
HENSON HERALD

EDITED BY EMMA LOCKLEY

On Wednesday 19th February, from 2pm till 4pm, at the Denise Coates Business School in the Atrium, Keele University, we are staging the first Book Fair of the year. Wendy Hudson and Serge Plotnikov will be introducing their latest work so please come along and enjoy the afternoon. So you are aware the cafe closes at 3pm.

Lisa Small who is taking over NSP will speak about the second edition of her book, written as a tribute to her son.

LinkedIn has been our main social media platform and at the time of writing we have over 600 post followers.

Recently I attended a Publishing Association webinar on audio books and authors voices can be artificially produced which could be a cost cutting exercise for publishers.

Malcolm Henson MPhil (M.D.)

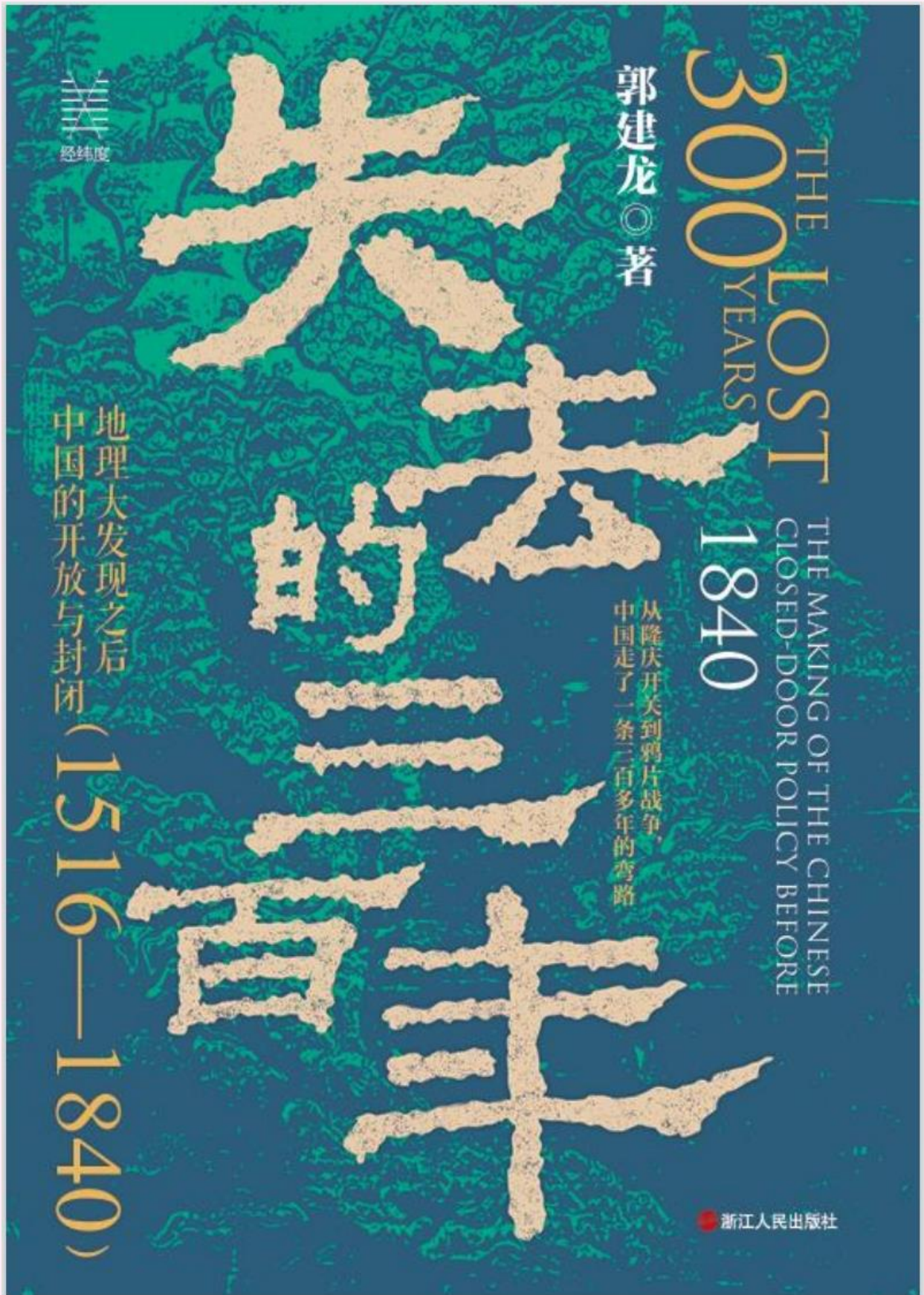
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郭建龙◎著

