



12-5-05 New diary, new beginning? Last two years has been hard. I have struggled with self confidence and maintaining a positive attitude. Having said that I am happy with who I am and not unhappy with where I am.

At the moment that's in Bali! Sitting on a verandah of our room in Antini 3 in Ubud kids asleep and Ange reading inside. Absolutely beautiful here.

Bali is a procession of third world type activities, notorious and lawless, people up to all hours making a living, markets, dirt and dust. And spread through it all vice paddies and art and tourists and lovely smiling local people enjoying life.

And this place is great (Antini). Nestled in amongst vice paddies and palm trees on the side of a hill. Nice pool, calming balinese garden. No air conditioning or television. Nights are a voluminous array of frogs and crickets, and earlier on (not last night when we arrived ~~at~~ about 1 am in the morning but now at least at 8:00 pm) soothing bamboo chimneys being



BACI 12 MAY 2005 GECKOS + GRASS HOPPERS AND  
REED AND BATAVIA INSPIRED LANTERNS AND BRULE AND BAMBOO CHIMES AND FROGS AND  
AND RICE PADDIES AND PALM EMMU AND STELLA AND US. CRIKETS AND FORESTS AND MONKEYS  
AND STAIRS STONE BUDDHAS AND SPIDERS BOATS AND BEACHES.



in moving them around with us ☺. A couple of hours  
at Surawa (spelling?) beach, outrigger (spider boats  
as Stella calls them) lined up on the beach, a  
floating gold and yellow umbrella washing up as  
Hatsun and; etsem. Three fishermen heading out  
to the reef with a long net, the guys on the water  
end up to their necks in it. All three with blue  
painted cane hats, very local fisherman stuff ☺.  
Down to Kuta to have a look at what appears to be so  
many Aussies. Great long beach with six or seven  
metres of shade along the beach full of surfboards and  
beach boards for hire, hair plaiting, massage etc,  
bit of a scene with salty surfers and white  
skinned young lads walking around with an air of  
new found manhood and self independence and importance.  
Could see the appeal. A place to chill and to be cool.  
To drink and to surf (or look like you can surf), to  
shop and eat and rub up and down against Balinese  
and tropical South East Asian laid back Island  
culture.



Drive past the site of the Bali Bombings, the Sari  
Club and Pads (I think, 200 people and only 3 Balinese  
according to Made our driver. Now a vacant block  
called Bali Peace Park and a memorial across the street.  
Yet more horrors interweave through and around this  
life we live in, pass through or whatever. And the  
thing that makes me uncomfortable with the whole thing is  
we all have our horrors and live on both sides of the  
fence. Wealthy Australians coming here with immigration  
law back home juicing the exchange rates, sucking the local  
women, the mothers, the sisters and daughters, getting waited  
on hand and foot, creating our own private hell for  
these people in a lot of respects. Complaining about  
corruption in a place where it is all a person can do to  
stay alive. Still there but for the grace of a higher  
power go all of us. Australians like us, like me and Ange  
and Stella Ewon. 200 people. It is a bit hard to reconcile.  
Sometimes life feels like a hybrid current of swirls and  
eddies pushing pulling ducking diving, bobbing along and we  
are just afloat in amongst it all. At the whim of  
submerged beaches, of heartflows and undercurrents. We  
are ill equipped to choose our own direction but do so out of

not leaving an option to do otherwise. I guess I meant to  
Hinduism in a way and yoga of right action. Do what  
your station in life dictates. - There you go who would  
have thought I would ever be on the side of the caste  
system - Through a bit of selfishness mixed with a  
bit of loyalty to Stella + Ewan, and also a bit of  
had to do much else (harder maybe). One of these  
days I will start to make up for it. At the moment  
to look after us, being as nice as we can along the way.  
Not getting for that plaster leg at the supermarket,  
sponsoring a child in Vietnam and writing good intentions in my  
diary; one of these days... I guess about the same people  
like us who don't go the long and try to bring a bit of  
sensible measure into the world (that's a ;che with it)  
one way, the more crossing over even if it is just in a  
well intentioned tourist sense, the better, the more  
the \$ flows and the more the culture flows also.

I don't know the answer, let's face it, I kind of  
a struggle myself, and maybe that is part of it. It's a

tough wide cruel world but it is all moving forward and  
we are all just living our little part in it, up, down  
and around and forever onwards...

How are you ever to enjoy yourself Brandon  
when you insist on taking on other people's real or not.  
It's very difficult to live in the now, and I'm not sure at  
all it is the right thing to do. If it involves ignoring or  
putting aside other than it feels a little like sitting on the  
sidelines at the scene of a horrible automobile accident. The  
post and future and present all mangled up in a mess as you  
get your way through it focusing on the happy times.

And so today was up to the North (to the  
mountain and Lake Batur). Huge huge huge caldera.  
Santorini plus a couple of hundred meters of elevation.  
Coffee and cocoa on the way down, holy springs temple,  
and a scenic trip back above Ubud through all the rice  
fields with the main mountain in the background above  
the palms etc. Stunning and romantic and almost dreamy if  
it wasn't for the sweat and dust and howlers and  
motorbikes and dogs and chickens and the impending



Flight back home tomorrow afternoon. So... really nice ☺. Dinner overlooking the rice paddies again. Stearns colours and atmosphere and everything else (again). And not much more than a few years ago I was lying in bed breathing through a tube and wishing to hell I could walk ~~off~~ and have my old life back again. More reason than ever to realise now I don't let this dust off into Jergatta land, a reason to break out of this Army shell into something a bit more adventurous and better for my fellow man.

One day pretty soon we will all understand. One day soon we will know the truth.

I believe in one day...

(Today).

21.5.05 Ewan is a definite second child. Poor thing has to make his presence felt amongst all of the other bigger people in the house (and he does a pretty good job of it ☺).

He is such a lappy snily little boy. He is quick to break into a cry at the moment but it is when he doesn't get his way more than anything else. His head has become quite resistant to wobble floors and bunnies etc ☺.

When we were in Bali he was often carried around by the waiters or waitresses and one of them was showing him the various geckos on the roof. So now his repertoire consists of clapping which we all taught him, and pointing.

He is also talking a lot in baby talk. His first word was I think a version of pa-joo-bee-bee which he loves because it ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> always everybody laugh. Stella is lovely with him and looks after him.

25.5.05 Back in Melbourne with Furiospolis. This engineering thing is hard. I am trying but is hard, I

can't seem to shut down at all constantly worrying  
over things which all ends in a vicious circle of no  
sleep and reduced ability to cope.

Wait for the light of day, things will look a bit  
better maybe.

26.05.05 Just watched a very good show on  
Lomo sexuality. Made me feel very conservative, very  
straight very sensible and trapped in this worried  
with kids and a professional job society that I have  
been led into. I am not gay and don't have any  
feelings even leaning that way. Similar to the  
Tibetans we met in Nepal however, I envy the  
utopianity of their lives, a course to believe in and fight  
for, how fantastic. I think that is what I need. I feel  
there is nothing strong enough in my life at the moment,  
but I know I can be capable of feeling it.

It also made me a little scared for Stella  
and Ewan. This really is an ignorant and scary  
world we live in. I just want to protect them both.  
I and Ange have been so lucky, I just wish that  
they can be the same, be spared the cruelty and

abominations that seem to be all around.

"We're all going on a bear hunt, a bear  
hunt, a bear hunt..."

We're going to catch a big one, a big one,  
a big one..."

I'm not scared,

I'm not scared,

I'm not scared!"

Childrens nursery song  
from playschool.

I like this song and what it says about the  
human psyche. 'I'm not scared' is a nice little  
statement of irony and humor with in overcoming  
what must be overcome in life. Spoken by a little  
child it is just beautiful. Pure and innocent, full  
of excitement and hope and future.

I hope and pray that that hope and excitement  
and sense of future can be strong and given the  
chance to grow in Stella and Ewan. Life can be



the most beautiful and fulfilling and loving thing. It  
can it seems be all that is not that however and  
not something you can always control and not  
something always with justice.

Hence the importance of friends and family  
I guess.

1-6-05

"So you think you can tell heaven from hell,  
Blue skies from pain, can you tell a green  
field from a cold steel rail, a smile  
through a veil, do you think you can tell?"

Did they get you trade your horses for  
ghosts, hot ashes for trees, hot air for  
a cool breeze, cold comfort for change,  
did you exchange a walk on part in the war  
for a lead role in a cage?"

Pink Floyd, wish you were here.

Maybe the type of thing I would have written in my  
diary when I was twenty years old at uni! Feel it has  
a little ring of relevance to my life at the moment however.  
Thoughts back to looking at the stars on freezing nights  
outside guest houses in Nepal, of trekking in Tibet and  
drinking in small cafes in China. One of those days  
I will head back to Act, hopefully with Ewan and  
Stella also knows. Maybe just me?...

pm. In Bangkok at the moment (today and tonight  
only on business (Central World Plaza)) I like  
Bangkok a lot. Has lots of energy and action and  
culture.

Had a look around the night markets tonight  
(Suan-Lum). Amazing stuff, as good as you see  
in any designer shop, better even. Furniture, art  
cakes, had to buy a small photo as a memento.

Might have to do a trip here one day to fit  
out our house!

2-6-05 Slightly different BKK experience this time. Two  
hours early for the flight and sitting in a bar with Tom  
Tom on the way and a whole swag of young guys

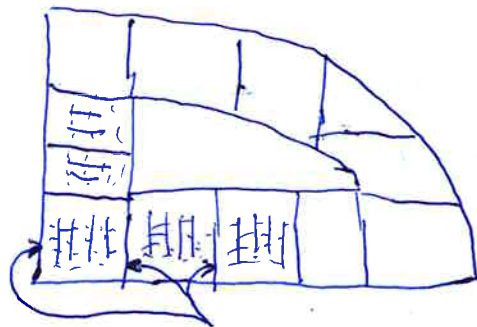
outside smoking and drinking beer (its 6:00am). They sound like they are off back to the UK and so have probably come from Phuket or somewhere. Just not that interested - having said that, when we go to Bali on a boys weekend, maybe a different thing! :-)

Bucketed down with rain last night when I was out looking for somewhere to eat. I like it when it rains heavily (not just here, although the whole blade runner thing is very good, but anywhere). Seems to close things in. Reduces the world to living room type space, creates a bit of change and novelty, excuses for things not going as usual or to plan.

4.06.05 Fiona has made some very sloppy decisions on decision points which puts us behind the 8 ball. Situations where we have been criticised of JCP the original consultant and now need to go back on our findings. Shit - and it is up to me to take the fall.

It is to do with the restraint to the bottoms of the trusses. Turns out you can make the work in restraining but it is dodgy - relying

on purlins + roof sheeting ultimately to restrain transfer trusses! I think I might take a text whereby we say we couldn't get the Bechtel model to work without taking into account the roof sheeting (which essentially is true), and say this is not good practice in restraint of transfer structure!



ONLY THING EFFECTIVELY  
RESTRAINING THESE BIM CHORDS  
IS PURLINS (CARRYING 7 STOREYS  
IN TRANSFER AS CANTILEVERS +  
BELT TRUSSES!).

5.6.05 I am worried about work (surprise surprise!). Issues being us (me), at the moment:

- Technical issues on the work we are doing on decision points



- Lack of prospective work in the short to medium term
- Reorganizing of the group.
- Financial performance or forecasts.

Some things I need to do as a priority.

- Get Lee access technical stuff of decision policy and financial. Do update or spend on the job!
- Access possible job list - get list of people to go out and see.
  - Lee + Wo.
  - Kevina.
  - DPA.
  - Kenny Hill.
  - Standard Chartered.
  - KZLD
- Start assembling case against CES.

sun Early morning sea today (6:00 before the sun was up?).  
 Balmy still (or always in Sing), windy black & white  
 basin reflecting lights from around. Couple of ~~8~~ kites on

and their families / wives / girlfriends sitting in  
 front of their tents with not much happening, Kevina  
 Tanges indoor stadium lying there beyond the bridge  
 all quiet and reserved, a sleeping slogan calendar  
 obscuring the Singaporeans around it, and a  
 couple of orchard tower girls leaving under cover  
 of darkness, a suggestive look cast here and  
 there.

7.6.05 Big motivation issues at the moment. Having  
 a lot of trouble working alongside Peter Wright. I can not  
 sense what it is. Feel like I am on the dropping block.

I could really do with a month's break to get  
 myself together! Unravelling around the edges it feels  
 like.

10.6.05 Listening to the god in the mornings, takes me  
 away into some other world and makes me wonder why I am  
 returning to the grind of Amp and engineering at the end of it.

2.06.05 Busy weekend, Kok Friday night, lunch at  
 Rumsche new place on Sat then drinks + dinner with the  
 quokka parents that night. The pool we opened so lots of  
 swimming, and then unpacking (unpacking), two stone  
 Buddhas (our Bali purchases) on the way through.

Monday morning + I am shattered! Signs of age, must get back into the gym, too large mate!! I will turn into that tall stiff bushy eyebrowed professor from uni if I am not careful. Dandruff and flaky dead skin behind the ears

(and on the face come to think of it). Maybe the breathers will help foster some inner peace and calm to combat all of this with.

Stella put some flowers on the bushes which was beautiful, can be one of little things (like we did at Bali), we do, go out and pick a few flowers for the Buddha

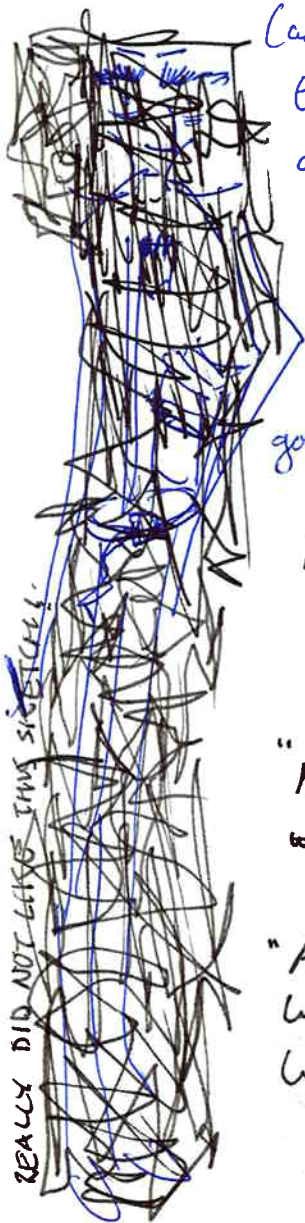
"If we dig precious things from the land, we will invite disaster"

there will be

"Near the day of purification, clouds will be spun back + forth in the sky"

"A container of ashes might one day be thrown from the sky, which could burn the land, and hail the oceans"

Hopi translations from the movie



REALLY DID NOT LIKE THIS SCRIBBLE!

## KOYANIS QATS'I

19.6.05 Seeing a counsellor from IPS (the employee assistance program at work). Had the first session last Monday and she gave me some reading material.

Suggested deep seated fears and needs behind perfectionism:

- 1) The fear of disappointing others
- 2) The fear of losing control
- 3) The need for constant approval.

Well... that just about sums me up!

← Good night last night indulging in myself a bit, too Yao tonight as well which was very good. Felt completely relaxed + fulfilled. ☺

The other thing that is helping at the moment is reading JFK's biography. A bit of a lesson in self confidence, positive thinking and not being trivial in your life.

27.6.05 I get a little worried over my teeth at times. Little twinges (very low level sharp pains) in the front of the chest from time to time, makes me wonder about my lungs after the accident. I feel weak in



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treasures come in  
a very plain wrapping.*

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written and directed by:

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music by:

*Belen Lee and Benny Wong*

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the chest at times and wonder if I should be going on these means that take so much out of me. Little stretches of a time though I feel, to back off + do nothing would feel like giving into a more certain gradual degeneration. You must be strong in order to defeat things when they come along (a variation on always take the harder road.).

I need to do a bit more muscle work. Get some strength up. My lower back is a bit on & off, build up slowly when it is feeling a bit better.

I need Stella back, she gives me a good workout, jumping up and down on my stomach ☺, punches, kicks crawling all over helping build up my match fitness.

22.6.05 I am not interested in work at the moment. Coming off being so busy it is very hard to get motivated. Have to keep forcing the issue and get side tracked thinking about things for Brendon.

A little self indulgent! Not good for the soul in the longer term. Or maybe it is if it forces a change. Time to get some things done for me. I have started sailing

which I really enjoy.

29.7.05

"And her five cities, like  
teeming sores, each drains her:  
a vast paradise robber state  
Where second hand Europeans  
pullulate Timidly on the edge  
of alien shores."

A D Hope, Australia (1939)

"A person will worship something, have no doubt about that. We may think our tribute is paid in secret in the dark recesses of our hearts, but it will out. That which dominates our imaginations and our thoughts will determine our lives, and our character. Therefore it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshipping, we are becoming."

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82).



21.08.05 Sleep therapy Manjaroni oil

11.08.05

KL. bags all through the city from buslines in Indonesia, gave a talk on the Eye and the Flyer which seemed to go down well. Late night last night typing a notes I never used, a walk around the streets which ended up with what I am sure was a transvestite following me for a bit offering massage! Late exit from the talk, 140 k's down the freeway to miss my plane and a long (2 hours) wait for the next flight, feeling very tired.

16.8.05

"Our expectation of what liberation is keeps us from experiencing it"

Paramahansa Yogananda  
(1893 - 1952)

Indian mystic + guru.

23.8.05

'There is at the surface, infinite variety of things; at the centre there is simplicity and unity of cause'

Ralph Waldo Emerson

(1803 - 1882)

American essayist, poet + philosopher.

24.8.05

I think I am loved with it? I don't really care for what I do. That's not right, I actually like it, it is just so mixed up with other stuff that it is diluted somehow. It's all too serious, too hard, too removed from reality. I want to be back travelling, back living in a non-real situation in the reality of the world. Am an observer, watching life, maybe.

I think I am loved with it as I am too easily distracted. That has to be a sign of boredom? That is why I like sailing, pure, connected to reality, basic, just the sea and the earth and the elements.

I need a sense of worth + creation and experience again. A project, some writing, poetry maybe. I should take up Haiku. Haiku to photos maybe.

I know I talk too much, wear my heart on my sleeve and all of that, get a bit idealistic and removed from reality, fool myself even sometimes. I like to experience, I like to feel what is out there, the soul that is around. The soul of the earth or the place, of the people and the things that end up coming my way. I am feeling, a little like an instrument perhaps, and that is what I look for. When I have trouble remembering can get distracted, day dream, and go far away, my inner mind is drifting, feeling looking observing, being. And it can be beautiful, it can be experiencing the sublime or it can be experiencing very little but being aligned with the sublime. I do really believe in Tao and am addicted in a way, going with the winds, not wanting to push, wanting to understand.

Some people are active forces in this world,

charging, manipulating, affecting. I am not. I am happy to be along for the ride and the experience. Life at times becomes the song that carries you away. But it isn't the words or the meaning it is the final feeling, that feeling of detachment, of closed eyes, drifting with the current, resting and being.

And it is all good.

1.9.05

"The man who has no inner life is a slave to his surroundings"

Henri Frederic Amiel  
(1821-1881)  
Swiss philosopher.

2.9.05 Yesterday was a strange day, in fact it has been a build up, auspicious things happening, come from larger goings on I feel. Have had two direct bits of feedback on Peter Russell and his that have waited 2 years to show themselves a few days before the whole



Flyer thing is confirmed. I have a cold + decided to get out, buy some paddal at Buegio and gets some news etc from Maje where by total chance I ran into Stella + Ange. Then a few things turned around despite my personal loom over the cold and frustration in dealing with Peter Waugh and Rob Davis (Perth Leader). Swiss Rue risks work popped up as a possibility again, The IR work reconnected itself, Peter Bowtell called me re a potential role in NY and the Flyer seems to be sorting itself out. And the shares have been having a feintester couple of weeks. We also had a delay letter on fusion policy but we had been expecting this + are hopefully prepared.



INDIANA TEA HOUSE, COTESLOE, PERTH

I liked Cotesloe beach and the Indiana Tea house. Reminded of the beach scenes in Romeo + Juliet with the candy stick remnant of the old deck pool (1800's). Nostalgic meeting of melancholy and sun + sand + salt laced in heat and in a constant state of erosion. A great place to sit back with hair away eyes and reflect and ponder things.

6.9.05 - 2:00 AM. Not sleeping again because of the Flyer. Stupid mistake in not getting around to checking the contracts before we signed them.

R seek no limitation on liability. I also should have revisited the fees. What a shit. I am dreading Australia's opinion of me and am at a low point, the lowest perhaps for the past 3 years, in fact in my career.

And I am unsure on what I should do. Should I offer my resignation? Admit fault + look better performance over the Flyer and offer the board the option of my termination without notice and other obligations they are normally bound to when making someone redundant?

② Should I stick it out, now coming up potentially to Perth or New York. How would I live with myself knowing what I have left here? How would I be received by others?

③ Should I stick it out in Singapore for the next 6 months. This at least would see me take the brunt of the slack I will receive head on + maybe put me in a position to control it a bit?

Despite the fees being tight on I think that they can be made to work. If cost of construction is 90M the full design fee =  $0.01 \times 90M = 900,000$ .

Detailed Design = $0.35 \times 900 = 315k$	C+S	0.15
Site Admin = $0.4 \times 900 = 360k$	PO	0.10
	EO	0.35
	SITE	0.4
We actually have	→	800k
	→	375k

Scaling up the 9 fees from 1% 2.5%  
1.04%

Bearing in mind that some efficiencies due to building contract happening at the same time.

O - a task basis

		x	PROFIT	ESC
Checking from	S4D =	$350k \times 1.3 \times 1.2$	$\approx 1.1$	= 600
	SING <sup>PM</sup> =	$75k \times 1.0 \times 1.2$		= 90
	SING <sup>CH</sup> =	$75k \times 1.0 \times 1.2$		= 90
				<u>780k</u>

All not ideal but doable + if we get paid prolongation which we should, on the original contract, then we are looking like making \$350k profit on that component of the work.

Total fee =	S\$ 397k	even if 300k profit
+	S\$ 1127k	
+	S\$ 190k	
	<u>S\$ 1,714k</u>	

Costs =	$1714 - 350 = 1364$	$= 1714 - 300 = 1414$
Profit =	350 (25%)	= 300 (21%)

Where we might be tight on is in the site admin as if issues with erection come up we will have to go above and beyond. This just needs tight management - MHI are supposed to be responsible for this + if we have to mobilise more than the basic attendance to solve erection issues we



should be claiming for it.

Will speak to RHCB over the limit on liability today and hopefully get it sorted out on the basis that it is not an unreasonable thing to be asking for and the contract has not really started yet.

7.9.05

Flyer.

- organise Alpha - Talk to Ken.
- organise PM Singapore Bldg. } Talk to J Trustos?  
AOW
- organise sales Singapore (ASSA models).
- resignation letter.

Patrick

- into an delays with Gozu

Longhee

- talks to Willey.

11.9.05 Battles with the truth at the moment.

It is not as simple as the truth being the best thing (the highest form of religion and all of that).

I think I have slipped into the realm of deceiving

myself with it. Using it to simplify my life, my thoughts and hence my actions. Good and bad become black and white, over exaggerated consequences that lack perspective.

A need to tell, for others to know, just to get things out of my head. And the justification is that it was wrong, a poor decision, and people should know, should know the truth so they are in a position to judge.

The real truth is however that a particular decision or action (fees + liability in this case on the flyer), was wrong. But also that it is not a problem yet. Also that there are many other factors. Settlement of fees, the fact that the Flyer is not the only job without liability limits etc etc.

If I stop to examine, what I am really scared of is the criticism, from Trustees and the board. The real truth on 50 & profits + no risk is that it is not always possible. The real truth is 3.2M \$ fee is a fucking big fee (The whole of DTE is 4.5M). The real truth is that this is

all growing experience. The real truth is that there are many others involved in this. JxW, PSW etc etc.

I think I have to recognise that I have made mistakes, recognise that I have done better than most ad now on. (Think about HCL, BC, KPB). I'm not doing too bad, I can see the glow of the light at least.

"I've done a lot,  
God knows I've tried,  
to find the truth,  
I've even lied.

~~And all I know,  
is still the beasts,  
are feeding...~~

But all I know,  
is down inside,  
I'm bleeding

And superheroes,  
wore the best,  
to ~~the~~ taste the flesh,  
not get deceased.

