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101 CHINA FACTS

FOR THE FACTUALLY MINDED

BRAS, SCORPIONS, EUNUCHS & MORE
A MIDDLE KINGDOM MISCELLANY

Cover Story

封面



1

"CHINA"
THE WORD "CHINA" IS DERIVED FROM CIN (چين), A PERSIAN NAME FOR CHINA POPULARIZED IN EUROPE BY MARCO POLO. THIS WORD IN TURN IS BELIEVED TO BE DERIVED FROM QIN (秦), AS IN THE QIN DYNASTY (221 – 206 BC). AN ALTERNATE THEORY IS THAT THE WORD IS DERIVED FROM YELANG, AN ANCIENT KINGDOM IN WHAT IS NOW GUIZHOU, WHOSE INHABITANTS REFERRED TO THEMSELVES AS "ZINA."



3

NAILS
IT WAS CUSTOMARY FOR WEALTHY MEN AND WOMEN IN THE LATE EMPIRE TO GROW THE NAILS OF THEIR LITTLE FINGERS EXTREMELY LONG AS A SIGN OF THEIR RANK (DISPLAYING THAT THEY WERE ABOVE MANUAL LABOR). THEY OFTEN WORE DECORATIVE GOLD AND SILVER NAIL GUARDS TO PROTECT THEIR NAILS. YOU HAVE PROBABLY NOTICED CABBIES DOING THE SAME – OH YEAH, THEY'RE LIVING THE DREAM.



2

CRICKETS
CRICKET FIGHTING IS A POPULAR AMUSEMENT IN CHINA. THE BEST FIGHTERS ARE BELIEVED TO COME FROM SHANDONG. FOLKLORE HAS IT THAT, OVERRUN BY AN ENEMY INVASION 800 YEARS AGO, A SONG DYNASTY EMPEROR SCATTERED HIS PRIZED CRICKET COLLECTION AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT TAI. AN ESTIMATED 500,000 PEOPLE TRAVEL TO THE COUNTY OF NINGYANG EACH YEAR TO PURCHASE THEIR DESCENDANTS, CREATING A CRICKET INDUSTRY WORTH RMB300 MILLION TO THE REGION.



4

REBELLION
HONG XIUQUAN, WHO LED THE TAIPING REBELLION AGAINST THE QING DYNASTY, REGARDED HIMSELF AS THE YOUNGER BROTHER OF JESUS CHRIST. AFTER FAILING THE IMPERIAL EXAMINATIONS FOUR TIMES, HE HAD A SERIES OF VISIONS AMONG WHICH A MAN WITH A GOLDEN BEARD HANDED HIM A SWORD AND A SEAL TO PURIFY CHINA. THE TAIPING REBELLION WAS THE WORLD'S BLOODIEST CIVIL WAR; IT LASTED 13 YEARS FROM 1851 TO 1864 AND RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF AT LEAST 20 MILLION PEOPLE.



5

PIGS
THERE ARE OVER 446 MILLION PIGS IN CHINA. THAT'S ONE FOR EVERY THREE PEOPLE, 46 PERCENT OF THE PIG POPULATION OF THE WORLD AND MORE THAN THE NEXT 43 PORK PRODUCING COUNTRIES COMBINED. PORK ACCOUNTS FOR 70 PERCENT OF ALL MEAT EATEN IN THE COUNTRY.



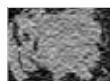
6

ACUPUNCTURE
SELF-ACUPUNCTURING WEI SHENGCHU, A COSMETIC DOCTOR FROM GUANGXI ZHUANG AUTONOMOUS REGION, HOLDS THE GUINNESS WORLD RECORD FOR THE MOST NEEDLES IN THE HEAD WITH 2,009, ACHIEVED IN MILAN, ITALY ON APRIL 11, 2009.



8

LANDMASS
ACCORDING TO CHINA, IT IS THE THIRD LARGEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD (AFTER RUSSIA, CANADA, BUT BEFORE THE US) AND THE LARGEST ALL-ASIAN COUNTRY, WITH AN AREA OF 9,596,961 SQUARE KILOMETERS AND WITH APPROXIMATELY 5,000 ISLANDS LYING OFF ITS COAST.



9

FURTHEST FROM SEA
THE EURASIAN POLE OF INACCESSIBILITY – THE POINT ON LAND FARTHEST FROM ANY OCEAN ANYWHERE ON EARTH - IS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 320 KM (200 MILES) FROM THE CITY OF URUMQI, IN XINJIANG. IT IS 2648 KM (1645 MILES) FROM THE NEAREST COASTLINE, THE BAY OF BENGAL.



10

CHOPSTICKS
IT IS ESTIMATED CHINA PRODUCES 45 BILLION CHOPSTICKS EVERY YEAR, THE MAJORITY OF THEM DISPOSABLE. IN 2006, BEIJING INTRODUCED A FIVE PERCENT TAX ON DISPOSABLE WOODEN CHOPSTICKS IN AN ATTEMPT TO HELP SAVE THE COUNTRY'S FORESTS. IT IS POOR ETIQUETTE TO TAP CHOPSTICKS ON THE EDGE OF ONE'S BOWL IN CHINA, AS TRADITIONALLY BEGGARS MADE THIS NOISE TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. IT IS IMPOLITE TO SPEAR FOOD WITH A CHOPSTICK (UNLESS THE FOOD IS DIFFICULT TO HANDLE, SUCH AS FISHBALLS). IT IS CONSIDERED POOR ETIQUETTE TO POINT RESTED CHOPSTICKS TOWARDS OTHERS SEATED AT THE TABLE AND CHOPSTICKS SHOULD NEVER BE LEFT VERTICALLY STUCK INTO A BOWL OF RICE – IT RESEMBLES THE RITUAL OF INCENSE-BURNING THAT SYMBOLIZES "FEEDING" THE DEAD AND DEATH IN GENERAL.



11

TIME
DESPITE ITS SIZE, ALL OF CHINA IS IN ONE TIME ZONE. BEIJING TIME - GMT+8 – WAS SET AFTER THE FOUNDING OF THE PRC IN 1949. HOWEVER, DUE TO ITS GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION IN THE WESTERNMOST PART OF THE COUNTRY, XINJIANG HAS PROCLAIMED URUMQI TIME (GMT+6), TWO HOURS BEHIND BEIJING. ALTHOUGH NOT OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED, IT IS THE TIME OBSERVED LOCALLY BY RESIDENTS AND MOST STORES AND GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN XINJIANG HAVE MODIFIED OPENING HOURS, COMMONLY RUNNING FROM 10AM TO 7PM BEIJING TIME.



12

MOURNING
WHITE, RATHER THAN BLACK, IS THE TRADITIONAL CHINESE COLOR FOR MOURNING AND FUNERALS IN CHINA, BUT IN MODERN TIMES BLACK IS USUALLY WORN, ALONG WITH A WHITE FLOWER OR ACCESSORY. IT IS BAD FORM TO WEAR RED AT FUNERALS AS IT IS A SYMBOLIC COLOR OF HAPPINESS.

13 YANGTZE



AT 6,300 KM THE YANGTZE RIVER IS THE LONGEST IN ASIA, AND THIRD LONGEST IN THE WORLD. IT FLOWS FROM THE GLACIERS ON THE TIBETAN PLATEAU IN QINGHAI EASTWARD ACROSS SOUTHWEST, CENTRAL AND EASTERN CHINA BEFORE EMPTYING INTO THE EAST CHINA SEA AT SHANGHAI. THE YANGTZE DRAINS ONE-FIFTH OF CHINA'S LAND AREA AND ITS RIVER BASIN IS HOME TO ONE-THIRD OF CHINA'S POPULATION, WHILE THE PROSPEROUS YANGTZE RIVER DELTA GENERATES AS MUCH AS 20 PERCENT OF CHINA'S GDP.

14 THREE GORGES DAM



THE THREE GORGES DAM ON THE YANGTZE RIVER IN HUBEI IS THE LARGEST HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER STATION IN THE WORLD. THE DAM WALL ITSELF IS 1.9 KM LONG AND 185 M HIGH AND TOOK 12 YEARS TO CONSTRUCT; A WORKFORCE OF 30,000 LABORING AROUND THE CLOCK IN THREE EIGHT-HOUR SHIFTS OF 10,000 MEN. ITS 26 TURBINES PRODUCE 80 TWH A YEAR, ACCOUNTING FOR THREE PERCENT OF CHINA'S ENERGY CONSUMPTION (IT WAS EXPECTED TO BE 10 PERCENT WHEN CONSTRUCTION BEGAN, SUCH AS BEEN THE GROWTH IN DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY IN CHINA) AND 1.3 MILLION PEOPLE WERE RELOCATED FOR ITS CONSTRUCTION. AT A COST OF RMB180 BILLION, IT IS THE THIRD MOST EXPENSIVE INDIVIDUAL OBJECT IN THE WORLD, EVER.

