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The China Studies Centre, one of the key strategic initiatives of the University of Sydney, has been in existence now for over three years. It is a symbol of our commitment to engaging with and understanding Greater China, and of deepening the collaboration amongst our academics across the University’s faculties on issues relating to China. It is also a place where we are working with the wider business, political and cultural community, and with the public, nationally and internationally. This was demonstrated by the Sydney China Business Forum organised by the Centre, which I attended in October 2013. More than 300 Australian and Chinese business leaders, state ministers and academics met to discuss ways to create partnerships to solve complex sustainability issues facing China and Australia.

This annual report gives examples of the many different areas of research and activity that the Centre has been involved in throughout 2013. It showcases the people that the Centre supports, the work of the staff in the Centre, and the different partnerships it has been involved with. These range from analysts of Chinese outward investment into Australia to historians of Republican China and experts on Chinese public health. In all of these areas, the Centre is seeking to take a leading position in engaging with and informing debate.

I hope that you will, through reading this report, get some sense of the richness and diversity of the Centre’s work. There are perspectives from our Chinese partners, business collaborators, students and participants from the wider community. It also celebrates the collaborative nature of the Centre’s work. Partnership and collaboration are essential in seeking to understand the issues of China’s rising importance in our world as the 21st century proceeds. The contributions here are testament to the dynamic and expanding links that the University has with China, and I am glad, as Patron, to support and commend the work of the Centre in this crucial area.

BELINDA HUTCHINSON AM
Chancellor, University of Sydney
Since the establishment of the China Studies Centre at the University of Sydney in 2012, we have produced an annual list of activities and publications and other information relating to the Centre. But this year, I thought it would be good to produce something that gives our stakeholders and supporters in the wider community some flavour of the work of our members, and of the kinds of research and activities that the Centre promotes and its membership undertakes. This yearbook is the result of that.

The Centre, in the end, is a collection of people who have something in common that brings them together. In our case, it is an engagement with diverse aspects of Greater China. Looking through this collection, you will get a sense of just how hybrid and extensive this now is. The old confines of pure Sinology are fading. To really get to grips with China and the realities that it presents now involves coming to terms with history, politics, economy, philosophy, and then ranging into discourses around science, innovation and healthcare. We also need to keep our eyes on public policy, culture in its broadest sense, and finally the geographical reality of Greater China as it now is.

The short essays in this yearbook have been produced by highly representative figures associated or linked to the Centre. Some are academic members, some are members of our advisory boards, some are students, and some are people who work directly for us. There are essays here about the sort of research that this community engages in (grouped mostly in the first section, under ‘Our People’), to the events that we have supported, hosted, or been part of (‘Our Events’) and, finally, perhaps the hub of what we aspire to do – producing ideas. Some samples of this are in the third section (‘Our Ideas’).

If the reader comes away from looking through this collection feeling a little bewildered and disoriented, then that would be good thing. Greater China as a place and a political, economic and social reality in the second decade of the 21st century presents no easy answers, and there are no easy frameworks within which to set it. There are entries here about the new leadership, ancient philosophy, current geopolitical conflicts, economic aspiration and assessments of the key leaders of the past 60 years. On each of these issues, we have to resist quick answers and platitudes, and the work of our membership and community of supporters shows just how many are now engaged in this endeavour. It is particularly pleasing this year that we as a Centre have been able to work so closely with the Australia-China Youth Association, and also that we have had the opportunity to engage with the business community. Some sense of this is contained in some of the essays that follow.

I am immensely grateful for all the support we have received throughout 2013 from the University, from the Deans, and from the wider community. Despite six years having passed since the Beijing Olympics in 2008, there is still less knowledge about China in the mainstream than there should be; the shocking truth is that more students study Latin than Mandarin at Australian high schools. This collection of short, broad ranging essays is an attempt to provide some sort of advertisement for why China-watching is fun, fulfilling and, beyond this, profoundly relevant to our lives today. That we have such a vibrant and active community in the University, and one that is so interlinked with the national and global community, is excellent. If this overview of the different things we have done, thought and written on China helps in motivating others to come join us, that would be excellent.

PROFESSOR KERRY BROWN
Executive Director China Studies Centre
The China Studies Centre is a major inter-disciplinary centre for knowledge and understanding of Greater China. China’s economic, political and cultural importance continue to grow as the 21st century progresses. Understanding this process, and being engaged and knowledgeable about it, is becoming increasingly important for business, government, civil society groups and the general public.

The China Studies Centre has, as core membership, one of the world’s most diverse academic communities, based at the University of Sydney, who cover areas from ancient Chinese history, to contemporary society and scientific developments in China across our 16 faculties. We support diverse and imaginative engagement with China, and serve as a centre of ideas, informed comment and collective and individual research.

The Centre’s core functions are:
– To serve as a national and international centre of excellence for research on China
– To engage with expert communities in government, business and other areas to supply the best quality advice and strategic insights into all aspects of China
– To develop high-quality programs of teaching and learning, especially those building cross-disciplinary approaches to the study of China
– To encourage informed public discussion about the impact of China on the Australian economy and its international relations.
– To provide support to the academic activities of the University’s students and staff in China.

The Centre also acts as the primary interface between the University and the wider community on China issues, and undertakes the University strategic thinking on its relations with China.

RESEARCH
The centre plays a highly active role in promoting research and academic engagement. We directly fund top-quality research on China, and facilitate collaborative research relationships both across the University and with institutions worldwide.

POLICY
Policy work is one of the centre’s biggest priorities. Australian business and government groups are working in increasingly complex ways with partners in urban and provincial China.

MEDIA
As public interest in China has intensified, so has our media presence. Members are increasingly called on to offer informed commentary about China – in printed, spoken and filmed media.

LEARNING TOGETHER
Australia’s relationship with China is the key to our future. This means we need to provide China-focused education to a new generation of researchers and business professionals.

The Master of China Studies provides a broad introduction to China’s society and culture, history and development, as well as offering the opportunity to focus on a specific disciplinary perspective. Current specialisations include Business, History, Law, Politics, Public Health, and Society.

OUTREACH
The China Studies Centre provides expert commentary and advice to local and state policymakers. We also work with government, leading businesses and community groups to run events and educational campaigns that showcase our research and create informed interest in engagement with China.

Our flagship event is the Sydney China Business Forum, at which we get together with politicians and business leaders from China and Australia to discuss interactions between our countries. For more information about the forum, please visit our website: sydney.edu.au/sydney-china-business-forum
I joined the University of Sydney in the middle of 2013, as Lecturer in the Department of History. My work focuses on the modern history of China’s western borderlands, primarily Xinjiang, and China’s historical ties to the Islamic and Russian worlds.

While much of the world’s attention is now drawn to China’s maritime assertiveness, and to its rivalry with Japan, China’s involvement with its continental neighbours is equally historically complex and sensitive, if not more so. For my purposes at least, these ties trace from the 1750s, when Qing armies conquered Xinjiang and incorporated the region’s largely Muslim population into the Qing Empire. When I first took an interest in Xinjiang, it was far less well known than it is today. If I told people I was studying the Uyghur language, I would almost certainly be met with a blank stare. Ten years later, this still occurs, but less frequently. In part, politics is the reason for Xinjiang’s relatively raised profile today. Uyghur-Han tensions there seem to be one of China’s most intractable ethnic conflicts. But Australia’s growing connections with western China have played a part too. As sources of the Chinese diaspora shift north and west, more and more Xinjiang natives have made their home here in Australia. Without exaggerating, Sydney can now pride itself on the best selection of Xinjiang restaurants outside of China!

To approach the history of a contested territory in a balanced fashion requires a view that encompasses as many angles as possible. As a PhD student I studied in Xinjiang, and spent many months in the archives of Russia and the former Soviet Union, as well as Taiwan. I continue to enjoy the challenge of archival research on this place and period. I hope to soon publish my first book on Xinjiang and the Uyghur diaspora in Russian Turkistan, entitled Caravans and Communists: The Revolutionary Origins of Uyghur Nationalism. This book describes the emergence of Uyghur nationalism as a by-product of the Soviet nationalities policy in Central Asia in the 1920s, and the introduction of a Soviet-style system of ethnic classification in Xinjiang in the 1930s – the first such project in China. Despite the talk of Islamic fundamentalism surrounding the Uyghur issue today, my own view is that nationalist discourse remains the primary means of voicing discontent in Xinjiang.

One of the pleasures of working on Xinjiang is that it is a historical crossroads: there are paths leading from it in many directions. I have a strong interest in Mongolian history, and this coming August will be travelling to Ulaanbaatar to present some of my research on the 1911 declaration of Mongolian independence, and the response it provoked amongst Mongols elsewhere in China. Afghanistan, which neighbours Xinjiang to the west, has provided me with another writing project, one that I happened upon through a chance find in the India Office archives in London during my PhD research. It is a biography of an English boy orphaned in Kabul at the end of the first Anglo-Afghan War, who after sojourns in Bombay and Brighton ended up living out his life as a wandering dervish in western China.

I look forward to bringing some of my research interests to my teaching at the University of Sydney. This year I’ll be offering a class called ‘Beyond the Great Wall: The Chinese Frontier’, and next year I have a new unit on the global empire of the Mongols.

David Brophy is Lecturer in modern Chinese history at the University of Sydney and Academic Member of the China Studies Centre.
2013 was an exciting year for research on Chinese foreign policy and the international responses it is generating. Three activities enabled me to contribute to debates on Australian relations with China, how we compare to other countries, and what insights we can glean from each other to grasp opportunities and avoid problems.

Comparing Australian and Brazilian responses to China’s rise
As the pace of China’s industrial development and urbanisation quickens, it is having a dramatic impact upon international natural resource exporters. China is the world’s largest consumer of iron ore, and Australia and Brazil are its largest foreign suppliers. Both countries have ridden the wave of a ‘mining boom’, and consequently emerged from the Global Financial Crisis largely unscathed. As we seek more effective ways to integrate mining into our economies, and to manage inbound investment from Chinese state-owned enterprises, Brazil and Australia have much to learn from each other. In March 2013, I was sponsored by the Council on Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR), a division of the Australian government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), to participate in the Brazil-Australia Dialogue. Hosted by the University of São Paulo and organised by the University of Melbourne, this initiative enabled me to provide critical input on ‘Australia-Brazil relations in the Asian Century’ to an audience of policymakers, business leaders and scholars. The event provided insights for a policy report on China-Brazil relations that I then produced for the Europe-China Research and Advice Network (ECRAN) of the European Union, to be publicly released in 2014.

China and the Trans-Pacific Partnership
The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is one of the most controversial multilateral trade and investment agreements ever to be proposed. Wide-ranging provisions on private enterprise, human rights, labour standards and freedom of online data make it impossible for China to join the negotiations in the foreseeable future. Chinese newspapers have therefore interpreted the TPP as an attempt to exclude China, while Cai Penghong of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences has voiced a widely held belief that the TPP is being used by the United States “as a part of its Asia-Pacific Strategy to contain China”. International dialogue on the TPP that includes Chinese voices, whether through official or informal channels, has been lacking. To promote more inclusive dialogue, in May 2013 I organised a forum at the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington D.C. entitled, ‘China, Latin America and the Changing Architecture of Trans-Pacific Engagement’. Funded by the Open Society Institute, the event brought together four ambassadors from TPP countries with analysts from Latin America, the United States and China. Following the event I published an opinion piece in the Australian Financial Review arguing that despite the recent musings of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, it is unlikely that China will join the TPP any time soon. The article is available on the University of Sydney Department of Sociology website together with video of the press conference following the Inter-American Dialogue: sydney.edu.au/arts/sociology_social_policy/about/news/index.shtml?id=2082

Engaging with Australian policymakers on the Asian Century
The Australian government is aware that many of the challenges it faces in the Asian Century are shared by other nations. Among these challenges is the need for strategies for diminishing the environmental consequences of skyrocketing natural resource exports, and more sophisticated reflection on the merits and problems associated with foreign land acquisition for agricultural development. In November 2013, I participated in a summit on Australia-Latin America relations at Parliament House. Organised by the Australia-Latin America Business Council (ALABC), the summit was attended by the Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb, Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop, and other leaders from government, business and academia. My presentation discussed Australia-Latin America relations in the context of China’s demand for food as its urban population edges toward a projected one billion people by 2025. Shortly before the event I spoke in London at Chatham House on the related theme of ‘China and the Resource Boom: Comparative Insights from Latin America and Australia’. A PDF summary can be downloaded from the Chatham House website: chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/195269

Adrian Hearn is ARC Future Fellow in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney and Academic Member of the China Studies Centre.
CHINA’S PEASANTS AND WORKERS
CHANGING CLASS IDENTITIES

BEATRIZ CARRILLO

As a society that has become highly unequal and differentiated, the language of class and class conflict is back on the research agenda of both Chinese and foreign academics who examine China’s social stratification and its related problems. On the one hand, we hear about the expansion of China’s middle class, who are said to represent the social and economic success of the economic reform policies. On the other hand, we also hear about the growing number of strikes and labour disputes involving rural migrant workers. The more than 250 million rural migrant workers that reside in China’s expanding urban system have indeed become a key social group against which social class identities are being made and re-made in contemporary China.

