

# Open Letter to Xi Jinping on the Climate Crisis

Professor Graham Parkes



**Institut für Philosophie**

Dr. Graham Parkes

Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien

Email: [graham.parkes@univie.ac.at](mailto:graham.parkes@univie.ac.at)

Vienna, 26 November 2022

President Xi Jinping  
General Secretary Office  
Central Committee of the Communist Party of China  
Zhongnanhai Ximen, Fuyou Street  
Xicheng District, BEIJING 100017  
People's Republic of China

Dear President Xi,

Please excuse my encroaching upon your valuable time, but the topic is urgent: the crisis with the climate, which will cause greater harm to China than to many other countries.

When you became General Secretary in 2012, I remember hoping that your advisers would brief you on the conclusions of the landmark report from the previous year by the China Economists 50 Forum and the Stockholm Environment Institute (along with the eminent climate economist Nicholas Stern). *The Economics of Climate Change in China: Toward a Low-Carbon Economy*, showed how China could "phase out coal and still maintain economic growth and aspirations for development". The authors concluded that, although a transition to a low-carbon economy would involve some costs up front and a loss of short-term profits, it would improve China's energy security and strengthen its economy in the long run—not to mention help prevent the planet from burning.

Unfortunately, however, your government opted for short-term profitability and a continued reliance on coal. But ten years later, extreme weather worldwide clearly shows the huge risks of continuing to burn fossil fuels. Your advisers will have impressed upon you how much China will suffer from global heating, insofar as the extremes of weather that have plagued the country recently will become steadily more frequent. Climate models predict that large parts of China will become uninhabitable if carbon emissions continue on anything like their current

path, with hundreds of millions of people harmed and displaced by heatwaves, droughts, floods, and sea level rise.

Because of high levels of humidity due to centuries of irrigation, the North China Plain, which is one of the most densely populated regions on earth, will eventually become too hot for human beings to survive there. According to a study published in 2018 by researchers at MIT and the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology, the North China Plain "faces the greatest risks to human life from rising temperatures of any location on Earth".

The validity of this study was confirmed by the heatwaves that ravaged large swathes of China for seventy days this past summer, which according to the Chinese Meteorological Administration were the most extreme ("long duration, wide range, strong intensity") since complete records began in 1961. One climate historian later called those heatwaves "the most severe recorded anywhere".

Oceanographers have long been warning that global heating is causing sea level rise around the world, but for a number of reasons this is happening faster along China's east coast than in most other places. A study of nine major coastal cities around the world found that Shanghai "stands out as the most exposed to coastal floods, mainly due to its high number of people living in flood-prone areas". The National Marine Environmental Monitoring Centre of China reported that sea levels along the coast reached a record high in 2021.

Researchers from the Ministry of Natural Resources in Qingdao have recently discovered that the sea level along the coast of China is rising faster than the global average, a phenomenon confirmed by several other studies. As you know, some 60% of your country's industry and 40% of the population are situated along the coast at low elevations, which means that sea level rise is going to wreak devastating economic and humanitarian havoc unless global heating is seriously mitigated. Rising seas will oblige many millions of people to move away from the coast. I wonder where they'll go — certainly not to the North China Plain, where "wet bulb" temperatures will be too high for people to survive out of doors.

A surplus of sea water is not the only problem. The summer of 2021 saw deadly flooding in Henan province, when "the heaviest hour of rainfall ever reliably recorded in China" fell on Zhengzhou, and the resulting floods killed several hundred people. A few months later, "the 59 observatories across Shanxi province all recorded historic levels of rain" thanks to three days of torrential downpours. Unsurprisingly, "Chinese meteorologists link such unpredictable weather patterns to the climate crisis": and so the more we accelerate global heating by burning fossil fuels, the more frequent these extreme precipitation events will become. If you are inclined to believe that some new technology will be able to capture the carbon or suck it out of the air, please consult your scientific advisors, who will tell you that the putative "fixes" are not feasible. The costs would be astronomical, and it would be impossible to deploy them in time to avoid the worst.