And all I know,  
is still the best  
is feeding...

And crawling on the planets face,  
some insects called the human race,  
lost in time, lost in space,  
and weeping.

Rocky Horror Picture Show  
(Superheroes)

28-9-05 Simone + Margot and Mat + Ben are over at the moment. Really enjoy having them here. Stella loves it choosing Mat about the place.

"What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others"

Pericles (495-425 BC) Athenian statesman



10.05 Simon + Mary (+ Mat + Ben) have been in Singapore for the week. Has been a lot of fun and everyone is sad to see them go. Four kids in the place has been good. Simon is a lot more into religion than I had realized. I probably did realise actually but always think of Buddhism as a philosophy more than a religion. Prostrations in front of the buddhas at the Thai temple on Pulau Ubin, touching statues to the forehead in a Tibetan buddhist outfit shop just in Tanglin, things like that aren't what I had expected. Not that there is anything wrong with that, just that the blind faith, idolisation thing is not something I fully related to Buddhism, despite having read a lot about it etc! How can things come so far (from a base where Buddha himself preached against idolisation),

I like Buddha out, just because of the simplicity and purity of (and serenity) of a lot of it. It just seems to become so much more (unnecessarily so?) in the hands of others.

I believe this life should be about what is in this life. Second guessing reincarnation, or theological masters, or this and that in all of the different religions is secondary and not come to being able to live good life

here and now.

Birds migrate because they feel it is the right thing to do. How does a bird apply its inadequate mental powers of logic and reason to the bigger picture? Let it ponder the reasons and discuss and explore, but in the end it is a simple as doing what it knows to be right itself.

I like Taoism more and more. My Taoism, the Taoism of Tao te Ching with the bits on politics and rulers and kings etc taken out. - I must do

Also been reading "10,000 steps without a cloud" (or is it miles?). Got interested in all of the countries of Xuanzang's original trip from China to India + back with the Buddhist scriptures.

Takalakan desert, Pakistan. Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and on and on. The world is impossibly large. Impossibly complex, and dangerous and beautiful. I think it's beyond anyone to get their mind around just how so.

"I ... am a boat on a sea ..."





2-10-05 Fusionpolis Logic:

- TRANSFORM
- UNDER INITIAL PS FORCES (PS<sub>i</sub>)
  - SELF WEIGHT ONLY
  - SERVICE STRESSES IN CONCRETE
  - ULS STRENGTH

- SERVICE
- LONG TERM PS FORCES (PS<sub>LT</sub>)
  - FULL LOADS
  - SLS CONCRETE STRESSES
  - ULS STRENGTH
  - DEFLECTIONS

6-10-05 Good day today at work, got on well with the Flyer client, spoke to Pat Dallard and some hope that we will be able to refute MHI's claims of too much drag on the rim. Financial results look ok (best then in two years). Should feel happy with myself. I have used a real difference here, the office is a better place financially and as a place to work!

Sitting up late at night, not because of work worries, not because of stock market worries (although probably should be!), but because I have been for a run and have adrenaline running through my veins.

16-10-05 I can honestly say I have never felt more heart in my mouth scared and worried about work than I do at the moment. I am very tense, a whole lot of me just wants to walk away. Not good for sleep and not good for enjoying life, quite the opposite...

I actually hit out at Stella today. She was being silly when I was trying to go through some paperwork as Eva and hit me very hard with her knee. Combination of bad temper, being tired and frustrated and a build up of Stella being silly and I grabbed her leg and hit her across the back of it.

Wasn't hard but wasn't soft and she cried and wouldn't go near me for a bit.

What is happening to me. How did I get like this. Any heedlessness I try to get into never is just a surface thing, skins a deer feeling of the surface but this toxic material under stays waiting there out of necessity of being there to depend myself at work.

I haven't made the best decisions w.r.t. the Flyer contracts. I should have sat down + renegotiated fees. I stuffed up on the facilities + Trustees. Peter Bailey + others are giving me a hard time, I have never done this before and there is a lot to lose!

Must try to see it through myself - this is it. This is why

I am paid what is a reasonable wage. Not great but not crappy. They would say without personal risk and they would be right. But there is personal risk with them.

There is my home and the respect of people that I respect, all at stake. I don't want to be one of those people who leave a messy mess for others to clean up...

And the stupid thing is that most of it is not my fault. The contract was Jeff + me. The reserves for the site fee was Jeff. I am just way too defensive about things as the essence of the job is me!

Maybe I need to get into a home early routine with the kids and work late, and care what may. At least then one factor will be taken care of - the most important one. They would work late at night to get things done. Yes I think I will try that, Get my previous night from the start. ☺. Feel better already.

In other ways the weekend was productive. Ange finished off her assignment and is taking the load of kids well (off me), I did a bit with them this morning, holidays x baby chaos at McCade and then sandcastle on

the beach which was fun. Got the tax done and sent off to Steven for processing! Moved the computer into the second bedroom which has helped a lot for focus and separation of tasks. No background working ☺.

I am sorry still and will try to be more of a better dad in the future.

18.10.05

"Conflict must end. It is only when the mind is completely quiet, and not in a state of conflict, it is only then that the mind can go very far into the realms that are beyond time, beyond thought, beyond feeling."

Krishnamurti  
(1895 → 1986)  
Indian philosophy teacher.

Last night was a state of perpetual conflict. Four hours of ruffled sleep & neckon.

21.10.05 Still on tablet and fell asleep on the couch waking at around 1 or 2, then back to sleep and up at about 5 or 6



to the sound of the kids. Feel almost normal although at a bit of a loss motivation wise. Last week was very busy with Tristram in town and lots going on on the Sleyer. Today is rainy and I don't really want to be here. Must push things forward however...

Am a bit scared I am losing touch with Stella. She doesn't appreciate the hugs and kisses any more! Both her and Ewan are definitely missing little children. Will have to make more of an effort to get home early and work late on the computer...

23-11-05 Working very hard at the moment. Home at 7:00 dinner till 8:30 then work to 11 or more and go in Saturdays 60-70 hours work a week!

Lots of drug executions in the news at the moment. Model Michelle Leslie, Vietnamese Australian being executed in Singapore and the Bali Nine. The Bali nine is the one that gives me a pit in my stomach. Very young Aussies. Either drugged, or blackmailed or just really stupid. I keep thinking about the father of one of the boys who was caught. He tipped off the Avert police when he asked them to go to the airport to stop his son.

Through some bungle they never talked to his son but ended up passing it on to the Indonesian authorities.

He must just lie awake at night turning that over in his head. His beautiful son sitting in a Balinese prison cell with a death sentence awaiting him. All of those years of bringing him up. Laughter, holidays, first days at school, first job, girlfriends etc etc. Hope and youth and joy and a whole life to live and nothing he can do about it other than watch the pain in his son.

Shit. I don't know how I could ever handle something like that.

26-11-05 Ewan's favourite toy at the moment is the little diecast blue combat truck.

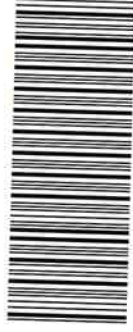
11-12-05 Stella and I have had a good weekend. Started off a trip to gym on the bus, chocolate milk for Stella and note photos for me at the barber centre in Tanjung Rhu. We were talking about her + Ewan + Mummy going to Melb and she was quick to ask if I could come too, a little bit concerned.

Day of indulgence food wise with Michelle's Stuart at The Sutor, and a swim with Stella in the pool. Watching Monster 1re tonight she asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I told her I was already

長崎原爆資料館



長崎の原子雲



grown up and was an engineer designing buildings. She replied with 'I want to be a clown'. She wants to make people laugh which is beautiful. We quite often get that reply when telling her not to be so silly. - But I want to make people laugh! Probably a bit of attention seeking but lovely so will try to encourage.

I also get let in on the secret with her head on my arm that she wants to marry me when she grows up ☺. Really beautiful times (in amongst the frustrations!).

Still working hard, still getting let down by people at work around me. Some of it my fault and I don't begrudge people their holidays. Fiona and Richard have been disappointing! Must make sure in future I have better people around me.

5.12.05 A bit on at the moment still + getting distracted by our new leader David Lee. Listening to how he is going to run all of those jobs by himself, how he is going to put us back on the map.

He sent out a shittily cobbled together brochure he had done for Capitaland + then complained it was the material. He is doing more damage than good; just at the

moment. And I am losing sleep that's about it!

Things I must do this week.

- Occasion proposal. ✓
- Ewan proposal. ✓
- A Grandpa Hospital ✓

5.12.05 Saw the Lion King last night. Very good although most of it was word for word the movie which was a bit disappointing.

Made me a little nostalgic, or feeling a little wary of impending trouble anyway the scenes with Simba and his dead father ("You promised you would always be there for me"). I have been getting fleeting pains in my chest lately, just surface twinges nothing too deep, but with the amount of work I have been doing and my medical history through the accident, makes me worry a little.

I really hope Stella and Ewan that if either of us ever goes, you will know how deeply we loved and cared for you. You have made life worth while and everything we do is in part for you. If ever something does happen, rest assured that we will be looking ever



you to give you what help we can.

6.12.05 I really like flying ("slipping for a moment into the present"). Time to reflect and be human, be what you are? I don't know really, might be a case of working hard to be something and only ever feeling like you're enjoying that in short bursts away from what has now become your life. That's not really you though is it, that's satisfying expectations from around you, expectations and responsibilities I guess in terms of looking after family etc. What would life be like if I was just purely me? I am generally happy to go with the flow so I think life would always involve the influence of others. We are all a product of what is around us, there's no separating the two.

So who am I? I like refined things, art & culture and things exploring reality & truth and the human position. I like energy and life and laughter. I like loyalty and people respecting and looking after each other. I am not strong, I am intelligent but not sharp and on the

ball. I am too emotional for that. I like to judge by feel and believe in higher orders of things. I do not believe in a God or an Allah or Buddha as most believe in him. I do believe there is something though, something that you could say is all of them.

I believe that all of this soul searching is not what it used to be for me. I feel very at ease with my understanding of the world however would not say I understand or am in control of it. The world was not meant to be like that.

I believe that I need to find myself or make myself through living more (and writing less :)).

And I think I have a lot to give to Stella and Ewan not over time I hope that I can give it...

11.01.05 Ewan gave me lots of hugs & kisses this morning and wanted to come out with me on the way to work. Really nice, when I give him a hug I hug him tightly & firmly for a

few seconds. Finding the transition between holidays + work very difficult. Back to all the mindless daily problems and arguments and trying to make money. Struggle against being at home with the kids.

A lot of it is this boring work thing. I don't love work, in fact the opposite. I can't imagine even being it, just at best a certain satisfaction. I don't want to argue + fight my way everyday.

Kids on the other hand, loving them is easy!

22.01.06

"fuck the poets of the past, my friends.  
there are no beautiful suicides  
just cold corpses with shit in their pants  
& the end of the gifts."

from anonymous  
postsecret.blogspot.com.

Very good (lay site) funny, sad, beautiful, full of life and the poignant, tired and hard, every thing life is...

Bought a car today, little Honda Jazz. Stella is incredibly excited, keeps asking when we can drive it repeatedly (I think she feels left out as all her friends mums + dads have cars, poor little thing).

Darwin next weekend, really looking forward to it although some hard work issues to get through before then!

The car will (I think) give us a new dimension to Singapore, we need it right now all of us.

29.01.06





Three days in Darwin over Chinese New Year.  
A trip down to Litchfield National Park which  
was beautiful.

It is the wet season so everything is green.  
Road roads and termite mounds green grass  
and scrubland trees all running away under  
a dark grey overcast sky continually threatening  
a downpour but somehow holding off it seems  
content with layering a heavy oppressive humidity  
on things instead.

Stayed at a crocodile farm to see a few  
crocs being fed, Stella was interested but wanted to  
be home, wasn't until we got to Florence Falls  
when her eyes opened a bit on the prospect of  
swimming in a waterfall. That was really nice.  
thundering water and soft splash lake & plunge pool at  
the bottom). Enough tourists swimming to relax  
feel safe + ok and crystal clear water leading  
off down into the river.

Friday the kids had work at the moment so

Ange. No time to be yourself but I guess that's not  
what being a parent is all about.

I'm still not sure where things are going at the  
moment. Just have to hang on and focus on the things I  
can see. Earn some money to look after the future and  
try to spend time with the family.

When will this feeling of tiredness end? This feeling of  
being on the back foot?

I think it has been with me a long time. Perhaps  
it is status quo of a continual rush? And I shouldn't  
complain, there is a lot of enjoyment along the way.  
I just feel however that I am still not 100%  
comfortable with my life and how it fits... Maybe  
it will come?

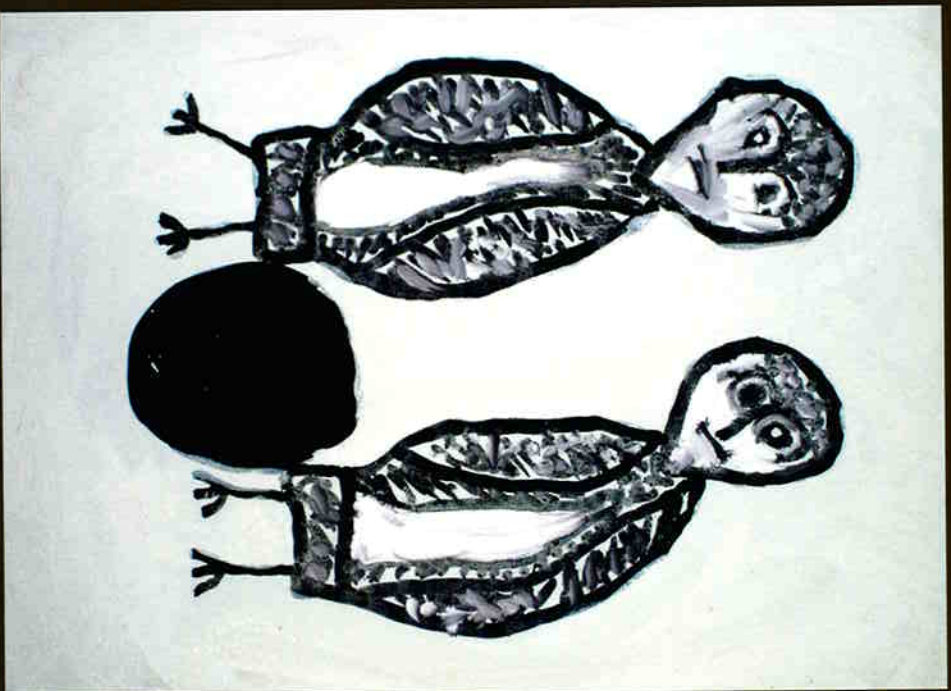
4.2.06 Just back from an information night at  
Stella's school. Really happy with her teacher at the  
moment. Strong and confident and demanding of Stella  
as Ange says, and really loves her.

She is having a good time. Their head of preschool  
was saying some things about kids development that  
really hit home and I believe in. All the little  
neural networks forming their connections. I forgot the



# GALLERY

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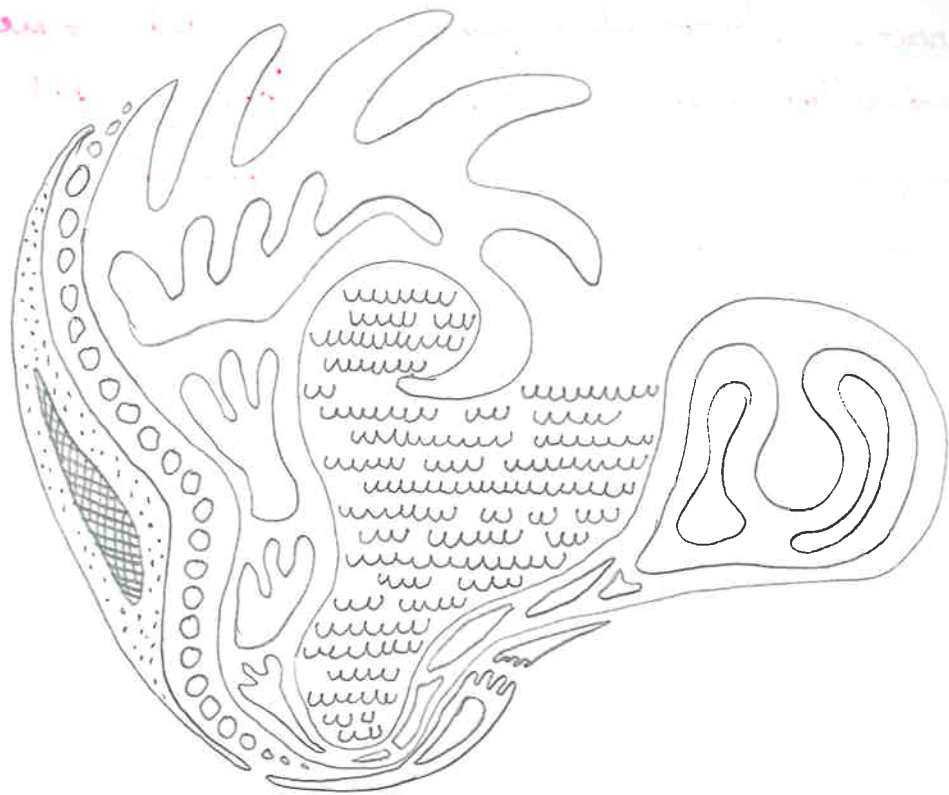
**PHILIP NEVILLE**

front image: Rover Thomas, Mook Mook

Figures list when a child is one, their brains are half the size of an adult and when they are 6 it is 90% the size. All of the neural network activity, the connections are done by the age of 10 (or again something like that!).

Fits in nicely with the 'Tup' movies and in with the water wacky theme from Japan. (Stella very sad they I think, to think little people are not recognised until they are seven. breaks your heart looking at all the love and learning and openness and beauty in Evans face - and that crusty of Stella girl as well!)

Struggling with motivation + a positive attitude at work at the moment. Don't feel like talking about it much other than I think it is getting better. I need to get a bit more 'don't care' about the whole thing. Lets me keep my sense of humour and sanity. Have a quietly confident feeling it will come, or at least work out (which ever way it falls if that makes sense).



Here I am still trying to lead out who I am. The goal posts keep on changing. They get beaten about and twisted + contorted, the ground moves below your feet, you are playing other peoples games, living something new every day.

I know where I want to be but you have to leave that behind for the longer term, for bigger goals. So what is important An Brea. The world, the earth, Family. Pride and recognition? It's just bull shitting.





## **COSTA RHU CELEBRATES**

### ***CHINESE NEW YEAR***

Date / Day : 03 Feb 06 (Friday)

Time : *from* 6.30 pm

Venue : Poolside

Programme : Lion Dance

Dragon Dance

\*\*\* *Snacks / Drinks Provided* \*\*\*

now. I know what's important and it's family + me  
and getting on in the world. Altho talking is not  
helping. It's one of those things: the thing that is  
important is being me whatever that is at the time.

09.02.06 Saw an interesting show last  
night at the Esplanade David Yang I  
think his name was, Australian born  
Chinese. Was a monologue for 90 minutes  
about parts of his life. Used different bits  
and pieces to focus on, his flat in Sydney,  
a bird bath... and other things. Got a bit  
close to being someone fulfilling a need to  
talk about his gay sexuality in the end. In  
fact the full frontal nude shot of a boy friend  
with the we had sex comments said in a  
manner of almost daring people to be shocked,  
was a step over the line (particularly as the  
accompanying image on the screen by its side

(it was set up like a dual slide show), was  
of the said boyfriend face down on the bed  
handcuffed with pink sheathed cuffs! A few  
Buddhist monks in the audience were probably not  
expecting that one! ;)

Anyway he was a strong believer in Taoism  
which I could really relate to. A couple of lines  
stayed with me:

"Any line of action involving direct  
intervention is destined to fail"

"I like this and believe it to a point, always  
better to go with the flow, what was meant to  
be will be..."

And the other comment was that he  
never really felt he became his self until his  
parents passed away. I can relate to this also.

Very strong part of you, whether it is the feeling of support, of safety net, or of judgement of readers to impress or justify yourself, it is always there.

Mind you as he mentioned, alongside the unconditional love that exists as a baseline with it!

20.02.06 Heaven is something invented by ~~the~~ survivors. A place to be recruited with loved ones, a place for things (be) to continue. Hell also in fact, because the anticlimactic emptiness of the alternative is too horrific to contemplate.

Thoughts inspired by a Japanese movie "Crying out love, in the centre of the world." A movie about unfulfilled love, very emotional movie and overdone in places, but really enjoyed it all the same.

There is something in me that enjoys the sadness. Something about the tragedy that somehow

balances something in my life? Or makes it real, or something like that.

I worry sometimes that Ange + I will never get back to the beautiful reality of life that we had when we travelled. Ange seems to be losing grip at the moment with the kids. Getting very angry and not coping at all (And I must say I would probably be the same if I did not have the respite of work!). She is rejecting Eva + I hear a lot of r's, d's, I hate that, get away from me's, all of that sort of thing (mainly to the kids - Stella especially). It makes me frustrated + angry as I don't know what to do about it.

I can't understand the net workers to be touched by the kids ???





27.02.06 Providing domineering parenting will result in a deceptive child.

This is from a parenting book and is I think true because I can see it at work. The more domineering a policy or a group of people are, the more deceptive the object of their domination gets. I can see it in myself. I am naturally honest and in fact prefer it because I don't have secrets on my mind. But it doesn't pay! You get a return attention + intervention and a whole lot of domineering crap - You end up becoming more deceptive just to survive!

09.03.06 Back under a lot of pressure at work.

Mark and Easy are too young really and Easy in particular doesn't take care of the detail. Puts me in a embarrassing situation needing to explain + change things that have been missed. My fault really? Haven't had time to check etc.

This is the real problem - time to do anything!

19.04.06 Stella woke me this morning with a serious tone in her voice to tell me 'snowmen can't do handstands or forward rolls .... or babies either, snowmen + babies can't do handstands or forward rolls.'

Resigned from work a week or so back (27.3.06)

Finally had enough, just don't have the energy to keep pushing any more.

Intigated through a few things but mainly the people that are hard work - its hard enough keeping all the balls in the air without fighting against Amy's things at the same time.

It has now moved on from them however. Now that the decision is made I can't really turn back as I will always be seeing I never really know what else is out there. Time to be a little hard on myself and face an examination of other opportunities.

It will be very hard leaving and a large part of me is looking to stay (a lot of things have happened that make me want to stay - people talking me out of it + other things - Amy is a good place after all).

Katey first + foremost I need a rest / break to get my head straight again! Can't think straight at the moment...

27.04.06 Came to light today that Fiona had  
sucked up again on the pile design! Forgotten about  
a whole lot of tension loads. Might just work  
better to see what the load loads are from WHI.

Riesis on using the tension capacity of the  
existing compression piles. Need to look closely  
at that - It is only the temporary condition  
which is a plus although need to make sure  
otherwise will be surrounded by tons of steel on the  
ground in a trusted word!

Saw Soja Wendt the other night as a  
part of Melder's 200 year celebrations. Very  
very good. Why cant I be a bit like that, have  
a bit of flair + confidence. Actually, I have flair  
it just gets quashed by the overriding lack of  
confidence in everything that I do.

18.5.06 Had a sleepwalking little Ewie come wandering  
out to visit me doing some late night work last night. Big  
sleepy smile on his face, lovely little boy.

Still not settled or sleeping well... ghosts of work  
hang around and haunt me all the night. Am not in a good  
way physically or mentally at the moment. Tried and  
disagree on both counts. Had some more pain up my  
chest the other night coupled with a taxi driver with a  
heart condition vehemently stating an ambulance by the side  
of a parked car must be 100% a heart attack victim.  
Got home and did two push ups before I went to bed - that  
should do it!

29.05.06 Still getting wound up on office politics. Must learn  
to relax and let it wash over me. David Tse is painful at  
times, immature small minded, erratic and with only his own  
best interests at heart.

I think that you miss the seasons in Singapore. That  
deep resonance that beats on an annual cycle in the human  
repose. seconds, minutes, hours, days, months and finally  
years or generations, a whole orchestra of different frequencies  
pressed into our developments from deep data.

