

Comment by Michael C H Jones

Myths perpetuated by spin-publicists, media barons and all governments are the opium of the masses in 21st century societies across the world. They are impossible to refute or escape in the language of intellectual conversation. Like Rudd you are forced to pander to them to further worthwhile objectives. The Foreign Minister no more believes in Deng as he does in Tony Abbott - perhaps Abbott as a preference.

So to new books to justify academic standings - valuable for trying to bring a little truth to the historical record but likely to have little impact on thinking and myths.

However as a person who started studying Chinese history and politics in 1962, and without making any claims to omniscience, the question of Chairman Hua needs to be placed in a broader context then simply a resistance to either the rise of Deng or who was really the generator of ideas for China's global Opening Up.

There needs to be a discussion of why and which Chinese intellectuals were protected during the Cultural Revolution and not involved in the day-to-day struggles and then became active within the Communist Party during the later stages of the Cultural Revolution re 1973/4.

Also there needs to be a thorough analysis of China's on-going negotiations with the US in the context of the recognition of the PRC by so many countries from the late 1960s post its UN admission. In particular President Jimmy Carter's work from 1977 and recognition of the PRC from 1st January 1979. The economic contacts and reports as well as the projections of business opportunities as well as the social inter-change of business leaders requires a large book.

Without the US recognition Deng could never have launched his Open Door Policy in December 1978 - hence the story of the negotiations leading to this US recognition between PRC Chairman Hua and US President Carter is the real history which debunks Deng's myth. Importantly it has to deal directly with the social changes in China post Cultural Revolution and the USA during and post the Vietnam War 1962/75.

I will be interest to read what Henry Kissinger has to say in his new book On China.