But since, as you like to say, "humanity has increasingly emerged as a community of common destiny", and since the climate crisis is unavoidably global in nature, China's contribution to dealing with it won't work without cooperation from the west, and the rest. And so it's all the more sad that for our part we are also failing to confront the situation with the climate, in part because of a hyper-individualistic view of ourselves as human beings. A "wicked problem", the climate crisis demands not just a few adjustments to our current worldview, but rather a radical *reframing* of our entire way of thinking. A recent book on the topic shows a number of ideas from Confucian and Daoist philosophy to be perfectly suited for such a reframing—and it turns out that you have cited most of these ideas in your speeches.

As a long-time student of classical Chinese philosophy, I believe that it would help enormously if we were to adopt and implement relevant ideas from the Chinese tradition. It was therefore encouraging when you began promoting "socialism with Chinese characteristics" as meaning a socialism grounded in ancient Chinese *philosophical* ideas. It seems to me that you have outlined in your early speeches as President a view of who and how we human beings are that would provide grounds for successful cooperation between China and the rest of the world on tackling the climate crisis—which is after all in the interests of every country on earth.

But let me first address an issue that tends to be a stumbling block in the way of good relations between your country and western nations. On the 95th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement of 1919 (a response to the betrayal of China by the Triple Entente at the Versailles Peace Conference), you delivered a speech to students and faculty at Peking University. In the process of connecting the spirit of the May Fourth Movement with a long-standing Chinese "dream of a great national rejuvenation", you recalled a nightmarish phase of the nation's history, the "century of national humiliation". Here is what you said:

"China used to be a world economic power. However, it missed its chance in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and the consequent dramatic changes, and thus was left behind and suffered humiliation under foreign invasion. Things got worse especially after the Opium War of the 1840s, when the nation was plagued by poverty and weakness, allowing others to trample upon and manipulate us. We must not let this tragic history repeat itself."

As a citizen of the United Kingdom, I have to admit that the Opium Wars were one of the most deplorable chapters in the long story of British imperial adventures overseas. As William Gladstone famously said of the First Opium War, in an address to Parliament at the time: he did not know of "a war more unjust in its origin, a war more calculated in its progress to cover this country with permanent disgrace".

I also have to admit that the British diplomat most responsible for the outbreak of the Second Opium War, Sir Harry Smith Parkes, may be an ancestor of mine. His subsequent imprisonment by the Chinese in Beijing was a factor in the eventual, disgraceful looting and burning of the Yuanming Yuan. I uttered an unheard apology on my first visit to the ruins

of those aptly named Gardens of Perfect Brightness in the 1980s, and apologise again to you now. Harry Parkes was apparently a capable diplomat in many respects, but also something of a hothead.

At any rate, I have to say I found the conclusion of your brief discussion at Peking University of the century of national humiliation quite encouraging: "China has stood up. It will never again tolerate being bullied by any nation. Yet it will never follow in the footsteps of the big powers, which seek hegemony once they grow strong. Our country is following a path of peaceful development." Many commentators were delighted to learn that your government was going to continue the commitment of your predecessor Hu Jintao to China's peaceful development.

I do wish the powers that colonised China in the nineteenth century would issue formal apologies, so that we could all move on. If critics of China could acknowledge the wrongs of that imperialism, the ultranationalist Chinese would no longer have grounds for grudges. Awareness of those wrongs would also grant us westerners a broader perspective on what is happening with Hong Kong. We rightly stand in solidarity with the protestors there because—to speak frankly—your government is no longer honouring the "two systems" part of the "one country, two systems" principle. But on our side we need to understand that many Chinese are wondering where that second, foreign system came from in the first place. What on earth were the British doing in Hong Kong in the mid-nineteenth century? Nothing very honourable, I'm afraid.

One of the most reassuring features of your Peking University speech was the announcement that your government would "carry forward the core socialist values through absorbing the rich nourishment of Chinese culture, so as to invigorate its vitality and broaden its influence". You then treated your audience to twenty quotations from the ancient Chinese classics, among which were Confucius's exhortation to be "true in word and resolute in deed", and his question, "If a man does not keep his word, what is he good for?"

Standing by one's word is of course a key virtue for the Confucians, and one that is sadly rare among political leaders these days. But your endorsement of Confucian sincerity would give readers of your book *The Governance of China* reason to suppose that you would follow through on the "philosophy of the new central leadership" articulated in your speeches from 2012 to 2014. After all, it would be awkward, and lead to loss of face, to turn out to be professing Confucian philosophy insincerely.

