

The
Economist

Is the German model broken?

Iran, 40 years after the revolution

China's embrace of intellectual property

On the economics of species

FEBRUARY 9TH-15TH 2010

Crude awakening

The truth about Big Oil and climate change



Australia	A\$120 (incl. GST)	Hong Kong	HK\$50	Korea	₩12,000	New Zealand	NZ\$15.00	Sri Lanka	Ru\$ 300
Benelux	€7.50	India	₹150	Malaysia	RM5.00	Pakistan	Rs100	Sri Lanka	Rs1,000
Canada	US\$10.00	Indonesia	₹100,000	Philippines	₱100.00	Poland	PLN1.50	Thailand	฿40.00
China	RMB\$9	Japan	¥1,200 (incl. tax)	Singapore	S\$12.00 (incl. GST)	Vietnam	₫100,000		

Mr Mações, a Portuguese political scientist and former foreign minister, sketched some of his arguments in "The Dawn of Eurasia" (published last year). In "Belt and Road" he looks chiefly at China's part in reshaping the world. Until now, its signature foreign-policy project has been known in English as the Belt and Road Initiative. That final word already sounds too diminutive. Encompassing scores of countries and \$1trn of real or promised infrastructure spending, the aim, first, is to create a new global economy with China at its heart. For all China's denials, the Belt and Road is also a major piece of geopolitical engineering. It reflects China's desire to shape its external environment rather than simply adapting to it; some worry that it is China's means to replace an American-led international order with its own. As a phrase, "the Belt and Road" may come to be used in the same, shorthand way as "the West" is today.

Debt and diplomacy

Start with the map, and the story follows. Yet there is no plan or plot, says Mr Mações. President Xi Jinping and his acolytes are no Marxist determinists. Lenin is the better role model as they seize a fleeting chance to change the course of history.

And how. As Peter Frankopan, an Oxford historian, deliciously puts it in "The New Silk Roads", when Mike Pompeo, the secretary of state, last July unveiled America's counter to the Belt and Road, the sum promised—\$13m in new programmes—was only somewhat more than the combined earnings of Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner. Just as "Belt and Road" augments Mr Mações's earlier work, so "The New Silk Roads" updates Mr Frankopan's magnificent history "The Silk Roads" (2015), which altered many readers' views of where the world's historical centre of gravity lay.

China is now repurposing an old tenet. The ancient concept of *tianxia*, or "all under heaven", put China at the heart of power and civilisation. Moral precepts governed relations among states. There are echoes of that in Mr Xi's notion of a "Community of Shared Future for Mankind", and in the constant emphasis on "win-win" outcomes, mutual dependence and respect. Countries' obligations depend on their place in a China-centred network.

The gratitude and dependency of others are convenient for China as it seeks to recycle its foreign-currency surplus, employ its workers on construction sites abroad, secure raw materials and fob off low-grade production onto others so that it may keep the best high-tech manufacturing and services at home. The Trump administration calls this approach "debt-trap diplomacy". But that misses the appeal for many recipients of Chinese largesse. For a start, no one else is offering so much of it.

What is more, as Parag Khanna says in

"The Future is Asian", an upbeat examination of a changing "Greater Asia", others welcome China's infrastructural forays "because they provide cover to pursue their own commercial agendas." Nor does the fact of India, Japan, South Korea and Turkey jumping into an infrastructural arms race imply a zero-sum contest. Rather, says Mr Khanna, a Singapore-based geostrategist, China is thereby "kick-starting the process by which Asians will come out from under its shadow."

Mr Khanna is too blithe about the drawbacks of authoritarianism. He imputes too much technocratic brilliance to the region's elites and glosses over the brutal dimensions of development, including China's high-tech repression against Uighurs. But on an important point, he agrees with Mr Mações and Mr Frankopan: Eurasia's future is likely to be more ductile than fixed and hegemonic. In this new world order, actions still lead to reactions. The increasing alignment of democratic Japan, Australia and India as a response to Chinese assertiveness is only one case in point.

