

THE CHINESE DREAM

a society under construction

NEVILLE MARS 何新城

ADRIAN HORNSBY



010 publishers

THE CHINESE DREAM:

DREAMING IS NOT A LUXURY. AROUND TWO HOURS EVERY NIGHT OUR BRAINS PRODUCE DREAMS. PRECISELY WHY IS NOT CLEAR. BUT THE GENERAL FUNCTIONS SEEM EVIDENT: DREAMS PROCESS OUR RECENT EXPERIENCES, DATA STORED IN OUR TEMPORARY MEMORY IS ENCODED AND TRANSFERRED TO BECOME PART OF THE NARRATIVE OF OUR LONG TERM MEMORY. THIS IS THE SYSTEM CHECK OF OUR MIND CONSOLIDATING NEW DATA. IT FEEDS OUR UNDERSTANDING, AND CONSTRUCTS OUR IDENTITY. EQUALLY, DREAMS WILL CONSIDER THE FUTURE. WHEN ASKING IMPORTANT OR DIBBLET WOMENS, OUR DREAMS WILL SET THE STAGE TO ALLOW US A VIRTUAL TEST RUN. WE CAN PREPARE OURSELVES. — GENEVIEVE NEW DREAMS IN AN INTERVIEW OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES, DREAMS BECOME THE HYPERGROUND OF OUR DESIRES. A SAFE PLACE TO EXPRESS UNCHARTED WISHES FOR WHICH THERE MAY BE NO ROOM IN WAKING LIFE. SOME DREAMS WILL BE REJECTED, WHILE OTHERS BECOME POWERFUL ASPIRATIONS THAT GIVE DIRECTION TO OUR DECISIONS.

RISE AND SHINE. CHINA HAS BEEN UP FOR THREE DECADES. WITH DENG XIAOPING'S ACCESSION TO POWER, CHINA LAUNCHED ITS LAST AND BOLDEST DREAM: THE DREAM OF INDIVIDUAL FREESER-

VEY. IT OPENED ITS EYES TO AN AMBIGUOUS REALITY. ITS JOGGERS TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND CONQUERED TO MARKET REFORMS TO REALIZE THIS DREAM. SINCE THEN, A SINGLE MASSIVE WAVE OF PROGRESS HAS KEPT THE ENTIRE NATION ON ITS FEET.

THE SUCCESS HAS AWAZED FRIENDS AND FOES ALOD. GETTING WITH IS GLORIOUS. MAY HAVE LOST ITS APPEAL AS A PARTY SLOGAN, BUT IT HAS EXPANDED TO BECOME THE UNIVERSAL MOTIVATION OF CHINA'S ENTIRE POPULATION. SPREADING BEYOND THE MIDDLE-LEVEL GROUNDS OF THE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES, THE GROWING PERCENTAGE HAS NOTURED A SOLID AND CONSIDERABLE MIDDLE-CLASS AND SPURRED THE CONSTRUCTION OF INDUSTRY AND SERVICES. THE GOBURNY THESE GUY'S ARE THE TRADIPARIS OF MODERN CHINA. THE SUBJECT OF THIS BOOK AND THE OBJECTIVE OF THE CHINESE DREAM: A SOCIETY OF MIDDLE-CLASS CONSUMERS SETTLED IN MODERN CITIES.

THE ASPIRATIONAL DRIVE OF INDIVIDUALS SIGNING CONTRACTS AND ORGANIZATIONS RESEMBLES THE AMERICAN DREAM OF THE 1950S AND WITH RURAL POPULATIONS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD BEING TOGETHER IN RESISTANTS. THIS MUST BE THE GORE COMPONENT OF THE GLOBAL DREAM. BUT WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MODERN CITY? HOW CAN IT BE REVIVED AND WHAT SOCIETAL VALUES IT ENGENDER?

A SOCIETY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

THE FACE OF CHINA: SIV RISE / ONE WORLD ONE DREAM

In 1978 China set aside the ideological struggle for global socialism, and turned instead to the more practical business of tending its own garden. Ironically this would-be parochialism of intent has thrown China onto the world stage in a much bigger and more powerful way than anything ever witnessed throughout the preceding centuries of empire and dictatorial zeal. China continues to protest the doctrine of harmony, peace, and non-intervention — a rise as though on the quiet — but as the rest of the world beholds China's economic miracle, its surge in defense spending (outpacing roaring GDP), its sophisticated space program (not without military implications), its monster move into global trade (by the time you read this, China is almost certainly the world's number one exporter), its impact upon the environment (likewise for energy consumption, with CO₂ emissions set to exceed the US sometime before 2010), and its undeniable hand in geopolitical sore spots (e.g. Sudan, Iran, Burma), the world is starting to gasp, 'No fair!'. China may be pursuing a "peaceful rise" — it is also doing an awful lot else. You cannot become a highly internationalized top-four global economy without major global impacts, and as a result, the past five years in particular in the West have been ones of avid China-watching. The 2008

Beijing Olympics has been unofficially billed as China's "coming out" party — a phrase which belies a widely felt suspicion that China is still somehow "in". Everybody knows China is growing, but to become what? What is the Chinese Dream?

Western speculation upon this point seems to traverse a void. The media supplies stories from either extreme of China's rise, indulging on the one hand the narcissistic fantasies of Shanghai-Shenzhen ultra-modernism, and on the other its own cultivated outrage at worker abuse horror shops. But these gaudy limits are given precious little by way of infill by the state itself. Instead the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) pursues a strict PR policy of maximum inscrutability. We knew Ronald Reagan liked jelly beans, Bill Clinton blow jobs, and that George W. Bush plays golf. But what is Hu Jintao like? Chinese official-speak seems to emanate from a core of indefatigable closed handedness: there is the wall of statistics, the effacement of personality, and the reiteration of such intractable slogans as: "HOLD ALOFT THE BANNER OF SOCIALISM WITH DISTINCT CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS", "PURSUE THE COURSE OF SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT", "IMPLEMENT SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY" etc. Words are spoken, but nobody seems to be remotely clear upon what has been said. All the while the essential question looms ever larger ...

