

Australia China Friendship Society  
ACT Branch Inc



澳中友好协会

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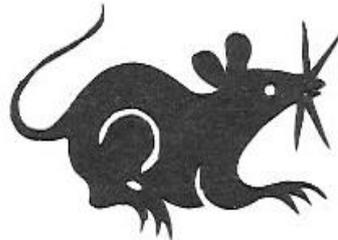
**Bulletin**

**2020/9 September 2020**

**Coming events**

**Off the beaten track in Hebei Province**

**14 October**



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*Promoting friendship and understanding between the Australian and Chinese people*

## Off the beaten track in Hebei Province

A presentation on the tour members of the Society made this time last year, to Hebei Province to the north of Beijing plus the horticultural Expo in Yanqing. The tour visited places not normally frequented by tourists, including an almost deserted section of the Great Wall and the evidence of renewable energy sources in the countryside was extraordinary.

This will be held on Wednesday 14 October at the Southern Cross Club, Jamison. Those who wish to will have dinner before the presentation, from 6.00pm. Because of Covid-19 regulations, bookings must be made for this, by emailing [acfsevents@gmail.com](mailto:acfsevents@gmail.com) by 7 Oct. We need to know if you are coming for dinner or just for the presentation.



## ANU China in the World Events

15 Oct 2020, 4.00-5.30pm

### How did Paris-trained Cambodian intellectuals transform into hardened Maoist guerrillas?

ANU China Seminar Series

This presentation explores the link between the Chinese Communist Party's efforts to globalize Maoism and the dialectical engagement of exported Maoism by intellectuals who became Maoists in Cambodia. It draws from Edward Said's concept of "Traveling Theory," which identifies conditions of production, transmission, and reception, to explain how Maoism emerged in Cambodian intellectual circles.

22 Oct 2020, 4.00-5.30pm

### Xiong Shili and Cultural Nationalism in Modern China

ANU China Seminar Series

Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885-1968) was one of the most important Chinese philosophers of the twentieth century, and a founding figure of the modern New Confucian school of philosophy. He lived and worked at a time when cultural nationalism arose in response to the many social, economic, political, and cultural problems that China faced in the first half of the twentieth century.

These seminars will be available as Zoom meetings.

Contact: Australian Centre on China in the World  
[ciw@anu.edu.au](mailto:ciw@anu.edu.au)



## Fast facts from the Beijing Review, September 2020

- The Cyberspace Administration of China has directed that all platforms setting up online classes for minors are to assume the main responsibility for content management; there is a ban on pop-up advertisements and information unsuitable for minors.
- By the end of 2020 installed unsubsidized wind power connected to China's grid will hit 11.4 million kilowatts, with photovoltaic capacity reaching 33.1 million kilowatts. These projects will drive investment of about 220 billion yuan as well as create new jobs.
- More than 1,400 hepatitis B patients have been cured thanks to a chronic hep B treatment project started 2 years ago. It is claimed to be the most effective treatment yet. Nearly 10,000 patients and 312 hospitals participated in the project. About 70 million are living with hep B and about 300,000 die as a consequence of the infection each year.
- Police have cracked over 100,000 cases related to telecom and internet fraud in the first half of 2020. About 16,000 of these related to COVID-19.
- China's car market is recovering from the COVID-19 slump, in the second half of 2020 sales of medium and high-end car brands are expected to grow, but low-end car sales are expected to shrink.

**Thanks to Neil Birch for compiling these.**

## Film evening, Wed 16 Sept

Members met for the first time in six months to view the film *China's 3 Dreams* at the Southern Cross Club, Jamison on Wed 16 September. It was a thought-provoking film, raising questions of the long-term effects of the Cultural Revolution extending down generations and across families.

## Committee News - September 2020 meeting

We have currently made the 'China Tea Club' in North Lyneham our monthly meeting venue, so met there again for our mid September 2020 committee meeting.

