

China Eye



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

Spring 2024

Number 81



Contents include:

Building Bridges to Beijing

Unsung Heroes CLC; Armistice Day

A Taste of Memory

Explore Dragons, Experience Diversity

Chinese Idea of Life and Death; Yi Jing

English Chinese Bilingual Competition

Reading about China

Sino File and China Eye Diary

CHINA EYE

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SACU Registered Address:
15A Napoleon Road, Twickenham, TW1 3EW
Tel; 07768 207702
Email: chair@sacu.org.uk

SACU website: www.sacu.org.uk
Email: info@sacu.org.uk

Membership: membership@sacu.org.uk
Details of membership are on page 4.

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Editorial: Walter Fung

Editorial assistance: Cilla Hollman,, Keith Bennett, Peter Jarvis, Jiaxi Li, Iris Yau

Cover design: Keith Ray

Contributors: Ros Wong, Walter Fung, Chris Nash, Andrew Hicks, Minji Xu, Jiaxi Li, Iris Yau, Barnaby Powell, Weien Zong, Yichao Shi, Gu Hongyan, Jacqueline Buksh, Christy Leung.

SACU Branch secretaries and local contacts

Beijing

Michael Crook, Tel (emergency only 13366068134)
Email: crookm06@gmail.com

London

Florence Kenna, 01344 849686

South Wales

Peter Hunter, 23 Maes-Yr-Hafod, Cadoxton, Neath, West Glamorgan SA10 8AZ

Manchester

Cilla Hollman, Email: c.hollman@sheffield.ac.uk

Sussex

Peter Colebourn. Email peter.j.colebourn@btinternet.com

Yorkshire

Peter Farrar. E mail peterf@sacu.org.uk

The Summer issue (Number 82) of China Eye will be available in early June 2024. Please send news or articles for inclusion before 20 May 2024 to Walter Fung, Tel 0161 799 6944, Email: walter.fung888@btinternet.com

Front cover: Dragon projected onto the 'Bombed-out' Church, Liverpool (Ray Fung)
Back cover; Amazing light display on the 'Bombed-out' Church Liverpool (Ray Fung)

All photographs are by the authors except where stated.

Welcome

Negative Reporting

The anti-China reports and comments in the popular press are continuing and possibly becoming more numerous. (Andrew Hicks has written more on this, see page 6) Terms such as 'China's 'coming crash', 'collapse', even 'meltdown'. The negative items are listed: property, unemployment of young people, falling birthrate and lower consumer spending. slow recovery from the pandemic. However, despite all this, the Chinese economy grew by 5.2% last year - compared to about 2.6% in the US and 0.5% in the UK. For the coming year, 2024 a figure of about 5.0% is targeted, which is significantly higher than that expected by most Western countries.

Regarding the Covid lock down in China, I am dismayed by the media reporting it as cruel, brutal, inhuman. None mentioned that it was to save lives. But the Western media has generally produced negative reports about China since 1949, when China became 'Red'. The US did not recognise China and did not grant diplomatic relations until 1979. Indeed, American citizens were not allowed to go to China for nearly three decades. Many Western nations and companies followed the US lead. The British, '48 Group', led by Jack Perry, which embarked on trade missions to China in 1953, were an exception.

Despite all this, within 75 years, China has grown from a very low baseline to become the second largest economy in the world, with a space station in orbit, moon landings and a Mars rover.

Even within the last 20 years or so, analysts have been predicting the collapse of China. Gordon G Chang in 2001, wrote a book entitled, *The Coming Collapse of China*. He critically examined almost every aspect of the economy and saw failure. Chapters included the headlines: 'Chinese banks will fail', 'WTO. accession will trigger collapse' and 'How the state will fail'. At about the year 2000, an author actually wrote, 'China promised so much, but delivered so little; at best China is a middle order second rank country. Can you believe it? Yet these 'experts' who are consistently wrong, seem to keep their jobs.

As late as 2012 the distinguished scholar and diplomat, Gerard Lemos, (now Chair of English Heritage and formerly Chair of the British Council), wrote a book entitled, *The End of the Chinese Dream*. He worked in China for four years and he did carry out some research, but only in Chongqing, where he asked the opinion of hundreds of men and women. Note only *hundreds*. Chongqing has 30 million people.

More positive aspects

A report in China Daily Global Weekly (CDGW) of 26 January to 1st February, says that the property problem and local government debts are 'soft' risks but geopolitical challenges are highly consequential and unpredictable. CDGW of 9-15th February included an interview with Steve

Barnett, a senior International Monetary Fund official, who believes China will still contribute to more than 25% of global economic growth in 2024 and predicts China's growth to be 4.6%. He points out that these figures do not yet take into consideration positive spill-overs of China's growth in other areas.

Despite all the negativity we regularly hear of Western businessmen and diplomats visiting China and new deals being signed. Maybe they are anticipating the day when recovery does come and they will want a share of the vast market potential in China or valuable Chinese goods.

Hainan Airways, connecting Manchester directly to Beijing, report a marked increase in passengers and a daily flight will be introduced this summer. In addition, the number of direct flights from Edinburgh to Beijing are being doubled.

'Experts' forget that China has a middle class numbering 400 million and this could double to maybe 800 million before the end of the decade. (Buyers of French luxury goods, German cars and high spending tourists?) Also, within the next decade, another 300 million people could leave the countryside for urban areas. This would stimulate many sectors of the economy. Infrastructure construction seems to be continuing apace. When recovery comes, the vastly improved port, road, rail and air facilities will contribute to vibrant economic growth. China is still very much a developing country.

Year of the Dragon

Despite the Sinophobia, the interest in China and Chinese culture seems to be growing. Huge crowds attended the Chinese New Year of the Dragon celebrations in Liverpool and Manchester. Sheffield's celebrations were the largest ever and Chinese New Year was celebrated in many other areas, London, Birmingham and Southampton to name just a few. In Liverpool, 60,000 people enjoyed the usual Dragon parade and festivities in Chinatown, at the nearby 'Bombed Out' Church and also at Albert Dock on the waterfront. There were amazing light performances at all three venues. See front and back covers.

From Facebook postings, very elaborate and extensive celebrations of the New Year and the Lantern Festival (15th day of the New Year) have taken place on the Chinese mainland. These include quite amazing aerial displays and unbelievable acrobatic lion dances.

Reports of 'booming consumer' spending during the Spring Festival period are coming from China (internet, Big News Network). Ministry of Commerce figures show: service sector spending was up 47.3% year on year, sports and entertainment products sales were up by 15.6%, gold, silver and jewellery sales were up by 23.8%. Altogether domestic tourists spent 632.69 billion yuan (\$89 billion). Indeed a very good start to 2024!

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
Students (PDF only)	£10
Institutions and Libraries	£27
Overseas (Airmail)	£35
Overseas (PDF only)	£13

Membership payment methods:

Online: pay with PayPal using your PayPal account or credit/debit card, by logging into SACU's online membership account from our website: <https://sacu.org/join.html>

Offline: bank transfer, standing order, cheque, recurring PayPal subscription plan – please email for details: membership@sacu.org.uk

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.

SACU's Digital Communications

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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

Notices from Council Members

From SACU Chair Chris Nash

I hope that China Eye readers are finding my weekly series of articles about China published on the SACU website under the heading 'Chair's Blog' interesting and informative. **I welcome both your responses to the articles and your suggestions for suitable future topics.'**

I would like to say, 'Thanks to the hard work of Wang Fang, Professor Sun and Frances Wood, the 2024 SACU Competition themed 'Harmony' has been launched.' The competition is an enormously important part of our SACU education programme.'

Chris's latest blog provides information on Chinese New Year, especially this Year of the Dragon. He explains the significance of the Dragon in different cultures and also the beginning of Spring and the Laba Festival.

Chris offers a platform for SACU members, especially younger ones, to comment on or write their views on the theme of Friendship. He is fostering a diversity of opinions and in this latest blog, an article by SACU Council member, Arron Van Rompaey, is reprinted in which Arron describes his experiences in China and those of learning Chinese.

Jacob Holliday SACU secretary

Programmes Coordinator Vacancy

SACU is a membership organisation. Everything that SACU does is conceived, planned, and implemented by volunteers. Currently, SACU Council is seeking to recruit a Programmes Coordinator. For full details about this role, and information about how to apply, please read the role specification attached.

Do you have an eye for the big picture? Can you communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders? If so, you might be the person we are looking for!

*The Society for Anglo-Chinese-Understanding (SACU) is looking for a **Programmes Coordinator**. This person will join the Executive Committee that manages day-to-day implementation of SACU's programmes and activities. The Programmes Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that SACU hosts a range of events, spaced evenly across the year, corresponding to the diverse interests of SACU members. The Programmes Coordinator is **not** expected to be directly involved in the planning and organisation of each individual event.*

Anyone interested in the role should contact me at jacob@sacu.org.uk

Barnaby Powell, SACU Speaker's Bureau Organiser

SACU Education Working Group

Our speaker's Bureau is already six-strong, but seeks additional members to cover different parts of the UK. Our main aim is to give Schools Talks on China. We have given a couple of talks in this past year to independent schools which are SACU members and we can follow up with those other schools which have participated in the Essay Competition before.

Chris Nash is currently working on contacting those State schools he believes would be interested in a talk, which would clearly complement participation in the Essay Competition. Once we have responses to our invitations, we shall need to follow up and deploy speakers to liaise with schools to set dates, etc. Barnaby has prepared some essential notes on China; see pages 21 and 22. Please advise Barnaby.powell@gmail.com as Convenor if you like to join the Education Working Group and/or volunteer to speak to schools.

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**

Please note that the 'Infamous: Opium, Silk, Tea & the Mission' exhibition curated by Iris Yau (SACU Council) will run until 8th June at the Portico Library in Manchester city centre, close to Piccadilly.

This exhibition relates the one of the key, but forgotten interactions between China and Britain in the 19th Century.

Never Befriend the Bogeyman

On 27 January 2024, a weekend replete with news stories such as the Middle East, Trump and the Tories, the *i* newspaper instead chose the following lurid front-page headline. **UK's 'golden age' with China harmed British intelligence, says former MI6 spy chief**. In a surprisingly slight interview buried at page 10, Nigel Inkster, former deputy head of the Secret Intelligence Service makes broad allegations against China without specifics or evidence.

Thus, he says, 'Chinese espionage now poses greater long-term risks to the UK than Russian spying.' While China has not been guilty of 'the kind of assassinations that have been the hallmark of Russia's intelligence services under Putin, I don't think that's because they are inhibited by moral scruples'. In other words, they're just as bad as the Russians even though they haven't done it yet. 'While individual acts of Chinese espionage may not in and of themselves be that harmful, their cumulative effect - taken together with the intent that informs it - is strategically far more concerning than anything a country like Russia might do'. So, it's not what they've actually done but (like Fu Manchu) it's their immoral and evil intent that is why we should fear them most.

He gives little suggestion of what this alleged espionage is all about though he does refer to 'industrial-scale cyber espionage' and to 'deploying more spies on the ground, using ruthless methods to gather all the military and commercial information they can'. He seems to be asserting that they're immoral and ruthless and dangerous because, of course, it's China.

His one primary and valuable point, however, is that our intelligence services are weak in respect of counteracting China; MI6 'clearly does have difficulties in terms of language expertise and collective general historical and cultural awareness' of China. Yes indeed, for decades we have turned our backs on China and given little respect and interest to it as a great civilisation; collectively we are hugely ignorant of a country that represents one fifth of humanity. And this weakness of understanding surely must adversely affect how we best conduct our relations with China.

Yet this truth is used by the headline to trumpet a wild assertion that UK's golden age of relations and commerce under Cameron and Osborne was harmful to us. A warmer stance towards China apparently led us to let our guard down. Inkster is quoted as saying that this was 'not a climate which justified a high level of focus on Chinese covert activities'. Yet this is just an assertion and there is no proof offered that better relations led us to lower our guard. Indeed, our intelligence weakness has probably existed for many decades even before Cameron and no proof of further deterioration is suggested by Inkster. Indeed, a closer relationship might to the contrary have led us to inform ourselves better about China. The *i*'s front page news item is thus based solely on the musings of an admittedly scholarly former intelligence official. He was pleased to be quoted and needed to think of something punchy to say.

