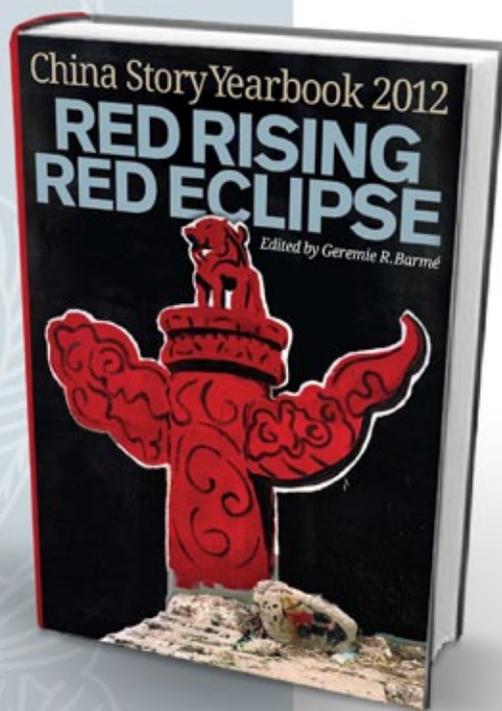


The China Story

中国的故事

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CHINA'S TOP TEN

Excerpt from
CHINA STORY YEARBOOK 2012

RED RISING RED ECLIPSE

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CHINA'S TOP TEN

HUDONG ENCYCLOPAEDIA'S TOP TEN WORDS OF 2011

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Below is a selection of top ten lists and annual reviews of 2011 published by various organizations including the official Xinhua News Agency, commercial Internet companies and the neo-Maoist website Utopia.

Hudong Encyclopaedia (Hudong baike 互动百科) is a Wikipedia-style crowd-sourced online encyclopedia run by a Beijing Internet company. In January 2012, Hudong Encyclopaedia released a list of the top ten words and phrases of 2011, chosen by their editors. The list was published in affiliation with the People's Daily Public Opinion Survey Office.

Limit, Restriction (xian 限)

The word of the year was 'limit' or 'restrict'. In 2011, foreign countries had to restrict government spending and limit greenhouse gas emissions, while in China there were limits placed on

apartment purchasing and car use, and restrictions on broadcast of entertainment shows on TV. The organizers also said that ‘resources are always limited... Humanity must come to a new understanding of “limits”; this is the only way to ensure the harmonious development of nature, the environment and society.’

Holding Up (*hold zhu* hold 住)

The English-Chinese hybrid phrase ‘*hold zhu*’ means something like ‘keep it up’ or ‘keep holding the attention of an audience’. It was first used in a Taiwanese TV talent show in which a deadpan contestant wearing cartoonish makeup demonstrated in front of a live audience how to ‘*hold zhu*’ the stage no matter how embarrassing the situation, for example by putting her bra on top of her head to look like a Qing-dynasty princess. Video clips of the show were uploaded to the Internet, and the phrase became popular among mainland Chinese. In 2011, ‘*hold zhu*’ was frequently used in advertisements,

newspaper headlines and Internet postings to mean capturing the attention of a crowd, or to refer to a daring performance of some kind.

Steve Jobs (*Qiaobusi* 乔布斯)

Chinese Apple fans mourned the death of Steve Jobs with as much fervour as their fellows in other countries. In the days following Job’s death on 5 October 2011, people organized mourning ceremonies outside Apple stores in Beijing and Shanghai, where they left burning candles, flowers and once-bitten apples. ‘Why doesn’t China have its own Steve Jobs?’ was a question asked by dozens of newspapers and in hundreds of Internet forums. Even the *People’s Daily* ran an article praising the genius of Steve Jobs.

High-speed Rail (*gaotie* 高铁)

In late July 2011, two high-speed trains collided, killing forty people and injuring nearly two hundred in Wenzhou, an eastern city near Shanghai. The accident brought the topic of China’s high-

speed rail program under extreme scrutiny from the media and the public (see Chapter 7 for further details).

Gutter Oil (*digou you* 地沟油)

The widespread use of gutter oil – oil recycled from food waste and sold to restaurants for use in cooking – was one of the food scandals of 2011 that most alarmed the public. The *Chongqing Evening News* estimated that about three million tons of gutter oil is consumed annually in China, but this figure is a guess, because the gutter oil business is illegal and gutter oil vendors do not report their sales figures.