THE LOST
300 YEARS
1840
THE MAKING OF THE CHINESE
CLOSED-DOOR POLICY BEFORE

从隆庆开关到鸦片战争，
中国走了一条三百多年的弯路

地理大发现之后
中国的开放与封闭
(1516—1840)

浙江人民出版社

Heart Of The World, Where Are You?

Selected chapters

'Let not your heart be troubled;
Believe in God, and in Me you shall believe...
I am the way, and the truth, and the life.'
Jn. 14:1, 6.

WHO AM I?

War, and exactly the kind of war that is going on in Ukraine now, aggravates the problem of self-identification for people. Yet I find that the question, "Who am I?" has always been topical for me, so I ask myself: "Why always?"

It can be, first of all, because for a long time I had to start life with something "far from being myself". Well, you know: a Soviet family and school. By the way, my first literary publication appeared in the magazine "Family and School". It was a story about a little boy who doesn't find himself in the world of his family. I mean a society in which you were imposed to create a particular image of yourself in a way that was beneficial to the state. They did not offer you an opportunity to find yourself in a different way which corresponded to you existentially just because it was not "convenient" to the state.

Secondly, because my "life time" has been a time and place of radical and long-lasting transformations. In centuries they will be a point, but for me now, it looks like a dotted line: something starts and then suddenly stops, starts and stops, starts again and stops again. I want to understand what is the truth, on which side the truth is. Besides, like any living being, I try to adapt to the new situation, and when it starts to work, everything changes abruptly and unexpectedly.

What can I say to you, inhabitants of the Atlantic civilization, that would make you feel for me? Imagine: you fall asleep in one country, the country you were born in, but you wake up in a different country, which actually builds not a social, but national state, so that you have to change even your language...

Thirdly, I think it is only natural for a human being to ask themselves throughout their life: "Who am I?" if they care about their development. The intensity of the process of asking and searching for an answer, is sure to be different at different stages of a person's life. Generally speaking, this factor is subjective and can be revealed in an extremely versatile way. A person clarifies who they are in order to develop themselves. A human being must constantly cognize oneself...

From my latest research, here are some data of the DNA genetic ethnic expertise, received from the USA. My genetic identity includes more than sixty percent of Slavic-Baltic roots (Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Lithuanian and Polish), almost a quarter of Balkan roots, a little more than ten percent of Finnish roots and two percent of Central Asian roots.

I have noticed that nowadays some people, having received a similar test result or having done their own genealogical “investigation”, choose a particular ethnicity from the “mix” as defining their what? – more a mindset than really the forms and content of life... Moreover, I have noticed that it is just as important for people to start by separating themselves from something, to get rid of it, to say to themselves and to everyone: “I am not”. Well, for example, in Ukraine: “I am not a Russian, I am a Ukrainian!” So, I could also announce, for example: “I am a Serbian, a Croatian or a Greek!”, because, indeed, having 23.7% of Balkan genes is quite a high proportion to declare your ethnicity. Thus, with this half-truth I would let others know that I am neither a Russian nor a Ukrainian, and their problems do not “bother” me, at least as much as them. I would avoid the trouble of explaining to Russians and Ukrainians living in Ukraine and abroad why I want to remain both Russian and Ukrainian (bi-ethnor) in language and culture, even though my ideology is a step towards all people and the whole world. However, I do not choose only one ethnos from my “mix”

We moved from our sponsor after living with her for exactly one year. We moved from the countryside to the city. We started renting a small terraced house. And here in Carlisle, we have found ourselves on the edge of a large floodplain where bulls graze. It feels like we are on the edge of the Oikumene. The meadow is surrounded by the Caldew River. On the horizon there are mountains.