Maybe there is something in the differences of people  
from the equatorial regions vs compared to those of the  
mid latitudes, and those of the arctic circles?

So many other some dominant factors I guess, weather  
environment, terrain, altitude, sea, land, dense population,

*200 Years' Anniversary*  
*A special evening with*

MELCHERS



JOJA WENDT

*Row: N*

*Jubilee Hall, Raffles Hotel*  
*23 April 2006*

*Seat: 10*



stank population... The cycle times are however kind of nice. More subtle and pervading somehow, like a silent force of nature, a heart beat to the Tao itself?

Some holidays (a break on leave without pay coming up in September which I am really looking forward to. Get back into things like this, touch god and the world again...

1 June 2006 I am actually quite angry about work but it is a silly angry. Angry that no one recognises what I have done, angry that I get criticism instead on wishes, angry that these jobs are there with risk in them!

I am not really excited to the design part of D+B. It would seem. I am not ruthless enough and want to do the right thing by everyone. You need to be a bit unreasonable and thick skinned in this life.

People get so wound up in work it would seem. Well, I do anyway! I don't know how people manage what they manage. Maybe I don't delegate enough. Maybe I don't have the right people around me to delegate to?

Maybe I am too focused on myself. It is all about me doing things, there is no leverage off of

others.

Anyway, I am doing my best. I have been involved in a lot of good things and a lot of good things have happened because of me. Project building things, office things, feminist things and people things.

It's funny. I feel like a medieval philosopher expounding a round world at times with people ignoring me, but I think I get this from one or two sources only. Judging myself on the aver reaction of a few individuals as they speak broadcast.

Long term sustained growth based on quality product and not short term gain based on quick win margins on sublimy workcut. I am sure Ove + the rest of Arup agree. It's just the rest of Arup, led by the industry and championed by David Tree ~~is~~ push you down the other route (the ~~are~~ work the staff + make money short term route)!

Cash follows Profit, Profit is King, Cash is just necessary. Claire and most of the Australian Board seem to disagree!!?

All through this resignation thing, people have told me

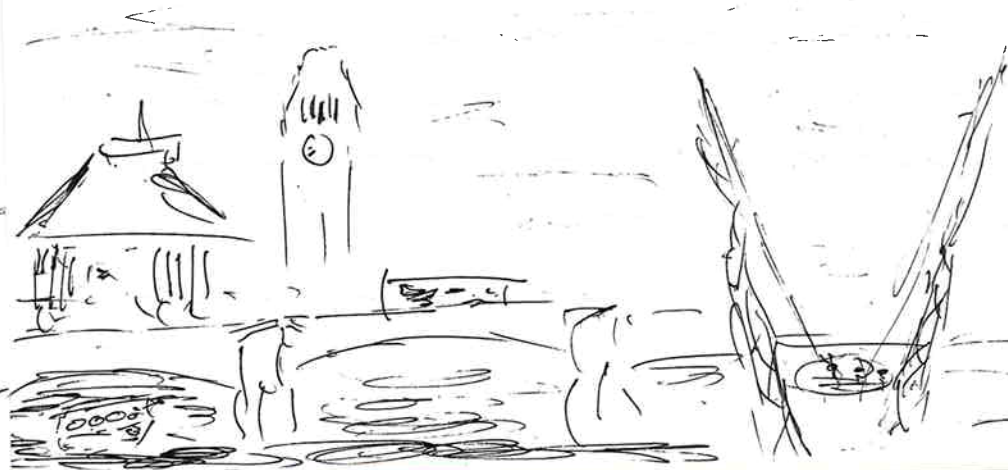
they don't want me leave. No one I can remember has ever asked me not leave, None I can remember has ever told me I am doing a good job.

You might argue it should be evident. Then why are people not saying it. To a paranoid person with low self esteem like myself, you need to hear it from time to time.

No one has ever said you are doing a good job, in fact the actions speak just the opposite so that is really all I have to go by even though I know I am doing ok at least. I am not going to sleep under those circumstances (we knowing I am not ok, and no one else saying a helio!)

I am not big enough, thickskinned enough or confident enough to be able to live like that.

pm. Dawn at Clarke Quay, having a bit of a wander and beer while Ange is off doing an English lesson with Kai. Really nice spot in Singapore now that it is finished, trendy little bars and restaurants and Tapes type places.



Jokers bound when out for a walk down the river from Costa Rica along the sea wall where the new Gardens East will be going, to look at the boats with Bowie :-!

They look abit like the devil himself. A little bit of the satanic verses starting to pick up on the craziness the whole Rushdie writing thing, sublimals in your mind, picking up on that mental energy and using it to pop through into the material world of rubbish and cost always that we wade through every day.





## So... ideas for a holiday

- Thailand, island hopping a few islands
  - strolling by the beach, sandcastles swimming walks boats
- x - Nepal, trekking
  - long walks, parties + kids. - don't really think so.
- Australia, Perth to Darwin
  - driving, camping, better when kids are older and can appreciate
- Bali, hire house + stay put for a while
  - beach, walks beach + ~~more beach!~~ markets
- x - India, Goa - Stay for a month - all beach! ↗
- China - Yangshu - river, bike rides, walks.

All comes down to what to do with the kids. Kind of like the idea of renting a house for a month or a couple of weeks at a time, getting to know the beach + that - swim, beach comb, art + craft. Maybe Thailand as an backdrop with the odd boat trip etc.

- Sailing. - luck to do 2-3 week leg somewhere?

I am thinking maybe a couple of weeks sailing, some solitude on my own to calm my head and then a couple of weeks by a beach somewhere → Thailand sounds nice!

I is thinking... this life is too short to spend it working and saving and renovating and then retiring. There is too much out there. Incredible countries and people and ideas. To die in the suburbs of Melbourne in blind retirement, a Blackie type existence of no depth or worth would be tragic crime against opportunity. To study in a Buddhist monastery or to translate the Tao or to build a school in an underprivileged country. I don't want to die without having Jeanette explained why I was here in the first place!

05.06.06 The anger towards Amy is not so much anger as bitterness which is a bit sad. Bitterness is a negative weak emotion born out of not being strong enough to do something about things yourself. It is rife up there with regret and jealousy and all the other unattractive feelings you like to think you are above.

Grace Stella a wave goodbye from the bus this morning and saw her there waiting for her bus waving back, poor little thing heading off to school. When we were just out of sight I could see her giving ear to ear visibly happy.

about the whole thing. "Tonight she wanted me to sleep  
head to toe in her bed." You know, like the thing where  
we go Stella, Daddy, Stella, Diddy, Stella, Daddy,  
member, member that Daddy". Absolutely beautiful +  
melts your heart. Three days holiday last week,  
had a great time. Family + life all a lot better without  
work! And coped a lot better at work today also...

This break in September will I hope be good.

20.6.06 Had a great fathers day with the kids.

Stella had made me all the worlds greatest Dad stuff at  
school (bookmarks, mouse pad, paper briefcase...).

Went to see 'Cars' at the movies, Mash House Horrors  
in the afternoon and some time to myself to watch  
the night.

should I do with my life 'which  
is actually very good - stories  
going through. It gave  
what I am doing has to  
? - personally,  
accompanying image on the 'in

Kind of nice that it was a retrospective justification,  
that I was able to make the moves myself (even though  
it has taken a long time!)

They talk about 'inner circles' in this book. A  
concept from C.S. Lewis who I presume is the Lion Witch +  
Wardrobe CS Lewis?. This is the inner circle of people  
you are always trying to impress. Not always (and most  
likely usually not), your friends. Could be people from a  
long time ago, people you are trying to prove wrong, or  
prove a point to, or anything else that drives your  
decisions.

23.06.06 I still get haunted by this fear that one  
of the kids will die somehow! It is totally irrational  
but very scary. It gets triggered off by reading those  
shocking articles in the papers... (Australian papers mostly).  
The last one was of a 42 day old baby that was beaten  
to death by the father. The father moon hit the kid on  
the head (bit of the open palm), to shut it up. He also  
shook it violently without restraining the head. When they  
did the autopsy they found old fractures in the kids ribs  
etc. The whole thing made me physically sick almost.



I look at the absolute beauty in Stella and Ewan and it breaks my heart. If one of them were not to be there I don't know what I would do. It would be the epitome of sadness and I really wouldn't be confident I could cope... Quite Black actually...

Dealing with David at work is getting harder and harder. I am being a pain to people in Australia I am sure. I think for my own sake I need to back off and let things go.



24.06.06

"Any new idea is asked two questions,

When you are weak, will you compromise?

and; when how do you behave when you win, when your enemies are at your mercy, and your power has become absolute, what then?"

Beal, of Jahalia,  
The Satanic verses  
Salomon Rushdin

Had a really nice night out with Ange tonight.

Japanese in the basement of Ngee Ann City and then a bit of book shopping - Kinokuniya.

Very relaxed and unassuming. Then back home to watch 'Whats on Doc' - Barbra Streisand, old 60's movie. Apparently Eva watched it and thought it was hilarious which is nice in itself (and just a little bit funny :-).

07.7.06 Home late last night from an opening in a gallery, have been going to a Jew with Richard + Alison, and they are good Jew.

Kids were asleep in bed and that was the second night I had seen them sleeping before going to bed myself. There is nothing more beautiful than a sleeping kid. Going to bed with the image of Ewan so sweet asleep and at peace with the world is pretty of them on the beautiful scale :-.

Clive is in town + doing the mentoring thing. I think people are changing their minds on David. With any luck they will get rid of him. I feel bad



saying that and I feel sorry for David also but I have pushed and supported and everything else for over 6 months + he continually turns around and bums you. Lies manipulates does deals, lets people (mainly staff), down. He is a nasty mean spirited, shallow, narrowminded short sighted little prick. Maybe mean spirited is not right, but all else is!

15.07.06 Sitting in a long weekend in Bangkok that could be a million miles away from everyday existence. Last week was the end of the whole David Tse saga (so we think?). Picking up the pieces of IR, well behind now and all a bit stressful. Nights out drinking to let some of the leaded in frustrations go, awkward conversations and late night emails with all sorts. It really is a madhouse of egos and work and over circumscribed importance and drama. All pretending it is real life, which it is, for the most part to some

(including myself when I let it...!). Anyway here in the Atlanta Hotel, jazz on the stereo, reading bits of 'The voyage of the Beagle', travellers around me, mixes of all sorts, fantastic.

David called me last night whilst I was sitting here with Stella eating toast (for Stella) and the obligatory Tom Tom. Felt he needed to let me in on how the Australian board felt about me. (Basically that they think I am nice). Info. granted on the basis of me being so nice in offering to do something to help him get into Saudi if he wanted.

Was actually quite a good thing, made me think a lot about the drives and thoughts behind mine + his + others actions. Feelings of anger, of competition of being hand done by, of revenge + retaliation all revolving around each other in my head.

One the spinning had gone on for a bit,

what I hope is a sensible and reasonable reality.  
started to slow talk.

A lot (most) of my feelings are driven by  
being defensive or things. I don't like being wrong, &  
I don't take criticism well.

The reality of the past 4 years is that I have  
come from a position of very little knowledge or  
experience and have done well. I have made  
mistakes but done the best I can and it has been  
good in most cases. Decisions made a lot with  
the heart but generally have come good. Things  
would be different next time but I could not  
lose the heart part I hope as this is what has  
made everything so rewarding.

Would I have helped David get into  
Sands. I don't know, probably not, but I wouldn't  
(and didn't) stop him telling Sands we had no  
problem with him joining them.

Did David call me last night to have a  
go at me, sending a message that he sees right  
through me? Don't know, and it doesn't matter  
from where I sit.

Am I worried about what the board think  
of me. Yes I am at least. Does it matter?  
Maybe, probably not if what I want to live is  
my life and not the Buerdon with ambition.  
thing (he would be doing an MBA right now).

Do I have issues at the moment? Yes I do,  
I am unstable in a way, but very stable in  
another. I am stable enough to let go of this  
wholeness of child that is passing by on all sides.  
And that is what it is, this parallel place in  
which people have forgotten how to see + feel the  
elements around them. Part of my issue is  
that when I do get involved in that stuff I  
let it get to me.

Why is that when I know it is not real

know that it is made up? Because I focus too much when I get into the detail of life - I am good at the big picture when I take the time to look at it. But I have to remember to do that. It is like breathing. You need to remember posture and deep breaths from time to time. Remember consciously to do it.

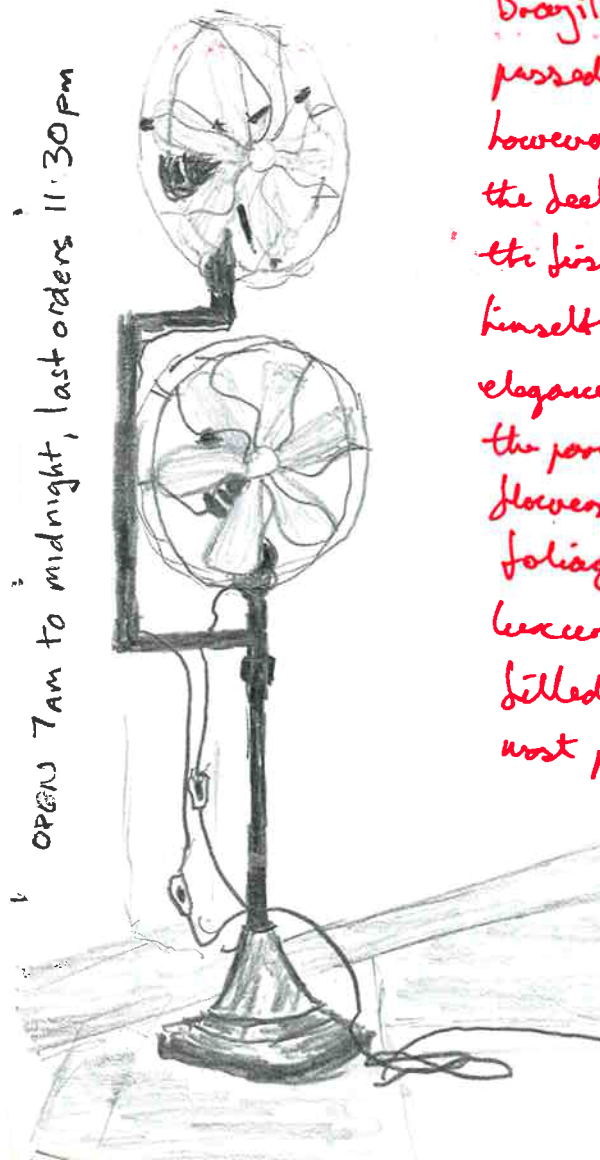
I could say pretentiously I live life intensely but that would not be true. In reality I live not laid back, but slightly disinterested anyway.

So this up and coming break is about love wheeling for a while, perhaps to my downfall (our downfall given we are a family), but it is in the interests of truth and reality. And sanity and mental stability (sense thing??).

The hardest thing of all is to accept that that other world value system that most of the world live by is not reality. It is not the true

indication of your worth. Hard when other opinions mean so much to you. You are what you see in other people's eyes?

19.7.06 "Bahia, or San Salvador, Brazil. Feb 29<sup>th</sup> - The day has passed delightfully. Delight itself however is a weak term to express the feelings of a naturalist who, for the first time, has wandered by himself in a Brazilian forest. The elegance of the grasses, the novelty of the parasitical plants, beauty of the flowers, the glossy green of the foliage, but above all the general luxuriance of the vegetation, filled me with admiration. A most paradoxical mixture of sound and silence pervades the shady parts of the wood.



OPEN 7am to midnight, last orders 11.30pm

FEET ON THE FLOOR PLEASE!



The noise from the insects is so loud, that it may be heard even in a vessel enclosed several hundred fathoms from shore; yet within the recesses of the forest a universal silence appears to reign. To a person fond of natural history, such a day as this brings with it a deeper pleasure than he can ever hope to experience again."

Charles Darwin

The voyage of the Beagle.

22-07-06 IR, Sakata Tower, Late night JCs, gymnastics, Rati Prata, halcyonnes, cable skiing, Steve Leung; Peter in Boston, Politics, leadership, strength, lack of confidence; Alison + decisions over beer David Tse, Robert Carr, Stella, Emily, Anze and to come!

How long would it take to clear my head, to erase the burn lines etched in my brain. Would it really help? I don't feel wrong now... Would it change the way I approach things, my ability to be political, to tell white lies. I don't think it would. So what would it do. Would it

let me taste reality and see both sides so I can decide which to live in? That's bullshit actually. I am not going to change me —

So if I am not going to change me, then what. I am going to find a shade of reality for me to live in (one that suits me best).

The work here is great, but it is stressful and demands long hours and is not in line with the family which is also great.

Do I take time to regroup + bolster my resources, my resilience and come back + make the best I can of the situation on my own terms? — (think so).

One of my fears is that I am not up to it. Intellectually I am probably ok in the long run but I'm not quick on my feet. Can I change that, or change the time frame that I have to deal with it or worse.

Get some good people around me is pretty key. Reading Satanic verses at the moment and

Rushdie's worlds of virtual insanity are feeling a little familiar. Life is becoming loose at the seams, bolts are loose wheels are wobbling and rolling off and the thing just keeps on moving on, accelerating if anything. Defies gravity, defies understanding and reality and morality.

It's like the circus has come to town and stayed. It feels like I am floating out there in that circus, untethered and going with the nonsensical seventh currents of absurdity, but so is everyone else. And what are Ewan + Stella, if anyone is anchored to terra firma it must surely be them, and they are (think, and it is beautiful, but at the same time I can see the time distorting around them.

Hairs blowing in the wind of the gentle vortex that is moving towards them. And perhaps all of this is how it should be. It is not long that is for sure! It promises growth and movement which is after all what we are about.

I should read 'The Vortex' by Franz Kafka again. It feels very much like that. And the bloody and dark stark stories that sit along side it in the book are very appropriate providing that menacing element always there, always waiting as ~~an~~ unthinkable catastrophe which could never be (could it?).

How did it go with Omar Kyan - I have studied and grown my whole life in this world, and still I am no master of it.

I understand the bits being flashed before me in an endless whirlwind torrent, I enjoy it and I hate it, it makes me laugh & it makes me cry, but I am still no closer to mastering it. It has me firmly by the horns and is leading me where it will.

It's like driving by looking out the rear view mirror. You need to develop this sense of future and the feel for history the present based on a partial understanding of the past. Humm...



Detachment Bourdon, sense of humor, and  
sense of kindness and honorable dealings.

WENT TO SEE  
THE BIG RECLINING  
BUDDHA AT WAT PHO WHEN  
WE WERE IN BANGKOK. ALL  
THE LOCALS TRIED TO TELL US IT WAS  
CLOSED UNTIL 2:00PM TOGETHER TO  
SPEND A COUPLE OF HOURS DOWN A BOAT CRUISE.  
WAS AN IMPRESSIVE SIGHT. USED TO BE A VERY OLD  
LEARNING MONASTRY, LOTS OF PICTURES ON THE  
WALLS, WOULD LIKE TO HAVE SEEN A BOOK OF  
THEM ALL. THERE WAS A ROW OF ALMS  
POTS DOWN ONE SIDE OF THE HALL  
THIS IS ONE OF THE COWS THAT YOU  
GOT (IN CHANGING A NOTE) TO DONATE  
A CONSTANT TALK TINKING OF METAL  
INTO POTS. ANICE COURTYARD  
OUTSIDE WHICH FEEL LIKE  
BUDDHA COULD HAVE GIVEN  
HIS FIRST SERMON THERE (BE  
OVER HANGING TREE. THE MAIN  
STREAM BUDDHA TRAIL WEAVING ITS  
WAY THROUGH THE HEAT AND SMOEL  
AND CHATTER AND GENERAL POPULACE  
IN ASIA. A LITTLE LIKE STRATFORD CROW  
AVON, NOT MUCH OF THE REAL SPIRIT THERE  
BUT A REAL ECHO OF THE PAST AND A REAL PART  
OF THE PRESENT → AND NICE.

29.7.06 In HK for IR. It is sucking me in (with a little  
help from Peter Bortell is. I probably should be  
resisting but it is a huge job. Will be fantastic for Anup,  
and prestigious (for those who work on it also).

Real action in Sing + HK will take off in the new  
year which if I don't decide to coil altogether would  
suit as far as timing goes.

David Tse seems to have disappeared off  
of the scene... although I can't help but think  
there is a sting in the tail there somewhere (as  
Peter says, Singapore is too small a place for  
things to be as simple as all of that).

I would like to get off the management  
thing a bit and build up some construction  
expertise. My background of struggling with jobs  
initially in Melbourne has meant that that  
that is a large part of my focus. Too much so...  
Still struggling not to lead a pace of life, but to  
find a pace of living in it. Tend to rush things +



ROYAL PLAZA HOTEL, DRIZZLY  
MORNING AFTER NIGHT OF  
RESTOS SLEEP

000000

AMERICAN BIBLE TV  
CH 5

CNN CH 10

FRANCIS TVS  
CHANNEL 16

MANAGER  
BLOOMBERG

CRIME NIGHT (DISCOVERY)  
CHANNEL 19 (CHANNEL)

HJ STRAKA

CV CHANNEL 7



not enjoy / think things through (which is a vicious cycle). Must slow down, be objective and make my way through life energised but unhurried, (and full of detachment + smiles) ~

6.8.06 Voyage of the Beagle is a lot more intense than I had thought it would be. Darwin being a naturalist is very objective and factual in his descriptions.

In some cases like when he describes it as almost a shame to kill an armadillo (for dissection), for they are such quiet creatures, it gives you an insight into how caring and compassionate he is as a man.

In others when he describes a town where as tyrannical and whose favourite sport is the shooting of Indians. Recently he slaughtered 48 and sold the children off at 3+4 pounds per head, it sends shivers down the spine and gives me a sick feeling in the stomach.

A very interesting and extremely confronting book. Must go, this is the day and age when a man was jailed after killing a small baby because it wouldn't stop crying.

The autopsy revealed a history of broken ribs at various stages of healing showing it had been the subject of a history of beatings.

Shit... what type of world is this. Makes me fear for Stella + Ewan, these judges out there. Knowing people can be capable of things like this makes me less tolerant of the human race in general, less forgiving myself.

22.8.06 Good weekend at Sidou, Room to ourselves right on the beach ☺. Kids ran around and got dirty, played on the swings + beach + boats.

Did the little trip out snorkelling and took the view of the tropical pacific island I am after. Golden Sand, clear clear water, blinding sunshine, salt water and shells + coral and the blue of the water and not much else.

Something that comes together, I don't know what it is. Something to do with the clean almost antiseptic nature of the whole scene.

That lead with the sun and the old worn plane costing a year vertical chisel from my Alfred hospital drawers, that is there...



4.9.06 Took Stella and Ewan horse riding down at Pazio Rio park on the weekend. Ponies actually! Stella loved it. She was a little scared of leading but after us holding her hand in ours she was right into it. Was a beautiful experience as we have known she has been getting into the whole pony thing. A few weeks back we found an old bit of rope down by the beach and she has carried it around a bit ever since as 'her pony' that need to be tied up here and there.

She was so excited and as I got a quick little nod and yes with a smile when I asked her if she wanted to go for a ride. (not the usual uncommittal response!). It was nice as it was something she really wanted to do and we were able to help her through the whole thing.

Both her and Ewan are having a good time growing up at the moment. i.

05.09.06 "What was, has always been,  
What is, has always been,

And what will be, has always been."

Louis Kahn.

in reverence for the work that has been done by the architects of the past.

10.9.06 Starting to think of my time off (have agreed with Anup to take 2 months off (November + December). Realising that 2 months is not a long time! Another reason I am going to have to learn how to live my life better.

I am thinking in 2 week breaks at the moment.

- Give Anup a break and look after the kids full time for a couple of weeks. Not only good for Anup the unspoken heavier my ups + downs, but a chance for me to bond more with them + appreciate what it involves.
- 2 weeks of hard ship backpacking. My road to Danvers as Alison calls it. Something with some meaning, retrace part of the silk road by foot or something like that. (maybe a sailing trip???)
- 2 weeks off on holidays with the family. I should happen in Ireland or something like that.
- 2 weeks doing some study on Taoism. Reading, writing. Publish stuff on the internet, look for the



read Tao, try to separate some of the governance type stuff, although, having it relate to social order is not as bad as I first thought. What is religion or philosophy if it doesn't relate to the human condition of which a large part is the social. Maybe start by returning down to the root, and then expand....

