

China Eye

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SACU: Promoting understanding and friendship between the peoples of China and the UK since 1965

Summer 2019

Issue No. 62



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China Eye is published by the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU), a registered charity No 294651 and a company limited by guarantee No 00876179.

SACU was founded in 1965 to promote understanding and friendship between the peoples of China and Britain, to provide facts and analysis about China – not uncritically but always from a firm basis of friendship – and to help the British people understand the meaning of China, past and present.

The society is open to all those interested in Chinese affairs and who are supportive of its aims, regardless of political affiliations.

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Cover design: Keith Ray

Front cover: The May 4th Monument in Qingdao, Shandong (WF)

Back cover: From London to Milton Keynes; SACU AGM (CC)

NOTE THE DATE AND DETAILS OF SACU'S AGM IN LONDON ON 20th JULY

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ISSN 2513-8898

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The Autumn issue (Number 63) of China Eye will be available in early September 2019. Please send news or articles for inclusion before 20 August 2019 to mailto:articles@sacu.org.uk

Welcome

Trade wars ‘good and easy to win’; theft of intellectual property and national security. The latest development in the China-US affair is the Huawei issue. Although Australia and New Zealand have followed the US lead, the UK has not yet made a clear ruling, saying any potential threat in the use of Huawei components in security apparatus, is ‘manageable.’ The US has stepped up the action by banning Google and other high-tech companies from dealing with Huawei which could be a crippling blow to Huawei mobile phone sales. Is President Xi Jinping’s visit to JL Mag Rare-Earth in Jiangxi province, a large rare earth metals company, coincidental? China is the biggest supplier of these materials in the world. They are vital for the manufacture of high-tech products. There are many other factors which can come into play. However, it is hoped that a negotiated settlement can be reached without further escalation.

A major topic in the news today is the theft of intellectual property. An article in the June 2019 edition of ‘Prospect’ magazine by Ewen MacAskill, entitled, ‘Huawei, hacking and the stench of Western hypocrisy’, reports that both the US and the UK have surveillance programmes, the capabilities of which far exceed those of China.

National Gallery, Landline China 8, Sean Scully exhibition

Richard Poxton reports that Sean Scully has become very popular in China. He has had two major exhibitions touring the country. The artist puts his success down to Chinese people seeing his work as both connected to the real and as very metaphorical and the Chinese being able to read his metaphors very clearly. He says Chinese are very literary and widely read and that they see his work (generally horizontal bands or blocks of colour) as a kind of abstractness that is emotionally based. This may be connected to their cultural language that has a high degree of abstraction. The exhibition is on until 11 August.

Andrew Hicks has prepared an article in this issue of China Eye on negative attitudes towards China. (see page 27). He writes the following about the Huawei issue: *‘Every government must keep its guard up at all times and have regard to expert views on security. However, our security interests are not served by rhetoric that treats China as an untrustworthy juggernaut that we cannot do business with. China is seeking to become respected as a responsible participant in the international community and our best interests are served in every way by being diplomatic and developing a strong relationship, including through commercial links’* However, one of the biggest thefts in history was the stealing of the tea secrets from China. See it on You Tube or just google, Sarah Rose and Tea. Her book, *For All the Tea in China* (Arrow Books, 2010), is readily obtainable. Other significant ‘thefts’ of Chinese know-how and technology were silk (from silkworm breeding, yarn winding to fabric weaving) and porcelain manufacture amongst many others. Chinese inventions are of course detailed in *Science and Civilisation in China* by Joseph Needham, a founder of SACU, and they are not just the compass, printing and gunpowder

Chinese thought: Roel Sterckx, the Joseph Needham Professor of Chinese at Cambridge University in the latest BBC magazine, *World History*. (Issue 15, April/May) advises that we introduce the next generation to the basic outlines of **Chinese thinking** as we do with that of Greek and Roman. Chinese thinking has not changed through the ages; we would benefit if we learnt it and passed it on to young people.

Chinese culture teaches a strong work ethic, the importance of family, respect for authority, parents and seniors. A harmonious society of unity and cohesion are more important than individuality. Society is best led by a monarch or leader and that the state is an extension of the family. (the Chinese word for country is ‘guo jia’ literally meaning ‘country-family’.

Roel has just issued a new book (*Chinese Thought, from Confucius to Cook Ding*, 2019 Pelican), which I can recommend. No previous knowledge of China is required and it is written in uncomplicated language, understandable by anybody, and each chapter can be read independently.

Haris Livas Dawes. Haris passed away in early May. She was on SACU Council for about 10 years and wrote ‘Reading about China’ for virtually every issue from 2009 to this very issue. See page 12 for her latest and last offering. She reviewed well over 80 books and also organised, with Brian Morgan, the Yorkshire/Humberside SACU group. Brian’s obituary of Haris appears on page 24.

Manchester SACU. Members in Manchester have held several meetings including a Chinese New Year meal at the Yang Sing restaurant. We have been fortunate in having the assistance of two Manchester University student societies: the Politics Society and the Chinese Studies Association. A recent ChinaCafe event discussed poverty. It is hope to continue these activities, especially when the new term starts in the autumn.

New Chinese Gallery in Manchester Museum. Bryan Sitch, a SACU member is involved with setting up a Chinese Gallery in the Manchester Museum. He has written an article, please see pages 14-15, entitled ‘Alfred Bosshardt: a Manchester Missionary in China’. Bryan writes,

‘This is just one of a number of stories that I am researching thanks to my Headley Trust with Art Fund Fellowship and travel bursary. This is in preparation for a new China Gallery at Manchester Museum opening in 2021. I am very grateful to Tony Waghorn and the Overseas Missionary Fellowship for kindly allowing me to examine the Alfred Bosshardt archive in March 2019. If you are interested in the project and would like to find out more please contact me: bryan.sitch@manchester.ac.uk

Walter Fung

SACU's Forward Programme of Events, from July 2019

Saturday 20 July: AGM and Afternoon events, at St Columba's Church, Pont Street, Chelsea, London SW1X 0BD. SACU is organising this year's AGM day with our partner organisation, The Meridian Society (TMS).

11.30am-1.00pm: SACU's AGM is in the Library. The AGM for TMS is in the Kirk Session Room. **2.00pm-4.30pm: From Old London to New Milton Keynes: Chinese Identities in Britain**

in the Upper Hall. This is our celebration of Lao She, novelist and playwright, timed to coincide with the Lao She Symposium in Beijing this year to commemorate 120th anniversary of his birth.

Dr Amy Matthewson will give her presentation, 'Loitering through London with Lao She' and **Dr Jenny Clegg**, 'Fu Manchu and the Yellow Peril' with Q&A. After refreshments, **Michael Ho**, film-maker, will show his short film 'From HK to MK', visiting his Chinese father who came from Hong Kong 50 years ago and settled in Milton Keynes.



Lao She (1899-1966) novelist and playwright

SACU members are all invited to attend the morning AGM, join other members for a 'bring your own lunch' or just come along to the afternoon presentations. The afternoon is a free event, open to all whether or not you are a member of SACU or TMS.

The Programme Group's plans for the next season include an invitation to **Professor Michael Wood** to speak to us again and taking up author **Lijia Zhang**'s offer to talk about her new novel *Lotus* (2018). For 1st October we plan a special event '**China at Seventy**' to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the PRC.

The next **SACU ChinaCafé meetings** will be held in the autumn, continuing this year's theme of health and well-being and supported by the Lau China Institute at King's College London.

We will launch SACU's next **Essay Competition** in November with our joint sponsor Peking University, and it will take place with participating schools in February 2020.

SACU's monthly eNewsletter, social media channels and website carry updates and booking details for SACU events, and other events organised by partner organisations, so do check them for the latest information.

On a personal note, I now have to step back from the Programme Group because I have undertaken to be SACU Membership Secretary and cannot do both roles! We hope more people would like to join Council and get involved in organising events. There are lots of ways members can help so please do get in touch with me or any Council member.

Ros Wong, Outgoing SACU Programme Group Co-ordinator events@sacu.org.uk

China Tour 2019: Hunan province organised by The Meridian Society. 21st Oct to 4th Nov 2019
Changsha (provincial capital city), Hengshan (sacred mountain), Shaoshan (Mao's home town), Zhangjiajie (spectacular mountain scenery in the Avatar film).

Expected price: £1,474 for SACU and Meridian Society. Non-members; £1,514. Single room £404 per person.

Excludes international flights. Includes 3- or 4-star hotel accommodation and 13 dinners. Please contact The Meridian Society asap.
themeridiansociety@gmail.com

This year, 2019 is the Chinese Year of the Pig (or Boar). Chinese festivals for the remainder of this year are:

- 7 June-Dragon Boat Festival
- 7 August-Chinese Valentine's Day
- 13 September-Mid Autumn Festival
- 1 October-National Day
- 7th October-Chong Yang.



Members of the See Yep Chinese Association setting off to pay respects to family graves in the two Chinese cemeteries in Liverpool. Qing Ming April 2019; next visit at Chong Yang (WF)

An introduction to our upcoming AGM and 2018 Annual Report from Zoe Reed our Chair on behalf of the Council of Management.

SACU's AGM – Join us please!

We are looking forward to welcoming members to SACU's upcoming AGM on 20th July, location details on the back page. As a membership organisation we are keen to promote the active involvement of our members – so please come along and we promise an interesting day!

At 11.30 we start with our formal Annual General Meeting. The Council will present its 2018 Annual Report setting out SACU Council activities over the year. Inevitably the report blends from 2018 into the current year. A pdf of the Annual Report will be sent to all members who receive our eNewsletter from Chris Henson. This will be attached to the July issue so please look out for it. Corinne Attwood and I will bring a few printed copies to the AGM for those without access to home printers.

We have a number of issues to bring to the AGM in addition to the Annual Report, which I've highlighted below.

Election of Council members

SACU's Council of Management meets quarterly and runs the business of SACU. It elects officers to various positions and they carry out all the work on a voluntary basis. Last year at the AGM we were rightly asked to make election to the Council feel more open and welcoming to new comers rather than just re-confirmation of existing Council members. We discussed this and in last China Eye I explained that we would use the timetable and process [updated to take account of email which was not available in 1965!] set out in SACU's Memorandum and Articles of Association to elect Council members. The timetable is:-

Nominations together with name of proposer and seconder are needed by **22nd June 2019** – **please contact us on chair@sacu.org.uk or on secretary@sacu.org.uk if you are interested** and we will help e.g. identifying proposer and seconder.

You need to submit a brief biography together with an accompanying letter explaining why you want to join the Council, what you can do to contribute and a commitment to always work from a position of friendship and understanding towards China. In these increasingly complex times we are keen to welcome people onto Council who can work with us on this core mission of SACU. We will need your letter and bio by **6th July 2019**.

The nominations list will close on **6th July** and the AGM on 20th July will elect members to Council so please attend.

I'm pleased to say we have already had some expressions of interest – **but there is still time to apply!** We have 12 elected members, half of whom stand down each year and seek re-election, and a further 9 vacancies. We are particularly looking for people willing to work on

- Event organising

- Website, social media and magazine production
- Liaising with schools
- Fundraising

Increase in subscription rates

At the last AGM we signalled that whilst our finances looked reasonably healthy this was largely due to an historic bequest and donations that are ring-fenced to specific activities. Income from our membership subscriptions is needed to fund our core activities of promoting friendship and understanding through materials, meetings and events. China Eye is our single biggest expenditure item and Walter has worked hard to bring down the costs by reducing the weight to the minimum postage. The fact remains however that a large chunk of the current subscription goes on paper copies of China Eye. Walter's labour, and indeed that of all Council members, is given for free and all of us at various times have subsidised SACU activities by not claiming expenses for example or paying for materials out of our own pockets. Despite all this we think the time has come for SACU to consider increasing its subscription rate. Council will be bringing a proposal for debate at the AGM, which decides the subscription rate.

Joint SACU/Peking University Essay Competition

The Competition began as part of the marking of SACU's 50th Anniversary in 2015. The aim was to help young people learn about the contributions of historical figures who have been friends of China and so to encourage China/UK friendship and understanding for the next generation. It was deliberately a small-scale event making use of SACU's existing links with Oundle School and St George's, Harpenden respectively the old schools of Joseph Needham and George Hogg. Professor Sun Hua, Director of the China Center for Edgar Snow Studies, Peking University and a longstanding friend of SACU, had the original idea and sponsors the event.

We now wish to expand the number of schools involved and to offer students the option of submitting responses in visual and audio media as well as the written word; so that submissions might comprise music, dance, art, etc. As previously an annual theme based on friendship and understanding will be adopted that will provide some sort of focus whilst not being unnecessarily restrictive. We look forward to discussions at the AGM on this topic and how many more SACU members and schools they are linked with can get involved.

