的追尾事故，之后欧洲的司机会把车送到车间，但在中国，他们不会。”

I have to say VW's accusation of Chinese drivers not having the sense to take a car to a repair shop after a severe rear-end collision, was a detestable attempt to escape responsibility by trashing Chinese people and its own customers. VW is capable of making very good cars, but it is my personal view that the company would benefit measurably from experiencing 6 months of no sales in China, to explain something to them in a way they will understand.

我不得不说，**大众指责中国司机**在发生严重追尾事故后没有意识开车去修理厂，这是一种令人憎恶的企图，目的是通过诋毁中国人和自己的客户来逃避责任。大众有能力制造非常好的汽车，但我个人认为，该公司将从**6个月没有在中国销售中受益匪浅**，以他们理解的方式向他们解释一些事情。

Commenting on these issues, one industry analyst stated, "That to some extent **shows [foreign] carmakers in China are weak in voluntary recalls and shouldering social responsibility**. In fact, Volkswagen's gearbox problems emerged last year, but it did not plan a recall until pressure from customers and the media grew." Another noted that in the past few years, **VW has recalled many vehicles in other markets to fix faulty transmissions, and didn't insult customers by denying the existence of the problem**. In the case of China above, VW reluctantly ordered a recall only after enormous pressure due to public exposure and embarrassment in the media but, and in spite of having to spend in total \$700 or \$800 million on recalls, still stubbornly refused to admit anything was wrong.

一位行业分析师在评论这些问题时表示，“这在一定程度上**表明**，**（外国）汽车制造商在中国的自愿召回和承担社会责任方面较弱**。事实上，大众汽车的变速箱问题去年就出现了，但直到客户和媒体的压力越来越大，它才计划召回。”另一位分析师指出，在过去几年里，**大众在其他市场召回了许多车辆来修复故障变速器**，并没有否认问题的存在来侮辱客户。

在上述中国的案例中，大众在公众曝光和媒体尴尬的巨大压力下才勉强下令召回，但尽管不得不在召回上总共花费 7 亿或 8 亿美元，大众仍然顽固地拒绝承认任何错误。



A couple of years ago, **Mercedes-Benz enjoyed some unexpected public participation in their grand exhibition booth at the Guangzhou auto show** when people unfurled large banners condemning the company's service attitude and warranty policies, with one banner proclaiming "A one-million yuan Benz only one month old, had four engine breakdowns. Refund!" A few years earlier, the furious owner of a Mercedes destroyed his car with a sledgehammer in public after a miserable year of unending problems that the company apparently refused to remedy adequately or to replace the car. Mercedes, of course, played dumb, with statements quoted in the Global Times like "*We'll have to verify his claims with the after-sales department ... We don't have any information on the situation ... We need to investigate ... We'll contact the car owner as soon as possible.*"

几年前，梅赛德斯-奔驰（**Mercedes-Benz**）在广州车展（**Guangzhou auto show**）的盛大展台上获得了一些意想不到的公众参与，当时人们展开了谴责该公司服务态度和保修政策的大横幅，其中一条横幅上写着“一辆价值 100 万元的奔驰车，才开了一个月，就发生了四次发动机故障。退款！”，一位愤怒的梅赛德斯车主在公众面前用大锤砸毁了他的车。在经历了悲惨的一年之后，该公司显然拒绝充分补救或更换汽车。当然，梅赛德斯装聋作哑，《环球时报》援引其声明称，“*我们必须向售后部门核实他的说法.....我们没有任何有关情况的信息.....我们需要调查.....我们会尽快联系车主。*”

There are two issues here, both inexplicable, symptoms of a degenerate medical condition that seems to occasionally affect all makers of expensive cars. Certainly the dealers are all sweetness and light while waiting for a prospective purchaser to hand over his money, and are even pleasant enough after the sale when facing minor warranty items. But a subtle change takes place where the dealers and the factories will adamantly refuse to even recognise, much less deal with, potentially expensive repairs, these almost inevitably related to engines and transmissions. Regardless of the

high prices paid for these so-called luxury automobiles, and of the warranty guarantees, the prior claims of high quality and guarantees of service evaporate in direct proportion to the cost of a repair. In the first example above, the car undoubtedly had a bad engine that should have been replaced, but no expensive car dealer will do that without a lawsuit and a court order regardless of the bad publicity. While happy to repair small things, they will fight for years to avoid the expense of a major repair. The other item is that infrequently a car appears to have been born with a curse. In the West, we call them 'lemons'. From the first day, nothing seems to work properly. When one thing is repaired, something else immediately fails, in an unending stream of misery for the new owner. In these cases, the auto dealers and companies are even more stubborn. They know full well what they are dealing with because they have seen it countless times before, but again will fight for years while incurring large amounts of unfavorable publicity and ill will, and simply refuse to consider the customer's position. In either case, the dealer could simply replace the car with only a small loss, by repairing the car and selling it off as a 'demonstrator', but I have never known this to happen. **And inevitably, the more expensive the car and the more serious the problem, the more obstinate and reluctant the dealer and the factory will be to remedy the situation.**