- 2 weeks looking into aid work. Follow could vision or Pedro, or UN or something for a bit to get a flavour + feel.

Still reading Voyage of the Beagle - fantastic. Visiting Tahiti + NZ at the moment, real travelogue diary but immensely valuable as it is written by a naturalist, concerned with truth + accuracy so it is like a time tray and seeing things differently for what they were like back then.

12.9.06 "Farewell, Australia! you are a rising child, and doubtless some day will reign a great princess in the South: But you are too great and ambitious for affection, yet not great enough for respect! Leave your shores without sorrow or regret"

Charles Darwin, The Voyage of the Beagle.

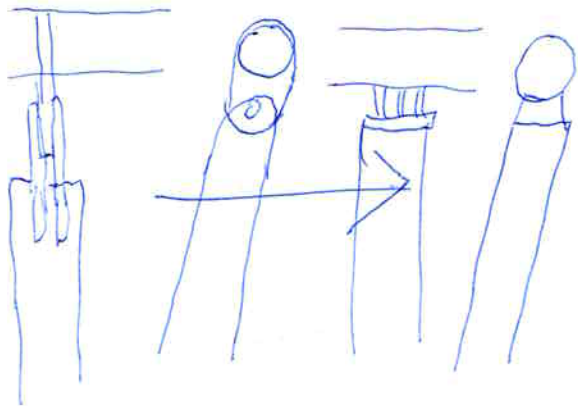
PESH BUDDHA.

25.9.06

"The history of man on this earth since the beginning of ages may be resumed in one phrase of infinite poignancy: They were born, they suffered, they died.... Yet it is a great tale!"

Joseph Conrad is response to a critic on 'Chance' maintaining the story could have been much shorter.

3:10:06 I am so angry, Mak and Siew Mah at work have let the detailing on the passenger deck bridge go to pot. Got talked into it by Tchenka. Shik house detailing that will look like crap + doubtful even works!



Will look shik house + messy!!!!

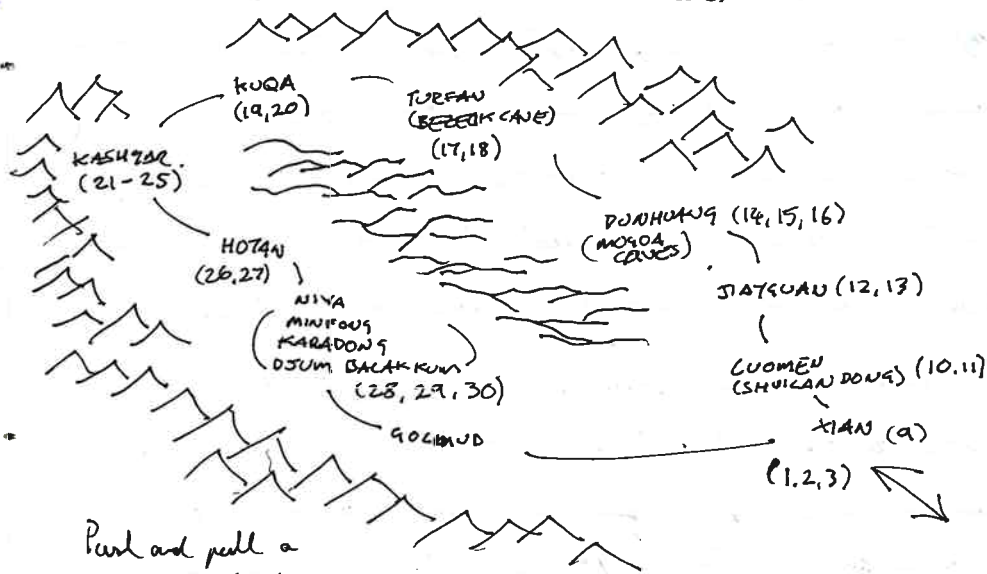
Really struggling at the moment on all fronts. God fucking help me!

9:11:06 Shanghai! The start of my three (and a bit) weeks away to get myself in order, to resolve a few things like dealing with the above in my mind!

Early morning flight to ~~Shanghai~~ Shanghai, then onto Xian. Plan is to do the Silk Road, something hard and diarning. A road to Damascus' as Alison puts it.

Truth is, I know very little about what it will be like (which is a good thing). Will immerse myself in the Taklakan desert for a bit (a Digher means enter and you will not come out apparently :-). Immerse myself in becrised cities bleak landscapes, buddhist caves, sand and, most likely, some frigid cold temperatures.

General plan just for interests sake as a 'before' shot is upon the North Rd and back on the South.



Push and pull a little bit to try and get a two or three day walk in. Maybe Duolunqiang, maybe Keshger in the hills, or maybe Naya where there are a few ruins.

Already a few processes starting to sort things out. A forgotten book led to a lengthy browse through a book shop at the airport. Biographies, light fiction, hard war fiction ('The Rope of nanking just pain across the crap out of me!'), science in the Sun

# Stella

Stephen Hawking, Buddhism, and finally the sad choice of Darwin and The Origin of the species. Mostly on the back of the Voyage of the Beagle I will admit but something I felt comfortable with. Historic, worthwhile buying out of the religious side of things for a bit with reality and the bare and raw.

Felt great getting back into the boots etc for some travel. Although has made me clumsy, gotten used to sliding my feet a little when I walk obviously and the boots grip + stick which makes for a few stumbles. Hopefully this trip will see me pull together the mental and the physical. A bedding down of the person. Stelfish I think but you need to be from time to time.

Shanghai is an impressive size airport. A bit clumsy in the engineering in parts, but quite impressive still. There is a runway here or long outside, I'm guessing smog, lots of local Chinese waiting to board to Xian, bit of a Melbourne Sydney business flight feel about it.

9:11. Well things could be going better but not too bad. The train times from here to Luomen are a bastard. Leaves at 10:00 and gets in at 1:00, no way of booking oncometer so would arrive cold! Think I will skip, start out to Luyhou and Siyayuan, do Luomen on the way back though if it makes sense. @ The

deciding factor was my boots falling apart I must admit. The humidity in Singapore must have gotten to them and the rubber persisted from the inside out! A good thing I had a long day of walking today and they fell apart now + not further in! At least have half a chance of surviving here - I have an appointment with a shop in the morning.

Xian is not quite what I was expecting. Very third world. Dust and grey and grime over everything. Smoke haze everywhere and the smell of urine + dust every twenty paces or so.

Maybe it is the proximity to the North Wests. Less money up here, harder people. The courtyard in front of the main railway station is full of people waiting. Sitting, sleeping on bags of produce, unkempt kids running around urinating, just generally attractive to the dirt!

A strange people as well. All this diffused with attempts to dress well to Western standards, quite serious (as you would be in that position I guess). A lot of different racial influences, Tibetan, almost European in places.

I am staying in a budget hotel near to the train station. Pretty basic but clean and comfortable, I think it

to V



is going to be a noisy night, will pop a melatonin to see if it helps. Staff are very friendly + not too over the top actually.

I ended up there as I couldn't find the Lonely Planet recommendation at first. I have since but apart from enquiring to double check on rail tickets I have stayed away. This trip is about me, not others and I need to keep it honest. The area is not that lush, a lot of small single stop front message pavilions with a girl beckoning you in. Subservient Asian women raises a few temptations but would be a silly thing to do. Not to mention sex seems to be taking over the world at the moment. Makes me fear for Ewan + Stella, I just hope they are untouched by the whole sick thing you keep reading about (a lot of it in the Aussie papers mind you!).

This is not flowing as well as I had hoped. Think I will concentrate a bit more on the photos and a bit less on the writing.  
Off for a short walk + back to bed.

The unfortunate truth is that this case I am sitting in epitomises A sin culture at its worst. Bright white fluorescent lights, big (big is always better), chrome columns surrounded by shabby ~~on~~ finishes ten years past their use by, aggressively chattering people, smoke, mis treatment of women and every now and then someone nice in there doing the right thing seemingly at odds (or there in spite of), the surroundings. The chinese businessman is a low form of life by the standards we currently know. A nation of David Tses → I am being really harsh here aren't I?

A couple from Yulin up the track a bit almost on the border with Inner Mongolia come over to have a drink before (where one goes from etc). Nice. It is all interesting, just not with the niceness that might be in other places → scrub that, pants or nice, it's this chinese business, male chauvanistic societal structure that irks me.

10-11-06

"How exquisitely the individual mind  
(and the progressive powers no less  
of the whole species) to the external world  
is fitted: and how exquisitely too -  
Theme this but little heard among men -  
The external world is fitted to the mind."

Wordsworth 1814.  
(The excursion).

A quote relating the human races slow realization that it is here as a product of the natural world around it rather than the natural world (as all other things), having been created with us at the center for our service. The fact that we all still eat meat and plunder resources without thought for the most part is evidence that we are still only part way through that realization (and yes I am guilty of the too).

To put too much reliance on looking after the natural world would be a mistake also I feel. Being here in China and seeing the hardship and the struggles and knowing that this has gone on for the longest time,

we must also recognize human nature and mercy too together to get on.

2:00 PM Sitting in Xion railway station having just paid 20 RMB to come up to the waiting room / cafeteria. More of a waiting room it would seem as the only thing it gets you is a cup of tea in a paper cup! A bit plusher than the stone of the square outside I guess.

Spent the morning searching for shoes to replace the trusty red boots which turned out not so trusty on this occasion falling ill to the rubber cover that shoes get between Melbourne + Singapore. Have myself a nice pair of pointy toed slip ons, guess I will be doing a soft shoe shuffle of the Takmakalan!

Have now got my hard sleeper ticket to Taiyuan, leave at the Jorndheer locom of 6:10 tonight. - 20 hours!

11-11-06 Morning after the first night on the train.

Slept really well actually, smoke (from the odd person smoking when they shouldnt and the train-diesel tinge to it, and probably the surrounding country side) is the worst bit which disappears when you are asleep it

It's true you can't smell smoke when you are asleep.

Stopped outside a little village. Sun rising through a lot of winery poplar type trees. Low band of smoke or fog making the whole village, low single storey square buildings similar to what you would see in Tibet, roads and stacks of hay seem all variations of the same yellowy grey.

People at work turning hay and stacking it into piles, herding sheep through the streets. Old slightly scraggy bullock helping him self to the hay. Young girl sweeping a yard of dirt and spinkling water over it from a cup and a bucket to settle the dust down.

I like train life, gives you time. Late last night got up and had my bowl of 2 min noodles, look with everyone fallen asleep, movement of the train constant, and shivering part outside in some patches overnight.

Looking at all the other trains, and there are quite a few narrow goods, some trains, passenger trains similar to this one. I counted one fifty two carriages long, passing at least 25m (from a quiet pacing interrupted by people

and deer and other ways etc.), would make well over a kilometre in length.

Surrounding brown hills in the distance. Looks very barren, no vegetation at all from this distance, just the light and dark brown of the shadows. Some higher hills in the distance beyond that that have white peaks.

The smoke is I think from all of the pollution



It is worse on the train

because of the plume from the diesel but everywhere you see smoke from small fires (in the homes), and we just passed a town that seemed full of moving produce, factories and a coal fired power plant, thick haze sitting across the valley. I hope I struck them on a still day because wouldn't be much fun if this was typical.

Countryside is very impressive visually. A huge brown desert of scrub + hilly mountains and brown houses, brown scrub and brown trees even, but with a nice low yellow light hazy warmth and interest to everything. Low shadows in relief to the hills,

← actually now think it's the coal but with the water they have every carriage load on so I got off.

Also some smoke is in the valleys when you see a coal fire



highlights the odd tree and telegraph pole, and sits  
nicely under the blue skies above. The distances are  
large enough that you can see the front of the train when  
it turns in front of you, you can also see other trains  
of it. The distance that lets you follow the line of  
the tracks, has to be said that we appear to be  
meandering across the floor of a large valley far  
wider than ought to be necessary, almost like we  
are bounding from the line of hills on one side to the  
line of hills on the other?

I am hoping the colours come out in the photos, will  
make a nice train trip montage

7:00am Had a great day - E did up strolling up to the  
front (staying at 'Taiche Shanghuang', a little place  
right by the front). Saw a picture of the overall and  
figured I had to be on the other side for good evening  
light. Followed lots of little tracks and crossed one banded  
wire fence to find myself in the wastelands to the West  
of the front. Fantastic - bleak eroded rolling hills of

alluvial deposits. Scraggy scrub and odd bits of  
weathering wall (with the new fence and some  
particularly desolate looking telegraph poles thrown in).  
The whole scene was great and I hit sunset which  
made I hope for some nice photos.

I ran into an old man with a camel (as you do)  
on the way around. It was after I had jumped the  
fence and so felt a bit in the way and gave him 5¥  
for a couple of photos. The camel was beautiful. Dark  
brown, two humps with the thickest fur I think I have  
ever seen. The old man was a bit weatherbeaten himself.

Feel a bit isolated staying here as I am the only  
one here! Nice little place and perfect for letting me  
see the front late and early which is why I chose it,  
and I also don't mind being on my own (although  
it has been a while!). When I came back  
from my circumnavigation of the front, noise was  
blaring and one of the girls was holding shut

the thick blanket curtains over the door, (I think they had all been dancing inside). Funny they keep staff on in off season as there can't be much business.

Stoes are hurting and I have a bit of a ~~blister~~ so will have to take it easy. Not sure if I should head into town for dinner or stay here + rest. I will see if they serve 'nifan' (egg rice from memory).

8:30 Well decision taken to rest the blister and eat here. Had the fried bean shoots which was absolutely beautiful → not sure if bean shoot is the right word but little dishes will talk of that nonsense. Oh Has to be good for you! And the staple nifan is still there which is good news. Tomorrow 8:00 am if all of the translation went well I will be having Shi fan (rice porridge).

Strange place. Six or seven young female

staff who mostly giggle, a couple of sheps who come in from time to time, and some other people who were being served by these people dinner + tea etc but seemed as if they owned the place (the tea older), and then some treats something who loozed in for a bit snelling of alcohol + then disappeared. The hotel is attached to the foot and the Great Wall museum which might explain it? Some deal where they get funded to stay open...

Anyway, as much as I like to think I am comfortable with my own company, can't help but worry so texted Aige the details just in case!

I don't think I do prefer to be on my own... I prefer to have my own way + to be able to do things on my own but I prefer to have a select few people around to talk to and enjoy it with. Sitting around the world solo - maybe not?

Anyway found CCTV9 - International so can get to watch a bit of TV in English which is nice.



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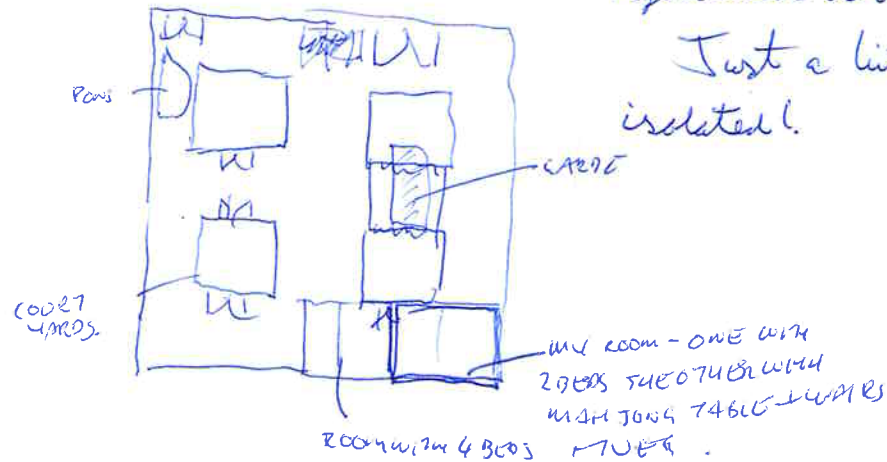
世界文化遗产 天下第一雄关 国家AAAA级旅游景区 **嘉峪关**

世界文化遗产地、嘉峪关雄峙于祁连雪峰与黑山之间，地势险峻，气势雄伟，以巍峨壮观著称于世，被誉为“天下第一雄关”。  
嘉峪关关城始建于明洪武五年（公元1372年），是明代万里长城的西端起点，也是长城沿线保存最为完好、规模最为壮观的古代军事城堡。关城由内城、瓮城、罗城、外城、城壕和南北两翼长城组成。关城内有嘉峪关楼、柔远楼、光化楼、敌楼、角楼、箭楼、游击将军府、井亭、文昌阁、戏台、关帝庙等古代建筑。

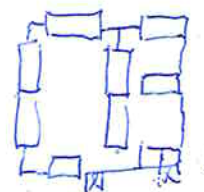
2019年10月10日 01-0101



It is actually a really nice hotel. Mah Jong set in the courtyard and set out around courtyard accurately reproduced below!



13-11-06 ↑ Actually an reflection looks nothing like this! more of a collection of buildings joined with walls to create courtyards.



Managed to miss my train last night, the lady at the station told me 2:00pm but the ticket had written on it 2:30 so I thought she was just being conservative and getting me there early (not the case apparently according to the stern faced woman letting people onto the platform! Quick look at Loulay Planet and there are 4 buses a day the last of which left at 2:30!! Even quicker turn around to the town

driver who had just taken me out to the overhanging wall (pretty spacious but all new I think, good views across the desert to see the edge of the oasis), and to the bus station - arrived at 2:30 on the dot, lots of running and demanding (nicely!) of tickets to Dunhuang and luckily for me the bus now leaves at 2:40.

Wandered onto a bus full of cheese buses and took the last seat right up the back. Not a lot of room it has to be said! One guy got on after me but he after foolishly looking around ended up on the Stewart.

People thinned out along the way so there was more room and roads were very good (just being completed) so a quick trip (5 hours) and another side of China.

I like Dunhuang up until now, everything is very easy and a bit more orientated to backpackers. Hotel Feitian Boutique right across from the bus station, a few <sup>2 HOTEL</sup> backpacker type restaurants and internet next to the hotel (able to book for all the dates more importantly).

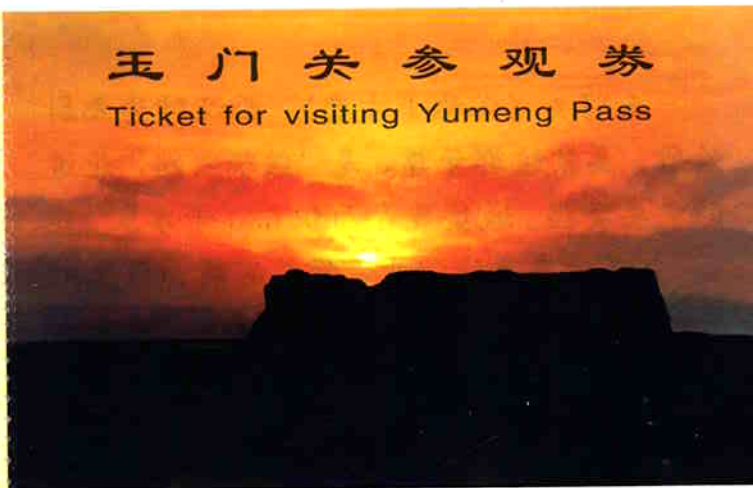
The main street Ming Shan Lu has a cosy

副  
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11.13

玉门关参观券

Ticket for visiting Yumeng Pass



玉门关参观券



凭票参观 只限一人

票价 1元 报销凭证

enclosed feel about it at night. trees <sup>branches over street.</sup> canopy and colored neon lights from the shops on either side giving the street a warm glow through the cool fine haze (even though literally cold).  
Gang to do Yamen Guan today - expensive at 300Y but it is what I came here to do (Tide Gate), so will be worthwhile.

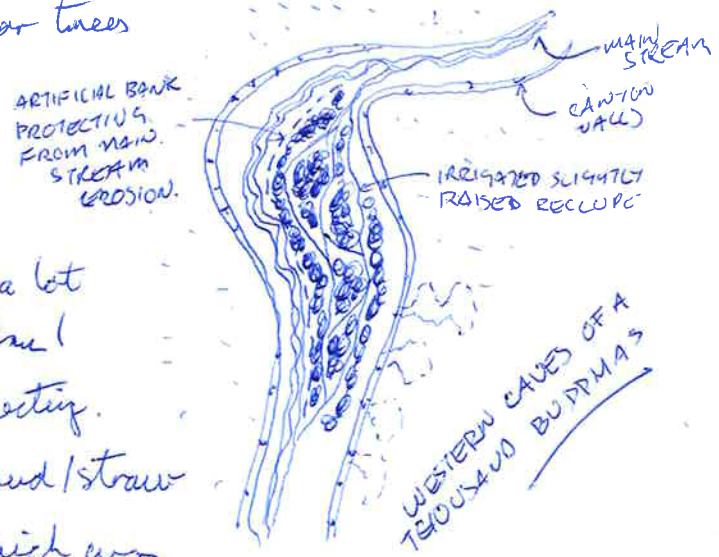
7:10 PM Tide Gate (Yamen Guan) was good. A long way out through the desert, desolate, windy, isolated, cold, everything I thought it might be.  
Can't quite figure out why they bothered with the wall so far out? The ruins from the wall were west of Yamen Guan at least as far as you can see and Yamen Guan is way way out there in the wasteland. Never mind building on the outside, wasn't so crash hot on the in!

What an amazing place this must have been, travelers & caravans heading off into the unknown, frozen mountain ranges, inhospitable deserts, bandits and who knows, in those days they would have believed in evil spirits and all sorts. It would have taken some nerve to head out, or some motivation. I guess travelled homeland,

promises of riches + reward.

Also went to the western grotto caves which were very good as well. Flat desert with the huge Dunhuang caves they talk about, and then unseen from any distance a canyon cut into the fluvial sands and gravel and pebbles. Would have been 20m deep a little canyon would all of its own. The caves had been cut into the sides of the canyon wall where a little respite from the water had been created by redirecting some of the main stream and planting poplar trees

The cut in the caves was a little disappointing, a lot more basic than I had been expecting. Painted on mud/straw rendering which was slating to peel off in places, easy to see how Stein







敦煌西千佛洞

WESTERN THOUSAND BUDDHA GROTTOS

甘肃  
(00)  
地方税务局监制

发票代码 262210601323

发票号码 00001833



外宾参观券

票价: 30元

日期

副券 报销凭证

and the others had managed to pull off whole ponds.  
Not good - will have to check out the British museum  
web site to see what I can find of them.

The best were the ones done in the Tang which I  
think was after Xuan Zang had been through and things  
(Buddhist things) were in vogue. They had a lot more  
more detail in them, very Chinese looking.

There were lots of others from the Southern + Northern  
dynasties period (Wan bei chao). Quite basic (but still  
nice) - all ~~red~~ red, black, green, yellow (and white) which  
must have been all they had as a palette. Snuck a quick  
plate when the guard was away distracted for a few seconds.  
Couldnt resist and a quick flash will be brought in the  
scheme of things.

There were also some creepy half finished sculptures  
of Buddha + Bodhisattvas etc that were done in the Qing  
dynasty apparatus - The carvings (loose effective), were done  
with sticks or straw and where exposed looked a little like  
some one had dismembered them!

You could also see the images of the donors who  
paid for the covers and the paintings on the bottom row.

Being a lot more prosaically in the deeper part is.

Dunhuang is not what I expected at all. For a  
town 2 hours from nearest town line it is quite big and  
seems well presented (comparatively). Xian and even  
Jingzhen gave me the impression of frontier towns  
where sex was a big seller and the cities were dirty  
business first. Dunhuang seems to have a bit more of  
its own identity and to be happy with it. Have to see  
all I've come across is a lot more developed than I  
had thought.

The desert shows up the want of everything as  
well. Anywhere people have touched stays like that.  
You can see the rubbish, scorpions etc from where they  
wrote the roads all along each side however many  
years ago. People spread out needlessly without any  
care or respect for the environment around them.  
Whatever happened to 'tread lightly on this earth', a  
buddhist (I am sure?), precept or something - should be  
if it is not.

There is a lot of things. orange nougats (fried), apple nougats,  
caramel nougats, cauliflower candy and a reflection



session (not very good), to help ease the squeezing of my 49 feet into my 47 shoes! The shoes one starts to give in is the good news...