Annual Report 2018 – themes and thoughts

As you will see from the full pdf document next month, Council members have as ever been very active on behalf of our Society. I've summarised 5 broad themes which encompass the items in our Report below:-

1. Providing the context to support members in promoting friendship and understanding

SACU needs to be an organisation with an active and engaged membership promoting SACU's core mission of friendship and understanding between the peoples of UK and China. Council has focused on providing opportunities where members can progress their areas of expertise and interest in

furtherance of our mission. The upcoming expansion of the Essay competition is a case in point where any SACU member with a connection to a school can use it as a reason to engage with the school and promote our core message. We have held free public events giving members the opportunity to introduce friends to SACU and its work and have recruited new members via that route. Of particular note is the work Jenny Clegg has been doing to develop interest in Manchester – including SACU ChinaChats where people can talk together on themes that enhance their understanding of China. This is similar to the SACU ChinaCafe model that provides member-only space for members to work together on issues that enhance knowledge, friendship and understanding.

2. Working in and with China and the Chinese

The best way, scientifically demonstrated, to reduce stigma is people to people contact. There is a lot of stigma about China and the Chinese people and our mission is to build friendship and understanding – hence encouraging more people of Chinese heritage as well as Chinese nationals to join SACU and get involved. We supported a number of individual and group delegations with connections to SACU's history to enjoy people to people contact by helping them link up with areas of historical interest. We are trying to modernise the meaning of 'friendship and understanding' to encompass for example an exploration of UK/Chinese different perspectives on mental health and wellbeing. Our Essay competition is another example as is the current proposals to set up a Beijing Group. Our George Hogg Cooperative Education Fund has made slow progress at least partly due to delays in China as well as our poor fundraising skills – please get involved if you can help!

3. Modernising operations and increasing vfm

All small charities struggle with finances and ours is no exception. Costs are rising alongside our ambitions and we are attending to how we can achieve more *value for money* with every pound of your income. One of the cost effective ways to fulfill our mission is to reach more people and in this day and age active website and social media presence is vital. We really could do with more help to develop our presence in these arenas. We recognise that time and travel costs money in addition to venue hire for meetings, so are thinking of taking the brave step [!] of holding virtual business meetings through our Microsoft Office TEAMS set up. Much as I love the paper copy of China Eye, the cost of postage and printing digs deep into our limited resources so we are grateful to those members who are opting for pdf only. We have no paid administrative support and are reliant on the enormous free work of particularly Ros Wong in her role as Membership Secretary and Events Coordinator. Is this model sustainable though in the long-term? We have to consider how best to invest your money.

4. Capturing and capitalising on our history

Many people are drawn to SACU because of its unique history and commitment to continuously promoting friendship and understanding over more than 50 years. But we need to capture this – and fast whilst we still have SACU members who remember the early days. So the Archive Project is seeking funding to do this work.

5. Partnership working

We are very grateful to our longstanding partners who recognise the benefit of working with us to mutual benefit. Without the provision of free venues we would simply be unable to do most of what we do. We have been approached by universities to be involved in funding bids and where this is at no cost to SACU and in furtherance of SACU's mission we are pleased to accept. Continuing to develop new partnerships is something we are keen to do so please think about introductions you could make – we want to support you to take forward your China-related friendship and understanding opportunities.

And in the afternoon we have

On the back page of this China Eye you can see the fabulous flyer produced by Council member Cai Chen. This promotes the afternoon AGM event with speakers:-

Dr Amy Matthewson: Loitering through London with Lao She

SACU member Dr Amy Matthewson talks about her project to develop an interactive app based on Lao She and his years in London. The app is being developed in conjunction with the Museum of London Docklands, combining places Lao She mentions in his novel *Mr. Ma and Son* along with visual and material cultures from the Museum's permanent collection. It will allow visitors to engage with Lao She's London and the broader issues and experiences of the Chinese community in London.

Dr Jenny Clegg: Fu Manchu and the Yellow Peril

Dr Fu Manchu - the 'Yellow Peril Incarnate' was the fictional personification of the 'Yellow Peril' threat masterminding a dangerous conspiracy to undermine Western civilization ...and control the world. SACU VP Dr Jenny Clegg asks why the Fu Manchu fiction of Sax Rohmer became so immensely popular and left such a long-lasting legacy in Western popular culture?

Michael Ho: From HK to MK (film)

"What does it mean to be British? Gabriel, a dentist originally from Hong Kong, has lived in Milton Keynes for nearly 50 years. His dual heritage son Michael couldn't wait to leave. Now a film-maker, he returns to the city to discover how his father feels about the place he has made home." (British Film Institute)

Please invite your friends and colleagues to join us for this free event

The New Culture Movement as part of the May Fourth Movement

Michael Sheringham

As a sequel to the excellent article on the historical and political significance of the May Fourth Movement in this magazine (No. 61, Spring 2019), this article focuses on the cultural movement which accompanied the national patriotic movement which swept through China exactly one hundred years ago. As Rob Stallard illustrated in his article, progressive Chinese, especially the younger generation, were fired by the same zeal to restore China's sovereignty and dignity in the world as previous reformers at the turn of the century, but they were even more eclectic in their search for new ideas and values which they adopted from the West in order to achieve these goals.

In fact, as with the Cultural Revolution which erupted 45 years later, this movement had its origins in the preceding years when political and social conditions gave rise to a mass movement starting with the youth, especially in the key universities in Beijing, Peking and Tsinghua (Beida and Qinghua) Universities. The differences between these two movements and the different political and social circumstances are obvious, but it is significant that young intellectuals, particularly students, were in the forefront of the mobilisation and ideological upheaval.

New Youth magazine

Before the political demonstrations which took place in the big cities in 1919, progressive academics and intellectuals, such as Chen Duxiu (1879-1942) and Li Dazhao (1889-1937) established a magazine called *New Youth (Xin Qingnian)* in which they and their colleagues and fellow writers expressed their views about the social challenges facing China. Disappointed with the failure of the new Republic to bring about social and political change after 1911, these radical thinkers believed that China needed a more fundamental change in thinking, education and moral outlook than the mere technical or constitutional reforms which previous reformers had advocated in order to overthrow the Manchu Dynasty and imperial rule. The magazine *New Youth (Xin Qingnian)* which had been set up in Shanghai in 1915 was re-established in Beijing in 1917 under the aegis of academics at Peking University (Beida), and followed by a student magazine called *New Tide (Xin Chao)* and many more at other universities and schools.



New Youth magazine

Publishing houses and bookshops in the major cities started publishing new books, magazines and pamphlets to promote this progressive trend, introducing many translations of Western and Japanese works as well as new Chinese writers. As the Russian revolution unfolded, their writers and publicists also came to play an important role in influencing Chinese intellectuals through these publications.

New Thinking

In every field the young Chinese intellectuals and writers began to challenge the fundamental tenets of traditional Chinese philosophy and culture, starting with the moribund Confucian heritage with its system of social hierarchy and patriarchal authority. Instead, they advocated the Western ideals of Democracy and Science as the pillars of a new way of thinking and restructuring society. They emphasised individual freedom and popular education, including the emancipation of women from the worst kinds of oppression as epitomised in the feudal traditions of bound feet and arranged marriages. Writers such as Lu Xun (1881-1936), Ba Jin (1904-2005) and Mao Dun (1896-1981), expounded these radical new ideas in short stories and later in novels which were widely read amongst the educated, especially young, intellectuals, academics and students. Young women writers, many of whom studied in private schools, including missionary schools and colleges, began to write about their own plight, as well as the sufferings of impoverished girls from working class families. Xie Bing Xin (1900-1999), Ding Ling (1904-1986) and Ling Shuhua (1900-1990) were among the pioneer female writers who broke the bonds of conventional restraints to write freely about their experiences and inner thoughts through the characters in their stories and in their poems.

Reform of Written Language

One fundamental reform, first advocated by the American-educated academic at Beida, Hu Shi (1891-1962), was in the written language. This had been based on classical Chinese (*wenyan*) used in official circles for centuries, only moderated by more colloquial forms of spoken language in novels such as the *Dream of the Red Chamber*, *Water Margin* or *Journey to the West*. Hu Shi championed his cause in *New Youth*, where he first published his article 'Tentative proposals for literary reform' in 1917. Writers of fiction, poetry and polemical essays began to experiment in following his guidelines in a more popular, colloquial style of writing known as *baihua*. In 1922 this was officially proclaimed to be the national written language, but it was, of course, still only read by the literate elite.

Hu Shi started writing poems experimentally in *baihua* style, as did Lu Xun who was more familiar with writing poems in classical style. Lu Xun, however, is credited with being the pioneer of the new literary movement, writing in the vernacular style when he had his first story 'The Diary of a Madman' published in *New Youth* magazine in 1917. He had studied medicine in Japan in the early years of the Chinese Republic, but had become disillusioned with the reactionary, even unpatriotic policies of the new

government. He decided that it was necessary to start exposing the backward, feudal Chinese habits and customs through his writing in order to change their mentality. Like Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu, he had started writing essays and translating Western literary works which he believed were a challenge to the age-old Chinese values and practises embedded in the Confucian classics, traditional education, the elitist imperial examination and system of governance. As the literary reforms promulgated by *New Youth* and other progressive magazines and journals gained favour amongst the literati, these writers and intellectuals spread their new ideas about transforming society first through the universities and then to a wider circle of educated, mainly young, urban citizens.

New Culture Movement

The protagonists of the NCM studied, read and translated the philosophical, sociological, political and literary works of Western, Russian and Japanese thinkers and authors to gain inspiration for their own transformation, cultural reform and social revolution.

Western romantic poetry and fiction was attractive to the young Chinese generation longing for individual freedoms, such as freedom of expression and freedom to make their own choices in love and marriage. Most of the 'New Culturalists' recognised that individuals, including themselves, had responsibilities as members of society, and indeed many were committed to social engagement and change, but they felt they had to redress the historical imbalance of state and social control over individual rights and self-expression. Democracy for these free thinkers started from the ability and right to employ their own and others' independent, critical faculties.

What ideas were these iconoclastic thinkers and writers promoting in their efforts to bring about cultural reforms and political and social change? Apart from the literary reforms, two key issues were educational reform and emancipation of women from feudal and patriarchal oppression. In education, the liberal reformers, particularly Hu Shi, admired John Dewey the American educationalist and in the women's movement they were influenced by the suffragettes and then the struggle for women's rights in Russia and their participation in the Soviet revolution. In the early 1920s the progressive young writers of the Crescent Moon Society (see section 'New Literature' below), invited John Dewey, the philosopher Bertrand Russell and the poet Tagore to visit Beijing and other cities to give lectures to students and intellectuals who thronged to hear these heroes of their ideals.



Rabindranth Tagore at Tsinghua (Qinghua) University, Beijing, 1924

Educational reform

In the educational field, Peking University became a model and pioneer of liberal reforms and intellectual freedom under its newly appointed chancellor, Cai Yuanpei (1898-1940), who had studied in Germany and appointed a broad spectrum of academics such as Lu Xun, Hu Shi, Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu to teach at the university. Although there were few women as yet prominent in the academic field, girls were enrolled in the university in increasing numbers.

After acting as Minister of Education under the reactionary Presidency of Yuan Shikai, in late 1916 Cai was invited by his successor to take up the post of chancellor of the university, which he planned to transform into a modern educational institution where outstanding intellectuals would lead the way in discussing and promoting new ideas in every field of academic study, thus creating an atmosphere of national resurgence. In this aim, Cai was successful, as his teaching staff and first generation of students became the vanguard of the New Culture Movement and activists during the patriotic May Fourth Movement. Even though he continued to support the Guomindang (KMT) after Chiang Kaishek came to power, a statue of Cai was erected at Beida in recent years to commemorate his contribution to modern education.



Statue of Cai Yuanpei

Female Emancipation

Young women had started to become involved in political and social affairs since the end of the 19th century in the movement to overthrow the Qing Dynasty. Girls from educated and intellectual families, who had received privileged private schooling began to campaign for popular education for girls and female emancipation from feudal and male domination, mainly through a burgeoning independent press in the Treaty Ports (under foreign administration). They contributed articles and stories to new radical newspapers and magazines, while setting up their own women's magazines to promote their cause. Between 1898 and 1911 over thirty periodicals focusing on women's issues were published, though usually short-lived. One of these writers, Qiu Jin (1875-1907), wrote in her story *Stones of the Jingwei Bird*: "With all my heart I beseech and beg my twenty million female compatriots to assume their responsibility as citizens." Tragically, she was executed by the Qing authorities for treason before she could finish this work, and she became a heroine for the new female

intelligensia and women's movement in the May Fourth Movement.

