



## Cat Country : A Satirical Novel of China in the 1930s

*Lao She*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

## Cat Country : A Satirical Novel of China in the 1930s

*Lao She*

### Cat Country : A Satirical Novel of China in the 1930s Lao She

When a traveller from China crash-lands on Mars, he finds himself in a country inhabited entirely by Cat People. Befriended by a local cat-man, he becomes acquainted in all aspects of cat-life: he learns to speak Felinese, masters cat-poetry, and appreciates the narcotic effects of the reverie leaf – their food staple. But curiosity turns to despair when he ventures further into the heart of the country and the culture, and realizes that he is witnessing the bleak decline of a civilization.

Cat Country, Lao She's only work of science fiction, is both a dark, dystopian tale of one man's close encounter with the feline kind and a scathing indictment of a country gone awry.

### Cat Country : A Satirical Novel of China in the 1930s Details

Date : Published June 28th 1970 by Ohio State Univ Pr (Txt) (first published 1932)

ISBN : 9780814200131

Author : Lao She

Format : Hardcover 295 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Cultural, China, Classics, Asian Literature, Chinese Literature, Fantasy, Fiction, Dystopia, Asia, Novels, Unfinished

 [Download Cat Country : A Satirical Novel of China in the 1930s ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Cat Country : A Satirical Novel of China in the 1930s ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Cat Country : A Satirical Novel of China in the 1930s Lao She**

---



????? ?????????? ?????????, ????????? ????????? ?????????????, ??? ??? ?????? ??? – ????????? ?????? ?  
????????? ?? ?????????? ? ??? ?? ??????: ??? ????? ????????? ??????????, ??? ?????????? ? ??????????  
?????????????. ?????????????? ?? ?????? ?? ?????????? ? ?????????????? ??????????, ??? ?????? ??????????????  
?????????????. ??? ????????? ????????? ?????????? ?? ?????????? ? ?????????????????? ?????? ??????. ??????  
????????????? ?????????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ?? ??????????????, ? ?????????????? ?????? ??????  
????????? ?????????? ???. ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ??????????????! ?????? ?????? ??????: ?????????? ??  
????????? ?? ??????, ?????? ?????? ? ?????? ?????????????? ??? ?????????????????, ? ?? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ??  
????? ?????????? ??? ??????????????. ??????, ?????? ?????????? ?????????? ? ??????, ?? ?????? ??????????????  
????? ??????, ?? ??????, ?????? ?????????????????? ?????? ?????????????? ?????????????? ?????? ??????, ??????????  
????????? ?????? ?????? ? ?????????? ?????????? ?? ??????????.

?? ?????????????, ?????? ??? ?? ?????????????? ??? ?????????????? ?? ?????????????????????? ?? ??????????  
? ?????????????? ?????????????? ??????????. ?????????? ?????????? ? ?????? ?????? ? ?????????????? ??  
????? ??? ?????????? ??????. ??? ?????????? ?????????????????, ?????? – ?????????, ?????? – ??????????  
????????????... ?? ?? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????????????? ?? ??, ?? ?????? ??????, ?? ??  
????????????? ?????????????? ?????????????????; ?????????? ?????????? ?????? ?????????? ??????????????  
?????????????, ? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ??????????, ?? ?? ?????????? ?????????; ?????????????? ??  
????????????? ?????????? ?????????????? ?????????????? ?????? ?????????? ?????????? ??????. ??????, ?????? ?????? ??  
????? ?????????? ? ??????, ? ? ?????????????? ?????????????? ?? ?????????? ??????: ? ?????????? ??? ?  
?????????????????. ??? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????????????, ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ? ??????, ?????? ?????? ???  
?????, ?????? ?? ?????? ?????????? ?? ?????????? ?? ??????. ?? ? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? ? ??????, ?  
????????? ?????????????? ?????????????? ?????? ? ??????, ?????? ?? ?????, ?????????????? ?????? ??????????????  
????????? ?????????????? ?????????????????? ?? ??????????????.