15 ATING HO



THE ATING HO, WHICH FLOWS INTO THE AONG TSO, A LARGE LAKE IN TIBET, IS 6,100 M (20,013 FT) AT ITS SOURCE, MAKING IT THE HIGHEST RIVER IN THE WORLD. ABOVE THIS ALTITUDE THERE ARE NO RIVERS AS THE TEMPERATURE IS PERMANENTLY BELOW FREEZING. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ISLANDS IN TIBET'S ORBA CO LAKE, LOCATED AT AN ALTITUDE OF 5,209 M (17,090 FT). YOU GUESSED IT - THEY'RE THE HIGHEST ISLANDS IN THE WORLD.

16 PEKING MAN



THE FIRST RECOGNIZED SPECIES OF HOMO ERECTUS, THE PEKING MAN, WAS UNEARTHED IN ZHOUKOUDIAN, A CAVE SYSTEM IN BEIJING, IN 1923. THE FOSSILS ARE DATED TO BETWEEN 300,000-550,000 YEARS AGO. IT IS THOUGHT THAT HE WAS A TOOL WORKER AND KNEW HOW TO MANIPULATE FIRE. THE FIRST SPECIMENS OF HOMO ERECTUS HAD BEEN FOUND IN JAVA IN 1891, BUT WERE DISMISSED BY MANY AS THE REMAINS OF A DEFORMED APE. THE DISCOVERY AT ZHOUKOUDIAN PUT THIS TO REST AND JAVA MAN, WHO HAD INITIALLY BEEN NAMED PITHECANTHROPUS ERECTUS, WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE GENUS HOMO ALONG WITH PEKING MAN.

17 PEKING DOG



THE PEKINGESE, PEKINESE OR PEKE (ALSO COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS A LION DOG, OR PELCHIE DOG DUE TO THEIR RESEMBLANCE TO CHINESE GUARDIAN LIONS) IS AN ANCIENT BREED OF TOY DOG, ORIGINATING IN CHINA. DNA ANALYSIS HAS CONFIRMED THAT, AT OVER 2000 YEARS OLD, THE PEKINGESE BREED IS ONE OF THE OLDEST BREEDS OF DOG, HAS HARDLY CHANGED IN ALL THAT TIME AND IS ONE OF THE LEAST GENETICALLY DIVERGED FROM THE WOLF. FOR CENTURIES THEY COULD BE OWNED ONLY BY MEMBERS OF THE CHINESE IMPERIAL PALACE. THE EMPRESS DOWAGER CIXI, DESPITE PRESENTING PEKINGESE TO SEVERAL AMERICANS (INCLUDING ONE TO ALICE LEE ROOSEVELT LONGWORTH, DAUGHTER OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT, WHO NAMED IT MANCHU) SAID OF THE BREED, "LET IT COMPORT ITSELF WITH DIGNITY; LET IT LEARN TO BITE THE FOREIGN DEVILS INSTANTLY."

18 WHAM!



THE FIRST WESTERN POP GROUP TO PERFORM IN CHINA FOLLOWING OPENING UP WAS WHAM! IN 1984. THE GROUP'S MANAGER, SIMON NAPIER-BELL, SPENT 18 MONTHS WINING AND DINING HUNDREDS OF OFFICIALS IN AN ATTEMPT TO GET PERMISSION FOR A WESTERN BAND TO BE ALLOWED IN. DURING THE FINAL STAGES OF NEGOTIATIONS HE PRESENTED OFFICIALS WITH TWO BROCHURES - ONE FEATURING WHAM! FANS AS PLEASANT MIDDLE-CLASS YOUNGSTERS, AND ONE PORTRAYING QUEEN FRONT MAN FREDDIE MERCURY IN TYPICALLY FLAMBOYANT POSES. THE CHINESE OPTED FOR WHAM! AND ON APRIL 10, 1984 15,000 FANS PACKED THE PEOPLE'S GYMNASIUM IN BEIJING TO HEAR THEM PLAY.

19 LHAGBA POOL



AT AN ALTITUDE OF 6,368 M (20,892 FT) LHAGBA POOL ON THE NORTHEAST SLOPES OF MOUNT ZHUMULANGMA - AKA MOUNT EVEREST - IN TIBET IS THE HIGHEST LAKE IN THE WORLD (UNLESS YOU COUNT AN UNNAMED CRATER LAKE ON OJOS DEL SALADO VOLCANO ON THE ARGENTINA-CHILE BORDER, WHICH WE CERTAINLY DON'T, PIDDLING LITTLE INCA POOL...)

20 TEA



CHINA IS THE LARGEST PRODUCER OF TEA IN THE WORLD, WITH 1,257,384 TONS PRODUCED IN 2008 - OVER 50 PERCENT MORE THAN SECOND PLACED INDIA. ACCORDING TO POPULAR LEGEND, TEA WAS DISCOVERED BY THE CHINESE EMPEROR SHENNONG IN 2737 BC WHEN A TEA LEAF FELL INTO HIS BOILING WATER.

21 ETHNIC GROUPS



THERE ARE 56 ETHNIC GROUPS IN CHINA, OF WHICH THE HAN MAKE UP A WHOPPING 91.6 PERCENT, AT 1.23 BILLION PEOPLE. THE OTHER 55, WHICH NUMBER APPROXIMATELY 105 MILLION PEOPLE, ARE MOSTLY CONCENTRATED IN THE NORTHWEST, NORTH, NORTHEAST, SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST, BUT WITH SOME IN CENTRAL INTERIOR AREAS. THE 18 MAJOR MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS (AND POPULATION IN MILLIONS) ARE THE ZHUANG (16.1), MANCHU (10.6), HUI (9.8), MIAO (8.9), UYGHUR (8.3), TUJIA (8), YI (7.7), MONGOL (5.8), TIBETAN (5.4), BUYEI (2.9), DONG (2.9), YAO (2.6), KOREAN (1.9), BAI (1.8), HANI (1.4), KAZAKH (1.2), LI (1.2) AND DAI (1.1)

GANGSTER NO. 1

22

THE TOMB OF OLD SHANGHAI GANGSTER NO. 1, DU YUESHENG, IN NEW TAIPEI CITY, BEARS THE CALLIGRAPHY OF GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK AND READS "HIS LOVE OF JUSTICE BURNED BRIGHT." DU COLLUDED WITH THE KUOMINTANG DURING THE CHINESE CIVIL WAR AND FLED SHANGHAI AS THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY CLOSED IN.

Fig.1



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig.5



Fig.6



Fig.7



Fig.8

BORDERS

23

CHINA'S LAND BORDER STRETCHES ALMOST 190,000 KM, AND - AT 14 - IS THE COUNTRY THAT BORDERS MORE COUNTRIES THAN ANY OTHER IN THE WORLD. CLOCKWISE FROM THE TOP THEY ARE MONGOLIA, RUSSIA, NORTH KOREA, VIETNAM, LAOS, MYANMAR, BHUTAN, NEPAL, INDIA, PAKISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, TAJIKISTAN, KYRGYZSTAN AND KAZAKHSTAN.

Fig.2

ENERGY

24

IN 2009 CHINA BECAME THE WORLD'S LEADING CONSUMER OF ENERGY, THE FIRST COUNTRY OTHER THAN THE UNITED STATES TO TOP THE LIST IN OVER A CENTURY. ACCORDING TO THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY, CHINA CONSUMED 2,252 MILLION TONS OF "OIL EQUIVALENT" LAST YEAR, TOPPING THE US TALLY OF 2,170 TONS BY AROUND FOUR PERCENT. CHINA'S ELECTRICITY DEMAND IS FORECAST TO INCREASE BY 1,000 GIGAWATTS OVER THE NEXT 15 YEARS - EQUIVALENT TO THE TOTAL US ELECTRICITY OUTPUT AT THE MOMENT.

Fig.3

LARGEST BOOK

25

THE LARGEST BOOK IN THE WORLD IS CHINESE ENCYCLOPEDIA *GUJIN TUSHU JICHENG* (古今图书集成) WHICH CONTAINS 10,000 VOLUMES AND SOME 170 MILLION CHARACTERS. IT WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE KANGXI EMPEROR IN 1700 AND TOOK ITS AUTHORS 26 YEARS TO COMPLETE. IT IS REFERENCED IN THE LONGEST WESTERN TEXT EVER WRITTEN ABOUT CHINA, JOSEPH NEEDHAM'S *SCIENCE AND CIVILIZATION IN CHINA* - ITSELF FREAKISHLY LONG AT 24 VOLUMES.

