

China Eye



SACU: The Society which has promoted understanding between the peoples of China and the UK since 1965

Autumn 2023

Number 79



Contents include:

Everyday Life in China

Lee Kai Hung Gallery at Manchester University

Jessie Booth at Chinese Government Office (pt 2)

Reading about China

Hot Dog, Frozen Kitty

Isabel Crook; An Appreciation

Bob Benewick; An Appreciation

Review of China's Hidden Century Exhibition

Democracy in China

Sino File and China Eye Diary

CHINA EYE

Autumn 2023 Issue No 79

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Front cover: Silk Spinning, Beijing (WF)

Back cover; Flying Horse of Gansu, at Gansu Provincial Museum, Lanzhou (WF)

All photographs are by the authors except where stated.

Welcome

SACU's AGM will be held in Manchester at the Manchester University Museum on Oxford Road. Afterwards there will be a conducted tour of the new Lee Kai Hung Chinese Gallery, Saturday 23 September. Details are in the SACU E Mail Newsletter

BRICS conference in South Africa

The Johannesburg summit has admitted six new countries to the group: Argentina, Iran, Ethiopia, Egypt Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The summit was attended by more than 50 heads of state and governments and more than 30 other countries are believed to want to join. They are all developing nations including some very populous countries such as Indonesia, Mexico and Nigeria. Criteria has been agreed to consider applicant nations. Mr Xi told the conference that the BRICS s would pool their strengths and wisdom to make global governance more just and equitable. There seems to be range of reactions in the British press to this. One calls for *better understanding*. Why do these nations want to join a group that some regard as a 'rival' to the G7? A very sensible question.

Sinophobia; de-coupling or de-risking

The Sinophobia continues; I am afraid it is very deep seated. Some MPs have suggested that Chinese made electric cars, could be used for spying! It will be interesting to see what effect this will have on cheaper Chinese electric car sales.

However, the 'decoupling' attitudes from China have changed to the less extreme of 'de-risking'. Western politicians have come to realise that they cannot just have no contact with China which is what 'decoupling' entails. China is the main trade partner of many Western countries.

If companies are told to stop selling certain goods to China, they have to find other customers. In some cases, China takes about 30% of their produce. Biden has put in place more restrictions on selling some high-tech goods to China, but they will not come into effect until next year, presumably so alternative customers can be found? Western governments are beginning to recognise that everybody loses by de-coupling or even de-risking.

University research – Chinese connections

The results of research in British universities funded or jointly funded by Chinese companies are available to both the British university and the Chinese partner. If Chinese students, usually PhD candidates are doing the work, the British university has both the benefit of talented Chinese researchers and their fees, significantly higher than that of UK students. Much of this work would have to stop if Chinese funding was not available or if Chinese researchers had to leave everyone would lose. Some really toxic reports have appeared in the press about 'stealing' of intellectual property'. The authors seem unaware of the number of Chinese patents being issued annually and also the number of citations Chinese research papers attract.

Maglev Trains; 600 km/hr (372 m/hr)

China is developing Maglev trains which are capable of 600 km/hr or 372 mph. Imagine being able to travel from; Liverpool to Manchester in 10 minutes; London to Manchester or Liverpool in less than 40 minutes. This would help eliminate the 'north-south' divide? More important it would eliminate the need to fly and contribute to reduced carbon emissions. Regular long-distance Maglev services are a long way off even in China but existing Chinese high-speed trains can average 200 mph, which still means Liverpool to Manchester in 15 minutes and Liverpool and Manchester to London about an hour.

Green energy and climate change

It is gratifying that more and more UK reports are stating that China generates more 'green' energy than any other country, but then says China is still building coal-fired power stations. However, energy is needed to construct 'green' facilities, which is why Richi Sunak is allowing more North Sea oil drilling. Maybe the government and press should explain this more carefully.

China's hidden century

I visited this exhibition in the British Museum, which is on until 8th October. It can be expensive, £22, but I was only charged £10. It is much more extensive than I expected. More than half the visitors seemed to be Mandarin speaking Chinese, making careful assessments. I was surprised to see a pair of two metre high cloisonne vases sent by China for the coronation of King George V.

Opium was mentioned and discussed in the catalogue. The benefits to commerce both to Britain and to China (!) are pointed out. The catalogue quotes that a German Lutheran translator for William Jardine would have identified the opium trade as a necessary evil to reach the potential souls that could be saved (!). Missionaries made great efforts to convey Christianity to China and some did emphasise the appalling damage opium caused to Chinese health, but this was not mentioned sufficiently well in the exhibition.

Overall, I would recommend the exhibition to those who have a specific interest in China, possibly not to a casual visitor. Chris Nash's impressions are on page 10.



Chris Nash visited SACU in Manchester on 18th July to meet North-west SACU members and for a meal at the A Plus Chinese Restaurant. Left to right; Peter Xu, Walter Fung, Jenny Clegg, Fang Zong, Chris Nash, Yaying Deng and Hui Cooper

Walter Fung

Can you contribute to SACU's Mission?

友 To promote friendship and mutual understanding between the peoples of Britain and China.

友 To provide facts and analysis about China – not uncritically but always from a firm basis of friendship.

友 To help the British people understand the meaning of China – past and present.

SACU Council strives to achieve these aims but needs the support of individual members. All SACU Council members are volunteers, nobody is paid. If you can help, please contact **Chris Nash, SACU Chair**, email: chris1nash@me.com

Membership

Membership is open to all who subscribe to SACU's aims. Membership applications and renewals can be made online by logging into SACU's online membership account from our website: <https://sacu.org/join.html>

Membership rates:

Individual	£23
Retired/Unwaged	£18
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Cheques may be made payable to SOC FOR ANGLO-CHINESE UNDERSTANDING LTD and send to: Mrs Rosamund Wong, SACU Membership Secretary, c/o 27 Portland Close, Bedford MK41 9NE, Mobile: 07906 956426 email: membership@sacu.org.uk

Your email address will be used only for SACU purposes. It will not be passed to any other person or organisation without your permission. In circulars such as the SACU email newsletter your email details will be 'blind' and not visible to others.

China Eye

Recent back copies are available to view on our website: <https://sacu.org/magazine.html>

All earlier issues of SACU's magazines *China Now*, *China in Focus* and *China Eye* are available to members in our digital archive: <https://archive.sacu.org> (Please ask for members-only password)

SACU Newsletter

We circulate a monthly email newsletter to all members. Newsletters include notices of forthcoming events, member news, and links to topical information that we consider will be of interest to SACU members. Members are invited to send items for inclusion to the SACU newsletter team: newsletter@sacu.org.uk Please remember, you can unsubscribe at any time.

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Our social media channels carry posts and news of events which inform and educate our members and readers about China, especially positive aspects to balance the negative aspects we so often read in the UK media.

SACU Digital Archive

Launched at Chinese New Year 2023, our magazines and early newsletters, SACU documents and rare photo collection can be viewed online: <https://archive.sacu.org> (Please ask for members-only password)

SACU Events

Please keep an eye on our website, social media and members newsletter for news of forthcoming SACU events. SACU holds events for the public and some members-only meetings. Events are held on Zoom or are hybrid (both in-person and on Zoom). Our AGMs are held as hybrid events.

Working Groups meet online to discuss selected topics or plan new events. All members are warmly invited to join a working group. Interested? Please email Jacob Holliday, SACU Secretary, jacob@sacu.org.uk

SACU's membership is spread across the UK and beyond and Zoom has enabled us to reach more of our members and the public than we did before the pandemic, when we held in-person meetings only, so we continue to hold some online and some hybrid events.

SACU Speakers Bureau

This includes members who offer to give talks in schools or to other organisations on topics relating to China, always from a SACU standpoint of friendship and understanding. Please get in touch if you would like SACU to speak at your school or if you would like to join the bureau as a speaker.

SACU/Peking University Essay Competition

Our annual essay/multimedia competition for schools, generously sponsored by Peking University. Are you connected with a secondary school which would like to take part? Do get in touch.

If you have any membership questions, please contact: **Ros Wong**, membership@sacu.org.uk

Aspects of Chinese Democracy and Progress

Walter Fung

Democracy; Definition

The Western media is constantly using the word democracy and dividing the nations of the world into two categories, democratic and authoritarian (non-democratic by the Western perception). My Concise Oxford Dictionary defines democracy as *'having government by all the people, direct or representative; form of society ignoring hereditary, class distinctions and tolerating minority views'*.

A definition from the internet says, *'A system of government by the whole population of the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives'*. Note the word *'typically not exclusively'*. Elections, voting, with multiple candidates and election campaigns are central to the Western system.

John Keane in his book, *The Life and Death of Democracy*, Simon & Schuster, 2009, states his belief that history is a key for understanding democracy at the present time. His perspective implies that democracy does not have just one and only distinctive form, one model, that can be brought as a 'gift' to peoples which have different attitudes and history. He also strongly questions the old assumption that democracy is a universal norm that reflect Western values.

Western politicians seem to believe that all nations should adopt the Western system. They state that nations engaged with China 'so they (China) would become more like us, but it is not happening.' Recently an American politician sought alliances with other countries, to ensure that China, which does not share our values, retains only its proper place in the world. Do these not imply attitudes of elitism and supremacy? Can there be a single system applicable to all nations, cultures, history and state of development? Do people still believe in Francis Fukuyama's 'End of History', liberal democracy being the ultimate form of government?'

During the Coronation of King Charles III and in the service for the victims of the murders in Nottingham, faith leaders including, Anglican, Catholic, Jewish, Islam, Hindu and Sikh were all included. In the past, many of these religions fought each other to the death. Now, most respect each other, treat each other as equals and accept their differences.

A Hindu friend once told me. 'All religions teach goodness; they are different paths to the same goal' Can there not be different paths to good and effective government? Hopefully, the time will come when nations will accept and respect their differences. Instead of a 'clash' of civilisations, there will be a 'cooperation' of civilisations to achieve harmony throughout the world. The rise of China is a reality which has to be accepted.

Chinese Democracy; how does it work?

In China the Communist Party (CPC) is the ruling party. It has about 98 million members and all sectors of society are represented. About 52% have degrees, 34% are workers or

farmers, 12% are managers, 16% are professionals, 25% are 35 years old or younger, 8% are from ethnic minorities and 29% are female. (Approximate figures based on a report in *Beijing Review* 12/5/22) Jiang Zemin, in his 'Three Represents' motion in 2002, allowed businessmen and entrepreneurs into the CPC; everybody is represented.

China claims to have what is termed 'Whole Process Democracy' which works. It involves consultative meetings and direct elections at village level. Information articles on the internet, white papers and consultations at every level of social and political life, inform citizens of proposed government policy. In addition, the Chinese government uses extensive public opinion surveys directly via the internet on all major policy decisions and other issues. There are very many consultations and discussions to achieve a consensus.

A major institution in China is the Chinese Peoples' Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). As the name implies, the CPPCC is a consultative and advisory body in which every sector of the Chinese nation has a chance to discuss policy and proposed government action. Member are drawn from all 56 ethnic groups and representatives of all parts of society. An important feature of the CPCC is that eight political parties other than the Communist Party of China (CPC) also participate. These other parties cooperate with the CPC. There are delegates from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and overseas Chinese.

Each year the CPPCC meet at the same time as the National Peoples' Congress (NPC), China's Parliament. The two meetings are referred to as 'The Two Sessions'. The NPC is invariably described by Western media as the 'rubber stamp'. How disrespectful!

The Chinese Government work with 'Five-Year Plans'. It publishes the details of what it intends to do beforehand and each year at the meeting of the 'Two sessions,' progress is evaluated in public reports and speeches by senior government officials. They include the First Secretary of the CPC and the Premier. People are informed of what has, or has not, been achieved and what is to be done in the coming period. Is this not a form of accountable government?