??? ?????????.

- ??????-????? ?????????????? ?? ?????? ?? ?????????????? ?????????? ??????
- ??, ?? ?????? ?????????? ???.
- ? ?????? ?????????
- ????????????? ?????????? ??????????. ??? ?????? ?????????? ?? ??????????????. ?????????? ?? ??????:
- ?? ?????? ??????????, ??????. ? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????, ?????????? ?? ?? ? ?????????? ??????????????
- ??? ????????? «????????»?
- ??????????????, ? ?????? ?????????????? ??????????. ?? ??? ??????. ? ?????? ?? ?????? ? ?????? ?????? ??????????
- ?? ??????, ?? ?? ??????????????, ? ?????? ? ?????????????? ??????. ?????????????? ???, ??????. ?? ?? ??????  
? ? ??????????
- ?????????, ?????????????, ??????????, – ?????????? ? – ?????, ?????? – ?? ?? ??? ?? ?????, ????? ???  
????????? ? ??????????
- ?????????? – ?? ?????? ??????????...
- ? ??????????. ?? ? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????????? ??????????! ? ?? ?????????? ?????? ?????????? ??????????:
- ?? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ??????, ? ?????? ?????? ?????????????? ?????????????, ?????? ??????. ? ??  
????????? ?????? ? ??????-????? ?????? ? ?????????? ? ?????? ??????. ?????? ??????, ?? ? ??????  
????????? ?????????? ?????????? – ?????? ?? ?????????? ?? ??????. ? ?????????? ?????? ??????
- ????????????????? ?????????? ?????????, ? ?? – ???. ?????????????? ?????? ? ??, ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?????, ??  
????? ?? ??????????

??, ?? ?????? ??????, ?? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ?????? XX ?????????, ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????  
????????????? ?????? ?????? ??????. ?? ?????????.

DeanJean says

Not so much science fiction than a deeply troubling and savage account of certain periods of Chinese history, and a very good swipe at our 'modern' civilisation today.

---

### **Ivana says**

The author did not consider himself a good satirist. I would disagree, this is satire at its best. It is a satire on China, but I would say that it can be applied to most societies. Set on Mars, it questions the customs of a cat society living there, while in fact examining human nature. More often focusing on dark aspects of human psychology than not, the novel describes a dystopian society. It is a fascinating read, if somewhat depressive.

---

### **Jayme says**

io9 says it's "often called the first Chinese work of science fiction". Cool!

---

### **Iman Danial Hakim says**

Excellent written. A story about a man stranded on Mars, inhabited by Cat People. Befriended by a local cat-man, he learns all aspect of cat-life - Feline culture, cat-poetry, etc. A satire at its best; that lampoons 1930s China. Lao She unfolds the brutality and violence of early Communist era via dystopian society.

Really a worth reading!

#catpeople #laoshe #china #satire #read4malaysia #book #novel #literature

---

### **Andres says**

Lugu ise on üsna nõrk.

Teisi arvustusi lugedes saan aru, et tegu on satiiri või irooniaga. Tundmata aga Hiina ajalugu (tõtt-öelda on ajalugu üldse üks minu nõrgemaid valdkondi) on keeruline samastuda või mõista.

Eks muidugi oli võrdlemisi säravaid peatükke ja ideid. Mõni torge oli täiesti ajatu, kehtides sama hästi nii sajandeid tagasi kui ilmselt ka sajandite pärast tulevikus.

Kokkuvõttes see mulle aga mingit erilist lugemiselamust ei pakkunud.

---

### **Hadrian says**

I read this because I'd vaguely heard it was one of the first Chinese fiction novels, but what I received was a

searing mockery of life in China in the more chaotic years of the Republic.