What is highly ironic is that our former 'spy chief' is thus up in arms accusing the Chinese of also spying and doing it too well. Surely, he knows that's part of the business. We in the UK, rightly have extensive agencies gathering intelligence and assessing global risk. It's not all about

covert spying and espionage but it's essential to know and understand other world powers so that we can improve our relations with them and head off potential risks through dialogue.

What is disturbing is if the mind-set of British intelligence officialdom maintains a Cold War mentality presuming that anything that China ever does is always wrong. Flimsy unsubstantiated allegations of this type should not make headlines. That is just bad journalism.

In any event most of the commercial and military information that China might want in order to size up the United Kingdom is in the public domain. Inkster says that Beijing is deploying more spies on the ground using ruthless methods when all their spooks surely need to do is put in a freedom of information request. The two political systems are very different and it's we who surely should be working harder on the ruthless undercover techniques.

At the foot of page 4, in the same issue of the *i* newspaper is two column inches of copy headed, '**Beijing asks Iran to rein in Houthi rebels**'. Thus, Chinese officials have asked Iran to help rein in Iran-backed Houthi rebels who are attacking ships in the Red Sea or risk harming business relations with China. Nigel Inkster regretting warmer relations with China was never front-page news but this certainly could have been. China being seen to use its economic clout to reduce armed attacks in the Middle East is highly significant. Yet it can never be headlining news because positive stories about China never are. That's not what editors think sells newspapers.

Andrew Hicks

Andrew is a member of SACU Council. He is a retired lawyer, who has worked in senior positions in several countries of the world, including Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore. His book, 'A True Friend to China', records the activities of the Friends Ambulance Unit in China 1945-1951.

China Eye Diary; Chinese Festivals 2024

The full sequece of 12 animals is in this order; Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Hoese, Goat, Monkey, Rooser, Dog and Pig.

4th April, Qing Ming

June 10th Dragon Boat Festival

17th September, Mid-Autumn Festival (Moon Cakes)

1 October National Day of Peoples Republic of China

11 October, Chong Yang (Seniors' Day)

These are the main festivals celebrated in the PRC, which have also become known to UK residents, Chinese New Year in particular. Parts of the central areas of major cities, such as London, Liverpool and Manchester are cordoned off for the celebrations.

Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival is the most important festival in China. It is usually accompanied by a week long National holiday. The second most important holiday in China is National Day, 1st October, which is also followed by a week long holiday. The PRC was founded on 1st October 1949, so 2024 will be the 75th Anniversary.

Building Bridges to Beijing?

David Law

- *This HEPI blog was kindly authored by Professor David Law, Academic Director: Global Partnerships at Keele University.*
- *HEPI's previous work on the role of China the UK's higher education sector includes [UK Universities and China](#), HEPI Report 132, and [Understanding China – The study of China and Mandarin in UK schools and universities](#), HEPI Report 148, edited and written respectively by Michael Natzler.*
- *David is a member of SACU and has contributed several articles to China Eye*

In common with most institutions in the sector, Keele is aiming to expand its connections in China. As part of this work, in September 2023 I joined a mission of Vice-Chancellors, Pro-VCs, and senior staff from 20 UK universities. We visited Beijing, Shanghai, and some other cities. The meetings were engaging and we learnt a lot. But we did this in a context of a chorus of concern voiced by many politicians that the UK's HE links are already too close.

British Council, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and Universities UK International (UUKi) organized a comprehensive programme. We were the first formal group visit to China since the pandemic. Previous groups often took a specific focus, such as scientific research, or were set up by organisations such as the Russell Group. The September tour was representative of the whole sector, with an approximately equal representation between Russell Group and non-RG universities.

The 2023 UK-China Higher Education Forum was a major highlight. Co-curated by the British Council and the CEAIE (China Education Association for International Exchange), 40 Chinese universities attended the Forum.

The first rule of rational debate is to establish the facts.

Context

For more than 40 years, the UK and China have engaged in multi-level collaboration in research and higher education. The starting point was the 'Third Plenum', **December 1978**, which confirmed the leadership of Deng Xiaoping and marked the beginning of "reform and opening up" in China's economy. The new approach in China was based on the use of market mechanisms, the import of capital and some capitalist techniques, and technological modernization acquired through controlled integration with Europe and America. In the industrial economy this led to various forms of joint ventures. In HE, this would propel Chinese universities towards collaborative international models, within a policy framework designed by Chinese officials. This has certainly raised the quality of

Chinese universities and created '*trans-national education with Chinese characteristics*'.

During two decades, in China, a highly specific and mature large-scale trans-national education (TNE) has been established. In other territories, the profit motive is very apparent; in China, the government strictly limits how much money the foreign partner can repatriate. It calls this 'reasonable return'.

There is no sign that appetite diminishes from overseas universities who queue up to participate in this sustained and successful project. The published TNE data shows China to be the top location for UK delivery (<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/universities-uk-international/events-and-news/uuki-news/another-record-breaking-year-uk>).

TNE is defined by bringing the programme to the student, not *vice-versa*. If only for currency outflow reasons, it makes sense for China to encourage more students to stay in their home country. TNE activity in China is also highly distinctive, as well as being very large. Globally, nowhere else is the state so paramount, as illustrated by the range of programme approval procedures used by the Beijing Ministry of Education. Chinese colleagues that I speak with are astonished that a UK university does not need government permission to establish TNE in China.

Current features of the UK/China relationship in HE

Of course, student mobility is a crucial dimension of this relationship. China remains one of the top international student recruitment markets for the UK, with approximately 150,000 Chinese students studying in the UK. Whilst the numbers are very lop-sided, UK students do go to China for short-term study programmes. The British Council reported to the HE Forum that, over the last decade, more than 67,000 young people from the UK have participated in study, internship, and teaching programmes in China, both through its own initiatives and other possibilities. The UK HE sector has a cohort of impressive alumni employed in China. Many alumni are now in senior administrative positions in public and private organisations; they contribute significantly to the Chinese economy and they help to shape public opinion. This contributes to the narrow objective of UK HE (to remain a key partner), and to a wider wide range of social, economic, and cultural connections between China and the UK.

In TNE, there are now more than 260 joint education programmes and institutes that have formal approval by the Ministry of Education (including 44 joint institutes (JI) – this includes Keele's Health and Medical Sciences JI in Chengdu). The total TNE enrolment is above 70,000 students. Collectively, UK TNE has more students in China than in any other country; this is most unlikely to change for many years to come.

Research collaboration with China is also strong. Grants made by the UK-China Research and Innovation Partnership Fund facilitate connections between over 100 Chinese universities and more than 50 from the UK. The UK is now China's second largest research partner in terms of academic co-publications; and China is also the UK's second largest.

Conclusions

There are many opportunities in China for collaboration, both in arts and sciences. On the basis of China's sustained economic growth and social development, the number of disciplinary areas that are included in partnership models continues to expand. At one time, there was a major focus on management and IT; this has steadily changed.

Our delegation left China united in the view that the UK, within and beyond universities, needs to develop stronger cultural awareness of China. At present, there is no doubt that our awareness is lagging behind. For example, using comparative student numbers on 'programmes' of all kinds (short and long courses), Chinese participation in mobility is well over one order of magnitude higher. We need more students in our language classes, not just in our Chinese Studies departments, and to make a greater effort to involve students in outward mobility. The work by Michael Natzler for HEPI is particularly instructive (hyperlinked below).

China's leadership, in all spheres, aims for multi-polarity in world systems. The UK's reputation in China for quality HE is very strong; leaders of Chinese universities respect the achievements of our universities. But we must not take that for granted. We have a rich track record in education and

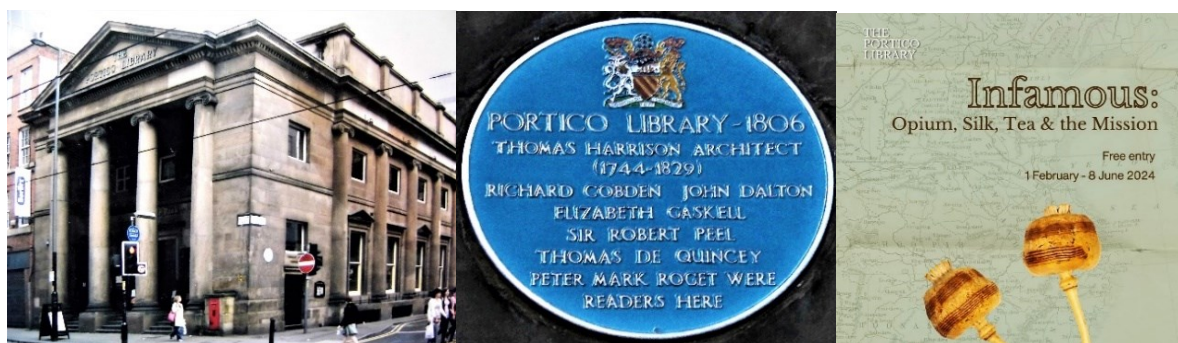
research but we need to earn our reputation and evaluate all opportunities (for cost/benefit and risk). There is a danger of complacency; across the world there are other national systems that are competing with the UK for position in China.

Can the UK higher education sector rise to the challenge? We need to embrace reciprocity, although the parameters for safe engagement are not always clear. We must show our intellectual grasp of the challenges and operate in a way that is true to ourselves and to our heritage.

In his Mansion House speech, 25 April 2023, the UK Foreign Secretary said: "we must face the inescapable reality that no significant global problem ... can be solved without China." It must be said with conviction: universities help solve global problems. Therefore, *UK universities have to build bridges to Beijing* but always with clear sightedness and careful risk analysis.

No UK university can disregard 'stakeholder' views; we must be ready to respond. We know that this hot topic in Whitehall and Westminster stirs the passions; we also know that our universities are not a branch of government. There are three principles outlined by the Foreign Office: *protect [our interests], align [with our allies], engage*. HE's role is engagement; we leave it to government to define national policy.

This article is reprinted with the kind permission of HEPI, the only independent think tank devoted to higher education.