I think, “Suppose this man, who is standing at the edge of the Oikumene, has lived his life and is summing it up. Here he has a few years to live, and he wants to live them as a certain person. That’s the point!”

As who, what kind of person do you want to live the last few years of your life before you go beyond the Oikumene? So, in reality, friends, you are not so much asking yourself, “Who am I?” as you are asking yourself, “Am I the person I want to live the last few years of my life on the edge of the Oikumene?”

Perhaps it has always been this way: I have always asked not only who I am, but how well I fit into the tasks of the new horizon of events that has opened up. So the question “Who am I?” is a dialectical question that leads you from the past to the future, like the bowstring pulling down an arrow.

What a strange thing! It was given to me to write my main scientific and artistic works, to find my poetic form, to make engravings and, as I hope in the near future, to start sculptures only in the second part of my life. A smaller one, which was cut by the “golden section” at the turning point of my life, when I visited the Holy Mountain Athos in 2002. At that time I must have been the closest to myself...

Today I was happy to write this poem in prose:

Right now,

Barely breathing

And moving slowly and gracefully

Like a Chinese gymnast of a school unknown to me,
I am trying to approach a butterfly
That has perched on the yellow stars at the entrance to our house.
Its folded wings,
When bathed in the sunlight,
Resemble
Unbleached light-grey paper,
A kind of paper, medieval craftsmen used to make,
Or the kind of paper wasps build their homes from.
Its folded wings, with such a pattern, are invisible in the light,
But even in the shade—
Clouds flutter like butterflies and again they have covered the sun—
The folded wings merge with the shade.
I bend low,
I barely breathe,
I beg the butterfly
(in my thoughts, but aren't my eyes and heart open?!)
To reveal the inner side of its wings.
Oh yes, I know: there are butterflies
That never (!) open their wings while reclining on the flowers...
And it opens its wings,
And for some reason, not at once,
But slowly, ever so slowly,
As if in a slow motion,
And I see the marvellous blue velvet
With black edging on the upper wings,
And then, just as slowly, it folds them again...
Or has something happened
To my perception of time...
Planet Earth, Carlisle, Mariport Cottages.
20 июля 2023 (13:41).

Thanks to a mate philatelist and butterfly enthusiast from Belarus, I managed to find out that the butterfly I saw and photographed today is the Holly Blue (Lat. *Celastrina argiolus*). A few years ago, it became a symbol of Finland through a public vote. A very tiny butterfly. Such little ones are often overlooked. This one is from the second generation of the season, judging by the width of the black stripes (in the second generation, they're wider), and also by the time a "spring" butterfly is flying and feeding on flowers—after all, midsummer has already passed.

So now I know what kind of butterfly it is, but who am I?

I, like a child, approach life through images: I have imagined myself as a dog. That is, I am a dog. More precisely, I would like to be one. I still have some work to do to become a Labrador Retriever. I'm not sure about the coat colour—fawn, black, or chocolate. A very kind dog, Óri by name. Kindness is a quality that is rarely valued among human beings, but I still want to be a kind dog Óri.

I am someone who every day calls on himself to be more human than those who kill one another. Who lie to one another. Who rob one another. Who humiliate one another. Who are lazy. Indifferent. Have few kind words and smiles. Those who make human neither themselves nor those around them, and, to be honest, bring no humanity into the world, which is vitally necessary for its existence... But the most important thing is to be kinder than you are! And that is much, much harder! Every day, I take a test on humanity, and every day I fail it. I pull myself when I notice my lack of humanity. I try not to get offended, not to snap, not to... Avoid doing some things and, on the contrary, do others. But every day, as I step into this battle, I lose it. That's who I am.

Obviously in autumn, I will be employed—not as Óri the dog, but like many Ukrainians here who have limited English—as a factory worker. My wife and I will visit our eldest daughter in Spain, where our youngest will come from Berlin to stay with us, and after that, I am to start looking for a job.