The Chinese system allows effective long-term planning, continuity and therefore a better chance that projects will be completed. China believes that systems of government have to evolve individually in each country, without foreign interference, and its nature depends on that country's culture and history.

Achievements. Success a measure of legitimacy?

Some people cannot appreciate the size of China's population. At 1.44 billion, it is about 4.2 times the size of the US and 20 times that of the UK. It is a highly diverse country with 56 ethnic groups and vast differences in wealth, education and culture. There are difficulties not experienced in smaller, less diverse countries.

In 1949, China was in a state of complete ruin after the Japanese invasion and occupation. Twenty million had been killed and one hundred million -a quarter of the population -

were refugees in their own country; literacy was around 20%, expectation of life about 35 years, infant mortality was 195/1000. Poverty was almost universal. Many people were undernourished and starving and much had to be done quickly.

By 2022, extreme poverty had been eliminated and there are now 400 million middle class Chinese. This figure is growing daily. As many as 850 million people have been pulled out of poverty and this has entailed creating jobs and housing for tens of millions of people every year for decades. Health care, social services and infrastructures also had to be provided. Now, literacy over 97%, infant mortality 5.7 per 1000 and expectation of life, about 78 years are similar to those in the US. In education, China has established schools for all children and also universities, some of which are now approaching world class.

The West appears to use Human Rights as a political weapon, but the ultimate human right is freedom from poverty and the ability to buy food, shelter and clothing. Without these other freedoms are meaningless. Asian aspects of human rights emphasise the collective group and responsibilities rather than rights of the individual.

Economic reform did not really start until Deng Xiaoping's reforms of 1978. The national GDP at that time was tiny-about \$218 billion (at that time UK \$335 billion) compared to what it is today, now about \$18 trillion (83 times greater). Now China has the largest economy in terms of Purchasing Parity (PPP) and second only to the US in absolute terms.

China issues more patents than any other country; the published information is available to anyone. It is a world leader in some aspects of science and technology and artificial intelligence. China now has a manned space station orbiting the earth and a rover on the planet Mars. Eric Li in his TED talk, suggests the CPC earns its legitimacy by competence. The TED talk, 'A Tale of Two Political Systems' is highly recommended. It is clear, concise and is easily accessible on YouTube.

The Western nations are worried about the 'threat' of China. But China does not have a history of aggression. It has not fought a war since 1949, The 1979 Vietnam war lasted only two weeks. No land was captured. It was a 'punitive war,' and in response to Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia.

Does the government have the backing of the people?

Pre-pandemic, 140 million Chinese tourists travelled abroad and they all went home and hundreds of thousands of Chinese students are studying in Western countries (over 120,000 in the UK) and none seek political asylum.

The Harvard Gazette (via internet 14/6/23) reports that the Ash Center in the US, found in the 2016 survey (the latest) that 95.5% of the Chinese respondents were satisfied with their government. In addition, the Edelman Trust Barometer consistently find that over 80% of Chinese trust their government. Edelman is a US organisation. The Ipsos surveys (Paris) over the past few years have found that about 90% of Chinese think China is on the right track. Also, Dalia Research (Berlin) has shown that 73% of

Chinese believe their country is a democracy. Some analysts have described it as a 'consultative meritocracy'.

The Future

The Chinese system is not perfect but continues to improve. China is still a developing country both economically and politically and is still only in the early stages of socialism. Although 400 million Chinese are middle class there is still a long way to go to eliminate differences in people's income and inequalities between different regions of China.

The emphasis is now on high value goods, innovation and a commitment to scientific and technological advancement. Infrastructure is being built such as the 40,000 km of high-speed railway. China is already the largest trading nation in the world and this will increase with Belt and Road programmes in which about 70% of the countries of the world are involved. Regarding Climate Change, China's carbon emissions are scheduled to peak by 2030 (some analysts believe this may be achieved five years early) and carbon neutrality is planned by 2060. Even now, China is a world leader in green energy production with more wind turbines, solar panels and new energy vehicles than any other country. Long term plans are for China to achieve 'common prosperity,' be an all-round prosperous country by 2035, and be a beautiful country and a world leader in all aspects by 2049- the 100th Anniversary of the Peoples Republic of China.

Below are ten photographs; the first six were taken in 1983 on my first visit. The subsequent four were taken on visits about 25 years later showing the incredible progress made during this fairly short period of time.



Central Beijing looking south-west in 1983



Shanghai 1983, not far from Nanjing Road



Xi'an 1983. Characters say, 'protect the environment



Shanghai 1983, near a commune



A suburb of Xi'an in 1983



Central Guangzhou 1983. Entrance to Qingping Market



Shanghai business area



Central Chongqing riverside



Shanghai approaching Jingan Temple



Central Chongqing, Liberty Square

Some aspects of everyday life in China

James de Burgh

James is a SACU member living in Nanning, Guangxi province. He first visited China in 1987 and has lived there since 2004.

Chinese Hospitals and Community Medical Care

Health care in China uses a model that is unfamiliar in most western nations. It has two main precepts; -

- Available to all 24 hours a day 7 days a week
- The best and most modern medical care available to mankind

A typical Chinese hospital is split into departments in a similar way to western hospitals but with an additional department for general medicine that patients use when they are not entirely sure of what is wrong with them. The Accident and Emergency departments are very different to the western equivalents so I will start there.

The first thing to notice is that there is no waiting time. You enter, are registered and immediately placed upon diagnostic machines that check your general health. Meanwhile blood samples are taken and any immediate wounds or injuries are treated by teams of doctors and nurses. Once you are stabilised you are passed onto a ward under the care of a specialist or specialists for more complex problems. My own experience of A&E in China confirms the above, while one nurse jotted down my details another was already taking blood samples, I was admitted to a ward less than 15 minutes later. Two specialist groups deal with victims of road injuries or major accidents and if needs be an off-duty shift of doctors and nurses can be called in.

In terms of the other routine departments patients are always seen the same day and receive the same range of diagnostic treatments, scans, ultra scans, blood tests, heart monitoring etc etc. The procedure is simple you phone the hospital and are given a time slot to attend. You will always see a specialist and if your condition needs hospital treatment you are admitted straight away if not the specialist will give you a prescription for whatever medicine you need (if any) and book you in for a further appointment to check progress. The hospitals are squeaky clean and care levels are not only professional but also very human.

There are no GPs in China so hospitals carry the load of treating every imaginable ailment. Some effort is being made to spread the load by opening local clinics. This practise was already in place to deal with pre and post natal care and child health care and now city districts small towns and village complexes are being provided with clinics staffed by doctors and nurses and equipped with a full range of diagnostic tools and used as primary health care centres.

In remote areas mobile clinics visit villages on a daily basis and provide primary health care. Many of these villages are a long way from a hospital so a helicopter ambulance service is provided to ensure that urgent cases receive prompt treatment. Midwives, trauma doctors and nurses are on call at the Helicopter base 24 hours a day and can generally reach any village within 15 minutes. These services co-ordinate with the fire service to provide medical aid in cases of rock falls and other hazards common to the remote areas. Payment for services is usually via the national health insurance plan, people not on the plan sign a pledge to repay the costs of their treatment, but in reality, if they are too poor to pay the local government picks up the bill.

In terms of bed ratios to population I am not entirely sure of the answer. The city I live in, Nanning, has a population of around 6 million people and has 27 general hospitals and five specialist hospitals. As the hospitals pride themselves on same day admission then I would assume that the bed ratio to population is quite high. Having said that treatment is intensive so hospital stays are probably shorter than in the UK.

Dentistry

Going to the dentist in China is totally different to the UK. First, you just walk in whether it is a small one dentist practise or a large multi-practise. In the smaller practices there is zero privacy and the treatment room is usually a shop front with a large window where anyone passing can watch what is going on. In the larger practices there may be partitioned off treatment, but the partitions are only shoulder high, so as you walk to your partition, you can see other patients undergoing treatment. Having said that, in every respect, the treatment is excellent. The equipment is ultra-modern and spotlessly clean; hygiene levels are very high. Avoidance of pain or discomfort is a priority and a range of techniques are used to ensure that patients are kept pain-free.

Costs are much lower than in the UK, as I can testify; a single crown cost me £400 in the UK. Here in China, I had eight crowns and a bridge made for less than £100 and 15 years later they are still there and trouble-free. My UK crown fractured in less than a year. After all those long waits to see a dentist on the NHS, it was refreshing to be able to walk in and get seen the same day.

Crime in China

Crime rates are very low in China. Street crime is very rare; if there are incidents, they make headline news. You can walk anywhere safely any time of the day or night.

Violent crime is very also rare but when it does happen the community helps the police. Car theft is really a mugs game here as all major roads and motorways have toll booths. As you pay for distance travelled each vehicle is registered joining and leaving that road or motorway. (the tolls are small a 400 mile trip to Guillen costs 20 yuan in tolls.) Hence car theft is very rare, the most common theft is stealing batteries from E-bikes but even that has dwindled as the police tracked down the repair shops that bought the batteries from the thieves and broke up the rings that made the crime worthwhile. I should add that the police are popular as they are courteous, and helpful. Chinese police are unarmed except in very special circumstances such as the terrorist attacks in Xinjiang. Burglary rarely happens because most people in the cities live in gated compounds, so entry and exit is controlled to some extent especially at night. A friend of mine working at the local university was burgled and the police response was fast and efficient, they caught the burglar and returned his property in three days.

Shopping in China

The daily needs of people see them shopping in supermarkets and local covered markets. The covered markets provide fresh vegetables and fruit as well as fresh meat, the supermarkets cover just about everything else including household goods. Bread and cakes are covered by bakeries all around the city and small shops up through to large department stores cater for shoes and clothing. In my home town, Nanning, there is a huge mall that deals with nothing else but computers and mobile phones. Prices are low and the increased standard of living and rises in disposable income mean that the majority of people can afford all the benefits of modern life, for instance 50-inch widescreen TV costs 800 yuan here. The internet shopping malls provide for just about everything else, you can even buy a combined harvester on the internet.

Remembering a True Friend of China

It is with great sadness and respect that SACU marks the passing of Isabel Crook whose death at 107 years old was announced yesterday. In her remarkable life, Isabel was a true pioneer of friendship between China and the world.

Isabel was born in Chengdu in China in 1915, the daughter of missionaries. She spent her childhood in China but went to complete her higher education in Canada. She qualified as an anthropologist and in the 1940's returned to China with her husband. She decided to study the impact of the land reforms then being introduced by the government on improving the lives of ordinary people. The result of this was the publication of 'Revolution in a Chinese Village: Ten Mile Inn', a book which played a significant role in educating the world about developments in the New China.

Later in their lives, Isabel and her husband, David, became pioneering teachers first in Hebei and then at Beijing Foreign Studies University. As a teacher, Isabel influenced the education of generations of Chinese graduates, winning many life-long friends. She dedicated her life to making her contribution to improving the quality of education in China wherever and however she could.

Isabel took up the cause of the cooperative movement in China and in the 1980s worked with Rewi Alley, Israel Epstein and SACU's former chair, Derek Bryan, to revive the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives - Gong He. She carried on this work for many years and it was through Isabel that SACU built links with the ICCIC and with the Baillie Schools (now universities) in Beijing and Gansu.

Isabel made a lasting contribution to SACU through her family. Two of Isabel's three sons are SACU members - Michael and Paul. Michael Crook is also Director of the ICCIC - the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives which is an institutional member of SACU.

Zoë Reed, when Chair of SACU, had the privilege of visiting Isabel on three occasions - in June 2016, November 2017 and September 2018. On each occasion Isabel's warmth and interest in others was very apparent. As Zoë said, "Whilst Isabel's extraordinary place in history is for others to tell, for me it remains the memory of her being such a gentle and lovely person".