14.11.06 Chinese seems to be a very harsh language. You often see people talking and they are actually barking sounds at each other. I don't know if I have ever heard it spoken softly - unless actually as it is in most modern songs (but still not that calm). The other classic Chinese voices that stick are the public announcement usually by a female voice high pitched and repetitive over a loud speaker at other is the high pitched, voice of the classical music

WESTERN CAVES OF TAIWAN AND BURMAS  
 + various kinds of ranges, introspection  
 those days they all sorts. It out, or some

副券  
 招領券  
 招領券

30元

見券

good. Hard to believe. Had an english for nearly 2 hours 249 which is the one is), heavenly horses, e'd was painted like were

before Xuan Zang's time so they wouldn't have made it into the tripitaka legend by then), also 96 with the big Buddha - 35m high and impressive presence (dug from above so lit from there and in front which gave alot of spatial presence as well), and lastly 148 with the medicine Buddha, also impressive (14m long). Would have liked to buy a book but they were not cheap (5\$ 6\$) and I would have to carry all the way in from here, will browse the net for some images and also look in bookshops to see if anything turns up.

The roads here are dangerous only because people don't know how to drive to the rules so everyone is always driving to the worst case scenario. On a 2x2 lane road trucks and buses still sit in the middle lane (in case the side of the road gives way or they have to reverse for something I guess). Everyone wants to let the other driver know that they are there (and even this does not work in cases as I have seen trucks slowly move over to cut off a passing bus - no notice they were just moving around something on the road themselves). We passed a T-bone accident on the way back from the caves and the two drivers (who had swapped with a roman driver cab half way through the trip - who knows how those things work!) insisted on stopping to join the



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3:00pm Moqao caves were really good. Hard to believe all of that art is thousands of years old. Had an English speaking guide who showed me around for nearly 2 hours. Saw caves 328, 16+17, 420, 428, 259, 249 which is the one on the ticket (lots of active figures, aroras (blowing), heavenly horses, the Fleming mountains etc. - strange as she told me it was painted in the Western Wei or Sui dynasties both of which were

before Xuan Zang's time so they wouldn't have made it into the T'ang legend by then), also 96 with the big Buddha - 35m high and impressive presence (dug from above so lit from there and in front which gave a lot of spatial presence as well), and lastly 148 with the medicine Buddha, also impressive (16m long). I would have liked to buy a book but they were not cheap (5¥ & 6¥) and I would have to carry all the way in from here, will browse the net for some images and also look in bookshops to see if anything turns up.

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敦煌莫高窟

MOGAO GROTTOES DUNHUANG

发票代码 262210601223

发票号码 00033155



参观券

票 价：100元

外语导游费：20元

日期

副 券 报销凭证

swarm of people standing around and watching. A policeman was gingerly laying out traffic cones - all had the appearance that things like that don't often happen around here so maybe the wide open space and horn are not such a bad idea.

9:20 Well if that wasn't one of the scariest trips I've ever been on! Started quite well, friendly bus station assistant taking time to understand where I was going and recommending I take a 7.00 bus instead of 9:00 (to reach a train at Louyang 2 hours away @ 23:15).

I then met (by chance for the third time in 3 hours - once when they approached me to get photos at the sand dunes by crescent lake, twice alongside me riding home (with them in the local bus that wasn't moving that much quicker) and the third at dinner - 3 days ago) a couple from Shengzhou I think who were also travelling. They were very friendly, assured I had no money as they saw me on the lake insisted on paying for my dinner and giving me a bottle of water, and accompanied me to the bus station and the great hill of buses. They helpfully inquired as to

ATTACHED PHOTOS WERE PRINTED OFF THEIR CAMERA IN MARCH 2015 BEFORE I LEFT IN THE

CAPE - QUITE IMPRESSIVE. SAID I WOULD SEND THEM A COPY OF which was my bus and I watched the attendants head sweep past all the coaches, all the sleeper buses etc to a small 8-10 seat minibus parked in the corner! I couldn't quite believe it but decided the sign in the dashboard (was going to say window - but that is being generous, this was little more than a car).

So waited for a bit until there was a bit more chatter (with my friends involved, the girl with a look of 'oh come on' on her face and I am being thrust the 20¥ I had paid for the ticket with the ticket being taken out of my other hand).

Wait wait wait just a minute buddy your rat going anywhere without taking me to Lueyuan! Move back + forward, questioning the tones etc as making clear that few passengers and 2 large bags - my pack and a bigessian sack were never going to fit into a cab.

Another five minutes later there we all were, minus the lessian sack (which must have been jettisoned or caught another taxi), me in the front bearing the full brunt of the heating jets, 3 others crammed into the

FEW PHOTOS BY EMAIL - MUST REMEMBER TO (VERCHENTIE@21VONM.COM)





one of them opening & shutting the door trying to stop a cold draft (which never got fixed).

Quite a leisurely pace out of town which gave me a little more confidence before we hit the open game baron highway that connects Dunhuang and Luoyan. Never get in a car at night on a long journey is the lesson.

We set a speeds between 80 and 110 in the middle of the road veering off for oncoming traffic or to overtake. There is some unclear code of turning your high beam lights on & off when you pass oncoming traffic. Blinded one minute, glimpses of the road and centre line the next, very scary.

To make things worse our driver stopped off grabbed a bag of dinner and proceeded with one hand, eating with the other.

I don't know what was worse, the open dark stretches where we would tear along at 110, over lights up at all angles lighting up the snaky haze, bouncing around the pot holes and ruts and falls and tarmac repairs desperately looking at for that rogue animal that is about to pop into your field of vision (in hindsight, it was a desert, fairly unlikely).

or the alternative of trying to pick the lights of the other vehicles, tail lights are good as they mark the way, unless they are so washed out to appear white in which case they just scare the hell out of you. Oncoming lights are a seat gripping experience of trying to guess what they belong to so you have some idea of how close they are (~~close~~ a tractor with close lights looks that is actually ~~close~~ near by looks unerringly like a car or a truck that is actually a long way off).

And just out of the towns of course you have the horse driven carts and bullocks to whom any lights at all are a thing of another age.

Resting now in Luoyan railway station awaiting the train to Turpan, settling my nerves and thanking my stars. The locals are having a bit of a laugh at me for changing my sweaty socks, they are lucky it is only my socks is all (I would say to them (if I could :-)).

15.11.06. Overnight sleeper was 2 hours shorter than I had thought - lucky I filled up my water bottle early in the trip! Buss into Turpan was a bit of a joke, an hour trip but great the first hour and a quarter going back and forward between the bus station & the train looking for passengers. To be fair

where we bought tickets at the first time we were at the bus stop, the ticket read 8:20 and since enough we picked up the last passenger to fill the bus to the ~~bus~~ capacity on 8:20 and off we went through the desert to Turfan.

Turfan is quite a dirty place with not a lot going for it on the surface. Didik help that I got possession from Achmed right from the time I stepped off the bus! In my tired frustration I accepted a car tour to Bizgelik caves and Saiche ruins which are the two things I really wanted to see (after walking to the supposed top hotel in Turfan which turned out to be a dump!), and having Achmed show me a reasonable place right next to the bus stop.

A guy who looked a sleep bus out tomorrow (think it is a sleeper - night rat, he seemed cheap! Will be ok even if not - leaves 11:30 gets in at 7:00.

I'm rushing things a little at the moment but there hasn't really been anywhere that has grabbed my heart (apart perhaps from Darkhanay; but I look that fairly leisurely

anyway. Also puts me in Kuga for market day <sup>(Fridays)</sup> and also possibly Kashgar for market day (Sunday) also - which would be worthwhile seeing I hope. I might settle down in Kashgar for a bit. Other options are none slightly scary, or side trip to Beijing to see some of the Olympic construction... we will see.

My Uigher noodles and veges have just arrived. dodgy little eating houses (restaurant is a bit generous) off side ally in the bazaar. Cook roaches on the floor, kitchen outside the front under the tin roof of the awning. Food arrived with meat anyway (just noticed. I didn't think they understood the word in the phrasebook!)

Here goes nothing - big in + hope for best. → will have to drink a lot of water.

8:00am Bizgelik caves and the flaming mountains were good.

Beautiful setting, a real shame they were just stripped away like that. No photos so I took the time to have a go at sketching one of the thousand buddhas painted on the roof of one of the caves (see over), the

Asked and was then  
sure we will see what  
comes out!



中国 吐鲁番  
柏孜克里克千佛洞  
门票



票价: 20 元

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柏孜克里克千佛洞

Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves



票价: 20 元

中国 吐鲁番  
苏公塔  
门票



票价: 30 元

265210659901

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苏公塔

The Emin Minaret



票价: 30 元

中国 吐鲁番  
交河故城  
门票



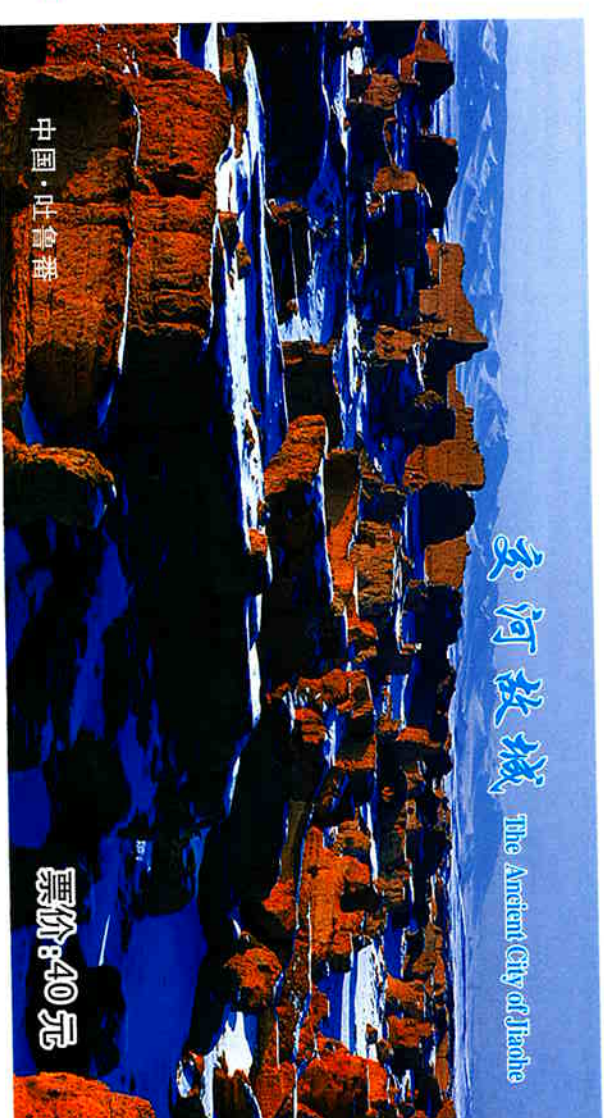
票价: 40 元

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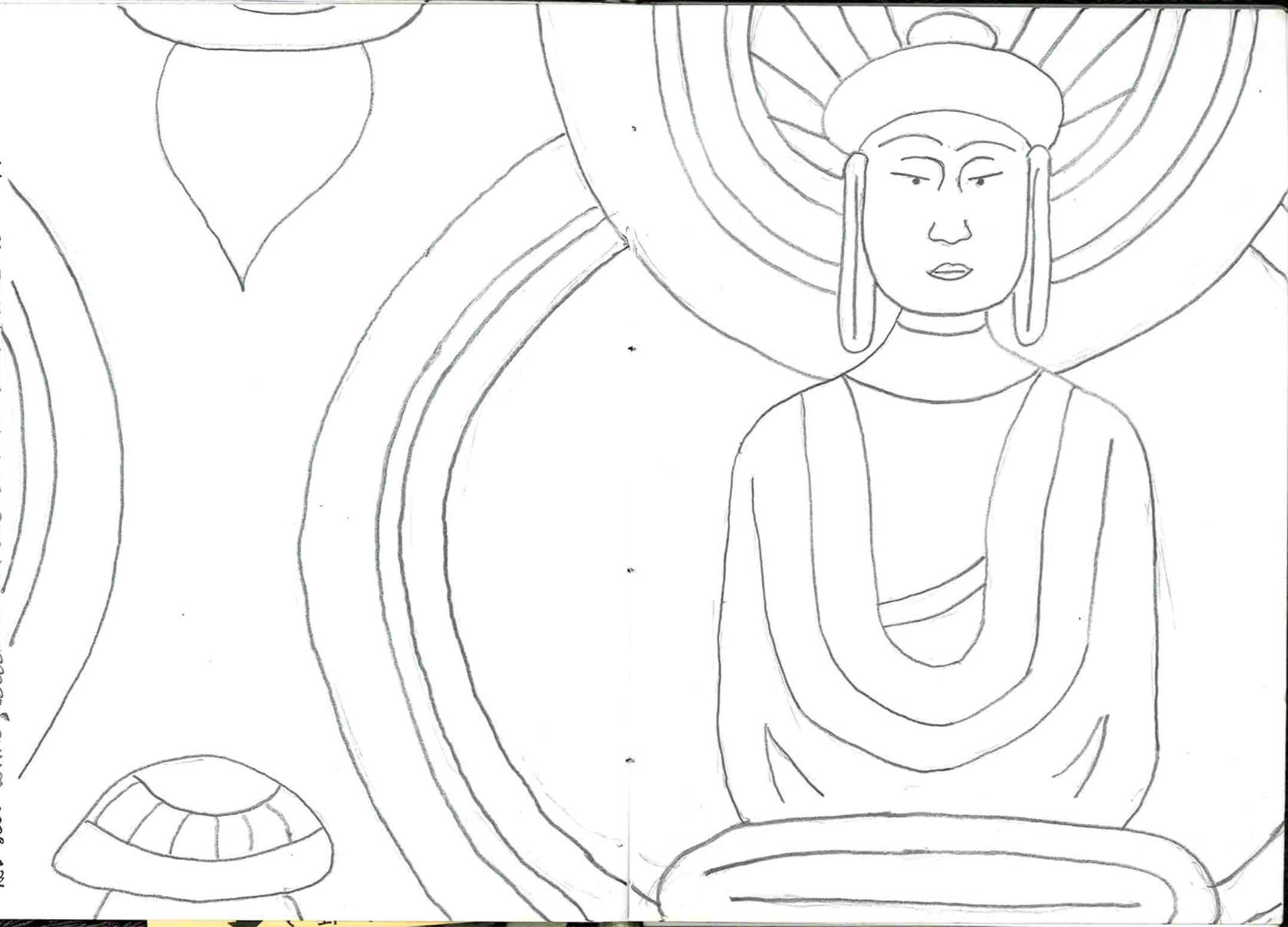
交河故城

The Ancient City of Jiaohe



票价: 40 元

RED BUDDHIST WHITE, BEZELIK CAVES, ONE OF A THOUSAND ABOVE (CAVE 27)





original was a bit softer than I could reproduce despite much rubbing out. A bit the mouth wasn't quite so puffed (I am sure). seems he is not happy with Ca Coq and the others having removed his friends, the eyes definitely were that way though, not a happy look.

I wonder if they will ever be given back? Would be the best thing to do after all wouldn't it?

As with a lot of the scenery so far, stark and desolate wide expanses of desert broken by narrow mountain ranges, that whole other planet feeling, especially today with the oranges and reds

The minute at the mosque was ok, just very impressive and very old brickwork basically. Was feeling a little let down after the high of the markets in the morning and still felt a little jaded looking at Tailor ruins, expected none to be there I must admit after Mogao...

In the end though it slowly grew on me and I was quite impressed when I left. What really set my imagination going was the East gate. a descending path cut into the plateau. Standing at the bottom it wasn't hard to imagine yourself 1500 odd years ago entering the city, looking up to two enormous watch towers on

either side, struggling up the steep path with a big buddha statue or something sitting facing you as a greeting, smaller roads leading off to the left and right into the labyrinth of the city.



The monasteries were ok - good to see the remains of a couple of statues, the houses were good, wells and all of that, little  $\square$  shaped recesses carved into walls for candles or statues or something. The wells gave me the creeps a bit, there weren't many people there and if you fell down one you would be more than likely on your own getting out!

Just had a couple of 'large' Joes at the local best food joint that 'M's would have been proud of! Might go back into the markets to get some more Uighur noodles (better than heading to expensive Chinese restaurants around the corner) - (even if a little scary - must drink more water!).

Other small things - people chewing on raw sugar cane, a guy in a trackie suit juggling this



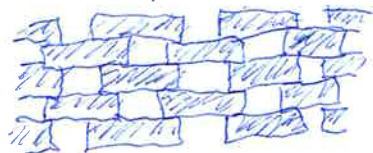
morning - totally out of place amongst the beamed poor faces  
in the bus! The smell of half cooked, or cooking mutton  
everywhere, not appealing to a vegetarian! And all the  
Uighurs - these have definitely changed from Dunhuang, far  
less chinese (in fact they are a minority). Uighur  
writing, television, faces - being mix of mongolian, russian  
and chinese, a lot of variation, you would even call  
some of them Greek (Hellenistic is it?), and Turkish.  
Must make for interesting times at school etc, wonder if there  
are racial tensions - must be.

The other thing I realised today is that people are stuck  
here. It is incredibly hard (not to mention expensive) to get  
a passport (Ahmatjan my tour organiser - who turned out ok  
incidentally, was telling me).

Ok - off to the markets (again).

16.11.06 - Markets were dead! Bid of Soviet, German +  
mandarins instead did the job!

I should have mentioned that grapes is big business here,  
lots of grapevines around the place and rectangular buildings with  
straggled backwood to act as  
drying boxes.



Despite the early promise of car and motorbike hours all  
night, dropped off not too late, cleverly, and was a  
quiet night with good sleep even if I did wake every two  
or three hours. Doing a lot of dreaming, hopefully it is to  
resolve things that are on my mind, a sort of clearing  
process. Not all of it is relevant however though - dreamed  
last night something good happened (promotion I think), and that  
meant it forced me up to Suvally namgy Lyon (Winton) who  
was my girlfriend but that brought on the realisation that I  
didn't want to (not to mention that I have never even been  
out with her!). Who knows how these things work - unrelated  
thoughts from a long time back, events superimposed over other  
people, than having me in their thoughts for some reason...  
don't know + doesn't matter really, but I will take the stroke  
it is all good medicine in helping me become at peace + clear up  
the house a bit.

Enjoying The origin of the species.

11.15 Just wait over on my cable - had pack and everything  
and took a wrong step. Tumbled my cable and keel, all just  
buckled below me. Stopped to tape it up on the side of the road  
where I felt much to amusement of small crowd that gathered.  
Hope it will be ok - have the day to rest on the bus, on

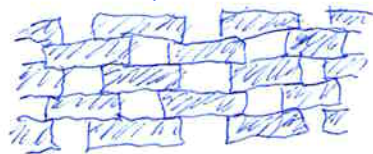
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feel it starting to swell up already, a lot of aches in there as well! Will try to move without weight today to keep it mobile, but not much else I can do from memory (it has been a while since I have done something like this - back in the old basketball / football days!). Body isn't as young and resilient as it used to be, confident I'm not that over it though so will be interesting to see how it bounces back. - I hope it does!

4:20 pm Judging by our start (50 min late and then 20 min filling up with petrol), time doesn't count as a high priority in Uighur!

Sleeper bus is ok although all smells and feels like nothing has ever been washed, all of a bit greasy to the touch. Stopped at a roadside cafe and they seemed to get the meaning of no meat - standard fare is a bowl of hot stock soup and a big joint of mutton so will see what survives! They have good looking bread and noodle. If all else fails, which would be fine.

We seemed to have climbed quite a bit onto a plateau (or out of a depression). Amazing bit of

road building. Rocky landscape that has been joined through erosion so the little hills are quite close together very up and down, like a whole mountain landscape reduced in scale by a factor of 2 or something.

Maybe building a road is not so bad as you are just cutting + filling (a lot) locally. But travelling through on foot in a caravan as they would have had to do back in silk road times, would have been a nightmare! Would have seemed like endless mountains!

17-11-06 Sitting at a small outdoor cafe shaded by some tarpaulins and grape vines, to my left are four or five pool tables with people playing snooker, to the right in front of me the bazaar at Kuqa, a mess of bums and produce.

Feeling pretty good about myself having headed off the taxi drivers (apart from a left turn station), bought a standing room ticket on a Kashgar train and have instructions on how to upgrade to a hard sleeper - or how in queueing lessers from the local Chinese / Uighurs → the quick + the dead (+ because I am not quick at the moment I was



and then it seemed we couldn't rest stop for people, at one stretch we could get more than 200 in without stopping, and it would then be 15-20 min of dithering and back + forth + people on + off etc until we pulled into a siding with no one there and just sat! and sat ... and sat. One old woman was complaining and one ~~was~~ young guy caught a taxi.

Options going through my mind given the trip was supposed to finish at 7:00 - They had got shitty about me taking photos of all the people getting on + off + thought I might be up to no good, and were therefore getting authorities involved + were just waiting for them to arrive. Option 2 is man in Shank suite is local Ojigwa politician / leader and they were planning to take me hostage for a bit of ransom!

Sounds far fetched but by chance I happened to meet our bus driver the day before so he knew well in advance I would be going. The Shank suit man had that definite 'Che' look about him and was serious as (I brushed me off whenever I tried to ask about time we would be in Koga.), one guy who was also getting pissed off (and had originally said to me that the

revised arrival time was 7:00 sat evening through playing with my watch) came back and said don't worry we will be leaving in 2 hours, 'just chill out'. Every thing but the just chill out in signs + Ojigwa. Not comforting.

Ended up getting shitty myself as I could hardly walk so was totally at their mercy. Decided to bail. Taxi would take me, but 45 mins later they put me on another bus which was a relief.

Turns out we weren't at Koga and what I expected to be a 20 min trip into center of town was ~~less~~ hours of powering along well over 100!

So really we not reaching everything right but the (and it could have been valid), scenario of local Ojigwa rebel leader kidnapping lone western tourist and holding me to ransom did not appeal - decided I would quite like to see the kids all grow up and spend time with them - Anger in my old age.

Given by the time I jumped ship I had spent almost 3 hours of waiting with no explanation or sign of improvement, I don't think I did too bad and was a good solution as got into Koga about 4:00 and got a bed.

Ankle is bad but will take it easy today, overnight to Keshgou and settle in for a few days to get some strength back in it.

9:40 PM. I just unwrapped my ankle, has blown up like a balloon except for where it was taped and has blood circling all around it. Looks bad and gives a bit of a pit in the stomach but have managed today by being careful. My knee is very tender as well - I think I was lucky the whole thing wasn't a lot worse! Take it easy, get to Keshgou and give it a day or two's rest, should be on the improve now I hope. I will keep taping with the bandage over as long as I still have tape just in case I go over again (will limit damage I hope).

Am feeling very down actually, missing home and don't know if I should be out here putting myself in danger (really want to see Anze + the kids again, the with them is just so good, and looking forward to growing old with it - cheesy I know but so how I feel).

Put on some (tunes) music which has helped put me at ease a bit more, sealed up all my travel stuff, the says

and seized the latch on the Chinese document holder which was therapeutic :-)

Will be a great trip, the photography has been really enjoyable (hope it comes out), just hard at the moment. Really I enjoy things like this most when juxtaposed with home life. Leaving all of that and who I am (I feel all the things in the moment, that is who I am largely), for this alone would be pretty desperate. It's cold, poverty stricken, dusty and dirty with little hope of respite. Would not enjoy being stuck in it! Spoke to a young guy (20), I met today reading between the lines, he has finished college and has pretty limited opportunity, wants to make his own way in life but is finding it hard. He was doing shoe shine (to support his studies he said but let slip he was off to the net cafe to surf with the money he had made. He told me his father was well off fixing machines but you have to make your own way when you turn 18, don't you? Felt sorry for him, I guess these internal struggles with life go on no matter what background there is.

Found the markets by the river (and the mosque), and it was good. Not much more than the rest of the markets in town (in

Just you could say the town is one big market - that that is not occupied with other shops and wall streets!).

Loads of what must be the country Uighur people, men in black overcoats that never get washed (I suspect little else does either!), big fur hats and long beards (and hard weathered skin). They remind me of what you would expect in Zovats country (forget which now - Kyzgagston? - might even be true!), or the dilbert locals from Albania, just smaller.

They all bring in their horse and cart with all of the goods for sale, anything from produce to clothing (a lot of hats!), and anything else. There were even televisions although I think they may have come from the city people.