So this summer—2023—needs to be used intensively to write the story I have been planning since last year—the story about a girl from Mariupol. I have gathered and analysed many facts about this real-life girl. Of course, I will change the names or will not mention them at all. I will alter the names of the streets and alleys in Mariupol connected to the girl's family life. The fact that I lived in Mariupol for more than a quarter of a century is helpful, as I know the city well. The first six chapters will be completely realistic, and two others will be a fairy-tale.

I am writing this story in Ukrainian, not out of hatred and/or contempt for Russian civilization, but solely to support Ukraine in its resistance to the aggressor and to thank Ukraine for what it has given me. Ukraine has given me an extraordinary amount of substantial things, in some cases complementing Russian culture, in some on par with Russian culture, and in others even more than Russian culture. I have not mastered Ukrainian to the same level as Russian, the language of my family, so for me, writing texts in Ukrainian diminishes my capabilities, but in this case, it doesn't upset me at all...

I have complex feelings about Russia's war against Ukraine. Many people refuse to accept or endure the complexity of their attitude toward what is happening and the entities involved. They act simply: by rational oblivion, fiery hatred, and/or insulting, disdainful contempt. Like a sword, they cut off Russian culture, including the Russian language. In some cases, this comes from a grievance against Russian civilization, sublimated into acts deliberately insulting "Russian speakers", even if they support Ukraine. I cannot and do not want to reject

Russian culture, and therefore, I have to bear the heavy burden of this complex relationship. Right now, I am writing this text in Russian, and then I will continue writing the story in Ukrainian. All of this is about me, just operating with different tools.

Why is it so complicated? Because I don't want to part with one thing, another, a third, a tenth, a hundredth. Because I don't want to throw the baby out with the water. Because for me, the ability to perceive the world in its complexity preserves the capacity to empathise for everybody not just for a chosen few. Perhaps, due to my personality type, my affective empathy as a general emotional reaction is less developed, but I believe my cognitive empathy as the ability to wear other people's shoes and understand their motives and outlook is highly developed. This latter form of empathy is especially important in the time of social change, where the goal is to care for improvements. I find myself with the whole world, which, if it feels the need, will translate my stories whether from Russian or Ukrainian and will see my other works. In this case I will find myself among the people of the world, or the world may find itself with me? We will be together, finally...

So, I am already writing my second story in Ukrainian, but not because I hate or despise Russian civilization, but because, in this way, I support Ukraine in its struggle to survive amid the collapse of Russian civilization. I am only afraid that the price of Ukraine's survival is too high—inhumanity, or humanity only for its own people. Again, I perceive the world in a complicated way while remaining the whole, I hope. This is part of the answer of who I am.

Serge Plotnikov

Digital Forum



Here's a picture from the most recent meeting of the Digital Forum.

Midland Chess Tournaments, Part 3 Nottingham 1936

Section C, Two Games

Here are two games played by the tournament winners.

Capablanca vs Alexander

1. c4 e5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. g3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. d3 Nge7 6. Nd5 O-O 7. h4 Nd4 8. Bg5 f6 9. Bd2 c6 10. Nxe7+ Qxe7 11. e3 Ne6 12. Ne2 f5 (a) 13. Qc2 b6 14. f4 Bb7 15. fxe5 Bxe5 16. O-O-O (b) d5 17. d4 Bg7 18. cxd5 cxd5 19. Kb1 Rac8 20. Nc3 Qd7 21. Rc1 Nc7 22. Qb3 Kh8 23. h5 (c) g5 24. h6 Bf6 25. Rhf1 Be7 26. Qd1 Qe8 (d) 27. g4 Qg6 28. gxf5 Rxf5 29. Rxf5 Qxf5+ 30. Ka1 Rf8 31. Qh1 (e) Qd3 32. Nb1 Bd6 33. Bf3 Qf5 34. Rf1 Qg6 35. Rg1 (f) Be7 36. Nc3 Qg8 37. e4 (g) Qf7 38. Bg2 Qf2 39. Bxg5 Bxg5 40. Rf1 Qxf1+ 41. Bxf1 dxe4 42. Bg2 Ne6 43. Bxe4 Ba6 44. Bb1 1-0

- (a) This move is too aggressive and ... b6 immediately was better.
- (b) White now aims for a King side attack.
- (c) This forces Black's next move.
- (d) Black must stop Qh5.
- (e) White aims to play e4.
- (f) White now builds pressure on the g pawn.
- (g) This forces the win of material, leading to a decisive advantage.