Fig.4

'GODDESS OF SHANGHAI'

26

MORE THAN 300,000 PEOPLE CROWDED THE STREETS OF SHANGHAI FOR THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF 'THE GODDESS OF SHANGHAI,' THE SILENT SCREEN ACTRESS RUAN LINGYU, ON MARCH 14, 1935. RUAN KILLED HERSELF BY EATING POISONED CONGEE AFTER BEING ATTACKED MERCILESSLY IN THE TABLOIDS FOR A BRACE OF AFFAIRS. HER FUNERAL PROCESSION RAN FOR OVER FIVE KILOMETERS; THE FRONT PAGE OF THE *NEW YORK TIMES* CALLED IT "THE MOST SPECTACULAR FUNERAL OF THE CENTURY."

Fig.5

SS KIANGYA

27

SHANGHAI WAS THE SITE OF THE WORLD'S WORST MARITIME ACCIDENT WHEN, ON DECEMBER 3, 1948 THE SS KIANGYA, A CHINESE PASSENGER SHIP CARRYING REFUGEES FLEEING THE CHINESE CIVIL WAR, STRUCK A MINE AND SANK. THE EXACT DEATH TOLL IS UNKNOWN, BUT 2,150 PASSENGERS WERE LISTED ON THE MANIFEST AND SHE WAS ALMOST CERTAINLY CARRYING STOWAWAYS. IT IS THOUGHT THAT MORE THAN 3,000 PEOPLE WERE KILLED, ALMOST TWICE THE NUMBER OF TITANIC.

Fig.6

GRETA GARBO

28

JIANG QING'S FAVORITE HOLLYWOOD ACTRESS WAS GRETA GARBO. "YOU AMERICANS HAVE BEEN UNFAIR TO GARBO BY FAILING TO GIVE HER AN ACADEMY AWARD," MADAME MAO TOLD HER BIOGRAPHER ROXANE WITKE IN THE 1970S. "I BELIEVE THIS IS THE FAULT OF THOSE IN POWER IN THE UNITED STATES AND NOT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. SHE IS A GREAT ARTIST. HER INTERPRETATION OF 19TH-CENTURY BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATIC WORKS IS OUTSTANDING."

Fig.7

WOMEN PARKING

29

A SHOPPING MALL IN HEBEI HAS CREATED A PARKING ZONE JUST FOR WOMEN - THE SPACES ARE A FULL 3 METERS WIDE AND ARE PAINTED IN VIBRANT PINK AND PURPLE. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL WANG ZHENG, THE CAR PARK IS MEANT TO CATER TO WOMEN'S "STRONG SENSE OF COLOR AND DIFFERENT SENSE OF DISTANCE."

Fig.8

JULY 5, 1900

35



THE IRAQ WAR WASN'T THE FIRST TIME AN ARMED CONFLICT WAS ENTERED INTO ON SPURIOUS GROUNDS. ON JULY 5, 1900 *THE NEW YORK TIMES*' HEADLINE SCREAMED, "ALL FOREIGNERS IN PEKING DEAD," WHICH PRECIPITATED THE INVASION OF CHINA'S CAPITAL BY A 20,000-STRONG, MULTINATIONAL RESCUE FORCE TO BRING AN END TO THE BOXERS' SIEGE OF THE LEGATIONS. HOWEVER, *THE TIMES* HAD GOT THE BIGGEST STORY OF THE DAY HOPELESSLY WRONG; MOST OF THE BESIEGED FOREIGNERS WERE ALIVE.

URINALS

37



SHAANXI NORMAL UNIVERSITY HAS TAKEN AN INNOVATIVE STEP IN ORDER TO SAVE ON WATER USAGE. CLAIMING THAT 160 TONS OF WATER COULD BE SAVED ANNUALLY IF WOMEN STOOD UP TO PEE, THE UNIVERSITY HAS INSTALLED SIX URINALS IN THEIR FEMALE RESTROOMS. BUT THINGS AREN'T GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN - FEMALES HOLDING THE REQUIRED FUNNEL WHILE URINATING IS PROVING "A PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIER" TO THE PROJECT FLOWING SMOOTHLY, APPARENTLY.

BRAS 30



RISING POWER REQUIRES BIGGER BRAS: STARTING IN 2005 CHINESE LINGERIE MANUFACTURERS STARTED PRODUCING BRAS WITH BIGGER CUPS, AND SOME LABELS HAVE SINCE INTRODUCED SUB-BRANDS MARKETED TOWARD ESPECIALLY CURVY WOMEN. AND WHILE THE SUBJECT LACKS HANDS-ON RESEARCH, THE EXTRA CLEAVAGE APPEARS TO BE LINKED WITH PROSPERITY - SALES PEOPLE SAY THE BIGGER BRAS SELL MAINLY IN CITIES.

SATELLITE

31



THE PRIMARY MISSION OF CHINA'S FIRST SATELLITE, DONGFANG HONG 1, LAUNCHED ON APRIL 24, 1970, WAS TO BROADCAST THE SONG 'DONGFANG HONG' (THE EAST IS RED), PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHAIRMAN MAO, AND ANNOUNCE THE TIME. IT CEASED TRANSMITTING IN JUNE THAT YEAR.

ZHUMULANGMA

32



THE HIGHEST POINT IN CHINA JUST SO HAPPENS TO BE THE HIGHEST POINT ON EARTH: MOUNT ZHUMULANGMA, OR MOUNT EVEREST, LOCATED IN TIBET ON THE BORDER WITH NEPAL, IT IS 8,848 METERS (29,029 FT) ABOVE SEA LEVEL AT ITS SUMMIT. THE LOWEST POINT IN CHINA IS THE TURFAN DEPRESSION, XINJIANG, WHICH IS 154 METERS BELOW SEA LEVEL.

WEIGHTLIFTING

33



PERHAPS IT'S ALL THAT PRACTICE HOLDING UP HALF THE SKY (THAT OR THE SUPPLEMENTS) BUT CHINESE WOMEN HAVE THE MOST WEIGHTLIFTING MEDALS IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD WEIGHTLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS - 314 GOLD, AND 423 IN TOTAL.

'DOG MEAT GENERAL'

34



CHINA'S 'DOG MEAT GENERAL' OF THE 1930S, ZHANG ZONGCHANG, KEPT A HAREM OF CONCUBINES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, EACH OF WHOM HAD A WASH BASIN WITH THEIR COUNTRY'S FLAG ON IT.

PIRATES

36



ONE OF CHINA'S MOST INFAMOUS PIRATES WAS A WOMAN. A FORMER PROSTITUTE, CHENG I SAO (1785-1844) MARRIED A NOTORIOUS PIRATE CAPTAIN ON THE CONDITION THAT SHE WOULD SHARE EQUALLY IN HIS WEALTH AND POWER. WHEN HE DIED SIX YEARS LATER, SHE TOOK COMMAND OF HIS FLEET AND "ROBBED TOWNS, MARKETS, AND VILLAGES, FROM MACAU TO CANTON (GUANGZHOU)." IN 1810, SHE ACCEPTED AN AMNESTY OFFER FROM THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT, KEPT HER LOOT, MARRIED HER LIEUTENANT AND OPENED A GAMBLING HOUSE, LIVING TO THE RIPE OLD AGE OF 69.

ATOM BOMB

38



AMERICAN NUCLEAR PHYSICIST JOAN HINTON WAS RECRUITED TO HELP DEVELOP THE ATOM BOMB WHEN SHE WAS 22. BUT SHE WAS SO REPULSED WHEN THE US DROPPED IT ON JAPAN THAT IN 1948 SHE FLED TO CHINA AND TOOK UP A LIFE OF DAIRY FARMING. "IN THE 1950S, THERE WAS A REAL FEELING OF COHESION AMONG PEOPLE," HINTON TOLD THE *NEW YORK TIMES* IN A 1996 INTERVIEW. SHE DIED LAST YEAR IN A BEIJING HOSPITAL AT AGE 88.

