

News from the Net - Last Week of November

I spend a lot of time online, as many do. Even this website is mostly just used for my own purposes, the WordPress front to this site is a *vanitas* project that I mostly used while I travelled but who travels anymore. I still code in the background but have been struggling to make posting a habit.

To that end, perhaps I will add links to stories that I enjoyed reading. I told myself that this was a great way to collect data on what I am paying attention to. That was enough to motivate me. I think. I'll start tagging posts too that will help me create metrics for the data collection exercise.

First up, China. I have many unpublished writings on the geopolitics of China and Ukraine, mostly related to the historiography of Diplomatic History. My draft folder is replete with stories about the decline of empire but as I incorporate more and more history back into my "Cold War" reading list, I realize how important writers such as Odd Arne Westad are still changing my thinking about these issues as much as Melvyn Leffler did in grad school.

This [Wired](#) article about the protests in China is the most important piece from this week. COVID mobility restrictions is increasingly oppressive in many areas as officials struggle to immunize this vast population. Couple this with the inability of Xi to take full advantage of the transition of Hong Kong and the death of Jiang Zemin, and it is no wonder that the ghosts of Tiananmen are on the mind. Funerals and earthquakes tend to be external events that motivate social change in China.

The vector to technology and the Great Firewall of China is important. PRC have loosened mobility restrictions in Guangdong province but doing this may fuel discontent in other regions as they learn of this. Can central authorities maintain message control in the light of this "white paper" revolution?

[This](#) book on Basquiat is the book release of the week (I type this like it is a thing), but art history remains central to my reading and how I spend (too much of) my time. I am working on an article on Philip Guston and one thing that I am constantly reminded of in his late work is the street

graffiti of New York. And while Basquiat is normally seen through the eyes of Warhol, Guston may be more appropriate in an asemic, object oriented, perspective. I'll write more when I get this book. It will go on the list.

So two links for this week. More to come.

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