To start with we made final plans for the movie night on the 16 September where we showed 'Chinese 3 Dreams'. We hope you enjoyed the evening, if you were able to make it and enjoyed catching up with friends you may not have seen for a while.

We decided on the October event – 'Off the Beaten Track in Hebei Province, a presentation on the Society tour last September.

The annual Panda competition and School awards will be celebrated quite differently to past years. Due to the current restrictions, we are unable to hold or host the usual larger presentation events. Instead, for the School awards your committee members will each deliver awards to the participating schools, for their respective Mandarin language teachers to distribute to the awards winners. It will be similar for the Panda competition. Initially judging will occur early October 2020. Carol and Brian have once again generously opened up their home to store the entries and to hold the judging – thanks to both.

Chen Yi from Project Hope has been in touch with Carol to say that they were still deciding on suitable students for us to sponsor.

Once again we enjoyed the delicious meal after the meeting – this time the Singapore noodles were a highlight – so simple, yet don't often end up ordering them.

Wishing you as little hay fever as possible during Spring and that you enjoy spotting the Floriade flowers dispersed throughout the city and suburbs. Some lovely ones near the Portrait Gallery and in Braddon, as well as at the Scullin shops!

Your Secretary, Tanja

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## Online video courses a boon for teachers

By He Qi in Shanghai | *China Daily* | Updated: 2020-09-09 07:45

Having proved to be a useful tool during the pandemic, online courses will continue to be provided to students in conjunction with on-campus education, the Shanghai Education Commission announced on Aug 31. These courses have already been made available for the 2020 autumn semester for elementary and middle schools in Shanghai, which reopened on Sept 1.

Among those tasked with providing online courses is the Xuhui Institute of Education Shanghai, which will deliver senior middle school courses in

Chinese and information technology along with elementary school courses in natural science this semester.

"The recording of the online lessons started when the pandemic broke out and it has continued until today. These online courses can act as a backup teaching resource during an epidemic and can also be used as supplement for regular teaching," says Li Hong, deputy director of Xuhui Institute of



Jiang Li, a Chinese teacher from Shanghai No 3 Girls Middle School, has her lesson recorded by a colleague in a studio in Shanghai.  
[Photo by Gao Erqiang/China Daily]

Education Shanghai, a teachers' vocational school in Xuhui district under the local education bureau. "These courses are also a good resource for our teachers' professional development and can be used as a case study in teacher training and classroom teaching research," she adds.

More than 5,000 high-quality online video courses covering all basic subjects in schools were produced by the end of the spring semester, benefiting more than 1.4 million students from Grades 1 through 12.

According to Li, recording lessons for a course is not as simple as it seems. Each video, lasting only about 20 minutes, requires three teams of people and days to complete. "The teaching team is responsible for ensuring the quality of the content, the technical team is responsible for recording, post-production, delivery audit and uploading, and the logistics support team ensures the safety of each team and is responsible for epidemic prevention and control," she explains.

"For example, our senior middle school Chinese teaching team has selected 22 teachers this semester to be involved in the recording. A group of teaching researchers from the city and district levels are also involved in helping prepare, record, and check the lessons."

Li says that the institute recorded 566 lessons last semester, accounting for about one-tenth of the total in the city. This semester, they will record around 300 lessons.

"The biggest difference with the online course is that it lacks any interaction between teachers and students. Since teachers cannot see the students, they have to design different methods to achieve that interaction in the various disciplines," says Yuan Wenzheng, director of the Information Resource Center at Xuhui Institute of Education Shanghai. "For example, our information technology course features three 'virtual students' who can answer questions during the class. These avatars will also accompany students throughout the entire learning process," Yuan adds.

The introduction of the online courses has not just benefited students, but also teachers, says Fan Biao, a researcher specializing in Chinese classes for the Shanghai Education Commission. "Many teachers in other provinces said that such recording work promotes fairness in teaching because we can now share high-quality teaching resources. Video courses are indeed a great lesson preparation resource for teachers in many schools," says Fan.