朕远眼光来驾驭瞬息万变

FEARFUL

SYMMETRY, THE PRECISE TRANSLATION OF

THE BEIJING 2008 OLYMPIC SLOGAN IS ONE SAME WORLD, ONE SAME DREAM. TO CHINESE PEOPLE ITS INTERPRETATION IS OBVIOUS: WE CAN OBTAIN THE SAME LIVING CONDITIONS AS THE WEST AND THE BEIJING OLYMPICS WILL SHOW THIS TO THE WORLD. FOR THE PEOPLE IN THE DREAM, THE TV COMMERCIALS OF CARS GLIDING PAST A BACKGROUND OF SHINY NEW TOWERS IS PROOF THAT THIS TIME IT IS REAL. CONFRONTED WITH SO MUCH PROGRESS, QUESTIONING THE QUALITY OF THE FUTURE SEEMS senseless. THE GRUDEST FORM OF TWENTIETH CENTURY MODERNITY IS ON OFFER. AT A TIME WHEN THE DEVELOPED WORLD HAS COME TO ACKNOWLEDGE ITS SHORTCOMINGS, MISWEPT AWAY BY NEW-FOUND CONSUMERISM, THE YOUNG MIDDLE CLASS LOOKS AHEAD AND MARCHES ON.

THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ON THE OTHER HAND IS INCREASINGLY AWARE THAT ITS PASSIONATE ADOPTION OF WESTERN-STYLE PROGRESS CAN NO LONGER SURVEIL THE IMMINENT DANGERS. IT WILL EXCLUDE THE BULK OF CHINA'S CITIZENS FROM HIGH OF THE PROGRESS BEING

WANG

PRESENT THE PROGRESS OF

THE BILL FOR ITS RAMPANT ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION. THE ONGOING ECONOMIC BOOM HAS INSTILLED ITS LEADERS WITH A TOWERING CONFIDENCE TO RESPOND. THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL FROM THE WEST ARE ACQUIRED — THE NEWEST ARCHITECTURES, THE FRESHEST BIOTECHNOLOGY. IN RELIEF THE URBINE CITIZENS CONTEMPORARY CHINA FACES DEMAND NEW PARADIGMS. HALF WAY DOWN THE PATH OF MODERNIZATION, THE HAZARDOUS PERILS HAVEN'T DRAWN ARE REVEALING THEMSELVES. CHINA'S BOOMING PERILS HAVEN'T MOVED BEYOND THE SHORT TERM. WEATHER THERE HAS BEEN NO OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS THE PRODUCTIONS OF SOCIALIST MARKET ECONOMY, SIMPLY NO TIME TO REFLECT ON THE OUTCOME. THE CHINESE DREAM IS NOT BEING DROPPED.

INSTEAD EVERY NEW PROBLEM — MANY OF WHICH PRESENT THEMSELVES ON A SCALE PREVIOUSLY UNSEEN — IS SIMPLY COINED UP WITH A PLAN FOR ITS REMOVAL. BY THE YEAR 2020, 2030 OR 2050, IN PERFECT SYMMETRY ALL CONTEMPORARY SHORTCOMINGS WILL BE DIRECTLY INTRODUCED TO BECOME OUTSTANDING OBJECTIVES.

For the most part, the world feels it knows the American Dream. It is clearly founded upon the pluralistic ideal of a liberated people, who, in pride of their independence, list among their inalienable rights both freedom and the pursuit of happiness. It is highly individualistic, deeply authoritarian, unabashedly utopian, essentially Protestant, and closely attuned to the principles of self-interest upon which capitalism rests. It has over the past century, led its free individuals in their motor cars out into an enormously gas-guzzling landscape of single house plots with flagpoles, porchings, and driving-distance retail marts. It has also, and less comfortably, led its government into a painful and prolonged war in Iraq, bringing on accusations of interventionist aggression and cultural and militaristic imperialism — everything the Dream once stood against. But however creaky the present, the ideology holds fast, and is propounded from the bowsprit: freedom, democracy, (neo)liberal capitalism, opened markets, and free (if with subsidies) trade.

For the CCP identity is not so easy. For a start, there is an essential discord to any socialist revolutionary party which promotes social harmony while exhorting some people to get rich quicker than others. This root contradiction, in combination with a degree of enforced reticence regarding the global demise of socialism, goes some way toward explaining the CCP's adamantness, if charmless, inwardness. But while the political face of China has remained sturdily impassive, the body has been remarkably open. After 30 years in Mao suits, post-1978 China has welcomed a terrific influx of foreign cultural influences, and

changes to wealth and lifestyles have far outpaced explicit formulations of what the country stands for or who its people are. Indeed the sheer pace of physical change has tempted numerous Western critics to posit a Chinese identity crisis — a fragile dragon which has become somehow lost or confused in the furious dust clouds of the construction boom or the artificial lights of new megacities — a nation still ailing from recent turbulent history, and addled with insecurities about its multi-ethnic composition, its enormous size, its questionable territories (Tibet, Xinjiang, Taiwan, Inner Mongolia), its demographics distorted by the one child policy — in the midst of which (the critics continue), is a youth growing up in something between a cultural wasteland and a vacuum, in which values are being replaced by the most superficial consumer desires for bubble gum, mp3 players, and crass fake Westernism.

The suggestion that pop is somehow melting the minds of a generation or country is of course no more new than it is accurate. However, it seems to have found fresh throat in relation to China, especially on the subject of the starkly new pop-modernist cities which have either appeared out of seeming nowhere (the fishing village that used to be Shenzhen), or have summarily razed previous "traditional" areas in order to bounce into being. The immediate assumption is that much of the newness has come at the expense of oldness, and the West, which has always set such high value on its own architectural heritage, has been particularly appalled by acts of wholesale demolition.

THE FUTURE CHINA NOW BOASTS RADICAL SCHEMES FOR (AMONGST) ALL ASPECTS OF SOCIETY FROM WEIBO TO TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND MOON LANDINGS. IF ACHIEVED CHINA WILL BECOME NOT JUST A SUPERPOWER BUT THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED NATION, THE WEST MUST HOLD ITS BREATH AND BELIEVE IN GOD FOR A LACK OF ALTERNATIVES.