Combining our work on rural migrant workers, local economic elites and class issues in China, David Goodman and I co-edited a volume that focuses on the changing class identities of the workers and peasants of contemporary China. China’s old Maoist working class is not only ageing but during major restructuring of the state-owned sector many lost their jobs and welfare benefits, and in the process also lost their social standing. Rural migrant workers are increasingly forming a new working class, though – unlike the old Maoist working class — they have yet to build a coherent and unified class identity.

Jonathan Unger and Luigi Tomba start off by examining the ways in which both industrialisation and urbanisation affected class and status group configurations in a series of Guangdong villages. Unger describes the return of the pre-1949 village lineage system, around which land rights and the related economic benefits have been appropriated, restricting non-lineage members (such as rural migrant workers) from gaining a foothold in the local economy. Similarly, in the urbanising villages observed by Tomba, local villagers had become a kind of propertied class that the related economic benefits have been appropriated, restricting non-lineage members (such as rural migrant workers) from gaining a foothold in the local economy.

In the final two chapters, Joel Andreas, and Jack Qui with Hongzhe Wang, examine the class transformation of the old Maoist working class, comparing some of their cultural practices with those of rural migrant workers. Andreas takes a look back at the strong membership rights that workers used to have within their work units during the Maoist period, and how these were eroded by economic reform and state-owned enterprise restructuring. While this opened up opportunities for upward social mobility for some, the majority lost their economic security. Finally, Qiu and Wang explore the different ways in which the old working class and rural migrant workers create cultural spaces that restate or help unify class identities. Whilst both of these social groups are socially excluded in different ways, the cultural spaces of rural migrant workers reflect a degree of acquired strength and pride amongst these workers, which in turn serves to consolidate their class identity.

What the chapters in this volume clearly illustrate is not only the fact that class has yet again become a variable through which one can examine China’s socio-economic transformation, but that class remains a crucial multi-faceted indicator of the structural inequalities prevalent in contemporary China. As class discourses regain importance in academic fields as well as the public domain, they may also become the organising principle and source of agency for a range of social groups and actors.

Beatriz Carrillo is Senior Lecturer in China Studies, a joint appointment between the China Studies Centre and the Department of Sociology and Social Policy and Academic Member of the China Studies Centre.

CHINESE CULTURE AND HUMOUR

JOCELYN CHEY AND JESSICA MILNER DAVIS

Noting some years ago that Chinese humour was a greenfield area of study, we have now cooperatively edited two volumes of trans-disciplinary research designed as an introduction to humour studies applied to Chinese society. Since the requisite fields included history, literature, medical theory, psychology, education, advertising, marketing, media studies and political science, we invited experts in these and other disciplines to contribute chapters, while we ourselves authored two overview chapters, written from the points of view of the history of Chinese thought (Volume 1: Jocelyn Chey) and comparative humour theory (Volume 2: Jessica Milner Davis). We also contributed individually to other chapters, especially with cross-referencing throughout the two volumes.

Volume 1, Humour in Chinese Life and Letters: Classical and Traditional Approaches, was published by Hong Kong University Press in 2011. Opening with chapters on the place of humour in the Confucian, Daoist and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) classics, it concluded with an analysis of the contribution made by Lin Yutang to the theorisation of humour as applied to contemporary Chinese society in the 1930s. Lin saw gentle jokes and quips as a powerful weapon with which to influence public opinion and improve social conditions. His understanding of the role of humour, largely based upon theories developed by George Meredith, fitted into a long tradition of Chinese humour practice, and particularly characteristic of Daoist counter-culture. Lin popularised the word youmo, now the standard term for ‘humour’ in the Chinese language, and was one of those responsible for the promulgation of a ‘Year of Humour’ in 1933.

Volume 2, Humour in Chinese Life and Culture: Resistance and Control, published by Hong Kong University Press in July 2013, continues the survey of humour in China with another influential literary theorist, Qian Zhongshu, who applied Henri
Bergson’s theory of the comic to China’s new post-reform urban culture. Bergson saw laughter as a means whereby the human spirit could surmount the confines of mechanical time and social convention. As a general conclusion, we believe that the development of humour expression and usage in China in the last hundred years runs parallel with the development of ideas of individual worth and personal freedom.

The perspective of comparative humour informs studies in Volume 2 of some of the new forms of humour that have emerged since the early 20th century, such as comic movies, a medium that dates back to before the Second Sino-Japanese War. These movies are appropriately framed in Chinese society when released to coincide with the New Year, helping to generate a propitious commencement of the lunar year. Cartoons are an important medium for humour that developed in Republican times along with the proliferation of newspapers. Generational differences in cartoon types and uses correspond with the pre-War, wartime and Maoist eras.

One chapter shows that, from the late 19th century, the Japanese government used anti-China propaganda humour to ridicule and demean China, and that China was quick to respond – and continues the mockery even today. For decades, humour tropes such as the bumbling stupid Japanese soldier have persisted, actively endorsed by government authorities, even for children’s entertainment. Humour can exclude, but it can also serve to unite and define local groups: another chapter shows how dialect usage and rapidly changing local culture underlie the explosion of local comic songs in 1960s Cantopop.

Since the 1980s, Chinese and foreign advertisers alike have discovered the persuasive power of humour in advertising. Their target audiences, Gen X and Gen Y, differ slightly but significantly when China is compared to the US or Australia. Both marketing and psychological field studies of humour usage are now beginning in China. One collaborative study published in this volume compares the range and intensity of the fear of being laughed at in sample populations from Taiwan and German-speaking Switzerland. Another contrasts the value attached by teachers and students to humour in the classroom at schools and universities in Mainland China and Hong Kong, including an international school in the latter.

While Chinese jokes and parodies share many values with the West, some characteristics are unique to Chinese culture. The Internet provides a ready stage for the general public to express feelings and share humour. Fed up with bureaucratic double-speak and crass commercialism, they use spoofs (egao) as passive resistance. In response, the CCP veers (as other autocratic regimes have done, for example 19th century Prussia) between allowing the venting of discontent and needing to crack down on extreme expressions of public dissatisfaction. Political jokes have also flowered since the consolidation of reforms to the economic and political system. Indeed, as one chapter shows, the quantity and quality of joking reflects the process of political change, although this nexus is complex, not simple.

Nevertheless, the extent and topics of humour reflect the current concerns of citizens, as can be seen from this comic doggerel (shunkouliu) posted online this year:

粉、米粉、面粉、粉粉有毒；
京官，縣官，村官，官官腐敗；
國道，省道，鄉道，道道收費；
國稅，地稅，雜稅，稅稅有理；
學士，碩士，博士，士士無用；
影星，歌星，體星，星星脫衣；
河水，江水，海水，水水污染；
牛奶，羊奶，二奶，奶奶傷人。

Dr Jocelyn Chey is Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney. Jessica Milner Davis is an honorary research associate in the School of Letters, Arts and Media at the University of Sydney. Both are Honorary Members of the China Studies Centre.
From 2013, the Centre has supported a group of Junior Policy Associates to work on specific projects. Over ten from various backgrounds were involved in the Centre’s work during the course of 2013.

GEORGIA REGAN

Over the past twelve months, my contribution as a Junior Policy Associate (JPA) at the China Studies Centre has largely involved assisting Professor Kerry Brown in compiling, ordering and editing articles for publication written by himself, colleagues at the University of Sydney and academics abroad. This was not a deliberate direction chosen at a particular point; it was just an organic process that evolved over time.

Initially, Professor Brown had me assist in compiling the articles he published on the Open Democracy website; an independent, public interest, not-for-profit network. Articles dating from 2007-2013 needed to be read, deconstructed, ordered according to main themes, and edited before being presented in final form to the publisher. This process was an ideal introduction to Professor Brown’s work as it familiarised me with his experience, perspectives and the potential direction I saw him taking the centre as its Executive Director.

Following this, editing draft publications of the acclaimed and respected academics Bates Gill and Andrew Small was a daunting task, but I am grateful for being given the opportunity to do so. Analytically, the task was demanding; engaging with critical policy recommendations and supporting data as a junior policy analyst was both challenging and beneficial to my understanding of EU, US and PRC relations.

Editing draft papers written by members of the Europe China Research Advisory Network (ECRAN) was particularly informative and really developed my understanding of the functions of European Union funded research projects, as well as giving me access to the work of multiple internationally recognised experts on EU-China relations. As a student and JPA, this opportunity was utterly invaluable.

Contributing to the editing process of one of Professor Brown’s upcoming publication, to be released by Palgrave Macmillan, really refined the editing skills that I had been
building during my time as a JPA. Critically deconstructing the text extended upon the understanding of Chinese politics and society that I had developed throughout the year. Editing these drafts added layers of colour, subtlety and humour to complex socio-political issues and revealed Professor Brown’s appreciation for detail and intricacies, evident in his anecdotes. To be formally recognised as a contributing editor to this publication is more than I would ever have expected and I am very thankful.

I would recommend the JPA program at the University of Sydney China Studies Centre to students who are self-starters, self-motivated, driven to complete assigned tasks within deadlines, and who are genuinely interested in Chinese politics. Working under Professor Brown is a privilege; his extensive experience living and working in the PRC and East Asia in the British diplomatic corps allows him to impart invaluable first-hand advice to junior associates. Fortunately for me, this year-long internship as a JPA has opened another door; working as an intern in Berlin for the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi) in the area of ‘Rising Powers & Global Governance’. Without Professor Brown’s support, I do not think this would have been possible.

I would also like to thank Dr Luke Deer, who was the first to steer me in the direction of the China Studies Centre when he coordinated the Politics of China unit within the Department of Government and International Relations. With his encouragement, I unassumingly applied for the JPA position and then unexpectedly found that I had been given an opportunity to work amongst this dynamic network of experts. I am so grateful for this and would encourage all those interested to apply – it is definitely a way to get your foot in the door and is an incredibly rewarding experience.

Georgia Regan was a student from the University of Sydney graduated in 2013.
WHAT IS IT LIKE AS A STUDENT HERE?
A TAIWANESE TAKE

STEHFY YOU
The University of Sydney is well known for its diverse student life. Students come from many different countries to form a multicultural university. As a Taiwanese student, I enjoy blending in with the local culture as well as keeping in touch with my own culture through the Taiwanese society on campus. The Taiwanese student society I joined runs events that attract students interested in Taiwanese culture and offers assistance to any Taiwanese students who are experiencing difficulties. On each Taiwanese festival day, the society invites students who are away from their families to celebrate together. Celebrating in their company helps me to find studying at the University of Sydney more welcoming and friendly. My interactions with people from other countries caused some cultural shock for me at first, but I have since gained a wealth of cultural knowledge and understanding of the kind that was not available in my high school textbooks in Taiwan. I have learned how people practice different religions, use different ways of communication, and can have very different attitudes on the same things. My experience at the University of Sydney has really helped to broaden my horizon.

Another interesting aspect of student life at the university for me is that students have freedom of speech, and therefore debates about controversial issues, such as religion and politics, are openly held between students with a wide range of opinions. This kind of debate creates an opportunity for rational thinking and clear expression of thought. Although I prefer not to express my own opinions vocally, I enjoy thinking independently and I find the discussions to be very intellectually stimulating. Attending such debates has helped me greatly in my academic work as it strengthens my ability to think rationally about complex issues.

In terms of the diversity in education, the University of Sydney often invites professionals representing each faculty to give lectures about their most recent research or to highlight interesting topics for discussion. This year, I started to attend these kinds of seminars and forums. In one of the seminars held by the China Studies Centre, I had the chance to meet a former military representative from Taiwan. In that seminar, I learned about the importance of Taiwan in terms of its location with respect to its surrounding neighbours as well as its international status. In another seminar, I discovered new ways of thinking about Tibet that was very different from what I had learned in textbooks, and also learned about the importance of the balance between nature and human civilization there. In addition, I also attended the Sydney China Business Forum held by the centre in November. It was a forum about how to maintain sustainability in a highly industrialised society, issues such as water pollution, reusable energy and agricultural development are currently attracting much interest and are highly focused on in China. The forum offered an opportunity for experience and technology exchange between China and Australia. During this event, I met CEOs from high tech companies as well as people representing government bureaus, and had very memorable conversations with each of them.

As an international student, living independently here is not as easy as it is for local students. Using our second language to study is also a challenge for us. With these difficulties in mind, the University of Sydney provides a space for international students like me to address their issues and to seek additional help in achieving academic English. Having access to this service at the University has made me feel supported and cared for.