In 2007, Isabel was awarded the title of "Tenured professor emeritus" by Beijing Foreign Studies University. She received other honours such as "One of the Top Ten Meritorious Foreign Teachers" by the Chinese government and the "the Most Influential Foreign Experts at the 40th Anniversary of China's Reform and Opening-up" in 2016 and 2018. In September 2019, she won the Friendship Award of the People's Republic of China, the highest medal of honour in China for foreigners. Xi Jinping himself awarded the medal to Isabel.



Photo shows from left to right; Michael Crook, Richard Poxton, Isabel Crook, Zoë Reed, Prof. Sun Hua.



Isabel's 104th Birthday (photo by Tamara Treichel)
Isabel with Tamara at Babaoshen Cemetery

While we mourn Isabel's passing I'm sure every SACU member will honour her life by renewing their dedication to the cause of 'building everlasting bridges' of friendship between China and the United Kingdom.

Isabel Crook played a significant role in China's socialist development. Xi Jinping personally awarded her a medal of honour. Jenny Clegg knew Isabel well and is to write a fuller account of Isabel's life in the next China Eye.

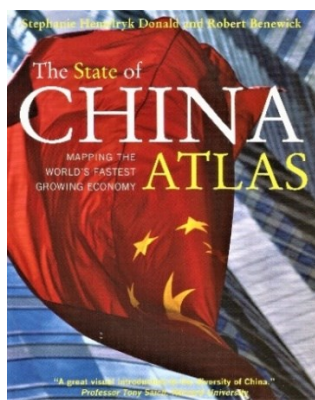
Chris Nash

Bob Benewick; an Appreciation

It is with great sadness and respect that we record the passing of Robert Benewick, formerly Professor of Politics and then Emeritus Professor at the University of Sussex. He was the author of numerous academic publications on the development of modern China. His writings are another vital part in the building of bridges and understanding between China and the world by education. He was a 'Life-long Educator about China' Bob joined SACU in 1975 and was an active member of the society; a member of the editorial board of the SACU magazine, *China Now*. He took over the position of Char of SACU from Jim Pennington in 1986 He held this until 1990 and then became a Vice-president until 2013. At the age of 80, ten years ago, he resigned all his SACU posts.

SACU had a growing membership in the mid-1980s and a number of lively branches. Work was flourishing with the successful tours programme and along with the tours team, SACU also employed a librarian/education and community worker. As chair, Bob brought efficiency to Council overseeing with our organisation's diversifying activities. He gave the benefit of his experience and knowledge to other council members; he helped Walter Fung with the historical sections of the SACU Handbook in 2013.

However financial difficulties related to RMB devaluation in 1987 came to a head in 1989, and Bob had on his hands the problem of managing the closure of the SACU office in Camden and its move to Cheltenham with the transfer of the library to the Great Britain-China Centre, all this whilst arranging support for Chinese students in Britain distressed by events at home in China.



Bob had an influential reputation as a Professor of Politics at the University of Sussex. His books on China included *Reforming The Revolution* and *China in the 1990s*, both with Paul Wingrove, also a SACU member, and *Asian Politics in Development* with Marc Blecher and Sarah Cook. His *State of China Atlas* as well as *The Pocket China Atlas*, both co-authored with Stephanie Donald, were key texts for undergraduate reading lists for years, the former running to three editions.

SACU extends our condolences to his family and friends. His memory will live on in our hearts as a loyal and articulate colleague and an honoured friend of China.



A SACU Tour of China (about 1986); Front row Bob is on the right; Asa Briggs, SACU President is on the left.

Bob's passing was reported in *The Guardian*:

Benewick, Robert Julian ('Bob') on 29 July 2023 aged 90. Emeritus Professor of Politics at the University of Sussex, Bob will be sorely missed by Kate, niece of his first wife Anne; Louisa and Emma, daughters of his second wife Joan; and his extensive family of friends across the country – especially in Brighton and Hull – as well as in China, Jamaica and the USA.

Keith Bennett has supplied further information about Bob. His significant contributions to SACU were in fact only a small part of his activities and achievements. He was the author of several books on political related topics. The University of Sussex has prepared a very detailed account of Bob and his life, which has been posted on their 'Hub'. A link is supplied here;

[Obituary: Robert Benewick : Staff Hub : University of Sussex](#)

His funeral took place at 12 noon at Woodvale Crematorium in Brighton on Saturday 9th September.

Chris Nash

A Review of 'China's Hidden Century' by Chris Nash

Throughout the summer and until October 8th there is an exhibition at The British Museum entitled 'China's Hidden Century'. It covers the period of the nineteenth century, which parallels the Victorian period in British history. And just as in Britain this was a time of great turbulence and change. The challenge confronting this exhibition is how do you tell the story of social change through objects, the 'things' that museums inevitably have in their collection.

The exhibition starts with life at the late Qing court and glass cases of spectacular costumes worn by court officials and even by Empress Dowager Cixi (see photo below) who in effect ruled China from 1861 to 1908. Cixi is a controversial figure who even today divides opinion. To some Cixi is a negative presence, blamed for the failure of China to modernise. Supporters of this side of the argument point to evidence such as the way in which Cixi crushed the Hundred Days Reform initiative, an attempt led by the Emperor Guangxu, to change the very way in which China was governed towards a more constitutional organisation.

To others Cixi is a brave woman doing her best in an impossible situation to balance competing, destructive forces and preserve the Qing vision of China. On this side of the argument, we have facts such as Cixi's decision to support the 1900 Boxer Rebellion in its uprising against the western powers then greedily and mercilessly trying to turn China into a colony, torn up and distributed amongst themselves.

My problem with this part of the exhibition is that it doesn't really help us to understand the challenges that were influencing Cixi's decision making. Some in China still refer to this period as the 'century of humiliation' and in my opinion the exhibition fails to witness the destructive ferocity with which Britain, France, Germany and Russia in their own ways tried to dismember China. One of the most notorious incidents from a Chinese perspective was the looting and pillaging of Beijing including the Summer Palace, the Yihéyuán. Two cultural fragments stolen from the palace presumably by British soldiers, are presented in the exhibition. We have to ask why they haven't been returned to China? t there was another side to this story of humiliation, a story of Chinese resistance. We know that China was at an enormous military disadvantage compared to the weapon power that had been developed in the centuries of warfare and imperial aggression in the west.

This is represented in the exhibition by medieval looking armour and equipment used by some parts of the Chinese military at the time. But this fails to tell the whole story. The fact is that at this time China was attempting to modernise, starting with developing the modern military technology needed to protect herself. In 1865 an arsenal was built in Nanjing by General Li Hongzang, who made sure that it produced artillery according to the latest scientific principles. In 1884 and 1885 there was a largely forgotten war in the west in which French armies attacked Chinese territory in northern Vietnam and Yunnan province.

The reason it's forgotten is because the Chinese successfully defended the borderlands and inflicted a number of defeats on the French army. France was at that time the second most powerful colonial power in the world, after Britain. In March 1885 a Chinese victory in the Battle of Zhenan Pass led to a crisis in France called The Tonkin Affair and the fall of the French government of the day. I saw elements of this history for myself in a museum in the city of Jianshui. Yet none of this can be found in the British Museum version of the 'hidden century'.

A section of the exhibition is concerned with Arts and Culture, which I know will be of interest to many SACU members. There is a fascinating story to be told here of the cultural impact of tensions between the traditional and the



modern, between the 5000-year inheritance of Chinese expression and the increase in encounters with literary and

other aesthetic ideas from the wider world. There are interesting examples of the beginnings of western influenced print media in Shanghai from the 1850's where, as would happen later with film, Chinese writers and publishers quickly adapted the lithographic medium to match the interests and needs of a Chinese audience.

The exhibition does a good job of supporting the cultural contributions of women artists in the Qing era, for example the talented painter Cao Zhenqiu, who was described as an 'amateur, despite all of her splendid accomplishments, simply on the basis of her gender. However, I don't think the exhibition gives us enough of a sense of the emerging Chinese modernism. From this period there is the story of the poet Huang Zunxian, who combined the ability to write in the Chinese classical style with a fascination with a cosmopolitan content.

Although he used traditional poetic forms as a literary method for making the complex changes of the period more understandable to both himself and his readers, Huang dismissed the typical content of earlier poetry as 'empty talk' and wrote instead about events from his travels, including America and Britain. In "Moved by Events" ("Gan shi"), a poem written to describe the court of Queen Victoria in England, where he was assistant to the Chinese ambassador to England he writes:

古今事變奇到此	The changes from past to present— they are so very strange indeed!
彼己不知寧毋恥	If we remain ignorant about them and us— would not it be a shame?

Lines which could very well have been the subtitle to a deeper version of this whole exhibition.

This exhibition also tries to portray the everyday life of ordinary Chinese people at this time. This section opens with a dramatic glass case enclosing the rain wear of the working classes, all made from natural fibres. Ironically from our 21st century ecological crisis we should be seeing value in such sustainable garments, but it painfully illustrates the fact that life in Qing China was the same backbreaking struggle as centuries of labouring ancestors. In my mind, the exhibition does not develop this theme enough. The rest of the exhibits in this section memorialise the material culture of an emerging middle class. Important as this is, it doesn't do justice to events concerning the labouring and agricultural poor that would soon become the forces that set away Qing rule as China became a republic in 1912.

To understand this period, I refer you to the relevant section of Michael Wood's excellent 'The Story of China'.

According to sources he has found there were 285 peasant uprisings in 1910 as the economic and social fabric of Qing feudalism collapsed. Then he recounts the events of the 1910 Changsha Rising, which began when a young family, mother, father and two children, took their own lives in utter despair at inescapable poverty and starvation.

Michael points out that the uprising and its brutal suppression by Qing forces were witnessed by a 16-year-old Mao Zedong, who retold stories of the events in a famous 1936 interview with the American journalist, Edgar Snow. A year later, in October 1911 in the city of Hankow, all of these social and cultural pressures and tensions erupted in the Xinhai Revolution and the declaration of the new Republic of China on 1 January 1912. I would like to have seen these stories witnessed in the exhibition.

‘China’s Hidden Century’ represents the revolutionary spirit of the times in a different way. It chooses to focus on the incredible life of the poet and educator Qiu Jin.



Portrait photograph of Qiu Jin

I’d urge all of you to follow the story of this remarkable woman. She called herself ‘鉴湖女侠; pinyin: Jiàn hú Nǚxiá; or in English, ‘Woman Knight of Mirror Lake’. She could fight, ride horses and drink alcohol as well as any man. She left her husband and wrote a book of stories encouraging women to escape from family oppression. She co-edited a women’s journal called ‘China Women’s News’ (Zhongguo nǚ bao), which was so revolutionary it was shut down by the authorities. In 1907 she became Principal of a school in the city of Datong, which under cover of being a sports college, prepared students for revolutionary struggle. Her life had a tragic, heroic ending which I will leave you to find out for yourselves. Instead I’ll chose to end on the ringing defiance of her poem, ‘Reflections’

“Unbinding my feet to pour out a millennium’s poisons,
I arouse the spirit of women, hundreds of flowers, abloom.
Oh, this poor handkerchief made of merfolk-woven silk,
half stained with blood and half soaked in tears.”

‘Let’s find out more about the work of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank’ by Chris Nash

On the evening of Wednesday 5th of July I was honoured to be invited to represent SACU at the inaugural meeting of a new organisation currently called The Paddy Ashdown Foundation. This organisation aims to continue the legacy of

this influential British politician of the 1980’s and 1990’s by creating a forum for transformative, joined-up thinking. The first invited guest speaker was Sir Danny Alexander, who was Chief Secretary to the Treasury in the British government from 2010 to 2015 and who is now Vice President of policy and strategy at the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank.