You went on to quote the ancient adage, "Harmony of Nature and the Human", which refers to an original harmony, since lost, but eminently worth regaining. The practical implication is that human activities tend to fail when they conflict with the powers of Heaven and Earth, and are more likely to succeed when integrated with them. Our insistence on burning fossil fuels, pursuing massive deforestation, and raising cattle on an industrial scale generates a volume of greenhouse gas emissions that is throwing off the Earth's energy balance, disrupting the dynamic harmony that prevailed during the Holocene Era. The urgent task is to restore the

harmony among the Heavens, the human world, and the Earth as much as we can.

You returned to the topic of "the harmonious coexistence of humanity and nature" a couple of years later, invoking the ideas of Frederick Engels: "According to materialistic dialectics ... the world is an interrelated whole and an interactive system." You then emphasise that "human development activities must respect, accommodate, and protect nature; otherwise nature will retaliate against us". To illustrate the point, you paraphrase that wonderful passage in *Dialectics of Nature* where Engels gives an account of civilisations that ignored the principle of protecting nature (in Mesopotamia, Greece, Asia Minor, and Europe) and suffered dire consequences as a result.

You go on to list some major twentieth-century environmental disasters in the West, followed by a series of environmental abuses in the history of China up to the Qing dynasty in the nineteenth century, coming to this eminently sensible conclusion: "We must take warning from these cases." These are salutary reminders indeed—alongside the devastating consequences of Mao Zedong's "war against nature", which began with the Great Leap Forward. As you yourself then say, quoting Engels: "Let us not flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory, nature takes its revenge on us."

You then show how these ideas of Engels are anticipated in the ancient Chinese classics, citing relevant passages from the *Analects* of Confucius, the masterpiece by the third great Confucian thinker *Xunzi*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals of Lü Buwei*. The gist of these texts is that human activities such as fishing, hunting, and tree-cutting need to be practised *sustainably* (to use a modern term), so as not to deplete the natural resources on which our existence depends. These are wonderful and timely ideas, and all the more pertinent in the light of your demonstration of their compatibility with Marxist socialism on these topics. It's hard to think of many world leaders who promote such beneficial notions from the classics in their public pronouncements.

I also can't think of many world leaders whose ambition for the country is to make it into "a modestly prosperous society", rather than an opulent paradise of consumerism. Your often-stated opposition to "hedonism and extravagance and waste" is correspondingly absent from political rhetoric in most western countries. This attitude is perfectly in line with the Confucian encouragement of modesty and restraint (though not to the point of asceticism), and the Daoists' promotion of sufficiency and their warnings against excess.

Your emphasis on moderation, which also comes from the Chinese Buddhist tradition, is perfect for our present era, now that we've brought the age of planetary abundance to an end. It's a pity that the Chinese middle classes have fallen for consumerism in such a big way, and I hope the Party can persuade them that the pursuit of greater wealth and ever more pleasure is a dead end—and that natural limits will in any case put an end to excessive levels of consumption.

In a speech to the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee in 2013, you addressed the question of how to "improve the country's resource management system". You reminded your audience that the people together with "mountains, waters, forests, farmlands and lakes form a living community", and emphasised that "to control the exploitation of natural resources and restore ecosystems, we must follow the laws of nature." This allusion to the *Laozi* (ch. 25) sums up the Daoist attitude perfectly. Human activities meet with success when they follow the ways of the greater powers of Heaven and Earth, which in turn exemplify the spontaneous patterning of *dao*.

I was interested to learn that when you inspected flood control measures in Anhui province in August of 2020, you again recommended "following the laws of nature" in dealing with flooding, and praised the legendary Emperor Yu's sensible "way of dealing with water". This echoes the passage in the *Mencius* where Yu is praised for taming the floods by "following water's natural ways". Your attitude is a welcome change from former president Jiang Zemin's, who during a ceremony at the Three Gorges Dam dismayed ecologically-minded academics in China by triumphantly repeating the Maoist slogan: "The human must conquer nature".

