

# A NEW CHINESE IDENTITY

1 THE SPIRIT OF ANCIENT CHINESE 壹



巳丑年六月廿

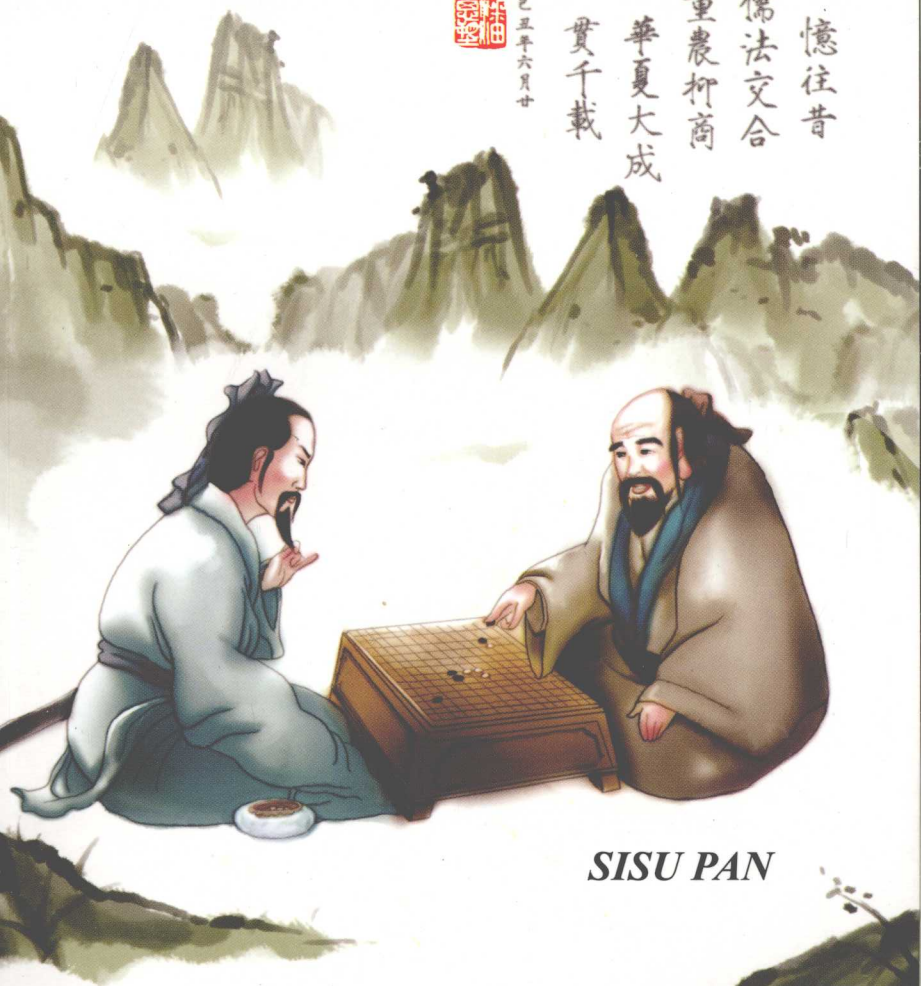
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*SISU PAN*



NEW WORLD PRESS

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*To my family and my friends,  
whose generous assistance has enabled me  
to finish the book in time;  
And especially to the Sonnenblumes,  
who are my driving force on the way forward.*

## Foreword

Thirty years ago, our world saw one of the greatest events during the climax of Cold War, the normalization of diplomatic relationship between U.S.A and China. Both American and Chinese diplomats contributed their greatest efforts to remove the obstacle between the two giants. In the subsequent years, most Western bloc countries renewed their relationships with China, initiating a new era of international political progression.

The Western world and China share much in common but also differ greatly in many other issues. Such differences, sadly, are often easier to be remembered by us than the similar beliefs we hold in common. Mutual understanding of our similarities and dissimilarities, therefore, is vital to the healthy development of international relationship. For the relationship between China and America over the last decade, we saw the progressive cooperation between the two countries in various fields like energy, anti-terrorism and patent protection. However, Americans' misunderstanding over

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Chinese issues also prevails throughout the nation in every aspect, from congressmen's ungrounded accusation of Chinese racial and religious issues, to local news reporters' nonobjective cover on Chinese environmental and human rights problems. Should such exaggerated stories be left alone without counterevidences, would American citizens not support any aggressive, or even hostile policy towards China? The scandals of Iraqi WMD still linger in people's mind.