SCATTERED JEREMAS, WITNESSING CHINA'S WINDSWEPT ON A DUAL BASIS, THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE CONTEMPORARY BIG HAZARDS AND SIKHING, BIG HOPES FOR 2020 AND BEYOND ISN'T QUITE SO STARK. RESPONDING TO CHINA'S HAS BEEN TO CHINA'S SUCCESS FROM THE ANGER OF HERBIB, EBRA, SIBERGESSIVE WAVE OF CHANGE HAS COME OUT OF A DISSIDENT PRODIGEMENT WITHOUT A BLUEPRINT FOR THE SOCIALIST MARKET ECONOMY. INSTITUTIONS HAS BEEN A BURNY RIDE WITH YEARS OF LOSING CENTRAL FUNDING. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOUND THEMSELVES CLOSE TO BANKRUPTCY WHEN ANOTHER FEW YEARS THE LAND REGIONS BEHIN PLACE TO REFORM LOCAL

GOVERNMENTS TO LEASE AND DEVELOP AREAS UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION. UNLOCKED THE WORLD'S MOST RAINY RAINING TREASURES, DEVELOPING DID NOT YIELD ANY SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL RETURNS, FURTHER ENCOURAGING ENTERPRENEURISM HAS DISSEMINATED THE WORLD'S LARGEST CONSUMER MARKET.

ORGAN DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN PRODIGEMIC AND OFTEN BEING LESS EMPLOYED AS A POLITICAL TOOL. IT HAS ALSO BECOME MORE RIGIDLY STREAMLINED. THE SOCIALIST MARKET HARBOR CAN BEHOLD ANY PROCEDURE SWITCHING FREELY BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPERATIONS. THE MAOIST DREAM OF COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP, ADOPTED OFF IN BITS TO A MASS OF COMPANIES AND INNOVATIONS, WRESTLING FOR SUPREMACY OF SURVIVAL FROM THE TOP, THE STRUGGLES BETWEEN PROJECTS, WHILE SOLD BY VILLAGERS SERVING AND THE ONCE COMMUNAL CARPET TO GREEN PISTONS SERVING HASSE. FREE PRIVATIZATION, ACCORDING TO THE ONE STEP APPROACH, BOTTOM LEVEL MIGRANT WORKERS SEND WAGES BACK HOME TO BEHOLD IN THE VILLAGES WHILE URBANITES BUY THEIR FIRST APARTMENT IN THE CITY. PLOT BY PLOT URBANIZATION PROGRESSES A CONTROLLED QUANTUM OF CAPITALISM WITH CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS.

自上而下+自上而上=中国

This interpretation of the new Chinese city as an expression of cultural annihilation / identity loss misses two critical points about China. Firstly there is the comparatively lower status of architecture

within Chinese history, which is focused less on city states, and more, given the history of political instability, on portable wealth forms. Notably, historically significant temples are often valued for their site rather than for the structure itself, which may have been knocked down and rebuilt multiple times over many centuries.

It is striking that the Forbidden City in Beijing, probably China's architectural apoogee, is much more a complex reticulation of courtyards, gates and axes than an expression of built volumes or created interiors. The key interest is the capture, division and rationalization of external space — aims quintessentially different from those driving the massive stone edifices and august drawing rooms of architecturally proud imperial Europe. Secondly, while architectural tradition may occupy a relatively low position in China, tradition itself, indeed possibly to the detriment of innovation, has long been exalted,¹ and China long wedded to the notion of itself as an ancient and culturally dominant civilization. In many ways the reinstatement of China upon the global stage is seen by the Chinese as no more than a setting right of a weak two centuries — a view which the CCP is no stranger to as it consciously deploys traditional

"harmony" rhetoric,² both to legitimize its own leadership (drawing a perverse line from feudalism to "Communism with Chinese Characteristics"), and to encourage the strong sense of common history

and nationhood which is sweeping across China today.

What the Western fantasy of a China undergoing identity erasure instead reveals is a deep identity crisis within the Western world when confronted by this huge, closed, red alien rising. There is a sense that world order is sliding away from what has been, since the outset of industrialization, an essentially Anglo-Saxon hegemony, and a terrible anxiety gathers as it goes. To further compound the distress, this acute external probing of global power structures comes at a time when the West is suffering another identity crisis entirely on its own front: an EU which keeps gagging on its constitution, a US which — once so confident of being the best place to live on earth — is becoming increasingly aware of its unpopularity, the threat of global terrorism, the quandary of immigration, the tangibly fragile planet which seems to be sitting, regrettably, in a greenhouse almost entirely of the G8's making — all this at the same time that Western populations themselves are getting famously addled about who they are on an individual level, and resorting more and more to antidepressants and comfort eating. The sickeningly fat, threatened and unhappy West now turns to China, points the finger, and croaks, 'You have an identity problem.'

Hilariously, China has been perfectly up front about its identity all along. The Olympic slogan, officially rendered into English as *One World One Dream*, though a more faithful translation would read *One Same*

1 Indeed the importance of tradition is structurally embedded into tradition itself, through Confucian stress upon loyalty (to parents and thus to past), and the Taoist dictum to 'let your wheels move only along old ruts.'

2 The CCP's promulgation of the "harmonious society" clearly echoes Confucian ideals and language.

BY 2020 CHINA WILL COMPLETE THE BUILDING OF A CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY. CHINESE WILL LEAD THE WAY.
— PREMIER WEN JIABAO

BEFORE THE WORLD OBSERVES THE CHINESE DREAM IN ANXIETY AND WITH ANTICIPATION, SET AGAINST A BACKDROP OF DIMINISHING RESOURCES AND BLEAK PROGNOSTICATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL MARKET, THE EMERGING ECONOMIES ARE WHERE THE BIG GAINS ARE TO BE MADE. THIS THE ABSENCE OF A VIGOROUS POWER GRID, THE LOWER CURRENT LEVELS OF ORGANIZATION, THE LACK OF CARS AND SO ON, THAT SUDDENLY OFFER HOPE. BEARING DEVELOPMENT SO OFTEN MOUNTED YET Seldom observed, its road demanded from CHINA IN ORDER TO AUGH THE COURSE OF PROGRESS WITH GOALS FOR GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY. BIG SOLUTIONS ARE REQUIRED TO MOVE BEYOND SUCH ONE-DEPENDENT LANDSCAPES AS THOSE PRODUCED BY THE AMERICAN DREAM, INDEED TO BE APPROACHED CHEERFULLY. THIS KNOWLEDGE MUST BE FOUND AND IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY AND NOW.