Launch of Exhibition at the Portico Library, (plus associated activities)

The 'Infamous: Opium, Silk, Tea and the Mission' Exhibition' opened at the Portico Library, Manchester on 1st February 2024. It was curated by Iris Yau who is a Council Member of SACU. Following a special preview for invited guests at 5.00 pm, it was open to the general public from 6.00pm. The Portico librarian, Dr Thom Keep was very pleased with the success of the launch, estimating that it was attended by about 150 people. The exhibition will be open until the 8th June and is highly recommended, not only for the exhibition itself, but also to see the Portico Library building, its décor, contents and to enjoy a wonderfully prepared meal. Events associated with the Chinese, Lunar New Year, include; a Lion Dance, an International Women's Day discussion, a dialogue on Christian missionaries and the opium trade, a talk by Dr Fang Zong on tea and a lecture by Prof. Zheng Yangwen, author of *Social Life of Opium in China*. **Many other interesting events also take place at the Portico, Manchester. Further details and information from the Website: www.theportico.org.uk**

那些“吃苦耐劳”的无名英雄

——参与 2023 一战停战纪念仪式有感

宗蔚恩

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华南理工大学传播学学士

自由媒体人、文化博主、国学活动策划发

起人

11月11日，我有幸参与了由 Western Front Association 组织在 Cenotaph London 举行的 Armistice Day Ceremony 战停战纪念仪式。连续多日阴雨绵绵却在这天阳光明媚，初冬的寒意暖阳之下逐渐消散。从 Charling Cross 出站后，便感受到一股涌向一战停战纪念碑的人流。人头攒动的街道上，人们胸前佩戴着象征国际纪念阵亡将士的罂粟花标志。作为一个中国人，我在人群中显得有些格格不入。周围时不时投来的斜视仿佛在疑惑：“一战停战纪念日为何有中国人在凑热闹？”

然而这正是我们这群华人在这里汇聚的原因——追忆那 14 万参与这场人类历史上最残酷战争的中国劳工们。出于当时中国国力衰弱、《排华法案》的影响，以及对中国人的刻板印象和偏见等各种原因，中国劳工旅对一战的贡献鲜少被英国主流社会提及。长期以来，中国劳工旅在关于一战的讨论中被边缘化，为中国劳工旅发声的组织代表也鲜少。近几年，在一批有志之士的不懈努力下，不断地收集资料、组织活动，以文字和影像讲述他们的故事，中国劳工在一战的贡献才逐渐浮出水面，渐渐受到了欧洲社会了解和重视。

中国劳工旅大多是来自中国北方的农民，其中还有数百名学生充当翻译。为了弥补战时劳动力的不足，1916 年英国内阁批准征募中国劳工。一个风雨飘摇的国家寻求国际地位的道路和生活在动荡时代的普通人的谋生之路就此启动。每一个在西欧战场上出苦力的中国劳工背后，都背负着一个家族和一个挣扎的国家的期望。令我深感触动的是，他们并非出于多么高尚的理由而远西欧，却为国家和社会都做出了不可磨灭的贡献。这些“下里巴人”出于最朴实的想法——这是一份既能赚钱又能看世界又能为国争光的活，为什么不干呢？他们有的人为了生计和发财，有的

人因为好奇想去看外面的世界，背井离乡，踏上这趟危险又未知的旅程。

1918 年的英军报告中指出：“大多数劳工都能熟练地工作，而且他们一直都在铁路、兵工厂和坦克车间高效率地工作。”一位法国军官也指出：“他们能胜任任何工作，商人、鞋匠、铁匠、工程师，几乎无所不能。”华工以吃苦耐劳、任劳任怨而著称，在这场并非属于他们的战争中，他们从事着英法士兵都不愿意做的脏活累活。尽管出发前英法政府承诺他们不会到前线参战，但战争爆发后许多承诺都被抛诸脑后。根据中国劳工的回忆，有时他们挖的战壕距离德国人仅有 50 米，经常是挖好战壕后，英国士兵再进入战壕与德国人交战。1917 年，在法国皮卡的一次战斗中，由于德军突破了英法联军防线，正在前线挖战壕的数百名中国劳工来不及撤退，只能靠手中的铁锹、锄头与德国人搏斗。等到英法联军赶来支援时，大部分中国劳工都已阵亡。此外，中国劳工的合同规定每日必须工作 10 小时，每周 7 天无休。在英国军队的华工中，甚至不允许踏出营地与当地人际交往。

战争胜利后，一战华工的贡献出于各种原因并未得到应有的尊重和承认。战争结束前，《战争的圣殿》这幅纪念一战的名画在巴黎展出，但因为 1917 年美国参战，为了在画中加入美国人，创作者将原画中的中国劳工抹去，换成了美国人。华工靠着吃苦耐劳的品格帮助同盟军赢得了战争，吃苦耐劳却也成了西方对中国人的刻板印象，甚至被视为抢占资源。类似的情况在二战后的英国再次上演。二战爆发后，英国政府需要大量商船船员运送食物和武器，于是在 1940 年招募了 2 万名中国海员。然而他们的工资仅为英国海员的一半。战后，约 2000 多名退役中国海员留在利物浦生活工作。但战后英国失业率和通胀严重，中国海员和当地海员面临着竞争。航运公司急于摆脱中国工人，削减工资收回战争风险金。1945 年 10 月 19 日，英国内政部决定采取行动，“强制遣返不受欢迎的中国海员”。有些人甚至是出门上街给女儿买牛奶就遭到抓捕，来不及与家人告别就被遣送出境。这些以勤劳和廉价著称的中国海员在被利用完毕后遭到了驱逐。

勤劳和廉价或许是自 18-19 世纪大航海时代开始、工业革命发展以来，欠发达国家和地区既爱又恨的标签。那些未通过殖民获得资本原始积累的国家，只能通过劳动密集型产业与殖民者进行资源交换。我曾与一位英国手机零售商交谈，他说他常常去中国深圳采购手机配件，并在那里找工厂进行加工和组装。他自豪地表示，这样生产出的仿冒苹果手机比正版便宜许多，他能从中赚取可观的差价。但不一会他又面露“同情”之色，为那些剥削严重的工人打抱

不平。我一听觉得很有意思，于是反问他：“那您知道东亚、东南亚、南亚的劳动力都这么廉价，工人待遇恶劣的根本原因吗？”他开始分析起了这些国家的政府模式、资本运作的企业对工人的压榨、亚洲人喜欢吃苦耐劳的思维模式。我却已经坐不住了，“您就从未想过是因为西方资本国家通过殖民获得的原始积累，推动了工业和技术革命的进步，导致曾被殖民的国家在后殖民时代无法产生竞争力，只能依靠廉价劳动力和自然资源来谋求在经济全球化时代的发展。您倘若从这个角度看，剥削劳动力的真的是政府和企业吗？您一边从中国的廉价劳动力和资源中赚取差价，谋取利益，一边却将矛盾指向政府和企业，说着中国人吃苦耐劳的思维模式很僵化，您难道不觉得这很虚伪吗？”

站在纪念仪式现场，我感慨万分。这一天，我看到由子午社组织的五十多位华人代表为中国劳工旅敬献花圈，自豪地为他们正名——哪怕污泥满身，也仍是英雄，仍是“潜龙”。不知从何时起，勤劳被污名化，被歧视，甚至成为政治攻击的武器。作为华人，或许我们多多少少都曾对“你工作好努力 (hardworking)”这样的说法感到不悦，因为它让我们联想到那些底层劳工的刻板印象，我们不希望自己被贴上这样的标签。然而，正是这一群劳工为当时的中国换来一战战胜国的地位，挣得在巴黎和会拒绝签署《凡尔赛条约》，拒绝将德国在中国山东的特权转交给日本的一点资本和底气。他们凭借着吃苦耐劳的品质成就了这一切。而时至今日，越来越多人了解到中国劳工旅。我们对他们的记忆和敬意，是对他们在天之灵最好的告慰，也是在为华人群体争取更加公平公正的媒体曝光和待遇尽绵薄之力。

The Unsung Heroes — Reflections on Participating in the 2023 Armistice Day Ceremony by Weien Zong

*Master of Global Media Industries, King's College London
Bachelor of Communications, South China University of Technology; Freelance Media Person, Cultural Influencer, Chinese Cultural Event Planner*

On November 11th, I had the chance to participate in the Armistice Day Ceremony organized by the Western Front Association at Cenotaph London. Despite several days of continuous rain, the weather turned sunny on this particular day, gradually dispelling the chill of early winter. Coming out from Charing Cross station, I felt a surge of people heading towards the monument commemorating the end of World War I.

Crowded streets were adorned with individuals wearing poppies, symbolizing the remembrance of international fallen soldiers.

As a Chinese, I was a little out of place in the crowd. The occasional sideways glances seemed to inquire, "Why are there Chinese people participating in Armistice Day?" This was the reason why we, as a group of Chinese representatives, gathered here — to commemorate the 140,000 Chinese labourers who participated in this most brutal war in human history. Due to China's weakened national strength, the impact of the 'Chinese Exclusion Act', and various stereotypes and prejudices against Chinese people, the contributions of the Chinese Labour Corps to World War I are seldom mentioned in mainstream British society. For a long time, discussions about World War I marginalized the Chinese Labour Corps, and few representatives were advocating for them. In recent years, thanks to the tireless efforts of a group of dedicated individuals who have been collecting information and organizing activities, the stories of the Chinese Labourers' contributions to World War I have gradually come to light. Their contributions are gradually gaining recognition and appreciation in European society.



White Chrysanthemums Wreath for CLC
Photo by Iris Yau (SACU Trustee)

CLC mostly consisted of farmers from northern China and also included hundreds of students serving as translators. In 1916, facing a shortage of wartime labour, the British Cabinet approved the recruitment of Chinese labourers. This marked the beginning of a tumultuous journey for China seeking international status and for ordinary individuals trying to make a living in turbulent times. Each Chinese labourer toiling on the Western European battlefield carried the expectations of a family and a struggling nation. What deeply moved me was that their journey to the West was not driven by noble reasons, but rather by a practical desire for survival, prosperity, or a chance

to see the world while bringing honour to their country.

The 1918 British military report stated, "Most labourers are proficient at their work, consistently demonstrating high efficiency in railway, ordnance factories, and tank workshops." A French officer also remarked, "They can handle any job, be it as a merchant, shoemaker, blacksmith, or engineer; they are almost indispensable." The Chinese labourers, known for their endurance and willingness to work, engaged in the dirty and Labourious tasks that even British and French soldiers were reluctant to undertake. Despite promises from the British and French governments that they would not be sent to the frontlines, many of these commitments were cast aside once the war erupted. According to recollections from Chinese labourers, there were instances where the trenches they dug were only 50 meters away from the German forces. Sometimes, after completing the trenches, British soldiers would enter the battlefield in combat with the Germans. In a battle in Picardy, France, in 1917, when the German forces broke through the British and French Allied lines, hundreds of Chinese Labourers working at the frontline were unable to retreat in time. Armed only with shovels and hoes, they had to confront the German forces. By the time the British and French Allied forces arrived for support, most Chinese labourers had already perished. Additionally, the contracts for Chinese labourers stipulated a mandatory 10-hour workday, seven days a week. In the British military's Chinese labour units, leaving the camp to interact with locals was strictly prohibited.

After the war, the contributions of the Chinese labourers, who played a crucial role in helping the Allies win the war, did not receive the respect and recognition they deserved. Before the war's end, the painting "The Temple of War," commemorating World War I, was displayed in Paris. However, due to the United States' entry into the war in 1917, the original depiction of the Chinese Labour Corps was replaced with Americans. The hardworking and enduring nature of the Chinese labourers contributed to the Western stereotype of the Chinese as diligent but was also seen as a means of resource acquisition.

A similar situation unfolded in post-World War II Britain. After the outbreak of the war, the British government needed a large number of merchant sailors to transport food and weapons, leading to the recruitment of 20,000 Chinese sailors in 1940. However, their wages were only half of what British sailors received. After the war, around 2,000 retired Chinese sailors

remained in Liverpool. However, with severe post-war unemployment and inflation in Britain, Chinese and local sailors faced intense competition. Shipping companies, eager to rid themselves of Chinese workers, reduced wages and reclaimed war risk bonuses, making it difficult for them to survive. On October 19, 1945, the British Home Office decided to act, "forcibly repatriating unwanted Chinese sailors." Some were even arrested while buying milk for their daughters on the street, without the chance to bid farewell to their families before being deported. These Chinese sailors, known for their diligence and affordability, were expelled after being exploited.



CLC Representatives at the Cenotaph
Photo by Weien Zong (the Author)



Wreaths for CLC at the Cenotaph in London
Photo by Iris Yau (SACU Trustee)

Diligence and affordability have perhaps been a double-edged label for underdeveloped countries and regions since the beginning of the 18th and 19th centuries, during the Age of Discovery and the Industrial Revolution. Countries that did not achieve capital accumulation through colonization could only engage in resource exchange with colonizers through labour-

intensive industries. In a conversation with a British mobile phone retailer, he proudly mentioned his frequent trips to Shenzhen, China, to purchase phone components. He found factories there to process and assemble the components. He told me about the significantly lower cost of producing imitation Apple phones compared to the genuine ones, allowing him to make a substantial profit. However, shortly afterwards, he expressed a sense of "sympathy" for the exploited workers and criticized the harsh working conditions. Intrigued, I asked him, "Have you ever considered the fundamental reasons behind the cheap labour and poor working conditions in East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia?" He began analyzing the government, corporate exploitation of workers, and the work ethic of Asians. I couldn't help but interject, "Have you never thought that it might be due to the original accumulation of capital obtained through colonization by Western capitalist countries? This drove progress in industrial and technological revolutions, leaving formerly colonized countries unable to compete in the post-colonial era, forcing them to rely on cheap labour and natural resources for development in the age of economic globalization. While you profit from the cheap labour and resources in China, seeking benefits, you then shift the blame to the government and corporations, claiming that the thinking pattern of hardworking Chinese people is rigid. Don't you find this hypocritical?"