Girls had always suffered from being considered inferior and less valued than boys in the family and society. In a modernising society, schooling and higher education was an obvious opportunity to break away from the traditional role – to prepare for marriage and a domestic life in rearing children for their husbands. As schools and college education gradually opened up for girls, often in special girls' schools and colleges in the cities, they offered not only new fields of learning but also broader and more modern perspectives of the world. The percentage of girls attending college or university-level courses rose from 2.5 percent in 1923 to 15.02 percent by 1934, with higher percentages in Christian-run colleges.

During the May Fourth demonstrations, girls participated alongside men and were active in organising rallies, making speeches and working in propaganda journals. After this political upheaval, young women began to focus on gender issues, forming feminist groups and discussing their own plight and ideals in the many new journals and magazines, such as *New Youth*. This magazine focused on the traditional values which oppressed women and introduced emancipated foreign women like Sophia Perofskaya and Emma Goldman, while publishing foreign women writers such as Katherine Mansfield.



Poster advertising clothes fabric for the modern girl student

A whole issue of *New Youth* was devoted to Henrik Ibsen's writing in 1918, and the main character of his play *A Doll's House*, Nora, became a model of female emancipation for young women and progressive youth in general. This production spawned a plethora of similar stories and plays during the early 1920s. Lu Xun contributed a cautionary note in his talk to students of Beijing Women's Normal College in 1923 'What happens after Nora leaves home'? While fully supporting their feminist aspirations, he was pointing out that financial independence was essential for young women hoping to make their own choices in life. Anyway, the genie was out of the bottle and the modern Chinese girl seeking her own life and romantic happiness was born. So were the many stories, poems and plays written by young women about their lives and aspirations.

New Literature

The new writers of this Chinese Renaissance started by reading and translating foreign literature which attracted

them both personally and socially as antidotes to the rigid Confucian culture which they had imbibed in their own education. Their literary idols were Ibsen, Tolstoy, Gorky, Goethe, and the Romantic poets Shelly, Keats, Wordsworth and Byron. Lu Xun wrote both critical essays and creative short stories highlighting the backwardness and suffering of ordinary people ('New Year's Sacrifice') or poor scholars ('The True Story of Ah Q'). Guo Moruo (1892-1978), who was to become President of the Chinese Academy of Science and Technology in the early period of the People's Republic, studied German literature and translated *Faust* and *The Sufferings of Young Werther* by Goethe, and wrote romantic poetry in the early 1920s. Ba Jin wrote his famous novel *Family* – part of his trilogy *Turbulent Stream* – about the constraints of the old patriarchal family and the young generation beginning to struggle for emancipation and break away from paternal domination. Mao Dun, who became Minister of Culture in the PRC, wrote about the 'bright lights' of the city – in this case Shanghai – in his novel *Midnight* about the corruption and inequalities of a capitalist-style society, while Lao She (1899-1966) described the abject life of the poor and downtrodden in the decaying city of Beijing in novels such as *Rickshaw Boy*. Shen Congwen (1902-1988), who grew up in the rural area of northwest Hunan, wrote about his experiences of countryside life in what became a distinct genre of 'native soil writing', notably in his novel *Border Town*. The young woman writer Xie Bing Xin wrote poetry and stories, mainly for children, expressing love between children and mothers, as parables for harmonious social values to counter social strife. Another young woman, Xiao Hong (1911-1942), wrote in more strident political terms about the poverty and misery of her own family and others in the community she knew from childhood in and around Harbin in northeast China, then known as Manchuria.

This new creative writing started during, but mainly flourished after, the political upheaval of the May Fourth demonstrations and patriotic movement at the end of the First World War, as Stallard has recounted. The literary world then fragmented into several literary circles, just as both the Communists and Nationalists (KMT) formed their own parties in 1921 and soon split into contending factions. Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao, creators and editors of *New Youth*, were two of the founding members of the Communist Party, having discarded their liberal thinking for Marxist ideology and Socialist goals.

In the literary world, the main protagonists (and often antagonists) were the romantically-inclined Creation Society, led by Guo Moruo, and the group committed to social realism, led by Lu Xun, known as the Literary Research Society – both societies also founded in 1921. Perhaps in between these groups and claiming political neutrality was the Crescent Moon Society, which was founded in 1923 and published the magazine the *Crescent Monthly*, edited by Chen Yuan (1896-1970), the poet Wen Yiduo (1899-1946) and the Cambridge-University educated poet Xu Zhimo (1897-1931). Hu Shi was a member and regular contributor, promulgating liberalism and pragmatism in political and literary reform.

All these writers had studied abroad, Wen Yiduo and Hu Shi in America, Lu Xun in Japan, Guo Moruo in Germany and Japan, Ba Jin in France and Japan and Chen Yuan in England and Scotland. Lao She too spent many years writing and teaching in London. They returned to China fully committed to changing the intellectual and social climate, imbued with concepts which they had imbibed abroad, ideas about democracy, freedom of expression and other civil liberties.

The Literary Research Society stood for 'art for life's sake' as the main tenet of their literature, based on humanism and realism. They were dedicated to revealing the hardship of the present-day lives of ordinary Chinese people and called for ways of changing society. Mao Dun and Lu Xun's brother, Zhou Zuoren (1885-1967), were among their vanguard. The Creation Society originally promoted romantic self-expression and the principle of 'art for art's sake', counting the playwright Tian Han (1898-1968) amongst their adherents.

The new writers, poets and playwrights usually first made their mark in the literary field through magazines and journals published mainly in Beijing and Shanghai and associated with the new literary societies, following on from *New Youth*. Apart from the Creation Society's publication *Creation Monthly* and the Crescent Moon Society's *Crescent Moon* journal, a multitude of literary magazines flourished during this period, many published by progressive bookshops. These also included the literary supplements of regular publications such as the Beijing *Morning News*, edited by Xu Zhimo. Other literary supplements were specifically edited by women, such as *Women's Weekly*, a supplement to *Beijing Post*. *Women's Weekly* was issued from 1924 under the auspices of the women's literary group known as the Wild Rose Association, which also gave it's name to another Beijing women's literary magazine, *The Wild Rose Weekly*, a supplement to *The World Daily* issued during the following years.

From Literary Revolution to Revolutionary Literature

These literary societies and publications grew out of the language and literary reforms, but the leading writers and editors of the Creation Society, led by Guo Moruo, began advocating revolutionary literature after the patriotic movement of May 30, 1925. This started as a workers' protest against foreign exploitation of labour, especially in the Japanese-owned cotton mills in Shanghai. When British police in the International Settlement fired into a crowd, killing 11 demonstrators and injuring over 50, the demonstrations were joined by thousands of young people, including students, who organised and marched to gather support for the workers' strikes in all the major cities. When the workers set up picket lines, the Western and Japanese authorities in the Foreign Concessions in Shanghai declared martial law and brought in gunboats with marines.

About 60 more students and other demonstrators were killed in early June, and the protest movement spread. At the end of the month, British and French troops in Guangzhou fired on a group of protestors, marching in sympathy for those

killed in the May demonstrations, killing another 52 and wounding over a hundred.



A [propaganda](#) poster depicting a foreign imperialist and a local warlord torturing a Chinese patriot in the aftermath of the May 30th Movement

The anti-imperialist demonstrations reached another climax on March 18th, 1926, when 47 unarmed Beijing students were gunned down during a protest against Japanese imperialism. Some of the students were from Beijing Women's Normal College, which became a cauldron of patriotic struggle among the radicalised students. After this tragic incident many of them joined intellectuals and writers moving to cities in the south such as Wuhan and particularly to Shanghai, which now became the locus of the New Culture Movement.

The pact between two prominent political parties, the KMT and the Communist Party collapsed when the KMT under Chiang Kaishek attacked trade unionists, suspects and supporters of the CCP, most harshly in Shanghai in February 1927. Reflecting this political split, the literary world was engaged in its own literary debate, which was characterised by strident polemics between left-wing writers and liberal, less politically-committed writers.

Under official persecution and censorship, progressive and patriotic writers, led by Lu Xun, decided to unite for a common aim, in June 1930 forming the League of Left-Wing Writers with a Marxist slogan: "the working class is the main factor in the struggle against decaying capitalism and imperialism." Their main journal was *The Big Dipper*, which was edited by the woman writer Ding Ling who was on the League's standing committee and had become a successful writer with her stories 'Mengke' and 'Miss Sophia's Diary', both published in 1927. Since Japan was making more militant threats and then incursions into China's northeastern territory, these Chinese intellectuals and writers stepped up their patriotic resistance expressed in their creative writing and manifestos. They pledged to represent the common people, write for them and reflect their lives. One of their methods of propagating these ideas was woodblock print art which Lu Xun promoted, inspired by the German woodblock print artist Kathe Kollowitz.



Lu Xun teaching a class of woodcut printing

Those who mainly supported the KMT-promoted 'nationalist literature', many under the auspices of the Crescent Moon Society, claimed that "the only thing to be cultivated is knowledge of human nature, and true art consists in finding the way to express this knowledge." Another literary group, The Third Kind of Literature, was identified and criticised by Lu Xun for insisting on the independence of literature from politics and asserting that "literature is eternal while politics is ephemeral."

Fatefully, the relationship between politics and literature was vividly revealed in Shanghai in February 1931 when the KMT government executed six young writers who were Communists or Communist sympathisers. After this tragic event, which Lu Xun lamented in one of his poignant essays, the League of Left-Wing Writers went underground.

"During the last thirty years with my own eyes I have seen the blood of so many young people mounting up that now I am submerged and cannot breathe." (Lu Xun, *Selected Wrks*, Vol. 3, quoted in Spence, p. 276).

One of those executed was Ding Ling's husband, Hu Yepin, a left-wing poet himself, only 26 years old. This tragedy persuaded her to start writing revolutionary stories, including 'Flood' in 1931, which described heroic peasants dealing with a natural disaster. She herself was arrested and imprisoned by the KMT in 1933, but managed to escape to Yan'an in 1936.

The League continued to produce and promote left-wing and patriotic literature until it was disbanded in 1936, the year that Lu Xun died of tuberculosis. The era of the May Fourth literary and cultural movement can be considered to have ended at this point,



Lu Xun (1881- 1936)

Perhaps controversially, Mao Zedong upheld the contribution of Lu Xun in 1940 as "The chief commander of China's cultural revolution...a hero without parallel in our history." ('On New Democracy'). Mao also praised the spirit

of the May Fourth political and cultural movement in paving the way for the Communist revolution:

"The May Fourth Movement twenty years ago marked a new stage in China's bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism. The cultural reform movement which grew out of the May Fourth Movement was only one of the manifestations of this revolution." ('The May 4th Movement', *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, May, 1939)

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Statue of Cai Yuanpei:

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Propaganda poster of May Thirtieth Movement:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_Thirtieth_Movement

Woodcut print of Lu Xun:

https://www.academia.edu/13157636/Lu_Xun_1881-1936_and_the_Modern_Woodcut_Movement (article by Caroline Corban in *Bowdoin Journal of Art*, 2015)

Lu Xun: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lu_Xun

Reading about China

Dr. Haris Livas-Dawes

St. George And The Chinese Dragon by Lt. Colonel H B Vaughan, 7th Rajputs, The Alexius Press Ltd. 2000

This book is an account of the Boxer Rebellion and the siege of the Peking Legations. Colonel Vaughan and his 7th Rajputs were the Relief Expedition, one of the seven nation's troops sent to free the legations. The 7th Rajputs were an Indian army regiment who were ordered to prepare for service in China.

Vaughan's is an eye witness account of what he found there. An editor's forward describes the background and Vaughan gives specific accounts of his and the Boxers' actions. Armed Forces personnel with experience of battle will find these accounts interesting. But even I, with pacifist leanings, was impressed with this book. He discusses how his Indian troops compared with the Allies. They compared favourably "as regards discipline, with the Allies. In marching power under a hot sun they naturally excelled; they did not get out of hand after the Capture of Peking, nor did they commit atrocities, while, as regards soldierly bearing and turn out, they stood first." Vaughan's troops were also the first to enter the British Legation. "And there was much cheering and shaking of hands."

Chinese Calligraphy By Qu Lei Lei , Published in association with the British Museum Press by Art Media Resources Inc. Chicago, IL.

Anyone reading the national press during the past few months cannot help noticing the attention that calligraphy is getting. Sometimes it is the promotion of handwriting as the most polite and civil form of correspondence, putting e-mail in the shade. But occasionally there is an article about Chinese Calligraphy, considered a high art form in China. Qu Lei takes us through the 8 basic strokes after he has demonstrated all the implements needed, such as the inkstick and inkstone, the special paper and brushes. I noticed on my last trip to China how many in our group who purchased all the needed supplies.

The author is clear about "manoeuvring the brush". For example, here are the instructions for the Straight Vertical, a powerful stroke: "Begin by moving the tip of the brush upwards followed by a downward pressure and a small clockwise rotation. Then move the brush straight down. Pause before rotating the tip clockwise to move the tip back up the stroke. Lift off."