THE 400 FETTER IN 2000. JUST SUCH A REGIONAL PLAN FOR LEAPROG ORGANIZATION CAME FROM WITHIN CHINA. THE THEN-SOME MINISTER OF CIVIL AFFAIRS, DOUG GERLING, PROPOSED THE CONSTRUCTION OF 400 NEW CITIES BY THE YEAR 2020. OR 20 NEW CITIES PER YEAR OF ABOUT 1 MILLION RESIDENTS EACH. THIS GRAND DESIGN SEEMED ANSWER TO ACCOMMODATE THE PROJECTED FLOOD OF RURAL MIGRANTS AND SPRING

FOUND CHINA TO THE LEVEL OF A MODERN INDUSTRIALIZED NATION. THE OBSCURE AMOUNT OF WEALTH, BOTH SHARED AND MISMANAGED, AND THE DESIRE TO CONSUME A CONTEMPORARY SYSTEM IS HIGHLY SENSITIVE. IN THEORY, A CITY SHOULD BE BUILT ON A CLEANER AND DOWNSIDE THE FRESH GOVERNMENTS, BEING CRISIS AND RECONSTRUCTING WITH ITS OWN EMERGING AND OBTAINING A VISIBLE IDEA. ESPECIALLY WHEN INSPIRED BY YOU, THE PROPOSAL BECAME THE STARTING POINT FOR THE DGS'S RESEARCH.

SOON WE FOUND HEBEY IS ALL TOO OFTEN MORE EXPENSIVE THAN CHINESE. BIG AMBITIONS. DURING THE PERIOD 1978-2011, CHINA REALIZED MORE THAN 400 CITIES. THEN WHILE ORGANIZATION CONTINUED TO ACCELERATE, SUDDENLY NO NEW CITIES WERE REPORTED. THE BIRTH OF A CHANGE PLAN IS A WATER OF FORTH. DETAILED CRITERIA ARE FORMULATED, THAT PRESERVE THE PLAN OF HEAVY TO RURAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AN AREA, AND BE OPEN TO URBAN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. IS CLEAR, CITIES SHOULD BE DESCRIBED ENVIRONMENTAL AIDS WITH OUR OVERSIGHT OF A CITY. DISPENSED SEMI-URBANIZED REGIONS WILL GRAB THE SPURIOUS, WHILE DENSELY POPULATED INDUSTRIAL GOVERNMENTS OVERLOOKED. MOREOVER, THE REGULATIONS ARE EASY AFTER THE CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE. MICHAEL IS GEARED TOWARD THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CITIES, BUT PREFERABLY WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPENSIVE CITY BENEFITS OR LOSING GENERAL CONTROL.

World One Same Dream, is in itself — with its distinctly Chinese flair for concision — a perfect expression of CCP governance, one same party which unilaterally sets the course of reform for one same nation. In frank opposition to the pluralist American Dream of all people free to pursue their own ideas, the Chinese Dream is of 1.3 billion people all engaged in one same mission, and pursuing one same vision. Over the past 30 years the single unequivocal driving force which has coordinated all efforts and motivated all policy has indeed been one same principle: maximize economic growth.

ECONOMIC GROWTH: BLACK OR WHITE?

China's rise is the most successful humanitarian project ever to have taken place. Never before have so many people been lifted out of extreme poverty in so short a space of time. Estimates vary, but it is on the scale of 400 million Chinese poor raised above the US\$1/day line in 28 years. In that time, GDP has risen in real terms by a factor of more than 14, making China the fourth largest economy in the world (some one fifth the size of the US). If current growth rates continue, China will outsize the US in the next 20 to 30 years.

The economic growth part of the story is well known. The relationship between current growth and popular benefits is not so black and white. What is less obvious, but perhaps even more astonishing, is the growth in savings that has accompanied China's soaring earnings. In 2006 these stood at over 50% of GDP, having hovered between the high 30s

and the mid 40s for a decade. If you take the position that the purpose of raising GDP is to enable people to have more money to spend on improving their lives, this seems perverse. The super-saver policy of amassing money to stuff mattresses is hard work for small gain, and yet this is what the Chinese seem to be engaged in.

The first of China's super-savers is the government, which has accumulated some US\$1.7 trillion in foreign exchange reserves — the largest such reserve in the world. This is money which simply never enters the economy. It happens like this: an export is paid for in dollars, the dollars are passed on to the bank, and the bank is obliged to hand them over to the government in exchange for a low yielding sterilization note.⁴ The government then buys low yielding dollar treasury bonds, which it stockpiles, while the people who have been working so hard in China's famous sweatshops to produce the exports never see the money. The scale of this operation is huge — in 2006 China produced toward US\$1tr in exports, of which US\$400bn (i.e. 40%) wound up in foreign exchange reserves. US\$1.7tr is comfortably in excess of US\$1,000 for every person in China. Considering that GDP per capita is still hovering around US\$2,000, this seems to be saving in excess of prudence. The 20 million Chinese still living on less than US\$2/day, if told their government had this much money stashed away on their behalf but wasn't releasing it, might legitimately say, 'Hey! I could really use a thousand bucks.' Worse still, it's a thousand bucks which is going to be worth a lot

tion
ditan
upon
ast),

3 1.12 (1978) x 1.08 (1979) x 1.08 (1980) x 1.05 (1981) x 1.09 (1982) x 1.11 (1983) x 1.15 (1984) x 1.14 (1985) x 1.09 (1986) x 1.12 (1987) x 1.11 (1988) x 1.04 (1989) x 1.04 (1990) x 1.09 (1991) x 1.14 (1992) x 1.14 (1993) x 1.13 (1994) x 1.11 (1995) x 1.10 (1996) x 1.09 (1997) x 1.08 (1998) x 1.08 (1999) x 1.08 (2000) x 1.08 (2001) x 1.09 (2002) x 1.10 (2003) x 1.10 (2004) x 1.10 (2005) x 1.11 (2006) = 14.88

4 This is something the bank holds and receives a small return on, but cannot cash. The money is effectively sterilized, hence the term.