Ineluctably, Eurasia is cohering, but that does not have to be under the stifling "togetherness" of *tianxia*. In their different ways, these books all serve as an antidote to American fears of a Manichaean contest with China. They give shape to latent forces that are already impossible to ignore. ■

Contemporary art in China

The sands of time

BEIDAIHE

A museum on the Chinese coast aims to merge with its environment

BURIED BENEATH a sand dune, in the beach town of Beidaihe, nestles one of China's newest art galleries. An offshoot of the Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art in Beijing, 300km away, the UCCA Dune is unlike any other cutting-edge art museum in China. Most are high-profile architectural statements, erected in the middle of bustling cities. The Dune is subtle and secluded, its galleries unfolding against the backdrop of the sands.

Interdependence with the landscape and the local community is at the heart of the Dune's purpose. It aims to be sustainable ecologically as well as financially, and to help protect the environment rather than destroying it. "Our work was not just to design a physical structure," says Li Hu of OPEN Architecture, one of the overseers of the project, but to "dream up an entirely new type of institution."

Mr Li wanted to create a gallery that was not "juxtaposed" to its environment but



Rooms with a view

"merged into it". Instead of placing the museum on top of the dunes as was originally planned, he decided to bury the building beneath them to preserve the coastal ecology. The structure is heated by geothermal energy; its walls and windows and the wooden tables in its café were handmade from local materials, a tribute to the craftsmanship of the Hebei region. Because the museum is lit naturally by skylights, visitors' experiences of the artwork will vary with the seasons and time of day.

The Dune's interiors are meant to cultivate an intimacy between viewer, work and space. "Going to a museum in China often feels like going to a shopping centre," says Mr Li—an experience of rushed consumerism, typically characterised by large crowds and smartphone selfies. By contrast, the Dune's subterranean galleries invoke the caves in which the most primitive human art was first daubed. The design was inspired by Louis Kahn, a 20th-century American architect who envisaged museums as a "society of rooms", which foster interaction and encourage people to slow down. Given the isolated location, visitors will have to make a deliberate "pilgrimage to the art", as Mr Li puts it, rather than just a hurried urban fly-by.

"After Nature", the inaugural exhibit (curated by Luan Shixuan), focuses on a pertinent subject: the future of humanity's relationship with the natural world. Each of the nine contemporary Chinese artists in the show engages cleverly with the space that their work occupies. Visitors standing in front of Liu Yujia's "Wave", a digital diptych featuring aerial footage of waves rushing against the coast, need only to turn around to find themselves looking out at the Bohai Sea. Beyond a glass door lies Zheng Bo's "Dune Botanical Garden", a

work of bio-art made of transplanted local weeds that also functions as a museum garden. Nearby stands "Destination", an installation by Na Buqi, which comprises an overturned billboard advertising an eerily photoshopped beachside getaway.

Ms Na's contribution is a wry commentary on the museum itself. Its location, Beidaihe, is well-established as both a summer retreat for Beijing's political elite and a popular beach resort for domestic tourists. Cranes crowd behind the dunes, supervising construction work by Aranya, a Chinese developer that also funded and built the museum. Much as the Dune wants to attract visitors, a big influx might threaten its sustainable vision: like that forlorn billboard, a picture-perfect ideal risks being compromised by the double-edged forces of consumption. ■

Segregation in America

Lines of colour

Separate: The Story of Plessy v Ferguson, and America's Journey from Slavery to Segregation. By Steve Luxenberg. W.W. Norton; 624 pages; \$35.00

THE KEY TO SUCCESS at the Supreme Court, as the late Justice William Brennan liked to say, is the number five. With five votes—a majority of the justices—you can do anything. But as an impassioned group of activists discovered in 1896, falling short sometimes does more than disappoint a losing litigant: it can cement a disastrous status quo for generations.