The University of Sydney has amazed me with its diversity, and I found studying here to be a very enjoyable experience. In addition to my core coursework, it has offered me many opportunities to gain knowledge outside of my own field of study, which is dentistry. During this year I have learned much and have gained many precious experiences and memories from participating in activities and events held by my Society and the university. As a Taiwanese student here, I feel very welcomed as part of this big family.

I would also like to thank the China Studies Centre for inviting me to their seminars and forums, as well as for providing a platform for cultural exchange between Taiwan, China and Australia. With the help of the Chinese Study Centre, people are able to learn more about Taiwan and its relationship with China and other surrounding countries, creating harmony and deeper understanding.

Stephy You is a student from Taiwan in the School of Dentistry at the University of Sydney.
MARY WANG
Olut Boao, 5 – 7 April 2013

Boao is not yet a familiar place name outside of China, but this will change in coming years. This tiny fishing village on Hainan Island in South China, an hour’s flight from Hong Kong, has been transformed into a multi-hotel resort and global meeting place, especially for the annual Boao Forum for Asia.

In 2001, China became a member of the World Trade Organization and built and supported Boao as a Forum for Asian and global dialogue on important issues facing the region and the world. An important aspect is that China sees itself as the host of its international partners at Boao, and not just a participant at others’ forums such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In the 12 years since Boao was founded, 2013 is the first time that state leaders from 47 countries and five continents have participated. At Boao, Chinese and Asian points of view and ways of thinking can be represented and debated in considering future Asian options and strategies in business, politics and also higher education, which has been added as a theme for the past three years. In a real sense, Boao is an Asian and world club, and a banquet to share global ideas and initiatives. After 200 years of domination and turmoil in China, from the opium wars to invasions and world wars and the Cultural Revolution: Deng Xiaoping’s ‘opening and reform’ in 1978 to Xi Jinping’s ‘China Dream’ in 2013: Boao is one point of reference showing that China’s rise is real.

During the forum, a young reporter commented to me: “This forum is called Boao for Asia, but the topics are not focused on Asia, but globally.” She was right to a degree, as over the past 12 years the position and role of the Boao Forum for Asia has gradually changed. As China Daily has said, “it is rooted in China, based in Asia and eyes the world. It has transformed into ‘Asia’s Davos’ and provided a ‘thought feast’ for the common development of China, Asia and the world”. However, I hope that this thought feast will provide some remedy for the real challenges that China faces. Deng opened up China from a low base of development. Now, Xi Jinping and the government must face the huge challenges of established structures and interests requiring deeper economic reform, the realities of urbanisation with large populations, and the pressures of food security, health and education. Can China and the world dance harmoniously hand in hand? It does not matter at which venues, at Davos and Boao or at APEC and OECD. What really matters is that the thought feast provides a bridge of deeper understanding and overcoming human limitations to achieve a win-win situation. This requires real wisdom indeed.

Among the highlights at Boao in 2013 was the keynote speech by President Xi Jinping in which he articulated the China Dream, with particular reference to international relations. He included a pledge, that China would be a good international citizen, working with international governments and agencies as partners to approach and solve the major global challenges of poverty and humanitarian development. In other sessions, pressing issues were discussed in business regulation, agriculture, health, education, environment, resources and innovation.

Australia was well represented at the Forum. The then Prime Minister Julia Gillard spoke at the keynote session. Previous Prime Minister Bob Hawke has long been a regular supporter at Boao. There were representatives from government, business, tourism and academia. Andrew Forrest was a sponsor, and Bob Hawke gave his usual spirited delivery of ‘Waltzing Matilda’ at the reception hosted by the Australian Ambassador to China, Frances Adamson. Australia-China partnerships in the abovementioned sectors make China the largest trading partner and a prime factor in the sustainability of the Australian economy.

The roundtable discussion on ‘Education and Employment’ was a 90-minute session with ten leading university presidents and education leaders from around the world. The central issue was the balance of education and training, and whether the purpose was education for life, or education for jobs. Of course the answer is both, but with a strong requirement that education is for thought leadership and the capacity to deal with future as well as present challenges. The University of Sydney’s Vice Chancellor, Dr Michael Spence, argued for careful mentorship and development of talent, and for an emphasis on diversity and access in order that societies may build and sustain both local and international engagement in several important interventions.

Finally, but importantly, the Boao Forum provides opportunities to meet leaders and others from around the world. The University of Sydney delegation led by the Vice Chancellor had a full program of meetings with government ministers, academic presidents and business sponsors. In addition, there were several meetings with Chinese and international media, heavily represented at Boao. The University of Sydney, through its leaders and the China Studies Centre, can make an important contribution to linking China, Australia and the world.

Mary Wang is China Manager, International Portfolio, Vice Chancellor’s Office, The University of Sydney and Associate Member of the China Studies Centre.
Over 8–9 August 2013, Dr Wei Wang, from the Department of Chinese Studies, and I organised a successful China Studies Centre annual international workshop entitled, ‘Contemporary Chinese Discourse and Social Change’. It brought together, for the first time in Australia, leading world experts and internationally renowned scholars in contemporary Chinese discourse studies, intercultural studies and sociolinguistics, including Professor Sun Chaofen of Stanford University, a leading scholar of Chinese linguistics, and Professor Naran Bilik of Fudan University, a leading scholar in Chinese anthropology. The workshop provided an opportunity for scholars from leading universities such as the University of California, Stanford University, University of London, Beijing University, Fudan University, Hong Kong University, and Nanyang Technological University to gather at the University of Sydney and forge a new and innovative collaborative research agenda for the decades to come.

The workshop was situated in the context of research on contemporary Chinese discourse, with a focus on the role that language plays in the ongoing socio-political transformation of Chinese society. With a view to producing new interpretative approaches in researching the complexity of discourses, 20 paper presentations were organised into three sessions: ‘Discourse in Action’, ‘Discourse in Use’ and ‘Discourse and Identity’. Overall, the workshop examined how discourses change in a context-dependent way; how social changes in China can lead to such shifts in the use of discourse; how social identities are constructed through language use; and the ways in which agents or agencies manipulate meanings.

In the past three decades, the economic development of China has been rapid and impressive. The changes in economic, geopolitical and international position that China has enjoyed, and the internal and global issues that these developments engender, have become objects of intense interest and concern among scholars in a wide range of disciplines, not only in various Chinese regions and communities, but also the rest of the world. As discourse analyst Norma Fairclough has pointed out, discourse not only reflects social change, but is integral and constitutive of social change, so a workshop on discourse research and contemporary socio-political transformation in Chinese society was timely and significant.

There have been various models and conceptualisations of discourse and discourse analysis in contemporary Chinese settings formulated by scholars in linguistics, sociology, pedagogy and cultural studies. It has been shown that social change and economic conditions have multiple impacts on rhetorical practice, political communication, and cultural behaviour. The scholars at the workshop from both in and outside of China conducted research investigating contemporary Chinese discourse and the representation of China in Western media. They acknowledged that the economic, social and political changes taking place in China are bound up with changing discourses, reflecting new practices, identities, values and attitudes. This represents a growing wave of scholarship, producing analyses of the discourse of China’s political, social and cultural transformation. A variety of approaches and methods were adopted: conversational analysis, genre analysis, rhetorical analysis, narrative theory, critical discourse analysis, natural historical discourse perspective, and cultural political economy developed within the fields of politics and international relations. The data analysed included TV blockbusters, government work reports, teaching quality assessment reports, speeches of Party leaders, and tape-recorded face-to-face interaction between government officials and the general public.

This workshop cemented a new collaborative research network between Australia, China, Singapore, the US and the UK in the area of contemporary Chinese discourse studies and cross-disciplinary research. The workshop will result in new publications in the form of a Special Issue for the Journal of Chinese Language and Discourse (CLD) and a book on Contemporary Chinese Discourse and Social Change in China for the CLD companion book series Studies in Chinese Language and Discourse, edited by Wei Wang and me, which will be published by the John Benjamins Publishing Company, one of the leading publishers in the field of linguistics.

Linda Tsung is Associate Professor at the Department of Chinese Studies at the University of Sydney and Academic Member of the China Studies Centre.
HOME, SYDNEY AN INTERNATIONAL CITY

SOPHIA CHEN
Sydney, 10 August 2013

“Harmonious diversity doesn’t just ‘happen’. It needs to be fostered and nurtured. It needs the energy and imagination of people who will reach out and actively make connections with other communities and individuals. It is events like HOME that make it ‘Happen’... So I congratulate the Australia-China Youth Association for organising HOME, and I thank the University of Sydney’s China Studies Centre... and the other organisations which joined the City to support it.”

Councillor Robert Kok, City of Sydney Council

On 10 August 2013, something special took place in Sydney’s Lower Town Hall. The modern space inside this iconic civic landmark was transformed into a world of music, laughter and youthful creativity. With a popular spin on classical traditions of art, music and dance, fresh ideas brought together people, the community and two worlds. As you entered through the steps of Lower Town Hall, works of pure imagination revealed endless possibilities in the Australia-China youth space.

It was a youth festival with many cultural, educational and social activities to suit everyone’s taste. You could unwind with some Chinese tea whilst enjoying live Chinese music, Mahjong and riddles. You could chill out at the ‘beach area’ and soak up Aussie BBQ culture whilst learning sports and slang. Better still, you could engage with the best of both worlds at a theatre for talks, performances and presentations about anything Australia-China related – be it history, international relations or careers. If you preferred to do things the fun way, then you could relax at the bar lounge with a mentor from Australia or China, or escape to famous Australian and Chinese landscapes in ancient costumes on a green screen.

It was a celebration of what we call home. It was also a celebration of what many of us would like to call home. Organised along the theme of ‘HOME for you and me – Sydney, an International City’, this large-scale youth festival was designed to bring together international and local students, as well as the broader community. With the aim of raising awareness, encouraging cross-cultural exchange, and providing a platform for international students to have fun, make friends and gain community work experience along the way, this project truly showcased opportunities through ongoing conversations and mutual understanding – starting from the youth, our future.

Not surprisingly, behind this successful event was a collective effort by a dedicated team of young leaders and over 100 volunteers who spent countless hours making a difference. The HOME 2013 project was pioneered by a group of bilingual local students passionate about its cause. They believed more could be done for international students who found social life difficult in Australia. In a
2008 report conducted by the City of Sydney assessing the needs of international students, social isolation was a key problem amongst many other welfare issues. Many years since then, these issues remain the subject of much debate in the press. In a 2013 article in *The Australian*, Cate Gribble and Mingsheng Li observed an interesting trend in the employment market in China, where returning Chinese graduates struggle to find a job due to a lack of opportunities to acquire work experience, soft skills and entrepreneurship whilst overseas; “The finding is consistent with interviews with Chinese students in Australia, which found that many Chinese students are dissatisfied with their English language development. Poor English language competency is considered a major barrier to employment in Australia and limited opportunities to interact with native speakers is the often cited reason for lack of progress.”

What it takes is to tackle the real issues slowly at the grassroots level and with a creative approach. Pioneers of the HOME initiative were passionate about creating fresh and exciting ways to explore Australian and Chinese culture with international students. The initiative was itself a ‘home’ to many international students who found it a meaningful and rewarding experience; working with local students, learning and sharing ideas, as well as having fun at numerous outings, drinks and dinners organised to reward hard work throughout the year. Just like the HOME event itself, the project teams brought together a diverse group of people, all with different connections to the Australia-China relationship, Sydney and the wider community.

The HOME project 2013 was a national initiative of the Australia-China Youth Association (ACYA) organised by its chapters at major universities in Sydney. The initiative was proudly supported by the City of Sydney, University of Sydney China Studies Centre, University of New South Wales Confucius Institute, UTS International, Consulate of the People’s Republic of China in Sydney, Hong Kong Economic Trade Office, and various other organisations who place great interest in the welfare of international students.
WHO’S AFRAID OF CHINA?
PUBLIC DEBATE FOR STUDENTS ON CHINA

MINGLU CHEN
Sydney, 21 August 2013

China is the most heavily populated country in the world and has experienced the most rapid economic growth over the last three decades. As a major player in the Asia-Pacific, China’s rise will have an ongoing impact on the wellbeing of the region. With China being Australia’s most significant trading partner and one of our most important regional neighbours, any changes that its rise brings are of critical concern to us. Is China to be feared? Who is afraid of China?

In partnership with the University of Sydney Union, the China Studies Centre organised a lunchtime debate on 21 August 2013 for students on the subject of what role China will play in the future of the country and the region. This event was opened by the Vice Chancellor and attended by over 300 students, staff and members of the public. I acted as the compere. The debate involved renowned scholars in the field: Dr John Lee, Adjunct Associate Professor and the Michael Hintze Fellow for Energy Security at the University of Sydney’s Centre for International Security Studies; Professor Kerry Brown, Executive Director of the China Studies Centre at the University of Sydney; and Ms Linda Jakobson, then East Asia Program Director at the Lowy Institute for International Policy. They debated the sort of role that China will play in global affairs over the next decade, and whether this will be constructive or challenging.