The next step would be to sit down with this book and start to practice. I am one of those who did purchase all the necessary items, but have not found the time to practice.

Can you contribute to SACU?

SACU is dedicated to promoting friendship and understanding between the peoples of Britain and China. If you can help SACU Council, especially in the areas of organising events, fundraising, managing the website and social media and liaising with schools in connection with our Essay competition, please be in touch with any Council member; see page 4 for more details.

New Website; 'China Families,' which records foreigners in China (1850-1940s)

Robert Bickers of Bristol University is carrying out research and is to launch a new website to record information about foreigners of different nationalities, professions and ages who lived and worked in China between these years. These are in fact the years of British 'concessions' in China. You can obtain more information, contact the organisers and contribute via; <https://www.chinafamilies.net/>

SACU member, Grace Lau's new book: Portraits in a Chinese Studio.

This is a collection of photographs of residents and visitors to Hastings taken by a Chinese photographer – a reverse situation to Victorian photographers in China during the 1800s. Grace called her project, '21st Century Types' and believes the photos speak volumes about the way we see ourselves and the way we are seen. Published by Parakeet Books April 2019.



Save the Red House of Bronte's novels

The Bronte novels are popular in China. The Red House in Gomersal is in danger of being sold and demolished to make way for a road. Charlotte Bronte enjoyed many weekends at the house. In her novel, *Shirley*, she called the house, 'Briarmans.' There is a campaign to halt this demolition. If you can help and want to be involved, please contact the China Eye editor.

Amazon Smile

This is an online website on which you can shop, where Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price to a charity of your choice. Yuan Gao, SACU treasurer has set up a system by which you can select SACU as a preferred charity. Eligible products are marked as such.

<https://org.amazon.co.uk>

The Mythical Fenghuang Bird

(Chinese Phoenix)

Emblem for an Empress

David Rosier

In previous articles relating to the iconography of the Imperial Court, and regulated costume in particular, the dominant character has, quite rightly, been the iconic Chinese *Lung* Dragon, the personal emblem of the Emperor. In addition, I have outlined how specific birds were adopted for each of the 9 Ranks of Civil Officials and a parallel system of animals was used for the 9 Ranks of Military Officials. I have yet, however, to explore the origins and application of one vitally important creature that adopted the role of China's most auspicious of birds – the *Fenghuang Bird*, known outside of China as the *Chinese Phoenix*.



Origins

As with the Imperial Dragon, the Fenghuang Bird originates in Neolithic times [Hongshan Culture (6000-4000BC)] and is also attributed with mythical powers and influence. The earliest images have been

found as jade and pottery motifs, the oracle bones of the *Shang Dynasty* (1600-1046BC) makes reference to the phoenix and by the *Zhou Dynasty* (1046-256BC) the bird's image is appearing on sacred bronze ritual vessels. It is one of the 4 Divine Creatures of China together with the Dragon, Unicorn and Tortoise.

Symbolism



The bird is deemed to appear at times of peace and prosperity. It is believed it augurs the emergence of an able ruler or the arrival of a great man. It is said the phoenix appeared on the birth of Confucius (551BC) and the bird

will later be associated with Confucian values of virtue, duty, ritual, compassion and trust.

The combination of Fenghuang and Peony is wish for wealth, rank and good fortune.

The Chinese Phoenix is regarded as the 'Emperor or Sovereign' of all birds. Originally the male bird was known as *Feng* (straight tail feathers with serrated edges) and the female, *Huang* (tail feathers in a cloud formation). This distinction was maintained through to the Yuan Dynasty

(1279-1368) but from that point the two birds were merged into the Fenghuang which became a single feminine entity and representative of the Empress.

The Fenghuang is regarded as being an amalgam of various birds and creatures, and opinions have varied over time, but a generally accepted basis is the Golden Pheasant (head), Mandarin Duck (body), Peacock (feathers), Manchurian Crane (legs), serpent (neck), and fish (tail). The 5 tail feathers incorporate the 5 colours of the cosmos and represent the 5 cardinal virtues of sincerity.

Finally, the phoenix symbolises the feminine Daoist concept of *Yin*.

Imperial Deployment

In the Ming and Qing Dynasties (1368-1911) the phoenix appeared either as a single creature, in pairs or, most commonly, in combination with the dragon as a representation of the Emperor and Empress.

When the Empress appeared in public with her husband, she would wear regulated court costume that carried either 8 dragon roundels or had eight dragons incorporated into the semi-formal *jifu* (Dragon) robe. In contrast the Emperor would wear 9 dragons incorporated into his robes. There was, therefore, no need to have the empress displaying unique insignia. The costume did, however, incorporate elements that deployed the image of a phoenix. The Empress would wear a formal hat that had 8 golden phoenixes surrounding a final made of golden dragons. The symbolism being the dominance of the male over the female.



The combination of the Dragon and Phoenix has become recognised, and still used, as a wedding symbol as it represents the most important wedding that could take place in the empire. Normally the dragon and phoenix would coil around the symbol for 'double happiness'.

There was one occasion during the ritual year when the Empress would perform a ceremony without the presence of her husband. This was the rituals that took place at the Hall of Sericulture and was performed to ensure that there was an adequate supply of mulberry tree leaves for the silkworms to feed on. The empress would wear a robe of imperial yellow silk and this would be embroidered with 8 Fenghuang Birds.



Whilst the dragon always took pre-eminence over the phoenix there is one exception and that relates to the Dowager Empress Cixi (1835-1908). From the relatively humble origins as a 6th Rank Imperial Consort Cixi would provide Emperor Xianfeng (1850-1861) with a son who would become Emperor Tongzhi in 1861. The same year that the Dowager Empress Cixi would orchestrate a Palace Coup and seize effective control of China that would last until her death in 1908.

Cixi designed and wore numerous robes that carried only the phoenix design which was a clear statement that she placed herself above the incumbent emperor. Not only did the court allow this breach of protocol but as a tribute to her period of 'rule' the marble carving on the steps leading to her



mausoleum shows the image of the phoenix ABOVE the dragon. A unique tribute by the court in recognition of Cixi's successful preservation

of Imperial Rule.



Following the demise of Imperial Rule in 1911 interestingly the Republic of China adopted a state emblem (1912-1928) which incorporated the Fenghuang and Dragon, plus a selected number of the 12 symbols of Imperial Authority.



Strait's Chinese Culture

Chinese settlers established communities along the Malacca Straits from Malaysia to Singapore and into Indonesia in the 17th and 18th centuries. The settlers inter-married with the local population and created a unique culture in what was termed the Peranakan Community.



Interestingly, Peranakan or Baba Nonya porcelain, which used vibrant ground colours of red, green and yellow, deployed Fenghuang designs across a wide range of items. The phoenix was depicted as either standing or flying but it is not clear why the image of the Empress was preferred over that of the Emperor. It may, however, simply reflect the feminine qualities that the bird possessed, and this was felt appropriate for this community. The most frequently used imagery was that of the Fenghuang with peonies (wealth, rank and good fortune).

The Fenghuang has had an important and unique role to play in Chinese culture and the bird represents far more than just being the personal emblem of the Empress. The bird has become synonymous with the female *Yin*, beauty, love and fidelity.

Alfred Bosshardt: a Manchester Missionary in China

Bryan Sitch

I recently had the great pleasure of visiting the Overseas Missionary Fellowship in Kent as part of the research that I am doing for the new China Gallery at Manchester Museum (opening in 2021). The Overseas Missionary Fellowship holds an important archive associated with Manchester missionary Rudolf Alfred Bosshardt (1897-1993). Today his name is almost unknown to the general public but during the mid-1930s Bosshardt was as well-known as Terry Waite during the late 1980s and early 90s, and for similar reasons. Bosshardt was held captive by the Communist army in China and took part in the Long March, one of the founding events of the modern Chinese state. Alfred Bosshardt is of considerable interest as part of the content of the new displays.

Last year I reported for China Eye on another powerful narrative that emerged from my exploration of the China collections at the Museum. This exciting development, generously funded by Manchester businessman Dr Lee Kai Hung, will create for the very first time a permanent set of displays about China and Chinese culture at the Museum. My visit to the Overseas Missionary Fellowship in Kent was supported by a travel bursary as part of my Headley Trust with Art Fund Fellowship. What makes Bosshardt even more relevant to the new China Gallery project is his relationship with his captor, General Xiao Ke, which was unexpectedly renewed over fifty years after Bosshardt was released.

Rudolf Alfred Bosshardt was of Swiss nationality but was born and brought up in Manchester. His parents had left Switzerland in search of work during the later 19th century, a time when Manchester, the first industrial city, was a workshop of the world. The family found the Christian faith and Alfred discovered his religious vocation at the age of ten when a visiting missionary talked about his work in China. Alfred was excited by the stories told by the missionary and remembered how he spoke Mandarin with a Lancashire accent. Alfred avoided being called up during the First World War; his Swiss surname made the recruiting sergeant suspicious. Instead he served the war effort by working in industry and helping in the city's hospital. Qualifying in engineering was but one step in his career plan to become a missionary in China. He wrote to the China Inland Mission, the incredibly successful missionary organisation founded by James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) during the 19th century. Alfred was invited to attend a conference in Swanwick and selected for training to go to China. Although Alfred had a very good knowledge of the Bible from participating in his local Baptist Church, he needed to study theology, medicine, Church history and Chinese culture. There was no guarantee that trainees would be selected to go to China but Alfred had a very strong belief that he had been called by God. In addition, his values and principles aligned

with those of the China Inland Mission, which were that God would provide for the needs of the missionaries.

Alfred travelled to China - then a six-week journey by ship via Marseilles, the Suez Canal, Aden and Singapore - landing in Shanghai in November 1922. After more instruction and training in Mandarin he was given a posting to a mission station at Zunyi in

Kweizhou (Guizhou) in south western China. He sailed up the Yangtse to Chungqing (Chongqing) where he met the senior missionaries with whom he would learn his craft. A first attempt to travel to Zunyi - a lengthy journey on foot and over difficult landscape - had to be aborted because of banditry. At this time the deeply unsettled political situation in China and the lack of centralised authority allowed brigands thrive, making life very difficult for the European missionaries who it was assumed were very wealthy. Eventually Alfred reached Zunyi, where he became more proficient in Mandarin and started preaching to the Chinese.



Alfred and Rose Bosshardt in Chinese dress, mandatory for members of the China Inland Mission

Eight years later, an experienced missionary in his own right, and now in his early thirties, Alfred proposed to a Swiss missionary, Rose Piaget, from the famous family of watch-makers. After a short furlough the two were married. The bridesmaids were Chinese, American and Swedish, the presiding minister Welsh. Alfred and Rose spent their honeymoon in a house that was supposed to be haunted - the owners had not been able to have a son and had built somewhere else to live nearby. Knowing the house's reputation other Chinese would not rent the property but Alfred and Rose lived there very happily.

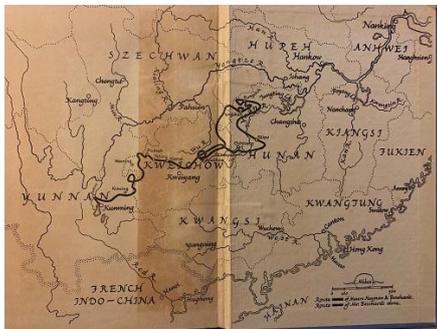
In the autumn of 1934 whilst returning from a prayer meeting with other missionaries the Bosshardts and their servants were taken prisoner by members of the Red Army. The Communists were retreating from Jiangxi province in south eastern China where they were being surrounded by Nationalist forces led by Chiang Kai-shek. The next day the Bosshardts were joined by other missionary prisoners the Haymans, their two small children and a Canadian missionary Miss Emblen. All were accused of spying for the imperialist powers and fined \$100,000 each. The women, save for Miss Emblen, and the children were soon released. Miss Emblen was released about a week later, leaving Alfred and Arnolis Hayman prisoners. Many Chinese from the landlord class were also held ransom.

Soon after their capture Alfred was able to help the leader of the Chinese Sixth Army, General Xiao Ke, by translating the names on a French map of Kweizhou (Guizhou) province into Mandarin. Rose had taught Arthur French after their marriage. Many years later, in a book about the Long March the general acknowledged just what a great help this had been in enabling the army to plan its route. Alfred and the general came to respect one another, though on opposite sides of religious and ideological divides.



Alfred Bosshardt on his release on Easter Day 1936

On his release Alfred was joined by Rose and she slowly recovered his health. The doctors said he had only been ten days away from death. Many years later when Alfred was in his 80s and early 90s he would enjoy telling people that the doctors told him his traumatic experiences would take ten years off his life. Alfred and Rose worked again in China and in Laos as missionaries, and after Rose's death Arthur returned to Manchester where he helped found the Manchester Chinese Christian Church. He lived out his retirement years quietly and happily, surrounded by family and fellow Christians, often receiving visiting Chinese students who often addressed him as Uncle Alfred.