## **Beijing 2022 test events to be held through closed-loop management**

*Beijing Review*, 2020-09-23 · Source: Xinhua News Agency

Fresh from celebrating the 500-day countdown, the Beijing 2022 organizers decided to host tests events through closed-loop management for public health concerns.

The decision was announced in a meeting on September 22, hosted by the Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2022 Winter Olympic Games president Cai Qi, who emphasized COVID-19 pandemic control and prevention in the next phase of preparation for the Games.

According to the meeting, tests events for Beijing 2022 will be held behind closed-doors with athletes, media, organizers, service staff and other involving personnel through closed-loop management. Pandemic prevention measures will be carried out inside the venues and in surrounding areas with routine venue disinfection, temperature checks and nucleic acid tests in place.

The organizers also highlighted that reviews will take place after each test event, which would help formulate better working and contingency plans amid the pandemic. The meeting also reiterated that all Games venues should be completed by the end of this year, safely and up to high standards.

Close cooperation with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), and International Federations (IFs) is also indispensable to confirm schedule for test events, the numbers of participating athletes and related issues at the earliest possible date.

The organizers will also establish working teams for each test event and for venue operation, with detailed plans for accommodation, catering, medical service, transportation and volunteers.

The Short Track Speed Skating World Cup, to be held in December, will be the first test event for Beijing 2022.



## **Recurring Nightmare: The Plague Visits Beijing** **By Jane Brophy**

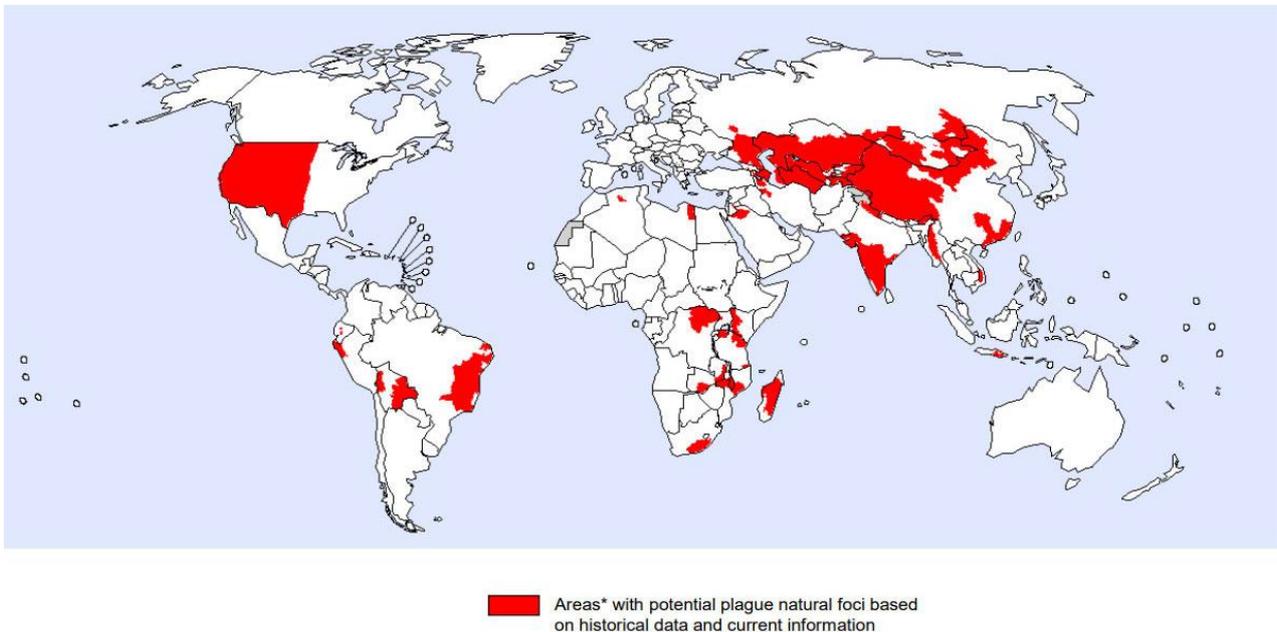
Source: China Story [Yearbook 2019: China Dreams](#)