The first panellist, Dr Lee, argued that it is only natural to be afraid and cautious of China. On the one hand, the benefits brought by China’s rise are self-evident, but on the other hand it could disrupt the established international system. As history illustrates, great powers tend to use force while they are rising. The rise of a hungry China has already affected the strategic plans of other Asian countries, an obvious example being China’s numerous territorial disputes with its neighbours.

Speaking after Dr Lee, Professor Brown’s opinion was somewhat more neutral. He confirmed that there would be reasons to fear China, but at the same time it is important to take a more relaxed approach. He suggested to ‘strategically integrate’ China, since after all this is a story with no heroes. In this process, a smart engagement would be essential, as we need to maintain a sustainable world order.

Ms Jakobson took the complete opposite stance from Dr Lee. She started with asking the question, ‘what is there to be afraid of?’ While approving Professor Brown’s approach of smart engagement, she did not agree with Dr Lee. In Linda’s eyes, China is ‘not a dissatisfactory power’, but it does not have a ‘profound competitiveness’. Despite the speed at which China’s economy is growing, it still lacks new technologies and innovation.

There was a Q&A session following the panellists’ speeches and the audience embraced this opportunity to interact with the experts. Various questions were raised, such as ‘what perspective should western media take when reporting on China and China-related issues’ and ‘what would the future be like if China fails to rise as a great power’. The panellists were also asked to comment on issues such as China’s aging population, China’s lack of political change, the China-US relationship, and how these issues impact or would impact on China’s economic development. I feel that all these questions are well informed and demonstrate a genuine interest in China and its current issues. There appeared to be many more questions from the audience, but time constraints meant the panellists could only comment on a few. The debate allowed those present to obtain a better understanding of China’s rise and its impact on world economic and international affairs, and to develop a more comprehensive perspective when interacting with China.

The China Studies Centre received assistance in organising and publicising this event from a number of organisations, including the Australia-China Youth Association (ACYA) and CRCC Asia. Youth outreach events like this have become an important part of the Centre’s activities. I believe they will inspire more and more students to engage with China and in China-related academic coursework, and that the China Studies Centre is a major forum for expanding and deepening knowledge of China.

To watch the video of the event, please visit: youtube.com/watch?v=wc1BpxbzbZg

Dr Minglu Chen is a Lecturer in China Studies at the China Studies Centre and the coordinator of the Centre’s PhD in China Studies Program.
OUR EVENTS

Above: Panel Discussion, Who is afraid of China
WORKSHOP
LOCAL ELITES IN THE CONTEMPORARY PRC

DAVID GOODMAN
Dunhuang, Gansu, China 2–7 September 2013

While local elites have long been a point of entry and focus for the study of China’s history, this has not been the case for the period since 1949. On the other hand, recent research has started to draw attention to the roles of local elites as agents of governance, drivers of economic enterprise (and enterprises), and formers of local opinion and values.

The point of this workshop was not simply to enable some of the current research on local elites to be brought together, but perhaps more importantly to set the research agenda for the future study of local elites. Local in this context is the provincial, city or sub-provincial level of administration.

Paper authors were asked to ground their study in at least one specific locality, though if the possibility arose, then comparative studies were also welcome. For the purposes of the workshop, a focus on the contemporary PRC – defined as including and since 2000 – was requested, though of course exploration of the historical roots and antecedents of contemporary elites was also encouraged.

28 scholars from the USA, UK, Germany, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, as well as Australia and China, attended the workshop and discussed 16 papers. The workshop was well served by Professors Tom Bernstein (Columbia University) and Dorothy Solinger (University of California at Irvine), who attended the workshop as rapporteurs. The intention from the beginning was to produce an edited volume – Local Elites in Contemporary China – and this is now in the planning stage under the editorship and leadership of Dr Yingjie Guo.

Papers and discussions demonstrated the richness of the focus and the field of examining local elites. Inevitably, the workshop was initially fragmented by the level of focus for consideration of particular elites at village, county, and provincial levels. By the end of the sessions though there was a considerable appreciation of the extent to which the complex scalability of administrative levels in the PRC means not only that elites operate in a constantly changing environment, but also that they are most often the agents of these changes themselves. This conclusion was most clearly developed in an examination of Suzhou, which exists at four different formal levels within the PRC’s territorial administration, though always called a city. Necessarily, these ambiguities provide leverage of many different kinds to local elites, and this is where the workshop’s discussions highlighted the importance of status and personal relations alongside politics and economics as determinants of elite behaviour. Personal relations have long been identified as important in this context, but the emphasis on status has emerged only recently in the research on this topic.

Professor David Goodman is the Academic Director of the China Studies Centre.
SNAPSHOT
THE SECOND WORLD HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON CHINESE ACADEMIC JOURNALS

FENG DAIMEI
Sydney, 18 September 2013
On a winter morning in Beijing, my colleagues and I met Professor Kerry Brown, Executive Director of the University of Sydney China Studies Centre, in a cozy coffee bar at the Kerry Center Hotel. We had exchanged initial plans for holding the Second World High-Level Forum on Chinese Academic Journals through collaboration between the Social Science in China Press (SSCP) and the China Studies Centre.

On 18 September 2013, the Forum took place as planned in Sydney. About 30 participants, including China Studies scholars and chief editors of leading China academic journals from China, Australia, New Zealand and the US, attended the discussion forum on ‘Mission and Evaluation of Academic Journals in an Era of Multiple Cultures’.

The discussion was held at a conference room in the Darlington Centre at the University of Sydney. Participants had a fruitful discussion. Professor Brown delivered an opening address emphasising the importance of cross-culture dialogue. Wang Limin, deputy chief editor of the SSCP, as a co-host representative, also gave a speech at the opening. He stated that digitalisation is challenging the future trajectory of academic journals. He also agreed that gathering together representatives of many China journals from different cultural backgrounds to discuss the issues their journals are facing would facilitate scholars grasping the development trends of academic journals.

Many participants commented that the forum brought about an opportunity to exchange views face to face, giving broad exposure to debates. Participants who currently work overseas expressed how China Studies is entering the spotlight of the western audience because of the rapid rise of China. For instance, Professor Brown noted that Australia released a ‘National Strategic Report’ in August that particularly emphasised the increasing role of China. Some scholars pinned hopes for the role of journals more generally on China Studies at this crucial moment. Zhao Suisheng, Professor and Executive Director at the Center for China-US Cooperation at Denver University and editor-in-chief of the Journal of Contemporary China, said that journals would serve as bridges between traditional Sinology and modern social sciences, traditional scholarship and policy studies, and western and Chinese scholars who study Chinese issues.

Participants agreed that overseas experts on China Studies are gradually transcending the ‘generalists’ category, while more and more ‘specialists’ on social sciences have started to delve into China Studies as they realise there are issues there that require resolutions beyond language
or culture.

While overseas participants attached more importance to the rising role of China, most participants from China were concerned with the internationalisation of Chinese journals. As generally accepted, international scholarship norms are predominately western. Chinese scholars have no power of discourse in the academic sphere. Should China scholarship become international by inclining to western standards, so that scholars can have more publications in international publications, or should China scholarship retain its uniqueness? This question sparked much debate.

Many participants cautioned that one-way internationalisation would damage the development of Chinese culture. More importantly, some scholars noted the limitations of western discourse in explaining Chinese issues. Wang Yiyuan, a professor of Chinese from Victoria University in New Zealand said, “...in some areas, only Chinese interpretation can be applied”.

Professor Kerry Brown and Wang Limin, Deputy Editor-in-chief, Social Sciences in China Press (SSCP)

However, some worried about being ‘lost in translation’. When Chinese-language papers are translated into English, they will probably lose unique connotations that English words are unable to duplicate, cautioned Zhu Shoutong, a Professor of Chinese Literature from Macau University. In order to translate into English, some valuable ‘highlights’ have to be omitted, he continued.

It is wise to employ an international view but not necessarily exaggerate and internationalise all issues, concluded Jiang Zhongxiao, chief editor of Social Sciences in Guangdong.

Chinese was the working language of the forum, which is unusual for international events, especially those held outside of China. “I believe all participants have a good command of Chinese”, Professor Brown told me when I tried to hire translation services. This somewhat reflects the popularity of China Studies in the world nowadays. It would have been a big surprise to hear foreigners speaking Chinese even just ten years ago. What a big change! Zhao Suisheng shared his feelings about being able to speak Chinese at an international conference; “It makes for a more informal atmosphere”, he said, “It will probably become a new alternative to host international conferences using Chinese as the working language. I recently attended a meeting in South Korea that was also conducted in Chinese.”

The World High-Level Forum on Chinese Academic Journals is an annual international conference initiated by the SSCP in 2012. It has evolved from the original High-Level Forum on Cross-Straits and Four Regions Academic Journals started in 2008. The first Forum was held in Russia, in collaboration with the Institute of Economics, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation.

Feng Daimei works at the Social Sciences in China Press of the Academy of Social Sciences in China.
In 2013, the University had 4,685 enrolled students from Mainland China, 706 from Hong Kong, 39 from Macau and 116 from Taiwan. In addition, there are many more local students who share their heritage with these countries. Since the Mid-Autumn or Moon Festival is the most significant Chinese cultural event to fall during term time, the China Studies Centre ran an event on campus for the first time in 2013 and attracted more than 200 guests. It provided students who are far from home with the opportunity to celebrate whilst also bringing a Chinese cultural event to the attention of students who do not necessarily have a vast knowledge of China. In keeping with the informal and friendly atmosphere we wanted to create, we provided every attendee with a lantern and moon cake to take away as a gift.

The majority of people who attended the event were undergraduate students, either from China or with an interest in China, closely followed by postgraduate students from the same backgrounds. Amongst other guests who attended were academic members of the China Studies Centre as well as members of the community with a specific interest in China and Chinese culture, such as film makers who wanted to engage more with international students and representatives from TAFE colleges who wished to network with the students. The feedback we received from guests was that the event provided those who were far from home with a sense of family and cultural pride, and that it introduced an aspect of their culture to local students.

Due to the overwhelming success of the event in 2013, the China Studies Centre plans to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival again in future years to increase awareness amongst the student body.

Jordan Bryan is Chief Operating Officer of the China Studies Centre.
THE AUSTRALIA-CHINA YOUTH DIALOGUE

JOEL WING-LUN
Canberra & Melbourne, 24–29 September 2013

The 2013 Australia-China Youth Dialogue (ACYD) brought together more than thirty young Australian and Chinese leaders from government, business and academia in Canberra and Melbourne to discuss key aspects of the bilateral relationship with leading experts and policymakers. The inaugural ACYD was held in 2010 as a response to remarks made by Stephen FitzGerald, Australia’s first ambassador to the People’s Republic of China, lamenting the lack of institutionalised dialogue between Australia and China. In four short years, the ACYD has become one of the most important bilateral forums. It has an alumni network of outstanding former delegates that stretches across the globe and has become a model for other youth dialogues in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

A non-profit organisation run by volunteers, the ACYD has been fortunate enough to enjoy the support of eminent people and institutions that have contributed their time, energy and financial support to the Dialogue. Previous ACYD speakers include Frances Adamson, Australian Ambassador to China, Justin Yifu Lin, former Chief Economist and Senior Vice President of the World Bank, and Bob Hawke, former Prime Minister of Australia. The 2013 ACYD received the rare honour of an opening reception hosted by Governor-General Quentin Bryce at Government House, as well as a post-Dialogue reception for delegates and alumni at the Australian Embassy in Beijing.

The 2013 ACYD delegates brought diverse professional experiences to the discussion table, across sectors such as government, finance, media, academia and the military. Some had a strong background in Australia-China relations, while others were eager to learn about the impact of the relationship on their own areas of expertise. The 2013 delegates included many University of Sydney alumni; international relations researcher Yun Liu, tech entrepreneur Sarah Stewart, and financier Chloe Qiu. Yun Liu, a recipient of the University of Sydney Graduate Medal and current Master’s student at Johns Hopkins University, was the inaugural ACYD University of Sydney China Studies Centre Fellow.

Over five intense days, the delegates discussed and debated key issues in the relationship, including climate change, business, regional security and cultural diplomacy. In the opening session, the delegates discussed the science, politics and economics of climate change with experts from the Australian National University and China-based clean energy company Climate Bridge. While China is the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gasses, Alex Wyatt of Climate Bridge described existing Chinese emission-reducing measures as already dwarfing those being debated in Australia. Citing China’s problems with wasted food, he noted that if global food wastage were a country, it would be the third largest greenhouse emitter after China and the United States.

A tour of Australian Parliament House was followed by a Q&A session with MPs Andrew Leigh and Josh Frydenberg, who engaged in spirited discussion with the delegates on the practicalities of Australian governance and managing the Australia-China relationship. The MPs expressed clear partisan differences on matters of domestic policy, but were generally in agreement in their approach to Australia-China relations. At an Old Parliament House dinner hosted by the University of Sydney China Studies Centre, Executive Director Kerry Brown delivered a keynote address on China’s journey to middle income status and its implications for Chinese politics and society, and by extension the world at large.