You get the definite feel with China that it is writing history in real time. The facts they are undertaking are breathtaking - railway to Alaska, the Olympics etc, even the highways around here, and it is all good stuff but the people out here are going to take some dragging along. It's really in the wastelands beyond, and life is tough. It's funny when superimposed with the history of the silk road. I think things maybe would have been cleaner than (cleaner

as in more true to themselves). The appearance of instabilities and industry and all of that has polluted the ocean badly.

Everywhere you look there is the insensitive touch of man, (I think I have said before, little respect for any thing which is a shame, because its things like that that breed respect into themselves.

18.11.06 Reading Origin of the species, an interesting a lot of question popping up, really is an amazing field. The supposed law of nature that requires some crossing in breeding between varieties (true I would believe), but where does this come from. I am sure biologists today know a lot more of all this now. It really is delving into the why and how one we have questioned.

The other big one is what all of this means for us as humans: We have removed somewhat the natural selection put by looking after all. Does our driving force become mental ability?

It still is mind boggling how something like the human eye (or any eye!) that requires nerves to receive signals etc can possibly develop through accidental changes chosen naturally. I guess a more sensitive part of skin that makes the animal more



Aggravant of approaching peas etc.

Every bone in my body yells that there must be something else, some rotund building block analogy in the makeup that allows these things to develop, ~~even~~ or some willful deviation from the want or desire? ...

Coming into Kashgar, the desert + mountains have been replaced by ... treasured fields of green and trees etc. Have maybe we spill off the edge of Chinese touch on the land (and up into the pristine mountains)?

50 Bit (a bit), peevish, lost all the photos off of the digital camera, local guy here would be could use his card reader and something to do with taking card from camera caused format error → was really the videos that I wanted → loud speaker at night markets, Indian fish on sleeper bus + passing desert, lunch at the Kuyun street market with eggs playing pool and acrobats being shy! Man washing himself + shoe shine boy etc. Need to be more careful in future and at least have time to take some! (Also photo of foot at its worst)

Kashgar looks good, all the western food cafes are closed but found little Pakistani place that does anzelettos and A do Pratta; anzelette with spices + onion

+ tomato, Pratta with washed potatoes. They are the only two things on the menu that don't have ground meat of some sort in them!


Got a single room in Qizi Bagh hotel 60 ¥ a night, fantastic. Met a nice couple from states + we will go up to Karakul lake Monday / Tuesday, stay in a yurt and all of that!

- even better, just ordered a cup of chai - and they knew what I was talking about! - doesn't take much, but another plate of uighur noodles (nice as they are), would have sapped what remaining strength I have.

19.11.06 Sunday markets at Kashgar today, a little disappointing I must admit. We went to the Westgate market first thing in the morning which was good but small compared with the big Indian corner fair (Wapour). A fair bit of like + look and sound, still worthwhile seeing.

The deli and Sunday markets (goods and produce), were also good but I prefer the more down to earth varieties of Taylor and the smaller sites. Was all a bit overpriced here!

Had a nice beer cups of tea at a two storey tea house overlooking a street. Nice old buildings. There are a number of nice old buildings that have just fallen into disrepair, nice timber details in places, balconies and details that have had no maintenance at all. The buildings are not valued or recognized. There is a lot of dust and dirt about and little self cleaning opportunity in rain so things just end up getting dirty and dirty!

Got my boots fixed which was one of those great experiences travelling. Sat down with the young guy who at first couldn't see a way around it. Wasn't until I cut and scooped off the heels myself that they began to see a way through and now I have some hopelessly sturdy hybrid heels.  Mainly a glue job but held

together with nails at the end also so hopefully will see me through the rest of the trip. Wanner and some screws in my case (and nice to have back).

I realised I might have had my camera on the wrong

150 settings this morning! ~~F\*!#C!~~! I really hope most of the film I have taken is ok. The only thing that gives me hope is that I noticed how poor the light was and the EV adjustment was on - I am not sure how these could have been accidentally leached around, but pray that they were - shouldn't to think all of the stuff at Sargjapan and Tado Cots etc all gone - I already lost a whole lot of good photos here yesterday!

Met an American couple here - John and Deyle. Haven't spent most of the time with them which has been <sup>expelling???</sup> a nice change. Am going to Kevakal lake with them tomorrow. I hope I am not imposing too much. get to feeling from John, they might prefer a bit of time alone. Will let them say something, Deyle seems ok. I would like a bit more time on my own also so will try to create space over the next couple of days.

One of the things I have realised out of this trip is that I need to become a bit more eloquent and interactive with people. Foundations of this are more confidence and

quiet stability in myself. We will see... I am pretty happy with who I am and feel quite strong as a family unit.

21.11.06 Just got back from an overnight trip to Karakul lake. Was worthwhile. Went up the Kanokan Muzy towards the Khunjerab pass almost to Tashkurgat (the last town before the border and passes into Pakistan).

Stunning scenery the mountains (Karakun Shan range in Chinese - I think they may be the Pamir's?) rise abruptly out of the desert from nothing. Karakul is at around 1,300m and the peaks of the range are at 7,700m. Over 6 km of vertical rise from the flat expanse of the desert - stunning. The drive up the canyon (which is the Gazy river according to Abdul our guide (tributary to the Yankant Me in Mandarin), is actually reasonably gentle but has towering peaks on each side. On the way up it was very calm and beautiful weather and the whole thing seemed nice and very manageable. On the way back down, there was a breezing wind and low thick black cloud hides the tops of the mountains showing them in all their real size. Ice roads and the odd fallen boulder revealed some

of what the pass was really like. It had an awe inspiring feeling of drama about it from the heated car. I can only imagine what it would feel like as a caravan heading up half a century or more ago.

Clouds filled gaps between the walls and there was a feeling of impending weather closing in. In those days it would be put down to spirits and all sorts of things, pretty bloody scary stuff.

There are a couple of lakes on the way up, the first is the desert lake which was mostly dry, and the second is Karakul lake which was wet (and icy around the edges).

In the summer you stay in tents, in the winter (now) we stayed in the ~~local~~ local village at a home stay organised by Abdul. The village Tashon, has about 2,500 people and is a Kazakh village which tends to be sheep and goats up them. Sheep and goats are not a business but like Abdul was quick to tell us.

The family stayed in a single room (maybe 5 x 6 m) decorated with wall hangings and carpets. A single pot stove in the center which had a stove pipe that vented through a hole



in the roof, and a single window covered with plaster and  
a table cloth that had red flowers to brighten things up a bit.  
They had a single bulb and television that ran between  
8:30 and 11:00 at night off of the power from the two  
wind generators they had (of which one was working!).

Two or three kids and the parents (and us), all  
very basic but nice. The big letdown was the toilets.  
Obviously over capacity and needed rebuilding but sitting there  
nevertheless. They were so desperate that even the locals  
avoided using them (or maybe it was too cold for the walk  
at night, even though I made the effort and it wasn't too  
bad). Went outside to brush my teeth this morning and  
was dog reaching with the smell of dog dirt and urine that  
seems to be carried right to the back of the throat. Stayed  
with me for most of the day!

I am now back in Patara Cafe with my Chai and  
Aloo Pratha (Potatoes), Good except the piece with  
with snake - not from deatelle this time, but from  
someone in the kitchen!!! I can't understand it,  
needs to be of use who don't do or think much at all in

their lives, just interesting things from thousands of years  
ago (Silk road war!), and then tourists with modern kids  
and prices like the Bicos and usable phones.

The stars last night were incredible, could see the  
Southern Cross I think + Pleiades etc but as John said it's  
as if they couldn't get any more up there. The whole thing,  
Adarve village house, yaks, sheep, lake, mountains, sunrise +  
sunset, amazing checkpoints, trudging through snow and over ice  
on our walls, the stars, I will omit the toilets! the local dogs,  
boulder balls, yak butter tea, and the local kids was great.  
Would be better is a part of a long walk, a Nepal type  
Aangkor or something where it unfolds for you at walking pace,  
you see it all on your own steam, you have time to get into  
the effects of day + night, warm and cold, which part of the  
step the eyes sit in becomes second nature and you really  
feel like you dissolve into what is around you. We  
must get back to doing one of these days! - The Marxist  
rebels in Nepal are apparently going to be brought into  
the governmental system to who knows it might even be back

thone!

22-11-06 Saw off John and Dagle this morning (to Shanghai)

Was a good few days with them. Kashgar has been as I had hoped, a place to regroup and get back to a blank state (I was going to say therapeutic but that is going a little too far).

Boots fixed, hair cut, money withdrawn, washing done, sights seen and not to board on the Senames.

Back in Pakistan Cafe, seems to be full of hard looking Pakistani business men most of the time. I don't mind except when they smoke in which case it becomes a simple filled hole of a place to be avoided.

The owner (I think), has a business growing fruit in and around Kashgar, and exporting it to Pakistan. There is a lot of fruit available here and it is reasonable quality (apples, grapes, mandarins, asia peaches, cantalope, water-melon...).

They have large posters on the wall here. One of the black box (Haj is it?) at Mecca (It is easy to forget this is a very strong muslim community!), and one of a fictitious Pakistani Palace I imagine where the palace and water may be real but the deep blue sky, the blood red turkeys and the green trees and white snows have all been

cut in using photoshop or something. Very Indian/Pakistani (Asian actually), thing to do.

Kashgar has a bit of a luxurious edge to it. Down at the intersection where the Sennar Hotel (Binguan) is, you notice the girls dress slightly better (like in the CBD of a lot of cities where there is more money around). There is quite a presentable underground shopping mall which lets you cross the roads without having to deal with all of the traffic. Has shops with good quality shoes, air conditioned and reasonably in control.

Kashgar (and probably a few other places in Xinjiang!) there are women who in the muslim tradition I guess, wear brown, thick towel type consistency veils over their heads covering their faces. No holes for the eyes or anything. Adds to that feeling of another world, another time. It really is a male based society however, and the men (apart from those occupying stalls or something, don't seem to much. I imagine that they hold the important part of being a man, sitting around pondering life and the families poor position in it. Do some praying which is important to this but all in all told to other men, drunk chai, make sure the women know where their place is. I am probably being grossly unfair, there would not

be many jobs around, and not a lot of example to be led by in growing up.

People on buses seem to be a good representation of your average person. I think the trains are distinctly middle class (if you travel by hard sleeper). Anyway the buses are full of smells. Of food smells, both from food and people breathing, busping etc etc. Clothes and bodies haven't been washed for days or weeks and have a bit of a greasy smell (and I imagine feel) to them. There is a guy next to me at the moment with no understanding of personal space and who is like a fountain of crusted sunflower seed shells spraying them over me, the bus and every one else on the bus. That is the other favourite part time, that of picking your teeth and making a lot of noise when you eat on sleep tea (you never sip in XJ!). Not screaming too generous on I. It's just that these things are down to personal hygiene and one thing that don't need to be like this! Thought I should record how I feel also, and to be clear I am not (or trying not), to complain. The down to earth simplicity of China (+ India) etc is one of the things I like about the

10:50 A mixed sale + sound in Kiangilike, an hour late but better at a comfortable pace and arriving ok!

The roads on this side of the Taklanakan (the

south side look like they will be the two lane, two way bumpy roads I was expecting (not the developed super highways of the Northern side). There is something honest about a bumpy road and a bumpy bus. You don't hurry, you just trundle along at a reasonable speed feeling the journey, stopping off every few hours for a toilet break at a bus stop or somewhere. On the way here it was for a quick prayer to Mecca session on the side of the road (in the middle of nowhere as the sun set behind the mountain of Kunkun Shan).

Because it is so bone shaking and you are generally at some funny angle to get your knees in, using your bum cheeks to help grip the seat, you arrive fulfilled, feeling like you have contributed to a reasonable part of the journey yourself (having felt it at least!).

The trip was nice, driving with the mountains in front or on our right, rising up from the desert all around. The seating for the bus was a little strange, seemed like the two rows on one side and to the front were reserved (I think for Uighurs), leaving myself, a few women and some other misfits to fight it out at the back!



The women were quite strong on where they wanted to sit and it wasn't next to me! I held my ground when they tried to push me back (mostly because I was in one of the only places I could sit in physically!). Slapping my knees, the old man in the back row behind me smiled and nodded to me in encouragement.

When we stopped to pray, the men Muslims were all the people at the back of the bus - one of the reasons they reserved the right hand side may have been because it was closer to Mecca?

Anyway 5 hours later and in Klanguilik feeling pretty good about things.

Saw a lot of horizontal poles stuck up in the poplar trees or arranged above the houses in places and wondered what they were until I saw a flock of pigeons perched on one. I think pigeon fancying is quite common here, I remember seeing an old man clutching one close to his breast in Kaga at the markets.

Am missing out on the food here by not eating

meat, this place I am in serves a greasy rice with saltanas and a yellow fruit (would like to say mango but it is not that tasty). On top of this you get either the mutton joint, or the kebab about a foot long of meat chunks (which looks not bad - the joint I could probably leave!).

Back to the lanterns and whatever other biscuits + things I can scrounge up from the stalls I can afford...

23.11.06 Sitting in a little restaurant off at the main square in front of the old Mosque in Klanguilik. Was worth the stop off, the 15<sup>th</sup> century mosque Jameh Masjid (1405) is beautiful in a rustic type of way.

Was up early this morning (9:00 Beijing time when it's only just getting light - none of the birds get up that early!) and figured out I went by a ticket for Uster until 9:00 am local time, so took a little wider hike to the mosque which was fun. Had to watch my legs (larger than most Ughes), and almost lost them a couple of times. Troughed all of the back streets of the old quarter of town and into the mosque.

Was very nice (but cold!). Managed to find some hot wood straight out of the oven for warmth and wonder

a few of the streets. The services people seem to be on  
first (excluding those doing food, restaurants + baker). The  
cobbler and key cutters were out, and also people selling  
pidgeons. I am not sure for food or for sport? Is very  
popular here with some and more of the big horizontal perches,  
apparently to have birds that leave up a section or the perch  
presumably to upset the birds into flight and get them to come  
back when you want them to.

1:15 We left the bus station about 45 min ago after half  
an hour wait while some ticketing problem got sorted, I know  
what I can tell it didn't and we left anyway. We are  
now at the edge of town where we are picking up one guys  
extended family it seems. It looks like they are moving (on on the  
move - we are at a hotel courtyard (I think), and are loading  
everything - Sacks + sacks of stuff, the family material of course.  
VCD players (well the box), and even a bundle of old stove  
pipe (a bit of a commodity in Uighur country).

I feel a bit for them as they look very poor, clothes  
were ragged around the edges, little kids with smelly noses and  
black faces, possibly a part of it all. And it looks like

I am the lucky one to shove the back seat with the birds!  
Thought I was lucky getting on the bus ~~at 10:15~~, departure time  
10 mins after I booked a ticket, just enough time to check out.  
I needn't have hurried! I needn't have showered either!!!

7:55 PM Another restaurant, another dining session! :)  
Hotan has done well at enclosing itself to me so far.  
The bus trip ended up being good in that Hotan appeared much  
earlier than expected, and we actually arrived on time  
(having made up or hour and a half of delays at least).  
No touter, found hotel easily and have taken out all 3  
beds in a dorm room whose only downside is that it  
doesn't have an ensuite, which isn't always a downside  
as there is none of the smell that comes with a WC  
either!

Found good little internet place with a guy that knows  
what he is doing and a good little chinese restaurant (CP  
says they are sichuanese) all a few doors down from the  
hotel. Did some CD's as a backup of the photos done on the  
digital camera so far.

Did the old (new) favourite of scrambled eggs and  
tomatoes, and a plate of chinese cabbage in soy type sauce

which is nicer than it sounds! Sent the poor guy in and out of the kitchen trying to figure out with the chef if they do any of the dishes in the phrase book. Little however extra sized kitchen so cant expect too much! Saw some neon lights that showed signs of having coffee which I will explore tomorrow - tired + full of food now so going to bed.

Arge said the nights are long without me which was nice. Am enjoying things but am looking forward to getting back to the warmth and home of Singapore as well.

People leave spit everywhere, on the floors of buses, of restaurants etc, bit of a cultural gap - surprise me indoors as in the home, they all take their shoes off so there must be some sense of internal space?

Scenery on the bus today wasn't that thrilling. Present for most of it broken up by some quite long bits of irrigated fields and paper trees - there are quite a few rivers / tributaries ... ? that cross here coming down from the mountains to disappear into the Tablanchar.

The trip is giving me a good feel for the country and the desert and the history, but the romantic days of the silk road are long since gone unfortunately. Replaced with modern Chinese third world society getting by.



FOUR DUMPS (OVER THOUSAND STRONG CEILINGAS, NEW TORCHES + EMERGENCIES ?  
TANG, SOI, NOPTUETSU WEI, WESTERN WETI, RECLINING + TOWERING, FALLING  
FLYING APSARAS + QUEING DOMORS, ENGLISH SPEAKING GUIDES CHINA BOUND, THOUSAND

AUTUMN LEAVES FROM MOCAO CAVES - BUDDHAS + BODHISATTVAS



The Chinese giant of a government the PRC making itself felt through the super infrastructure pushing through.

Must try to spend more time sketching, being quiet with the environment. At the moment the pace is driven too much by the buses and trains etc. Don't think I have found what I have been looking for here just yet. Came close in Dun Huang at Western Caves of a thousand buddhas and Mogao but not quite there. We will see what the next couple of days brings, I am looking forward to them as this is a bit less frequented and developed, and a bit more where I will find it if it is there.

Forgot to mention the family on the bus → could up seven of them with four generations from what I could make out, Grand parents down to the baby. Was a little interaction, helping them store the VCD player so it wouldn't abrade off the shelf and taking some bread from the father, cool things went well, was nice sharing a part of their journey, big thing moving TVs etc. If that is in fact what they were doing.

They were going + smelly though it has to be said, you could tell by the dust build up on the young trucky something's heads they didn't wash at all! The grandmothers had something

wrong with her hands which meant they were twisted at funny angles, the grandmothers had the regular low hat (gnised here which is more fun than in other places, a Curcove (black wire) covering up a recently shaved head → must do that to minimize no.



TYPICAL AROUND KASHGAR. (LEFT WITH FOX TRIM)



TYPICAL SOUTH EAST OF KASHGAR - ALL SHOOT HARE GOATS FUR.

of haircuts + help reduce maintenance (no rats or anything). Did feel like a modern day Gropes of wealth type thing going on.

24.11.06 Third fog about the place this morning (visibility maybe 50m). Slow start for me also. Bit of time on the net researching Kunming (It is from there that you can go to Karadong - follow the river up). Still need to try to see it hotels there, and also look at Nijia (Mindong).

Some restaurant as last night seeing if I can get some eggs and rice → bit doubtful just at the minute. I think what I am looking for out of this trip is to do something not many other people do (that was one of the reasons Tibet was so great). Might be I have in try to organise an overnight trip North of Kunming to Karadong, Jinn Baki + Yaman Sha. Will see how I go trying to explain hotels or a start to the hotel stuff here.

Will take a look at Yaktan or Melikawat just out of

Hotan today. Must remember my gloves and do some sketching.

Am thinking will go east a bit maybe as far as Niija and come back to fly from Hotan - Planes leave only twice a week from Niija and morning one due to bad weather would stuff we might see.

Fly to Orangi and see the museum, fly out for Langhera and see Lower on the way back.

Food has arrived - egg - vege soup - don't know how the soup got in there! + Fried eggs nice!

Angel told me that Hotan has one of the oldest healthy populations in the world (not bad considering the haze and smogging!)

The workers in an office building across the street have all arrived for work and are out doing exercises, exercising arms and clapping hands etc, a few squats nothing too energetic but with a bit of a cadence about it. This type of thing might help but I prefer to put it down to not overwashing!

Still enjoying The Origin of the Species even though I don't drag you along, is more quietly there for the reading. He has a nice little passage now and then that are too long to quote. Drawing the Tree of Life analogy on page 171 to that of the natural selection chapter is one of them.

"Of the many twigs which flourished when the tree was a mere bush, only two or three, now grown into great branches, yet survive and bear all the other branches; so with the species that lived during long past geological periods, very few now have living and modified descendants. From the first growth of the tree, many a limb and branch has decayed and fallen off..."

Part Quotation, Darwin,  
The Origin of the Species, 1859.

10:00 am After the slow start, organised a taxi to take me out to the Yotkan river. Nice drive out, lots of tall poplar trees lining the roads and country side seems quite well off (irrigated with fields etc). Went off the main road into dirt type lanes running between the fields - lots of fruit trees, and grapes (including a stretch with grapes on trellis over the road for quite a while).

We kept stopping to ask directions and got pretty in generally the same way - towards a group of empty fields at the back of some houses. I can't say that it wasn't nice, in fact struck me as the Chinese equivalent of English fields. Trees thick and in the best of the

autumn leaves, a gaggle of geese or ducks on both  
furrows around in the moist soil for beetles or whatever,  
a seemingly cacophonous of roosters far off in the distance  
calling in daylight. A quiet peaceful air with the faint  
remains of the morning mist, a farmer on a tractor somewhere,  
but Yotkan ancient city ruins it was not!

We passed a sign which apparently (all Chinese  
to me!) declared that yes this was it Yotkan. We ended  
up getting up in despair and drove back into town. I paid him  
30 of the 40 pousad on the basis he didn't have to wait  
for two hours while I admired the ruins (as we didn't find  
them!). I am pretty sure what we were looking at was the  
village of Yotkan, not the ruins. The ruins have after all  
been protected by the Chinese something or other society of antiquity.  
Might try again tomorrow along with the museum.

Having been disappointed in Yotkan, I headed off in  
search of Melikawat. Despite some rugged dirt road and  
a maze of turns and more requests for directions, this time  
we were met with a little more success.

At the end of a small dirt road village (which I

took to be Melikawat, we found the ruins.

The ruins were nice and I spent my time in looking  
around. Out in the desert (not dunes, but the rocky  
encroachment type desert formed when all the sand blows away  
to leave the small rocks). Ruins were mainly mounds, what  
was I imagine left of the foundations of the bigger buildings.  
You could see the layout of rooms here and there, and  
also see the lines of other smaller walls in the ground.  
Following the lines of some of the walls, came across a lot  
of pottery fragments (and even some small bones in one spot).

There was evidence on the remaining mounds of earth  
that the wind tears through here, probably sand blasting what  
is left of the ruins. Not as good as Taihe ruins, much larger  
and more difficult to get an idea of the layout but a haunting  
presence nonetheless.

On showing a pottery fragment to my Tosi driver he  
was saying it was old, not new. Thousands of years old, not  
recent, and I would believe it (although still only has the  
faded stamp of a Xinjiang cable!). I kept a few pieces  
to bring home → there were thousands of them strewn all



around the site (and it is a large site).

The wind tends to blow away the sand and so creates a bit of a natural excavation process that leaves anything hard and relatively heavy exposed on the surface.

There were two or three gentle mounds with lots of exposed river rocks and other hard fragments. I think these would likely be the spoil mounds of Stein and others (or am I getting a bit carried away?).


The other strange thing was the number of broken river rocks. Maybe from the streams but not cold during the night + days over summer?

The surrounding area was also interesting. The whole area seemed to be a mass of alluvial deposits of river stones. Large (commonly the size of bowling balls) and very round.

The smaller size ones almost perfectly round to the point of rolling down a tyre track groove in the side of hills.

The local village seemed to survive by providing labour to excavate these sites. There were literally thousands of people at these sites hoes and picks, the odd excavator etc

digging these things out and into tracks (I guess although I didn't see a large no. of these?).

The surrounding countryside seemed to be the subject of a huge irrigation scheme. Kilometer after kilometer of aqueduct with those vertical gate valves to start / stop water flows. It seemed as though the small oases of the past have been supered up on PRC steroids and the land is gradually being dammed back from the desert (a the back of a lot of hard labour - the waterways were all lined with hand placed stone ).

The rivers had a boundary fence of red and white RC posts reinforced by barbed wire for the full perimeter but progress was advancing on all four sides.

Back to the cold grey of the town (as opposed to the cold brown of the desert!), into my internet shop, and my kitchen. They were happy to see me in the kitchen and are feeling a bit more comfortable with me - relative success with Choo Jan (Sweet rice), with eggs and a bit of spinach. Then the soup again - veggie this time without eggs. All good stuff

ad should be intentions but will get sick of it very quickly.  
Need some junk food hits to keep me sane!