In December 2011, following an exposé published by Xinhua News Agency about the gutter oil industry in Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei, the Ministry of Public Security launched a blitz against the trade in gutter oil. Police arrested more than 700 people and seized 60,000 tons of gutter oil. However the fear of gutter oil remains a widespread reason that some people avoid eating out.

School Bus (*xiaochē* 校车)

On 16 November 2011, a school bus operated by a kindergarten collided head-on with a coal truck in Qingyang, Gansu province. Nineteen children and two adults were killed in the accident. The bus, a nine-seat van modified to carry more passengers, had sixty-two children on board at the time of the crash, along with the two adults. News of the crash caused outrage on the Internet, especially because the week after the Gansu crash reports appeared in the press about the government’s donation of twenty-three new school buses to Macedonia. Internet users contrasted the government’s largesse to foreigners with its miserliness towards its own people. Pictures showing American school buses that survived collisions with other vehicles unscathed led to a popular belief that the US government built school buses according to military standards. Media pundits and microblog users called for more to be done to protect the safety of Chinese school children.

SINA WEIBO'S TOP TEN STORIES OF 2011

Guo Meimei (*Guo Meimei* 郭美美)

Guo Meimei was a young woman who uploaded pictures to her Sina Weibo microblog of herself with a white Maserati car, and of a closetful of Hermès handbags. She also claimed to be a manager of the China Red Cross: the combination of showing off her wealth (called *xuanfu* 炫富 on the Internet) and her association with a charitable organization that had previously come under scrutiny for corruption caused public outrage. Guo turned out not to have an official position at the Red Cross, but the negative publicity severely damaged the organization's reputation and greatly reduced donations from the public.

Hurt No More (*shangbuqi* 伤不起)

Originating in an Internet posting about how difficult it is to study a foreign language, the expression '*shangbuqi*' is used to mean that someone has been so hurt by their experiences that they simply cannot be hurt any further.

PM2.5

PM2.5 refers to air pollution particles smaller than 2.5 micrometres in diameter that may pose a more serious health risk than larger particles. This measurement has been used by the US Embassy's air quality monitor and Twitter feed for several years, but PM2.5 numbers were not previously reported by China's air quality monitoring stations, which only noted the numbers for larger pollutants. (For more on PM2.5, see Chapter 7.)

Salt Rumours (*yaoyan* 谣言)

This is a pun/homonym referring to the word for 'rumour', which is also pronounced *yaoyan*, although written as 谣言. The phrase refers to widespread rumours that radiation from the Japanese nuclear disaster that followed the 2011 earthquake and tsunami would result in people even in China suffering from a lack of iodine. This led to a run on salt in China; worried citizens stockpiled

vast quantities of iodized salt, which they thought could combat radioactive contamination of food and water.

Occupy Wall Street

(*zhanling Hua'erjie* 占领华尔街)

Despite some censorship of the debate surrounding the protests in the US and elsewhere, news of the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations was widespread in the Chinese media and on the Internet. In October 2011, a small crowd of leftists activists in Zhengzhou, Henan province, organized a demonstration in support of the US protesters.

Sina Weibo is the most popular of the Twitter-like microblog services in China. In December 2011, Sina published their list of the top news stories of the year. They did not disclose the methodology behind the compilation of the list, but the top item about the Wenzhou high-speed rail accident on 23 July certainly trended strongly. As noted in Chapter 7 of this book, that train accident was the major news story of 2011, one in which Weibo played an important role.

Train Accident

(*dongche shigu* 动车事故)

The accident at Wenzhou left over forty dead and resulted in a month of questioning of what some bloggers called China's 'blood-stained GDP' model and corruption and other problems at the Ministry of Railways (see Chapter 7 for details).

Microblogs and the Anti-Child-trafficking Campaign

(*weibo daguai* 微博打拐)

Rural development scholar Yu Jian-

rong launched a campaign on Sina Weibo to reunite kidnapped children with their families. Yu encouraged Internet users to upload photos of child beggars to Weibo, as many of them are assumed to have been kidnapped and forced by gangs into professional begging. Some critics complained that the campaign infringed on the beggars' right to privacy.