Chinese representatives for CLC

Photo courtesy of Daniel Li (Sinoist Books)

Standing at the site of the memorial ceremony, I was deeply moved. On this day, I witnessed over fifty Chinese representatives organised by the Meridian Society laying wreaths in tribute to the Chinese Labour Corps. Proudly, they reclaimed their rightful recognition—even if covered in mud, they are still heroes, still "hidden dragons." At some point, diligence became stigmatised, discriminated against, and even

used as a weapon for political attacks. As Chinese, we might have, to some extent, felt displeasure with phrases like "you work very hard," associating them with the stereotypical image of low-level labourers. Nobody prefers to be labelled in this way. However, it was this group of labourers who earned China its victorious position in World War I and gained a little confidence to refuse to sign the Treaty of Versailles in Paris, rejecting the transfer of German privileges in Shandong.

They achieved all this through their quality of enduring hardship. Today, more and more people are learning about the Chinese Labour Corps. Our memory and respect for them are the best comfort to their spirits, as well as a modest effort to advocate for fair media exposure and treatment for the Chinese community.

About the author

Weien Zong graduated from King's College London with a background of 5 years of media and documentary education and work experience. She has extensive media experience, interning at Guangdong Radio and Television Station, NetEase Games, the United Nations Youth Leadership Development Program, and with independent documentary filmmakers. Currently, she is dedicated to creating original videos of Chinese traditional culture and medicine on major social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Xiaohongshu, and Bilibili. Additionally, she organizes offline Chinese cultural events to promote traditional Chinese culture and wisdom.

Meridian Society and descendants of CLC men pay respects in April 2017 at the CLC cemetery Noyelles sur Mer, Flanders where 800 CLC men are buried. (Photo by WF)



「憶味」項目旨在以口述歷史的方式去探索在英華人廚師的集體回憶，該項目於 2023 年 11 月舉辦啟動禮並圓滿結束。當天倫敦大都會檔案館除提供活動場所外，亦特意展示與華人飲食文化有關的文獻。參與嘉賓人數眾多，活動反應熱烈。

此項目獲得大英學術院資助，由英國倫敦大都會檔案館、明愛（倫敦）學院、英國華人文化傳承中心、英國密德薩斯大學、英國諾丁漢大學共同合作，並獲李錦記（歐洲）有限公司提供活動贊助。啟動禮焦點在於研討環節，由倫敦大學亞非學院食品研究中心副主席 Jakob Klein 博士擔任主持，而米芝蓮兩星餐廳 A. Wong 行政總廚黃震球先生及大三元集團連鎖中餐廳董事郭華夏先生分享經營中餐廳的點滴。郭先生提到他們的餐館視員工像家人，想盡辦法留住好員工，黃先生則表達出傳承華人飲食知識的荊棘之路，如何令新一代明白承傳飲食文化的重要性是巨大考驗。

該項目現正徵集「集體回憶」作品。歡迎遞交有關美食、移民和回憶的個人經歷，詳情請留意英國華人文化傳承中心的網站。

Taste of Memory by Christy Leung

Christy is Marketing Coordinator at Ming-Ai (London)

The “Taste of Memory” project explores the collective memories of British-Chinese chefs through oral history. The project launch concluded successfully in November 2023. In addition to providing the event venue, the London Metropolitan Archives also showcased documents related to Chinese food culture. All the guests were delighted with the arrangements on that day.

This project is funded by the British Academy, and it is a collaboration with the London Metropolitan Archives, Ming-Ai (London) Institute, British Chinese Heritage Centre, Middlesex University, and the University of Nottingham. Lee Kum Kee (Europe) Limited sponsors all the project events. The highlight of the project launch was the panel discussion hosted by Dr. Jakob Klein (Deputy Chair of the SOAS Food Studies Centre at the University of London), featuring Mr. Andrew Wong (Chef-patron of two-Michelin-starred restaurants A. Wong) and Mr. Andrew Kwok (Director of The Good Earth group chain of Chinese restaurants). Mr. Kwok mentioned that all employees are treated as extended family members, and they strive to retain them. Mr. Wong expressed concern about the inheritance of knowledge regarding Chinese food culture, and he found it challenging letting the new generation understand its importance.

The “Taste of Memory” project is now calling for “Collective Memory” submissions. This project would like to collect and collate the stories about your personal experiences with food,

migration, and memory. For more information, please refer to the website of the British Chinese Heritage Centre.

Website: https://www.britishchineseheritagecentre.org.uk/en_uk/projects/taste_of_memory/memories.html



Jakob Klein (SOAS) in conversation with Andrew Kwok (The Good Earth Group) and Andrew Wong (A. Wong) about their food memory. (Image Courtesy of Ming-Ai Institute)



Participants including Iris Yau (SACU Trustee) at Taste of Memory launch at London Metropolitan Archives. (Image Courtesy of Ming-Ai Institute)

The Year of the Dragon (2024)

The animal sign for this year is the luckiest of the 12 animal signs of the Chinese Zodiac and hopefully, this year will see a more harmonious world, less wars, less floods, less earthquakes, fewer natural disasters and no man-made problems. Women in China try to time their pregnancy so that the birth of the new born child will hopefully be in the most luck and successful of signs. There are five types of dragons, which include the dragons of patience, success, virtue, health and power. They also come under these types: metal, water, wood, fire and earth. These all have different characteristics.

A few famous people born in the Year of the Dragon include Fire; Frank Sinatra (singer), Yehudi Menuhin (violinist), Kirk Douglas (film actor)

Wood: Salvador Dali (artist)

Earth: Shirley Temple (black film star and activist)

Whenever you were born, your birthday year comes around only once every 12 years. It is an interesting subject.

Happy New Year to all SACU China Eye readers from Jacqueline Buksh.

The History and Evolution of Chinese names

英中了解协会会员施懿超于2023年11月30日在曼彻斯特大学商学院举办了一场题为《中国姓名的起源及演变》的公共讲座，近50位曼大教师、学生及其他社会人士参加了此次讲座。讲座内容主要包括中国姓氏的起源和变化、姓名的传统和特点、以及目前全国姓名使用的现状，还探讨了中国人取名的一些讲究及文化背景。讲座内容丰富、互动有效，受到了听众的普遍好评。本讲座由曼彻斯特大学孔子学院和曼彻斯特大学商学院共同主办，讲座录音可以在孔子学院的YouTube频道<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVjC6GjpfXM>找到。

Yichao Shi (施懿超), a member of the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU), held a public lecture entitled "The history and evolution of Chinese Names" at the University of Manchester Business School on November 30, 2023. Nearly 50 University of Manchester teachers, students and other interested persons participated in this lecture. The lecture content mainly includes the origin and changes of Chinese surnames, the tradition and characteristics of Chinese names, and the current situation of name use across the country. It also discusses some of the cultural background of Chinese given name. The lecture was rich in content and effective in interaction and was generally well received by the audience. This lecture was co-organized by the Confucius Institute at the University of Manchester and the University of Manchester Business School. The recording of the lecture can be found on the Confucius Institute's YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVjC6GjpfXM>

About the Author:

Yichao Shi (施懿超) is an experienced professional educator with a PhD from Nanjing University in Chinese Classical Literature. Dr Shi has now retired as a professor in Chinese University and is living and teaching in Manchester.



Dr Yeow Poon: A Tribute

SACU members were saddened to hear of the passing of Dr Yeow Poon on the 17 December 2023 following a battle with cancer. Born in 1956, he was a prominent member of the Chinese Business Community and formerly Chair of the Chinese Cultural Centre in Birmingham.

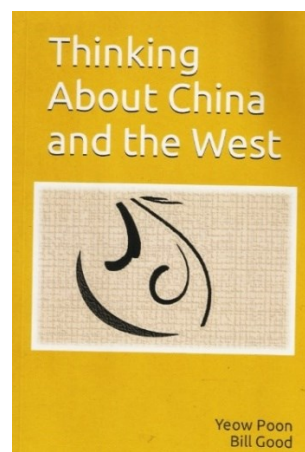
He was not a member of SACU, but shared our values and took part in joint activities to spread understanding between China and the world. Yeow was a founder member of CARG (Campaign for Antiracism Group) and participated in the Standing up to Sinophobia movement.

Together with Bill Good, he authored '*Thinking About China and the West*' (reviewed in China Eye No 76). The book showed his deep understanding of connecting cultural values and his strong belief that the differences between China and the West can be brought together as positive forces to overcome the challenges facing us today.

His funeral was on 22 January this year and was attended by Iris Yau.



Yeow at a Chinese Labour Corps meeting in Birmingham (WF)



The 2nd English Chinese Bilingual Recitation Competition was successfully held

第二届英国英中双语朗诵比赛成功举办

On November 19, 2023, 36 students from across the UK gathered at the Djam Lecture Theatre of SOAS, University of London, to participate in the finals of the 2nd English Chinese Bilingual Recitation Competition. Participants, ranging from six to eighteen years old, competed in five different age groups. They each recited two pieces in English and Chinese. The planning, design, training, and on-site support for the competition were all undertaken by over 40 volunteers from the Mother's Bridge of Love (MBL).

The competition was jointly organised by Mother's Bridge of Love (MBL), Fusion Education (FES), KYX International (KYX), SOAS Chinese Culture Society, and Xue Mo Culture. The purpose of this event is to showcase the bilingual talents of young people in the UK, encouraging them to be innovative when it comes to communications and exchanges between languages. The organisers sincerely wish to attract more students, schools, and communities to participate, communicate, and learn together, fostering a diverse cultural atmosphere in the UK, while creating channels for cultural understanding and inclusivity between China and the UK.

The twelve judges of the competition were all leading cultural figures in the UK and China. The English-language judges included Prof. Julia Lovell, prize-winning translator and sinologist at Birkbeck College, University of London; Dr. Frances Wood, former curator of the Chinese collections of the British Library; Hilary Spurling, winner of the 2006 Whitbread Prize, author of "Burying the Bones: Pearl Buck in China"; Beth McKillop, senior research fellow and former deputy director at the Victoria and Albert Museum, expert on Chinese and Korean art, senior teaching fellow at SOAS; Dr. Seth Cook, Asia coordinator of the Food and Land Use Coalition; Huw May, the headmaster of Kensington Wade, a bilingual Chinese- English school. The Chinese-language judges included Dr. Song Lianyi, director of the East Asia Department at SOAS; He Yue, columnist for FTChinese.com; James Li, founder and CEO of KYX International; Wen Diya, former journalist and presenter of China Central Television and Phoenix Television; Zeng Biao, lecturer in psychology at the University of South Wales; Winnie Cao, tax partner and head of China Business Group at Blick Rothenberg, and editor of a Chinese language magazine.