nes

SLICK CITIES OUTSIDE OF THE OFFICIAL RECORDS AROUND ONE HUNDRED NEW TOWNS OF SUBSTANTIAL SIZE HAVE EMERGED ACROSS CHINA IN THE LAST DECADE IN THE FORM OF MEDIUM-TOWNS, TOURIST TOWNS, SUBURBAN ENCLAVES, FACTORY VILLAGES, THEMED AND GORGEOUS TOWNS AND MILITARY SETTLEMENTS. THEY EMERGE IN DIFFERENT FORMS, SOMETIMES AS INDEPENDENT ENTITIES, SOMETIMES AS PART OF A LARGER URBAN STRUCTURE, BUT ALWAYS CLEARLY DELINEATED FROM THE PRE-EXISTING, MOREUSINGLY, THESE ARE SLICK CITIES — CLEAN RESIDENTIAL STRONGHOLDS FORGED AGAINST THEIR MIDDLED-SUBURBINGS, COMPARED TO THEIR PREDECESSORS, SLICK CITIES LOOK AND FEEL SMOOTH, BUT THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY: SLICK CITIES ARE BY NATURE STATIC, THEIR WALLED OFF SPACE IS UNWELING TO CHANGE, THE PUBLIC DOMAIN IS REDUCED TO THE VONDS IN BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS, EXPLODED IN SIZE, THEIR ARCHITECTURE NEGATES THE NECESSITY FOR PLANNING BEYOND CONNECTING ARTERIES. THE STORGEFRONT, THE NERVEFACE OF THE CITY IS BLANDED, THE STREETS, ONCE THE WILD CARD DOMAIN OF PUBLIC LIFE, ARE REDUCED TO TECHNOLOGIC TRANSIT SPACE. URBAN LIFE AS WE KNOW IT, SO DEPENDENT ON HOW AND WHERE ITION (SUSCOURED, NOW FEARS HAS ENTERED THE PLANNING PROCDURES, THE CONVEYER BELT POINTS ARE GROWN, MANAGED WITH THE INSPIRATION OF EVERY LARGE PLAZAS AND MALLS. CHINA'S PERESTRAIT TRAINING AND GERS ALIVE END THEMSELVES, HUNTERED THROUGH

VONDS AND HIGHWAYS UNSUPPORTED BY THE LARGER NETWORK, CONGESTION IS INEVITABLE. HUMAN ENCLAVES, UNLINKED, THE LIFE OF THE SLICK CITY IS STITCHED APART, PLANNING HAS BECOME A PRACTICE OF MOVING PEOPLE OUT AND VONDS IN, THE EXPANSION AND FRAGMENTATION OF THE CITY ACCELERATES.

SLICK CITIES, CHINA'S SLICK CITIES ARE BORNED, BUT ALSO BORN BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD. EUROPEAN ARCHITECTS, CONSUMERS OF THE SOULLESS SPACES, WHILE AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE AMERICAS, THEIR SCALE, SPEED AND RATIONALIZED SHINE, THE CITY BORN FROM HOPES TO FAME, MINIMA (CURRENTLY AMERICAN) CITIES OF 60% SLIMS, INTO A CITY, JUST LIKE SHANGHAI, 2011.

BUT THERE IS LITTLE ROOM FOR NOSTALGIA, NOT BECAUSE GUARNEY CHINESE MODERATELY FOR WALKING, THE CHINESE, SO HAS SOLED CHINESE AS A MEANS TO SURVEIL, THE VEST, CHINESE RULE, AN REVEGE ALIENS, OR POWER, THEY EXPRESSED THEIR GENIUS OF THE FARMHOUSE SOCIETY, MACHINERY, PRESERVE, WALLED OFF, OLD ORNATE WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR PUBLIC SPACE, THEY COULD BE COPIED EFFICIENTLY WHERE NEEDED, THESE, THE FIRST SLICK CITIES, THE FIRST SLICK CITIES, TODAY, SLICK CITIES CONTINUES TO BE A PRECARIOUS BALANCING ACT BETWEEN TIGHT CONTROL AND BUDGET-RELIEF, EXCLUSIVE COMPANIES, PUBLICLY PUSH IMPERIAL GROWTH ABOVE, WHILE IN REALITY, THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ARE ENGAGED BY THE WILLAGES OF THE CONSTRUCTION,

less fairly soon. To be keeping US\$1.7tr in low yielding dollar bonds at a time when the dollar is entering what looks to be a long term wobble, and may be as much as 20% over-valued, while the RMB is perhaps 20% undervalued, seems perplexing. If exchange rates flatten out, China is set to straight lose over US\$400bn.

The reason for the government's assiduous dollar-mopping operations has been its determination to keep the RMB cheap. By sterilizing all the foreign currency, the RMB is maintained at an artificially low level, thus maximizing the attractiveness of China's exports.

The backbite is that while exports boom, people within China don't have money to spend, banks lack capital to lend, and the internal economy is stifled. Bizarrely the people who have really benefited from this tactic over the last ten years have been the Europeans and Americans, who have enjoyed low levels of inflation, and with the inflow of terrifically cheap Chinese products, have been comfortably curling up on sofas in US\$1 t-shirts with US\$3 toys watching dvds on US\$15 players. Now, as Chinese demand for imports is hitting truly global levels and pushing commodity prices up, the doggedly low RMB only passes this burden on to the Chinese in the form of inflation (already starting to happen with the consumer price index for 2007 rising by about 7%).

The true topsy-turviness of the foreign currency reserve is that in effect, the poor country which is growing fast — and so should be

期待变化

borrowing (investing in its own capacity to make money) — is conversely lending to the rich country which is growing slow — and so should be lending (investing in high growth areas where the profits are good). Is the US\$1.7tr a weapon to threaten America with? Will it become a Chinese slush fund for state-sponsored buyouts of foreign companies? 2008 saw the creation of a US\$200bn Chinese sovereign wealth fund which has already been active among America's ailing banks. But as was demonstrated by US Congress' response when China National Offshore Oil Corp. tried to buy American owned Unocal in 2005 — and failed — the West won't give up ownership of its cherries so easily.⁵ In the meantime, the majority of the reserves remain a big deprecating CCP wad.

But compellingly, the government is only one of China's super-savers, and not its most significant. Over half of China's savings are in investments, chiefly the reinvestment rather than paying out of corporate profit.