Experts at a panel discussion on security cited China’s domestic challenges as the main reason why China would be unlikely to engage in armed conflict in the region. They rejected the notion that Australia must choose between China and the United States. Yet these arguments were put to the test in a crisis simulation led by Michael Shoebridge, First Assistant Secretary for Strategic Policy at the Department of Defence. Delegates played the roles of regional powers as Philippine pirates hijacked a vessel in disputed waters in the South China Sea, revealing themselves to be somewhat less temperate than their real life counterparts.

Former Foreign Minister Gareth Evans delivered a speech on the importance of personal relationships and cultural diplomacy in international relations. Over meat pies at the Henley Club and dumplings in Chinatown, the 2013 ACYD delegates engaged in some cultural diplomacy of their own, even watching the AFL Grand Final together. They are continuing to collaborate, producing opinion pieces and content in partnership with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. In the months since the Dialogue, there have been alumni reunions across at least three continents. Friendships and partnerships have been forged that will change the face of Australia-China relations in years to come.

Joel Wing-Lun is Governance and Law Coordinator of the Australia-China Youth Dialogue.
This symposium, attended by over 100 people in Beijing, was part of the University of Sydney graduation ceremony held in China in 2013. The Symposium had Chinese and Australian partners talking about their different understandings of what the China Dream might be and how we could all work within it.

DUNCAN IVISON
Beijing, October 2013
At the heart of the concept of the ‘China Dream’ is a vision for promoting a good life for the people of China.

Social scientists, lawyers and public health experts will rightly focus on things like the reduction of poverty, reforming the judicial system and improving healthcare as measures of success in achieving this dream. These are all incredibly important objectives.

However, philosophers will want to pause and consider a more basic question: what does it mean to live a good life? And how should we go about answering such a question? We might want to turn for guidance to Plato and Confucius, representing two great philosophical traditions in the ‘West’ and ‘East’. For both, although we must live within the parameters set for us by our natures and ‘heaven’, we are still responsible for our actions and especially for our treatment of others.

So, how do we live a good life and also fulfil our obligations to others? I shall try to answer this question.

For the ancient Greeks, and Plato in particular, a good life is a life that is just: it is a life in which reason ‘rules’, both within our souls and in our political community. It is not a life measured by how much wealth or power you have accumulated. For Confucius, as I understand it, the good life is also a life governed by reason: it is a life in which one’s desires and interests are reconciled with the needs of others and disciplined according to maintaining appropriate relations. For Confucius, moral conduct involves, among other things, ren—compassion for others – that begins with one’s immediate family and then stretches outward to a wide array of social relationships.

How do these ideas apply when we think about the obligations of communities and states? A fundamental challenge for both Australia and China today is to understand how the increasing interdependence between peoples and states should be understood ethically, and how those ethical commitments can be reflected in our social and political institutions. How do we both live a good life and fulfil our obligations to others – especially to those living beyond our national borders? We cannot avoid this question as the actions we take as individuals and communities affect those outside of our borders – for example, actions relating to climate change, migration, international security and the distribution of wealth.

In recent western political philosophy, there has been intense interest in concepts such as moral and political ‘cosmopolitanism’ (a term deriving from the ancient Stoic concept of being a ‘citizen of the world’) as a way of framing our ethical obligations to others beyond our borders. The challenge of moral cosmopolitanism is to reconcile the duties we have towards those with whom we share a specific political community, with duties we owe to everyone given our common humanity. This has informed debates over the nature of human rights and global distributive justice, as well as practical matters to do with state sovereignty and the design of international institutions such as the United Nations or the International Criminal Court.

I believe this remains a vital debate, even if the challenges are great. Realism and pragmatism govern much of our thinking around international affairs, and for good reason. But we should not abandon the challenge of articulating the moral dimensions of our international relations as well. Chinese and western philosophy has much to contribute to this debate. Whether through western concepts such as moral cosmopolitanism, or Confucian concepts such as ren or de (virtue) – or indeed the recently revived concept of tianxia (‘all under heaven’) – we need new, innovative conceptual frameworks to help shape the moral architecture of our interdependent world, as much (or even more so) than we need new trade agreements. Philosophers in Australia and China can play a vital role in helping to answer these questions - or, at the very least, helping us to ask better questions that lead to new insights about problems that can probably never be fully answered.

Duncan Ivison is Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney.
SUSAN SARETZKI
Sydney, 29 October 2013

Since initiating market reform in 1978, China’s rapid economic and social development has lifted more than 500 million people out of poverty. With a population of 1.3 billion, China recently became the second largest economy in the world. However, rising demand for energy and resources, increasing greenhouse gas emissions, and the deterioration of natural resources, such as water and arable land, are posing enormous challenges for China.

According to a study released in September 2013, conducted by Accenture and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, some 80% of Chinese cities are unable to achieve a balance between economic growth, resource efficiency and sustainable development. To secure a sustainable future, China included a comprehensive collection of sustainable development goals in its 12th Five Year Plan, the overarching guidance framework used in Chinese policy-making.

On its way to achieving these goals, China has already become the world’s largest user of solar and wind power, and has introduced major innovations in automotive and solar technology.

The 2013 Sydney China Business Forum, hosted by the City of Sydney and presented by the University of Sydney China Studies Centre, addressed the critically important issues in China’s push for sustainability, including energy, transport, water and agribusiness, and explored areas of collaboration between Australia and China in building a more sustainable future together.

More than 300 Australian and Chinese business leaders, government officials and academics attended the Forum held at Sydney Town Hall on 29 October 2013. The keynote speakers addressed issues such as sustainability practice by China Development Bank (the world’s largest development bank), legal framework issues for Australian companies doing business in China, and challenges for Chinese companies tapping into the Australian market.

China’s ambitious new plan to push sustainable energy includes the upgrading of the environmental sector to the rank of a ‘key industry’. Under the new government guidelines, the sector is expected to earn US$294 billion by 2015, and to grow at twice the rate of the rest of the economy.

The speakers discussed the potential for growth and investment in the green sector under China’s new initiatives. Mr Tony Cripps, CEO of HSBC Bank Australia Ltd, stated that China’s trade in the green sector would raise enormous opportunities for investment. He predicted that growth in research and development would underpin and drive the Australia-China relationship, with China increasingly providing the requisite capital.

In addition to green energy, developing sustainable water use is also high on China’s agenda. With almost 20% of the world’s population but only 5% of the world’s renewable freshwater supplies, it is easy to appreciate why the Chinese government has made improving water treatment such a high priority.
Mr Ren Desheng, General Manager, GD Loongwater Membrane Technology Ltd, told the Forum that under China’s 12th Five Year Plan, the Chinese government would push for more water conservation, imposing stricter water consumption standards on heavy industry.

Mr John Grill, the Chairman of Worley Parsons, discussed the challenges of working in the water sector in China. Speaking from Worley Parsons’ experience, he stated that there were still barriers to competition in the regulated energy and infrastructure sectors, especially in the contracting of major projects. He also mentioned that for international engineering companies, getting design accreditation in some sectors is still problematic. However, he mentioned that it was pleasing to see efforts by the current Chinese leadership to address and lower barriers to competition.

In the area of sustainable transport, China’s urban transportation system is facing increasing pressures caused by rapid urbanisation and motorisation. China’s energy problem has become an issue of strategic national security, which has created a more pressing need for China to develop new energy vehicles compared to other countries. By 2012, within two years of a subsidy policy being implemented, 25 pilot cities had promoted a total of 27,432 new energy vehicles, including 23,032 in the public service and 4,400 purchased by individuals.

BYD Company Limited briefed the Forum on the urgent need for new energy vehicles in China. The City of Sydney discussed Sydney’s initiatives for the development of sustainable transport.

In addition to energy, water and transport, sustainable agribusiness also generated much discussion at the Forum. China faces challenges of limited water and land resources, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters associated with climate change. The Chinese Government has developed the 12th Five-Year Plan on National Agriculture and Rural Economic Development (2011–2015) to guide China’s agricultural production and development. Opportunities exist for Australia and China to cooperate in investment, agricultural resources development, technological innovation and agrifood services, to improve agricultural productivity in both countries and contribute to improving global food security. As Economic and Commercial Consul from the Consulate-General of the People’s Republic of China in Sydney, Mr Peng Gang, pointed out, “As China’s economy develops further and living standards continue to improve, China will increasingly look to Australia for meat and dairy products, wool, wine, and other farm products.”

The Forum participants concluded that Australia-China collaboration in sustainable agribusiness has a sound foundation and bright future prospects.

The Forum also saw the launch of the University of Sydney-KPMG report *Demystifying Chinese Investment in Australian Agribusiness* by the Hon. Andrew Stoner MP, Deputy Premier of New South Wales. The report provides clarity on the current scale and composition of Chinese large-scale commercial investment into the Australian agricultural and agribusiness sectors. It analyses the realities facing China’s food demand patterns and outlines practical initiatives that Australian companies should take to attract more investment.

Presented by the University of Sydney China Studies Centre, the Sydney China Business Forum is an annual event to facilitate open dialogue between Australia and China. HSBC Bank Australia was the Platinum Partner of the 2013 Forum.

Susan Saretzki is the Director of Government and Business Relations at the China Studies Centre.
NEIL THOMAS

Sydney, 29 November 2013

The ACYA Journal of Australia-China Affairs is a bilingual and peer-reviewed journal co-published by the University of Sydney China Studies Centre (CSC) and the Australia-China Youth Association (ACYA). Established by ACYA in 2011, the Journal is an annual publication. Volume III was the first edition of the Journal produced through collaboration between ACYA and the CSC.

The 2013 Journal was officially launched on 29 November as the closing event of the CSC Annual Conference, featuring a roundtable discussion between CSC academics and Journal authors focussed upon their works published in the Journal. CSC Executive Director Kerry Brown chaired the event, and Professor David Goodman, Dr Minglu Chen and Dr Adrian Hearn were all speakers.

The Journal provides a high-quality and high-visibility platform for students, young professionals and researchers to publish academic essays, opinion articles or creative work pertaining to some aspect of Australia and China, submitted in either the English or Chinese language and with the final Journal being completely bilingually translated by the ACYA Translation Committee. It is a unique publication that plays an important role in connecting the voices of Australian and Chinese youth with the broader Australia-China academic and popular discourse, covering a wide variety of topics and writing styles. The 2013 Volume has been disseminated by the CSC, Australia-China Council, Foundation for Australian Studies in China, and ACYA.

The submissions and review process is conducted by CSC academics in conjunction with the ACYA Journal Sub-Committee, and is extensive and rigorous. From over fifty submissions received each year, only the best dozen are then selected for publication. The finest submission in both the English and Chinese academic essay sections is awarded an ACYA Prize for Youth Scholarship.

The ACYA Prize for Youth Scholarship (English) was won by University of Sydney PhD candidate Sophia Slavich for her essay ‘Looking Beyond the Land’ on the topic of Uyghur-Han relations in Xinjiang. Slavich compares national integration policies towards Uyghurs in China with the ‘Australia model’ of Indigenous policy to argue that underlying socio-political ideologies as well as institutional structures must be addressed in order resolve ethnic conflict.

The ACYA Prize for Youth Scholarship (Chinese) was won by Gong Chuying, a Masters student at Beijing Foreign Studies University, for her work entitled ‘An Analysis of New Policies by Australian Universities to Recognise China’s National College Entrance Examination Results’. Gong concludes that despite acceptance of gaokao results increasing Chinese student interest in Australia, ease of policy replication, expensive tuition and tougher course requirements mean that improving the quality of Australian education is ultimately the best way to attract more Chinese students.

Thomas McConochie won the prize for best English opinion article for his piece ‘The Usefulness of Uselessness’, an engaging and stimulating exposition on the case for the greater teaching of classical Chinese to deepen understanding of contemporary Chinese language and literature. The Chinese opinion section was won by He Kong’s article ‘Looking Ahead at China and the World’, an expressively argued appeal for greater mutual understanding between Australians and Chinese in order to transform the ‘China threat’ into a ‘China hope’. Guo Juncheng was awarded the creative work prize for ‘Where is Home?’, an emotional autobiographical tale of navigating self-identity between cultures, countries and ethnicities.

The academic and institutional support of the CSC for the Journal has been instrumental in strengthening its scope and review process, and is a significant and distinctive contribution to the Australia-China youth space. It also represents invaluable support for ACYA, the only youth-led not-for-profit NGO working at an international level to promote greater ties between Australian and Chinese university students and young professionals through people-to-people exchange, education and careers, with over 5,000 members spread across 20 Chapters in Australia and China.