Dropped in on the coffee place - kind of weird.  
Basement cafe with std slightly dodgy low level yellow  
ad med lighting, the bar from the seventies, and lots of  
boots with younger people, presumably drinking coffee. Didn't seem  
to be dodgy but difficult to tell... Anyway not enough  
light to write by, and not very scenic, so left to come  
back to the warmth of the hotel room.

Still feel like I am around the edges of the desert,  
great from a few stretches of road. Tying with the idea  
of going back on the cross desert highway. The plans  
leave in the middle of the night so you wouldn't see anything  
and the roads should be reasonable so probably just as safe.  
Will see if I can get someone to tell me how reliable  
things on the highway are.

Really suffering not having better Chinese language  
skills - my own fault, have had four years to do something  
about it and haven't!



MELIKAWAT ROWS ETCHED IN SAND EXCAVATED BY EXPLORETS PAST A SKIMMED SURFACE  
OF POTTERY FRAGMENTS THESE DAYS SURROUNDED BY RIVER ROCK AND ALL ENCROACHING  
CHANNELS OF MOUNTAIN WATER DIRECTED TO THE PRC'S BIDDING. COLD HARD DELICATE  
AT THE MERCY OF TIME AND MORE CHANGING WINDS.

25-11-06 Another slow start, getting into local Uigluer time  
even so slowly! Managed to make contact with a tour operator  
who is going to try and get 'his friend' to organize a trip up the  
Kunyu river to Koradong for me - he is into Tade and goes there  
quite often apparently.

I feel like the silk road is slipping below the new  
PRC, the huge competition schemes and superhighways. I think I have  
said before that you get this feeling China is writing the history of the  
future now, it is real action building stuff, develop, develop, develop,  
bigger and better where as everyone else seems on standard time letting  
things grow generally as they will. Tradition and history here seems only  
to be valued as far as its intrinsic surface value goes.

What will be left of the silk road will be the few islands  
of preserved ancient cities (and not really well preserved or  
presented at that). I guess I shouldn't expect much else and it is

entirely reasonable (it is in fact exactly what happens in western culture). In India and Nepal + Tibet you had a real feel for the past, it was like going back in time, the mountains and the villages and the monasteries don't change, they just keep on going whereas here we are definitely in the new Vajra-territory, with the drive being supplied (applied?) by Beijing.

Saw two things yesterday that were quite disturbing. One was a road safety campaign set of billboards (set up by a busy intersection), that had real 6x4 photos of the mutilated bodies of traffic accident victims. The worst were the kids with swollen bruised faces, blood around the mouth and nostrils, and tyre tracks in the dust - God how awful.

The other was in reading through a travelogue in doing some research on Kerija and accommodation where this guy had come across a woman being held as collateral on a loan. She had been forced to take the place of her husband (who was the previous collateral), and now that they (her husband and his brother) had apparently gone to ground was being forced to work off the debt in prostitution. 2200¥ left which she thought would amount to 9 months of work. God awful as well and destroys faith in human nature. I guess that is a small percentage of life that is bad - and you don't know if the guy was being taken for a ride (he ended up

paying off her debt).

Things to do today - find out about train bus leaves tomorrow for ~~Orange~~ according to ~~at 10:00~~ but would like to eyeball them - will do the cross desert from Kerija. - Find out what time bus leaves for Kerija! - Orqinise and see Talka (second time lucky), - have a look at the museum and rest of town again.

Sunday markets tomorrow although I have seen enough markets to be able to give this one a miss...

8:00 Decided to back out of Mater. Had another eye at visiting Talka ruins which it is the right place (same as yesterday), is just a few unmarked mounds in between fields (the relics one under the ground apparently!). This was disappointing and the toxic driver, some one who insisted on charging 120¥ for Melitavot yesterday, charged me 60¥ - should be 30-40. Coached the shits and decided to go to Kerija.

Felt like a good decision at the time → people on the bus were good, left on time and made reasonable speed. Even the scenery looked good, mountains and desert.

Arrived in Kerija and it is a bit bleak. Absolutely no English spoken at all, no way I am going to be able to organise trips into the desert from here!

☞ The sleeper buses to Orange all leave at night



which defeats the purpose of doing it (don't see any desert!).

- OPTION 1 - overnight bus from here - UROMAI MON 4pm
- OPTION 2 - Motor coach, sleeper bus MON AM - UROMAI TUES AM
- OPTION 2B - as above but sleeper Sun location if can
- OPTION 3 - Motor coach, fly Sunday night - UROMAI MON AM

Options give me desert during the day, just a bit frustrated not to be moving!!! Will arrive back in Hota on market day which will be interesting also.

Will then play by ear to see if Uromai Museum can be fitted in and also Luoa Wai Langhoo + Xion. If I can fit all of these in would be good. However being honest feel like I have seen enough so wouldn't / shouldn't be disappointed even if I can't see desert...

Would be good if I got the chance to say good bye to one or two people in Hota also - the internet geek and the sickhouse restaurant people :-)

4:15 Ok feeling a bit better with myself now. Have had a session on the internet and sorted out flights + train times which all look manageable (back to Hota). Happy I have seen enough of Tablamban - would have been nice to get to Kawadeng but too hard (will require C17) especially in

any case which will take a few days?). Will try to get out tomorrow afternoon on the express bus to Uromai + see the middle of the desert - if not, the day after + spend some time in Hota -> markets + Hota Hotel where they speak some English just to talk about possibilities if any. -> maybe the museum although not a big museum for.

Got some shucai, jidan, chow fun (veg + egg fried rice I am hoping, on its way, will have a beer, do a bit of reading, and put Kenji down to experience. - Meat just arrived with the veg-egg separate to the rice (which is fine).

27.11.06 Uromai Railway Station - basement restaurants nearby, Jidan, Shui Cai, Wihon 王 Chaoban and we will see what we get!

The cross desert highway was worthwhile. Once we turned off the main silk routes at the edge, the poplars and fields and villos disappeared quite quickly and the real desert began. It was as I thought it might be and hoped it would, endless sea of dunes, sand, one after the other in a large ocean of desert.

Was also very cold. I remember seeing the sleeper bus cover it, in the morning with long icicles of dirty dust stained water-

Very good although light on the way, think this one was used to transport here.

in frozen motion dragging off the gears (bleed holes?) in the rubber lining around the window seals (at first I thought they were vaseline or something?). The condensation on the windows was frozen again although this time there was some central heating so managed to stay warm ☺.

29.11.06 Keniya actually wasn't all that bad in case I have been unfair, actually bigger than it looks at first sight, which is the bus station strip. There is actually an indoor mall (best mall as it is called that runs between the bus station and main street. Issue is really I don't speak mandarin so difficult to organise anything.

Anyway early wire (6:00 am) much to the bewilderment of the hotel manager who sleepily pointed at the clock and shrugged his shoulders. The people at the bus station had told me 7:00 Beijing time (was severe (first bus back to Hoton).

It was pretty bleak at 7:00 by the bus station in Keniya let me tell you. There was one shop with a light on that looked like it stayed open all night with the inevitable movie (always in Uighur), played by VCD to a small crowd of three.

I found myself a drunk corner (which wasn't hard!)

and sat on my porch pondering the advantages electrified rods with a heating element would have. Cold, damn cold!

Half to my surprise, a little greyhound bus sleepily pulled up out from behind the terminal + parked itself in front of the bus stop. The shop owner (who by that time had lost me an old army jacket - I found about 4 or 5 quans in the pocket and offered it to him - he mistakenly thought I wanted to pay for it and refused - I judged the ensuing conversation out of the weakness of the phrase book and let it rest - leaving the few quans in the pocket!), anyway, the shop owner gestured 'Hotion'.

Fantastic, high hopes until I realized that it would only leave when full so I settled down in the back seat to wait for other passengers. It was market day in Hotion so my hopes were high! 28 quans to sell, 4 down, lets go!

At about a quarter to eight, the driver was gesturing for us to go and buy a ticket - the ticket office was open, and warm! how long had it been like that I thought!!! So ticket said 8:00 am and again my hopes rose and lo behold at 8:10 with 10 people the bus set off ☺.

A quarter of an hour later we still had not managed to clear the main street. A heady 2 km/hr (yes slower than walking pace) and an intermittent sounding of the horn to attract

would be passengers was the reason.

It was bitterly cold, I wanted to get up and do a slow jog next to the bus just to keep warm, but the Travellers fear of being separated from his pack kept me from doing so! Over the course of the least 45 mins we slowly picked up speed to around 50-60 km/hr and even more slowly picked up passengers.

The bus was well laden with produce and the people could hardly move inside (market day in Hotan). At one stage we picked up a guy with yak skins and spent 15 minutes loading them on, throwing them up onto the roof one at a time, and later Col found when I had to dig the pack out from under them, stuffing them into any nook or cranny in the space under the bus that could be found.

It didn't warm up at all. I was in the middle up the back where my knees could fit which was also the busiest + coldest spot on the whole bus. I say coldest as I can't imagine any thing being colder than buses right then. Looking around, the locals (admittedly a little more rugged up than me mostly + with the big fur hats), were, or seemed to be, doing it easily.

There was a thick layer of ice on the inside of all of the windows that was so low that to dip off with Sigoroids (not that I was even keen on trying!). Images of the inside of a Saigee played around my mind.

Arrived at Ustien (spelling it like it sounds and not like it is spelled in the books or maps), at about 11:00, all in all a good result really.

As huge thanks to me, the bus gods must have been smiling as I got the last ticket (15 lower), on the 1:00pm cross desert highway bus to Oumangji.

Arrived in Oumangji to snow (and of course cold!). Oumangji is a lot more together than most Xinjiang towns (it's the capital 'wisdom'), and I had looked up flight at the next morning to Lanzhou and made contact with Jimmy, the LP then tree guy I had been talking to unsuccessfully about a tour into Taklanakan, all within 10 minutes.

25 minutes later I was at the hotel and given that the visibility was very bad all over town (and it was almost 1:00pm), I started to have second thoughts, an image of a chieftain pilot drawing a deep breath and heading off down into a blind runway of mist firmly implanted in my mind.

Unable to decide to the point where I could ask if the airport was open and letting flights take off or not (or even ascertain if anyone really knew!), I decided to cancel the flight + take out the evening train mentioned in LP.

I spent the afternoon at the museum with Jimmy who



شىنجاڭ ئۇيغۇر ئاپتونوم رايونلۇق مۇزېيى

新疆维吾尔自治区博物馆  
THE MUSEUM OF XINJIANG UIGUR AUTONOMOUS REGION



شىنجاڭ ئىشلەپچىقىرىش مەدەنىيەت بايلىقلىرى، قەدىمكى خەلىپىلەر كۆمۈرىسى  
新疆文物珍品及古尸展  
EXHIBITION OF XINJIANG RELICS TREASURES AND ANCIENT CORPSES


شىنجاڭ ئىشلەپچىقىرىش مەدەنىيەت بايلىقلىرى، قەدىمكى خەلىپىلەر كۆمۈرىسى  
新疆陨石 玉石展  
EXHIBITION OF XINJIANG SIDEROLITE AND JADE

参观券 25 元

新疆维吾尔自治区物价局监制

showed me around the museum. Well worth doing but with lots of English translation so didn't really need someone translating for me. They had a lot of very well-preserved mummies, the Coylean? beauties, who wasn't that beautiful (particularly after you had seen her in her real mummified state!), and various other high status people. All in incredible condition it has to be said - quarters were up to 3000 years old!

I got the hand sell from the museum attendant that Jimmy had organised to show me the mummies, and ended up buying a small, supposedly silver (solid) Buddha from the Qing dynasty, which meant it could be as late as 1911! - still not bad, was from around Harbin. The official government certificate states this ended up being a hand written receipt from the museum (a great body). The final pitch that got me was that it all goes to the museum and helps them keep running & it was a very good, well maintained museum. (and the wanted price was 1200¥ - I ended up saying 500 (58/100) and they accepted!). I had the whole replica / original argument with them trying to explain some people prefer an exact replica & to leave the original where it was supposed to be but I seen it was lost.

So I now have my silver Buddha good bed down  to go with the other Buddhas by my desk at work. And Jimmy got 50¥ for his troubles as well. Both parents in the scheme of things really so don't feel bad about it - and worthy causes I hope...

So Urumqi, covered in snow and a thick mist surprisingly endeared itself to me. The mist gave it a feeling of intrigue and homeliness as your world was only ever a 50-100 m radius of soft whiteness at any one time, a nice little microcosm universe to walk around in.

I did the queue thing at the railway station and got pulled aside a few people from the front to go to the front of the next line where the lady spoke English (some at least). Despite her gruff attitude to begin with she found me the last hard sleeper ticket on the T296 to Lanzhou - The last attempt was going to be on the 2nd → a bit late! Very very lucky she told me that someone else must have cancelled!

The train told me it was  $-11^{\circ}\text{C}$  outside in Urumqi when we left, and the thick mist hadn't cleared all day. How could I have thought I could have seen in this I thought smugly walking down the platform gentry.

Fifteen minutes later, it was  $-8^{\circ}\text{C}$  outside, we were off travelling through the country side a few km outside of Urumqi.

Train times worked out well, some time to see the museum + the Taoist temple tomorrow before train to Luomen at around 15:00. As long as I can get from Luomen to Xian without too much trouble will be ok. 29 - Luoyan

30 Luomen 1, 2, Xian, 3 → Singapore! Looking forward to getting home → think I will stop at TI Marcos' for a bit I must admit! ☺

Meal just arrived and it was a plate of steaming pigs trotters and other assorted messy bits. Mmmm! *seja language* not as down pat as I thought!

29.11.06 Quick meal waiting for train to Luomen. Luoyan continues to impress. I think it has been a while since LP has been here. The decrepit Taoist temple is actually quite nice and has been renovated I would say.

Beautiful stone carvings in the walls and the nice Chinese 'flying roofs' everywhere. Spent a bit of time sketching but would have been below zero (ice not melting on the streets!). Got a bit hozy towards end partly as my hands started to stop working, and partly because my brain was also freezing up!





There is a big university (I suppose, meant all universities?), in the middle of town not far from the train station, and this gives the area a bit of life I think - lots of little places to get food, amusements and leisure interest cafes, and a few bits of life on the streets (cafes, shoe shine etc). - I am too embarrassed now to get my shoes shined as they are really badly apart. The front of the sole is starting to detach now (in addition to the back which was repaired + is now the best bit of the boot (??), in Koshogor).

Just had my first egg drop soup (no mixed stir fry veges - only cabbage - what is this fascination with cabbage anyway!), anyway soup was nice. So called I suppose as they drop an egg into the boiling water? Couldn't see the normal froth you get in poaching an egg so this might be strained off. There is some sea weeds type dark green veges in there as well. Soup is always good for the soul on a cold day.

Sitting here reminds me of the other kind of sleeping, the longer + louder the sleep, the more you must be enjoying your food I think as on the train it was getting out of hand. All except for one lady who used to let a roaring belch go every so often - and then have an expression on her face like a dog that has just farted - no sign of

recognition of the fact at all! A nation of noodle eaters, you have to expect sleeping to be a natural sport I guess, it then follows with eating with your mouth open - smashing and clacking of food + teeth + tongues + swallowing seeds, it just needed the hand on the crutch scratching to complete the picture.

Lanzhou also has these high mountains either side of it which reveal their profiles by exposure through the mist (or is it smog?) way up high above the buildings where you are not expecting this to be.

On the train  
to Luoman - hard seat  
which is actually not hard  
reserved which is very  
But riding frozen chicken class again - these are heated but they only give off a tiny amount of warmth! Also not full, which was a bit of a surprise but I guess they have a fixed number of carriages and if it's not full, it's not full - gives me hope for the train from Luoman to Xi'an!



9:05 Almost (well confusion anyway!), missed the stop for Luoman. Very small place and I would be much better going to Tianshui which has very very very good buddhist cereals, or so my new friend from the train told me. He was nice and I could tell - wanted to speak a bit but I was a bit

embarrassed by not knowing much English. I was tired and contemplative so just let him go at his own pace asking the odd question - we went through the interests section a bit later on so had a little to say to each other.

Luomen is in fact very small. Station without attendants; town without any sealed roads - I could tell it is slightly warmer here however as there was water + mud in the streets. I got charged 10¥ for a two or three (expected very lumpy + so teasing on the way!), trip from the station to the centre of the village (town is generous).

Back and forward between rooms till got the heating working and other reasons I couldn't quite figure out! Have the sleeping bag out anyway as was cold last night (the woman calling up to offer passage every 15 minutes wasn't helping either! - ended up putting the phone off of the hook!), like a bit of comfort in my old age - <sup>(the cold tide blew across a heat sink sucking heat out of my room + into the outside air!!!)</sup>

Got some food at the local Chinese place (I overdid it all), ended up with noodle, veggie, egg, tomato soup which was pretty average but they promised the fried rice would be on tomorrow - not tomorrow morning I bet which will give us a chance to try something in the kitchen myself without rice or noodles!

Anyway the whole group, Mum + Dad, a couple of young

girls (one who was favoured, and the other Cinderella doing the dishes outside), the local policeman (who was the other patron), all got into the phone book and my diary and the travel maps etc and an interesting time was had by all.

Really enjoyed the Taoist temple today - I think everything in Lanyou was so good because my expectations had been set so low from LP! Photographed a few of the temple signs giving explanations in English, there is also a short passage in the LP phone book which gives Taoism in 30 words or less - all material for my studies - sounds like things are so removed from the original teachings that, that is what I should maybe be concentrating on. Did a bit to do with modern Taoism and look at the original philosophy that struck such a chord when I read it so long ago.

Seems most religions goes the same way. Buddhists getting into tautic stuff and idolisation, Muslims justifying killing and extremism, and Christians doing the same thing. The answer I can't help but feel is relatively simple, it's just that simplicity is hard to keep alive when muddled with human nature, the fears and aspirations and desires and everything else that people have and let get the better of them - Me included obviously - I guess that's what makes life the story that is to be told!

Looking forward to Shuilian Dong (the water curtain caves tomorrow, promises to be picturesque and spiritual - Buddhist and Taoist which will be good.

Brought a small Taoist pendant today more to show a little support to the White Cloud Temple but will be nice to add to all the little trinkets that all carry a bit of our travels with them, and a lot of warmth and good luck as well I am sure.

Doker games are on at the moment. Volleyball, Table Tennis, and the odd bit of basketball (and little else), lectures strongly on CCTV5.

30-11-06 The square in town was alive with people and action this morning, buses ready to take off, children picking through rubbish stalls, make shift tents, lots of people with bundles of platted straw on something all looking like they were ready to head off to market on a soon to arrive bus.

8:30 First order of the day, check out - cold shower - good for the constitution! Luckily I used the sleeping bag last night as as I thought the ice cold floor didn't warm one iota all night and the times I slipped off I was ice cold outside.

Second order of the day is 'fart', back to my little local, as expected, no rice but was able to get them to do a omelette, very oily but they put in some spring onion etc which was ok. Felt not full so went for some veg soup also (which the chef had cooked for himself).

Third order - train tickets + walk through town - South Shuilian Dong...

I think this trip has been a bit about getting back to real life (and not about getting away from work although the one is the converse of the other). I tend to get so involved in work that it is all I do - not healthy (and I'm better than most!). This whole living for work and getting in other things around the edges is not a good way to be. I feel like I have a growth spent every time I travel. Reading, photography, writing, thinking, experiencing life and finding out about things. Travel in the mind as well as the body, makes me feel three dimensional again. Not confident (although there is some of that), but comfortable and well adjusted. I need to travel more, or get that exploration into the rest of my life somehow.

Walk Shuilian Dong (the Water-Curtain Caves lived



# 水帘洞

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SHUZHIAN DONG 水帘洞, GANSU.

up to the high expectations put on them! The road in was up a narrow canyon and most of it was spent on the river bank, the road having been washed away a while back by the looks of things. Nice country side → terraced fields and country life going on, fields being tended to, sheep and cattle being driven, people going about their business - just cold! Once we got into the canyon the water had frozen where it wasn't deep or flowing quickly so below zero.

Different little sub-villages had heard off some of the Snow also in a plastic pipe on the side of the gully (fed by a water shift reservoir).

The main attraction at Shudien Dong is some George Ben relief carvings of Buddha with a couple of Bodhisattvas attendants in the face of one of the sandstone cliffs. Really impressive, impressive for all of the other things that are there also, little chortens in purpose carved niches, other rows of Buddha statues of which only the heads remain, the rest being reduced to the sticks used as reinforcement, and lots of painting. Not sure if it is the original - looks like it could be, the old thousand Buddhas everywhere and bits and pieces of other stuff. Elephants and deer make appearances as well. It's about the setting also - I must admit, the canyon and the big sandstone boulders

mountains (reminded me a little of the Olgor).

On the other side of the canyon to the carvings is a Taoist temple and monastery (there were a few people - I presume monks living there). It is a series of small temples with the sloping roofs up to a large shallow cave. Paths cut into the hillside on the way up with white trees and snowfall still on the edges and in the towers (light), made it a nice place to wander around (it's not cold!) → bit of a recurring theme!

The Buddha carvings and statues etc were built by a series of precarious ladders and cantilever walkways supported from timber beams embedded into the sandstone cliff and wedged into position - Would not have been that keen to wander around even if they allowed access → failure would mean a certain death toll. Again quite impressive though. I don't know how they did all of the painting etc, must have been through hanging ropes and steps from the cliffs up above.

Again took some time to do a bit of a sketch - nice way to spend time in a place (and good for accumulating spiritual merit the buddhists would say?). Got a bit distracted in the end I would like to say due to the cold (which was a factor!), but more because I like to do the detail and let it lead me where it leads me → I should really take the



time to sketch out the overall outline first!

Forgot to mention a kilometre or two the road in became impossible to our little van and we had to walk in (which was actually nice). The only things that were making it up were these little three wheeled utilities they have here (around all of China from what I have seen). They are quite basic with two stroke engines by the sounds of the cycle, and the main drive shaft is actually ~~across~~ three big iron belts!

Just had my last Uighur noodle for the trip (I promise). My Chinese local is actually run by Uighurs of the Tibetan persuasion I think (which actually means it is not a Chinese local doesn't it! - they speak Chinese however and the sign is in Chinese which is what threw me!). The Tibetan women (and men now I come to look at the latter!) seem to have very rosy cheeks. From memory, this is from rubbing yak butter on their cheeks to help protect from the weather. Gives them a glowing healthy look anyway, a lot nicer than the pale Chinese.

2:30 Time for a wander around town. I was a bit earlier on - there are a few paved roads etc further into town. The Luomen Bazaar + Railway Station seem to be collected on the side of town which is a little

were undeveloped - which is actually nice - but none down to earth and the square has a real focus of activity feel about it.

4:00 Back again in my little Uighur/Mongolian local - stir fried mixed veges this time before the train trip to Xian. Afternoon (post couple of hours), consisted of finding a half decent place to go to the toilet - doesn't pay to get caught in a rush in China!, and then wandering around town. I noticed that the rubber on the soles of my soles was starting to degenerate also and they also were about to be left behind on the pavement!

Wandered a bit further, saw bird signals and found all of the cobblers gathered together in one part of town in a street corner (in the warmth of the shade unfortunately!). Anyway in 1/2 hour had the towel cut off the front of the soles, the old rubber stretched to the leather and a new rubber front put on also stretched through to the leather. My boots now look like they have come fresh from a hardware set but surely they appear to be (and heavy!!!). Only need to last 3 more days! :-)

7:50 Made the Xian train :-), got there very early these days after missing the train out of Saisuoguan!

邓 = 董 (DENG AH SHI)

甘肃省武山县洛门镇 宁远路言友煨鸡店  
沙石坡言友煨鸡店

Photos to little Luoma local!



邓 = 董

NO NEED FOR  
DENG'S NAME!  
THANK AS USUALLY  
WHERE? - OR  
SOMEONE USES  
NAME???

Said goodbye to the people in the restaurant who have been feeding me (it must seem constant) over the past 24 hours. Took a few photos and promised to send them a copy - will have to enlist the girls at work help in deciphering if need be!