The connection with China is that China is a significant partner in the organisation and furthermore that it is based in Beijing. The AIIB has an important role in funding development in member states. The bank currently has 106 members, including 14 prospective members from around the world. The breakdown of the 106 members by continents are as follows: 42 in Asia, 26 in Europe, 21 in Africa, 8 in Oceania, 8 in South America, and 1 in North America. Involvement in the AIIB is an important way in which China is taking a leading role in global development.

Sir Danny explained the ways in which the AIIB is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (SDG’s). In particular he emphasised that the Bank is fully committed to investing in sustainable projects which will enable countries to meet the commitments of the Paris Agreement, in particular to ensure that global increases in temperatures are kept to less than 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels. In the last two and a half years this has seen the delivery of 200 projects in 35 different countries.

China is set to double its capacity and produce 1,200 gigawatts of energy through wind and solar power by 2025, reaching its 2030 goal five years ahead of time, according to a report by the Global Energy Monitor. Of course, every development of sustainable energy in China has both a local impact in environmental improvements and contributes to global progress towards zero carbon. Sir Danny praised the green aspects of the ‘Belt and Road’ programme but stressed that the bank is independent of any one country. He explained that the AIIB also emphasises gender equality which has been seen as a critical strategy in tackling issues of climate change in the developing world. The Bank operates a South-East Asia Women’s Empowerment Fund.

The meeting finished with a Q and A session. On behalf of SACU, I informed all attendees about our Essay competition which brought together students from China and the UK to research key global issues and which in 2022 had an environmental theme. I urged Sir Danny through his position to try to give more focus to education initiatives as a way of building bridges between the UK and China. Sir Danny praised the essay programme as an excellent example of international co-operation. He also very kindly agreed to facilitate a visit to the AIIB offices in Beijing for my Chinese international students who study in Beijing. I will ask a student to write an article for SACU following the visit.

I’m sure all SACU members will join with me in thanking the Paddy Ashdown Foundation for their kind invitation to us and wish Sir Danny Alexander the best in all aspects of his work which support our SACU mission of growing understanding between China and the UK.

The Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery at Manchester University Museum 李启鸿中华文化馆

Bryan Sitch, Deputy Head of Collections and Dr Fang Zong (宗芳 博士), Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery, Manchester Museum, University of Manchester

The Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery opened at Manchester Museum on 18th February 2023. This 200-square-metre gallery is an exploration and celebration of Manchester and the North West's relationship with China. It is the culmination of five years of preparation, involving consultation with Chinese communities in the city, four visits to China in the year before lockdown and a Headley Trust with Art Fund Fellowship to study Chinese collections in the city and beyond.

It is the first time a permanent Chinese Culture Gallery has been created at Manchester Museum, and it is entirely due to the generosity of Dr Lee Kai Hung, who is a Manchester Chinese businessman and philanthropist. Dr Lee's vision for the gallery is wonderfully encapsulated in a personal quotation on the moon-gate in the gallery:

'If there is no dialogue, there is no understanding
If there is no understanding, there is no trust
If there is no trust, there is no harmony
If there is no harmony, there is no peace'

This has served as the guiding principle of the new Chinese Culture Gallery which aims to build create better understanding between different cultures. The aim is to put the visitor in the shoes of or enable him or her to see life through the eyes of, someone from another community. The themes of the gallery have been carefully chosen in order to maximise empathy:

- Our Shared Environment
- Caring and Healing
- Identity and Belonging
- Trade and Collecting
- Movement and Migration

The Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery is located on the first floor of the museum, adjacent to the Museum's other new flagship gallery, the South Asia Gallery. Although funded separately, the new Chinese Culture Gallery forms part of the *hello future* redevelopment, the £15 million Heritage Lottery Fund project to make the museum one of the most inclusive, imaginative and caring institutions in the world.

A large screen shows a montage of winning entries to the Manchester China Institute's annual photographic competition. The themes of home, friendship and family

help to underline the aim of the gallery which is to create empathy between different communities.

The visitor flow is designed to follow the Chinese custom: starting from the right. The first display is the Bamboo case showcasing the only international loan from China in the new gallery.



Plate 1: Bamboo objects display

The loan is from the Bamboo Ware Museum located in the island city Yang Zhong in the middle of the Yangtze River. It is part of the Chen Lyusheng Museum group. Professor Chen was the Deputy Director of the National Museum of China, and after his retirement he founded this museum group in his hometown. Many parts of the building are made of bamboo, and it is almost entirely powered by solar energy. It is a green museum that shares Manchester Museum's commitment to a more sustainable world.

Bamboo is a fast-growing material which, like plastic the material it is sometimes used to replace, can be used in many ways. China has a long history of using bamboo and holds it in the highest regard as a symbol of good virtue. Bamboo is an essential part of Chinese culture. The great Chinese poet Su Shi (1037-1101) wrote, '*I would rather eat without meat than live without bamboo*', and the British scholar Joseph Needham (1900-1995) stated that '*East Asian civilization is none other than a bamboo civilisation*'. The Bamboo Ware Museum houses over 6,000 bamboo items, ranging from rare Han dynasty (206 BCE – 20 CE) documents to things still in use today. We selected four everyday objects to illustrate the themes of this gallery.

The gift box is for giving food on special occasions. The Chinese characters woven of bamboo strips represent good fortune and the hope of having good salary (career). This fits the theme of *Identity and Belonging*.

The heater has a ceramic pot inside a bamboo frame. People burn dried twigs and leaves, grain stems and even nut shells

in it to keep warm. People can also dry the baby's socks on top of the heater. This supports the theme of *Our Shared Environment*.

The suitcase is used to carry essentials and little luxuries when people travel. This reflects the theme of *Movement and Migration*.

The baby walker is where a child can sit, walk and play inside whilst parents can do some housework. This relates to the theme of *Caring and Healing*.

These four historical bamboo objects were made in the 1950s or 1960s and are still attractive pieces.

In this part of the gallery windows look out into an atrium where there is a large, suspended bamboo artwork by British Chinese artist Gordon Cheung. The bamboo frames are covered with newspaper and are modelled on the windows of traditional Chinese houses which are disappearing now as towns and cities in China undergo redevelopment.



Plate 2: Bamboo artwork installation by Gordon Cheung

Our Shared Environment explores China's importance as a centre of global biodiversity. No less than 8% of the world's plant species are found in China. If this sounds like a relatively low number, Yunnan Province in southwest China alone has no less than 13,000 plant species whereas America's total plant species number 18,000.

It is not for nothing that China has been described as the 'Mother of Gardens'. Many garden plants – some of them now regarded as British stalwarts, including peonies, camellias, plums, chrysanthemums, roses and azaleas, originally came from China. The display acknowledges this debt and highlights the role of native collectors such as Lao Ho, who was plant hunter Augustine Henry's most valued fieldworker.

The gallery does not shy away from difficult issues and points to the exploitative nature of the relationship by which nurseries commissioned plant hunters to go to China to gather seed and specimens for propagation and sale to British garden enthusiasts.

Another section of the display highlights inspiring work by Chinese conservationists on the Loess Plateau which runs

across north-central China, rehabilitating an area of scrub desert the size of the Netherlands and making it green again. A taxidermy specimen of a milu deer – one of the largest exhibits in the gallery - telling the story of how the deer was brought back from the verge extinction by the Duke of Bedford. He gathered together the few live deer in European parks and zoos to create a small herd. As the numbers slowly increased it became possible to return milu deer to China where there are nearly 10,000 milu deer at the latest count.

The return of the milu, an important wildlife conservation story, highlights international collaborative endeavour to protect our shared biodiversity. Also, at the time, it strengthened relations between China and UK. Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013) called it a major event in the history of Sino-British diplomacy in the 20th century. Since 2018, an annual Beijing (International) Milu Culture Conference/Festival is held in Nanhaizi Park which was once a royal milu hunting ground, and today it is a home to a large herd of milu and home of the Beijing Milu Park Museum.



Plate 3: Visitors admiring the Kangxi Birthday Scroll

Opposite the *Our Shared Environment* display is a large vinyl print of a section of Emperor Kangxi's Birthday scroll. This 22-meter-long print has been loaned by the Rylands Library and depicts the emperor's procession through the streets of Beijing. All life is there, including excited crowds, street entertainers, the emperor in a ceremonial carriage and his entourage, shopkeepers and their customers and even elephants and camels. Objects from the Museum collections are shown alongside the illustrations on the scroll, in this way annotating the historical document in 3-D.

The gallery has a number of such set-piece installations. In the middle of the gallery is a star canopy showing the night sky in early August when the stars Vega and Altair appear on either side of the Milky Way. In Chinese mythology Vega is Zhinü, the weaving princess, and Altair is Niulang, the cowherd. Although they came from very different classes of Chinese society, they fell in love and had children. However, Zhinü's grandparents, the King and Queen of Heaven did not approve. The lovers were placed on the

opposite sides of the Milky Way in the night sky. A flock of magpies took pity on the couple and created a bridge between them over the Milky Way, so that they could be reunited on just one day every year. This is the origin of the Double Seventh or Qixi festival, also known as the Chinese Valentine's Day falls on the seventh day of the seventh month of the Chinese lunar calendar. Loves stories are also the subject of a fine Chinese Treasure Cabinet. It is decorated with carved scenes depicting the White Snake and other stories.



Plate 4: The Star Canopy and the Chinese Treasure Cabinet

The display cases in this part of the gallery explore the themes of *Caring and Healing* and *Identity and Belonging*. A life size acupuncture model presented by Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner, Prof Shulan Tang, who is based in Didsbury, Manchester is shown alongside old acupuncture charts lent by Manchester Central Library. A large photographic portrait of a Chinese female tattoo artist Doris Lam challenges stereotypical notions of what constitutes Chinese identity. This is just one of a number of portraits of Chinese people taken for the gallery by University of Huddersfield photography lecturer Dr Yan Wang Preston.

The remaining display cases show *Trade and Collecting* and *Movement and Migration*. Early in the project consultation with members of Manchester's Chinese communities told us that people would expect to see something about the Opium Wars. Opium smoking paraphernalia are shown alongside prints of opium plants and opium poppy seedheads from the Museum's Herbarium.

Also on display is a collection of some fifty bronze pieces including offering vessels, incense burners, figurines, mirrors and bells collected by Thomas Bellot (1806-1857) who served on HMS Wolf as a ship's surgeon in the years following the First Opium War. Bellot bought or traded for the bronzes in Southwest China and the interpretation asks how much say local people had in these transactions.

The display also highlights Manchester Sinophile John Hilditch (1872-1930) who had a large collection of Chinese

cultural material and a temple in Rusholme where for a small fee visitors could attend a religious ceremony. Hilditch told tales of collecting the objects that would not look out of place in an Indiana Jones movie, although there is little evidence he went to China. After Hilditch's death the collection was dispersed but vases have been kindly loaned by Salford Museum and Art Gallery, and by Stoke Potteries Museum.

The emotional heart of the gallery is represented by the Experiencing China and Anglo-Chinese Friendships cases. Here visitors can see a collection of gifts presented to Doug and Rosie Sadler by grateful Chinese newcomers to Manchester who had been helped by the couple. There is also an umbrella presented by members of the Chinese Labour Corps to Lieutenant Thomas Walsh (1877-1970) at the end of the First World War. Walsh had studied Mandarin at the University of Manchester and it seems very likely that the gift was in recognition of the close working relationship that enjoyed with the Chinese workers because of his linguistic abilities.



