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Educated at Cambridge, London and Leeds Universities, he worked in Japan, Australia, and Inner Mongolia before joining the FCO, where he served in the China Section and then as 1st Secretary, Beijing, from 2000 to 2003. He completed a PhD at Leeds in Modern Chinese Language and Politics in 2004. His [`Struggling Giant: China in the 21st Century`](#) was published in June 2007, and [`The Rise of the Dragon`](#) - Chinese Investment Flows in the Reform Period' in February 2008. He has written for The Guardian, Daily Telegraph, Independent, Far Eastern Economic Review, Index on Censorship, and other publications in the US, Europe, China, Hong Kong, and Australia, and commented on China for the BBC, ITN, ABC, the Today Programme, Al Jazeera, CNN and others.

The Communist Party of China is the world's last remaining major Marxist Party. "Friends and Enemies: The Past, Present and Future of the Communist Party of China" is an accessible history and assessment of the Party, retelling the extraordinary tale of its establishment in the 1920s, and the upheavals it has survived through nearly 90 years. It looks at the period post-Mao, under the more pragmatic leadership of Deng, where the CCP reshaped and reevaluated itself, nearly being felled by student demonstrations in 1989, before reasserting itself as the most powerful entity in what has become the world's third largest economy. In the final two chapters, the major challenges facing the Party as it moves into the 21st century - energy security, environmental issues, and economic and social problems - are evaluated, finally offering a judgment on the Party's likelihood of survival, and how it might look twenty years from now.