2023年11月19日，来自全英各地的36名学生在伦敦大学亚非学院Djam Lecture Theatre参加了第二届英国英中双语朗诵比赛决赛的角逐。从6岁到18岁以上5个不同年龄组的选手每人都分别用英文和中文朗诵了一篇作品。比赛的策划、设计、培训、决赛现场支持全部由40多名MBL志愿者担当完成。

本届比赛由母爱桥(MBL)、英国富趣思学(FES)、凯谊信(KYX)、伦敦大学亚非学院中国文化社及雪漠文化联合主办，希望通过这个比赛展示英国年轻人的英语和汉语的双语才艺，鼓励他们勇于创新和交流；希望通过这项活动吸引更多的学生、学校和社区参与、学习、交流，构建中西双方文化理解和包容的渠道，共同营造英国的多元文化氛围。

比赛的12名评委皆为英中文化界领军人物，其中英文评委为：著名翻译家和汉学家，伦敦大学伯贝克学院(Birkbeck College, University of London)中国文学和文化史教授蓝诗玲教授(Prof. Julia Lovell)，大英图书馆中国收藏部前负责人吴芳思博士(Dr. Frances Wood)，英国著名作家、2006年惠贝瑞图书奖获得者、《赛珍珠传》和《大师马蒂斯》的传记作者希拉里·斯珀林女士(Hilary Spurling)，前维多利亚和阿尔伯特博物馆CEO、伦敦亚非学院(SOAS)中国与韩国艺术

专家贝斯·麦克奥女士(Beth McKillop)，食物和土地利用联盟 的亚洲协调员顾惜思(Dr. Seth Cook)，以及 Kensington Wade 英中双语学校校长豪美先生(HuwMay)。中文组评委则由伦敦大学亚非学院(SOAS)东亚系主任教师宋联谊博士，英国社会学者 FT 中文网专栏作家何越女士，凯信国际(KYX)创始人 CEO 李健先生，中国前中央电视台、香港凤凰卫视记者主持人温迪雅女士，南威尔士大学(University of South Wales)心理系讲师曾飏博士(Dr. CengBiao)和必臻集团(BlickRothenerg)税务合伙人、作家和中文杂志编辑曹锦玥女士(Ms. VinnieCao)联合担任。



作者：

顾红艳，母爱桥伦敦总部志愿者，2021 年获得英国东安格利亚大学文化遗产和博物馆研究专业硕士学位。《鸿雁英伦博物馆之旅》视频制作者。第二届英中双语朗诵比赛筹备组成员，并主持了2023年11月19日的决赛。

About the author; Gu Hongyan, a volunteer at the Mother's Bridge of Love (MBL: Charity Registration Number is 1105543. <https://www.mothersbridge.org>) head office, was a member of the organizing committee for The 2nd English Chinese Bilingual Recitation Competition and hosted the finals on November 19, 2023. In 2021, she received her MA of Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies from the University of East Anglia. She is also the creator of the video series Hongyan's Journey of Museums in Britain

The Mothers' Bridge of Love, is dedicated to reaching out and enriching the lives of Chinese children in all corners of the world – those adopted by Western families, those raised abroad and those living in China. MBL was founded in 2004 by bestselling author Xinran, based on conversations, correspondence and experiences she had in China and around the world. Xinran still oversees MBL operations, supported by a board of Trustees and a team of dedicated volunteers.

Xinran was guest speaker at SACU's agm in London about the year 2005. At that time SACU was especially supportive of Chinese orphans (mainly girls) adopted from China by British couples. SACU held a series of events over several years for these children and their new British parents at Frodsham (near Liverpool/Manchester) hosted and organised by Jane Hadley, the SACU chair at that time.

Explore Dragons, Experience Diversity by Minji Xu

Minji 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 reflects the club's recent celebrations with kids in different countries to welcome the year of the dragon.

Dragon East and West

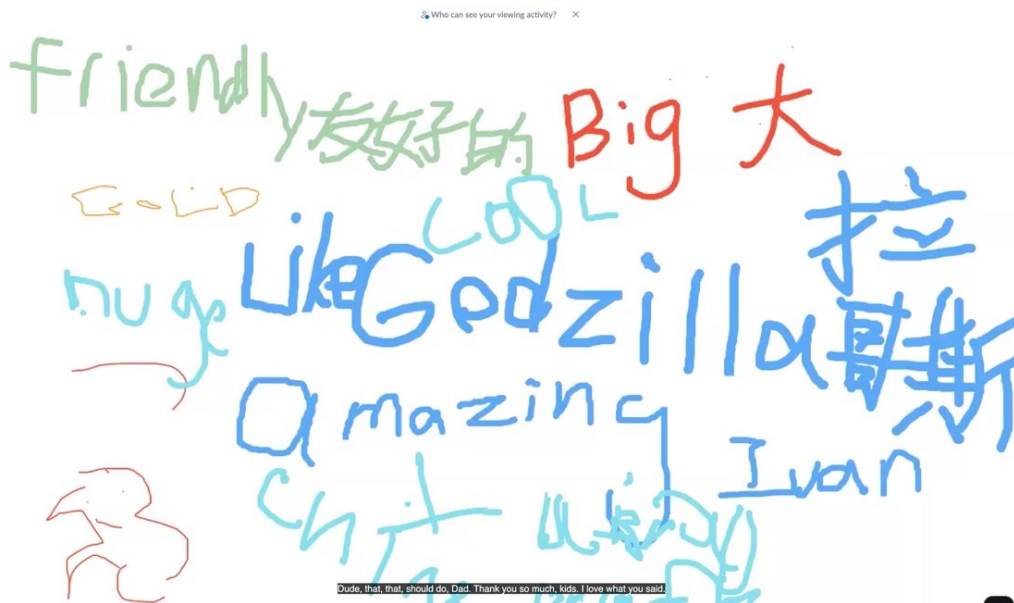
This year is the Chinese Year of the Dragon. When curating a Chinese New Year celebration for children, I wanted a different experience, something imaginative and original. The cultural differences of dragons came to my mind.

The dragon is a symbol of power in both Eastern and Western cultures. However, its image, superpower, lifestyle, and role in cultures are quite different. In the Western culture, dragons are to be feared, tamed, or conquered. Whereas in Chinese culture, the dragon represents authority, with an almost God-like status. Chinese people pray and make wishes for these imagined creatures, believing themselves as heirs of dragons (“龙的传人”).

This provides a wonderful opportunity for children aged 5-12 to experience diverse cultures. That is how our online event ‘We’re going on a dragon hunt’ was designed. We started by comparing dragons in the East and West, followed by exploring dragons in art, language, and folk stories. At the end, we let children design a dragon from their own imagination.

Are dragons good or bad?

At the beginning of the event, we asked children to write one word on a whiteboard to describe dragons. Some of the words were ‘friendly, big, huge, gold, cool, amazing, Chinese and like Godzilla’.



Word wall made by children.

Are dragons real?

Most of the children didn't believe dragons were real. When we showed them animals in the real world that have dragons in their names (such as Komodo Dragon), they were filled with excitement and fascination. We showed some creatures in the ocean and on land who might inspired the mythical image of dragons. Everyone raised their hands to ask questions and share their own knowledge of animals.

Are dragons real? (Lóng zhēn shí cún zài ma?)



Collaborative reading

Then we read together the folk tale ‘Four Dragons’ story in English and Chinese together. This is a little-known story about how four dragons brought rain to help farmers and became four biggest rivers in China. While reading the story, the older kids were helping the younger ones with reading and spelling. How they supported and helped each other was an inspiring example of a collaborative event.

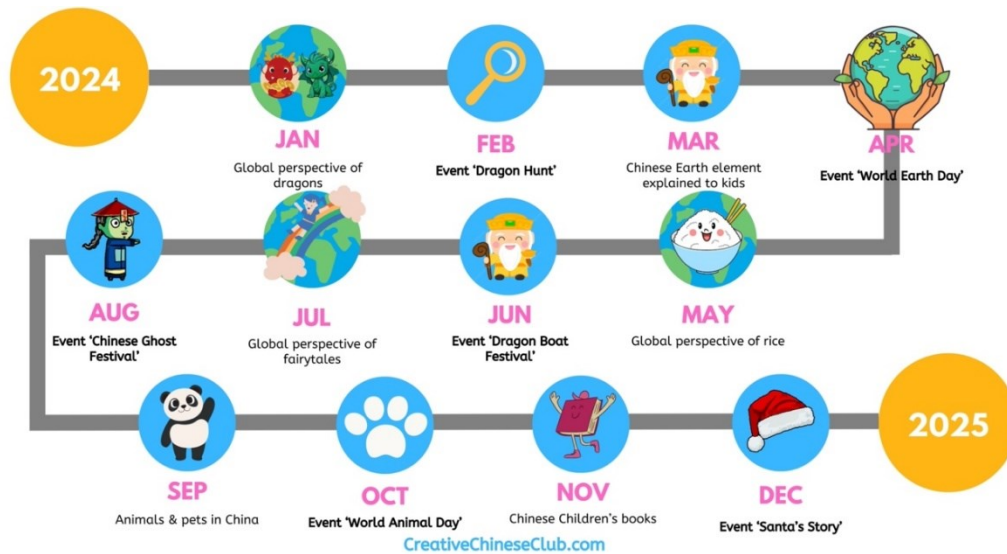
Design your own Chinese dragon

At the end of the event, we asked children to use coloring pens and paper to design their own Chinese dragons. This was my favorite part. Seeing these dragons come with different shapes, colors, and styles, I can't help thinking how wonderful it is to be able to see the world with multicultural perspectives. This also helps us to understand culture as a living thing. We inherit, grow, and refresh it, making it more relevant to our world today and tomorrow.



What can you do?

Are your children interested in learning Chinese language and culture in an engaging way? Are your children interested in connecting with others to explore world cultures? Look at our content and event planning this year and join us! Send us an email (story@creativechineseclub.com) so we can keep you updated.



Dragon Boat Racing at Salford Quays; this year's two-day event is on 8/9 June

Appropriately, 2024 is the Year of the Dragon. The Dragon Boat event commemorates the Chinese patriot, Qu Yuan, who was so distressed at seeing his country invaded that he drowned himself in the river Milo, over 2000 years ago. The Dragon Boat Race is exciting and fascinating both for participants and spectators. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn about Chinese heritage. In addition to the races there will be cultural performances, kung-fu demonstrations, folk songs and dances, calligraphy and Chinese painting. Chinese Festival food will be available.

Further information from info@xca.org.uk

Also contact this e mail address if you want to enter a team, sponsor the event or rent a stall. The festival is a collaboration between the Xinhua Chinese Association (XCA), Salford City Council and the British Dragon Boat Racing Association.

从《周易》看褪去宗教外衣的“中式生死观”

宗蔚恩

伦敦大学国王学生全球媒体产业硕士

华南理工大学传播学学士

自由媒体人、文化博主、国学活动策划发起人

“中国人有宗教信仰吗？”

常有外国朋友这样问我。我说首先宗教（religion）和信仰（belief）在中国语境中并不等同。中国有多种多样的宗教文化。佛教、道教、基督教、伊斯兰教都有不少信徒。如果谈到信仰则更数不胜数了。有信仰祖先的，有信仰萨满的，有信仰老天爷、土地公、财神爷的，还有什么鬼神都不信只信“天行健，君子以自强不息”的。信自己又何尝不是一种信仰呢？

称之为“信仰”也不完全准确。因为从《易经》的角度来说，面对包括人自身在内的宇宙万物，那些看得见的与看不见的现象，都不是信不信的问题。就好比太阳东升西落，月亮阴晴圆缺，这些客观存在的事物和现象与“信不信”毫不相干。这也是为什么中国哲学很少去反复确认和探讨“谁创造了人”“谁是造物主”这个问题，而更多探讨人与外界之间的互动。回看中国历史，除了个别朝代外，中国主流社会很少出现大肆推崇宗教的现象。是孔子仅仅用“敬鬼神而远之”就把宗教问题给敷衍过去了吗？远没有那么简单。对于“我是谁？我从哪里来？我要到哪里去”的终极问题，中国哲学虽然不热衷去探讨，但不代表对这个问题没有答案。从孔子所编著的《易经·系辞》中，我们或许能一窥中式信仰的真面目。

首先，简单介绍一下《易经》。维基百科称《易经》为“古代中国巫师用于推演未来吉凶祸福的卜筮书。百度百科称《易经》“含盖万有，纲纪群伦，广大精微，包罗万象，是中华文明的源头”。两种定义的差别也反映出了《易经》的两面性。它既可以是古代帝王将相圣人君子的最高学问，也可以是街头算命先生人手一本工具书。可以说，中国传统思想文化，不管是道家还是儒家思想，不管是兵法还是玄学术数，都开花结果于《易经》这片肥沃的土壤中。

《易经》包括《经》和《传》两部分内容。《经》则是由周文王所演算的 64 卦和编著的卦辞和爻辞。《传》则是孔子及弟子对《易经》的解说，一共十篇，俗称十翼。其中数《系辞》最为精彩，总论了“易”的基本理念。《系辞》说“易与天地准，故能弥纶天地之道”。也就是说，易代表的是天地法则。易经六十四卦就像一张大网，概述了宇宙间所有的变化规律。无论是客观世界的变化，还是人事变化，都逃不开这 64 卦。