Plate 5: Experiencing China display case

The last case shows objects loaned by the British Museum and by Manchester Art Gallery that help to link China and South Asia, including fine porcelain vases and carved jade vessels. This serves as a link to the adjacent South Asia Gallery.

The Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery is part of Manchester Museum's *hello future* redevelopment. At the time of writing (late June 2023) over 390, 000 people have visited the newly transformed Manchester Museum. The Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery.

There is a programme of events and activities related to the gallery throughout the year.

The Manchester Museum is open to the public from Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm.

The Museum is on Oxford Road, about half a mile from Manchester city centre, in the Manchester University precinct.

Look Global, Act Local

Hog Dog and Frozen Kitty's World Adventures by Minji Xu

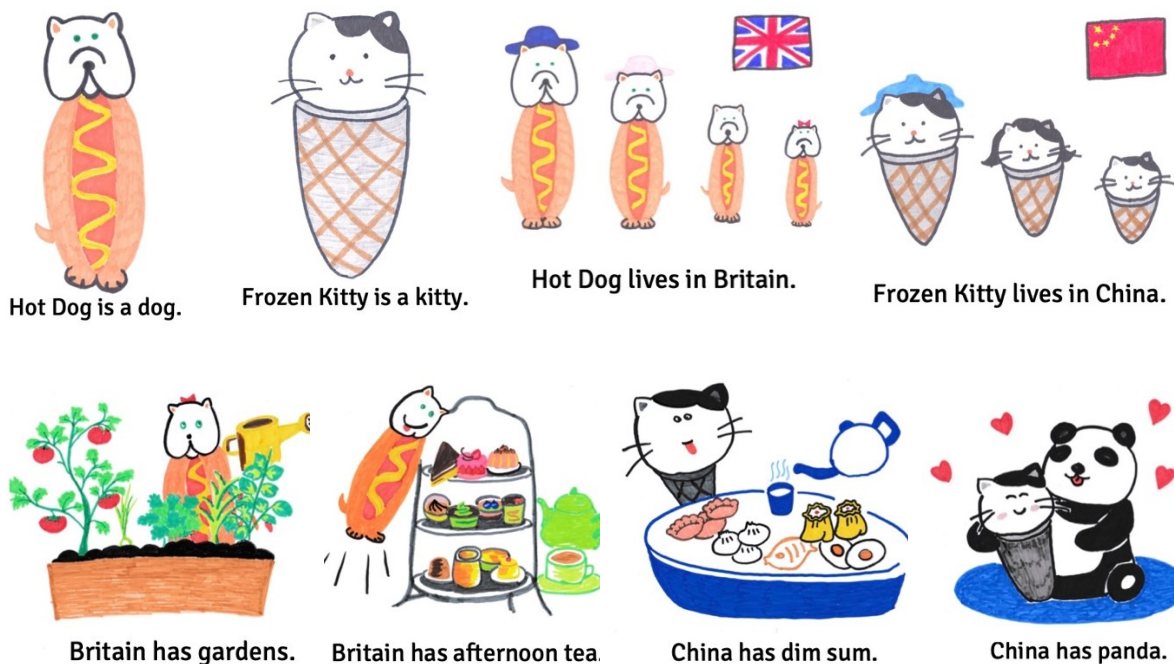
Minji Xu is a SACU member. She is the founder of Creative Chinese Club whose mission is to make learning Chinese fun and grow global citizens. This article is dedicated to the club's recent campaign 'Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty's Global Adventure', its first public display in the UK and some afterthoughts.

Why do children learn Chinese?

Creative Chinese Club offers an engaging learning experience to children around the world. Our youngest learner is age 3 years and the oldest one 12 years. They spread through Asia, Europe, and North America. Some come from heritage families (i.e., one of the family members is a native Chinese speaker), some learn Chinese as their parents hope they will engage in a business or cultural partnership with Chinese speakers in the future.

Who are Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty?

I am a native Chinese-speaker, and my husband Mike is a native English-speaker. We came up with two characters just for fun: an English-speaking Hot Dog and a Chinese-speaking Frozen Kitty. They come from different cultural backgrounds with different personalities. But they are both fun and curious, like every child. What I didn't expect was how well the young learners naturally warmed to them. So, I began to introduce these two characters as children's language learning companions in our lesson plans and story book series.



Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty's global adventure

Some of our learners are very curious about children in other countries. This triggered us to think - can we have a global adventure for Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty, taken by children around the world.

I spoke to about a dozen Chinese families who immediately took up this idea. It was the one-week May national holiday in China so every family was travelling. That week, the Chinese parents and children took cutouts of these two characters to hike, to visit museums and gardens, and to take high-speed bulletin trains. They went all over China!



Inspired by these China adventures, children in other countries followed suit, which really made this campaign global. Over this summer holiday, they have taken Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty to Asia (China, Japan and South Korea); Europe (UK, France, Greece, and Turkey); and various states in the USA. They took part in local events such as the July 4th fireworks in the US, outdoor sports such as surfing, tasted local food and drinks and made some road trips.

These photos (upon families' consent) are used in our curriculum to teach Chinese vocabularies in an authentic context.



What do Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty mean to you?

We asked children and teachers who participated in this global campaign – what do Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty mean to you? Here are some heart-warming answers we got:

“I think Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty are great learning tools to help me understand Chinese better.” – Sam

“Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty are friendly and colorful characters that relate Chinese language to everyday life.” – Luke

“I wasn’t embarrassed to practice my Chinese with Hot Dog & Frozen Kitty. It was okay to make mistakes and learn new words.” - Giovanni

“I liked seeing Hot Dog & Frozen Kitty in parts of the world that I’ve never seen before” - Valentino

“I think Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty are friendly and lovely cultural ambassadors. Chinese language learners around the world can connect with them and get in touch with more wonderful and interesting new cultures.”
– Ruohan

“I think Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty brought me joy for my travel. It really feels like I am taking two friends on a trip.” - Gavin

Look global, act local!

Our mission is to make learning Chinese fun and grow global citizens. Being a global citizen doesn't mean how many countries one has been to or how many languages one speaks. It does not mean one knows how to label people: this is what British people do and this is what Chinese people think. It is about developing skills that allow us to communicate with anybody and support our local community.

We live in Horsham, a market town which is becoming increasingly cosmopolitan. One can hear Cantonese, French, Italian, Ukrainian, and Mandarin walking about. Our community library is not only a space to work, a resource to get wonderful books, but also a welcoming hub. People from all walks of life come here to read, knit, use computers, or simply sit and relax. When our library invited me to create an exhibit on the global adventures of Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty, I knew it was the perfect opportunity to apply what we have gained from having a global outlook and serve our local community.

Mike and I brainstormed how to design this exhibition. In addition to introducing the characters' characters and lifestyles, we also designed a hot air balloon. We see it as the perfect way for them to travel. For the landing site for Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty, we didn't want to make a cold runway. Wherever they were taken to, they were treated with love and care. So, their landing point should be a soft, safe, very, very big heart. This hand-made big heart shows our gratitude to everyone who gives Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty extra pairs of wings and eyes, to have an extraordinary life experience.



What can you do?

If you are interested, we would like to invite you to take Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty on an adventure. Send us an email (story@creativechineseclub.com) so we can share with you the simple instructions to follow.

You can find Hot Dog and Frozen Kitty's bilingual storybooks via Amazon. Feel free to visit our website <http://creativechineseclub.com/>

JESSIE BOOTH AT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION OFFICE (continued from China Eye number 78, Summer 2023)

Marion Carlisle

From Jessie Booth to Dr. Yeh in Taiwan August 1949

Dear Dr. Yeh,

It was very kind of you to send me the coral brooch and I shall always treasure it as a reminder of the days when you were China's Government representative in London and I was your Secretary.

You people in Taiwan have jumped most uncomfortably into the news just lately and we are all watching the situation most anxiously. I am sending you today's leading article from THE OBSERVER which I believe fairly sums up the British attitude to the crisis. I often complain to myself (and to others) that although we have plenty of news and views on the Chinese situation, they are never the views of the Chinese themselves. All Chinese, I feel sure, whether Nationalist or Communist, would agree that Taiwan is part of China and as that belief was also bred into my bones while I worked for China from 1942-49, I cannot endorse the present American protection of Taiwan though I can understand the American viewpoint. The USA obviously does not see any reason to allow Taiwan to pass under the control of a hostile Communist government in China at a time when a third world war is touch and go.

Nevertheless, all my instincts and Chinese training lead me to believe that Taiwan is Chinese whatever regime comes or goes and whatever international quibbling goes on about it. So you will realise what a dilemma confronts me. Why are issues never black and white so that one could support one side wholeheartedly? Well, it's no use crying for the moon.

The doors of the Chinese Embassy in Portland Place are literally tied up with red tape and sealed. A policeman guards the premises night and day.

When you see Chu Fu-sung and his wife, please give them my warmest regards. It was Fu-sung who wrote me about the award of the Brilliant Star which I should love to have had. But times are too troublous for Governments to be thinking of such things and I gladly take the will for the deed.

With many thanks again for the lovely brooch,
Yours very sincerely, Jessie Booth

Letter from Kuang-Mien Lu, International Refugee Organization (IRO) February 1950

Dear Jessie,

This is just to inform you that I shall soon be going back home to China, leaving Geneva the first week of March. (He explains in detail how his family will be repatriated to China while he carries out a mission in the Far East to wind up the IRO).

You know I went back to China last year during April and May. Since then, great things have taken place. It seems the nation has been suddenly and entirely changed and the changing is most drastic and fundamental. Though many friends abroad are yet to realise the extent of its involvements, there is no doubt that a new and great era has dawned in China. Both Mrs Lu and I are very joyful indeed that we can go back to China earlier. As soon as I am relieved from my present duties with the IRO, we both will be able to go back to our respective fields of work, to participate in the reconstruction of the new country.

As soon as we settle down permanently somewhere in China, we shall inform you of our new address. With kindest regards, Kuang-Mien



Jessie with four generations of the family, 1958

From Kuang-Mien Ku, I.R.O, Shanghai. A detailed and eloquent letter to friends abroad. July 1950

First, he describes his journey to Hongkong and then by steamer to Tientien. He notes: the destruction on both banks of the river left behind by the retreating Nationalists. New buildings recently erected and the factories operating normally again. Orderly farms with lots of activities in the fields. Notably: 'The people, though poor as ever before, looked definitely happier and more cheerful'.

'On the train to Peking I could definitely notice all the changes. This was an express train with only 3rd class

coaches. They were kept clean and neat and all passengers had their reserved seats which were comfortable. The boys looked after the passengers carefully and with politeness. There were equipped in all the coaches loud speakers and passengers were constantly informed of the names of stations and time of arrivals and sometimes popular folk songs were broadcast. When tickets were examined, the usual confusion of the conductor being followed by a crowd of police, gendarmes and soldiers, as was the commonplace scene of Nationalist China, disappeared completely.'

'I was with my nephew and his family in Peking, both he and his wife are working in the Government. (He describes their hours of work, simple food and salary). 'Life is very simple, yet they seemed to have everything they need and were joyful and happy. The pay of a Government minister is around 1000 catties of millet. Almost all the people in Peking, irrespective of sex and age, wear blue or grey uniforms. It seems that everyone here deems it an honor to be simply dressed.'

He describes the dramatic increase in the number of primary schools and pupils as compared with the 'pre-liberation era'. Also the significant improvements in sewerage, the dredging of lakes in the area. 'Peking is now a much cleaner city than it has ever been for hundreds of years'. Also reconstruction of dykes, new irrigation systems, land reforms completed in Manchuria and North China and about to start in Central and South China. He writes: 'If these reforms are to be carried out successfully, as they definitely will, it will mean a historical fundamental change in the social economical life of China. Tremendous energy of the farming population will be released, agricultural production will increase and the necessary conditions will be made secure toward widespread industrialisation of the whole country'.