A game typical of Capablanca's remorseless style. Sadly, he died from a heart attack in 1942, aged 53. The notes are taken from Harry Golombek's book, 'Capablanca's Best Games of Chess'.

Botvinnik vs Vidmar

1. c4 e6 2. Nf3 d5 3. d4 Nf6 4. Nc3 Be7 5. Bg5 O-O 6. e3 Nbd7 7. Bd3 c5 8. O-O cxd4 9. exd4 dxc4 10. Bxc4 Nb6 (a) 11. Bb3 Bd7 12. Qd3 Nbd5 (b) 13. Ne5 Bc6 14. Rad1 Nb4? (c) 15. Qh3 Bd5 16. Nxd5 Nbx5 (d) 17. f4! (e) Rc8 18. f5 exf5 19. Rxf5 Qd6? (f) 20. Nxf7! Rxf7 21. Bxf6 Bxf6 22. Rxd5 Qc6 23. Rd6 Qe8 24. Rd7 1-0 (g)

- (a) ... a6 was better.
- (b) Nfd5, simplifying, was much better. White now builds up a king-side attack.
- (c) This wastes time and ... Qa5, again trying to simplify, was better.
- (d) Here Nfxd5 was needed.
- (e) There is no effective way of preventing f5, which opens up the Black position.
- (f) Not good move, but others have been shown to fail.
- (g) White is bound to win a Rook.

A game which shows Botvinnik's more tactical play in the early years of his career. The notes are his, taken from the book 'One Hundred Selected Games' (1926-1946). He played in and won the Hastings tournament as late as 1967, aged 55, and I watched him play a simultaneous display at Bournemouth, one of several he gave after playing at Hastings.

John Knee

Curried Swede Soup

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Cooking Time: 40 minutes

Serves 4 people

Ingredients

2 tbsp olive oil

1 onion (roughly chopped)

2 garlic cloves (finely chopped)

900g swede (peeled and roughly chopped)

400g sweet potato (peeled and roughly chopped)

2 tbsp mild curry powder

½ tsp cayenne pepper (optional)

400ml can coconut milk

900ml vegetable stock

1 tsp lime juice

2 tbsp coriander (finely chopped)



Photo from [Curried Swede Soup Recipe | olivemagazine](#)

Method

STEP 1

Heat half the oil in a large pan over a medium heat and cook the onion for 4–5 minutes or until just beginning to soften. Season, then stir in the garlic, swede, sweet potato, curry powder and cayenne, if using. Cook, stirring, for 3–4 minutes or until fragrant.

STEP 2

Pour most of the coconut milk into the pot, reserving 2 tbsp. Add the stock. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer, cover and cook for 25–30 minutes or until the swede is tender. Remove from the heat and blitz with a hand blender until smooth. Meanwhile, mix the remaining oil with the lime juice and coriander.

STEP 3

Serve the soup in bowls, topping with the reserved coconut milk and the coriander mixture.

Recipe can be found at: [Curried Swede Soup Recipe | olivemagazine](#)

Smoky Bacon and Leek Risotto

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Serves 4 people

Ingredients

Rapeseed oil (for frying)

Large handful fresh sage leaves

4 smoked streaky bacon rashers (chopped)

1 large leek (finely sliced)

2 garlic cloves (crushed)

250g arborio risotto rice

150ml dry white wine

750ml hot vegetable stock

80g soft goats' cheese



Photo from [Smoky bacon and leek risotto recipe | delicious. magazine](#)

Method

STEP 1

Heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/Gas Mark 6. Heat 2 tbsp oil in a pan over a medium heat, then fry the sage until crisp. Set aside on a plate and tip out half the oil. Fry the bacon over a medium heat until crisp on both sides. Set half aside with the sage.

STEP 2

Add the leek to the rest of the bacon in the pan and cook for 5 minutes until softened and lightly browned. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute, then stir in the rice and turn up the heat slightly. Add the wine and let it bubble. When the wine has reduced by half, stir in the stock, then transfer to a baking dish with a tight-fitting lid and cook with the lid on for 20 minutes or until the rice is tender but still has bite and the stock is absorbed.