As for the American public, most of them haven't ever been to the land of China for life. Their perspective of China is the perspective of their media, the Chinese world viewed and comprehended by Westerners. These reporters and researchers tend to choose popular topics in the Western world, like human rights and environment protection. They don't understand that China is a developing country, and that more than tens of millions of Chinese citizens are below or near the poverty line. They don't understand that China is at a different developing stage as compared with Europe and America. About 150 years ago, it was the Western countries that committed some of the most bizarre human rights crimes around the world through colonial wars. London and Paris were the most polluted cities our world history ever

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knew. Modern China, on the other hand, has produced a far better result in human rights record, poverty elimination and environment protection at a low profile.

Chinese are facing many challenges at present, not only the difficulties Europeans and Americans had experienced, but also many issues unique to China. China has a large rural population of over 0.8 billion. Most of them are low-income individuals. Chinese land is vast, fully populated in the eastern region but sparsely in the west. Regional development is extremely imbalanced. Some Western observers may attribute Tibet's low literacy and life-span to the Chinese government's racial discrimination, but they don't know that merely 50 years ago, at the hand of Dalai Lama and his followers, Tibetans' literacy was almost nil, and feudal lords enslaved serfs in a manner that could be considered barbaric even by the Dark Age European standard. The Chinese government has transformed the once devastated land into a modernized Tibet, where Tibetan people have received better education and freer practice of religion than their relatives who fled to India with Dalai Lama. People should ask those Western critics if they ever know what Americans have done to native Indians in the past 100 years.



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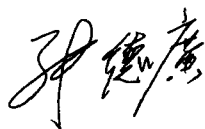
The records of our human history are often manipulated to serve political interests. Dalai Lama may intentionally ignore his regime's theocratic nature; and pro-independence Taiwanese may deny speaking Chinese because they believe they are speaking a unique language called Taiwanese completely different from Chinese, which is indeed the most well preserved ancient Chinese language. If Western critics really want to understand Chinese issues, they need to learn more about China from the Chinese perspective, not just out of anti-China sentiments.

I felt the need for Chinese people to present their thinking and culture directly to our English readers in a manner and language accepted by Western people instead of second-hand or even third-hand account from Western media reporters. For quite a long time, Chinese people are unable to wield the weapons of persuasion to defend their own rights, leaving the vacuum for Western reports to fill in, in disguise of justice and righteousness but in nature serving the interest of their employers. Sisu's book has provided us a new horizon to the understanding of Chinese culture and identity, past and present. He is a talented young man, having travelled extensively in China and the Western world, excelling in various

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kinds of knowledge of broad spectrum. His writing is neither in traditional Chinese style nor Western one, but a combination of the two, which consists of the rational critique of the Westerners and the sense of Chinese traditional philosophies. I hope, after reading his book, our readers will gain much knowledge that is unfamiliar to Western and even Chinese people. Knowledge is the best weapon to combat prejudice. Let's enjoy reading the young man's book and let's contemplate the faults and achievements of Chinese culture, this time, not by Western second-hand reporters.

Zhang Deguang

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the Chinese characters '张德光' (Zhang Deguang) in a stylized, cursive script.

*Former Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*

*Chairman of China Foundation for International Studies*

*Former Deputy Foreign Minister of China*



JK Fairbank

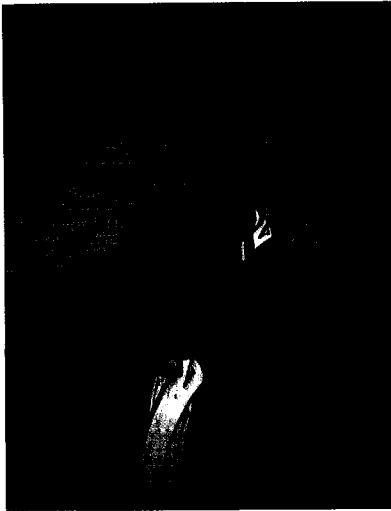


Fairbank was amongst the most prominent sinologists in America. His understanding of Chinese issues came directly from his experience in China more than half a century ago. Things have changed rapidly, however, since the founding of People's Republic of China in 1949.