'It is impossible to enumerate the 101 impressions, or shall I say, the inspirations I have had since I came back. The one great big difference as compared with old days, I must say, is this deep sense of dignity and responsibility in the mind of every individual toward discharging his or her duties. It is the first time in China that irregularities disappeared and nobody enjoys special privileges. Law and regulations are above everything. Serious famine has been averted. Inflation has been stopped and prices have been stabilised as have never been for a number of years.

'A revolution is taking place in China - this time a real and fundamental one. It is a pity that this is not being properly understood abroad due possibly to ignorance and prejudice - the result of purposeful propaganda of the reactionaries - enemies of the people. There will be difficulties and obstacles internally as well as externally, such as Truman's open military interference of our internal affairs. But the onward march of the Chinese people for freedom and independence will clear them all away. The new nation has come to stay. It is a symbol of hope and freedom, not only for China, but also for the millions of the colonial and oppressed people in Asia and throughout the world who in the end shall eventually come together hand in

hand and cast aside every chain which binds them'.

He ends with an update on his 3 children and a personal note to Jessie, asking her to pass on his letter to other friends in the U.K.

A final letter to Jessie from the wife of Chu Fu-Sang, Teipei, Taiwan, July 1952. Her viewpoint and response to events on mainland China could not be more different.

First, she apologizes for her long silence and explains that they left Nanking in a hurry at the end of 1949. After settling in Teipei, her husband became Counselor to the Prime Minister. She describes the island of Taiwan – 'as big as Switzerland and just as beautiful'.

'We see Dr. Yeh a lot. He is now our foreign minister. He is still his old self, often talking about the old London days. I hope one day when this world is a little sober – that day is surely to come – he will be our first ambassador to your country.

We government workers all live in the dormitory provided by the government. We are lucky to have a small house, something like a bungalow in England. Since I quit the Central Daily News, I am free lance writing. I wrote a book called '*Taipei To Me*'.

Life here is rather hard. Take the doctor for instance, his salary is not more than 20 American dollars. So as far as pay is concerned, he can get a much better job if he leaves. Yet he is here to fight for the cause he believes in. News from the mainland makes everyone one of us a good communist-hater.

My best regards to Mr. Booth and David, I remain sincerely yours etc. Mrs Chu

LATER YEARS

After 1952, Jessie's connection with her Chinese colleagues ceased as China was cut off from the rest of the world. Then after nearly thirty years, this letter arrived.

From Kuang-Mien Lu, Peking, China.
February 1979

Dear Jessie,

This is just to inform you that I am still very well although in April I shall be 73 years of age. I hope you still remember me as an old friend after being cut off for almost 30 years and that this letter will reach you at the address you gave me years ago.

Since I am still working in the Chinese National

Cooperative Commission, I do hope to hear of some latest developments of the British Movement.

Hoping eagerly to hear from you, I am yours as ever, K.M. Lu

David, Jessie's son, then sent news that Jessie had died in 1972 and so had her husband and brother-in-law. Although David did not follow in his parents' socialist footsteps, all his life he was known as thoughtful and helpful, particularly to those less fortunate than himself.

Two months later Kuang-Mien Lu replies to David:

He expresses his deep sorrow 'to hear of the sad news of the passing away of your parents, my dear friends and of the death of R.G. Gosling. (Reg Gosling was Jessie's brother-in-law and very active in the Cooperative Movement. Gosling Stadium in Welwyn Garden City is named after him).

Every time of my visits to London I was warmly received by your good mother and other dear British friends. I should have kept corresponding with them ever since my returning home to China in 1950. But world events were developing much against our wishes and we had been cut off for decades and missed the opportunity of meeting each other again in this life.

Human life has its tragical side and it sometimes seems to be inevitable.

However, I still believe and have hope that some of these human tragedies are man-made and could be overcome though intelligent efforts and far-sighted statesmanship. However late, please accept my sincerest condolences and if possible put some flowers before mother's resting place on my behalf as an expression of my respect and gratitude to her for her effort to the China cause.

I do hope during the remaining years I shall be allowed to do something to further the cordial relations and friendships between your great county and mine, particularly in the cooperative fields. I am quite sure China has a lot to learn from your country in her earlier development – of marching forward toward modernizations.

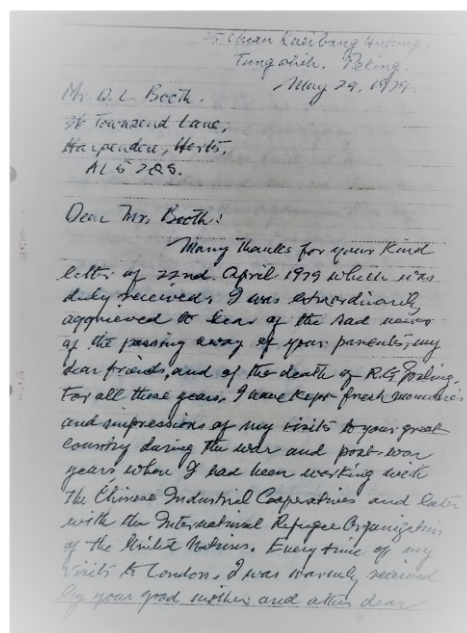
With best regards to you and family, Sincerely yours, K.M. Lu

A SUMMING UP TRIBUTE

Letter to Jessie from the China Christian Universities Association, February 1949

'I hope that 'farewell' really means au revoir! May I

also say that I think you are one of the people to whom China and all friends of China owe very sincere gratitude for all you have done over a considerable period. You have given your time and energy so unstintingly, and sought to acquaint yourself with the needs of China's great people. I very much hope we shall meet again before very long.'



A letter from Kuang-Mien Lu to Jessie's son after her death in 1979

Chinese Brush Painters' Society (Yorkshire)

This society provides a focus for all who are interested in Chinese Brush Painting. The society arranges workshops with Chinese and other experienced tutors and provides information and assistance to members on all aspects of the subject. Currently the group has over 140 members, who travel from Cumbria, Cheshire, Nottingham and Lancashire as well from all parts of Yorkshire to attend workshops. These workshops usually take place at a weekend and sometimes for two-days. They are suitable for beginners or experienced artists.

The group produces a regular monthly newsletter packed with information. Meetings are usually held every month at the Pool-in-Wharfedale Memorial Hall LS21 1LG (on the A659) at the bottom of Pool Bank, just off the A658 between Bradford and Harrogate). The venue has excellent facilities and car parking.

Further information from the Secretary: Anne Allan, Tel: 01422 368482 or email: mail@anneallan.com Website: www.cbpsvorks.co.uk

Reading about China by Walter Fung

Migrants (The Story of Us All) by Sam Miller, Abacus Books 2023

This book of 439 pages covers migrations from the Neanderthals to modern times. It includes numerous references and other notes, in 44 pages. People migrated not just because of poverty, climate change, civil unrest or wars, they went because of curiosity and a sense of adventure as well as a search for a better life. Migration is an important part of the human story.

They were sometimes welcomed, even admired, became objects of curiosity, but when things went wrong, they became targets for blame, and drew comments such as, 'They are not like us.' The author, Millar, a former BBC journalist, born in London but spent a lot of time in India, comments that the subject has become 'toxic'

I was interested in the book, because Chapter 8 deals with 'Linnaeus, Chinatown and Fu Manchu'. (Pages 238-272). This of course is a huge subject which Miller deals with very concisely and thus highlights only some very important points.

Linnaeus published papers classifying humans into four groups using physical attributes and moral characteristics. Some say his writings influenced modern racism.

Because of poverty and political instability, many Chinese chose to leave their homes in Guangdong and Fijian provinces to seek better prospects in South-east Asia, Peru, Cuba, the US, UK and other places. However, many were tricked or forced to migrate as indentured labourers. They underwent horrendous hardships, for example about one in ten died on the four-month journey to Peru and conditions were far from perfect; minor indiscretions were met with floggings

Chinese migrated to America to prospect for gold; California became the 'gold mountain'. Others were especially recruited to build the transcontinental railway in America, but after the job had been completed and they were no longer needed, trade union leaders accused the Chinese of taking their jobs declaring that the 'Chinese must go'.

'Fewer than 400,000 Chinese migrated to the US between 1850 and 1910. This is a tiny number compared to the 25 million Europeans and yet anti-Chinese feeling developed and increased to such an extent that a law was passed in 1882 with the sole objective of barring Chinese from entering the US. Before this there were numerous discriminatory local and national laws making life difficult for the Chinese. They were blamed for outbreaks of leprosy, syphilis and bubonic plague. In 1885, the entire 300 strong Chinese population of Tacoma were run out of town and their property burnt. In the late 1880s, in a number of separate incidents, about 60 Chinese miners were murdered, some tortured to death. No one was ever convicted. Activists claimed that the Chinese were uncivilised, filthy beyond all conception, clannish and had nothing in common with Americans in religion, habits or language,

From south China many Chinese went to Australia, the 'new gold mountain' where they were met with similar hostility, but not the same extreme violence. The 'White Australia Policy', in force from 1901, was mainly to prevent Chinese and Pacific Islanders from entering Australia.

The worst violence against Chinese migrants was in the Philippines where the Spanish authorities considered the Chinese a 'threat' and 20,000 Chinese were killed in Manila in 1603.

Millar also records, 'Britain's greatest contribution' to Yellow Peril' was Sax Rohmer's fictional Chinese villain, Fu Manchu. Every Chinese negative stereotype can be found in the stories of Fu Manchu: opium dens, all-round inscrutability, secret societies, demoniacal cruelty, mysterious poisons and hypnotic powers.

An interesting point I have not heard before is the view that one reason why Chinese migration was mainly from south China was because Buddhism here had more influence than Confucianism. In north China Confucianism was stronger and which discouraged leaving family and the ancestral tombs to go abroad. According to Millar, northern Chinese did migrate, but within China.

Many Chinese retained, a special relationship with their homeland and their families in China tried to keep track those who had migrated and listed them in their ancestral shrines. There was a notion of resisting permanent migration, the word Chinese used was 'qiao' which is translated as 'sojourner', implying a temporary stay in foreign lands.

Dragon Pearl, Growing up among China's elite by Sirin Phathanothai, Simon and Schuster 1994

This is another book, I have had for over 20 years, but not read. I was about to take it to Oxfam but after reading just the first few pages, I could not put it down. I thought it was fiction, but quickly realised after a few checks on the Wikipedia, that it was based on actual facts. It related the story of two children of a prominent and influential Thai family who were sent to China at a young age to learn Chinese and become acquainted with Chinese culture, Chinese attitudes and way of life. The objective was that they would grow up and become 'bridges' between China and Thailand. At this time, Thailand was politically close to the US and China wanted to establish some influence with Thailand.

The children were a girl aged eight and her brother two years older. The book was written by Sirin Phathanothai who recorded her life from the age of eight, when she was sent from her home in Thailand to grow up in China. Her father had arranged this with Chinese officials, who included Zhou Enlai, who became an uncle to her. She could call on Zhou when help was needed. Another influential mentor was a man whose father was a close associate of Sun Yatsen.

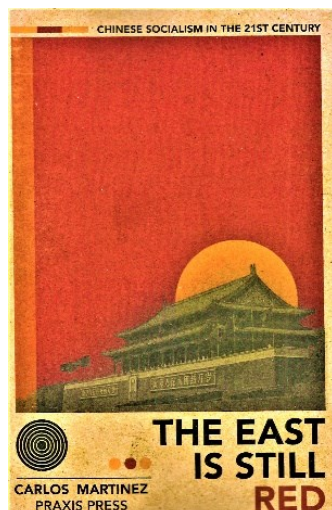
The sharp contrast in the way of life in everyday activity between their life as upper-class Thais and in China made absorbing reading. Their experiences in the Cultural Revolution were disturbing. Their account was first hand; how family members had to denounce other family members. The Gang of Four had such influence that even Zhou Enlai had difficulty controlling the excesses.