既然《易经》是一门包罗万象的学问，那么它如何看待宗教中生死问题呢？《系辞》中明确指出“原始反终，故知死生之说”。生就是开始，死就是结束。有开始就有结束，有结束就有开始。开始不是真的开始，结束也不是真的结束。结束不一定在开始后，也可以在开始之前。孔子认为，如果能明白这个道理，就明白生死是如何一回事了。这与佛家的“轮回”概念意义大抵相同。东方文化中，死不叫死，叫“往生”。但是中国传统文化并不像佛教那样将生死看得如此之沉重，因为在儒道看来，生死就是客观规律，没有神秘色彩，也没有情感色彩。人之所以为生而雀跃，为死而难过都是人的主观抉择。死亡也可以是一件值得庆祝的事情，比如中国很多地方都流行为年纪大岁数去世的老人办“喜丧”。再者，在中国传统术数中，“十二长生”——长生、沐浴、冠带、临官、帝旺、衰、病、死、墓、绝、胎、养，也描述了“原始反终”。从中我们可以发现中国文化中很有意思地方——“死”“墓”“绝”都不是轮回的终点。轮回的终点是“胎”“养”，是新生命正在孕育的阶段，是受精卵和胎儿的阶段。从婴儿呱呱坠地的那一刻开始，又是一个生命周期的开始。这就是中国人说的“生生不息”。

孔子也并不花大笔墨去提倡死后业力、报应的概念。因为孔子一方面认为，真正的君子是不会因死后是否有善报或恶报而改变自己进德修业的行动的；但另一方面不得不承认的是，教化民众是需要鬼神观的，所以孔子说“仁者寿”。这个“长寿”超越了人类生命的长度，大仁大德之人的生命已经超越了物理时间，这才是真正的“与天地同寿”。宗教为我们描绘出死后世界的景象，但《易经》告诉我们如何活着，告诉我们站在“生”的这端去看“死”。站在日出看黄昏，那么并不用为黄昏而悲观，因为再过半日太阳又会重新升起来。

《易经》从一个不带有迷信和神权色彩的角度解释了生死问题，对“我是谁？我从哪里来？我要到哪里去”给出了“中国答案”。南怀瑾先生说“把宗教外衣统统剥光了，我们东方最高的宗教哲学是“神无方”。神是没有方位的、没有形象的，我们本身生命也好、精神也好、宇宙的生命、宇宙的精神也好，神是没有方位，无所不在，也无所在。”小时候上学的时候，老师说中国传统思想是朴素的唯物主义。现在读了《易经》想想此话不假，不过与其说是“唯物”还是“唯心”，不如说是朴素的唯实主义。宇宙间所有的奥秘，有可见与不可见的，有可感知和不可感知的，在《易经》看来都是绝对物质，绝对客观存在的。《易经》没有为那个至高无上的“道”套上“神”的外衣，它只告诉你“一阴一阳之谓道”“阴阳不测谓之神”。所以之所以解释“中国人是否有宗教信仰”这一问题这么难，是因为它已经褪去了宗教的外衣。所以西方传统定义的宗教在儒家和道

家上都是无法成立的。中国文化的各家学说都是根植于同一个“天人合一”的认同。从《易经》到中国人的思想方式，这种“天人合一”的认同已经超越了简单的偶像崇拜和先知预言。

Understanding the “Chinese Idea of Life and Death” From *Yi Jing* (易经, Book of Changes)

Weien Zong

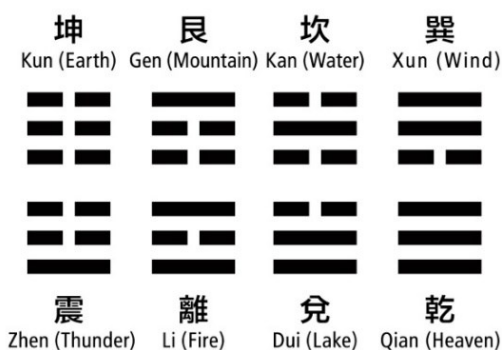
Weien is Master of Global Media Industries, King's College London. Bachelor of Communications, South China University of Technology. Freelance Media Person, Cultural Influencer, Chinese Cultural Event Planner

"Do Chinese people have religious beliefs?"

My friends often ask me this question. I said first, that religion and belief cannot be equated in the Chinese context. China has diverse religions, with Buddhism, Daoism, Christianity, and Islam all having numerous followers. When it comes to belief, the variety is even more diverse. Some believe in ancestors, some in shamans, some in the Jade Emperor, the Earth God, the Money God, and some also believe in nothing but 'heaven's vigour, with the Jun Zi (person with the highest virtue) striving tirelessly'. Believing in oneself, isn't that a form of belief too?

Calling it 'belief' isn't entirely accurate either. From the perspective of *Yi Jing*, it is not a matter of belief when facing visible and invisible parts of the universe. Like sunrise and sunset, the waxing and waning of the moon, these objective existences and phenomena have nothing to do with 'belief'. That is why Chinese philosophy rarely dwells on and explores questions like 'Who created humans' or 'Who is the creator', but rather focuses more on the interaction between humans and the external world.

Looking back through history, except for certain dynasties, mainstream Chinese society rarely saw widespread promotion of religion. Did Confucius brush aside the issue of religion with his phrase 'Respect ghosts and gods, but keep a distance from them'? It is not that simple. Regarding the ultimate questions of 'Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?', although Chinese philosophy may not be keen on repetitively questioning and confirming them, it does not mean there are no answers to these questions. Perhaps we can catch a glimpse of Chinese-style belief from the Chapter of *Xi Ci* in the *Yi Jing*, written by Confucius.



Yi Jing Ba Gua (Credit: From Internet)

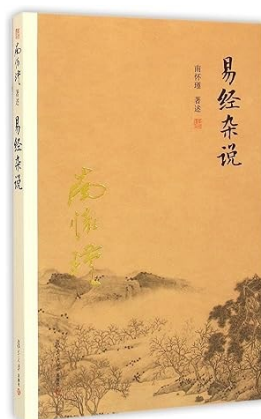
A brief introduction of *Yi Jing*. Wikipedia describes *Yi Jing* as 'an ancient Chinese divination text used by wizards to predict the future and determine fortune and misfortune.' Baidu Baike says *Yi Jing* 'covers all things and all changes in the universe; It can used to well govern the country; It is broad and profound; It is the source of Chinese civilization.' The difference between these two definitions also reflects the duality of *Yi Jing*. It is the supreme study of ancient emperors, kings, sages, and Jun Zi, and it can also be a tool book found in the hands of every street fortune teller. It can be said that all the traditional Chinese Philosophy and culture, whether Daoism or Confucian thought, whether military strategy or metaphysics, all grow up in the fertile soil of *Yi Jing*. *Yi Jing* consists of two parts: the 'Classic' and the 'Commentary'. The 'Classic' consists of the 64 hexagrams and their interpretations while 'Commentary' is written by Confucius and his disciples to explain *Yi Jing*. Among them, the Chapter of *Xi Ci* is the most brilliant. *Xi Ci* states that "the Yi accords with the norm of heaven and earth, hence they can supplement the Dao of heaven and earth". In other words, Yi represents the principles of heaven and earth. The 64 hexagrams are like a massive net, outlining all the laws of change in the universe. Whether it's changes in the objective world or changes in human affairs, they all cannot escape these 64 hexagrams.

Since *Yi Jing* is a study that encompasses all things, how does it view the issues of life and death in religion? A line in *Xi Ci* answers this question – "the primal reverts to the ultimate, so as life and death". Life is the beginning; death is the end. The beginning entails an end, and the end entails a beginning. The beginning is not truly the beginning, and the end is not truly the end. The end doesn't necessarily come after the beginning, nor does it come before the beginning. Confucius believed that if one could understand this truth, one would understand what life and death are all about. This concept is largely similar in

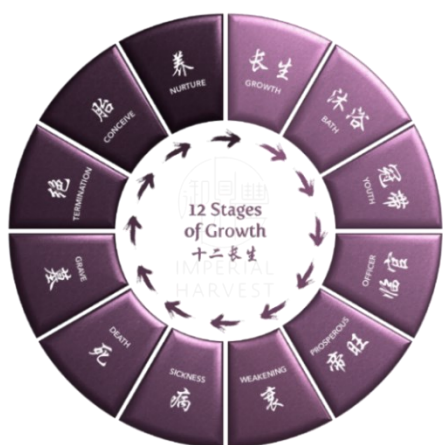
meaning to the Buddhist concept of ‘reincarnation’. In Eastern culture, death is not called death, but ‘head to life’. However, Chinese culture doesn't regard life and death as heavily as Buddhism does, because in the eyes of Confucianism and Daoism, life and death are objective laws, devoid of mystique or emotional colour. Whether one rejoices in life or mourns in death is entirely a subjective choice. Death can also be a cause for celebration, as seen in the folk traditions in many parts of China of holding ‘joyous funerals’ to celebrate elderly people who have passed away at an old age. Also, in traditional Chinese numerology, the Twelve Life Circle - Birth, Bathing, Youth, Officer, Prosperous, Weakening, Sickness, Death, Grave, Termination, Embryo, and Nurture - also describe the ‘primal reverts to the ultimate’. From this, we can see an interesting aspect of Chinese culture – ‘death’, ‘grave’, and ‘termination’ are not the end of the circle, but ‘embryo’ and ‘nurture’. The end of life is the stage where new life is being gestated. From the moment a baby cries at birth, it's the beginning of another life cycle. This is what a Chinese Chengyu says ‘Sheng Sheng Bu Xi’, meaning ‘life continues with life with no stop’.

to look at ‘death’ from standing from the ‘life’. If we stand at sunrise and watch the sunset, there is no need to feel pessimistic about the sunset. Because the sun will rise again after 12 hours.

Yi Jing explains the issues of life and death from a perspective devoid of superstition and divine authority, and provides the Chinese answer to the questions of "Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?". Nan Huaijin said, "Strip away all the religious trappings, and the highest religious philosophy in the East is 'god without form'. God has no position, no image, whether it's our own life, our spirit, the life of the universe, the spirit of the universe, God has no position, is omnipresent, and nowhere."



易经系传别讲 by Nan Huai Jin 南怀瑾(Author)
Credit: From Internet



Twelve Life Circles in Traditional Chinese Numerology
Credit: From Internet

Confucius also didn't spend much effort advocating posthumous karma and retribution concepts. Confucius believed, on the one hand, that a true Jun Zi would not change his actions in virtue and cultivation based on whether there would be good or bad consequences after death. On the other hand, it must be admitted that educating the public requires a belief in ghosts and gods, so Confucius also said ‘The benevolent have long lives’. This ‘long life’ transcends the length of human life, the life of a great benevolent person has already surpassed physical time, and this is the true ‘being in harmony with heaven and earth’. Religion depicts the world after death for us while *Yi Jing* tells us how to live, and tells us

When I was in school, my teacher said that traditional Chinese thought was simple materialism. After reading *Yi Jing*, I feel more agree with this statement. But rather than saying it's materialism or idealism, *Yi Jing* is realism. All the mysteries in the universe, visible and invisible, perceptible and imperceptible, are seen as absolute material, absolute objective existence by *Yi Jing*. It does not doesn't clothe the supreme Dao in the garb of ‘god’. It only tells us ‘Dao is the interaction of yin and yang’ and ‘the unexpectedness and unknownness of yin and yang are called god’. This is the reason why it is difficult to explain the question of whether Chinese people have religious beliefs because it has shed the trappings of religion. The traditional Western definition of religion does not hold true for Confucianism and Daoism. The various schools of thought in Chinese culture are all rooted in the same recognition of ‘heaven and man united’. It is a recognition rooted and developed from *Yi Jing* to Chinese people’s mindset that transcends simple idol worship and prophet prophecy.