Cover Story
封面



EUNUCHS

39

UNLIKELY YOU'D FIND ANYONE ENVIOUS OF CHINESE EUNUCHS, BUT IF YOU THINK CASTRATION WAS BAD, THE POST OPERATIVE 'CARE' WAS MUCH, MUCH WORSE. AFTER BOTH TESTICLES AND PENIS WERE CUT OFF (THE WHOLE BOX AND DICE, SO TO SPEAK) A METAL PLUG WAS INSERTED INTO THE URETHRA AND THE ENTIRE WOUND BANDAGED. THE EUNUCH WAS THEN MADE TO WALK ABOUT A ROOM FOR TWO TO THREE HOURS SUPPORTED ON EACH SIDE BY HIS CASTRATORS BEFORE HE WAS ALLOWED TO LIE DOWN. HE WAS FORBIDDEN TO DRINK ANY LIQUID FOR THREE DAYS, DURING WHICH TIME HE SUFFERED GREAT AGONY FROM THIRST AND WAS UNABLE TO URINATE (NOT TO MENTION THE EXCRUCIATING PAIN OF THE CASTRATION AFTERMATH). AT THE END OF THE THREE DAYS, HIS BANDAGES WERE REMOVED, THE INSERTED PLUG PULLED OUT, AND HOPEFULLY THE EUNUCH WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN RELIEF WITH A FLOW OF URINE, AT WHICH TIME HE WAS CONGRATULATED AND CONSIDERED OUT OF DANGER. IF THE SURGERY RENDERED THE EUNUCH UNABLE TO URINATE, THE PASSAGES HAVING GROWN CLOSED, HE WAS DOOMED TO AN AGONIZING DEATH.



FLOODS

40

THE CENTRAL CHINA FLOODS OF 1931 ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED THE DEADLIEST NATURAL DISASTER EVER RECORDED, AND ALMOST CERTAINLY THE DEADLIEST OF THE 20TH CENTURY. THE HUMAN CASUALTIES ARE ESTIMATED TO BE BETWEEN 400,000 AND 4 MILLION. CHINA HAS THE UNENVIABLE RECORD OF FIVE OF THE TOP 10 MOST DEADLY NATURAL DISASTERS IN HISTORY: THE 1931 CENTRAL CHINA FLOODS, THE 1887 YELLOW RIVER FLOOD, THE 1556 SHAANXI EARTHQUAKE, THE 1976 TANGSHAN EARTHQUAKE AND THE 1920 HAIYUAN EARTHQUAKE.



KIDNAP

41

WHEN THEN EXILED SUN YAT-SEN WAS KIDNAPPED IN LONDON AT THE INSTANCE OF THE QING GOVERNMENT IN 1896 ("ALMOST BEFORE I HAD LEARNED TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN HOLBORN AND THE STRAND," HE WROTE) HE MADE HIS ESCAPE BY THROWING A NOTE OUT OF A WINDOW TO HIS FRIENDS IN THE STREET, WHO PROMPTLY INFORMED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WHICH SECURED HIS RELEASE.



MATTEO RICCI

42

AT THE RIPE OLD AGE OF 25, MATTEO RICCI (1552-1610) BID ITALY A PERMANENT GOOD-BYE. THE PRIESTHOOD CALLED HIM TO CHINA, WHERE HE ESTABLISHED ONE OF THE FIRST CULTURAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN CIVILIZATION. RICCI'S HOME IN GUANGDONG IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN THE FIRST EUROPEAN HOUSE BUILT IN CHINA. HE LEARNED TO SPEAK AND WRITE FLUENT CHINESE, AND HE SHAVED HIS HEAD AND WORE THE GRAY ROBES OF HIS LOCAL SPIRITUAL CONTEMPORARIES. BUT IN GOING NATIVE, HE STAYED TRUE TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND PUBLICLY DEBATED BUDDHIST MASTERS.



PALACE

43

IT TOOK 3,500 BRITISH SOLDIERS TO SET BEIJING'S IMPERIAL SUMMER PALACE (YUAN-MINGYUAN) ALIGHT, AND THREE DAYS FOR IT TO BURN TO THE GROUND. "YOU CAN SCARCELY IMAGINE THE BEAUTY AND THE MAGNIFICENCE OF THE PLACES WE BURNT," CHARLES GORDON (LATER GORDON OF KHARTOUM) WROTE TO HIS MOTHER OF THE 1860 INCIDENT. "IT MADE ONE'S HEART SORE TO BURN THEM; IN FACT, THESE PALACES WERE SO LARGE, AND WE WERE SO PRESSED FOR TIME, THAT WE COULD NOT PLUNDER THEM CAREFULLY. IT WAS WRETCHEDLY DEMORALIZING WORK FOR AN ARMY."



1 in 5

44

ROUGHLY ONE IN EVERY FIVE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD IS CHINESE, WITH CHINA'S POPULATION ESTIMATED TO BE A WHOPPING 1.34 BILLION.



CAVES

45

DONGZHONG (LITERALLY 'IN A CAVE') PRIMARY SCHOOL, WHICH IS SITUATED IN A MIAO VILLAGE WITHIN ZIYUN COUNTY, GUIZHOU PROVINCE, IS IN A HUGE, AIRCRAFT HANGER-SIZED NATURAL CAVE, CARVED OUT OF A MOUNTAIN OVER THOUSANDS OF YEARS BY WIND, WATER AND SEISMIC SHIFTS. ESTABLISHED IN 1984, IT CATERES FOR AROUND 200 STUDENTS, AND IT MUST BE ONE HELL OF A STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH TO LEARN.



DRUNK

46

CHINA'S FIRST DRUNK TANK FOR FOREIGNERS WAS OPENED AT YUNNAN FIRST PEOPLE'S PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL IN 2007 TO COPE WITH THE GROWING NUMBER OF BOOZY LAOWAI PASSING THROUGH KUNMING. "DRUNKEN INCIDENTS WITH FOREIGNERS ARE INCREASING RAPIDLY, WITH THIS DETOXIFICATION ROOM WE CAN QUICKLY HELP WITH THEIR DRUNKEN CONDITION AND AVOID A WORSENING OF THEIR SITUATION," A LOCAL POLICE OFFICER TOLD MEDIA. THE ROOM IS LOCATED IN THE HOSPITAL'S INTENSIVE-CARE WING. PEOPLE WHO WIND UP THERE ARE CHARGED FOR SLEEPING IT OFF.



THE QUEEN

47

DURING FILMING OF THE IMMENSE CORONATION SCENE IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY FOR BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI'S *THE LAST EMPEROR*, A 1987 BIOPIC ABOUT THE LIFE OF PUYI, QUEEN ELIZABETH II WAS IN BEIJING ON A STATE VISIT. THE PRODUCTION WAS GIVEN PRIORITY OVER HER BY THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES AND SHE WAS FORBIDDEN TO VISIT THE FORBIDDEN CITY.



HAIR

48

KNOWN AS THE CHINESE RAPUNZEL, XIE QIUPING IS IN POSSESSION OF THE WORLD'S LONGEST DOCUMENTED HAIR. IT WAS 5.627 M (18'5") WHEN MEASURED ON MAY 8, 2004. SHE LAST HAD A HAIRCUT IN 1973 AT THE AGE OF 13. WHEN SHE TRAVELS, SHE HAS TO WEAR IT STYLED IN A TIARA AND BRING A SPECIAL HAIR ATTENDANT ALONG WITH HER.



RAILWAY

49

WHEN THE QINGZANG RAILWAY TRAVELS THROUGH THE TANGGULA PASS IN THE TIBETAN TANGGULA MOUNTAINS AT AN ELEVATION OF 5,072 METERS (16,640 FEET), IT IS THE HIGHEST RAILWAY IN THE WORLD. THE RAILWAY, WHICH CONNECTS XINING, QINGHAI TO LHASA, TIBET HAS BUILT-IN PERSONAL OXYGEN SUPPLIES SO PASSENGERS CAN AVOID ALTITUDE SICKNESS. TANGGULA ALSO HAS THE WORLD'S HIGHEST RAILWAY STATION AT 5,068 M (16,627 FT).



ALICE

50

LEWIS CARROLL'S *ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND* WAS BANNED BY THE GOVERNOR OF HUNAN PROVINCE IN 1931 ON THE GROUND THAT "ANIMALS SHOULD NOT USE HUMAN LANGUAGE, AND THAT IT WAS DISASTROUS TO PUT ANIMALS AND HUMAN BEINGS ON THE SAME LEVEL." THE GOOD GOVERNOR HAD EVIDENTLY FORGOTTEN A CERTAIN CHINESE TOME CALLED *JOURNEY TO THE WEST*...



AIRPORTS

51

QAMDO BANGDA AIRPORT IN TIBET IS THE HIGHEST COMMERCIAL AIRPORT IN THE WORLD AT AN ELEVATION OF 4,334 METERS (14,219 FT). VISITORS ARE WARNED BEFORE LANDING TO MOVE SLOWLY ON LEAVING THE PLANE AND THAT THEY MAY FEEL LIGHT HEADED OR DIZZY BECAUSE OF THE THIN AIR. THE LOW AIR DENSITY ALSO MAKES A HIGHER TAKEOFF AND LANDING TRUE AIRSPEED NECESSARY, REQUIRING A LONGER RUNWAY; AT 5,500 M (18,045 FT) QAMDO BANGDA'S IS THE LONGEST PUBLICLY USED RUNWAY IN THE WORLD.