In adulthood, the author did apparently have some success in being a successful ambassador but I must admit I found this method of building bridges between countries somewhat strange and probably not widely practised.

The East is Still Red by Carlos Martinez, (Chinese Socialism in the 21st Century) Praxis Press 2023.

This is an extremely well-researched book, written in clear language backed up with facts and figures. There are extensive references very conveniently positioned at the end of each chapter. China's achievements engineered by the Communist Party are presented showing that people are considered first, a sharp contrast to the West where profit is all important. The book is

comprehensive covering China's position and point of view on virtually every issue and highlights Western bias and in many cases inaccurate reporting. The benefits and advantages of socialism over pure capitalism are explained.



China has made astonishing progress since the reform and opening up acts of 1978. Much has been achieved economically and the lives and incomes of Chinese people have improved annually. Much has been achieved, but socialist development continues as an on-going process; Adjustments are made according to changing circumstances, but the political structure remains the same. After 1978, using the World Bank definition of absolute poverty, 840 million people were pulled out of poverty by 2021. Peoples' earnings continuously increased; between 1988 and 2008 and grew by 229%, compared to the global average of just 24%.

China is nothing like the USSR. The USSR even at its peak had a GDP only 44% that of the US. Gorbachev tried to achieve too much at a pace that was much too fast. China's reforms have been incremental and gradual. Deng Xiaoping advised, proceeding like a person crossing a river. One step at a time and make sure footing is secure before taking the next step.

Carlos presents alternative information on the 'Great Leap Forward' (GLF), which has become accepted in the West as a total misguided disaster caused by the Communist Party of China and Mao Zedong in particular. Mao is held responsible for the deaths of 30 million Chinese lives because of the famine caused by the GLF. However, page 11, records that the statistical analysis of the Indian economist Utsa Patnaik concludes that the maximum deaths caused by the famine totals a maximum 11.5 million. (Also see below, a 'History of Civilisations' by Fernand Braudel)

China is a global leader in climate change. Efforts are being implemented according to the government's plan and is not influenced by market forces or financial policy. Fuel companies are under government control unlike in the West. (The Times headline of 24/7/23, reads, 'Tory retreat from green polices to woo voters!')

In today's China everybody has food, clothing, access to medical insurance and education. China is still behind the West in some sectors, but this is because of history, not a failing of the present system of government.

The Pew Research Institute of the US, has found that 94% of Chinese people have confidence in Xi Jinping. (27/1/23). In addition, 89% believed their economy is good. Similar ratings by

US people for the US economy is 40%.and Joe Biden's confidence rating is 40%.

The book argues the case for a multipolar world instead of one dominated by the US and former imperial powers. A multipolar world would benefit developing nations. However, it appears that there is a plan to prevent the emergence of a rival superpower. The cold war on China and the steps to contain and hinder its rise is part of this plan.

NB; Mention must be made of Jenny Clegg's book, *China's Global Strategy, 'Towards a Multipolar World'* which was published in 2009, by Pluto Press. The book shows that China is taking a multilateral approach and is offering real assistance to developing countries and helping to build the institutions and infrastructure needed to run a multipolar world. Jenny Clegg is a SACU Vice-president.

A History of Civilisations by Fernand Braudel (Penguin 1995)

This paperback of 600 pages covers the whole world. However, I only want to draw attention to a section of this author's account of the Great Leap forward and the poor harvests which resulted in millions of deaths. Braudel says that the catastrophic harvests of 1959, 1960 and 1961 were mainly the result of natural causes. (page 211). China has always been subject to droughts and floods, sometimes in alternate years and even sometimes simultaneously.

The great flood of 1961 destroyed half of the crops in the northern provinces. Tornados and floods claimed millions of lives, but during March to June of that year, draught reduced the flow of the Yellow River to a trickle – you could walk across it.

NB. Braudel, a French man died in 1985 and this maybe this book was written before the 'East-West' divide became firmly established.

China Eye Diary

This year (2023) is the Year of the Rabbit. Next year is the Year of the Dragon. The full sequence of 12 animals is; Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig.

The remaining main Chinese festivals for this year are;

29 September. Mid-Autumn Festival (Moon Cakes).

1 October, National Day (usually a week-long holiday, called a 'Golden week'.

23 October, Chong Yang (Senior Citizen's Day)

21 December, Winter Solstice (Dong Zhi)

Chinese New Year in 2024, is on the 10th February 2024. The date of the Chinese New Year usually falls on the first day of the second month after the Winter Solstice. Thus, it varies from year to year. Chinese New Year is the most important festival celebrated by Chinese all over the world. In traditional societies, the celebrations continue for 15 days, coming to an end with the Lantern Festival on the 15th day.

Sino file Autumn 2023

Items worth reading again

It's payback time, Xi tells China's band of billionaires

President Xi has told China's billionaires that they are expected to do more to 'repay society'. Under a 'third distribution' scheme, the newly wealthy will have to contribute more towards a goal of 'common prosperity' by 2035. A meeting presided over by Xi- declared that- 'we should reasonably adjust excessive incomes and encourage high-income people and companies to pay back more to society'.

Last year an anti-monopoly investigation into Alibaba resulted in a \$2.8 billion fine and three years ago the authorities began to crack down on high payments made to celebrities and capped earnings for television productions. The actress Fang Bingbing had to pay another \$129 million in taxes.

Last year (2020), China had 626 billionaires. The leadership has said it would rectify the order of income distribution including cleaning up unreasonable incomes, eliminating illicit ones, and using tighter regulations and possible tax reforms. Beijing is asking the rich to do more for charity. *(From The Times 20/8/21)*

Mattel officials apologise to China

The world's largest toymaker apologised to China yesterday for recalls of nearly 20 million Chinese-made toys.

According to news accounts, Thomas A Debrowski, Vice-president for world-operations apologised to China for harming the reputation of Chinese manufacturers. Of 20 million toys recalled, 17.4 million were magnetic toys and used lead paint. Although produced in China, they were recalled because of a design mistake by Mattel. Mattel is still committed to operating in China. There is a lot of scapegoating of China but the issue was caused by a system designed to push down costs, which are root causes and Mattel is behind them. *(From the Internet, New York Times 22/9/2007)*

From The Economist (8/11/2003). Chinese graduates going home. Overseas Chinese are returning to become entrepreneurs in the motherland

Hu Jintao addressed 4,000 foreign educated returning Chinese 'to realise the great rejuvenation of our nation', Nearly 600,000 students have left China in the last 25 years, but only 160,000 have since come back. However, the number returning is rising. In 2002, it almost reached 18,000 which was double the number two years ago. About 90% hold a masters or doctorate degree. Many are starting their own company; in Beijing alone, there are now 3,300 enterprises started by returners.

Senior citizens' care in China

China attaches great importance to the well-being of its older members of society. The 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) highlights new approaches, which will involve over 20 government agencies. A blueprint for a three-category health care system is being set up, which will help government and

society provide the necessary facilities. There will be a safety net for vulnerable seniors and nursing homes will be encouraged to offer free or low-price services for those with low incomes or disabilities. Community -based nursing service networks will allow senior citizens access to care within 15 minutes. Efforts will be made to improve the quality of life by developing access to cultural, sporting and tourism activities and home services. Recreation organisations have been set up such as age-friendly universities ('life-long learning', U3A in the UK), bands and tourist groups. There are 264 million people in China aged 60 and over. *(From Beijing Review 27/1/22)*

Bill Gates visits Xi Jinping (Internet 16/6/23)

The founder of Microsoft met Xi Jinping in Beijing today. According to state media, he pledged \$50 million to China to fight malaria and tuberculosis and praised China for 'tackling the Covid pandemic, setting a good example for the world'. Mr Xi is reported to have referred to Bill Gates as 'an old friend' and said he always placed hopes on the American people and hoped for continued friendship between the peoples of the two countries.

Hydrogen powered train

The world's first hydrogen-powered autonomous rail rapid transit train (ART) left its manufacturing base in Zhuzhou, central China's Hunan province, ready for shipment to Malaysia as the first batch of China-made ART export to southeast Asia. *(From internet Facebook 18/7/23)*

From the British Press

Debt-relief 'duet'

On May 17th the IMF board signed off a \$3 billion bail-out for Ghana and immediately released an urgently needed first tranche of \$600 million. This was made possible only by assurances from bilateral creditors, China in particular and the Paris Club, an informal group of Western countries, that they would take losses on their loans to Ghana. There is a danger of mounting debts by African countries, who may be forced to cut back on health and education.

The West has grumbled about the 'debt trap' of Chinese loans. Some are judged to be reckless, but this criticism is largely unfair. China has financed roads, ports, railways and other needed infrastructure when private lenders and other countries were unwilling to do so. *(From The Economist 20/5/23)*

China to reach clean energy target five years early

China is set to double its capacity of energy by wind and solar power to 1,200 gigawatts (GW) by 2025, five years before the target of 2030. This is according to a report by Global Energy Monitor, a San Francisco based NGO. During the first quarter of this year, China's solar capacity had reached 228 GW, which is more than the rest of the world combined. The installations are mainly in Xinjiang, Hebei and Shanxi. Solar farms under construction could produce a further 379 GW, which is three times that of the US and nearly twice that of Europe. Off-shore and on-shore wind capacity is more than 310 GW, which is twice the level of 2017 and is equivalent to that of the next seven countries combined. *(From The Guardian 29/6/23)*

EU cuts Biden adrift in China link.

EU leaders will confirm a 'multifaceted' strategy towards China, defining its approach as 'simultaneously a partner, a competitor and a systemic rival'. They say, the EU and China have a 'shared interest in pursuing constructive and stable relations'. Although the EU will 'de-risk' and diversify, in terms of blocking ownership of critical infrastructure and avoid dependency on strategic items (car batteries), it will not restrict trade. The EU will not decouple or turn inwards and will stay out of zero-sum binary conflict between the US and China. (From *The Times* 29/6/23)

US and Australia military deal to face China

The US is to send more troops and military aircraft to Australia. The US will also help Canberra's intelligence services in an unprecedented peacetime move to counter the perceived threat from China. Airbases in north Australia will be enlarged to accommodate US aircraft and military supplies will be sent there. Military experts suggest that the purpose of these actions is less about defending Australia but more about bases for offensive operations in the Asia and Pacific region. A combined intelligence centre is to be established by 2024. The US and Australia are also concerned about the security pact between the Solomon Islands and China. (From *The Times* 1/8/23)

China controls minerals critical to world economy

For the last 20 years, China has been buying up valuable resources around the world. Even where it does not own the mines outright, it has secured deals that ensures 80% of the planet's supply is sent to China for processing into usable metals. China dominates the processing and refining of these metals. They include copper for high conductivity, lithium for batteries and other 'rare earth' metals for use in electronics, especially electric cars. In total, China spent \$108 billion in the 10 years up to 2018 on foreign mines. China controls 68% of the nickel in the world, 73% of cobalt, 93% of manganese and 100% of graphite, according to Benchmark Mineral Intelligence quoted in the Sunday Times. In addition, China manufactures 79% of lithium battery cells. (From *The Sunday Times* 1/5/23)

US trade war with China would destabilise the world

After her visit to Beijing, Janet Yellen, US Treasury Secretary warned a trade war with China would be disastrous for both countries; there would be no winners. She also said that the world is big enough for both the US and China to thrive. She spoke during a four-day trip with 10 hours of meetings with Chinese officials, which included Li Qiang, the Chinese premier. Despite the tensions, two-way trade between the two countries reached a record \$690 billion (£540 billion) last year. (From *The Telegraph* 10/7/23)

CIA chief makes secret visit to China

William Burns, the CIA director has visited Beijing for talks with security officials as the US seeks to improve dialogue and relations with China. This comes after faltering efforts to arrange a face-to-face conversation between President Xi and President Biden at the G20 summit in Bali last November, Burns went to meet his Chinese counterpart to emphasise the importance of keeping lines of communications open. Lloyd Austin, US defence

secretary shook hands with the Chinese defence secretary, Li Shangfu on the sidelines of a security meeting in Singapore yesterday, but there was not a 'substantial exchange'. Earlier Beijing declined a formal meeting between the two. (From *The Times* 3/6/23)

US and China agree on some specific issues

US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken visited Beijing for two days and met senior Chinese leaders. Mr Xi welcomed progress and said he was pleased with the outcome. Some channels for further discussion were arranged but the US request to resume military-to-military communication was rebuffed. (From *the I newspaper* 20/6/23)

'No choice but to engage with China'

Richard Lloyd Parry in the Times, wrote that isolating China is neither possible nor in our interest. He mentioned the reality of modern China. Xi is not Putin and China is not attempting to export ideology. Both China and the West are so deeply enmeshed economically that mutual isolation means both sides losing. We have to live with China and must accept that there is no sensible alternative to engagement with China and on occasion to compromise. (The Times 8/2/23)

'Taiwan split over threat from China'

When Ma Ying-jeou of the KMT, was Taiwan's leader, he met Xi Jinping, face-to-face in Singapore. They both mused on an ancient Tang dynasty poem by Chen Tao, about the tragedy of war.