Alfred and Arnolis' journey with the Communist army in 1934-36

At this time the Chinese Second and Sixth armies had not started the Long March. The Communist forces marched and counter-marched and made many feints to confuse the Nationalists. Alfred and Arnolis were treated better than the Chinese prisoners but the long marches were exhausting, it was difficult for them to keep themselves clean and they were often short of food. During this time attempts were being made to negotiate their release by missionary Hermann Becker working through Chinese Christian convert intermediaries. Alfred and Arnolis tried to escape before Christmas 1934 but were quickly recaptured. Both were beaten and their fine was increased. After several attempts an agreement was finally reached to release the missionaries on payment of a fine but only Arnolis was set free. His deep Christian faith sustained him throughout his long captivity. Alfred would remain a prisoner until Easter 1936. Physically exhausted, malnourished, suffering serious illness and often so weak he could only travel on horseback, Alfred on one occasion begged his guards to shoot him. Thankfully, his relationship with his guards seems to have been quite good. Alfred had been taught when he was a child by his mother to crochet, and he made the soldiers hats and socks to keep them warm.



Book dedication with photos of General Xiao Ke signing in Beijing

Perhaps the most incredible aspect of Alfred's story is the fact that he was contacted by General Xiao Ke during the 1980s, over half a century after the Chinese army set Alfred free. Despite the important part he played during the Long March and the war with the Nationalists the general had been criticised during the Cultural Revolution and sent to the countryside. When Deng Xiaoping came to power he had been reinstated and Xiao Ke held senior roles in the Chinese state and was principal of the University of Military and Politics. An American journalist researching a book to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Long March having interviewed Alfred in Manchester went to China to interview Chinese veterans, including General Xiao Ke. The journalist mentioned that he had spoken to one of the very few European survivors of the Long March and this enabled the general to contact Alfred through the Chinese consulate. He sent him a book about the Chinese army with a special dedication. General Xiao Ke had previously tried to find Alfred in France believing he was French.

After being held for 18 months and travelling thousands of miles, sometimes walking 30-40 miles a day and for several days at a stretch without a rest, Alfred learnt he would be released. By coincidence Alfred was set free at Fuming near Kunming on Easter Day 1936, a date of deep religious significance to him. Alfred was convinced that the only reason he had survived his ordeal was because God had protected him. His account of his experiences was dictated to a missionary nurse when he was recovering in hospital. It takes its title – *The Restraining Hand* - from his strong conviction that God had restrained the hand of the Communists. A follow-up publication focusing more on Alfred's spirituality was called *The Guiding Hand*.

The two exchanged letters and were good friends. Alfred's last years were spent in a nursing home in Kent. He died in 1993.

The International Medical Relief Corps in Wartime China, 1937-1945

by Robert Mamlok MD

Reviewed by Chris Henson

Robert Mamlok is Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine, Houston, Texas.

This story covers a period of only eight years but those years were quite possibly the bloodiest in human history. It begins in 1937 with two wars raging - the Japanese invasion of China and the Spanish civil war between Republicans, Communists and Anarchists and Franco's Fascists. It ends in 1945, approximately 85 million deaths later, with the complete defeat of fascism and Japanese militarism.

Those of us who have known only the peace and stability of middle-class life in the West during the last 70 years can barely imagine conditions like those that existed in China at the time. This book helps the reader do so by recounting the story of the volunteer IMRC physicians who began the journey in 1937 Spain, on the Republican side, and as they travelled to China where they joined the fight against the Imperial Japanese Army

SACU member **Dr Robert Mamlok's** story of the **International Medical Relief Corps in Wartime China**, (IMRC), between the years **1937-1945** is a literary photograph of the conditions under which ordinary but committed people lived during those years. The central character is Dr Erich Mamlok, one of a group of qualified doctors, most of whom were Jewish, fleeing persecution at the hands of the Nazis in Europe. He was also the author's father.



A reader can usually skip the Acknowledgements, Preface and even most of the Introduction in a book without losing much contact with the story that follows. This is not one of those books. Every part hangs together and it begins with a reminder to the young of today of what this handful of people - 21 men and 6 women - fought for when they volunteered to join the fight in China.

“They were fighting for your freedom and their own. And, in so doing, we acknowledge this history of goodwill between the people of North America, Europe and China.”

In his Preface, the author writes about the week he spent in Guizhou in 2015 as a guest of the People's Association for

Friendship with Foreign Countries of the Guizhou Foreign Affairs Office to commemorate the role of his father and his comrades in the ultimate victory. He talks about meeting the English, German, Romanian and Polish descendants of the group and how they recaptured a small part of the shared sense of community their parents and grandparents had forged. He concludes with a story about a young Chinese post-doctoral researcher at his university in Houston who answered his advertisement for a translator of some of his father's papers. When she realized what the story was about she refused to accept payment for her time. Friendly gestures live for a long time in China.

The Introduction briefly restates the political conditions in Europe in the immediate pre-war years. It describes the terrifying insecurity of Europe's Jewish communities which were isolated and to a very great degree friendless even when not actively persecuted. Denied normal employment opportunities, young doctors from these communities went where they could to practice their skills in a meaningful way. They found it with the armies in Spain and then China, fighting fascism. Nineteen of the twenty-seven doctors who formed the IMRC in China came from the war in Spain.

The book divides the experience of these men and women into a three-part framework that begins with the role of exiled physicians in the global struggle against fascism in the late 1930s. It then recounts the role of the IMRC in China where, incredibly, politics intervened to prevent them working where they were needed most. It concludes with an account of their service with US Army General Joe Stilwell's combined allied expeditionary force in Burma and India in 1943-45.

In **Part 1**, in late 1936, the group of doctors who were to become the International Medical Relief Corps in China began assembling in Spain. Few of them then had any idea that within four years they would be fighting with the Chinese Nationalist army against the Japanese half a world away. Few had much control over where they would be in coming years because all of them, with a couple of exceptions, were more or less “on the run” from the fascist or Nazi organizations that were taking over their home countries.

The civil war in Spain rapidly wound down to a complete fascist victory and those doctors who were able to escape internment by the French made their way in small groups by various means to England. Here they were able to obtain temporary asylum.

It was their good fortune that they possessed skills even more useful in wartime than in peace and that a number of organizations in Britain were recruiting volunteers for the global fight against the totalitarianisms of the day. From ports in England, they sailed back through the Mediterranean to the Suez Canal, crossed the Indian Ocean to what was then French Indo-China and from there to Hong Kong where the Chinese Red Cross had its headquarters until December 1941.

Part 2 of the book is an account of what the IMRC physicians found in China and one of the things they found,

though it took a while to dawn on them, was that they were not much wanted there by the Guomindang (Chinese Nationalist) leadership. It did not help relations with Chiang Kaishek's men that several of the European doctors, who were already committed communists, immediately asked to be reassigned to the area of north-west China where Mao Zedong and the PLA's two surviving armies were operating. The last thing Chiang wanted was to make things easier for the Communists even though they were, ostensibly, allies against the Japanese.

The Nationalist leadership seem to have decided that the "Spanish doctors" as they were known should also be kept far away from the front where they might weaken the morale of the GMD (KMT) armies. Consequently, they were assigned to rear bases and civil health work which, while important, was not fighting fascism as they wished to.

Throughout the book, there are memorable paragraphs which bring into jarring perspective the difficulty of life for ordinary people in China during this period.

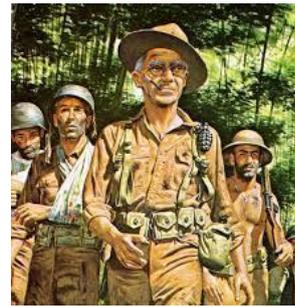
Chapter 6, **Medical Conditions in Wartime China** lists the staggering number of fatal diseases to which civilians and the Chinese soldiers were subject. The pre-war efforts of the League of Nations to introduce vaccination programs for smallpox, cholera, plague, typhoid fever and dysentery had some success but as the Japanese forced the Chinese armies further west, large scale vaccination programs became ever more difficult to introduce. There is also evidence that the Japanese, most probably using the services of their notorious Unit 731, waged germ warfare on the captive population. (This is a crime for which Japan has never been held responsible.)

The sheer number of the diseases to which the population was subject was a major problem of the time. It did not improve when the civilian was pressed into military service. In fact his situation became worse because the state's governing Confucianism traditionally assigned its lowest social ranks to the common soldier. While the officers above him could and did take care of themselves it was usually at the expense of the men they commanded. As recruits, that those newly impressed suffered usually from malnutrition (approximately 70% of each intake) even before they arrived in the army was of no concern to his commanders. The author notes that "*when the Chinese military command was confronted with the prevailing conditions of chronic malnutrition they often argued, "Never mind, the one thing we have plenty of in China is men"*". (p.103)

On page 154 of the book is a photograph of ten of these men. The title is "*Group of malnourished recruits of the 13th Army Chinese Headquarters rejected for active duty with the Allied command.....*" Just 20-30% of the Chinese recruited for service in the US expeditionary force met minimum US health standards.

It was only when General Joseph Stilwell, the US army theatre commander, regrouped Allied forces in late 1942 to advance from India through Burma that the "Spanish doctors" finally got a chance to fight the Japanese. Stilwell

asked for ten of the foreign doctors to be reassigned to the Chinese Army in India, whose training - and feeding - he was supervising and which he would later command.



The Guomindang and the Chinese Red Cross, who answered to the Guomindang, were more than willing to send some of their guests as far from China as possible.

Part 3, *The IMRC and the Chinese Expeditionary Forces: 1943-1945*, covers the history of the IMRC in Burma, India and the southern Chinese province of Yunnan. This is also the territory where readers of SACU member Andrew Hicks' book "*Jack Jones: A True Friend to China*" will recall the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU) operated a similar humanitarian mission.

With Stilwell in command, the 'Spanish doctors' of the IMRC were at last given the opportunity to do what they had come to do. But a few hurdles remained as they made their way to India. The national origin of those medics who had fled from Nazism in their home countries and who arrived in India without all the formal permissions, which would have been impossible in the circumstances, were automatically classified as 'enemy aliens' whereupon the British Indian bureaucracy attempted to intern them. Stilwell persuaded them not to.

In Burma, the doctors of the IMRC were divided into units and allocated between the Chinese armies in the CBI theater. The author has traced his father, Dr. Erich Mamlok, who served under General Liao Yao-hsiang in the 65th Regiment of the Chinese 22nd Division and follows the campaign as they rid the Taro Plain of Japanese in early 1944.

The activity of others in the IMRC is reported in some detail. Doctor Cohn (one of the two female doctors with the IMRC) founded and ran a tuberculosis clinic in Chongqing; Dr Schon worked periodically in a Chinese military prison and his description of conditions there is as grim anything described by Dickens.

Epilogue provides a closing summary to the lives of these physicians after Japan's defeat and surrender. Most of them returned to their native countries - Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Germany, Austria, Poland, Russia - where after further adventures many of them then emigrated to North America.

The author notes that "*They shared the optimism and strength of a collective international conviction: to fight for the principles of humanity and equality, even when confronted with the worst of circumstances.*"

And he asks, “*What did they accomplish?*”

A list of material accomplishments follows, such as the innovations in and improvements to public health that they introduced to wartime China.

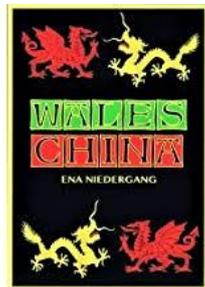
Far more important though, was the biblical precept that their mission fulfilled: *Whoever saves a life saves the world.*

The doctors of the **International Medical Relief Corps** in Spain and China from 1937 to 1945 took no lives but saved many

Wales-China: 250 Years of History by Ena Niedergang

A book review by Chris Henson

SACU member Ena Niedergang is the authority in Wales on the 250 years of history shared by her country and China. Her book comprises a huge collection of alphabetically organized and reproduced news clippings, vignettes, letters and notices of events featuring Chinese topics with a Welsh connection and vice-versa. It is a profusely illustrated “museum in a book” that invites and encourages discussion. It is also a great deal of fun to read.



This is a living museum and each entry is brought to view in the present. Ena assumes her readers will have sufficient knowledge of the overall subject that they will not need too much context explained. In fact, the book inspires further research.

Thus, as early as **page 1**, under the letter **A** for **Abergavenny** is a report from the *Cumberland Pacquet* in 1791,

...Captain John Wordsworth (cousin of William Wordsworth, the poet) had lately the honour of receiving and entertaining on board his ship, the *Earl of Abergavenny*, at Canton, the Emperor of China with numerous retinue.