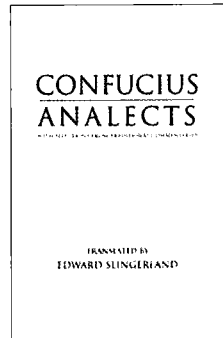


American-Japanese Scholar Fukuyama

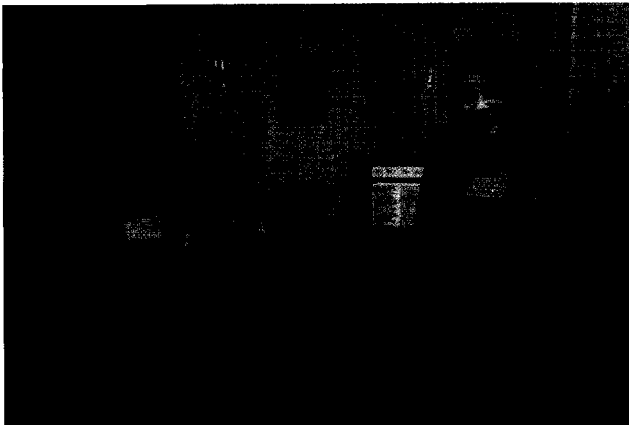
Fukuyama published his famous work *The End of History* at the end of the Cold War. However, we haven't seen the end of humanity or social evolution as predicted by him. China became the most significant counterexample against his theory.



Confucius  
Founder of Confucianism



One of Western translations of Confucius' works  
Confucius's teachings were promulgated into Europe by  
Jesuits in the 17th century, and from then on Westerners  
started to take interest in Confucian classics.



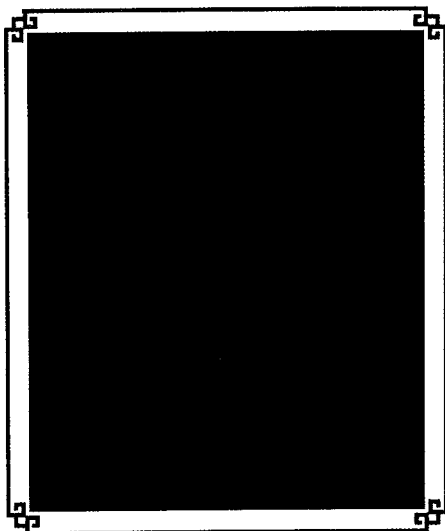
Confucius Institute

One educational event organized by Russian Confucius Institute.  
China is using Confucius as a national symbol to promote its cultural  
values, much like its German counterpart, Goethe Institute.



Lao Tzu

Founder of Taoism, which stresses the natural side of humans.

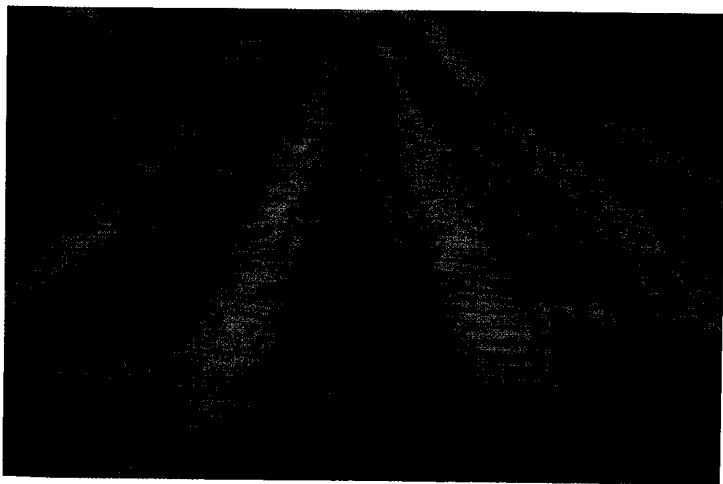


Han Fei

Han Fei and his Legalism are the bitter enemies of Confucian schools. The essentials of both Legalism and Confucianism, nevertheless, were incorporated in Imperial China's official teachings.