LANTERNS

52

ORIGINATING AS FAR BACK AS 250 BC, CHINESE LANTERNS ARE AN IMPORTANT SYMBOL OF LONG LIFE. LANTERNS WERE ALSO ONCE SYMBOLS OF A FAMILY'S WEALTH, AND THE RICHEST FAMILIES HAD LANTERNS SO LARGE THAT IT REQUIRED SEVERAL PEOPLE WITH POLES TO HOIST THEM INTO PLACE.



TALLEST

53

CHINA IS HOME TO THE 2ND, 4TH AND 5TH TALLEST MEN ON THE PLANET. AT 236 CM (7'9") BAO XISHUN (ALSO KNOWN AS XI SHUN OR THE BIG GUY), A HERDSMAN FROM INNER MONGOLIA, HELD THE TITLE OF THE TALLEST LIVING MAN RIGHT UP UNTIL SEPTEMBER 17, 2009, WHEN TURK SULTAN KÖSEN WAS MEASURED AND FOUND TO OUT-STRETCH HIM AT A WHOPPING 247 CMS (8'1"). HERE BAO IS PICTURED WITH FELLOW INNER MONGOLIAN HE PINGPING, WHO WAS THE WORLD'S SHORTEST WALKING MAN UNTIL HIS DEATH LAST MARCH. REST IN PEACE, LITTLE GUY.

THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN, OR TIANMING, WAS THE CHINESE PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT THAT EMPERORS USED TO LEGITIMIZE THEIR RULE. PREDICATED ON THE CONDUCT OF THE RULER IN QUESTION, HEAVEN WOULD BLESS THE AUTHORITY OF A JUST RULER, BUT WOULD BE DISPLEASED WITH A DESPOTIC RULER AND WITHDRAW ITS MANDATE, LEADING TO THEIR OVERTHROW. THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN WOULD THEN TRANSFER TO THOSE WHO WOULD RULE BEST. THE CONCEPT WAS FIRST USED TO SUPPORT THE RULE OF THE KINGS OF THE ZHOU DYNASTY (1046–256 BC) AND THEIR OVERTHROW OF THE EARLIER SHANG DYNASTY (1600–1046 BC). USED THROUGHOUT HISTORY TO SUPPORT THE RULE OF THE EMPERORS OF CHINA (INCLUDING 'FOREIGN' DYNASTIES SUCH AS THE QING DYNASTY, WHO WERE MANCHU), IT WAS INTEGRAL TO THE BELIEF CHINESE EMPERORS WERE SEMI-DIVINE.



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ASTROLOGY

57

CHINESE ASTROLOGY HAS 12 ZODIAC SIGNS – RAT, OX, TIGER, HARE, DRAGON, SNAKE, HORSE, RAM, MONKEY, ROOSTER, DOG AND PIG – WHICH CAN EACH BE ONE OF FIVE ELEMENTS: EARTH, FIRE, WATER, METAL AND WOOD. IT TAKES 60 YEARS TO COMPLETE A FULL CYCLE (FIVE 12-YEAR CYCLES). THERE ARE ALSO ANIMAL SIGNS ASSIGNED BY MONTH (CALLED INNER ANIMALS) AND HOURS OF THE DAY (CALLED SECRET ANIMALS). IT IS A COMMON MISCONCEPTION THAT THE ANIMALS ASSIGNED BY YEAR ARE THE ONLY SIGNS; WHILE A PERSON MIGHT APPEAR TO BE A DRAGON BECAUSE THEY WERE BORN IN THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON, THEY MIGHT ALSO BE A SNAKE INTERNALLY AND AN OX SECRETIVELY. ADD IN THE ELEMENTS AND THIS MAKES FOR 8,640 POSSIBLE COMBINATIONS, ALL CONSIDERED CRITICAL FOR THE PROPER USE OF CHINESE ASTROLOGY.



CALLIGRAPHY

55

EAST ASIAN CALLIGRAPHY, WIDELY PRACTICED AND REVERED IN THE SINOSPHERE (CHINA, JAPAN, KOREA AND VIETNAM), ORIGINATED AND DEVELOPED IN CHINA. THE OLDEST EXTANT CHINESE CHARACTERS ARE FROM ORACLE BONES, OR JIAGUWEN, CHARACTERS CARVED ON OX SCAPULAS AND TORTOISE PLASTRONS USED IN DIVINATION IN BRONZE AGE CHINA. THE OLDEST ARE BELIEVED TO BE DATED TO THE 14TH CENTURY BC. IT CAN TAKE A CALLIGRAPHY MASTER THEIR ENTIRE LIFE TO PERFECT THEIR STYLE, WHICH IS THOUGHT TO REVEAL THEIR MORAL AND SPIRITUAL SELF-CULTIVATION AS A TYPE OF 'HEART PRINT'.



DRAGON

58

CHINESE DRAGONS ARE LEGENDARY CREATURES IN CHINESE MYTHOLOGY AND FOLKLORE, AND ARE TYPICALLY PORTRAYED AS LONG, SCALED, SERPENTINE CREATURES WITH FOUR LEGS. IN YIN AND YANG TERMINOLOGY, A DRAGON IS YANG AND COMPLEMENTS A YIN FENGHUANG, OR CHINESE PHOENIX. ACCORDING TO CHINESE LEGEND, THE FIRST LEGENDARY EMPEROR, HUANG DI, WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN CLOSELY RELATED TO A DRAGON, AND AT THE END OF HIS REIGN IMMORTALIZED INTO ONE THAT RESEMBLED HIS EMBLEM, AND ASCENDED TO HEAVEN. THE DRAGON, ESPECIALLY YELLOW OR GOLDEN ONES WITH FIVE CLAWS ON EACH FOOT, CAME TO REPRESENT THE EMPEROR OF CHINA AND THE IMPERIAL THRONE WAS CALLED THE DRAGON THRONE.



BOXERS

56

THE BOXER REBELLION BETWEEN 1898 AND 1901 IN NORTHERN CHINA WAS AGAINST CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES, FOREIGN IMPERIALISM AND TECHNOLOGY BY A SECRET GROUP CALLED THE SOCIETY OF RIGHTEOUS AND HARMONIOUS FISTS OR YIHEQUAN, WHICH CONSISTED OF LOCAL PEASANTS AND OTHER WORKERS MADE DESPERATE BY DISASTROUS FLOODS AND WIDESPREAD OPIUM ADDICTION. WESTERNERS CAME TO CALL THE WELL-TRAINED, ATHLETIC YOUNG MEN 'BOXERS' DUE TO THE MARTIAL ARTS AND CALISTHENICS THEY PRACTICED.



59  **CICADA**

BECAUSE THE CICADA HAS THE LONGEST LIFE SPAN OF ANY INSECT (UP TO 17 YEARS) AND SHEDS ITS SKIN, IT HAS LONG BEEN A SYMBOL OF REGENERATION AND REBIRTH IN CHINA. IN ANCIENT CHINA, JADE CICADAS WOULD BE PLACED IN THE MOUTHS OF THE DEAD BECAUSE THEY WERE THOUGHT TO SLOW DOWN THE DECAY PROCESS AND SPEED UP REBIRTH IN ANOTHER WORLD.

60  **DA YUNHE**

CHINA'S GRAND CANAL, OR DA YUNHE, IS THE WORLD'S OLDEST AND LONGEST CANAL AT 1,795 KM (1,114 MILES) LONG, WITH 24 LOCKS AND AROUND 60 BRIDGES. ALSO KNOWN AS THE BEIJING-HANGZHOU GRAND CANAL, THE OLDEST PARTS OF THE CANAL DATE BACK TO THE 5TH CENTURY BC. ALTHOUGH THE VARIOUS SECTIONS WERE FINALLY COMBINED DURING THE SUI DYNASTY (581-618 AD), ITS COURSE IS TODAY DIVIDED INTO SEVEN SECTIONS WITH THE SECTION FROM HANGZHOU TO JINING THE ONLY ONE NAVIGABLE.

61  **SEX TOYS**

CHINA IS THE TOP PRODUCER OF SEX TOYS IN THE WORLD, WITH 70 PERCENT BEING MANUFACTURED IN THE COUNTRY. THE SEX TOY INDUSTRY IN THE COUNTRY IS ESTIMATED AT RMB13 BILLION, WITH OVER 1,000 MANUFACTURERS NATIONWIDE. THE BEST SELLING ITEMS ARE PRODUCTS THAT ENHANCE SEXUAL AROUSAL, SUCH AS STIMULUS CONDOMS, WHICH CONSTITUTE 21.5 PERCENT OF THE MARKET.