Not well known is that there were two ships named '*Earl of Abergavenny*' constructed one after the other. The second *Earl of Abergavenny* was one of the largest merchant ships built for the East India Company and was constructed in 1796 after the first was sold to the Admiralty in 1795. It was 20% greater than the first in tonnage and 5% in length.

The ship the *Cumberland Pacquet* report refers to is the first *Earl* which was constructed in 1785 and built to normal East India Company specifications. The first was captained by William Wordsworth's cousin, John Wordsworth. The second was also captained by John Wordsworth but this was the brother of the poet. The first resigned from the service in 1791 and the second drowned along with 262 of his crew and passengers when his *Earl* sank in Weymouth Bay in 1805.

From the date given for the Emperor's invitation to tea (1791), it was to the first *Earl* that he came.

An interesting thought but unlikely that the Emperor of China (Qianlong, in 1791) would turn up for tea with Captain Wordsworth even if his cousin was a well-known poet. First, there would be the problem of elbow room. Engravings from the period depict, in one case, up to 160 retainers around an Emperor's travelling palanquin. There would not have been enough room in the wardroom of the *Abergavenny* for this many guests.

There is also the question of Qianlong's own rather negative view of British officials and their offers. Two years later, in 1793, he dismissed George III's Ambassador, George Macartney from his court, with the instruction that he go home and take his collection of '*useless manufactures*' with him.

Could this be 18th century 'fake news'?

From conversations with Ena in the past year, I recall that she is also an authority on the life of the missionary and educator **John (Rev. Dr Griffith 1831-1912- Chinese Name: Yang Ge Fei) p. 103 - 108**

She writes in more detail about his life and legacy for the **Autumn 2014 edition** of the **Historical Association's Chronicle in The Swansea Branch Chronicle 6**, downloadable here: <https://www.history.org.uk/historian/resource/8674/the-swanea-branch-chronicle-6>

The legacy of many of the missionaries who went to China on what were little more than 'soul harvesting operations' probably does not amount to much. The population of peasant farmers from whom the souls were extracted was powerless to resist the privileges which the big, orthodox, religious orders had bought or extorted from the Ching government. Apart from touching off occasional bouts of bloodshed, and incidentally helping to keep a national consciousness alive, they didn't accomplish much that was of permanent benefit to China. **Griffith John** was an exception though. He had a gift for languages and spoke and wrote Chinese fluently. (The apparent Welsh sensitivity for musical tone would have been a useful advantage in learning a language based on tones.) He also used his language ability to found "*schools, colleges and hospital - which have continued under different name into the 21st Century*". The links he forged between the people of Wuhan and of Swansea persist and are honoured into the present.

Part Two: Stories Behind My Research serves to conclude the book and it has a number of features that will challenge you to explore further. Some of Ena's anecdotes from this section are real originals and are interesting in and of themselves. The story of how she became the custodian of Gladys Aylward's Chinese clothes, which she had deposited with mutual friends on her way back from China, reminds one not just of Ingrid Berman who played Gladys in **The Inn of the Sixth Happiness (1958)**, but also of England's entry in the long-distance orphan rescue marathon - George Hogg (who doesn't get a mention in the book as he was not Welsh), but who was played by Jonathan Rhys Meyers (who is Welsh) in **The Children of Huang Shi (2008)**.

When I noted earlier that the Qianlong Emperor had sent Macartney packing with all his cases packed, I learned something new. Some of the '*useless manufactures*' had in fact exercised the appeal for which they were designed and Ena discovered where in Beijing they were kept. The information is filed under **William Hughes**.

Another very useful feature in this section was the **Glossary of Place Names**. I had lived in Shenyang for six months before I realized that I was in the city where the Japanese military staged the **Mukden Incident of 1931** and began World War 2. I suspect, too, that I cannot be the only person who occasionally has trouble remembering that colonial Canton, for example, is now Guangzhou in the PRC.

Ena is a teacher, a storyteller, a writer, a traveller and a Sinophile. All of these qualities have gone into the creation of **Wales-China 250 Years of History**. It is an entertaining and educational read and a very good reference journal for anything to do with the surprisingly rich and mainly benevolent history between the two countries.

The book is available for purchase from the publisher, **Ying Hua Books** of Swansea, Email to: info.yinghuabooks@gmail.com.

Hilda Grace Brown, a founding member of SACU by Chris Henson



Hilda, Yang Xiangyi and Gladys

We have been asked by the family to inform the membership of the passing of **Hilda Grace Brown, 1917 -**

2018, a founding member of the **Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding**.

Her daughter Ruth reports that she was born in Tianjin (then Tientsin) in 1917 to missionary teacher parents who had met and married in China. She was the middle of five children of whom her younger sister Gladys Yang will also have been well known to some SACU members.

At age 9, her parents returned the children to Britain where Hilda was enrolled in Walthamstow Hall School for the Daughters of Missionaries, a boarding school set up for the children of Non-conformist missionaries. Quite unusually for the time, this school encouraged girls academically with the ultimate aim of obtaining a University degree and working toward the betterment of society.

Her daughter Ruth again, "Hilda was always interested in social issues. Aged 14 (in 1931) she had visited the Peckham Settlement, a poverty relief and social change project in London. Seeing the slums, and girls her own age having to earn their living, started her thinking of the need to change society".

The empathy she felt for China and its people, having considered that country her home for the first 9 years of her life, was probably easily extended to include the disadvantaged inhabitants of places like Peckham Settlement. After graduating from Walthamstow Hall, she read Sociology at the London School of Economics which, Ruth says, was then regarded as a "hotbed of communism", as some still think of it.

Her reengagement with China began after the Second World War during which her sister Gladys had returned to China with her husband, Yang Xiangyi. The recently widowed Hilda took her two daughters to visit them in Beijing in 1962, travelling intrepidly on the Trans Siberian Express. More visits followed as conditions in China changed with the ideological wars until the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was declared in 1966. Gladys and her husband were soon imprisoned as 'bourgeois intellectuals' and Hilda campaigned vigorously for their release.

"She visited them as soon as she could after that and went again over the years with family members and friends. She travelled quite widely in China, visiting Xiangyi's family and also other friends, Chinese and British. Her last visit was in 2002."

"She learned Chinese in order to converse with Gladys' mother-in-law, and went on to translate into English Gladys and Xiangyi's story, *They Walked Together* by Li Hui. We were able to give her the news, just before she died, that her translation of the book was to be published in China"



Hilda speaking at an event

As her senses deteriorated with advancing age and she could no longer read, Ruth notes that she enjoyed having the SACU quarterly, *China Eye*, read to her.

SACU Vice President Dr Frances Wood notes “I knew Hilda quite well, she was an amazing and stoical character and a great supporter of Gladys and family and China.”

She was also a great supporter of our Society of which she was a member, from 1965 to 2018, except when she occasionally or inadvertently lapsed. Her unwavering support for SACU and its mission for so many years is deeply appreciated.

Climate Change and China

Walter Fung

This short article summarises the current policy of China to Climate Change and the environment and the steps being taken. It draws substantially on Barbara Finamore’s recent book, ‘Will China Save the Planet? (Polity Press 2018). In 1996, she founded National Resource Development Council’s China Programme, the first clean energy programme to be launched in China by an international non-government organisation. I can recommend this book, packed with positive information together with extensive references and suggestions for further reading.

Contrary to popular Western public belief, China has always had a policy to protect the environment from the earliest days after, opening up in 1978. Much has been achieved in limiting the effect on the environment but China has also had extremely serious pressing problems to overcome; widespread poverty, building up the economy and creating jobs and health care. These issues are vitally important for national stability.

Economists in 2008 estimated that China needed growth of 8% to prevent unemployment rising in urban areas. China’s leaders focused on economic growth and poverty alleviation as the top priority, but this was to change in the second decade of the 21st century after significant economic progress had been made and 800 million people had been lifted out of poverty.

China’s early environmental achievements

In January 1999, *New Scientist* magazine published an article which began, ‘Remember- you read it here first’. The subtitle of the article was ‘Fred Pearce slays the myth of the Chinese carbon dragon’. The article reported that China is one of the few countries in a relatively early stage of industrialisation in which energy demand has grown significantly less than GDP. ‘China has cut its energy consumption per unit of output by 50% since 1980’. Remember this article was written in 1999.



A photograph taken in Xi’an during May 1983. The Chinese writing says, ‘Protect the environment’ (WF)

China’s National Assessment Report on Climate Change in 2006 detailed the threat to coastal cities and other consequences of global warming and in 2007 China published its National Climate Change Programme. This was the first document of its kind by a developing country. It listed what China had done over many years, including the central government order in the summer of 2004 to 24 provinces to slash their power consumption.

A document of 2007 solicited public opinion on a draft law to regulate air conditioning and central heating in public buildings. The law would require room temperature in summer to be no lower than 26 degrees centigrade, and no higher than 20 degrees in winter. These proposed regulations were to reduce energy consumption. The new regulation also promoted the use of renewable energy and proposed to ban the use and import of energy inefficient materials, techniques and facilities

The Biosani organisation in 2007 issued a publication, *Green China 2007-2008*, which detailed sustainable and green projects.

The Three Gorges Dam and other hydro-electric projects form part of the plan for clean energy. This dam generates energy- the equivalent of 18 nuclear power stations as well as providing flood control and vastly improved river navigation.

In September 2010, China topped the Ernest Young Renewable Energy Attractiveness Index. In the previous year, one half of all wind power turbines had been set up in China. The UN Environmental Programme reported that more than one third of all global investment in renewable energy was Chinese in 2010.

International agreements

In 2009 at Copenhagen, China would not accept binding international limits on its greenhouse gas emissions because this would restrict economic growth and hence threaten national sovereignty and stability. China's view was that it had already made and was making a significant contribution.

Before the Copenhagen talks, China had already pledged to increase its proportion of non-fossil fuels i.e. hydropower, nuclear power, wind and solar power, to about 15% of its total energy mix by 2020. In addition, China's carbon intensity emissions (defined as emissions per unit of GDP) would be reduced by 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2020. China holds the view that developed and developing countries have common but differential responsibilities. Other developing countries, notably India also hold this view, but this is an issue that the US would not entertain.

Before the Paris agreement in December 2015, President Obama visited Beijing and the climate was discussed. The two countries issued a joint statement; they would work together on environmental issues. The US would reduce GHG (greenhouse gas emissions) by 26-28% by 2025, compared to 2005 levels and China committed to peak its emissions around 2030. At Paris, China reaffirmed its commitment to peak emission by 2025, but added, it would try to increase the mix of non-fossil energy to 20% by 2030. It would also reduce its carbon intensity by 60-65% below 2005 levels by 2030 and also expand forest cover. Recently, President Trump has indicated that the US may pull out of these agreements.

Change of priority

These Climate Change agreements coincided with a change of priority in China's development. It was decided that the focus on GDP growth was no longer the way forward for China's citizens; 800 million people had already been lifted out of poverty. Although China's environmental laws and policies had been strengthened by President Hu Jintao, the new president, Xi Jinping in November 2012, stressed that China's future prosperity depended on a more balanced economic model that also protected the environment and people's health, i.e. 'ecological civilisation.' This formed part of a programme to move away from fossil-fuel driven heavy industry and manufacturing to one based on services, innovation, higher quality goods, clean energy and environmental sustainability.

A lower level of GDP growth, around 6.5%, would become the 'new normal'; GDP growth would no longer be the most important factor in assessing an official's performance. In its place, environmental performance would be the primary criterion for promotion decisions.

Focus on pollution control

At the beginning of 2013, the Chinese government began to release hourly air pollution data to the public, for more than 70 Chinese cities. Most failed to meet national pollution

standards. The monitoring was later extended to the 338 largest cities. Public awareness and concern soared and at the end of September 2013, the central government pledged 1.7 trillion yuan to clean the air.

Cleaning up pollution had become a top priority and an integral goal of the new economic development model and in November 2013, a National Strategy for Climate Change adaptation was published. This set out guidelines, targets and actions to protect water and soil resources and reduce climate impacts on agriculture. The report also called for steps to prevent and monitor rising sea levels for early warning systems at coastal cities and construction of seawalls and other flood control systems.

Public concern had grown and a survey in 2012 and again in 2017 showed that people understood and accepted that Climate Change was being caused by human activity. They believed that the government should take the lead to combat Climate Change, but citizens were willing to take action on their own and nearly 75% said they would be willing to pay more for climate friendly products.

Clean energy development and Climate Change

The main cause of air pollution and Climate Change is the burning of fossil fuels, the main culprit being coal burning. The development of clean energy and control of emissions had become not only in China's national interest, but in all other countries' as well. Xi Jinping has promised to help other developing countries both with technical and financial support and a 20-billion-yuan fund has been established.