Li Na Wins the French Open

(*Li Na Fawang duoguan* 李娜法网夺冠)

The female tennis player Li Na won the French Open in June 2011, the first Chinese player to win a Grand Slam singles title.

The Japan Earthquake

(*Riben dizhen* 日本地震)

The earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in March 2011 was closely watched on the Chinese Internet. Some commentators admired the orderly way that Japanese citizens dealt with the natural disaster. There was also widespread *Schadenfreude*,

with some Internet users recalling China's past sufferings at the hands of their eastern neighbour and saying that the Japanese deserved what they got.

Guo Meimei Incident

(*Guo Meimei shijian* 郭美美事件)

This relates to the scandal surrounding Guo Meimei, a young woman who uploaded pictures of her expensive handbags and luxury cars to Weibo and boasted about a position with the Chinese Red Cross that it turned out she didn't actually hold (see 'Hudong Encyclopaedia's Top Ten Words of 2011' above, and Chapter 8 for further details).

Steve Jobs

Passes Away

(*Qiaobusi qushi* 乔布斯去世)

Chinese Apple fans mourned with as much emotion as their fellows in other countries (see 'Hudong Encyclopaedia's Top Ten Words of 2011' above for more information).

Xie Na and Zhang Jie's

Grand Nuptials

(*Xie Na Zhang Jie dahun* 谢娜张杰大婚)

Celebrity gossip: the TV personality Xie Na married the singer Zhang Jie.

Soul Searching and

Little Yueyue

(*Xiao Yueue yinfa fansi jujue lengmo*

小悦悦引发反思拒绝冷漠)

A toddler in Foshan was the victim of a hit and run accident and then ignored by passers-by. Video footage captured by a surveillance camera was widely circulated on the Internet, causing a soul-searching discussion online and in the media about contemporary morality (see Chapter 2 for further details).

The Death of Osama Bin Laden

(*Ladeng zhi si* 拉登之死)

Osama Bin Laden's death at the hands of US special forces troops was big news in China, as everywhere else. Reactions ranged from criticisms of American hypocrisy over legality and

human rights, and admiration of Bin Laden for standing up to the US, to delight that a terrorist had met his just deserts.

TV Sensation: A Surprise at Every Turn

(*chuanyueju 'Bubu jing xin' rebo*
穿越剧《步步惊心》热播)

A Surprise at Every Turn was a popular TV show about a woman who time travels from contemporary China back to the eighteenth century. In recent years, the concept of time travel became so popular in books, TV and film that, in early 2011, Chinese TV regulators introduced restrictions on similar works that encouraged audiences to speculate about the past, or indeed the future (one in which, presumably, China would no longer be a one-party state).

XINHUA'S 2011 TOP TEN NEWS STORIES

Xinhua News Agency published a list of the top news stories of 2011 in English and Chinese. Xinhua's original English-language descriptions of each item are given below.

Measures to Cool off the Property Market

China launched a series of tough government measures to cool off the property market, including higher mortgage rates, a ban on third-home mortgage loans and purchase restrictions. The State Council, or China's Cabinet, introduced a policy package urging enhanced efforts to ensure the healthy development of the property sector and to promote the construction of affordable housing units for low-income families.

Food Safety Scandals

Food safety scandals erupted in great number in 2011. Authorities busted farmers for adding clenbuterol, a known carcinogen, to pig feed in order to grow leaner pigs.

Government Spending Restrictions

More than ninety central government departments publicized their 2010 and 2011 spending on government-funded overseas travel, receptions and official cars upon an order issued after an executive meeting of the State Council in May.

Further Criminalization of Drunk Driving Offenses

China's amended Criminal Law criminalized all drunk driving incidents starting 1 May. The previous law imposed criminal penalties on drunk drivers only when they caused serious traffic accidents.

Wenzhou High-speed

Train Crash

On 23 July, a high-speed train rammed into a stalled train near the city of Wenzhou in the eastern province of Zhejiang, leaving forty dead and over 190 injured.

Ninetieth Anniversary of the Communist Party

In a speech delivered on 1 July at a ceremony marking the ninetieth founding anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Hu Jintao, General Secretary of the CCP Central Committee, hailed the Party's achievements and stressed efforts for the future development of the country and the Party.