In "Separate", the context and aftermath of the court's ruling in *Plessy v Ferguson* are woven into a nuanced history of America's struggles in the 19th century as a civil war was fought, slavery ended and a new, complex racial politics haltingly took form. Steve Luxenberg, an editor at the *Washington Post*, dwells on the personal lives of the men who built and decided a case that wound up blessing the regime of Jim Crow segregation in America's South. His narrative culminates in an irony: six of the seven justices who signed onto what became one of the Supreme Court's most reviled rulings were northerners. John Marshall Harlan—a Kentuckian who once "had no quarrel with slavery" and whose family owned many slaves—wrote a dissent articulating the constitutional principle of racial equality that was not upheld by a majority of the court until *Brown v Board of Education*, nearly six decades later.

Like any good history, "Separate" introduces some puzzles while resolving others.

A key facet of the story, unknown by many—including, apparently, the justices who heard the case—is that the episode spurring Plessy was an elaborate set-up designed to hasten just such a reckoning. When Homer Plessy, a French-speaking Creole with only one black great-grandparent, took his seat in the white carriage of a Louisiana train in 1892, an officer approached him. "Are you a coloured man?" he asked. When the fair-skinned Mr Plessy answered "yes", yet refused to budge, he was arrested for violating the state's Separate Car Act. The scene had been carefully choreographed by the Comité des Citoyens, a civil-rights alliance of blacks, whites and Creoles in New Orleans whose first attempt at a test case (with Daniel Desdunes, a citizen's son, in Plessy's role) had recently foundered on a technicality.

"Separate" notes that several prominent men of colour, including Frederick Douglass—the escaped slave who became a celebrated abolitionist and orator—never thought much of the legal strategy of challenging segregation on the rails. It stung Louis Martinet, editor of the *New Orleans Crusader*, that Douglass "saw no good in the undertaking". But Martinet experienced moments of doubt, too, wondering if white racism and black "submissiveness" rendered their fight a "hopeless battle".

Albion Tourgée and James Walker, the lawyers arguing Plessy's case at the Supreme Court, knew at the outset that the justices were "somewhat adverse" to their position. So they pulled out all the stops with a nearly 80-page brief. Segregation in railcars violated the Thirteenth Amendment banning slavery; they reasoned, as it "reimpose[d] the caste system". It was barred by each of the four provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment, including the citizenship and equal-protection clauses. Most creatively, the lawyers contended that tossing a light-skinned man with a few drops of coloured blood out of a white carriage violated his due-process rights, as it amounted to a "forcible confiscation" of "the reputation of being white".

Wrapping these claims in a vision of colour-blindness, Tourgée and Walker persuaded only one justice—Harlan—that segregation was a "badge of servitude" at odds with the constitution's promise of equality. Meanwhile Justice Henry Brown, writing for the majority, found separate carriages stigmatising only if "the coloured race chooses to put that construction upon it". Luxenberg attributes Brown's myopic view that "separate did not mean unequal" to his sheltered New England upbringing and "most conventional" outlook. "Separate" shows how seven justices launched a half-century of racial cruelty because, unlike Harlan, they failed to see that "equality and opportunity could not survive if they came in different colours". ■

A memoir of madness

Physician, curb thyself

Let Me Not Be Mad. By A.K. Benjamin. Bodley Head; 213 pages; £16.99. To be published in America by Dutton in June; \$27

THIS IS A golden age for books written by doctors, psychoanalysts, surgeons and the like. In Britain, "This Is Going To Hurt", Adam Kay's memoir about his time as a junior doctor, has featured on bestseller lists for months. Atul Gawande, an American surgeon, has written a series of thoughtful inquiries into the limits of surgical intervention and end-of-life care. Books by Oliver Sacks, a neurosurgeon who popularised the genre with works such as "The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat" before his death in 2015, are still being published.

"Let Me Not Be Mad" seems, at first glance, to fit into this trend. Written by a clinical neurologist under the pseudonym A.K. Benjamin, it begins at an anonymous, presumably British, hospital. A female patient—an amalgam, like all the figures in the book, of several different case studies and encounters, both "real and imagined"—sits down in the doctor's office, having been referred to him because her brain appears to be "rotting". Mr Benjamin zooms out to predict her future: "Forgetfulness first...The onset of 'anomia' following the rule of frequency: losing the name for



A naughty night to swim in