Solar water heaters in rural Sichuan, China (WF)

Coal-fired power plants still generate a significant amount of electricity but are now subject to stringent requirements to *improve efficiency and more energy output per unit of coal burnt*. In 2014, ultra-low emissions standards were introduced, requiring them to be as low-polluting as natural gas power plants. Those units not able to meet the regulations were to be closed. Those that do meet the standards would pay reduced tariffs.

Beijing has invested billions of yuan to reduce its reliance on coal. All heating and power facilities in the city have been converted from coal to natural gas; the last coal plant closed in March 2017. But the capital remains polluted because of its proximity to Hubei province which has huge glass, cement and aluminium factories.

Tree planting had always been encouraged in New China and by 2009, 18% of China's land area had forest coverage. This coverage will increase to 23% by the year, 2020. Soldiers of the PLA have been assigned to tree planting to meet this target.

China is the leading producer of wind turbines and solar energy panels. The price of these items worldwide has been reduced by the economics of scale of production in China. The 12th Five-Year plan (2011-15) designated the production of energy from solar and wind sources as *strategic industries*. Targets, time-tables and policy measures were implemented together with financial grants and incentives.



Wind turbines and solar panels on street lighting on China (WF)

As early as 2001, China made the development of new energy vehicles (NEV) a priority in its 10th Five-Year Plan for 2001-05) and in 2010, NEVs were designated a strategic emerging industry. Accordingly, the government granted \$10 billion over 10 years to the leading automotive and battery manufacturers for the development of electric cars. About 140 Chinese companies make 66% of all lithium batteries in the world. The US share is about 10%. As with wind turbines and solar panels, the volume of production in China, has brought down the price of lithium batteries. In March 2018, China launched an EV battery recycling programme.

China also grants subsidies for the purchase of NEV cars and they are exempt from purchase tax. In some cases, subsidies total \$16,000 per vehicle. Beijing plans to replace all its 69,000 taxis with EVs. Didi Chuxing, the leading ride-hailing service in China plans to spend \$150 million on a nationwide charging service and expand its fleet of EVs to one million by 2020.

China is now the leading producer of EVs together with charging facilities. There are now more charging points in Beijing alone than the whole of Germany. In 2017, more than 605,000 passenger NEVs were sold in China, nearly half the world's total, plus 198,000 commercial NEVs, mainly electric. China is home to 99% of the world's total of 385,000 electric buses. Every five weeks, China's cities convert the equivalent of London's entire bus fleet. There are also plans to ban petrol cars by as early as 2030

President Xi, in a keynote speech at the Belt and Road (BRI) Forum, on 14 May 2017, stressed that China would uphold the concept of green development: low carbon, recyclability and sustainable life style. China would play its part to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The BRI would be used to accelerate the use of low carbon techniques in the countries involved.

A heartwarming experience: Visiting a home for Chinese orphans in Beijing

Tamara Treichel

Tamara is a writer and editor living in Beijing. Her articles have appeared in several publications in the Chinese press. She is a regular contributor to China Eye.

Volunteering can be a worthwhile experience for expats, e.g. those who are accompanying their working spouses to China, students or those who have a little bit of time to spare or feel the need to do something meaningful with their lives in China while interacting with local people. You don't even need to donate money or items, just your time is often appreciated.

I used to do some volunteering in nursing home facilities and animal shelters back in my native United States, and in Beijing back in 2009 I participated in an activity that involved inviting deaf-mute children and children with speech impairments for an afternoon in the movies, and the park, followed by a Happy Meal at McDonald's as part of a "buddy system." **(to be continued)**

Tamara's Article will appear in full in the next issue of China Eye. Articles relevant to current affairs, i.e. May 4th, climate change, Chinese in Britain (subject of AGM talks and obituaries have been given priority. Apologies to Tamara.



Chinese children, adopted from China by British families, enjoy a SACU social event at Frodsham (between Liverpool/Manchester). The Chinese consul was in attendance. (May 2007)

Dr Haris Livas-Dawes; Obituary

The Haris We Knew, by Brian Morgan and Felicity Yau

In 2008, I was approached by a Chinese friend from my university times, then Chair of the Hull Police Committee, who asked if I would be willing to give a series of lectures on Chinese Art in a prestigious local gallery. It turned out to be the Ferens Gallery in Hull, and the organiser was Haris. She wanted to put on events for the “China in Yorkshire Year”, 2008-9, as the whole of East Yorkshire seemed to have been virtually forgotten in this significant county-wide event.

I got to know Haris quite well, and we worked successfully together for the following ten years. We put on four major events at the Ferens, where I also introduced an important artist from China.

With her triple PhD, and being the mother of five children, she was a pleasant but somewhat formidable figure, with a piercing intellect, who would not suffer fools gladly. She was very active in artistic, museum, and environmental circles, and wrote and published widely. Her house, in the old French Towns area of Hull, was a museum in itself, with framed pictures covering virtually every main wall. I stayed there many times, always receiving impeccable hospitality.

Although born in Baltimore, USA, she was from a Greek family, and never neglected her roots, and remained a prominent advisory figure in arts to the Greek government. An academic first and foremost, her main work in UK was as an advisor, especially in fabrics, to the British Museum. She lived in Greece for 35 years, as an academic, holding professorships, as journalist, and advisor at the highest level to the government. A polymath indeed.

She was deeply involved in local communities in Hull, was always lobbying someone, and fearful of no-one. In some ways we were on a par, as I had earlier spent many years in Hull, and had taken the council right through to the Court of Human Rights. It was only after her death that I came to know of her work for the marine conservation group, Marinets, working on similar lobbying for anti-pollution measures as I had been when a full time Marine researcher in Plymouth.

I introduced her to SACU, and she soon made herself active there, both on the national committee, as well as reviewing books for the magazine, *China Eye*, for the following ten or so years. Between us we formed a Yorkshire group, under difficult circumstances. My role was to locate and arrange free venues, as we had no funding, and this we did widely throughout Yorkshire. But last year, after a long successful period, my luck and my persistence with my empty begging bowl, began to run out. Primarily because my Rotherham home base, with its constantly changing immigrant community, was not really suitable. We held meetings in private homes, in ethnic minority centres, in the prestigious Boston Castle, and at Sheffield university Confucius Institute. Had we gone to Leeds or Sheffield, we would

certainly have been overloaded, as Linda Rosen had been in 1997, so it was really quite difficult to keep the group small yet purposeful and manageable.

At each meeting, Haris used certain themes. She would talk about the national situation, with open discussion, and add a small item of interest. The main presentation was usually from me, whether making lanterns, or talking about Chinese architecture, and so on. We would then finish with a ten-minute Mandarin lesson, dealing with basics. For most of these, Felicity Yau was the perfect organiser and hostess.



Haris addressing the Yorkshire/Humberside SACU group and below, ‘The Lantern Makers’



Our organisation was not helped by her move from the convenience of central Hull, to Spurn Point, just about the most distant part of Yorkshire. So the average meeting involved husband Malcolm driving well over 120 miles.

She always wanted me to take a group to lesser known parts of China, but for health and other reasons, this was not to be. She will be sadly missed in diverse areas of life.



Haris at the British Museum

Haris passed away on 4th May 2019. She contributed to virtually every *China Eye* from Issue 29 (Spring 2011) to this current edition. We will miss her contributions and especially her regular book review, ‘Reading about China.’ WF.

Walter Fung

From the British press

Italy ready to join Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

Italy is negotiating to become the first country in the G7 club of advanced nations to endorse the BRI and possibly sign later this month when President Xi visits Italy. This has drawn sharp criticism from the US and it is likely to irritate Italy's EU partners who are seeking a common China policy. The Italian trade ministry has noted that Italy is behind the UK, Switzerland, Germany and France in exports to China. Furthermore, Italian companies are using technology provided by Huawei to test 5G communications in Italy. *(From The Times 7/3/19)*

NB So far 124 countries and 29 international organisations have signed BRI cooperation documents with China. Italy will not be the first European country: Greece, Portugal, Poland, Croatia, The Czech Republic and Hungary have already done so. *(Beijing Review 11/4/19)*

China's slowdown affecting Germany

China's hunger for luxury cars and industrial machinery has turned it into Germany's largest trading partner. The Chambers of Industry and Commerce estimate that almost a million jobs in Germany depend on China.

Alexander Hinterkopf, whose company makes industrial printers was in Shanghai for a conference on the aerosol industry last month, said attendance was significantly down and Chinese sales have dropped by about 80%. He blames the trade war between America and China saying that managers do not want to invest in machinery because of the uncertainty. *(From The Sunday Times 7/4/19)*

Encouraging figures for first three months

Buoyant industrial production, consumer demand and investment helped the Chinese economy to exceed expectations in the first quarter. Official figures published yesterday showed growth of 6.4% in the first three months of the year, curbing market fears of a sustained deceleration.

Officials from China and the US have agreed to a fragile ceasefire to allow more talks. A deal seems to be in the offing. *(From The Times 18/4/19)*

China plans to build a moon base within a decade

Announcements have been made for China to build a research station on the moon within a decade. This would be the first leg to reach further into space and land on Mars. Beijing is scheduled to launch another lunar probe to collect and return moon samples by December. Some samples would be permanently placed at Shaoshan, Mao Zedong's ancestral home. *(From The Times 26/4/19)*

China's car makers.

China now makes more cars than any other country and there are 325 million cars on China's roads. However, quality is still behind Western standards. Car making is one

of ten sectors for special attention in the 'Made in China 2025' policy and quality is to be improved. Investment in electric cars is significant. Car battery makers are growing rapidly and the biggest, CATL, is building a plant second only to Tesla's huge Nevada facility.

The planned total Chinese capacity for batteries is about three times the rest of the world combined. To stimulate uptake, electric vehicles are generously subsidised and are exempt from purchase tax. Also, in six of the biggest cities, electric cars are not subject to restrictions placed on petrol cars. Public sector bodies are required to buy electric vehicles, which is a big boost for buses. Almost all of the 400,000 electric buses in the world were made in China. China is also leading in infrastructure for electric car charging. In fact, Beijing alone has more charging points than Germany. *(From The Economist 6/4/19)*

Trains in China

In just over 25 years Shanghai has built 16 lines and 700 km of metro line, which is the world's longest. Recently, plans were unveiled for a further 300 km, which would include overland rail, to be added in the next five years.

Infrastructure construction is proceeding apace and in the first quarter GDP grew by 6.4%. In mid-2018 China's government cut taxes on personal incomes and corporate profits and banks were ordered to lend more to small businesses. Things are moving again, with half a dozen cities, including Shanghai, building metro lines. High-speed rail track is expected to be extended by 3,200 km this year. This is nearly as much as the entire high-speed rail network of Spain, the country with the second largest. This year's total in China is in fact lower than the annual average of 3,600 km of the last five years. *(From The Economist 20/4/19)*

World's high-speed rail track

The I newspaper, on 13 May, listed countries with the longest high-speed rail: China has 15,534 miles, Spain has 1,926, Germany has 1,887, Japan has 1,718 and France has 1,645. *(From information in Wikipedia, the UK has an estimated 420 miles of high-speed track.)*

Oxford leading UK electric cars (Chinese make)

Nio (the 'Chinese Tesla') employs about 45 people in Oxford working on advanced concept engineering for the next generation of vehicles. The Nio ES8 is being evaluated in the Begbroke Science Park. The car can accelerate from zero to 60 mph in 4 seconds. Although the car is not yet licensed to go on UK road, thousands of this SUV are already on sale in China. Only 60,000 electric cars out of a total of 2.37 million were sold in the UK in 2018. Last year a million electric cars out of a total of more than 22 million were bought in China. Some analysts predict that in China 50% of all car sales will be electric by 2025, and a huge supply chain is emerging driven by government incentives. *(From The Daily Telegraph 3/5/19)*

China's Mars simulation pods in the Gobi Desert.