The 2013 Volume of the ACYA Journal of Australia-China Affairs is available to download under the Publications section of the CSC website at: sydney.edu.au/china_studies_centre/en/ccpublications/acya_journal.shtml

Neil Thomas is an Associate Member of the China Studies Centre.
OUR IDEAS
MOZI: AN ANCIENT CONTEMPORARY

KERRY BROWN

In an age in which personality is taken as key to understanding everything, and in which attempts are made to locate the source of almost every thought system in the individual life experiences of the originators, Mozi offers a pleasing biographical blankness. What little can be gleaned on the historic figure who might be the person who inspired, and is sometimes directly quoted, in the texts bearing his name and translated by Jeffrey Riegel in Mozi: A Study and Translation of the Ethical and Political Writings (China Research Monograph, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 2013), is wonderfully intriguing. His name may have derived from the Chinese term for being branded, a common punishment in the era in which he is meant to have lived. He may have therefore been of very humble origins, and there are traditional accounts of him being able to speak even from these lowly points to powerful rulers, eroding some of the notion we might have of a highly settled social hierarchy and imperial enclosure under the ancient emperors. He lived close to the time of the other great classical philosophers – Confucius, Mencius, Xunzi. But he is even more shadowy than they, granted only a few characters in a single mention in the vast biographical history of China written a few centuries later by Sima Qian. The rest, as they say, is silence – at least as far as what his life may have been like.

But the writings bearing his name are extensive, and even though this collection, as its comprehensive introduction makes clear, omits some texts attributed to him because their provenance is too contentious and corrupted to be manageable, it still comes to several hundred pages. What they reveal is a systematic and sometimes surprisingly contemporary outlook, both on the role of emotion in personal and political life, and of the struggles to find and sustain good leadership that any society encounters. It is striking that these issues of leadership and its functions and challenges are as unsolved now as they evidently were at the time these texts are attributed to. Across the millennium, we share this frustration, giving a surprising point of unity.

The world of the third century BCE, at the start of the Han dynasty, when Mozi is supposed to have lived, is utterly alien to that of the 21st century. These texts offer the imagination interesting opportunities to try to think back to that world. The assumption would be it was a rawer, more violent place, a world of extreme power distance between the few ruling and those ruled, and a world where men were haunted by the plethora of demons and unknowns that figure in the memory traces left of the superstitions, mythologies and folktales in our own time. China is lucky inasmuch as at least the memory of this ancient time is better preserved in the written form of the language, many characters of which, despite grammatical differences between classical and modern Chinese, are still used and understood today. This remarkable linguistic continuity lies at the heart of Chinese cultural cohesiveness and is one of humanity’s great achievements and living legacies.

In the characters translated here, we are able to directly hear a voice from over two millennia ago. The translations offered after each block of text are often of poetic intensity, and this captures not just the content, but also the spirit of the language. The voice of Mozi, and the world that this voice slowly reveals, is at times unsettling, and at others very immediate. Mozi talks of ghosts, of spirits, and of detestation of music – as though it had the intrinsic power to bring down rulers corrupted by its sensuous power. But he also uses a voice that shows the same fondness for rhetorical repetition as modern public figures. And his use of logic is impeccable – with its support for righteous action and subversion of positions set up as wrong and intellectually and morally unjustified.

Mozi can be interesting now because he acts as an antidote to the seemingly all-conquering modern formulations of Chinese philosophy by new followers of Confucianism and its derivations. Confucianists were the ideological mainstream for the various elite political leaders of separate, sometimes coterminous, Chinese dynasties of the last two millennia. This gave them the chance to dominate the writing of history, and push aside voices that were discordant with their great historic founder. Mozi’s doctrines address the same prime questions of public behaviour and right action and its sources that those of Confucius did. But they also offer difference and diversity, offering insights into the vast terrain that mainstream Confucianists never completely controlled.

Mozi’s doctrine of impartial love is amongst his most strikingly contemporary, even despite its occurrence in a linguistic and historic world so remote from our own. Impartial love figures in a large section of these texts, explored through the burden on rulers to be its chief practitioners and exemplars:

Now if the gentlemen of the world truly desire that the world be rich, and hate its present poverty, truly desire that the world be orderly and hate its present disorder, they ought to practice impartially loving each other and cooperatively benefitting each other. (p.155)

This anger at elites is something that is as alive in modern China as it was over
two thousand years ago. Mozi’s diagnostic of a love that transcends the boundaries of the self, and is untied to its appetites and search for self-centred material and emotional appeasement, links into a vast humanist literature that can be traced through the Christian writings of the Early Church Fathers, up to the Renaissance and Enlightenment taxonomy of moral economy and self-abnegation, and into the Romantics and the powerful expressions of a poet like Wordsworth – whose notion of ‘being worthy of one’s self’ has a haunting parallel with the challenge found in Mozi of seeking a fuller humanity by looking outwards away from the self.

That Mozi’s political world clearly supports the notion that there must be elites, that they are somehow encoded into the fabric of the human political universe, and it is therefore their function to be worthier, better behaved and more righteous, might seem to set him apart from the modern reality of a China wedded to the communist doctrine of eventual egalitarianism. The reality, as we know, is in fact of a brave new Chinese world with as vast a power distance between the elite and the masses as existed in the dynastic past. Mozi berates rulers of his age for their love of fine clothes and a luxurious life (p.93) and holds up the perfect image of a hardworking, selfless administrative ruler as the ideal that lies away from these. This sort of indignation would fit comfortably with modern social media in China attacking the venality and corruption of local and national officials. This authentic anger is captured in many of the sections with their theme of worthy models, some taken from the past, held against the inferior behaviour of the current leadership.

This is a beautifully presented and structured book, and one that is accessible even to those who have no background in classical Chinese philosophy. It is important to understand this material because so many of its great primal themes – of righteous behaviour and the roots of human good and evil – are as integral to the understanding of China now as the classics of Plato and Aristotle are to contemporary European thought. In many ways, placing Plato’s Republic, with its infamous prescription for a society ruled by ‘philosopher kings’, besides Mozi’s descriptions of a hardworking and appropriately loving elite leadership, suddenly brings closer together the artificially divided worlds of Oriental and western thought. Their preoccupations and some of their solutions are very similar.

The great strength of this collection is the quality of the translation. It often reads like poetry, with the same delicate attention to rhythm and cadence as shown in the original.
With the complete retirement of Hu Jintao, China entered the era of Xi Jinping after the 18th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in March 2013. Xi subsequently consolidated his power by putting an end to the interference of retired politicians and placing his own people in key positions. However, it is not very clear what he is going to do for China.

One of the big problems for Hu throughout his whole decade in power from 2002 to 2012 was his failure to dislodge his predecessor, Jiang Zemin, from politics. Reluctant to relinquish his power completely, Jiang chose to interfere with the operation of his successor on all important matters.

At the 16th Party Congress in 2002, Jiang decided to stay on as chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC). After his retirement from the CMC in September 2004, he continued to influence the decision-making of the new leadership. He initially played funeral politics by having his name appear in the list of mourners for dead politicians but later inserted himself as the second most powerful leader in China after Hu in the official line-up of incumbent leaders drawn up for important occasions. With Jiang as the ultimate powerbroker, Hu’s power was seriously compromised.
With Hu’s assistance, Xi gradually disengaged Jiang, putting an end to the practice of ‘old men politics’. First, the ‘Friends of Music Lovers’, an unofficial club of high-ranking officials, senior intellectuals and high-ranking military officers under Jiang and Li Lanqing, was ordered to disband in December 2012. Second, in January 2013, Jiang was forced to declare his complete retirement from politics in a note to the new leadership under Xi, saying that in the future his name should merely be listed along with ‘other old comrades’ in official publications. Third, Jiang made it clear in a report on his meeting with Henry Kissinger in July 2013 that he would support Xi’s leadership.

Instead of a collective leadership, Xi has made attempts to establish his own authority over those of his colleagues in the Politburo Standing Committee. He has placed his former classmates and colleagues in key positions in the General Office of the CCP Central Committee, Central Organization Department and Central Propaganda Department. Consequently, Xi’s current power is much greater than that of his immediate predecessors Hu and Jiang in their first year in office.

The Third Plenum, held in November 2013, witnessed the consolidation of Xi’s power as the paramount leader of China in political, economic, and military and security affairs. In a major departure from previous Third Plenums, in which the Premier played a prominent role as head of a small group that drafted the decision of the plenum, Xi decided to head this group for the Third Plenum of the 18th Central Committee, with Liu Yunshan (a member of the Politburo Standing Committee and President of the Central Party School) and Zhang Gaoli (another member of the Politburo Standing Committee and Executive Vice Premier of the State Council) as his assistants. In an official report on the Third Plenum decision by the Xinhua news agency, Xi was mentioned 14 times but Premier Li Keqiang, the second ranking member of the Politburo Standing Committee, was not mentioned at all.

The Third Plenum established two new organs of great significance: the National Security Commission and Small Leading Group on Comprehensive Deepening of Reforms. The former aims to integrate leadership over domestic and external security issues, and the latter attempts to provide leadership over reform programs in all areas. The reform program produced by the Third Plenum, however, is filled more with slogans than detailed action plans. There is no fundamental overhaul of the current system. The Decision promises to allow the market to play a ‘decisive’ (instead of a ‘basic’) role in allocating resources, but also insists on the dominant role of state-owned enterprises in the Chinese economy.

Xi’s signature slogan is the ‘China Dream’. He calls for the Party and the people to rally behind his leadership to realise the dream of making China prosperous and strong again. On the one hand, China strives to become a moderately prosperous society in all aspects by 2020. On the other hand, China endeavours to safeguard its territorial integrity and national sovereignty. Yet this dream offers no solutions to the more urgent problems of a yawning gap between the rich and the poor, rampant corruption, and serious air, water and soil pollution, that threaten to make China an unliveable place.

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JINGDONG YUAN

Cross-strait relations remain stable in 2013. This year marked the completion of the power transition from the Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao administration to the Xi Jinping-Li Keqiang leadership. While most analysts expect that Xi will likely continue with the patient and flexible Taiwan policy that Hu initiated around 2005, Beijing may also pursue a more active cross-strait agenda that goes beyond economic issues. The Ma Ying-jeou administration in Taiwan has not ruled out political dialogue with the Mainland, but suggests it requires the right conditions.

Since the election of Ma in 2008, cross-strait tensions have been reduced significantly and replaced with steady progress in bilateral economic, social and cultural exchanges. The two sides have signed over 19 major agreements during this time, and 2013 continued the trend. Some of the major developments of the year include: the signing of a services trade agreement in June, which will open the Mainland and Taiwanese service sectors to each other; negotiation on a trade-in-goods agreement scheduled to be concluded by mid-2014; and a proposal to establish representative offices for the Straits Exchange Foundation in the Mainland and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait in Taiwan, these being two semi-official organisations that handle cross-strait affairs in each territory. This would be of great political significance.

This year, Taiwan has also concluded free trade agreements with New Zealand and Singapore, and attended the meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organization as an invited guest. This follows Taipei’s success in obtaining observer status at the World Health Assembly in 2009. And despite Gambia’s switching of its diplomatic recognition of China from Taipei to Beijing, the implicit diplomatic truce between the two sides has remained intact. Indeed, Beijing disavows—and Taipei confirms—that the PRC was not engaged in any diplomatic offensive to win over the African state.

Apart from continued economic integration and growing cross-strait contacts – including over 550 direct flights weekly, increased quotas for Mainland tourists to visit Taiwan, and the cross-strait opening of bank branches – the two sides have also seen close collaboration in law enforcement to combat crime and illicit activities. Semi-official, economic, societal and academic exchanges further promote and strengthen cross-strait interactions. For the first time, Wang Yu-chi, Minister of Taiwan’s Mainland Affairs Council, is scheduled to visit the Mainland in early 2014 to hold meetings with Zhang Zhijun, Director of the State Council’s Taiwan Affairs Office. Ma Ying-jeou has expressed his desire to attend the APEC Leaders’ meeting in China in 2014 and indicated his willingness to meet with Xi Jinping. Clearly, the political issues—which both sides seem to have so far postponed or avoided—can no longer be ignored. Xi has made it clear on numerous occasions when meeting with former Kuomintang officials that these issues should be left to future generations. Along with his advocacy for a ‘China Dream’—a key ingredient being to erase national humiliation and rejuvenate the Chinese nation—one could expect that Xi will push for negotiation on unification. However, despite steady progress and stability in cross-strait relations, which clearly benefits Taiwan more than the Mainland, this has by no means changed the attitudes of Taiwanese towards the PRC, with close to 60% identifying themselves as Taiwanese and less than 5% as Chinese.