STEP 3

Stir in most of the goat's cheese until melted, then serve the risotto with the remaining bacon, cheese and sage scattered on top.

Recipe Tip

Use the same amount of pearl barley instead of arborio rice.

Instead of stirring in butter and parmesan at the end, we've used a little soft goat's cheese, which still gives the dish the desired richness and flavour.

Recipe can be found at: [Smoky bacon and leek risotto recipe | delicious. magazine](#)

Super Leek and Potato Soup

Preparation/Cooking Time: 40 minutes

Serves 4 people

Ingredients

400g leeks
Olive oil
400g potatoes
1.5 litres of vegetable or chicken stock
320g kale
½ a bunch of fresh mint (15g)
½ a bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley (15g)
40g parmesan cheese
25g whole almonds
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
Extra virgin olive oil
4 small slices of wholemeal bread (35g each)

Method

STEP 1

Trim and wash 400g of leeks, then slice and place in a large casserole pan on a medium heat with 1 tablespoon of olive oil.

STEP 2

Sweat for 10 minutes, stirring regularly, while you wash and finely slice 400g of potatoes (leaving the skin on for extra nutritional benefit), then stir into the pan.

STEP 3

Pour in 1.5 litres of vegetable or chicken stock and boil hard for 15 minutes. Pick through 320g of kale, discarding any tough stalks, and add to the pan for the last 5 minutes, pushing it down and covering with a lid.

STEP 4

Meanwhile, pick the leaves from ½ a bunch of fresh mint, then finely chop on a large board with the top leafy half of ½ a bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley. Finely grate over 40g of Parmesan, add 25g of whole almonds, 1 tablespoon each of white wine vinegar and extra virgin olive oil, then finely chop and mix together. Toast 4 slices of wholemeal bread, then divide up the herby mixture on top.

STEP 5

In batches, carefully pour the contents of the pan into a blender. Put the lid on securely, cover with a tea towel and, holding it in place, blitz until super-smooth.

STEP 6

Taste the soup and season to perfection. Divide between your bowls, and serve with those lovely loaded toasts on the side.

Recipe can be found at: [Super leek & potato soup recipe | Jamie Oliver](#)

Creamy Leek and Blue Cheese Risotto

Preparation/Cooking Time: 30 minutes

Serves 4 people

Ingredients

4 tbsp olive oil
1 onion (finely sliced)
1 litre vegetable stock
300g carnaroli risotto rice
250ml dry white wine
4 leeks (sliced into 2cm pieces)
A knob of butter
10 fresh thyme sprigs (leaves picked)
100g gorgonzola dolce cheese



Photo from [Creamy leek and blue cheese risotto recipe | delicious. magazine](#)

Method

STEP 1

Gently heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a large frying pan. Fry the onion for 5 minutes until softened but not brown.

STEP 2

Meanwhile heat the stock in a large pan. Add the rice to the onions, then stir for a minute so the grains are coated in butter and slightly translucent.

STEP 3

Add the wine and increase the heat to medium-high. Stir until the wine has evaporated, then add a ladleful of the hot stock. Stir until the stock has been absorbed, then add another ladleful. Keep adding stock and stirring until the rice is creamy and cooked but with some bite (it will take about 20 minutes and you may not need all the stock).

STEP 4

Meanwhile, in another frying pan over a low-medium heat, add the remaining oil, a knob of butter and the thyme leaves. Gently fry for a few minutes until fragrant, then stir in the leeks and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft.

STEP 5

Stir the leeks into the risotto when you're happy with the texture. Stir in the gorgonzola dolce, then taste to check the seasoning. Cover and remove from the heat. Leave for 2-3 minutes before serving.

Recipe can be found at: [Creamy leek and blue cheese risotto recipe | delicious. magazine](#)



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Malcolm Henson M.D.



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Henson Editorial Services & North Staffordshire Press, Smart Innovation Hub, Denise Coates Foundation Building, Keele University, Staffordshire, ST5 5NS

Email: enquiries@hensoneditorial.com

Telephone: **07985425843**

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