Sino File of Current Events compiled by Walter Fung

Items worth reading again (note the dates)

Benefit of Chinese economy From Newsweek May 9 2005)

China's growth has amazing benefits for the world and America in particular. Morgan Stanley reports that cheap imports from China have saved American consumers more than \$600 billion in the past decade. They have saved manufacturers even more. The Economist magazine notes that it was largely thanks to China's robust growth that the world as a whole escaped recession after America's stock market bubble burst in 2000-01. And by buying up US Treasury bills, China, along with other Asian countries, has allowed Americans and their government to keep borrowing and spending and thus keep the world economy going.

Synthesised Protein (Beijing Review 11/11/21)

China has become the first nation in the world to synthesise protein from carbon monoxide. The discovery has been upgraded to industrial production with an initial capacity of 10,000 metric tons. This was announced by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences on 30/10/21. The product can gradually replace protein such as soya bean, which is imported. Ten million tons of the synthetic protein is equivalent to 28 million tons of imported soya bean and could reduce carbon emission of 250 million tons of carbon dioxide. China's importing of soya beans for food products and animal fodder is a factor in China's food security. Chinese livestock consumes 400 million tons of protein every year, of which 60% is sourced from imported soya bean.

'Third distribution in China' (From The Times 20/8/21)

It is payback time, President Xi told China's band of billionaires; they are expected to do more to 'repay society.' Under a scheme called 'the third distribution', the newly wealthy will have to contribute more towards reaching a goal of 'common prosperity' nationally by 2035. Xinhua, the official news agency, reported that a meeting presided over by President Xi concluded, 'We should reasonably adjust excessive incomes and encourage high-income people and companies to pay back more to the society'.

Last year regulators launched an anti-monopoly investigation into the giant Alibaba corporation, resulting in a record \$2.8 billion fine. Last month internet and education companies came under competition investigation. Also, three years ago, the authorities began to crack down on the high payments made to celebrities and capping how much they could earn for TV productions. The actress, Fan Bingbing was held for three months over a \$129 million tax bill.

Chinese government declares electric car revolution From The Times 21/12/15)

President Xi Jinping has designated electric car making a strategic priority to build national champions to take on the likes of Toyota and General Motors. Over the next five years at least \$15 billion will be pumped into China's electric car industry. Foreign makers have no choice but to also pour

money into electric vehicles because China is by far the world's biggest car market. In the first half of 2015, sales of electric vehicles jumped 240% to meet China's target to have five million electric cars on the road by 2020.

From the British Press

Chinese wine leaders

Moët & Chandon, the leading French fine wine brand, could lose its place to a Chinese wine maker. Moët & Chandon has seen its value fall 10% to \$1.3 billion in the past year and now it is just ahead of Changyu Pioneer Wine Company, which has a value of \$1.2 billion. Changyu has had dramatic growth since last year. It has developed more than 20,000 hectares of vineyards in China, more than ten times that of Moët & Chandon, which has only 1,190 hectares. Changyu's value has increased by 33% in the last 12 months. The company, the oldest wine producer in China was founded in 1892 by Zhang Bishi who collaborated with Lenz Moser, a 15th generation Austrian wine maker.

China now has the third amount of wine growing land in the world with 785,000 hectares, 10% of the world total and its 116 wine companies and 2,000 wineries' produce 4.2 million hectolitres a year (*From The Times 30/11/23*)

Suez Canal; Red Sea route

The Economist published an illuminating article on 3rd February about the situation in the Red Sea. On 19th January the Houthis said that Chinese and Russian ships would enjoy safe passage in the Red Sea, but much of Chinese maritime trade involves ships registered in other countries. However, about half of these ships are playing safe by going around the Cape of Good Hope even though this adds two more weeks to the journey and involves higher insurance.

Chinese state media says that a Chinese shipping line, Sea Legend, is offering to carry freight through the Red Sea with Chinese navy escorts. Since 2009, China has contributed to protection of commercial shipping from Somali pirates.

Chinese officials have asked their Iranian counterparts to rein in the Houthis. The Chinese have said that if China's business interests are harmed, it will affect business with Iran. However, although Iran supplies weapons to the Houthis, its ability to control them may be limited. (*From The Economist 3/2/24*)

IMF economic growth forecasts for 2024

China's GDP is expected grow by about 4.6%, the world average by 3.1%, Russia by 2.6%, the US by 2.1%, the Euro area and Japan by 0.9% and Britain by 0.6%.

These figures are approximations read off a bar chart in the Economist of 3/2/24.

NOTE; Chinese analysts believe that China should set a growth rate target of at least 5.0% for 2024. See below in From the Chinese press.

Tesla outperformed

The Chinese electric car maker BYD outperformed Tesla between October and December 2023. BYD sold 526,409 fully electric vehicles in this period compared to 484,507

sold by Tesla. However, Tesla sold more in the full year, 1.81 million vehicles to BYD's 1.57 million. BYD is not well-known in the UK. It was founded in the mid-1990s by Wang Chuanfu, aged 57, and his cousin; Wang remains chief executive. BYD started making rechargeable batteries for mobile phones and laptops before beginning to make cars in about the year 2000. Warren Buffett's company, Berkshire Hathaway has been a shareholder since 2008.

BYD makes six out of ten of China's best-selling electric cars and has begun to move into other countries, including Europe. The company makes its own batteries and chips and has interests in mines. BYD is an acronym for 'Build Your Dreams'. (From *The Times* 3/1/24)

China rates high in the 'Fear-o-meter'

This 'Safety perceptions' index, is an index of violent crime. It is on a scale of 0 to 1, where 1 is the highest risk or concern. One hundred and twenty countries were assessed.

The highest-ranking country (No 1) was Uzbekistan with a rating of about 0.005. Next, ranking No 2 was the UAE with a rating of 0.06. Others were; Norway; 0.07 (ranking 3) Singapore; 0.075 (ranking 4) China; 0.076 (ranking 5) Britain; 0.11 (ranking 8) Japan; 0.12 (ranking 9) United States; 0.24 (ranking 58) India; 0.3 (ranking 73)

The indices are estimated off a bar scale and are only approximate. The source is the Institute for Economics and Peace via *The Economist* 25/11/23.

Ethnicity of students proceeding to higher education

This report indicates the ethnicity of UK students on free school meals who proceeded to higher education. It shows that Chinese are the students, on free school meals, most likely to proceed to higher education, whilst white students are the least likely.

	Male %	Female %
Chinese	69.6	75.8
Other	50	64.1
Asian	47.8	63.6
Black	41.6	61.2
Mixed	26.5	41
White	14.5	24.4

Source: Department for Education. Data for 2021-22 (From *The Times* 22/12/23)

Number of Chinese students increasing.

The number of overseas students applying to attend a British university is at a record high this year. Although universities have been warned against an over-reliance on China and despite the effort to diversify the uptake of students, the biggest number was once again from China. There was an increase of 3.3% in Chinese student applications making a total of 28,620. This is more than the number of candidates from Wales and Northern Ireland combined. Including EU candidates, 115,730 foreign students had applied for undergraduate places in British institutions by the January

deadline. This is 0.7% more than at the same point last year. (From *The Times* 15/2/24)

China's Sovereign Wealth Fund

A sovereign wealth fund is a state-owned investment fund composed of money generated by the government often derived from a country's surplus reserves. They provide a benefit for the country and its citizens. China has the largest of any country in the world. The following figures are approximations read off a bar scale.

China (including Hong Kong); \$2.4 trillion
 UAE; \$1.9 trillion
 Norway; \$1.4 trillion
 Singapore; \$1.1 trillion
 Saudi Arabia; \$0.8 trillion
 Kuwait; \$0.4 trillion
 Australia; \$0.3 trillion
 (Source: Global SWT via *The Economist* 25/11/23)

Surveillance and surveillance cameras

The authorities in the county of Kaijiang in Sichuan province want to upgrade its portion of the 'Skynet' surveillance system. They want cameras that 'support detection of more than 60 faces simultaneously' and a system that is fast enough to analyse up to 100 faces per second and has the capacity to store up to 1.8 billion images. Officials say that 'the public is protected and criminals have nowhere to hide'. There are surveillance cameras in the West but Westerners view them with suspicion. However, in China the public are generally supportive of the cameras. A survey of 3,000 people in 2018, found that 82% favoured CCTV surveillance. Even state snooping on emails and internet usage received 61% support.

In China ID cards are needed to buy train tickets, SIM cards, hail a taxi via Didi and also when signing up for WeChat. The government is said to be deploying phone-tracking devices and collecting 'voice prints' from the public. (From *The Economist* 25/11/23)

AstraZeneca signs \$1.2 billion deal in China

AstraZeneca has struck a \$1.2 billion deal to buy a Chinese company that creates innovative treatments for cancer and rare autoimmune diseases. The acquisition of the Shanghai company Gracell Biotechnologies will give AstraZeneca access to platforms that could shorten manufacturing times and allow development of more effective cell therapy, which at present is complex and slow. Gracell has created a T-cell therapy called GC012F that could advance the treatment of blood cancers and the autoimmune disease lupus, which causes joint pain, skin rashes and fatigue. The CEO of AstraZeneca has commented on the impressive progress that has been made in China over the last few years. Despite the increasingly hostile trade relationship between China and the West, when it comes to technology, AstraZeneca has continued to focus on China. (From *The Times* 27/12/23)

China's Antarctic bases

The US, Australia and New Zealand are concerned about a new Chinese scientific research base in Antarctica, which they claim could be used for monitoring military activity in the southern hemisphere. President Xi has praised the new Qinling base, which China says will contribute to

humanity's understanding of Antarctica provide a platform for co-operation with other countries in scientific exploration and contribute to peace. China has other bases in Antarctica and has in the past carried out projects with Norway, Denmark and Iceland. However, the US has put pressure on European nations to stop this. Sweden is not renewing an agreement to share a satellite base with China, at the Esrange Space Centre in north Sweden. China is therefore turning more to Russia. *(From The Times 8/2/24)*

From the Chinese press

China's GDP growth in 2024

China's 2023 growth rate of 5.2% was higher than the global rate of 3% and China contributed 30% of the global economic rate. In 2024, China has many advantages and opportunities which outweigh the challenges. It is, thus, an engine for global growth. Industrial production is already showing signs of improvement. Chinese analysts believe the momentum of China's economic recovery is poised to undergo further consolidation, propelled by robust policy support, the advancement of industrial transformation and upgrades and the continuous deepening of reforms. The consensus seems to be a growth of at least 5.0% for 2024. *(From CDGW 19-25/1/24)*

Maths 'genius' joins Tsinghua University from Beijing Review 5/5/22

Yau Shing-Tung, a prominent Chinese-American mathematician has retired from Harvard University to join Tsinghua University. He was born in Shantou, Guangdong province, in 1949. He won the Fields Medal, regarded as the Nobel Prize for mathematics in 1982. Yau is considered a major contributor in the development of modern differential geometry and geometric analysis.

China tops world in IP filings

China has become the world's No 1 in intellectual property filings across all categories including patents, trademarks and designs. In fact, these were more than the rest of the world put together. According to the WIPO's World Intellectual Property Indicators 2023 report, China submitted over 1.6 million patent applications, over 2.9 million utility model applications and nearly 800,000 industrial design applications, which accounted for 46.8%, 98% and 53.8%, respectively of the world's applications. *(From CDGW 15-21/12/23)*.

Food security in China

China's increased grain output and stable food prices in recent years are a result of decade-long policy and planning. The overall grain output last year was a record 695 million metric tons, which was an increase of 1% despite heavy rains, floods and droughts in some areas. The country's per capita grain stockpile was 490 kg, which exceeded the international food security benchmark of 400 kg. Despite the climate change factors and regional conflicts, China's food prices remained stable in 2023.