The train is a bit lonely class I sleep it. (Leaves Luoma at 6:20am and arrives in Xi'an at 2:00 in the morning - a standard hard seat for most people so in taking to hard sleeper (soft option), it is nice, the conductors and the odd business man who can justify the little extra fee some comfort. I deal better with some people around family enough. It is not as though the smoke is any better as the whole carriage is filled with the smoke from the hot water lanterns - a coal smelling smoke - I think it might always be the case for carriage no. 5 as I can pretty sure the same thing happened on the way out from Xi'an in

the same no. carriage!

Have been listening to the tunes on my O2 at times when travelling - not very often as want to be discrete with people around (and also don't want to run the batteries down). It is a weird juxtaposition however, the western music, things that are favourites and really comfortable overlaid on situations like a sleeper bus, or just on the passing landscape outside a train window. I especially like 'They're not going to get us' by those Russian girls. Adds a bit of a sense of urgency and speed and humour / nonsense to the whole thing.

Would be nice to be here a day early but there are some really good things in Xi'an → Terra Cotta army, Big Goose Pagoda (Xiao Zang), a large Taoist Temple. Will see what I can get accomplished tomorrow. Also see how easy it is to change flights given I had to physically go to the China Eastern office in Lanzhou to confirm (Cherén, Cherén, Cherén) my flights home (so much for the easy number given → ok if you speak Mandarin).

1:12:06 So the lone business man sleeper turned out to be the nicest sleeper I have ever come across, and the rows of empty beds were filled by people at a station

at about half eleven - not a wish of sleep until we arrived in Xian (which is saying something on a train!) But can't find what you wish for I guess is the lesson out of that.

Decided to go the Ludao Biquan (CP choice) for a bit of company & western comfort. Room was fantastic, hot water, heating, water (drinking), clean, neat. Did the western breakfast this morning as an indulgence which was disappointing it has to be said - small & just off the mark taste wise. Have gotten used to the big scrappy Chinese breakfasts with egg & tomato!

Off to sight see this evening & tomorrow - Terra Cotta Soldiers, Big Wild Goose Pagoda, City Walls, Tourist Temple, Chang Shikha?

Have that nice feeling of coming home (to Xian) where I know things and am a bit more at ease of my own universe!...

8:00 am Dinner - bamboo shoots in Chilli sauce (very oily!) and veggie dumplings - I don't know why but they don't seem to have Soy sauce in this part of the world - noticed it further into Xijing also - instead they have Crown vinegar which looks about the same but is lousy on the taste front!!! Dinner didn't

live up to Linck's high standards I am afraid...

Terra Cotta army was very good. Local bus out & back and the ticket price had gone down over what LP told me so all in all good, particularly as I spent 600¥ this morning on thumb drives and a memory stick, to get over problems with the flash drive I bought with me. Has been in & out of so many computers and mapped in so many different ways something had to go wrong and it wouldn't accept any files! Managed to get confidence that I have all images now however! So spending money is tight unless I want to get other money out - don't see any reason to just get.

So the warriors also lived up to the expectations. There weren't as many of them as I was expecting and the whole establishment gave the feeling that it will be ready in 2016! Rows upon rows of warriors, in whole and standing in line, or in pieces half buried and being excavated (although there was no activity when I visited in terms of continuing to dig & uncover.

Makes me want to read more about the First emperor (Qin) - so probably will.

There was a 360° (almost) video production (in English) that despite being 70's/80's was very well





done and gave a bit of the history without getting too heavy or stodgy. Light wasn't good for photos but was enjoyable wandering around at my own pace, becoming acquainted with things.

I was one of the last out and discovered that the

221 BC. 6 FACTIONS BROUGHT TO ONE END AND UNCOVERED BY PEASANTS. A FIELD  
 5000 WARRIORS, 50 CHARLOTS. QIN SHI HUANG, IN DEATH IN WAR,  
 NOW THE SAVING GRACE OF A CAPITAL THAT WAS CHANG AN, XIAN...

advantage (or disadvantage), of this is that all the souvenir sellers see you as their last sale of the day.

Got talked into buying some small ceramic sets for the kids - 10¢ apiece! very cheap. But feel bad about a girl who followed me all the way out trying to sell post cards.

I saw her walking home later on, the bus and felt very bad. Still, that's life I guess and becoming a charity in these things is not good either.

She ended up asking 4¢ - don't know what their margins are but can't be much - not a nice place in life to be...

Urumqi, Lanzhou, and Xian all have signs in English (pinyin anyway) on the roads. When in Urumqi, Jimmy the Texas guide guy told me proudly that Urumqi would be an international city within five years. Demonstrates at once how behind they are in starting, and how quick they are when it comes to catching

photographer - except not so calm + collected at times, and quite smelly at others! Seriously though that's what I hope I am, a bit of a passenger taking it all in,...

3:30 Sitting contemplating the big Wild Goose Pagoda (as you do with a bit of buddhist persuasion!). The pagoda, not the original one but a taller 5 tier one if you count the pedestal (original is 654 AD was 5 tier), is now surrounded by tourist associated attractions.

The huge forecourt facing back to the city has been converted into a large musical water fountain display with shops and other things lining both sides. There is a lot of activity around so it seems to be a hit. The grounds hold souvenir shops and nice gardens and a few buildings here and there including some displaying under glass some buddhist tools.

There are big covered stone murals depicting Xiang Zongzi's journey to and from India (being so famous mountains or anything that I could see, but peaches + date lotus / poppy flowers? and a game of polo??). Public toilets and a further admission charge to climb the actual pagoda, I wonder what Xiang Zongzi would think of it all? He would probably be contemplative also and probably turn to one side

MIFANG, SHUCAI, CHOUFAN - 37, SHANGDE LU.

KITCHEN COME RESTAURANT, JIDAN,

蘑菇青菜	4元
麻辣豆腐	4元
尖椒肉丝	8元
木耳肉片	8元

# 牛肉拉面

to expire after the tents he brought back and the teachings and to see how things had developed so many years on down the track.

He would have missed a lot in the jump, the rise and fall of imperial dynasties, the communists and the cultural revolution, the gradual opening and spread into the world. It is a lot of stuff, makes you wonder if the strength alone would start questions on buddhism, place in things. Probably not, just a simple philosophy there for the people, the like blood behind things to rise and fall and weather the storms as best it can with the

truth behind it in his mind (and he may well be right).

I found in one little corner of the courtyard leading to the tents displayed under glass, some information booklets on Buddhism that were quite encouraging. Not idealistic at all talking about what Buddhism is (comes from the word to awake - *gyerantig*), and who the Buddha was, and the fact that it is a philosophy (which means *phil* - to love, *sophia* - wisdom). I think Xuan Zang would have been encouraged by that. I certainly was. This little corner of what the Big Wild Goose Pagoda should be about, sitting calmly amongst all of the other song and dance going on around it.

I have now officially run out of money!!! I spent my last 50¥ on a copy of Mao's little red book. The original price was 250 but given my meagre means, the book attendant came down! - How much over the real price of this book I been paying this type! Leaves me 32¥ to get home on the bus + buy some dinner. Refusing my deposit for the price of the bus fare to the airport!

5:30 Back in my breakfast hall for some *jidan* Choufan - .  
Been a lot of walking today, this city walks (about half of them

(= 6-7km), and then following the local bus routes around trying to find the bus stop for the ones that go to the Big Wild Goose Pagoda - There are a lot of buses on any one street but they stagger the stops making it difficult to pick where to are you want stops (even though you have seen it) - and I always seemed to be picking the wrong way to walk to the next stop!

10:50

"And the hungry people don't me, and their pallid  
faces haunt me,  
As they shoulder one another in their rush and  
nervous haste,  
With their eager eyes and greedy and their  
stunted forms and weeds,  
For townfolk have no time to grow, they  
have no time to waste"

from Clancy of the Overflow  
Barjo Patterson

Haven't been sleeping well since back in Xian for some reason, not spending that nervous energy in travelling? Spent some time on the internet, also dreams of work - hopefully resolution dreams although I still have like needless worry and



**Xi'an**  
**City Wall**  
Scenic Area

西安城墙景区

国家AAAA级旅游点  
西安城墙—古往今来  
经典与现代的  
Integrating of ancient & modern  
地方特色与景观



经典与现代的  
Integrating of ancient & modern  
地方特色与景观

成人票:四十元  
Adult ticket: 40 yuan

国家AAAA级旅游点

西安大慈恩寺  
价格优惠  
XI'AN DA CI EN TEMPLE

发票代码

261010653571



a getting prepared to fight and defend steel tonnages!  
Maybe mind is losing the silk road track, again into  
wandering mode. Lots of work (good work), to be done on  
the web site when I return - something to look forward  
to although it will take a while to get the film photos  
back! Think I will go through the tried + trusted  
Kodak labs in Aust!

3/12/06 Hmmm! Up early, 6:00am. Ice cold shower  
as no hot water that time of the day - that is until 2 minutes  
after I hopped out of the shower to shave when the water started  
to slowly warm up - another 5 min and I probably would have been  
ok! Good for the health I reckon!

Allowed to miss one bus as they were apparently not  
labelled and showed no signs, my only choice was to show the  
locals a hand written message, "please show me where the bus  
to the airport is". Allowing to miss one was a good idea as I  
got parked in different direction. It was only because I labeled  
onto a ~~local~~ local who was also catching a plane that I ended  
up getting to the right spot (and yes no labels exist from  
the lounge just down the side of the bus saying X in  
International Airport!).

So at airport more or less on schedule including the hours

worth of bus contingency. Add to the hour another hold on the  
first leg of the flight is domestic and not international and there  
you have Brecken finding out that the cost of the cheapest cup  
of coffee in departures is 50\*. I don't even remember what the  
blue Tamarica was!

The girl beside me just answered a phone call on a full  
recessed desk phone she had in her bag! She then proceeded to a  
grey tea feet away on a mobile phone and started to move  
around in the direction of differential check in desks, the guy was  
with me on the bus on the way in.

Quite a bumpy layover still to the day..

12:10 On the plane on the first leg home. The girl in the  
airport accidentally I presume dropped a number on a piece of  
paper (well I noticed it where she was sitting a minute or two  
after she left) - ~~1357~~ 13572305351 - had a look around for her  
but she had disappeared. I like a little mystery and a few  
seemingly unrelated (or perhaps just plain unrelated!), events.  
Helps keep the imagination stimulated :-)

Did the local 25\* buffet breakfast - bottomless  
coffee and biscuits - very nice (+ few suspect local dishes!)

4:20 Last leg home! Origin of the species has been interesting. He  
(Dorwin) is an impressive guy, strong logic and strong observational  
skills and strong practical experiments being at all of the different



rights to the theory. A life well spent I can help but think, mind you in the same manner as Scotts (of the A.T. tent), companion - can't remember his name right now, he would have been a member of that English class of people with a salary and able means to keep himself exalting him to do what he wants, devoting time to whatever he chooses. Still would have taken a degree of motivation and discipline however - I wonder where I would end up in the same circumstances? Probably still a family person, but maybe astronomy, religion, ??? I don't enjoy engineering enough for it to have been that unfortunately!

Am in the section of the book on geographical distribution. Must admit am shipping through a bit of it as it is out of date. Was back when continental drift was not known about which would have made a lot of his arguments a bit easier! - Must read a little more on the Wallace line + who discovered continental plate movements etc!

I feel like I am stumbling through a proper education, as most English seem to have received, a little too late (old dogs + new tricks), and a little haphazardly.

The other amusing thing to read is Darwin trying to argue against the logic of creation. Why were frogs created on islands, why are animals on one island close to a continent the same and not others. How do you argue with a miracle

based philosophy, the same book is always the negotiatives ways of the hood!

My list of things to read + look into that sat at 2 items for - only 18 months has grown to 18 in just 3 weeks. Again - I need to get a bit more of this into my normal life! Need to make time to think and do things I want to do. Perhaps I need to start setting aside days (or nights).

- Exercise
- Reading
- Work

745 Reading a bit of Marx little red book. Only a part of the way through but strikes me as being very light. Perhaps when compared to the hard structured logic and argument of Darwin in the Origin? Lots of repetition and reliance on words that don't always appear clear in context or perhaps clear in meaning to begin with.

I know I have the advantage of having seen the background and the results as a vic cultural revolution, a great leap forward and social and misused power, but it does have a very strong propaganda feel to it from the start. I guess living through it at the time, the only messages people were looking for and listening to were change and the introduction of communism, along with the abolition of Capitalism or Imperialism which



had caused so many problems in the past.

Passages like the following ~~seem~~ typical, words on suppressing reaction, but it seems plain (to me with hindsight at least!), what is reaction - anything you want it to be!

"What is the dictatorship for? Its first function is to suppress the reactionary classes and elements and those exploiters in our country who resist the socialist revolution, ... in other words to resolve the internal contradictions between ourselves and the enemy."

On the correct handling of contradictions among the people  
(Feb 27, 1937).

Who decides what constitutes resisting the socialist revolution?  
Not clear...

"The people's democratic dictatorship needs the leadership of the working class. For it is only the working class that is the most far sighted and most selfless, and most thoroughly revolutionary."

On the people's democratic  
Dictatorship (June 30, 1949).

How do the working class lead, who is their mouthpiece, the leaders of the party? Open to abuse, aside from the fact that the working class are no different to anyone else, human nature is a constant?

↑ ↑ ↑

Maybe being a bit naive myself but the basics are a form of dictatorship ~~it~~ will be open to abuse if the decision making is put in one place and portions of society are subject to repression ~~and~~

Capitalism is not good either (I think) but what it does have is open and free speech, rights to be heard and judged in a public forum.

It also has inequality, you might say as long as there is human nature there will always be inequality. The free speech and right to be heard gives it in theory justice, and so in theory for the individual avenues of out. of protection.

I think the rights of individuals, are more important than anything else, and probably also a mechanism for accountability of the leaders so they are answerable to their actions - (I guess this is what democracy gives and what dictatorship lacks).

"On the one hand, considerable changes in the conditions of life and crosses between greater undifferentiated forms, lesser fertility; and on the other hand lesser changes in the conditions of life and crosses between less undifferentiated forms increase fertility"

Darwin, The Origin of the Species, 1859



Two photos of Upsala Glacier in the Patagonia region of Argentina . . .



. . . show how climate change has melted the ice at a rate of 42 cubic kilometres a year.

high at the moment. Spending a lot of money but we will save a lot next year as well with the cheapness at Woking Road.

Little Eric is also going great guns being a monkey and pushing all of his boundaries with a great little grin. It is so good to be at home to experience all of this and see it all in action - obviously going back to work!

Like I said, I just need a way of keeping all of this going in parallel...

"Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand"

Thomas Carlyle

"The local of tomorrow, added to that of yesterday, carried today, makes the strongest falter"

Sir William Osler

"My life has been full of terrible misfortunes, most of which have never happened."

Montaigne

French Philosopher  
on the subject of worry.

17.12.06

"There is no expedient to which a man will resort to avoid the labour of thinking"

Thomas Edison.

21.12.06

Island hopping around Krabi has been fantastic. Cheap flights and first night in Krabi itself to get our bearings (flight arrived late so needed some certainty - a factor having kids brings into the equation). Few things around town + then the local bus down to the seaside (AoNang). All the mountainous limestone cliffs



scenery along the way was beautiful and really set the scene for things to come. All of that is the type of thing I have been wanting to see since we got here but never really knew where to go. Then out to Tonsai Bay in a longtail, just fantastic, sunshine, the sea, those little boats in and out of the stands and beaches, the kids loving it (me loving it!). Was a real adventure for them. :-)

Then to Lanta (Lanta Palace) - but Cheery had just right for us - pool restaurant, sedate beach, lots of reading while the kids spent time in the pool or looking around the beach.

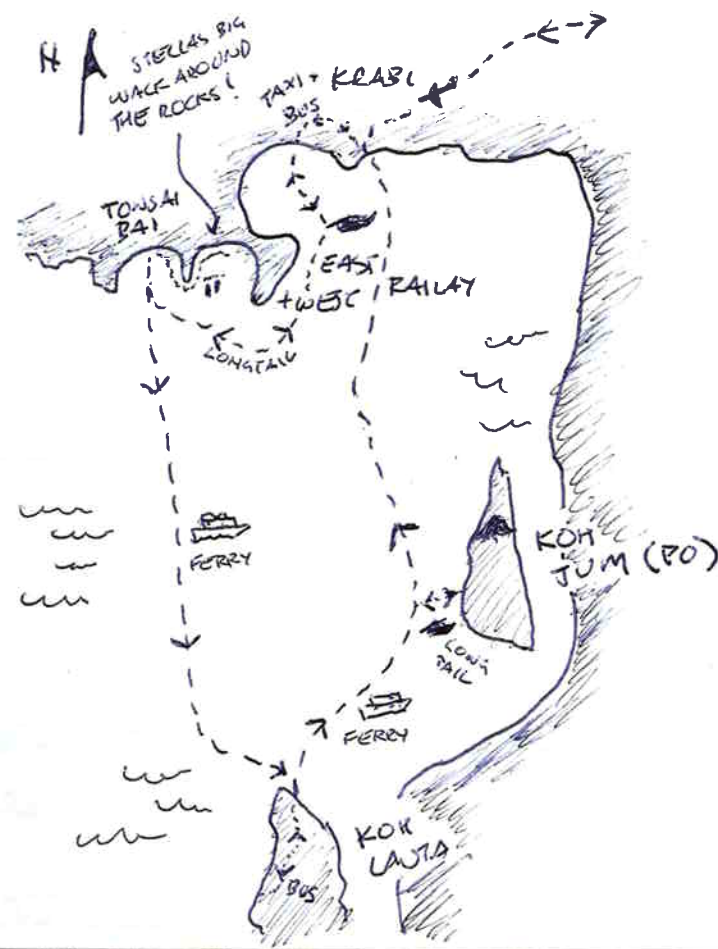
And then to Jum (Koh), extremely laid back and not so developed. Anderson resort → wide open grassy spaces, room right on the beach, hammocks, restaurant on the beach etc.

Was speaking to some people last night who were here 17, 18 years ago and said Railay beach was like this → now extremely busy + developed, and Tonsai Bay (which is also pretty busy + developed), was

just a deserted beach you went to see the monkeys at!

Things just change constantly everywhere I guess, some reason to live for the now...

Really liked Tonsai Bay - big limestone cliffs + a timber culture with people doing rows right adjacent to the beach + cafes; would be hundreds metres high cliffs right there!



24.12.06 Back to Tonsai Bay for the night, some kayaking with the kids across Raiway West and through the pirate cave which was great fun (for them and me). Ewan got a bit scared going in and then came around with a few yep's at the end! If he could have peeped his head into the air I am sure he would have :-).

Walk the next morning across the hills at the back of Tonsai Bay which was good, short but steep and nice rain forest, slabs of sunlight through the tree canopy, heavy mosquitoes! and out to deer sun and breezy green hills at the back of Raiway.



Back to Coster

Rue, beer for Santa, carrots

Spent the weekend and some doona (doona) time with the Mappets "Christmas Carol", in preparation for the big event. Will be a good morning.

(1) Total a Show on Intelligent Design which was

interesting. Something I will follow for a bit I think (could be a long bit!). Must admit I can't help but think that there is something more at work than pure natural selection.

I think that Darwin is a bit hard done by though, he was putting forward what he (and others by the way), knew. He spent a lot of time building and locking up the case for evolution and succeeded to the point that no one is actually opposing it, just perhaps saying there is another element in there somewhere.

I think that there could have been more elaboration, or exploration perhaps into the different forms of evolution (or maybe I read it once and only picked up on the rain pigeons?). Exploration of instinct and directed evolution.

Darwin mentioned change due to habit, I can't help but think there is a mental element in there as well.

From a sample of one, it is the 'I want to be taller' syndrome. There is something in us that must recognize a way of doing things or being better at things and developing into changes.

Instinct, Habit, pure chance, unconscious (or conscious) want, there must be different levels of

Importance: a nice concept and I think something, one part of the key that I need to get to grips with in order to handle this life!

Hopi Indian Prophecies:

"If we dig precious things from the ground we will invite disaster"

"Near the days of purification, comets <sup>then</sup> will be comets spun back and forth in the sky"

"A container of ashes might one day be thrown from the sky, which could burn the land, and boil the oceans"

from Koyanishqatsi the film.

Beautiful film, the best of the three as it had some sense of flow through the music; build up, slow down, pulling you along with it.

I have written down these quotes before, and I will again I am sure!

PERSONAL TO DO LIST.

~~ALTERNATIVE COPY FOR JACKSON~~

~~PHOTO COPY~~

~~PHOTO COPY~~

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WEB SITE

- BIGGER PHOTOS TO LINK FROM THUMBS

- ADD QUOTES

- TRIM THAILAND ETC.

- ADD OTHER COUNTRIES.

- ADD ASSORTED LIFE IMAGES FROM LIVING IN ASIA. (+ AUSTRALIA?).



BOOKS I WANT TO READ + THINGS TO LOOK INTO

- DARWIN VOYAGE OF THE BEAGLE ✓ 4
- LOST HORIZON (CONWAY?) ✓ 2.5
- ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES ✓ 3
- PEISIM + RATIONAL CHRISTIANITY. (LOOK INTO)
- FILM 'THE EMPEROR + THE ASSASSIN' (STORY OF FIRST EMPEROR - QIN).
- BRITISH MUSEUM WEBSITE ON MEGALO CAVE PAINTINGS.
- CHINESE WEBSITES ON THESE. ♪
- TRAVEL TO FERDINAND DE NARONHA - BRAZIL - FOOT OF REEF
- FINDING THE GREAT KOOSTER (BOOK)
- THE GREAT GAME (FURTHER STUDY).
- ART FROM SILK RD. - WWW REFERENCES LP RTTA.
- STUDY BEE STRUCTURE 3D OF MONYLONS - HIVE BEES - FROM DARWIN / ORIGIN OF SPECIES
- FIRST + LAST EMPERORS - CHINA
- SALVADOR DALI BIOGRAPHY (AUTO?)
- HOW TO STOP WORKING + START LIVING? ✓
- MADS LITTLE RD BOOK
- " BIOGRAPHY
- WALLACE LINE + CONTINENTAL DRIFT.
- WHEN THINGS FALL APART - PEMA CHODRON (GIVEN TO ME BY PETER BOUTELL)
- FREAKANOMICS - STEVEN LEVITT, STEPHEN DUBNER. ✓

PREVIOUS - 20 RUNS

2 MAY 04	BRIDGE + BACK	19.00	(FIRST)
2 APR 05	BRIDGE + BACK	15.27	(BEST)
BARROS	" "	15.35	(LAST)
16 MAY 05	BRIDGE + BACK	16:50	
5 JUNE 05	" "	17:07	
18 JUNE 05	" "	16:11	
25 JUNE 05	" "	16:19	
29 JULY 05	" "	17:56	(FRI AFTER) PRINKS
08 AUG 05	" "	15.15	*
03 SEP 05	" "	17:09	(HEAD COOL)
17 SEP 05	" "	15:48	
6 OCT 05	" "	16:20	(NIGHT)
9 OCT 05	" "	16:58	
01 NOV 05	" "	16:10	
26 NOV 05	" "	16:15	
26 FEB 06	" "	17:20	
26 MAR 06	" "	15:45	
30 APR 06	" "	15:33	
27 MAY 06	" "	17:09	
25 JUN 06	" "	17:45	RAINING AFTER B'FAST.
2 JUL	" "	10:06	HOT MID DAY
6 AUG	" "	15:45	LATE A'NOON
17 SEPT	" "	15:35	" "
5 DEC	" "	16:17	

MAYOS - MAR 06 15 RUNS (1/3/5/7/9)

BOO PREVIOUS

22-1-03	15# = 0.98	A# (1.02) = 100%
27-1-04	0.76	(1.31) = 78%
25-4-05	0.77	(1.30) = 78%
16-5-05	0.80	(1.25) = 81%
18-6-05	0.77	(1.30) = 78%
29-7-05	0.79	
03-9-05	0.78	(1.28) = 80%
18-2-06	0.83	
24-3-06	0.86	
26-5-06	0.83	
02-8-06	0.82	
10-9-06	0.84	

~~TT \$~~

TT \$

} 135,000 0.81

25,000 0.79

25,000 0.81

BOO PREVIOUS

22-1-03

27-1-04

25-4-05

16-5-05

18-6-05

29-7-05

03-9-05

18-2-06

24-3-06

26-5-06

02-8-06

10-9-06