Much of this boom is focused on heavy industry — a process which has turned China into the world's number one producer of steel, cement and flat glass,⁶ all of which it is now a net exporter of. The fact that China, with its enormous underemployed rural population, is labor rich, while it is also, with its scant ratio of land to people, resource poor, makes this level of investment into a sector which is extremely environmentally heavy yet creates relatively few jobs, a counter-intuitive choice.

The market factor driving this is the enormous structural bias toward

5 A similar situation occurred with Chinese states in American ports. In particular, China may have walls as it moves to buy up more and more of the West's most innovative technology companies.

6 35%, 48% and 49% of global production respectively.

CITY EDGES MEET WITH FLAUNTING WORKERS CONGREGATING IN THE VILLAGES JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY PROPER, WHILE REALTAGES SENT BACK HOME SPUR VILLAGER GROWTH ALTHOUGH NEARLY A MILLION VILLAGES COVERS THE LANDSCAPE AND ACCOMMODATES ALMOST A BILLION PEOPLE. PLANNING POLICIES INTENDED TO STIMULATE MODERN CENTERS ARE EFFECTIVELY URBANIZING CHINA OUTSIDE OF THE CITIES BELOW. THE ROAD DEVELOPMENT AND INCENTIVES GIVE THE NEW 'SOCIALIST VILLAGES' ARE PROLIFERALLY RESHAPING THE COUNTRYSIDE AND FORMING A VAST SEMI-URBANIZED TERRITORY.

CHINA'S MOST POPULATED AND FASTEST URBANIZING REGIONS SPANS THE CENTERS OF BEIJING, XIAN, AND SHANGHAI TO FORM THE WORLD'S LARGEST URBAN FIELD. A MEGALOPOLIS TWICE THE SIZE OF FRANCE WITH THE AVERAGE DENSITY OF A MID-SIZED AMERICAN CITY. IN ESSENCE THE CAPITAL OF URBAN CHINA, IT CONSISTS OF A HIERARCHY OF CENTERS WITHIN A GRID OF VILLAGES WHOSE ECONOMIES HAVE TRANSFORMED TO SUPPORT THE URBAN CONCEPT THOUGH MULTIPLE INTERDEPENDENT. THE COMPONENT PARTS OF THIS MEGALOPOLIS BETRAY DEEP SCHISMS, DRAWING IN UNWARRANTED FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY. ITS CONSPICIOUS ECONOMIC ENGINES ARE KEPT STRONG, BIG SOLUTIONS SLIGHT AS THE SOUTH TO NORTH WATER TRANSPORTATION PROJECT PIPES UNDER ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO THE ARID NORTH AND ARGUMENTALLY MAINTAINS THE FISH AND COOL OF ITS CITIES, BUT THE VILLAGES IN BETWEEN HAVE NO TAPES ON THESE PIPELINES.

reform and the move toward a better ordered society, this is a move away from radically volatile conditions. Behind current modernization efforts, a very different China is in distinct living memory. People who experienced the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) knew a time when local anarchic groups — with governmental blessing — smashed up towns, used the remaining buildings as prisons, and took prisoners for seemingly arbitrary reasons — perhaps simply, having created the prisons, to have someone to put in them. It was not only chaotic, but insanely brutal in terms of the torture, executions and even tribal-style cannibalism that took place. The survivors, witnesses, and perpetrators of these events are now somewhere around their 50s. For many, personal experience also encompasses terrible famine, brought on through sheer governmental mismanagement. The hunger and violence of the last sixty years are not available for discussion in China, either through state-controlled media channels, or within the national education system. Nevertheless, they create a present of extreme inflexibility for individuals, who have been forced to survive in a context of capricious arbitrators of a power structure from which they have had no recourse to rule of law, or ability to discharge democratically. Under such vulnerable circumstances, a preference for saving is almost psychologically instilled.

The ironic twist to this story of ferid personal saving is that it is providing the bedrock for the system which, to some extent, it is hoping to inure itself against. Almost a third of China's savings — equivalent to some 15% of GDP — are in household deposit accounts. The

GREEDING XIAO KANG. THOUGH PROPAGANDA MASSIVE SENSE AND EXTREME PROBLEMS AT THE PERIPHERY THE CAP CAPITAL TRUST IN WELL GOVERNED SELF-ORGANIZATION. THE POP MOMENT SEEMS TO BE PAYING OFF. THE PARADOXICAL SOCIAL PROBLEMS ONTO THE FUTURE IS STEADILY CARRIED OUT. THE WITH EVERY SINGLE PRODUCER TURNED CONSUMER CONSUMPTION WITH A SIZZLING HOT ECONOMY AND SURROUNDED BY BUZZING CONSTRUCTION. THE AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL PRESENTS TO THE PART STABLE PROGRESS. THE BENEFITS SHOULD SHOW GREED OUTLINE FROM THE CENTER TO PERIPHERY TO REACH THE COUNTRYSIDE. HOWEVER, WHILE SOCIETAL SHIFTS FIRST SEEM TO REVEAL THE OF SPATIAL ORGANIZATION, URBAN PATTERNS SOON REVEAL THE DOMINATION OVER HOW SOCIETY EVOLVES. AS CHINA'S ECONOMIC REFORMS UNFOLD, THE TENDENCY TO PRODUCE AND * FORMATIONS ACCELERATES. THE GRID THE URBAN CONCENTRATION OF CHINESE SOCIETY TIGHTENS. THE DREAM TO DESIGN CITY SOCIETY SLIPS AWAY.

PARALLEL WORDS. THE CHINESE DREAM IS AN ODYSSEY WITH THE GIGS. GIVE AWAY POWER WIDESPREAD URBANIZATION ARE AGAIN CENTRALIZED CONTROL. EXCLUSIVITY GRASPS WITH THE HUMANICUS SOCIETY. ULTIMATELY THE DESIGN OF A SOCIETY REVEALS THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL BEHIND THE SCENE.

economic impact of this is a huge cash vote in favor of current capital imbalances. China's State Owned Banks simply would not be able to afford to sterilize so much foreign currency, tolerate so much inefficiently invested industrial lending, or bankroll so many underperforming SOEs* were it not for the rich supply of cheap credit lent to them by the Chinese themselves. This money is effectively bankrolling the banks, and thus the Chinese people are really paying on *three* fronts. They have in the course of the reform era come out of their grotesquely underperforming communes to work like crazy producing exports for the sake of profits which the government sits on in the form of depreciating dollars. At the same time they are suffering the most evil industrial pollution on earth for the sake of profits which the industrial producers reinvest in increasing industrial capacity. And then, of the leftover profits which do trickle down, they put half into funding these dollar-amassing and polluting operations. The people may seem to be getting scant present rewards for the phenomenally future-driven management of the country, but it is a future they are investing in on every level.