And I must say you dismayed this academic here in Vienna when you said in a recent speech that "China's low-carbon ambitions must not interfere with normal life"—because extremes of weather are *already* interfering with normal life for many millions of Chinese! One thinks of the maxim from Emperor Yu that you cited as the first of your twenty "quotations from ancient classics" at Peking University: "The people are the basis of the state." (You omitted the beginning of the dictum: "The emperor must cherish the people and never abuse them".)

The ruler's obligation to "take good care of the people" is also just what Marxist socialism demands when applied to Chinese conditions. The Party must be, as you often say, "dedicated to serving the people". This is quite in keeping with the ancient Chinese idea that the emperor as the Son of Heaven must take care of the people—as the basis of the state—as if they were his own children. If he fails, it will be a sign that he has lost the Mandate of Heaven and it is time for a new regime.

Ever since Emperor Yu's success in taking care of the floodwaters, rulers in China have been granted legitimacy on their ability to manage the power of water so as to ensure the welfare of the people. And insofar as the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party depends on its taking good care of the people, it had better not ignore or downplay the danger of global heating, which is already inflicting considerable harm on millions of Chinese citizens.

Going back to your twenty quotations: several of them show how good government is an extension of the well-functioning family, and is based on the maxim that Confucius said is the "single thread" running throughout his teaching: "Do not impose on others what you yourself do not want." If more people were to practise this "negative" formulation of the Golden Rule, the world would be a far better place. So much of what goes wrong

stems from one group's blaming another group for what are in fact its own failings, and laying upon others the burden of "shaping up". As Mencius said, "The trouble with people is that they neglect their own fields in order to weed the fields of others." The good ruler, by contrast, is concerned to rectify his own shortcomings and take into account the situation and perspectives of the people.

You yourself cite Mencius when he says: "Treat the elders of other families well, as well as you would treat your own", and also (he adds) "treat your own young in a manner befitting their tender age and extend this to the young of other families." This principle (also to be found in Confucius) of extending the love that one naturally has for members of immediate family to more distant relatives, and then farther, is an eminently sensible basis for political philosophy and good government. As Confucius said, citing the *Classic of History*: "Simply by being a good son, and friendly to his brothers, a man can exert an influence on government".

Naturally you included in the twenty quotations the key principle in Confucian political philosophy: "Govern the people through virtuosity and educate them through ritual propriety". You don't cite what Confucius then said, which is that people "will then order themselves" spontaneously, with no need for coercion on the part of government. For the Confucians, the idea is to lead by example rather than govern by enforcement, fixing their own faults in order to set an example for others. As you suggested earlier in your Peking University speech, this kind of virtuosic governance is only attainable through assiduous self-cultivation. Paraphrasing the well-known passage in the *Great Learning*, you talk of how "cultivating oneself, managing the family, and governing the state" can eventually in full extension "safeguard peace for All under the Heavens".

For the Daoists as well as the Confucians, the best way to govern is non-coercively, by having those in power become stellar examples that people will be naturally drawn to follow. By extension into interstate relations, the Central Kingdom was to use the power of its virtuosity (especially in governing) to draw surrounding states into its orbit, rather than expanding the Empire by deploying military force. This is basically a matter of what we in the West call "soft power"—a phenomenon I know you are interested in.

But let me go back to the issue of being "trustworthy in word", which figured in two of your twenty quotations and is confirmed by Confucius's insistence that the true gentleman is ashamed if his actions fail to measure up to his words. On the positive side, the Party has continued the impressive achievements under previous leaders of helping the poor in China to get out of poverty. It is also taking good care of the people by reducing pollution of the air, water, and soil—although the appalling environmental legacy of the Mao era will take a long time to rectify. People can also be grateful for a reduction in government corruption, even if punishments may have fallen disproportionately on your political rivals or enemies.

On the negative side, some of your recommendations deriving from ancient Chinese wisdom are now being directly contradicted by the Party's

actions. In the first few speeches in *The Governance of China*, you acknowledged the importance of *diversity* for a thriving culture, and applauded the long history of Chinese people "creating a homeland where all ethnic groups live in harmony". You praised their success over millennia in keeping together "the fifty-six ethnic groups" that comprise the population. The third of your twenty quotations cites a key notion in Confucian philosophy, "Harmony rather than uniformity", which you later develop in the context of "a world with different cultures, ethnic groups, skin colours, religions and social systems". There you quote from the Confucian classics in celebrating the richness that comes from harmonious blending of diverse flavours in cooking and diverse sounds in music.