While Mainland-Taiwan ties remain stable and continue to expand, the cross-strait military balance is increasingly tilting in the mainland’s favour. Indeed, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has maintained a double-digit percentage increase in defence spending every year since the late 1980s and significantly enhanced its overall capabilities over the past few years with major procurements. These include the Liaoning (its first aircraft carrier), surface ships and submarines, a new generation of fighter aircraft such as the J-10, Su-30 and J-11, and anti-ship ballistic and cruise missiles. A recent Pentagon report on the PLA suggests there are 1400 short-range missiles deployed across the strait and that this number continues to increase each year, and that the Chinese anti-access and area-denial (A2/AD) strategy in the Western Pacific threatens US ability and willingness to intervene on behalf of Taiwan in the event of cross-strait conflict.

In contrast, Taiwan’s defence budget has suffered consecutive declines over the same period and fallen well below the 3% of GDP pledged by Ma Ying-jeou when he first came to power. But one of the most severe impediments to Taiwan’s defence capabilities is its inability to procure key weapons systems. Its fleet of F-16 A/B fighter aircraft is over two decades old. While the Obama administration has agreed to offer upgrades to these planes, it has declined to sell more advanced F-16 C/D fighters. More than a decade after the George W. Bush administration agreed to sell submarines to Taiwan, partisan bickering in Taipei and budget shortfalls mean their procurement remains elusive.

In sum, cross-strait relations have by and large been stable and bilateral economic ties continue to expand and deepen. 2014 may witness political issues being put back on the bilateral agenda, but these will likely remain confined to pragmatic matters more so than serious discussion of unification. A perceptual gap between the respective interpretations and expectations of Taiwan and the Mainland is likely to grow, with Beijing looking for political payoff in return for its economic concessions to Taipei. The Ma administration, facing opposition from the DPP and aware of the Taiwanese people’s preference for the status quo, will continue to follow a cautious and pragmatic path of interaction and integration without unification.

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FRED TEIWES

A deeply misleading narrative of elite politics during the initial post-Mao period, —from the arrest of the ‘gang of four’ in October 1976 to the removal of Mao’s successor Hua Guofeng in 1981—was created by the regime and, sadly, overwhelmingly accepted by the Chinese political studies field. Warren Sun of Monash University and I are addressing the distortions of the conventional view and working toward a deeper understanding of the true nature of leadership politics in this transitional period.

What are the key features of the conventional wisdom on this period? Three stand out: Hua Guofeng was a neo-Maoist—a ‘whateverist’ who advocated carrying out ‘whatever’ policies Mao had endorsed, and a leftist—particularly in pushing a reckless ‘Western leap forward’ in economic policy; Deng Xiaoping was the driving force in the economic reform policies of the period and the broader rejection of Maoism; and, the 1978 Third Plenum saw an inevitable struggle between Hua’s conservative forces and Deng’s reform faction, with the result being both Deng’s ‘paramount leadership’ and the Party’s ‘reform and opening up’ policies originating at that meeting.

Of the many false claims directed at Hua, several are revealing of the period’s political context. First, while the famous ‘two whatever’s’ editorial of February 1977 was issued under Hua’s auspices, it was an effort to move away from radical Maoism while retaining a link to the Chairman’s legitimacy. Paradoxically, it paled in comparison to Deng’s praise of Mao in September 1979: “[a]ll policies formulated by Chairman Mao were correct, our mistakes came from not insisting on Chairman Mao’s line.” Second, while Hua shouldered major responsibility for the economic leap forward, this was a consensus position within the leadership, and one totally shared by Deng. In fact, Deng was even more bullish about rapid growth than Hua, and the figure most responsible for excesses in the ‘Western’ leap of importing foreign technology. Finally, Hua was accused of preventing or delaying the rehabilitation of senior officials who had been purged in the Cultural Revolution. Clearly, some officials were resentful of delays in the process, but Hua oversaw the restoration of many senior cadres to important positions. Given the secrecy endemic to the regime, there was room for misunderstanding and a tendency to blame Hua. The outstanding case was Chen Yun, the only leader with historical prestige comparable to Deng. When Chen was not named to the Politburo at the 11th Party Congress in summer 1977, he blamed Hua, but in fact it was Deng’s reservations that prevented his selection from going through.
While the above demonstrates that the conventional view of Deng is simplistic, it does not gainsay that Deng was broadly pragmatic on policy, fully understood and furthered the need to move away from Maoism, and had a major role in the overall reform process. But others were more important in the initial moves toward economic reform, notably Hua both before and after the Third Plenum, and Deng was often silent on major issues, such as key economic reform measures at an April 1979 work conference, or concerning household contracting at a January 1980 national rural conference. Earlier, Hua and Deng agreed on an economic agenda for the pre-Third Plenum work conference, but both were surprised when the sudden emergence of the rehabilitation of senior leaders and ideological questions such as the ‘two whatevers’ altered the proceedings. The resulting developments did not reflect major differences between the two men, and the Third Plenum was not a clash of two policy approaches nor, as Deng Liqun later suggested, “a struggle of two opposing armies”. But Hua was weakened and Deng’s already high status was further enhanced. It was a step toward the removal of one leader and the full emergence of another. What explains this larger outcome?

Many specific developments after the Third Plenum require further research, but essential aspects of the entire process from 1976 to 1981 are clear. First, the leadership change basically had nothing to do with policy. Clear differences between Hua and Deng are virtually impossible to find, with the exception of Hua’s opposition to Deng’s initiative to attack Vietnam in early 1979, where virtually all other leaders were deeply sceptical but Deng still prevailed as a great military figure of the revolution. The latent problem was two conflicting sources of legitimacy—Hua’s ‘legal’ legitimacy from being selected by Mao and elected by the appropriate Party bodies, and Deng’s legitimacy based on historical prestige. The latter form was always likely to prevail if the issue was joined. Tellingly, within days of Hua’s great achievement in ending the radical threat, senior revolutionaries were asking “how can he [who only joined the Party in 1938] be the leader?” Hua’s vulnerability was ingrained, and when Deng and Chen decided to act against Hua in 1979-80, the game was essentially up.


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Drivers soon re-emerge. The result has been reiterated cooperation. But once relations stabilise again, conflict down diplomatic tensions and exploring new avenues for encouraged Beijing to respond to bilateral crises by tapering leaders’ worries over social unrest at home, has repeatedly augmented by strong economic imperatives and Chinese Effective deterrence by the US-Japan military alliance, military conflict pulls China back from the precipice. Yet each time, fear of an extremely costly Japan that, at points, has brought the two nations to the brink of war. Yet each time, fear of an extremely costly China’s foreign policy toward Japan, driven by two sets of opposing forces, provides an example. Beijing’s struggle for power in East Asia, augmented by anti-Japanese popular nationalism, has repeatedly led Chinese leaders to adopt an aggressive stance toward Japan that, at points, has brought the two nations to the brink of war. Yet each time, fear of an extremely costly military conflict pulls China back from the precipice. Effective deterrence by the US-Japan military alliance, augmented by strong economic imperatives and Chinese leaders’ worries over social unrest at home, has repeatedly encouraged Beijing to respond to bilateral crises by tapering down diplomatic tensions and exploring new avenues for cooperation. But once relations stabilise again, conflict drivers soon re-emerge. The result has been reiterated cycles of rising tensions and near conflict, followed by concerted efforts to calm diplomatic waters.

Pacific and Conflict Drivers

Chinese belligerence is particularly likely toward Japan, due to geographical proximity, prevalence of territorial and economic disputes, contentious past, nationalist pressures, and competition over strategic resources. Defensive measures by Japan will likely be seen as signalling aggressive intent, spurring Chinese build-ups. Even competition over seemingly minor maritime or ideological disputes will be vested with great significance, as compromising in the face of perceived Japanese assertiveness would signal Chinese weakness and encourage further encroachments. Anti-Japanese popular nationalism in China exacerbates these pressures. Concern over negative public opinion inhibits Chinese leaders from taking actions that they believe will be publically criticised, particularly amidst a period of heightened public emotion. And yet, not a single Chinese or Japanese soldier has died by the other side’s hands since the end of World War II. During this period, these two rivals have built up one of the world’s most robust economic relationships, bolstered by thick ties of institutional cooperation across political, social and economic sectors. What drives these more hopeful trends? The strongest constraint upon potential Chinese aggression is the deterrent effect provided by the US-Japan military alliance. Fears of popular unrest further explain Chinese caution. Massive public demonstrations could spiral out of control, turning from anti-Japanese to anti-Communist Party and swelling into a social movement. Economic factors also encourage restraint. Communist Party legitimacy depends upon ensuring an external environment conducive to domestic economic growth. Japan is a crucial part of that environment. Combining the Pacific and conflict drivers in the bilateral relationship suggests that China’s policy toward Japan is likely to be characterised by repeated surges of antagonism followed by efforts at damage control. Therefore, an amicable transformation is as unlikely as military conflict.

Putting today’s standoff in perspective

Since 2012, the two sides have been trapped in a dangerous standoff, one begun with Tokyo’s decision to ‘nationalise’ the contested Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Even if the historical pattern holds true, and the two sides avoid a descent into military conflict, the situation remains dire. Ongoing tensions entail lost economic opportunities—investments not made, trades that fall through—while redirecting national resources toward military build-up. Joint development of natural resources remains unrealised. The risk persists that an accident could spark a crisis that escalates into military conflict.

The policy implications for Beijing and Tokyo are twofold. First, leaders on both sides should continue to encourage deeper economic ties while pursuing regional economic integration. Financial cooperation is particularly promising. Secondly, they must strengthen the mechanisms for managing incidents at sea. Once the current crisis passes, they should seize the next interregnum to put in place mechanisms such as the long-delayed military hotline and a code of conduct for fishing vessels in disputed waters. The US should encourage such discussions, perhaps even through a regional framework. Ironically, perhaps the greatest hope for reduced tensions rests with the very real danger of catastrophic war. As Samuel Johnson once quipped, “when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.” We must hope that such concentration prevails in both Tokyo and Beijing, encouraging both sides to begin inching back from the dangerous precipice where they once again find themselves.

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2013 lived up to its expectations as being a critically important year in the Australia-China trade and investment relationship.

DOUG FERGUSON
Both of our countries have undergone fundamental political change that has and will profoundly impact future commercial opportunities.

For China, the transition of national leadership to Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang and a new Politburo Standing Committee, has been internationally welcomed as a smooth process and a strong catalyst for important and comprehensive reforms in China’s domestic political, economic, cultural and environmental spheres. Much of 2013 was consumed by the introduction and implementation of China’s new leadership personnel, and the repositioning of key regulatory bodies and their objectives. This has slowed new outbound direct investment approvals and activity by Chinese state-owned enterprises. It was clear, however, from the outcomes of the Third Plenum in November that China’s leadership is committed to gradual but comprehensive economic reform and liberalisation, to ensure not only growth but more importantly growth that is socially and environmentally sustainable. China’s worsening air and water pollution is becoming a key area of public concern and policy shifts towards cleaner energy and environmentally responsible corporate activity are filtering down to provincial and local governments.

Meanwhile Australia witnessed three different Prime Ministers in less than 3 months, reflecting a very long and distracting political battle waged from January through October, from which the Tony Abbott-led Liberal-National Coalition emerged the resounding victors. His policy campaign, which consistently committed the new government to important economic reform to reposition Australia as a more competitive, innovative, flexible, deregulated and business-led economy, was well received by Chinese companies investing and operating in Australia. Since taking office, the Abbott government has commenced implementing several key policy commitments, including the process of repealing the carbon tax and streamlining Federal and State Government regulatory approval processes. Although the first few months have required the new government to address some very urgent and challenging issues, confidence and trust remain high for this government to deliver on its promises to ensure that Australia is not only open to foreign investment business but that it is also profitable and sustainable for Australian business.

Despite the interruptions presented by changes in national leadership in both countries, which have undeniably interrupted new investment projects, other industries including trade, tourism, education and migration-led activities have continued.

INVESTMENT
KPMG and the University of Sydney, led by myself and Professor Hans Hendrischke, have jointly developed and analysed a database of Chinese direct investment into Australia from 2006-2013 and produced six separate reports since 2011 that have helped to demystify Chinese investment. This has reignited a mature, fact-based and pragmatic debate within Australian corporate, political and social networks on how to better engage with China.

Chinese corporations continue to invest directly and more broadly into Australia, with over 130 completed transactions amounting to total investment exceeding A$50 billion since 2006, making Australia the number one global destination for Chinese investment by a narrow margin. President Xi has recently reiterated that both the Chinese state-owned and private sector will invest up to US$500 billion abroad over the next decade, with Australia expected to continue to be a priority destination provided key policy settings are implemented regarding the FIRB, FTA, migration, and general policies to reduce Australian domestic operating costs, increase productivity, and speed of project approval and delivery.

