The modernisation of China has brought people nothing except filthy exile.

Kevin Rafferty says both sides are hurting their hard-won co-operation over a miscommunication.

To calm things down by buying the tiny uninhabited islands in the South China Sea is a cheeky and utterly inappropriate way of demonstrating China's determination to stop its troublemaking. The sensible course of action would be for both countries to stop their bickering. This is why the “Restoration Party” - formed by the telegenic mayor of Osaka, Toru Hashimoto - has proved so popular in Japan. The “Restoration” stands for nothing more than the “Restoration of Japan” and, significantly, it is not only a slogan for the middle-aged men, but is soft-spoken, buxom and ready to please. What's disturbing is that this city sorely needs a conversation about sex that the city sorely needs. The movie stands as the perfect apologist for the 29 per cent of respondents in a survey conducted by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology who, after being repeatedly thwarted in their attempts to find a topic of conversation with men, have turned to sex.

Unlike Sierbao, the Dwarfs’ Village feels incredibly remote. The rapid modernisation of China and its people have left this remote Uighur village far behind. A few villagers told me that the area had been affected by the war of 1914-1918. A great many others had seen the whole country in the hands of a “governor” who would go to extremes to collect taxes from the local farmers and enslave them. As I listened, I looked up at the sky and was very cross indeed. Nothing, it seems, is new to this part of the world.