Our protagonist crash lands on Mars, where he finds a land of cat people. The cat people are addicted to ?? (bewildering leaves?), which dull the mind and sap one's willpower, the intellectuals are of no real use and blindly worship the ancient classics, the leadership is tyrannical and greedy, the children are all filthy, the neighbors are about to invade and nobody knows what to do, the best are full of doubt and the worst are full of passionate intensity, etc., etc. There's even a parody of the idealistic ideologies of the period, which refer to either to industrial Marxism or Sun Yat Sen's Geogist land reform.

And as if to rub salt on the wound, he goes back to a more peaceful, prosperous, and free China, somewhere in the distant future. Well, two out of three isn't so bad.

---

### **Julia Rosa says**

This book is BLEAK AF, but an essential reading to understand modern China, but also interesting to debate revolution, ideology, morality. But it's depressing and doesn't have a good opinion of mankind.

---

### **Jacques Coulardeau says**

#### A DYSTOPIAN MASTERPIECE ABOUT CONSUMER'S SOCIETY SOAKING IN OPIOIDS

Of course, we could today read this novel as a direct description of China in 1932, more or less predicting the invasion of the country by the Japanese, not yet the Communists really since the Long March has to go west and not east. And the invasion from the west is clearly the invasion of China by western powers before the Japanese who will come from the east, and the conquest of China by the Commies from West is not enough conceivable at the time.

But that would be treating this book not as literature but as a pamphlet and that would be very reductive. I want to consider it as a work of literature and thus of imagination and projecting meaning onto the reality of life by imagining some conceptualized abstract reality that may have roots in the realm present of the time but has branches growing wide and high into the sky of our human reality.

Then what does Lao She speaks of, what does he tell us about the reality and nature of humankind? A lot, my friends, a lot.

As for flying to Mars, we are still far from that. As for finding humanoids there divided in various countries, we can say it is impossible since apparently, the atmosphere of Mars is poisonous if there is any atmosphere at all. Then we have to take this story as a utopian story, and if we look at it like that we have to say it is a dystopia more than a utopia. The future of a society that lets itself fall in the arms of consumer's oblivion because what you consume becomes a drug that ^provides you with full comfort, full satiety as for hunger and thirst. But at the same time that is only valid for the top layer of this society, those who do not work at all with soldiers directly under them to protect their power and property and are granted some of the consumer's drug which is called reverie leaves and they grow on trees.

But to reduce them to opium would be a very caricaturistic approach. Any human society has one drug, one consumer's good, at time several, that is the very drug that brings "reverie" to their tired psyches, their tired and lazy psyches. It can be food like marihuana and magic mushrooms, drinks like wine and beer, rum and

bourbon, or simply what makes like comfortable and enables people to just rest in peace, but the peace of survival before eternal peace, like beds, sofas, television, radio, hi-fis and in the modern world the Internet and social networks. You end up living in a world of phantasms, fantasy, unreality. "Réverie" in one word, dreaming and dreams that never turn into nightmares.

Think of the crazy extreme of a country whose population is the victim of a self-inflicted medical epidemic if not pandemic like the USA who are in the arms of opioids, those relaxing drugs derived from opium and giving you the ability to stand stress and even worse than stress as if it were a breeze in the warm summer. You become insensitive to heat and cold, to pressure and abandon. And that makes the USA the first consumer of the opium market in the world, opium that is mostly coming from Afghanistan where the Talibans had banned it and the Americans have re-established it as a standard agricultural crop. It is true that opium makes opioids a lot cheaper than if they had to produce the molecule through some synthetic procedure.

How good war is at times to provide you with the drug that will make you forget war is the ugliest invention of human beings.

That's what the book is all about. And a people, a country that has let itself fall in the arms of such a soft illusion, delusion, is ready to die and the book shows us the final destruction of this cat society by foreigners arriving from the west. And this will apply marvelously to Trump's USA. Cutting all connections with the world: TPP out, NAFTA out, Iran Deal out, North Korea destroyed entirely, China on their knees, Russia banned from the civilized world, and even Europe and their Paris accords are out too. A wall all around and an army that is supposed to be all-powerful though 36 out of 60 tomahawk missiles were hijacked into the sea by the Russia when one night, Trump decided to totally destroy one air base of Syrian Assad, an air base that was of course not destroyed since the majority of the missiles did not even reach Syria.