TRADE
Bilateral trade has continued to grow beyond A$130 billion per annum, fuelled by China’s ongoing thirst for iron ore, metals, gas and food, contributing enormously to Australia’s relative economic prosperity. Australia should continue to benefit from China’s ongoing urbanisation development objectives and rapidly growing upper-middle class population with aspirations for safe, premium food and consumer products. Australia’s fortunes would obviously be enhanced by a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and relatively weaker Australian dollar, both of which will hopefully be witnessed in 2014.
Record numbers of Chinese tourists, exceeding 650,000 per annum and second only to New Zealanders in total numbers, are visiting Australia and providing enormous benefits to our hotel, restaurant and retail shopping economies. However, opportunities will not accrue solely to Australian corporates. Not only are Chinese airlines now approaching 50 return flights to Australia per week, privately owned Chinese hotel and resort developers are also turning their attention to opportunities in Sydney, Melbourne and other popular tourist locations. Chinese banks and credit card companies have also capitalised on these opportunities and are developing retail and commercial banking relationships and offering offshore RMB currency services in Australia.

Students from China, exceeding 150,000 per annum and the largest source of international students, are studying at Australia’s leading secondary and tertiary institutions, including the University of Sydney, allowing financial growth and the development of important regional alumni relationships with the next generation of Chinese corporate leaders.

The Significant Investor Visa (SIV) program, introduced under the Labor Government in November 2012, has been popular with prospective Chinese migrants who regard the required A$5 million investment as a relatively low risk and flexible migration strategy for families with ongoing primary business operations back in China. While the approval process was not as fast as some would have expected, there are now over 40 visas approved and some 500 applications under consideration by the Federal Department of Immigration. Population growth through the migration of skilled and wealthy business leaders (along with education) promises to boost not only the Australian financial services investment sector but also benefit residential real estate values, motor vehicle sales, primary and secondary education, airline travel and retail consumption more generally.

A CHANGING INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE

Since 2006, 73% of Chinese investment has gone into mining, followed by gas (18%), renewable energy (4%), agriculture (2%) and other areas (3%). Investments in WA and Queensland mining and gas projects have been extremely large, with 30% of deals over A$500 million transaction value size. While this has drawn lots of public attention to Chinese investment, it has also committed Chinese companies to very long-term development and trade projects with Australia.

Our October 2013 report focussing on Chinese investment in the Australian agricultural sector established that there remains a concerning gap between the commonly held beliefs about Chinese investment in Australia and reality. Despite popular headlines to the effect of ‘Chinese are buying up everything and are the largest investors in Australia’, the facts show that although Chinese companies have invested over A$50 billion directly into Australia over the past six years, China still only ranks ninth in accumulated
investment—the US has invested nearly ten times more. While Chinese state-owned enterprises have been very active investors in the mining and gas sectors in Australia, accounting for over 90% of Chinese investment (by investment value), it is private sector investors from China who are becoming more active (by number of deals) in Australia’s diversified real estate development, agribusiness and other non-mining sectors. This trend will continue in 2014. It remains to be seen whether the Chinese state-owned sector will continue to invest in new mining and gas projects at 2006-2012 levels, but there are great expectations for greater participation infrastructure—e.g. mining, energy and civil infrastructure projects—over the next decade. Chinese companies undoubtedly have the financial capacity and technical and industry experience to deliver these undertakings, but will need strong Australian partners to bid, win and successfully manage major civil projects.

Australia has long held a very emotional attachment to its land, particularly agricultural land, which explains why there remains significant public sentiment and opinion polarity about foreign ownership and control of Australian land and the food sector more broadly. China is Australia’s largest food export market, valued at A$6.6 billion in 2011, and we naturally see ourselves as China’s first choice supplier of food, especially safe, premium food including meat, dairy, vegetables, wine, branded products, and leading technology and systems across the entire food sector.

For this opportunity to become a reality requires urgent enabling policy, respectful relationship building, and patience and hard work by both countries’ political and corporate leaders.

**2014 OUTLOOK**

The Year of the Snake drew to a close in late January 2014, and the Year of the Horse is now underway. We have been through a year of political change and have come out looking forward to a stable, mature and pragmatic trade and investment landscape.

As a laowai (non-Chinese), I have done some quick research and selected George Tang’s Chinese astrology website outlook, which optimistically predicts:

This horoscope year favours finances and there are immense profits to be made. Horse people will have the confidence and intelligence to strike excellent deals in 2014 which will bear fruit in years ahead. There will be a definite upturn in profits and financial fortunes show signs of being considerable.

Let’s hope George is right. But first we need to make sure both Chinese and Australian stakeholders share the same vision and think and behave like hardworking draft horses rather than flighty racing ones.

Doug Ferguson is Partner-in-Charge of KPMG Australia’s Asia Business Group and China Business Practice and sits on the China Studies Centre Panel of Advisors.
TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION

SOPHIA SLAVICH

“A nation’s enduring future hinges on education.”

The opening statement of the preamble of China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) makes it clear that the education system is a pillar for the realisation of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s national goals. Education, it is believed, will play a vital role in achieving the economic progress, preservation of internal stability, and maintenance of territorial integrity that China is striving for in the 21st century China. Nowhere are these goals for education more apparent than in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, particularly in the development of bilingual education systems. As an extension of the Great Western Development (Xibu da kaifa) campaign, ‘bilingual’ education programs have been given precedence in recent years.

The bilingual education being implemented in Xinjiang has a transitional linguistic purpose. As opposed to bilingual education for the sake of maintaining language, the Xinjiang system is designed to systematically transition minority language students into the language of the dominant Han Chinese society. Eric Schluessel of Harvard University describes ‘bilingual education’ in Xinjiang as a “euphemism for the mandatory increase in the use of Mandarin in minority-language-speaking children’s school environment in place of the languages that are those students’ everyday medium of communication.” The system demands different learning outcomes for Han and non-Han students in terms of language proficiency, and focus on the national standard Mandarin Chinese dialect (Putonghua) outweights that on Uyghur and other minority languages spoken in the region. The scholarly consensus on Xinjiang’s bilingual education system is that it places disproportionate value on, and recourses into, Mandarin, rather than providing a balance between the national standard and minority languages. The system can therefore be understood as an amorphous structure that makes a clear distinction between Uyghur and Han students.

Transitional bilingual education is a fundamental integration technique for many minority groups, who may remain marginalised if they do not possess the linguistic skills required of the labour market or if their own languages are not valued by society. Migrant communities, for example, benefit greatly from transitional language programs upon arrival in their new social setting. However, in the context of traditional or indigenous minority groups with high linguistic vitality—that is, the language is used across a number of social and institutional domains—maintenance bilingual education appears to be a more favourable model.

Completely transitioning large numbers of native speakers of a minority language into what authorities perceive to be a more sophisticated and appropriate linguistic norm is an example of linguistic imperialism seeking to alter the social and cultural norms of a particular group. To minority peoples such as the Uyghur in Xinjiang, maintenance-type bilingual education would offer Uyghur communities both access to social functionality in Mandarin, as well as a continuing sense of cultural affiliation with the Uyghur language.

The uncompromising position of transitional language education invites resistance. Ethnic relations between the Uyghur and the Han are tense at best. 2013 witnessed an alarming number of violent episodes that occurred not only in Xinjiang but also throughout Mainland China. Language, a significant cultural identifier, has been a rallying point for conflict worldwide. For the Uyghur community, the CCP’s education policy is an affront to the continuation of their culture and status in Xinjiang. Certainly, transitional bilingual education policy is not the only factor contributing to unrest in Xinjiang—religious suppression is another major issue—but what is significant about this policy is the attention it draws to the broader notion of education and its potential for both good and harm. Education is a fundamental building block with which to construct a strong society. China’s admirable commitment to educational investment and closing the socio-economic divide between east and west China have great potential. However, misguided education policies can also reify social divisions and intensify social unrest between different groups. Despite the popular belief that education itself produces more stable and tolerant societies, several mechanisms in Xinjiang’s transitional bilingual education system point to an alternative and less desirable outcome.

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REINTERPRETING THE
SINO-JAPANESE WAR:
THE JIN-SUI BORDER REGION IN
NORTH CHINA 1939–1940

QINGJUN LIU
The Second Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945 (usually referred to as the ‘War of Resistance Against Japan’ in China) was a significant turning point in the history of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Before the war, the CCP was on the verge of extinction with only limited influence around the country, and had suffered terrible losses under attack from the armies of Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist Party. By the end of the War, the CCP controlled the majority of northern China and was able to challenge Nationalist Party rule in China. In the ensuing Chinese Civil War, CCP victory is largely attributable to the expanded forces and extensive fighting experience it was able to accumulate during the Sino-Japanese War. Thereafter, the CCP established the People’s Republic of China and the Nationalist Party withdrew to Taiwan.

Generally, it is contended that the secret to the CCP’s strong position at the end of the Sino-Japanese War is mainly due to geopolitics and the CCP’s non-revolutionary tactics for mobilising the peasantry. Following full-scale Japanese invasion in 1937, the Nationalist Party government retreated from its capital Nanjing to Chongqing (its new wartime capital) in the southwest of China. After the Long March during the mid-1930s, the CCP had settled in north Shaanxi in northern China. Facing the threat of full-scale Japanese occupation, the Nationalist Party reached a settlement with the CCP, who renounced land reform, and a United Front of Anti-Japanese Resistance (United Front) was established. CCP forces were reorganised as the Eighth Route Army of the National Revolutionary Army, and then started to move in behind Japanese lines in northern China to conduct anti-Japanese guerrilla warfare and establish base areas.

The most widely accepted argument is that in the base areas of North China the CCP won mass support through moderate and inclusionary polices that united patriotic Chinese to undertake nationalist resistance against Japan. The main debate has been between those suggesting that the peasantry were mobilised by nationalism and those arguing for the importance of social justice programs. The CCP is even thought to have been carrying out a ‘silent revolution’ in base areas during the war, by turning to patriotism and social inclusion to convince the landed to sell property to the landless, resulting in land redistribution without violent class struggle.

David Goodman’s recent research indicates another possible explanation for the CCP’s success. From September 1939 to March 1940, in three counties at the heart of the Taihang Base Area in Southeast Shanxi (Wuxian, Licheng and Liaoqian), the CCP adopted a radical approach: it overturned local governments and took power itself, implemented land reform to redistribute wealth, and ‘rectified’ CCP membership by enlisting more workers, landless and dispossessed rather than the intellectuals and landowners recruited earlier in the war. Undoubtedly, this poses a challenge to the usual explanatory model of CCP success.

However, it is less certain what happened in the other counties across the CCP base areas in northern China. The extent of the significance of these radical events within the Second Sino-Japanese War is also unclear, as well as the short- and long-term effects on the evolution of CCP history. These issues are the point of departure for my examination of the Jin-Sui Border Region (Jin-Sui), towards the west of Shanxi Province and next to the more famous Shan-Gan-Ning Border Region, which centred on Yan’an, CCP headquarters at the time.

Jin-Sui Border Region was one of the CCP’s major base areas in northern China. Its place in modern Chinese history has been greatly eclipsed by the Shan-Gan-Ning Border Region, the Jin-Cha-Ji Border Region during the years of Maoist rule, and the Jin-Ji-Lu-Yu Border Region during the Deng era. It is the least known border region in northern China. However, during the Second Sino-Japanese War, it was of extreme geopolitical importance, since it not only served as the physical perimeter barrier and forward guard for the Shan-Gan-Ning Border Region, but was also the communication hub for contact between the CCP Central Committee, Central China, North China and South China. Notably, it facilitated international traffic between Yan’an and Moscow. My research proposal is to investigate whether radical events, similar to those that occurred in the Taihang Base Area, happened in this border region during 1939–40, and the consequences for the development of the CCP’s war campaign and subsequent construction of the People’s Republic of China.

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A FINAL WORD
WHY I HAVE BEEN LEARNING CHINESE

MICHAEL SPENCE

More and more people are learning Chinese for all sorts of sensible reasons. They want to do business in one of the largest economies in the world. They want to travel in that vast and fascinating country. They want to be able to communicate in one of the most widely spoken languages of the world.

I am afraid that I have been learning Chinese for a wholly different kind of reason. I was first attracted to, and remain fascinated by, the language itself.

There are three things in particular that drew me to Chinese. First, there is much about the language that reminds me of poetry, my preferred literary form. It is economical in its structure and syntax. Chinese expresses ideas far more concisely than English, and with an often-elegant simplicity. That desire for simplicity turns my very English pattern of thought, with its multiple dependent clauses, on its head, and challenges me to re-express ideas with less complexity.

Second, like the concision of poetry, the economical character of the Chinese sentence leads to ambiguities that can be both amusing and revealing. Word play is built into the character of the language in a way that makes it almost a national sport. It is a language built for the teasing epigraph.

Third, I love the beauty of the Chinese script. There is a history behind every character. Reading and writing Chinese makes me feel in touch with not only a whole literary world, but also the story of a whole civilization.

So it is the language itself that first attracted me to Chinese. It is also far easier to say this than admit someone once challenged me to learn it on the basis that it was too difficult: I have been trying to prove them wrong ever since!

Michael Spence is Vice Chancellor and Principal of the University of Sydney.