这里有两个问题，都是莫名其妙的，一种退化的疾病症状，似乎偶尔会影响到所有昂贵汽车的制造商。当然，经销商在等待潜在买家交钱时都很温和，甚至在销售后面对小保修项目时也很愉快。但一个微妙的变化发生了，经销商和工厂将坚决拒绝承认，更不用说处理潜在的昂贵维修了，这些维修几乎不可避免地与发动机和变速器有关。**不管**这些所谓的豪华汽车的高昂价格和保修保证，之前对高质量和服务保证的索赔与维修成本成正比。在上面的第一个例子中，毫无疑问，这辆车的发动机很糟糕，应该更换，但如果没有诉讼和法院命令，任何昂贵的汽车经销商都不会这么做，不管宣传效果如何。虽然他们乐于修理小东西，但为了避免大修的费用，他们会奋斗多年。另一件事是，汽车似乎很少天生就有诅咒。在西方，我们称它们为“柠檬”。**从第一天开始，似乎没有什么能正常工作。一件东西修好了，另一件东西马上就坏了，给新主人带来了无尽的痛苦。**在这种情况下，汽车经销商和公司更加顽固。他们非常**清楚自己在处理什么**，因为他们以前见过无数次，但他们会再次斗争多年，同时招致大量不利的宣传和恶意，并拒绝考虑客户的立场。在任何一种情况下，经销商都可以通过修理汽车并将其作为“演示者”出售，只需少量损失即可更换汽车，但我从未想过会发生这种情况。**不可避免的是，汽车越贵，问题越严重，经销商和工厂就越顽固和不愿意补救这种情况。**

The examples above with the two Mercedes owners are not exceptional, and are in fact rather common. The same would occur with Range Rovers, Jaguars, Ferraris, Rolls-Royce, and every other expensive marque. They will all happily repair small things but when exceptional circumstances demand the replacement of the entire suspension or drive train, the proud new owner is quickly abandoned in his misery. I know. I've been there. Especially with expensive automobiles, it is usually a bad idea to buy a "new" car in the sense of a new model when first offered for sale or an existing model with an entirely new generation of engine, transmission or suspension. These almost always have flaws that are revealed and re-engineered during the first year or two of manufacture, with subsequent years being quite trouble-free. I don't know of a useful solution to the above problems, except maybe to bring your lawyer and the police to the final signing of the purchase contract, to impress your service expectations upon the dealer. It should be noted that each of these escape attempts, such as the two above with Mercedes, are almost always illegal acts that violate the contractual warranty and would thus receive support from the courts. And

finally, I believe **these problems are more severe in China than in Western nations, primarily because the auto manufacturers assume correctly that their Chinese customers are often first-time purchasers with little experience in the shady practices of auto dealers and less likely to be well-informed about the behavior of a good car, less well-informed about a dealer's obligations, and much less likely to sue.** Yet one more sign of contempt for the goose that's laying the golden egg.

路虎揽胜、捷豹、法拉利、劳斯莱斯和其他所有昂贵的品牌也会出现同样的情况。他们都会很乐意修理小东西，但当特殊情况需要更换整个悬架或传动系时，这位自豪的新车主很快就陷入了痛苦之中。我知道。我去过那里。尤其是对于昂贵的汽车，购买一辆新车型或配备全新一代发动机、变速器或悬架的现有车型通常是个坏主意。这些产品几乎总是有缺陷，在制造的第一年或两年内就会被发现并重新设计，随后的几年则完全没有问题。对于上述问题，我不知道有什么有用的解决方案，除了可能让你的律师和警察参加购买合同的最终签署，以给经销商留下你的服务期望。应该注意的是，每一次逃跑企图，比如上面两次与梅赛德斯的逃跑企图，几乎都是违反合同保证的非法行为，因此会得到法院的支持。最后，我认为这些问题在中国比在西方国家更为严重，主要是因为汽车制造商正确地认为，他们的中国客户往往是第一次购买汽车的人，对汽车经销商的阴暗行为几乎没有经验，也不太可能对一辆好车的行为知情，起诉的可能性要小得多。**还有一个迹象是对下金蛋的鹅的蔑视。**

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Mr. Romanoff's writing has been translated into 32 languages and his articles posted on more than 150 foreign-language news and politics websites in more than 30 countries, as well as more than 100 English language platforms. Larry Romanoff is a retired management consultant and businessman. He has held senior executive positions in international consulting firms, and owned an international import-export business. He has been a visiting professor at Shanghai's Fudan University, presenting case studies in international affairs to senior EMBA classes. Mr. Romanoff lives in Shanghai and is currently writing a series of ten books generally related to China and the West. He is one of the contributing authors to Cynthia McKinney's new anthology 'When China Sneezes'. (**Chapt. 2 — Dealing with Demons**).

罗曼诺夫的作品已被翻译成 32种语言，他的文章发表在 30多个国家的150多个外语新闻和政治网站以及 100多个英语平台上。拉里·罗曼诺夫是一位退休的管理顾问和商人。他曾在国际咨询公司担任高级管理职务，并拥有一家国际进出口公司。他曾是上海复旦大学的客座教授，为 EMBA高级课程讲授国际事务案例研究。罗曼诺夫先生住在上海，目前正在写一系列与中国和西方有关的十本书。他是辛西娅·麦金尼新选集《当中国打喷嚏》的特约作者之一。（**第二章——对付魔鬼**）。

His full archive can be seen at

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