62  **TERRACOTTA**

IN 1974, A GROUP OF FARMERS DIGGING FOR A WELL IN XI'AN, SHAANXI PROVINCE, DISCOVERED THE TOMB OF QIN SHI HUANG (259-210 BC), THE FIRST EMPEROR OF CHINA. THE TOMB CONTAINED THOUSANDS OF LIFE-SIZED SOLDIERS, HORSES AND CHARIOTS - THE TERRACOTTA ARMY. THE ARMY'S PURPOSE WAS TO GUARD QIN SHI HUANG AND HELP HIM RULE ANOTHER EMPIRE IN THE AFTERLIFE. IT IS BELIEVED THAT IN THE THREE PITS CONTAINING THE TERRACOTTA ARMY THERE ARE OVER 8,000 SOLDIERS, 130 CHARIOTS WITH 520 HORSES AND 150 CAVALRY HORSES, THE MAJORITY OF WHICH ARE STILL BURIED.

63  **BICYCLES**

THE BICYCLE WAS INTRODUCED INTO CHINA AROUND 1891 BY TWO AMERICAN TRAVELERS NAMED ALLEN AND SACHLEBEN. THE BICYCLE IS NOW THE PRIMARY TRANSPORTATION FOR MILLIONS OF CHINESE. THE LAST QING EMPEROR, PUJI, EVEN RODE A BICYCLE AROUND THE FORBIDDEN CITY IN BEIJING. CHINA IS ALSO THE WORLD'S LEADING BICYCLE MANUFACTURER.

64  **COINS**

DURING THE QING DYNASTY (1644-1912), THE ELDERLY WOULD THREAD COINS WITH A RED STRING. THE MONEY WAS CALLED YA SUI QIAN (MONEY WARDING OFF EVIL SPIRITS) AND WAS BELIEVED TO PROTECT THE ELDERLY FROM SICKNESS AND DEATH. THE YA SUI QIAN WAS REPLACED BY RED ENVELOPES WHEN PRINTING PRESSES BECAME MORE COMMON, AND THE HONG BAO GIVEN OUT AT CHINESE NEW YEAR ARE STILL REFERRED TO AS YA SUI QIAN.

65  **NUCLEAR**


CHINA HAS 13 NUCLEAR POWER REACTORS SPREAD OUT OVER FOUR SEPARATE SITES AND A FURTHER 27 UNDER CONSTRUCTION, 50 PLANNED AND 140 PROPOSED. DUE TO INCREASING CONCERNS ABOUT AIR QUALITY AND GLOBAL WARMING, NUCLEAR POWER HAS BEEN LOOKED TO AS AN ALTERNATIVE. TO COAL. POWER IN CHINA, AND THE INTENTION IS TO RAISE THE PERCENTAGE OF ELECTRICITY PRODUCED BY NUCLEAR POWER FROM THE CURRENT 1 PERCENT TO 6 PERCENT BY 2020.

66  **QUEUE**

DURING THE QING DYNASTY (1644-1912 AD), HAN MEN WERE REQUIRED TO WEAR A QUEUE - A WAIST LONG, BRAIDED PIGTAIL - AS A SIGN OF SUBMISSION TO THE RULING MANCHUS. THE PENALTY FOR REFUSAL WAS DEATH. MEANWHILE, IN SOME PARTS OF CHINA, PIGTAILS USED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH A GIRL'S MARRITAL STATUS. A YOUNG GIRL WOULD WEAR TWO PIGTAILS TO DISPLAY HER AVAILABILITY TO PROSPECTIVE HUSBANDS, AND WHEN SHE MARRIED SHE WOULD WEAR JUST ONE, THIS INDICATING HER MARRIAGE.

67  **WORLD CUP**

THE CHINESE NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM HAS QUALIFIED FOR THE WORLD CUP JUST ONCE IN THEIR HISTORY, BACK IN 2002 IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND JAPAN. AROUND 300 MILLION PEOPLE TUNED IN TO BROADCASTS OF CHINA'S MATCHES, WITH A STAGGERING 170 MILLION NEW TELEVISION SETS BEING BOUGHT BY CITIZENS IN ORDER TO WATCH THEIR NATION'S DEBUT. THEY LOST ALL THREE OF THEIR GAMES, 2-0 TO COSTA RICA, 4-0 TO BRAZIL AND 3-0 TO TURKEY, AND WERE ELIMINATED WITHOUT A GOAL OR A POINT.

68  **MOBILES**

THERE ARE OVER 833 MILLION MOBILE PHONES IN USE IN CHINA, WHICH IS ENOUGH FOR 63.4 PERCENT TO OWN ONE. CHINA IS ALSO BELIEVED TO HAVE PRODUCED MORE THAN 7 BILLION HANDSETS IN 2010, ACCOUNTING FOR 60 PERCENT OF THE GLOBAL MARKET.



SMASH IT

69

A SHOPPING MALL IN SHENYANG CONTAINS A SPECIAL STORE FOR WOMEN TO SMASH HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS TO SMITHREENS WITH BASEBALL BATS. THE STORE, WHICH TARGETS FRUSTRATED HOUSEWIVES IN PARTICULAR, HAS A SIGN READING "NO MEN" AT THE ENTRANCE. SECOND-HAND MOBILE PHONES AND TELEVISION SETS ARE BOUGHT IN, WHILE CUSTOMERS CAN ALSO TEAR PAPER, HURL PLATES AND BEAT BIG BEAN BAGS IN THE CORNER. WOMEN ARE PROVIDED WITH GLOVES AND HELMETS TO PREVENT ANY ACCIDENTAL INJURIES, AND EACH RAMPAGE IS LIMITED TO JUST ONE MAD MINUTE.



PHOENIX

74

THE PHOENIX IS THE MOST IMPORTANT BIRD IN CHINESE LEGEND, AND REPRESENTS THE FEMININE POWER OF THE EMPRESS, IN CONTRAST TO THE MASCULINE DRAGON. THE GRACEFUL CRANE, WHICH IS A SYMBOL OF LONG LIFE, IS THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT BIRD IN CHINESE LEGEND. DUCKS ARE ALSO IMPORTANT SYMBOLS REPRESENTING HAPPINESS AND MARITAL FAITHFULNESS.



ARMY

82

THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST MILITARY FORCE, WITH APPROXIMATELY 3 MILLION MEMBERS, AS WELL AS HAVING THE WORLD'S LARGEST STANDING ARMY, WITH APPROXIMATELY 2.25 MILLION MEMBERS. STILL, CHINA'S POPULATION BEING WHAT IT IS, THAT IS ONLY 2.6 PEOPLE PER 1,000 CITIZENS, COMPARED TO 7.9 IN THE US, A WHOPPING 153.4 IN RUSSIA AND AN ARE-YOU-SERIOUSLY-UP-FOR-IT-OR-WHAT? 418.9 IN THE DPRK.



RICH WOMEN

77

ACCORDING TO *FORBES*, SIX OF THE WORLD'S TEN RICHEST SELF-MADE WOMEN ARE FROM THE CHINESE MAINLAND, WITH THE WORLD'S RICHEST WOMAN, GUANGDONG'S 'PAPER QUEEN' ZHANG YIN, WORTH US\$4.9 BILLION, OR RMB32.2 BILLION.



LIGHT BULBS

78

SICHUAN PROVINCE RESIDENT WANG XI-ANJUN ACCIDENTALLY SWALLOWED A FISH BONE 43 YEARS AGO AND "NOTHING HAPPENED." SO HE DID WHAT WE'D ALL DO, HE "TRIED SEVERAL PIECES OF BROKEN GLASS - SECRETLY - AND NOTHING HAPPENED ALSO." HE TOOK THIS DISCOVERY TO ITS NATURAL AND HAPPY CONCLUSION, BY EATING ONE LIGHT BULB PER DAY SINCE THEN. WHY, WANG? "THEY'RE CRISPY AND DELICIOUS!" O-KAY.



SCORPIONS

70

LI LIUQUN, A 58-YEAR-OLD MAN FROM HUNAN PROVINCE, CLAIMS TO HAVE SPENT THE LAST THREE DECADES DEVOURING OVER 10,000 SCORPIONS. HIS HABIT BEGAN 30 YEARS AGO WHEN HE WAS STUNG BY A SCORPION WHILE HIKING. IN ANGER, HE PICKED UP THE CREATURE AND DEVoured IT. FINDING HE ENJOYED THE SWEET AND NUTTY TASTE, HE CONTINUED EATING THEM, LIVE. HE HAS BEEN STUNG HUNDREDS OF TIMES AND SUFFERED A BIT OF SWELLING IN THE MOUTH, BUT WE GUESS REVENGE IS A DISH BEST SERVED... OVER AND OVER AGAIN?