*Bird flu in the year of the rooster ... swine fever in the year of the pig. Next year is the year of the rat ... the plague is coming.* — Weibo user, November 2019<sup>1</sup>

SO WROTE ONE Weibo user in mid-November after days of widespread rumours in the capital of the People's Republic of China (PRC) sparked panic. Then, the government confirmed it: the thought-to-be eradicated pneumonic plague had arrived in Beijing.

Pneumonic plague, a severe infection of the lungs, is one of three types of plague caused by the bacteria *Yersinia pestis* (of which there are many strains), the other two being bubonic (found in the lymph nodes and associated with the feared pustules of the 'Black Death' of fourteenth-century Europe) and septicaemic (found in the bloodstream).<sup>2</sup> The bacteria is endemic in China and, while the bubonic form is more common, pneumonic is the most virulent. Left untreated, it can be fatal within eighteen to twenty-four hours, although if treated quickly and effectively with appropriate antibiotics, it is easily contained. The most common way of contracting the plague in China is through the bite of an infected flea or by coming into contact with (or even consuming) an infected rodent. Pneumonic plague can spread through respiratory droplets from an infected patient who sneezes or coughs, for example. In the southern, central, and western parts of China where the rodent population is high (increasing desertification and drought provide favourable living conditions) and rural life makes contact with disease carriers more likely, large public health campaigns since 1949 have been successful in mobilising teams of villagers to engage in pest-control work. Teams of rat catchers still trap and test rats periodically to monitor them for possible outbreaks and changes to the bacteria strain.<sup>3</sup>

For Beijingers, however, the threat of the plague is a distant memory, as seen in a World Health Organisation (WHO) map of the global distribution of plague in 2016 (see below).<sup>4</sup> Thus the news, first appearing via a quickly deleted social media post by a doctor working at central Beijing's Chaoyang Hospital in early November, revealed that two plague patients had been mysteriously 'transported' from a hospital in Inner Mongolia.<sup>5</sup> Despite attempts by China's Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to limit further public discussion, rumours spread rapidly as the hospital ordered medical students working there to stay at home and all the seating in the emergency waiting area was replaced.<sup>6</sup> Government attempts to take control of the narrative and quell panic only fuelled it by providing an incomplete picture of what had actually taken place. This revived fearful memories of the mismanagement of SARS ('severe acute respiratory syndrome' or 'bird flu') at the same hospital in 2003, where a lack of public communication is believed to have resulted in the spread of the disease.<sup>7</sup>



Global distribution of natural plague foci as of March 2016  
 Source: WHO/PED, as of 15 March 2016

Occasional cases of plague infection are not rare in interior parts of China and are only sometimes lethal. But the presence of two infected patients in one of Beijing’s premier hospitals sent social media users into fits of panic and made international headlines.<sup>8</sup> Locals on social media demanded to know more about the circumstances under which the patients were transferred to Beijing: Had the patients been taken by public transport? Had they been on a plane? What steps had health officials taken to prevent the potential airborne spread of the disease?

Further investigative reporting by the English-language media outlet *Caixin*, which obtained an internal CDC brief, suggested this recent outbreak had been contained.<sup>9</sup> It revealed that the highly unusual step of transferring the two patients (a married couple) more than 800 kilometres to the capital — when normal protocol is to isolate and treat patients as quickly and as locally as possible — was taken because of a delayed diagnosis and the need for more specialised facilities to treat the infection in its advanced stage.<sup>10</sup> They were, moreover, transferred by ambulance. After their short stay in the emergency department at Chaoyang Hospital, the couple was taken to the smaller Ditan Hospital, which specialises in infectious diseases. The couple’s son and daughter were being monitored, and others at the Chaoyang Hospital who may have come into contact with them were being preventatively treated. While all this turned out to be something of a ‘storm in a teacup’, greater transparency at the outset could have prevented the panic and suspicion.