*'To rout the foe at hazard of their lives.
Five thousand soldiers sank into the sand
Their skulls unburied by the river's strand
They live on in the dreams of weeping wives'*

Both men had learnt the poem, when they were young and they recited it together. Ma told The Times that they have some things in common and can communicate with each other, which gives him confidence that the process can be continued and he sees the chance for peaceful coexistence.

Ma said that in his term of office, no country believed that there would be war. It is the DPP's policies that have brought Taiwan to the brink. Ma oversaw an unprecedented boom in cross-strait trade. Presidential elections are to be held next January between candidates from the KMT and DPP. (From *The Times* 17/6/23)

China explores deep into the Earth

China is digging a very deep hole in the Taklamakan Desert to learn about the geology 11,100 metre below the surface and also to assess the potential for oil and gas. It is seen as a response to concerns that China is too dependent on foreign imports. Scientific objectives could be to directly monitor the geological processes, such as fluid-rock interactions taking place at those kinds of depth. The drill bit can withstand temperatures of more than 200 degrees Centigrade and the bore hole is 20 cm. The present deepest bore hole is in Russia. It reached 12,262 metres and took 20 years to accomplish, but it has been largely abandoned since the year 2000. (From *The Times* 10/6/23)

First civilian astronaut to Chinese space station

Gui Haichao, a professor of aircraft dynamics, was the first non-military member of a space station team. He is a payload specialist who will collect, sort and analyse data connected with the payload and operating equipment. Up to now, all crew members have been military personnel. The Shenzhou-16 crew were sent into space on a Long March rocket from the Jinqian satellite launch centre in northwest China yesterday. Also, on Shenzhou-16 are Major General Jing Haipeng, 56 (fourth mission) and Colonel Zhu Yangzhu, 36 (first mission). China has operated 10 manned missions since 2003 and a moon landing is planned for 2030. *(From The Times 31/5/23)*

Restrictions on face recognition surveillance

Draft rules from the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) suggest that hotel rooms, gyms and changing rooms should not have image-capturing or personal identification cameras. There has been a backlash against the use of facial recognition to activate toilet paper dispensers. Cameras should only be used for specific purposes and only with individuals' consent. But devices could still be installed in the interests of national security and in public places if there were warning signs. Critics have expressed concerns about privacy.

The CAC guidelines prohibits the use of facial recognition to analyse ethnicity or religion and should not be used to endanger national security, harm public interests or disrupt social order. The draft rules are open for public consultation until 7 September, after which CAC will make revisions. *(From The Times 9/8/23)*

New Chinese Embassy plans fall through

China has accused the UK government of failing to fulfil its 'international' obligations after walking away from plans to build a new embassy on the site of the former Royal Mint. China bought five acres of land and the grade II listed property for a new embassy, a cultural exchange facility, offices and accommodation. However, local residents objected with several concerns, including increased activity in an area already crowded with tourists, possible demonstrations and increased use of CCTV. *(From The Times 11/8/23)*

Palm reading to pay on Beijing metro?

This futuristic system has been introduced on the Daxing airport line of the Beijing metro. Machines read the unique pattern of lines and veins on the palms of an individual's hand. The system was developed by Tencent, who suggested it could be extended to other uses, such as buying cinema tickets. The system could capture data for identification but because of privacy protection, original data would not be stored. *(From The Times 24/5/23)*

From the Chinese Press

China applies to join trade agreement

China has applied to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) which is a free trade agreement. This involves eleven countries; Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and

Vietnam. China has conducted a thorough evaluation of more than 2,300 articles of the CPTPP. Other reforms, measures and laws also need to be negotiated for China's admission. China believes its entry will bring tangible benefits to the member countries and will bolster economic integration of the Asia-Pacific region. *(From CDGW 23-28/6/23)*

Expansion of Communist Party

The Communist Party of China membership increased by nearly 1.33 million or 1.4% from 2021 and now stands at 98.04 million. The composition of party membership has improved with higher levels of education, a higher proportion of female members and more members from ethnic groups other than Han. Nearly 2.45 million joined the party last year and at the end of the year there were 20.96 million applications to join. (There are selection requirements and only a small proportion are successful). *(From CDGW 7-13/7/23)*

Cross-Strait's Forum, 16th June 2023

The 15th Cross-Straits Forum began on 16th June in Xiamen. The forum is to provide a platform for people from both sides to promote Chinese culture and forge closer bonds. President Xi sent a message, which boosted confidence in peaceful development of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Hsia Li-yan, the vice-chair of the KMT said that his party is committed to upholding the 1992 Consensus and opposes Taiwan independence.

The KMT will promote cross-strait economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation whilst working for peace and stability. Taiwanese people live and work on the mainland, like Shen Chieh, 33, a Beijing lawyer. A series of beneficial policies of the mainland have attracted young people from Taiwan to work on the mainland, where salary growth is better than in Taiwan. The chairwoman of the National Women's League of Taiwan was also at the forum and welcomed the letter from Xi Jinping. *(From CDGW 23-29/6/23)*

Huawei to return to 5G market

Huawei's consumer business revenue peaked at 483 billion yuan (\$67 billion) in 2020 before falling by 50% after US restrictions cut its access to chipmaking tools. Now Huawei should be able to procure its own 5G chips using its own advances in semiconductor design tools along with Semiconductor Manufacturing International. This will allow Huawei's return to the phone market. *(From CDGW 11-17/8/23)*

Harsher penalties for environment polluters

China's top legal bodies said on June 5th, World Environment Day, that they will continue to intensify their environmental protection efforts by enforcing harsher punishments on polluters. Last year more than 3,100 criminal cases involving the environment were resolved by the police.

These involved 36,751 suspects. At the same time, the Chinese Supreme People's Court heard 2,252 criminal cases of pollution and 102 which related to waste smuggling. *(From CDGW 9-15/6/23)*

Preservation of cultural heritage; China leading

China has preserved better than almost anywhere in the world, the cultural heritage of minority ethnic groups, wonderful costumes, wonderful folk art. This what I (Alan Macfarlane), really think needs to be preserved in China. Devoting time and imagination to the conservation, dissemination and understanding of mutual cultures encourages respect for other cultures at a deep level. Hopefully, this will lead to peace, harmony and order in the world and not endless bullying, misunderstanding, confrontation and competition.

World culture can unite us all. *(Letter from Alan Macfarlane, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, to CDGW 21-27/7/23)*

Kissinger visits China; meets Xi Jinping

Kissinger, now aged 100, first visited China in 1971 when he set the stage for Nixon's historic trip which led to normalisation of relations between China and the US. During his latest visit, Kissinger underlined the importance of a stable US-China relationship for the well-being of humanity and said that both countries have the ability to influence the world. Both sides, regardless of difficulties, should treat each other as equals. Any attempt to isolate or cut off the other is not acceptable. He also met Wang Yi, China's top diplomat, who said that it is impossible to attempt to remould China and even more impossible to block and contain China. *(From CDGW 21-27/7/23)*

Algeria supports China

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune visited China in mid-July and met Xi Jinping. Algeria will be a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council during 2024 and 2025. Tebboune said that China is Algeria's most important friend and partner. Algeria supports the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilisation Initiative. In 2014, Algeria was the first Arab country to forge a comprehensive strategic partnership with China.

Over the past six decades, China has sent 3,522 medical and nursing personnel to the country; over 27 million patients have been treated. *(From CDGW 21-27/7/23)*

Partnerships for progress in Africa

The Third China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo was held in Changsha in June. There was optimism enhanced by the Belt and Road Initiative. African governments have national development plans such as Kenya Vision 2030, Egypt Vision 2030 and Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan II. Agreements were signed for 120 projects valued at \$10.3 billion and about 99 cooperation projects valued at \$8.7 billion. These included 74 'big-ticket' projects involving 11 African countries, the highest number ever recorded.

There is immense potential for Chinese investment in Nigeria, which has a sizable young work force and well-developed infrastructure including ports and railways. China has maintained its position as Africa's largest trading partner

for 14 consecutive years. Total trade increased by 11.1% year-on-year in 2022 to \$282 billion. *(From CDGW 28/7-3/8/23)*

Record launch of 41 satellites

A Long March 2D carrier rocket on June 15 sent 41 satellites into orbit. They were built by Changguang Satellite Technology, a State-owned enterprise in Jilin province. The main task of the satellites will be to obtain high-definition images of the Earth. These will be used in areas such as industrial analysis, regional surveys, land resources, mapping mineral development and urban construction planning.

The Long March 2D rocket has been used for 76 flights, all successful, since August 1992 and is one of the most reliable rockets in China. The world record for the number of satellites being launched simultaneously is held by SpaceX of the US, which in January 2021 put 143 satellites into orbit. *(From CDGW 23-29/6/23)*

Cambodia Special Economic Zone

The Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone in Cambodia has grown significantly. Trade has risen from \$139 million in 2013 to nearly \$2.5 billion last year. It is home to 175 international companies. It is considered a landmark collaborative project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by Cambodia and China.

A celebration to mark the 10th Anniversary of the BRI has just been held. Fifteen years ago, the area was completely undeveloped with no electricity, no running water and no roads. Now the modern industrial park includes health clinics and higher educational institutes. A new 189km highway connects the area to the capital Phnom Penh. *(From CDGW 7-13/7/23)*

Chinese cruise liner progressing

China's first domestically-built cruise liner, the *Adora Magic City*, has completed its first sea trial lasting eight days. Engineers carried out 60 function tests to assess capability and performance and checked whether the vessel's equipment is convenient and comfortable for passengers. *(From CDGW 28/7-3/8/23)*

Restrictions on facial recognition use

A man in Zhenhai District in Ningbo, filed a law suit against his residential compound for the installation of a face recognition system. The dispute ended with a court order requesting the deletion of all biometric information. It was recognised that legal boundaries are needed to regulate the new technology. China's Supreme Court has published provisions stating that unauthorised collection of facial recognition data by commercial entities is an infringement of personal interest and is a civil offence that entitles the victim to appeal to the law. Ethical boundaries should be recognised. *(From Beijing Review 1/12/22)*

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