Addressing the thirteenth National People's Congress in 2018, you assured the audience: "We have developed harmonious relationships among fifty-six diverse but closely interwoven ethnic groups. We have formed one great Chinese family where all care for and help each other." That's certainly the traditional ideal—but the Tibetans and the Uyghurs would ridicule the pretence that the CCP has made any effort to realise it. Yes, Tibet and Xinjiang have been difficult to govern, but that is no excuse for erasing Tibetan and Uyghur culture from the grand harmony that you claim China represents.

It's interesting that you cite in your speeches maxims of Confucian and Daoist political philosophy that advocate non-coercive government, but you only once quote the radically opposed Legalist philosopher Han Fei (and then on a neutral topic). Legalist philosophy regards the Confucian view as hopelessly idealistic, and encourages the ruler to use whatever brute force may be required to stay in power, and employ coercion and punishments (along with occasional rewards) in order to maintain order.

The neighbours along your borders and around the South China Sea might be forgiven for thinking that your speeches on "China's Peaceful Development" ring a little hollow, and that you are actually following hardline Legalist principles rather than the Confucian philosophy you claim to espouse. And may I be forgiven for remarking that the only imperial dynasty to enact Legalist political philosophy, the Qin—infamous for burning books and burying scholars—was the shortest-lived in Chinese history? A mere fifteen years by contrast with 276 for both the Ming and Ching dynasties.

The Chinese people will surely flourish better if the Party stays with Marxist socialism, which is compatible with the ancient Chinese ideas you want as a foundation, rather than lurching into Leninism, which corresponds with Legalism, and even into Stalinism. Neither Lenin nor Stalin was a thinker, nor was their Chinese follower Mao Zedong (especially by contrast with the subtlety of Han Fei), and the regimes of Stalin and Mao signally failed to benefit the many millions of people who died under them.

Marx and Engels wanted people above all to be free: liberated from the chains imposed by ruthless capitalists, and free for more fulfilling work than capitalism generally offers. Quite in the spirit of the ancient Chinese thinkers, the authors of the *Communist Manifesto* promoted a politics that



encourages *association*, "in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all." The free development of human capacities is not something one immediately associates with life in China today.

Another venerable feature of the Chinese polity for millennia was the practice of *remonstrance*, as encouraged by both Confucius and Mencius. If the emperor is about to do something reckless, or is failing to act when necessary, his ministers are duty bound to advise him—most diplomatically—of the right course of action. This roughly corresponds to the western system of checks and balances among separated powers of government. It apparently used to be customary among members of the Chinese Communist Party to question and to dissent where appropriate, but nowadays doubters and dissenters are simply not tolerated.

This is the problem when a supreme leader arrogates too much power to himself: nobody dares to disagree, and so he gets trapped in an echo chamber of his own opinions, a hall of mirrors reflecting his own views. This is what is happening to your "no limits" friend Vladimir Putin, and it's not turning out well for him, or the rest of us. I'm afraid your insistence on the zero-Covid policy, in the face of most scientific advice, is not going to turn out well either. As you yourself have said, "it is not easy to govern a country of 1.3 billion people", and so any sensible leader will be open to good advice from others in his circle.

As far as I can tell, you already have more than enough power, and until recently you enjoyed a high level of popular support domestically, coming across as an upright character untainted by corruption. To the extent that your anti-corruption drive has succeeded, your colleagues in government will also be upright and conscientious. You frequently talk about the need for the ruler and top members of the Party to be competent and benefit the governed, and to develop through self-cultivation such a level of virtuosity that people are naturally drawn to follow their example. So why not *trust* the Confucian soft power of your collective moral authority and discontinue the Legalist programme of domestic coercion and suppression of dissenting voices? You could think of it as soft power with Confucian characteristics.

That great political thinker Xunzi, whom you occasionally cite, memorably quoted a traditional maxim that warns of the perils of instability for the ship of state: "The lord is the boat; his subjects the water. / It's the water that sustains the boat, / and the water that capsizes the boat." If you expose the people to a surplus of water in the form of floods and sea level rise, you will appear to have lost the Mandate of Heaven, and be at risk of capsize. There will be calls for a leader who can take better care of the people in the long run.