Qin Shihuang

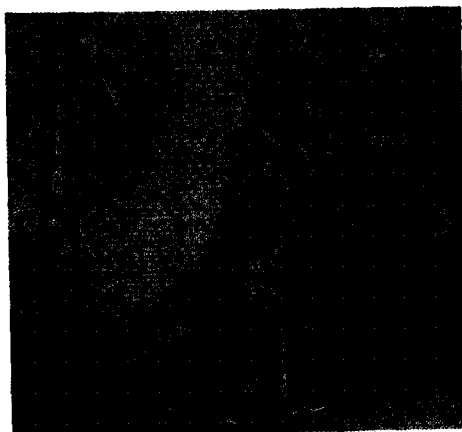
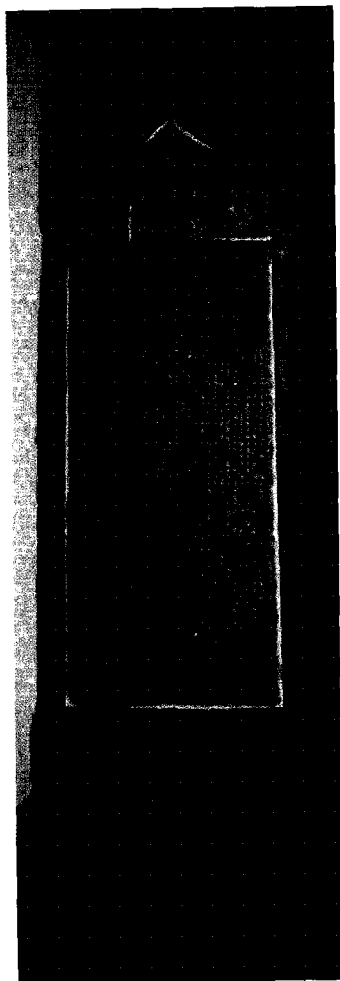


Terracotta army

Qin Shihuang was the first emperor of China, and a passionate follower of Han Fei's Legalism. His "tomb guards" terracotta army reminded modern travelers of the power of the once mighty Qin Empire.

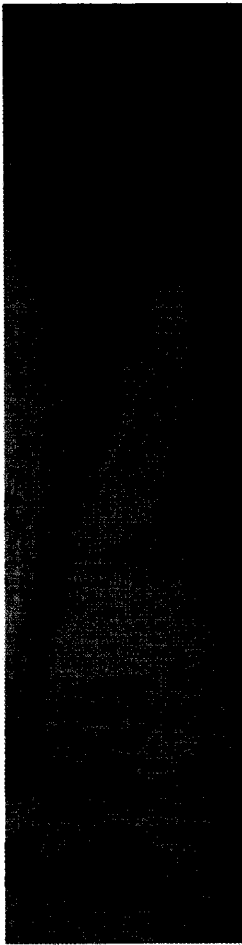
Nestorian Christian Stele in Xi'an

In contrast to many Westerner's imagination, Western religions were tolerated in Imperial China, so long as they didn't bother the sovereign of central government.



Two male lovers

Imperial China was much freer in its vision of homosexual activities than Christian Europe.



A traditional Chinese painting



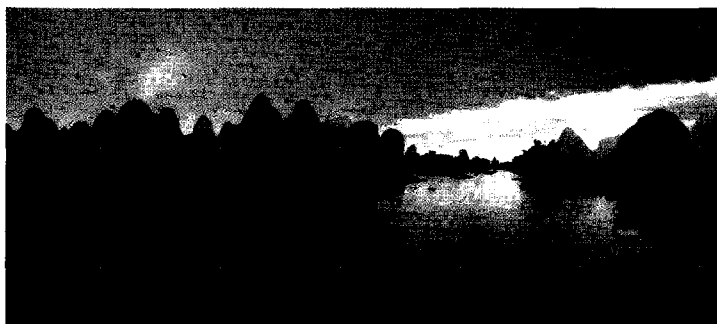
Northern China in Winter

China boasts a large territory and highly diversified geographic features.





Rice Terrace in Southern China



Mountains, river and fisherman – Chinese impression of natural beauty  
Chinese impression of natural beauty: Traditional Chinese literati are controversial in their spiritual world. They long for the serenity of nature, but cannot withstand the allurements and responsibilities of mundane life.