And Trump does not understand.

The stake is simple: the USA, any modern dominant power has to understand that the times are changing and that he who is number one today will be number two next year and number three in three years. You have to accept this reality and that leads to wondering if you are ready for collective government in this world, if the others are ready to accept you in that collective government of the world, and in the end if you have any power to influence what is going to happen in the world. The French oil company TOTAL has signed a full agreement with Iran. Are the USA if they decide to step out of the Iran deal going to impose sanctions on this oil company, hence on France, hence on Europe, leaving Iran in the hands of Russian oil companies as a direct consequence of such a move?

That's what the book is all about: what happens when a country and its people have reached the point when they are leaving on a total delusion that they are happy and the best and most powerful in the world, a world that is growing all around while this country and its people is little by little going down. Even if this country could have a sustainable growth rate of 3%, it will eventually be overtaken by China for one who can have a sustainable growth rate of 6%, except of course if this delusional country could start a war that would severely maim China, directly or via North Korea. Is anyone dumb enough to get into a war when all such wars have been lost since 1945? Lost in Indochina by the French. Lost in Korea by the USA and other UN nations. Lost in China itself by the Kuomintang supported by the USA and other western countries. Lost in Algeria by the French. Lost in Vietnam by the USA. Lost in Afghanistan by the Soviets. Lost in Afghanistan by the USA (still in progress). Lost in Iraq by the USA and a few other western countries (still in progress). Even, mark my word, lost in Syria by the USA and the West (still in progress). Who will be the winner in the still in progress cases? You name them and you have them: Iran, the Kurds, Turkey, Syria itself (Assad), Russia, China and the question is: will the USA and other western powers have any possibility to keep a couple of their dirty fingers in the mess they have created?

If we follow Lao She, the answer is not. The Cat people will be killed top the very last one by these foreigners, even if they accept to kneel down and change their allegiances and submit themselves to the foreigners. The foreigners do not want completely rotten to the core cat people who are even able to go flat on their stomach to save their life – eventually.

All big empires have ended in decay. The Roman Empire, west or east, Rome or Constantinople, have ended up as the soil of people coming from outside, the Germanic tribes or the Ottomans and Muslims, and there was no rebirth. The Chinese Empire ended up in total disarray with the opium wars, the colonization by the French and the English mostly, then by the Japanese and an attempt of the USA via the Kuomintang. And the rebirth was hard. Closer to us the Nazi conquest ended up with 55 or more million dead and of course, complete destruction and the rebirth came from other European countries that decided to work with West-Germany and Adenauer. Even the Soviet empire went down and the rebirth of Russia is not exactly easy after the looting Yeltsin authorized to the profit, political or financial, of the USA and the west. And look at the ex-colonial empires!!!

Lao She is the voice of reason in a world that may fall into disarray and folly and destruction, self-destruction I mean. So 1932 China is very far away from any open-minded literary reading. This is a dystopia of all consumer's societies and a utopia of all those who work hard and together to build the future for everyone and not for a class of privileged people.

It is a masterpiece.

Dr. Jacques COULARDEAU

---

### **Melaslithos says**

As has been mentioned by another reviewer here, "This is brilliant satire. This is terrible science fiction."

The plot is almost nonexistent, but it is an excuse for a fantastic satire of the Chinese society of that period. Between the reverie-leaf that makes us think of opium, the "everybody sharekyism" that resembles marxism/communism/all other -ism, the blind imitation of foreign values, the continual revolts, corruption, Lao She describes a very bleak society, a society losing its values, losing itself.