China has longed relied on imported soya beans, which accounted for 60% of imported grain last year. However, to shield the country from factors such as trade protectionism, adverse logistics and regional conflicts, the central

government has taken steps to bolster domestic soya bean production. *(From CDGW 9-15/2/24)*

Boom city on China-Kazakhstan border

Alashankou Port on the border is benefitting from the Belt and Road Initiative. A route starting from Lianyungang, Jiangsu province links with Rotterdam in the Netherlands. Since China-Europe Railway Express began operating in 2011, the number of freight trains passing through has increased from 17 to 6000 annually. A total of 113 actual routes have been established which pass through 25 Chinese provinces and links onward to 25 countries. Some 200 types of goods are carried from automobiles to cotton yarn and timber. *(From CDGW 15-21/12/23)*

China's ultra-deepwater research

China's first ultra-deepwater research drilling vessel began its trial voyage on 18/12/23. This is a step in China's deep-sea exploration programme and development of marine technology. Li Junfa, director of the China Geological Survey, said, at the launch ceremony in Guangzhou, that the facilities and equipment are of top international quality. Since work started on 30/11/21, more than 150 companies and institutions have been involved. The vessel weighs 33,000 metric tons, has a range of 15,000 nautical miles (27,780 Km) and is capable of withstanding super typhoons with a wind speed of 52 metres/second. *(From CDGW 22-28/12/23)*

Chinese car sales and GDP pick up momentum

China has been the world's largest car market since 2009. Sales reached a record high of 30 million units in 2023 and are expected to reach 31 million in 2024. New energy vehicles are making up more than 30% of new vehicle sales. Vehicle production reached 3.09 million in the month of November 2023. The World Bank has estimated that China's growth for 2023 is expected to be 5.2%, whilst the figure for 2024 is estimated at 4.5%. World growth for 2024 is projected to be 2.4%. *(From CDGW 12-18/1/24)*

China's economic growth recovery is on track

Despite the slowdown, China is expected to achieve a growth of 5% in 2024. The country's share of global manufacturing reached about 30% in 2022, compared with 28.5% in 2018 and 22.3% in 2012. Although some companies are moving out of China, this is only a part of the overall picture. Zhou Zhongxiu, president of the University of International Business and Economics said that China is strengthening efforts to move up global value chains, whilst further stabilising foreign direct investment. He also added that no global company can ignore a market as big as China. The head of corporate banking at Deutsche Bank believes China will remain a significant destination for foreign direct investment. Several large multinationals are already expanding their manufacturing capability within China to supply China's domestic market. *(From CDGW 12-18/1/24)*

Some statistics highlighted at Davos

The Chinese economy grew by 5.2% last year, slightly more than the target of 5.0%. The Spring Festival will generate about 9 billion trips, which will stimulate growth in the retail, tourism and transport sectors. This will help the consumption area which could improve the job market.

China now has a middle class of 400 million, which is expected to increase to 800 million before the end of the decade. In the last four decades, the real income of Chinese people has grown substantially, whilst that of people in the US and Europe has largely stagnated. During the next decade urbanisation will create huge demand in the housing, education, healthcare and elderly care sectors. A further 300 million people are expected to move into urban areas from the countryside. This will create opportunities for the urban transport and telecom infrastructure and in other domestic and international areas.

China has caught up with the West in certain sectors within the last two or three decades and is now a leader in cutting-edge technologies and innovation. For example, China leads the world in electric vehicles in all departments: production, consumption, sales and charging points.

Housing and local government debt are problems considered 'soft' risks, but geopolitical challenges are highly 'consequential' and unpredictable. (From CDGW 26/1-1/2-24)

High-quality growth targets

President Xi called for 'new productive forces' through scientific-technological innovation to generate new industries and new growth drivers. Key areas include, big data, artificial intelligence, blockchain, sensors, quantum information, integrated circuits and new materials.

These will be driven by innovation, advanced technology, high efficiency and high quality. This is a move away from traditional productive forces that are mainly driven by labour and land. China must expedite the green transformation of growth models to meet the goals of peaking carbon emissions by 2030 and attaining carbon neutrality before 2060.

Chinese analysts emphasise that scientific self-reliance is necessary to guarantee national security. But China should further expand international sci-tech exchanges and take an active part in formulating global rules. The six key areas are manufacturing, information, materials, energy, space and health. (From CDGW 9-15/2/24)

Macao SAR to accelerate development

The Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) will accelerate efforts to diversify its economy and integrate into China's overall development. The chief executive officer of the SAR made this statement on the 24th anniversary of the return to the motherland. The SAR government will focus on consolidating economic recovery, improving people's livelihood and advancing the practice of 'one country two systems. Industries such as tourism, modern finance, high-tech, conferences, exhibitions, non-gaming businesses and the arrangement of international conferences will be the focus. (From CDGW 22-28/2/23)

NOTE; According to the *Economist* 'Pocket World in Figures 2022', Macao's GDP per head (in purchasing parity) was \$129,451 in 2019. This was second highest in the world after Liechtenstein at \$139,100. The UK was \$49,932 and the US \$65,298.

Pacific island, Nauru recognises the PRC

The Nauru minister for foreign affairs and trade, Lionel Rouen said on 24th January that his nation looks forward to the bright prospects offered by cooperation with China. This follows the reestablishment of official relations. Nauru became the 183rd country to have diplomatic ties with China. Both countries have the common task of developing their economy, improving people's livelihoods and realising modernisation. (From CDGW 26/1-1/2/ 2024)

Bumper harvest and growth in Xinjiang

The Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region once again achieved a bumper grain harvest in 2023. It was mainly due to strong financial support given to farmers to improve technology. Grain output was 21.19 million metric tons, which included an increase of 3.05 million tons. In addition, the region's grain planting area expanded to 2.82 million hectares, an increase of about 390,000 hectares. The Xinjiang government has allocated 10 billion yuan (\$1.4 billion) to support high-quality farmland cultivation, irrigation and the development of new farmland. (From CDGW 19-25/1/24)

Guideline set for 'Beautiful China'

China's central authorities have unveiled a guideline for advancing the 'Beautiful China' initiative. This is a top-level development blueprint detailing targets for China's green and high-quality growth and to make its industrial sectors more digitalised, intelligent and environmentally sustainable. The document was jointly issued by the Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council. (From CDGW 19-25/1/24)

Chinese PM holds symposium with foreign experts

Premier Li Qiang met foreign experts, who had received the Friendship Award for 2023 and other foreign experts on 4th February. The award was given in the Great Hall of the People and is an annual award given to honour outstanding foreign experts in China. Experts from Switzerland, Germany, Brazil, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Russia and other countries, made speeches. The subjects included, technological innovation, green development and talent cultivation. Premier Li said that China is a land full of opportunity and provides a broad stage for foreign experts of various disciplines to work and launch businesses. (From CDGW 9-15/2/24)

Easing of visa arrangements for US tourists

China has eased visa requirements for US applicants to boost people-to-people contact. From January 1st, tourist visa applications will be simplified. Tourists will no longer be required to submit a round-trip air ticket, proof of hotel reservation, itinerary or invitation letter. However, tourists should still refer to the Chinese embassy and consulates-general, because processing is carried out on a case-by-case basis. (From CDGW 5-11/1/24)

Two new nuclear power plants approved

China's State Council (China's Cabinet) approved the Taipingling nuclear power project in Guangdong province and the Jingqimen nuclear power project in Zhejiang province. The State Council emphasised that the security of nuclear power is of utmost national importance. (From CDGW 5-11/1/24)

Tourism off to a good start

A surge in bookings was observed for the three-day New Year holiday, from 30th December to January 1st. Travel to domestic and overseas destinations surpassed pre-pandemic levels in both visitor numbers and revenue. Coastal cities such as Sanya and Xiamen saw increases as did Yunnan province and Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region. The homestay platform, Tujia saw 90% of its sites in Harbin booked up very quickly. Harbin is famous for its snow views and ice sculptures. The Chinese Tourist Academy released a report on January 1st anticipating 6 billion domestic trips and revenue of 6 trillion yuan (\$841 billion) during 2024. (From CDGW 5-11/1/24)

China enters cruise ship market

China's first large cruise ship, the Adora Magic City. Embarked on its maiden voyage on January 1st when it left Shanghai for resorts in North-east Asia. Reporters have commented that China is the only nation that has mastered the technology for building an aircraft carrier, a large liquefied natural gas carrier and a large cruise ship. The Chinese cruise ship ends the dominance of three European shipyards; only five shipyards in the world have the experience of building such large ships. The Adora Magic City has a gross tonnage of 135,000 tons, can accommodate 5,246 passengers and has a crew of 1,300 from 28 countries. (From CDGW 5-11/1/24)

Long March rocket success rate is 97%

On 10/12/23, China used a Long March 2D rocket to send several remote-sensing satellites into orbit. The rocket blasted off from Xichang launch centre in Sichuan province. This was the 59th rocket launch this year and the 13th flight of the 2D model. Overall, 500 Long March rockets have been launched. (From CDGW 15-21/12/23)

NOTE: CDGW = China Daily Global Weekly

Reading about China

Language by Xiaolu Guo

Paperback, 90 pages, Vintage 2007

Xiaolu has written a number of books about her life and experiences in England. She was born in Zhejiang province in China and came to the UK to study English. However, her writing is in a form of 'Chinese-English', which can be easily understood but is amusing, entertaining and at times quite clever. The first words in her book are, 'Sorry of my English'. There follows her accounts of everyday activities in England, but which seem strange to a new arrival from China. She is hungry and goes into a restaurant and asks what is available. It is afternoon and the waiter says, 'Afternoon tea'. Xiaolu is puzzled. What? Eat afternoon tea? When it arrives, she is intrigued by the term, 'whipped cream' Did the chef use a whip! And what is 'skimmed' milk?

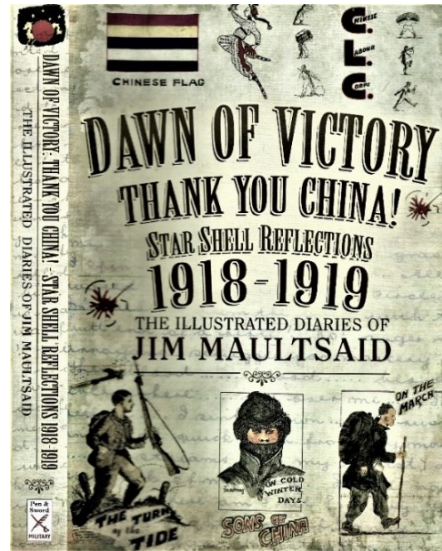
On another occasion, she goes into; Ye Olde Tea Shop'. Why they spell it like that? It look like Qing Dynasty old style building waiting for being demolish. Everything looking very old here. Old carpet under the foot is very

complicated flower pattern, like something from emperor mother house.

One incident is an interesting but pertinent comparison between Britain and China. Xiaolu has a late night out. Her landlady is very worried and when Xiaolu arrives home, her landlady tells her to phone next time she is out late, so she can be safely picked up by car. The landlady, who is Chinese, says, 'It is dangerous at night. This is not China; it is England and men easily get drunk in the pub'.

The Dawn of Victory by Jim Maultsaid

Hardback, 348 pages, Pen & Sword Military, Barnsley 2017



The Dawn of Victory Thank You China, was recommended to me by Steve Lau, the founder of the 'Ensuring we Remember Campaign' for a monument in Britain for the Chinese Labour Corps (CLC) of WW1. It is a collection of personal sketches, comments and diary entries of Jim Maultsaid, who was a British Officer in charge of a company of CLC men. The material was informative, sometimes amusing and sometimes disturbing – the horrors of war. Although he referred to the CLC men as 'my boys', he had respect for them, which was reciprocated. He praised the Chinese men for their energy, hard work, loyalty, ingenuity and cooperation.

At the end of the war, there was genuine sadness when the CLC men were leaving for home. They wanted Jim to go with them. All 500 of the men participated in preparing a 'farewell' banner to present to Jim, who was regarded by the men as a father figure.

**Note the Chinese Republican flag (1912) at the top left of the book cover. It comprises Five Coloured Stripes;
Red for Manchurians
Yellow for Han Chinese
Blule for Mongolians
White for Moslems
Black for Tibetans**

Walter Fung

The Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding



Dragon screen at Ping Yao, Shanxi province (WF)