Shenzhou-8 Docks with Tiangong Space Lab Module

The launch and safe return of the Shenzhou-8 unmanned spacecraft marked the successful completion of China's first space docking mission, with the spacecraft docking with the Tiangong-1 space lab module.

CCP Central Committee

Plenary Session Focuses on Culture

The Seventeenth Central Committee of the Communist Party concluded its Sixth Plenary Session in October, adopting a landmark guideline for improving the nation's cultural soft power and

promoting Chinese culture. The Central Committee also pledged enhanced efforts to promote the healthy and positive development of Internet culture.

Centenary of the 1911 Xinhai Revolution

A gathering was held on 9 October to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of China's 1911 Revolution, which ended 2,000 years of imperial rule in the country by toppling the Qing dynasty.

Ethics and Morality Debates

Ethics and morality were heavily discussed in the public sphere, with two incidents stoking debate. In July, a woman in east China's city of Hangzhou caught a two-year-old girl who plunged from the window of a tenth floor apartment, winning praise from people across the country. However, in late August, a bus driver in East China's Jiangsu province stopped to save an old woman who was hit by a three-wheeled vehicle, only to find himself held accountable for the accident.

UTOPIA'S LIST OF TRAITORS

In December 2011, the Maoist website Utopia published a poll inviting readers to rank China's Top Ten Traitors, that is men and women deemed to have sold out China to foreign interests, or whose ideas and activities were seen as compromising national integrity. The site was shut down in early April 2012 in the aftermath of the fall of Bo Xilai, one of Utopia's heroes. The final selection of China's Top Ten Traitors was not announced.

The Top Ten Traitors were to be chosen from a shortlist of eighteen, listed below with the likely reason for their inclusion:

1. Economist **Mao Yushi** 茅于軾 for liberal economic ideas, especially privatisation and his criticism of Mao Zedong.
2. History teacher **Yuan Tengfei** 袁腾飞 for his middle-school history lessons critical of Mao.
3. 'Science cop' **Fang Zhouzi** 方舟子 for his anti-Chinese medicine activism and support for genetically modified crops.
4. **Wu Jinglian** 吴敬琏 for liberal economics.
5. Diplomat **Wu Jianmin** 吴建民 for his calls for 'rational patriotism' rather than boycotts after an incident in 2010 over the disputed Diaoyu (or Senkaku) Islands.
6. CCTV host **Bai Yansong** 白岩松 for his promotion of 'universal values' and opposition to a boycott of French supermarket Carrefour after the Olympic Torch Relay fiasco in Paris.

7. Military scholar, biographer of Mao Zedong and Lin Biao, **Xin Ziling** 辛子陵 for his 2010 open letter calling for an end to media censorship.

8. Retired government official **Li Rui** 李锐 for his writings promoting political reform and his revisionist views of Mao.

9. Legal scholar/law professor **He Weifang** 贺卫方 for his liberal ideas and criticism of government policy.

10. **Stephen N.S. Cheung** 张五常 for his liberal economic ideas.

11. **Zhang Weiyang** 张维迎 for his liberal ideas and promotion of the further transformation of the Chinese economy.

12. Economist **Li Yining** 厉以宁 for his liberal economic ideas.

13. *Southern Weekly* Deputy General Editor **Xiang Xi** 向熹 for his newspaper's liberal tendencies.

14. Former *People's Daily* Deputy Editor-in-Chief **Huangfu Ping** 皇甫平 for publishing articles supporting reforms and criticism of Mao's legacy.

15. Writer, incarcerated Nobel Prize winning dissident **Liu Xiaobo** 刘晓波 for his critical writings, support of 'universal values' and activism.

16. Former doctor of Mao Zedong, Mao biographer **Li Zhisui** 李志绥 (deceased) for his book *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

17. Peking University journalism professor **Jiao Guobiao** 焦国标 for his 2004 essay 'Denouncing the Central Propaganda Department'.

18. Former *People's Daily* Editor-in-Chief/publisher **Hu Jiwei** 胡绩伟 for his support for press freedom and his petition for the repeal of the declaration of martial law during the 1989 Tiananmen crisis.