The widely held conviction that Western-style democracy follows economic development with the same inexorability as day does night is one of the West's fondest and shallowest attempts at historical master narrative. What the last fifty years of IMF, World Bank, and UN intervention have certainly managed to disprove is the theory that economic development necessarily follows the installa-

Id spending
If employer
cluded,

再长远的眼光

HOWEVER, A STRONG URBAN MIDDLE CLASS AS ENVISIONED FOR 2020

COULD CARRY A NEW SOCIETY IN 2007 INDIVIDUAL

AS IN CHINA WERE AWARDED BEING PROPERTY RIGHTS PERHAPS THE MOST PROFOUND LEGAL CHANGE SINCE THE BIRTH OF THE REPUBLIC, WITH THE CONSUMER-HOWEVER PLACED AT THE HEART OF URBAN DESIRE MECHANISMS, FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS WILL SUCCEED OR FAIL IN RELATION TO PEOPLE AS OPPOSED TO STATE OBJECTIVES. OWN-TIME, THE MIDDLE CLASS MAY UNDER THE FOREPRESS.

TO RETAIN MARKET PALMABILITY, THE INDIVIDUAL WILL NEED TO BE OFFERED MORE THAN PERSONAL SPACE. DEMAND WILL INCLUDE CITY-WIDE PERFORMANCE. AS THE URBAN DREAM TAKES SHAPE, IT HAS TO GAIN GROUND AGAINST GROWING URBAN EXPECTATIONS. COUNTER-INTUITIVELY, THIS WILL REQUIRE MORE COORDINATED PLANNING EFFORTS AT THE SAME TIME AS INCREASED HOMEOWNERS STATUS. INTEGRATED PROJECTS WILL NEED TO INTEGRATE WITH A COHERENT OR GROUPEL STRUCTURE. URBANIZATION WILL NEED TO BE STREAMLINED NOT FOR SPEED BUT FOR QUALITY. IN THE FORM OF EFFICIENCY AND CONCERT BY ABOLISHING ANTI-URBAN POLICES, CHINA CAN UNLEASH THE POWER OF ITS GROWTH OVER THE NEXT THREE DECADES AND MOVE TOWARD BRIGHTER PROCEE SOLUTIONS. IN THIS CASE, TO SERVE PROTECTED MIGRATION, NO NEW CITIES ARE NEEDED. UTILIZING PREDETERMINED

THE CHINESE DREAM IS SHIFTING. BUILDING CITIES WILL SHAPE SOCIETY, BUT A MODERN SOCIETY CAN'T BE SHAPED BY CITY BUILDING. THE RIGID STRUCTURE OF THE SELF-CONTAINED CITY AS A TOOL OF CONTROL IS CHALLENGED BY TWO DISRUPTIVE DYNAMIC FORCES. THE MARKET AND THE MASSSES, UNROBBESSED, URBANIZATION WILL CONTINUE TO GENERATE SCATTERING RESISTANCES. A DISORDER AT THE HEART OF THE SOCIALIST MARKET REARDED THE PERSONALISTS THROUGH CHINESE PRO JOB PROGRESS. RES GOVERNS ARE INCREASINGLY DEMANDING ON THE GLOBAL POLITICAL STAGE, YET INTERNAL DECISIONS REMAIN DISORDERED. CHINA IS THE BASKIN OF GEOGRAPHY PRODUCTION AND TRADE OF GOODS. YET INTERDEPENDENTS OPENED. IT IS OPENING UP TO DIFFER NATIONAL CORPORATIONS. YET ITS CITIZENS REMAIN BARRIED FROM GLOBAL MOBILIZATION FLOWS. CHINA IS BEHEAVING UP PARALLEL WORLDS AND BOUNDING A GLOBALLY CONNECTED RICHNESS.

THE DYNAMIC CITY. CHINA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY ENJOY AND WAHRE OF HAS SUGGESTION NAVIGATED MANY OBSTACLES TO ACHIEVE THE LAST THREE DECADES OF CONTINUOUS GROWTH. A BUSINESS AS USUAL SCENARIO IS NOT IMPROBABLE. A GOOD PART OF CHINA WILL LIVE THE CHINESE DREAM ACCOMPANIED IN BIGGER AND BRIGHTER CITIES THAN THOSE THAT EXIST ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD (A SEPARATE OF THE STATE CAPITALISM HYPOTHESIZED IN THE MAGAZINE AT THE END OF THIS BLOG).

tion of democracy. It is striking that China — far and away the most successful of the developing nations — has achieved its remarkable economic growth largely without the conventional “prerequisites” for capitalism (e.g. property rights,⁹ rule of law, transparency, trust), and mostly in direct contradiction of traditional IMF-World Bank “wisdom” (China has adopted neither rapid privatization of the state sector, nor keen suppression of inflation). Instead the CCP is very much running its own version of things — a “socialist market economy”, which could alternatively be termed bureaucratic or indeed state capitalism. It’s an oxymoron which emerges in the form of a whole series of China paradoxes. China is both the most globalized country in the world (in terms of trade and openness to foreign direct investment), and one of its most closed (in terms of the state control of media and the internet, NGOs, and official data). China is home to much of the world’s most technologically advanced architecture and urbanism (including the CCTV tower and Dongtan, set to be the world’s first zero carbon city), and yet is home to a predominantly rural population. China makes up 11% of the global luxury market, but in GDP per capita terms — even by purchasing power parity — does not rank in the global top hundred. And China is the world’s fastest changing society, and yet for nearly sixty years has had the same ruling political party.

At the 17th Party Congress the CCP made it clear that while it would continue with reform, it did not intend to follow the path of

Western-style development, referring no doubt, among other things, to multi-party representation. Within China, unofficial political organization or networking is strictly forbidden, and the Party certainly has no intention of allowing the populace to pass judgement on its leadership. When asked about democracy, the Party will reply, ‘We have democracy in China — democracy within the Party.’