TOMBS

79

WHEN SUN YAT-SEN ENTERED NANKING TO ASSUME THE PRESIDENCY OF THE NEW REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON JANUARY 1, 1912 HE MADE A STOP AT THE TOMBS OF THE MING EMPERORS OUTSIDE THE CITY TO ANNOUNCE TO THEM THAT THE MANCHUS HAD BEEN OVERTHROWN AND THAT THE COUNTRY WAS ONCE AGAIN UNDER HAN CHINESE RULE.



SINGLE MEN

75

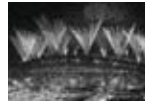
THERE ARE CURRENTLY 32 MILLION MORE BOYS THAN GIRLS IN CHINA, AND WITH 119 MALE BIRTHS FOR EVERY 100 GIRLS (COMPARED WITH 107 TO 100 FOR THE AVERAGE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRY) IT IS HEADING TOWARDS BECOMING A NATION OF BACHELORS, WITH OFFICIAL STATISTICS PREDICTING AS MANY AS 40 MILLION SINGLE MEN BY 2020.



SEMO LA

81

SEMO LA, AN OLD UNSURFACED TRACK THAT GIVES ACCESS TO THE CHANG TANG REGION IN CENTRAL TIBET (LA MEANS 'PASS' IN TIBETAN), AND IS TRAVELED ONLY BY A ONCE-WEEKLY BUS AND TRUCKS, IS THE HIGHEST VEHICLE-ACCESSIBLE PASS IN THE WORLD AT 5,565 METERS (18,258 FT).



OLYMPICS

73

THE 2008 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BEIJING WERE THE MOST EXPENSIVE IN HISTORY, ESTIMATED TO HAVE COST A WHOPPING RMB263 BILLION. ATHLETES FROM CHINA WON 51 GOLD MEDALS, THE MOST OF ANY NATION, BECOMING THE FIRST NATION OTHER THAN THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA TO TOP THE MEDALS TABLE SINCE THE 1936 SUMMER OLYMPICS.



OPEN PORT

83

DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, SHANGHAI WAS THE ONLY PORT IN THE WORLD TO ACCEPT JEWS FLEEING THE HOLOCAUST WITHOUT AN ENTRY VISA. THE JEWISH POPULATION IN CHINA IN 1940 IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE BEEN AROUND 36,000.



LANGUAGE

71

THERE ARE AT LEAST SEVEN MAJOR FAMILIES OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE - MANDARIN, WU, CANTONESE (YUE), HAKKA, GAN, XIANG AND MIN - WHILE AT LEAST THREE MORE ARE DISPUTED BY LINGUISTS - JIN, HUIZHOU AND PINGHUA. THE MOST SPOKEN, BY FAR, IS MANDARIN (850 MILLION), FOLLOWED BY WU (90 MILLION), CANTONESE (70 MILLION) AND MIN (50 MILLION).



ANIMALS

80

THERE ARE 30 DIFFERENT ANIMAL PENISES ON THE MENU AT GUOLIZHUANG, BEIJING'S 'PENIS EMPORIUM'. A YAK'S WILL SET YOU BACK ABOUT RMB150, WHILE A TIGER'S (WHICH MUST BE PRE-ORDERED) WILL SET YOU BACK RMB30,000.



FLAG

76

CHINA'S NATIONAL FLAG WAS DESIGNED BY ZENG LIANSONG, A CITIZEN FROM RUI'AN, ZHEJIANG PROVINCE, IN RESPONSE TO A CIRCULAR DISTRIBUTED BY THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE NEW POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE IN JULY 1949, SHORTLY AFTER THEY CAME TO POWER FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR. CHOSEN OVER 3,000 OTHER ENTRIES, THE RED IN THE FLAG SYMBOLIZES REVOLUTION, THE LARGE STAR SYMBOLIZES COMMUNISM AND THE SMALLER STARS REPRESENT THE CHINESE PEOPLE. THE POSITION OF THE STARS REPRESENTS THE UNITY OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY. THE FIRST FLAG WAS HOISTED BY MAO ZEDONG ON A POLE OVERLOOKING BEIJING'S TIANANMEN SQUARE ON OCTOBER 1, 1949, AT A CEREMONY ANNOUNCING THE FOUNDING OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC.



GREAT WALL

72

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA IS THE LONGEST MAN-MADE STRUCTURE IN THE WORLD. THE MAIN WALL IS AROUND 3,460 KM (2,145 MILES) LONG WITH AN EXTRA 2,860 KM (1,770 MILES) OF BRANCHES AND SPURS. THE EARLIEST EXTENSIVE WALLS WERE BUILT BY FIRST EMPEROR QIN SHI HUANG (260-210 BC) TO PROTECT HIS EMPIRE FROM INTRUDERS FROM THE NORTH, AN IDEA REVIVED BY THE MING DYNASTY (1368 TO 1644), WHO IT IS SAID POSTED CLOSE TO ONE MILLION SOLDIERS ON THE WALL. IT IS ALSO BELIEVED ONE MILLION PEOPLE DIED IN ITS CONSTRUCTION.



CONCUBINES

84

CONCUBINAGE HAS BEEN PRACTICED THROUGHOUT CHINESE HISTORY, PRIMARILY BY WEALTHY MEN WHO COULD AFFORD IT. CHINESE EMPERORS HAD LARGE HAREMS WITH HUNDREDS OF CONCUBINES. PERHAPS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CONCUBINE IN CHINA'S HISTORY WAS YEHENALA, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS EMPRESS DOWAGER CIXI. CIXI FIRST ENTERED THE COURT AS A CONCUBINE TO THE XIAN FENG EMPEROR AND GAVE BIRTH TO HIS ONLY MALE HEIR. BY KILLING OFF OR OUTMANEUVERING HER RIVALS (INCLUDING HER OWN SON), SHE TOOK THE REIGNS OF POWER AND HELD ONTO THEM FOR ALMOST HALF A CENTURY.

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SURNAMES

89

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF CHINESE FAMILY NAMES, THE 100 MOST COMMON SURNAMES, WHICH TOGETHER MAKE UP LESS THAN 5 PERCENT OF THOSE IN EXISTENCE, ARE SHARED BY 85 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION. THE THREE MOST COMMON SURNAMES IN CHINA ARE LI, WANG AND ZHANG, WHICH MAKE UP 7.9 PERCENT, 7.4 PERCENT AND 7.1 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY. TOGETHER THEY NUMBER CLOSE TO 300 MILLION AND ARE EASILY THE MOST COMMON SURNAMES IN THE WORLD. IN CHINESE, THE PHRASE "THREE ZHANG, FOUR LI" (ZHANG SAN LI SI) IS USED TO SAY "JUST ANYBODY."



DOMINOES

88

CHINA HOLDS A LOT OF GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS FOR THE WORLD'S LARGEST GATHERINGS (SURPRISED?) 1,197 PARTICIPANTS TOOK PART IN A TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT IN GUANGZHOU, 1,032 JOINED A GOLF LESSON IN BEIJING, 1,141 GATHERED FOR A BAREFOOT WALK IN CHENGDU, 10,267 FORMED A HUMAN DOMINO LINE IN INNER MONGOLIA. THE LIST GOES ON... AND ON...



SILK

87

ACCORDING TO CHINESE LEGEND, SILK WAS DISCOVERED IN 3000 BC BY LADY XI LING SUI, WIFE OF LEGENDARY FIRST EMPEROR HUANG DI. WHEN A SILK WORM COCOON ACCIDENTALLY DROPPED INTO HER HOT TEA, FINE THREADS FROM THE COCOON UNRAVELED IN THE HOT WATER AND SILK WAS BORN. CHINA STILL PRODUCES 54 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S SILK.



RICHEST MAN

90

MAINLAND CHINA'S RICHEST PERSON IS BELIEVED TO BE ZONG QINGHOU (宗庆后), WHO IS VALUED AT OVER RMB48 BILLION. HE STARTED BEVERAGE BUSINESS WAHAHA IN A MINI-GROCERY IN A SCHOOL IN HANGZHOU IN 1986, TARGETING PICKY KIDS AND THEIR PARENTS. THE COMPANY'S NAME SOUNDS LIKE AN INFANT'S LAUGH, AND ZONG WAS LAUGHING ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK IN 2009, WITH WAHAHA'S REVENUES ESTIMATED TO BE OVER RMB41 BILLION.



'IRON MAN'

91

'IRON MAN' WANG JINXI (1923-1970) IS CHINA'S NUMBER ONE MODEL WORKER, PERHAPS MOST FAMOUS FOR LEADING HIS TEAM IN OPENING UP THE OILFIELDS IN DAQING, HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE. ON ONE OCCASION THE CONCRETE MIXING MACHINERY IN HIS FACTORY BROKE DOWN, SO WANG PLUNGED INTO A TANK FULL OF THE GOOP TO STIR THE SOLUTION WITH HIS OWN BODY. "I WOULD GIVE UP 20 YEARS OF LIFE SO CHINA CAN PRODUCE OIL ON ITS OWN LAND," WANG SAID WHEN HE FIRST ARRIVED AT THE OIL FIELD IN DAQING. HE DIED OF STOMACH CANCER AT AGE 47.