Nor is it sufficient to take care of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions domestically, since we're talking about *global* heating as the cause of these problems. As you like to remind the audience of your speeches, "China will thrive only when the world prospers", because "this is a world where countries are linked with, and dependent on, one another at a level never seen before"? Since the world of today is indeed, as you

say, "an interrelated whole", you have to pursue solutions that go beyond the nation, and interlinked countries, to All under the Heavens.

China wants to be respected as a great power, and you have often called for a strengthening of Chinese "cultural soft power" to achieve that aim. "Soft power" is just a western formulation of the Confucian idea that the good ruler leads by example rather than governing by coercion, and that a state is great when it attracts others by the beauty of its governance. That is surely the way to go, rather than the coercive Legalist route, since continuing domestic oppression and aggression abroad will guarantee a massive loss of soft power, as foreign observers are repelled by the ugliness of Chinese governance.

The absence of any serious climate leadership from the world's former hegemon, the United States, opens the way for China to lead global action to cope with the climate crisis. In your speech to the CPC National Congress in 2017, you said the country was "taking the driving seat in international cooperation to respond to climate change." The world is waiting for the sound of the engine starting. If you were to follow ancient Chinese wisdom in taking the lead on slowing global heating for the long-term benefit of the Chinese people, you would in one stroke legitimise the Party's rule *and* gain the gratitude of the whole world and the greatest soft-power triumph in human history.

I'm sorry, I've already taken up more of your time than I wanted to. So let me finish by wishing you all the very best in continuing to work for the well-being of people in China and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Parkes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'G'.

Graham Parkes

Professorial Research Fellow

## ENDNOTES

- 1 *Nicholas Stern*: Gang et al. 2011.
- 2 *location on Earth*: Chandler 2018.  
*recorded anywhere*: China Meteorological Administration 2022. Also Le Page 2022.  
*flood-prone areas*: Balica et al. 2012.  
*record high in 2021*: Pole 2022.  
*several other studies*: Ravilious 2022.  
*several hundred people*: Bradsher 2021.  
*events will become*: Ni 2021.
- 3 *ideas in your speeches*: Parkes 2021.  
*history repeat itself*: Xi 2014, 189.  
*with permanent disgrace*: Cited in Fay 1975, 203.  
*the Yuanming Yuan*: Wong 2001.
- 4 *path of peaceful development*: Xi 2014, 189.  
*what is he good for?*: Xi 2014, 190, citing Confucius, *Analects* 15.6 and 2.22 (see also 1.13, 1.14, 4.22, 4.24, 12.3, 14.27).  
*from 2012 to 2014*: Xi 2014, 'Publisher's Note'.  
*eminently worth regaining*: Xi 2014, 190.
- 5 *consequences as a result*: Xi 2017a, 225, 228 (referring to Engels 1934).  
*the Great Leap Forward*: Shapiro 2001.  
*Annals of Lü Buwei*: Xi 2017a, 228 - 231; also Xi, 230.  
*in most western countries*: References to the goal of 'a modestly prosperous society' and denunciations of hedonism, extravagance, and waste' in *Governance I* alone are too numerous to mention.  
*the laws of nature*: Xi 2014, 95-96.
- 6 *water's natural ways*: Mencius, VI.B11, also III.A4, B9.  
*must conquer nature*: Shapiro 2001, 64.  
*millions of Chinese!*: Ni 2022.  
*and never abuse them*: Xi 2014, 190. Emperor Yu's dictum is from the 'Lament of the Five Sons' chapter of the *Shujing* (Classic of Chronicles), or *Shangshu*.  
*serving the people*: References to 'serving the people' in the first volume of *Governance* alone are too many to list.  
*yourself do not want*: Xi 2014, 190, citing Confucius, *Analects* 15.24 and

4.15.