While the memory of plague might not be so vivid for today’s citizens, China has a long history with the bubonic and pneumonic plagues. The third great plague in documented history began in 1855 in Yunnan. The two previous outbreaks were those suffered by the Byzantine empire in 541 and 542 and the Black Death that killed one-third of Europe’s population between 1346 and 1353. Driven by increased global trade and an influx of the ethnic majority Han people seeking to exploit the natural resources of south-western China (where many rats and fleas were carriers of plague bacteria), the nineteenth-century ‘Third Plague’ bloomed into a global pandemic of

(primarily) the bubonic strain, which was spread by rats and fleas on trading ships. In China and India alone, twelve million people died. The threat was considered active in China until 1960 when cases reported to the WHO fell to below 200 per year.<sup>11</sup> Despite this, or perhaps because of it, as admitted by health authorities in Inner Mongolia, public health campaigns to raise awareness of plague prevention and control have not been as visible in recent decades. *Caixin* spoke to residents of Inner Mongolia who were surprised to learn that the plague was an ever-present threat as they had not lived through a public education campaign.<sup>12</sup>



Under the lens: The bubonic plague  
Source: U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, Flickr

This 2019 case highlighted two uncomfortable truths: the persistent health divide between rural and urban areas, and the potential impact climate change is having on plague control efforts. According to the investigation by *Caixin*, the couple was from Sonid Left Banner, a country-level division of Xilingol League in remote central Inner Mongolia. They contracted the plague while carrying out pest-control work. In the past fifty years, China has recorded more than 1,000 cases of the plague and 183 deaths, with the hardest hit region being north-western Qinghai.<sup>13</sup> In May 2018, the Xinhua News Agency reported an explosion of the rat population in Inner Mongolia, which it attributed to 'recent persistent drought' and a vague reference to 'climate change'.<sup>14</sup> For people looking for examples of the interplay between climate change and epidemiological trends around the world, this might represent a new but ongoing challenge to plague eradication. As well as examining rising rodent numbers, a small number of scientific studies have begun to explore the relationship between climate and the plague cycle, suggesting temperature extremes play a factor in increased transmission.<sup>15</sup>

In response to the increased rodent population in 2018, the central government allocated twelve million yuan for pest control in the region, meaning more residents doing the frontline work in direct contact with rodents. The case of the couple from Inner Mongolia suggests that concurrent investment in healthcare infrastructure and resources to protect the health of those workers will be a crucial piece of managing the plague. It remains to be seen whether 2020, the year of the rat, will also be the year that the rat-borne plague returns to Beijing — and beyond.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Sean Martin, 'Bubonic plague: Third case of plague in China as panic begins — "The plague is coming"', *Express*, 19 November 2019, online at: [www.express.co.uk/news/science/1205992/bubonic-plague-china-plague-news-the-plague-pneumonic-plague-in-china-2019-symptoms](http://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1205992/bubonic-plague-china-plague-news-the-plague-pneumonic-plague-in-china-2019-symptoms)

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation, 'Plague', Fact Sheet, Geneva: WHO, 31 October 2017, online at: [www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/plague](http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/plague)

<sup>3</sup> Caixin, 'Gallery: Catching plague rats on the Tibetan Plateau', *Caixin*, 13 November 2019, online at: [www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-13/gallery-catching-plague-rats-on-the-tibetan-plateau-101482935.html](http://www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-13/gallery-catching-plague-rats-on-the-tibetan-plateau-101482935.html)

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organisation and Pandemic & Epidemic Diseases, 'Global distribution of natural plague foci as of March 2016', Geneva: WHO, 15 March 2016, online at:

[www.who.int/images/default-source/health-topics/plague/plague-map-2016.png?sfvrsn=68bcc3ee\\_4](http://www.who.int/images/default-source/health-topics/plague/plague-map-2016.png?sfvrsn=68bcc3ee_4)

<sup>5</sup> Sui-Lee Wee, 'Pneumonic plague is diagnosed in China', *The New York Times*, 13 November 2019, online at: [www.nytimes.com/2019/11/13/world/asia/plague-china-pneumonic.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/13/world/asia/plague-china-pneumonic.html)

<sup>6</sup> Yu Juan, Ma Danmeng, Liang Zhen, and Denise Jia, 'Two persons diagnosed with pneumonic plague in Beijing', *CX Tech*, 13 November 2019, online at: [www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-13/two-persons-diagnosed-with-pneumonic-plague-in-beijing-101482664.html](http://www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-13/two-persons-diagnosed-with-pneumonic-plague-in-beijing-101482664.html)

<sup>7</sup> Laurie Garrett, 'The real reason to panic about China's plague outbreak', *Foreign Policy*, 16 November 2019, online at: [foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/16/china-bubonic-plague-outbreak-pandemic/](http://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/16/china-bubonic-plague-outbreak-pandemic/)

<sup>8</sup> Yu et al., 'Two persons diagnosed with pneumonic plague in Beijing'.

<sup>9</sup> Flynn Murphy and Zhao Jinzhao, 'Beijing plague patients were medical transfers, further cases in capital unlikely: Officials', *Caixin*, 14 November 2019, online at: [www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-14/beijing-plague-patients-were-medically-transferred-from-inner-mongolia-101483498.html](http://www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-14/beijing-plague-patients-were-medically-transferred-from-inner-mongolia-101483498.html)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> 'Third plague pandemic', Wikipedia, 23 November 2019, online at: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third\\_plague\\_pandemic#cite\\_note-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_plague_pandemic#cite_note-2); Nils Chr. Stenseth, 'Plague Through History', *Science*, vol.321, no.5890 (2008): 773-774, [doi.org/10.1126/science.1161496](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1161496); Sarah Lynar, Bart J. Currie, and Robert Baird, 'Scabies and Mortality', *The Lancet: Infectious Diseases*, vol.17, no.12 (2017): 1234, [doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(17\)30636-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(17)30636-9).

<sup>12</sup> Liang Zhen, Zhao Yinchao, Yu Juan, Ren Qiuyu, and Flynn Murphy, 'In depth: North China region scrambles to prevent plague's spread after scare in Beijing', *CX Tech*, 26 November 2019, online at: [www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-26/in-depth-north-china-region-scrambles-to-prevent-plagues-spread-after-scare-in-beijing-101487584.html](http://www.caixinglobal.com/2019-11-26/in-depth-north-china-region-scrambles-to-prevent-plagues-spread-after-scare-in-beijing-101487584.html)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Xinhua, 'Inner Mongolia combats rat plague', *Xinhua*, 11 May 2018, online at: [www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/11/c\\_137172364.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/11/c_137172364.htm)

<sup>15</sup> Tamara Ben-Ari, Simon Neerinckx, Kenneth L. Gage, Katharina Kreppel, Anne Laudisoit, Herwig Leirs, and Nils Chr. Stenseth, 'Plague and Climate: Scales Matter', *PLoS Pathogens*, vol.7, no.9 (September 2011): e1002160, [doi.org/10.1371/journal.ppat.1002160](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.ppat.1002160).



## Ancient Chinese Fables

### Giving the seedlings a hand

A man in the state of Song was worried about his seedlings growing too slowly. He pulled up the seedlings one by one and came home exhausted.

"I am tired out today. I helped the seedlings to grow," he said to his family.

His son hurried to the fields to have a look and found that all the seedlings had shrivelled up.

Mencius

From K.L. Kiu, *100 Ancient Chinese Fables*, 1985

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