Upselling as this is to Western political teleology, it seems, at present to be forging a strong path. In fact many of today’s xiao kang* are distinctly opposed to the idea of peasants voting for national government. Tens of thousands of protests do occur every year, but overwhelmingly these are grievance-driven and result in negotiated settlements, rather than being issue-driven, such as might lead to wider political restructuring. They are manageable. To the larger question, ‘Are people buying into the Party Dream?’ — or rather, given its savings-driven profile — ‘Are people saving into it?’ the Party can answer with confidence, ‘Yes.’

This Dream is all about prioritizing an enhanced xiao kang* future over capitalizing on a xiao kang* present. It is a shooting the moon operation. China today is poorer than it may be, but has high hopes. The whole of Chinese society is looking to the future — if only because, given Chinese history and much of the Chinese present, there is in truth nowhere else to look. Most of this future is intangible. But the clues are out there. Much is also under current production. There is one incontestable element: urbanization.

9 Without effective rule of law, property owners in China have occupied a somewhat precarious position. Possession of documents but not *guan xi* or good relationship, with officials has been no guarantee of holding onto something. Urbanization processes have however driven change — see below.

光也始于个人之需

动态城市才是城市的梦!

BEHIND DREAMING: THE RESEARCH THAT RUNS THROUGH THE BOOK FORMS AN INVESTIGATION INTO CHINA'S DEVELOPMENTAL REALITY AND THE SPATIAL CONDITIONS IT PRODUCES AND SHAPES. CUT ACROSS DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES AND THROUGH MULTIPLE LEVELS OF SCALE FROM NATIONAL

FLEXIBLE FRAME

WORKS, CITIES CAN EXPAND IN THEIR NATURAL DIRECTION WITHOUT LOSING COHESION. THE PRESSURE OF THE MASSES BECOMES A BENEFICIAL FORCE TO DEVELOP THE MIDDLE-SIZE CITIES TO TWICE THEIR SIZE. THIS CONCENTRATING EXPANSION OF THE MOST EFFICIENT SETTLEMENTS OF 2 TO 10 MILLION HARBORS. THIS WOULD ACCOMMODATE ALL POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND ALLOW CENTERS OF PRODUCTION TO EVOLVE INTO CREATIVE AND DYNAMIC CITIES. TO MOVE BEYOND THE WORLD'S FACTORY FLOOR AND TOWARD AN ECONOMY OF IDEAS, CHINA WILL HAVE TO HARNESS THE EXPANDING NEEDS OF ITS INDIVIDUALS. IF CHINA IS TRULY TO THROW OFF ITS COMMUNIST PAST, IT WILL NEED TO HAVE MANY DREAMS FOR ITS CITIES. AND TO ALLOW COMPETITION AMONGST THEM.

INDIVIDUAL TO CREATE THE BASIS FOR

DESIGN PROPOSALS OF WHAT, IN THEORY, CHINA COULD ACHIEVE UNCOMPROMISING AND OPEN SELF-CRITICAL ALTERNATIVES TO TO INSPIRE A NEW COURSE OF URBANIZATION. AS SUCH, IT WILL BECOME AN INVESTIGATION INTO ARCHITECTURE'S OWN LONG-SHABBING DREAM. THE DESIGN OF THE CITY, WHILE FOR CONTEMPORARY CHINA, AROUSED BY A WAVE FOR THE NEW, THE IMAGINATION OF PLANNING AND DESIGN HAVE NOT BEEN OF GREAT CONSEQUENCE. THE NEW CHINESE CITY REPRESENTS ANOTHER UTOPIAN COURSE: A SOCIETY UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

NEVILLE WARR

CITIES NOT SUFFRAGE!

Urbanization is China's answer to what it's up to and where it's going. Urban development has been a major engine for economic growth, and indeed industrial output, where the investment boom has been in no small way powered by domestic demand.¹⁰ Crucially, and in a much bigger way than idea-based concepts for reform, it has also been a catalyst for social progress. The traditional Chinese middle class dream, so strongly rooted in the vision of a family with a child in a house, has bonded hard to the new real estate market, and the growing sense of home ownership has provided a focal point both for "social instability,"¹¹ in cases of land dispute, and for the long-awaited development of individuals' rights. After years of mounting pressure, in 2007 citizens were awarded the same legal protection of their property as the state — arguably the most significant shift in Chinese law since 1949. Urbanization, not democracy, it turns out, is the driver for change in China. It is also the trip, and the much dreamed-of destination.

But ironically for such a future-orientated society, the construction of this urban dream is being motivated by oppressively short term considerations. The radical mutability of the present, the near perfect absence of a reliable long term scenario, and the context of obscure and mercurial policy shifts, inevitably enforces among developers — and their local official partners — a "capitalize now" approach. Any intent to consider local integration is undermined by the fact that everything around is equally in flux, and high levels of consumer demand ensure

that suppliers compete chiefly on the grounds of cost and speed. The implications of this are all the more drastic for the fact that it's a one shot opportunity. Once cast, urban configurations are to a large extent fixed, and cities are notorious for refusing rewind.

Over the past twenty years it has become increasingly apparent that the world is a limited resource. Much of human development to date has simply not been aware of this. (It always seemed so big), but the vicissitudes of globalization and a growing acknowledgment of climate change have set up potential outcomes which, though distant, are casting shadows back into the present. The 21st century will be one defined by its attempts to grapple with an angel of the long term. China's urbanization is at the heart of its construction of a new society, and of the glorious future which the Chinese are currently and all so frugally awaiting. Given China's contemporary role as both laboratory for urban development and leader of emerging economies, it is equally a core component in the construction of a global future, and therefore a global dream. The Chinese city may be in the thick of becoming the ultimate expression of not only spatial, but also economic and political desire. All the more reason to ask now, while the building is going up so fast, is that in fact where we want to get to when we say we want to take each of these individual steps? All the more reason to dream harder.

ADRIAN HORNSBY

10. Terrific investment in real estate and transportation infrastructure (US\$400bn in 2006) make China its own number one customer for the enormous quantities of steel, cement and glass that it is producing.

11. A CCP euphemism for public protest. Land disputes — often stemming from (corrupt) governmental or government-sponsored land take — are the most common cause.