About 25 miles from Jinchang, a mining town in the Gobi Desert is a series of pods designed to simulate life on Mars. They are partly a scientific academy and partly a tourist attraction, which taps into the public's enthusiasm for space

exploration. China has plans to send a rover to Mars in 2020 and further plans to collect samples of the planet and bring them back to earth by 2028. Yesterday, the guides at the 'Mars base' showed about 100 young people, aged 13 to 14, around the site. The site will officially open for tourists later this year and the owner, Mr Bai Fan, a Beijing businessman believes that he will recoup his outlay of £6 million. *(From The Times 18/4/19)*

US envoy warns about Chinese loans

The new US ambassador to Australia is concerned about the way China lends money to developing Pacific nations which he describes as 'payday loan diplomacy'. Arthur Culvahouse Jr said that it was up to US allies and Western liberal democracies to educate people about the dangers of such loans. *(From I newspaper 14/3/19)*

China keeping UK private schools afloat

Barnaby Lenon, chair of Independent Schools Council has said that struggling private schools should be 'jolly pleased' that Far Eastern companies want to buy them. They are keeping them afloat. British private schools which have been bought include: Bournemouth Collegiate School, St Bees in Cumbria, Ipswich High School and Abbotsholme School near Uttoxeter. Mainland China is the largest source of foreign-born pupils at British boarding schools with numbers rising 10% last year to 9,000. Chinese investment could bring a rise in Chinese students, who are 'often quite high quality'. *(From The Daily Telegraph 28/3/19)*

From the Chinese Press

China's plan for 2019

Li Keqiang, Chinese Premier, in the government work report announced the target growth for the next year as between 6 and 6.5%. China plans to create 11 million new jobs this year and cut nearly two trillion yuan in taxes and corporate pension payments to bolster the corporate sector, especially private and small enterprises. The value-added tax rate for the manufacturing industry will be lowered to 13% from 16% and the rate for transportation and construction will be cut to 9% from 10%. China also plans to raise its fiscal deficit-to-GDP ratio to 2.8% from 2.6% in 2018. The local special-purpose debts will total 2.15 trillion yuan (\$320.5 billion) this year, which is 800 Billion yuan more than last year. *(From China Daily Global Weekly 8-14/3/19)*

Smart cities to become \$4 trillion business by 2022

Hanzhen Street in central Wuhan is undergoing an upgrading to introduce a new management system. It will have intelligent street lights and integrate the functions of monitoring cameras, traffic counters and guidance for parking. The IT system will manage the flow of people, traffic and commodities. The whole system is designed to make the city more liveable and provide a better welcoming feel. By the end of August 2018, about 500 Chinese cities had launched smart city projects and by 2020 a number of cities will have distinctive features. Intelligent street lamps will have monitoring cameras, wireless routers, push-to-call police buttons and screen and audio equipment for data collection and transmission. *(From Beijing Review 4/4/19)*

Tax cuts to boost China's small businesses

Millions of private business entrepreneurs will benefit from tax cuts this month. The scale of the cuts surprised many observers. VAT for manufacturing is being reduced from 16 to 13%. Corporate income tax, charged against profits is being halved from 10 to 5% for businesses with a turnover of less than a million yuan. For businesses with a turnover of less than 3 million yuan, the rate will be 10% minus 50,000 yuan. The policy demonstrates the government's commitment to the private sector. *(From China Daily Global Weekly 19-25/4/19)*

Innovation boom; China spending more on R&D

According to a US think tank report on 8 April, China is catching up with the US in innovation. In 2007 China's R&D investment was 33% less than that of the US, but by 2017, the gap had closed; China's spending was 76% that of the US. Chinese government institutions spent more on R&D as a share of GDP than the US; the increase went from 84% of US levels in 2007 to 119% in 2017.

In addition, China's hi-tech manufacturing value increase from 30% in 2006 to 77% in 2016. If this trend continued, China's high-tech manufacturing will overtake that of the US by 2020. *(From Beijing Review 18/4/19)*

The Polar Silk Road new energy frontier

The melting Arctic ice could present a shorter route to Europe from China – even shorter than via the Suez Canal. This does not necessarily mean existing routes will be replaced, but new opportunities for reaching Iceland, Norway and Canada, which are rich in energy, fisheries and minerals. A free trade agreement is already in place between China and Iceland, which in particular has clean green geothermal energy. The 2018 agreement between China's Sinopec and an Icelandic green energy company was the biggest deal in Iceland's history. Chinese companies are also investing in Greenland, which is rich in uranium and rare earth metals. The Arctic, with its very significant gas and oil, is growing in importance and Russia and China have stepped up cooperation in this area. *(From China Daily Global Weekly 19-25/4/19)*

China leads in the 'greening' of the earth

NASA's report in *Nature Sustainability* reports that satellite data (2000 to 2017) indicates that one third of the global vegetation is greening and 5% is browning. China leads the greening accounting for 25% of the total increase, followed by India's 6.8%. China accounts for a quarter of the global greening increase, even though it only has 6.6% of the total global vegetated area. *(From China Today April 2019)*

China committed to ecological civilisation

It seems there is no sacred cow in China's pursuit of an ecological civilization. Not even renewable energy when it endangers the survival of giant salamanders. The Hunan provincial authority has announced plans to demolish 10 hydro dams and more than 30 hydropower plants located in natural reserves in Zhangjiajie, renowned for its Chinese-painting-like hills. The days when government officials were promoted based on GDP as the overriding, even sole, KPI are over. Now,

their performance is appraised on multi-metrics including environmental protection and poverty eradication. President Xi's declaration of Ecological Civilisation is no empty rhetoric. He often says: "green mountains and clean rivers are more precious than gold hills and silver mountains" (青山绿水就是金山银山) *From China Dailey via internet 23/3/19*

Xi Jinping chairs private enterprises symposium

This took place in late 2018. China's economy is transitioning from a stage of high-speed growth to a phase of high-quality development in which the private economy will continue to play an important role. During 2018, China's economic output exceeded 90 trillion RMB for the first time. The private economy contributes more than 50% of tax revenues, 60% of GDP, 70% of technological innovation, 80% of urban labour employment and more than 90% of the number of enterprises. (*From China Today April 2019*)

Tourism set to grow; more visa-free cities

On 1st January, five more cities began to offer 144-hour visa-free services to travellers from 53 countries. The cities are Qingdao, Xiamen, Wuhan, Chengdu and Kunming. China is fourth on the list of most-visited counties with 60.7 million visitors in 2017. France is top with 86.9 million but by 2030, China is expected to be number one. In 2017, Chinese tourists made more than 130 million trips abroad and spent \$258 billion. In domestic tourism, five billion trips were made in 2017 generating revenue of 4.57 trillion Yuan (\$682 billion). Tourism is now considered an indicator of Chinese living standards as well as a key economic indicator. (*From China Daily Global Weekly 8-14/3/19*)

Chinese physicist wins RW Wood prize (of US)

Pan Jianwei, a physicist and professor at the University of Science and Technology of China has won the 2019 RW Wood prize presented by the Optical Society of America. He is the first Chinese to be awarded the prize, initiated in 1975. He was awarded the prize for his pioneering work at the frontier of quantum foundations and optical implementations of quantum information, including optical quantum computing. Former recipients of the prize have included a number of Nobel Prize laureates. (*From Beijing Review 4/4/19*)

Sinophile by Flo and Ivor Kenna

From Beijing Review (BR) of 21st February, we learnt that at the end of 2018, 13,000 freight trains had been on the China-Europe rail, which connects 49 cities in 15 countries. Also that in 2008 in China, people spent only 14 minutes on the internet but by 2018 it had jumped to 2 hours and 42 minutes!

BR of 7th March there was a surprising article by a research fellow at the Charhar Institute and the University of Haifa, Israel revealed that, 'The transformation of the US from an oil-importing state into an oil-exporting one due to the development of shale oil has lowered US willingness to directly intervene in regional affairs in the Middle East. Therefore, it is necessary for Saudi Arabia to seek connections with other world powers, especially Russia and

China'. This is borne out by the next article, in the magazine, which maintains that a new era of great power competition is unfolding between the US, China and Russia.

March 21st's BR has an article 'Guaranteeing Fairness' stating how the 'Foreign Investment Law' mixes pragmatism with vision to boost global confidence'. The Foreign Investment Law rests on a base of reform and opening up adopted by Chins just over 40 years ago. It is worth looking at how reform and opening up came about.

At the beginning of *Capital Volume One*, Marx claimed that the value of a commodity is determined by the quantity of labour spent on producing it. By the early 1970s it was becoming obvious to various economists, and in particular to Chinese economists that, while the values of commodities determined on this basis were the same, the prices certainly were not. A year's labour-time in the Gambia producing peanuts was worth, well, peanuts, in terms of dollars or pounds. A year's labour-time in India producing tea was on average, worth twice as much, but this was very little as compared with the imperialist countries. A year's labour-time in Britain producing textiles was far more rewarding. Even more so was the production of cars. Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, China decided to go all out to attract foreign investment in the more lucrative industries. Hence reform and opening up, which is now being extended to the whole world by the Belt and Road Initiative.

Moving on to BR for March 24th, Catherine McGuiness, Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee of the City of London Corporation, is reported as saying that the London-Shanghai Stock Connect, which links one of the world's largest capital markets with one of the world's major international financial centres, is good news for the UK, China and the wider global economy.

There is a nice front-page picture in BR for 4th April, which shows President Xi getting on well with Chancellor Merkel, President Macron and EU President Juncker in 'A United Stand'. Foreign Minister Wang says, 'No matter how the international situation changes, China will always view the EU as an important strategic partner and places China-EU relations in an important and high priority position within its foreign policy'. BR of 18th April quotes that the aim of Chinese policy is to create a new paradigm in strategic relations, whereby geopolitics is overcome through win-win cooperation, where international politics stop becoming a zero-sum game but instead where harmony prevails.

China does not think much of the US unilateral move against the Golan Heights, which 'violates UN resolutions and international law'. China does not think much of US intervention in Venezuela either.

Ending on a happy note, China is going all out to protect the endangered freshwater sturgeon by releasing artificially bred Chinese sturgeons into the Yangtze, according to BR for April 25th.

China - So Often a Negative News Story

Andrew Hicks

Why do media stories and commentary about China often seem to be so relentlessly doom laden and negative?

World news events by their very nature do tend to be negative but a journalist shouldn't base their interpretation of China on wholly negative assumptions. It is important also for them to remember the many positive developments in the world in the last half century.

Notable among these are...

... Post-war reconciliation and cooperation in Europe,

... Huge strides towards achieving a rule-based international community. *'Make treaties not war'*,

... Massive progress in eliminating world poverty, especially in China whose recent achievements have been spectacular,

... and the emergence of China as a stable and prosperous property-owning society. China now seeks to participate and be respected in the international community and to make a full contribution as the world's oldest and largest civilisation .

So why does there seem to be a generally negative stereotype of China in the written and broadcast media and thus also in public perception?

Old stereotypes are hard to shift and lazy media coverage tends to follow long-standing stereotypes for every continent. The UK, for example, has long had close contact with India which is now as comfortably familiar as tikka masala, while Africa, carved up by its European colonisers, always comes across as a disappointing basket case. China, in contrast, is an active threat, being seen as unknown and unknowable, untrustworthy and unstable.

Some possible causes of this negativity can be suggested.

... We have had contact with distant China for a relatively short time and do not know it well as an equal partner, despite alliances in both world wars. Hong Kong is familiar, but has always been seen as a bastion against 'Red China'.

... Writers portray the Chinese as culturally strange and different in a way that dehumanises them, China being at best portrayed as an exotic and entertaining travelogue. We are divided by language and cannot even read its writing.

... The overwhelming size of its population has always been seen as a major threat to the world, even though a valuable market for opium and other trades.

... The lurid image of the 'Yellow Peril' still persists from Fu Manchu to Dr No. Through such 'prejudice' we collectively pre-judge China and the Chinese.

... The West's extreme vilification of communism from the 'Red Scare' of Republican senator McCarthy onwards saw China as being fundamentally opposed to the West, part of a world conspiracy of communism against capitalism in a clash of civilisations. China is still regarded through the lens of communism, as having totalitarian control of its peoples and as being expansionist and antagonistic.

... The Cold War entrenched a negative attitude that China is an implacable enemy and, to a degree, this prejudice still overshadows the popular view of China.

... Sheer ignorance of modern China leads to attitudes that can only be described as neo-colonial and out-dated.

In conclusion, the media tends to pander to the old stereotype, setting China stories in this obsolete context. It gives the audience what it expects to hear in what is essentially lazy and sensational journalism.

It is thus time the media grasped the reality that China has radically modernised to become a largely urban property-owning society. This means that China now has to participate in international trade and relationships as a strong and responsible member of the community of nations. Until the last few centuries China was always the largest economy in the world and it is fully appropriate and desirable that it should soon recover that position. The world is safer with a prosperous and outward-looking China.

Lurid coverage predicts the time 'when China rules the world'. However, by grasping the reality that China has no desire to dominate then we can engage positively and ensure that it contributes to the world community as a respected economic power. The option is open to us to influence China through mutual friendship rather than confrontation.

We also have to recognise that during its long years of under-development and isolation China had little influence or standing in the world. We should therefore expect it to exert greater influence in securing its legitimate national interest and engage with this process as a necessary reality.

Individually the Chinese people are politically astute and have respect for British systems of law, government and education. While some may aspire towards a more open society, many tend to take a pragmatic view that the greatest threat is disorder and instability and that political change or liberalisation can only come slowly.

Meanwhile they expect to enjoy continued economic progress, to travel the world on holiday and, of course, to shop at Burberry and Harrods. Our urban societies have thus converged and their lives and aspirations are more like ours than could have been imagined even a few years ago.

Journalists and commentators now need to re-examine their assumptions about China. Much of their thinking is decades out of date and can be so glaringly and damagingly wrong.

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