It has to be noted that the book was written in 1932 and was also extremely visionary. Besides describing the ills of his current society, Lao She predicts many events to come. For example, the scene where cat-students kill their teacher announces the coming cultural revolution, as well as Lao She's own death (he committed suicide after being beaten by red guards).

This book is a little UFO amongst Lao She's books, and even amongst other Chinese books of that time. I warmly recommend it to all persons interested in that part of Chinese history.

---

### **Liz L says**

It's a bit of a slog at first, but it really gets going in the second half once everything was all set up. The entire last act was a bit of a punch in the gut.

The final sentence may be one of the my favorite final sentences ever. It was so blunt that I cackled like a middle school kid who just witnessed a sick burn.

It made me sad, made me laugh, and it surprised me. Can't ask for much more than that.

---

### **Arquero says**

A disillusioning story.

While rickshaw boy focused on the personal experience of the protagonist, this one clearly took a truly global view at the misery and decadence of a whole nation. And what a nation!

Wondering how China overcame this.

cf. Penguin island

---

### **Hamid says**

This is brilliant satire. This is terrible science fiction. If you're familiar with the contemporaneous historical period in which the author is writing, this is a thoroughly engaging, amusing and troubling work. If you're not familiar with the events, you'll find this a confusing, unfunny, poorly-written hash which you might be able to roughly identify with planet of the apes.

If, therefore, you decide to read this, you should take some time to look into Lao She, the Chinese Republican and Warlord period, as well as the subsequent rise of the Chinese Communist Party (after the publication of the book).

A Chinese astronaut finds himself landing on another planet (mars) where he encounters the Cat people, a degenerate race with an impressive history and cultural heritage now near-destroyed by its reliance on drugs, base needs and guttural stupidity. An allegory for then-modern China, Lao She ruthlessly sends up the nationalists, petty warlords, Qing dynasty and, particularly towards the end, the Communists (or the "Everybodyshareskys:) as he portrays the ignoble power struggles over who will rule the rotten edifice of a civilisation past its prime. Along the way everything from Chinese fashions of the time, Chinese opium addiction and even the writing system are criticised.

This being a translation of a modern Chinese novel written in the new style of adopting the vernacular in early 20th Century China, much will be lost in the translation. The translator makes a sterling effort but certain phrases and ideas cannot but be relayed clumsily.

---

### **Rita says**

Bravo, Lao She! I'm only sorry that your idealism and integrity caused you to be tortured, and pushed you to take your own life.

Once I knew that this was a satire in Chinese life in the 30s, I couldn't help to see each situation as making fun of Chinese and the beginning of communism and the whole madness of Mao Zedong.

My fave quotes:

--"This was a good example of Cat Country logic: the ableist people ought to receive the lowest Rewards"

(p.54).

--"the cat people were not accustomed to helping in anything that might be beneficial to someone else, even if that help only cost them a few words" (p.61).

--"anyway, I thought to myself, the cat people seem to consider Mutual plunder an entirely reasonable form of behavior, so why should I interfere?"(p.66).

--"You see, the victims of all this drum playing we're not exactly Angels themselves. None of those who were hindmost were willing to stay at the back, and would push, kick, crowd and even bite you in order to make their way in the world and become foremost. Those who were already foremost, on the other hand, kicked back with their heels, poked back with their elbows and leaned back hard in order to keep the hindmost in their proper place" (p.75).

--"Consequently, those who ought to have been killed were not; and those who ought to have been spared, on the contrary, lost their lives. The ones who were to have been killed but weren't, wormed their way into the Everybody SharesSchyism brawl and started corrupting it with Wiley schemes from within" (p.162).

---

### **Becca says**

A fantastical fable; humorous but with the painful tinge of historical mirroring. Knowing a little about China at the beginning of Communism was enough for me to see the parody (or just direct comparison) of Cat Country to China. A few laugh out loud moments were quickly balanced by shock and sympathy when you realise that, although this story is set on Mars, the real story was real China and the madness that went on in the name of ideals.

A really good read.

---