YAO DEFEN

86

YAO DEFEN OF LIUAN IN ANHUI PROVINCE IS THE WORLD'S TALLEST WOMAN. SHE STANDS 2.33 METERS (7'8") TALL, AND HAS SIZE 78 EU (25 US) FEET. HER GIANT STATURE IS CAUSED BY A LARGE TUMOR IN THE PITUITARY GLAND OF HER BRAIN, WHICH RELEASED TOO MUCH GROWTH HORMONE - HER MOTHER IS ONLY 1.42 METERS (4'8") TALL.



MATH

93

CHINESE MATHEMATICS EVOLVED INDEPENDENTLY OF GREEK MATHEMATICS AND IS CONSEQUENTLY OF GREAT INTEREST TO HISTORIANS OF MATHEMATICS. IT IS BELIEVED THE CHINESE WERE USING THE DECIMAL SYSTEM AS EARLY AS THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY BC, NEARLY 2,300 YEARS BEFORE THE FIRST KNOWN USE OF THE SYSTEM IN EUROPEAN MATHEMATICS, AS WELL AS BEING THE FIRST TO USE A PLACE FOR ZERO.



SMOKING

92

CHINA IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST CONSUMER AND PRODUCER OF TOBACCO: THERE ARE 350 MILLION CHINESE SMOKERS AND CHINA PRODUCES 42 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S CIGARETTES. EXPERTS SAY ABOUT 1.2 MILLION CHINESE DIE EACH YEAR FROM TOBACCO-RELATED ILLNESS, AND WARN THE NUMBER OF TOBACCO-RELATED DEATHS IN CHINA WILL RISE TO 3.5 MILLION PER YEAR BY 2030. NEARLY 60 PERCENT OF MALE CHINESE DOCTORS ARE SMOKERS, THE HIGHEST PROPORTION IN THE WORLD.



LI BAI

85

LI BAI (701-762), A MAJOR CHINESE POET OF THE TANG DYNASTY POETRY PERIOD AND ONE OF THE EIGHT IMMORTALS OF THE WINE CUP, A GROUP OF TANG DYNASTY SCHOLARS WHO ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR LOVE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, IS SAID TO HAVE DIED OF DROWNING AFTER FALLING FROM HIS BOAT WHEN HE TRIED TO EMBRACE THE REFLECTION OF THE MOON IN THE YANGTZE RIVER. IT IS BELIEVED HE WAS DRUNK AT THE TIME.



INTERNET

94

THERE ARE BELIEVED TO BE 308 MILLION INTERNET USERS CURRENTLY ACTIVE IN CHINA, OF WHICH TWO-THIRDS ENGAGE IN ONLINE GAME PLAY. THE VALUE OF CHINA'S INTERNET GAMING INDUSTRY IN 2010 WAS COMFORTABLY OVER RMB20 BILLION.

95



MIGRATION

THE NUMBER OF SEPARATE PASSENGER TRIPS ON THE NATION'S TRANSPORT GRID OVER THIS YEAR'S CHINESE NEW YEAR HOLIDAY IS EXPECTED TO REACH 2.85 BILLION, UP 11.6 PERCENT, MAKING IT THE BIGGEST ANNUAL MASS HUMAN MIGRATION IN THE WORLD. A RECORD 230 MILLION PASSENGERS ARE EXPECTED ON CHINA'S RAILWAYS (UP 12.5 PERCENT), ROAD PASSENGER TRIPS WILL REACH 2.55 BILLION (UP 11.6 PERCENT) AND AIR TRIPS WILL REACH 32 MILLION (AN INCREASE OF 10.8 PERCENT). CHINA HAS WELL OVER 200 MILLION MIGRANT WORKERS WORKING AWAY FROM THEIR HOMES.

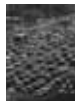
96



ZIPPERS

EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S ZIPS ARE PRODUCED IN FACTORIES IN THE ZHEJIANG PROVINCE CITY OF QIAOTOU (AMOUNTING TO 124,000 MILES OF ZIP EACH YEAR, OR ENOUGH TO STRETCH HALF- WAY TO THE MOON). QIAOTOU ALSO PRODUCES 60 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S BUTTONS (15 BILLION A YEAR), WHILE NEARBY DAYTANG MAKES A THIRD OF THE WORLD'S SOCKS. AS MANY AS 80 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S TOYS ARE MADE IN CHINA, WHICH BOASTS MORE THAN 10,000 TOY FACTORIES.

97



AUTOMOBILES

IN NOVEMBER 2009, CHINA BECAME THE LARGEST AUTO MARKET IN THE WORLD. IN THE SAME YEAR CHINA PRODUCED 13.79 MILLION UNITS OF AUTOMOBILE, 8 MILLION PASSENGER CARS AND 3.41 MILLION COMMERCIAL VEHICLES. OF THOSE 44.3 PERCENT WERE LOCAL BRANDS, THE REST BEING PRODUCED BY JOINT VENTURES WITH FOREIGN CAR MAKERS. ALMOST ALL CARS MANUFACTURED IN CHINA ARE SOLD WITHIN CHINA - ONLY 369,600 CARS WERE EXPORTED IN 2009. THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED CARS, BUSES, VANS AND TRUCKS ON THE ROAD IN CHINA REACHED 62 MILLION IN 2009, AND IS EXPECTED TO EXCEED 200 MILLION BY 2020.

98



HATS

NEVER GIVE A MAN A GREEN HAT AS A GIFT IN CHINA, AS "TO WEAR A GREEN HAT" OR "DAI LU MAOZI" IS A EUPHEMISM FOR BEING CUCKOLDED IN ANCIENT TIMES. IT IS SAID THAT THE HUSBANDS OF PROSTITUTES WERE FORCED TO WEAR A GREEN SCARF ON THE HEAD (LU TOU JING) SO PEOPLE BEGAN TO CALL ALL THOSE CUCKOLDED "LU TOU JING" WHICH OVER TIME EVOLVED TO "LU MAOZI" - GREEN HAT.

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LIU LING

LIU LING (221-300) WAS ANOTHER ECCENTRIC POET NOTORIOUS FOR HIS LOVE OF ALCOHOL. HE RETREATED TO THE COUNTRYSIDE IN ORDER TO PURSUE A SPONTANEOUS AND NATURAL EXISTENCE. AN OFT-QUOTED FOLK TALE ABOUT HIM CLAIMS THAT HE WAS FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES BY A SERVANT BEARING A BOTTLE OF WINE AND A SHOVEL, WHO WAS READY TO OFFER HIM A DRINK AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE OR BURY HIM IF HE FELL OVER DEAD. ANOTHER CITES HIS PRACTICE OF WALKING AROUND HIS HOME IN THE NUDE, EXPLAINING TO SURPRISED VISITORS THAT HE CONSIDERED THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE HIS HOME AND HIS ROOMS HIS CLOTHING, AND THEN INQUIRING AS TO WHY THEY HAD JUST ENTERED HIS PANTS.

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BIRDS

ON THE SHALLOW LIJIANG RIVER IN GUILIN, CORMORANT BIRDS HAVE BEEN TRADITIONALLY TRAINED BY FISHERMAN TO DO THEIR JOB FOR THEM. A SNARE IS TIED NEAR THE BASE OF THE BIRD'S THROAT, WHICH ALLOWS THE BIRD TO SWALLOW SMALL FISH ONLY. WHEN THE BIRD TRIES TO SWALLOW A LARGE FISH, IT BECOMES CAUGHT IN THE BIRD'S THROAT. WHEN THE BIRD RETURNS TO THE FISHERMAN'S RAFT, THE FISHERMAN HELPS THE BIRD TO REMOVE THE FISH FROM ITS THROAT.

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CITIES

THERE ARE OVER 160 CITIES IN CHINA WITH POPULATIONS THAT EXCEED ONE MILLION. IN THE USA THERE ARE JUST NINE. IN THE UK TWO. SHANGHAI IS THE LARGEST CITY IN THE COUNTRY, WITH A METRO AREA POPULATION OF 17 MILLION (CHONGQING'S METRO AREA POPULATION IS JUST 7.5 MILLION)

Cover Story 城市

DISCLAIMER: TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, ALL OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS TRUE. HOWEVER, THERE ARE PLENTY OF FALSE FACTS OUT THERE, SO IF WE'VE BEEN TAKEN IN BY ONE WE ARE TRULY SORRY.