*young of other families: Mencius, I.A7.*

*influence on government: Confucius, Analects 2.21.*

- 7 *through ritual propriety: Xi 2014, 190, referring to Confucius, Analects 2.3. See also Analects 2.1, 13.13, 14.42, and 15.15.*

*All under the Heavens: Xi 2014, 188, paraphrasing the ‘Eight Stages’ in the initial ‘Text’ section of the Great Learning.*

*measure up to his words: See, for example, Confucius, Analects 4.22, 14.27.*

*diverse sounds in music: Xi 2014, 4, 41; Confucius, Analects 13.23; Xi, Governance, 287, also 291.*

*and help each other: Xi 2020, 167.*

- 8 *on a neutral topic: Xi 2014, 457, on the necessity for leaders to have experience in their fields.*

*are simply not tolerated: See Cai 2021 and 2022.*

- 9 *capsizes the boat: Xunzi, 9.4.*

*All under the Heavens: Xi 2014, 70, 298.*

*respond to climate change: Xi 2017b.*

## References

- Balica, S. F. et al. 2012. "A flood vulnerability index for coastal cities and its use in assessing climate change impacts," *Natural Hazards*, 64:73–105. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11069-012-0234-1>.
- Bradsher, Keith. 2021. "How Record Rain and Officials' Mistakes Led to Drownings on a Subway." *New York Times*, September 25, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/25/world/asia/china-floods-subway-train.html>.
- Cai, Xia. 2021. "The Party that Failed: An Insider Breaks with Beijing." *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2021.
- . "The Weakness of Xi Jinping: How Hubris and Paranoia Threaten China's Future." *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2022.
- Chandler, David L. 2018. "China could face deadly heat waves due to climate change," *MIT News*, July 31, 2018. <https://news.mit.edu/2018/china-could-face-deadly-heat-waves-due-climate-change-0731>.
- China Meteorological Administration. 2022. "Combined intensity of heat-wave events." *China Meteorological New Press*, August 21, 2022. [https://www.cma.gov.cn/en2014/news/News/202208/t20220821\\_5045788.html](https://www.cma.gov.cn/en2014/news/News/202208/t20220821_5045788.html).
- Engels, Frederick. 1934. "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man." Moscow: Progress Publishers. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1876/part-played-labour/index.htm>.
- Fay, Peter Ward. 1975. *The Opium War, 1840-42: Barbarians in the Celestial Empire*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Gang, Fan et al., eds. 2011 *The Economics of Climate Change in China: Toward a Low-Carbon Economy*. Abingdon UK and New York: Earthscan.
- Le Page, Michael. 2022. "Heatwave in China is the most severe ever recorded in the world." *NewScientist*, August 23, 2022. <https://www.newscientist.com/article/2334921-heatwave-in-china-is-the-most-severe-ever-recorded-in-the-world/>.
- Ni, Vincent. 2021. "'It's Alarming': Intense rainfall and extreme weather become the norm in northern China." *The Guardian*, November 9, 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/09/intense-rainfall-extreme-weather-northern-china>.
- . 2022. "Low-carbon ambitions must not interfere with 'normal life', says Xi Jinping." *The Guardian*, January 26, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/26/xi-jinping-warns-chinas-low-carbon-ambitions-must-not-interfere-with-normal-life>.

Parkes, Graham. 2021. *How to Think about the Climate Crisis: A philosophical guide to saner ways of living*. London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021.

Pole, Jill with Reuters/ 2022. "China sets new record for rising sea levels", *euronews.green*, May 9, 2022. <https://www.euronews.com/green/2022/05/09/china-sets-new-record-for-rising-sea-levels-how-will-its-cities-cope>.

Ravilious, Kate. 2022. "Terrawatch: Why is sea level rising faster along China's coast?" *The Guardian*, September 28, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2022/sep/28/terrawatch-why-is-sea-level-rising-faster-along-china-coast>.

Shapiro, Judith. 2001. *Mao's War against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wong, Young-Tsu. 2001. *A Paradise Lost: The Imperial Garden Yuanming Yuan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Xi, Jinping. 2014. *The Governance of China*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.

———. 2017a. *The Governance of China II*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.

———. 2017b. "Report to the 19<sup>th</sup> CPC National Congress." *China Daily*, November 4, 2017. [https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/19thcpcnational-congress/2017-11/04/content\\_34115212.htm](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/19thcpcnational-congress/2017-11/04/content_34115212.htm).

———. 2020. *The Governance of China III*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.