

China Eye

SACU: The Society which has promoted understanding between the peoples of China and the UK since 1965

Spring 2020

Number 65



Contents include:

Michael Wood, President of SACU

SACU Working Groups

Janice Dickson - a Tribute

Tomb Sweeping, Qing Ming

Riding Out the Coronavirus

Visit to Gansu Province

Qing Dynasty Imperial Dress Accessories

Sino File/Sinophile/China Eye Diary

CHINA EYE

Spring 2020 Issue No 65

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.

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ISSN 2513-8898 (printed)

ISSN 2633-240X (on-line)

Contents

- 3 Welcome
- 4 SACU Notices
- 5 Working Groups -Can you help SACU?
- 6 Michael Wood -SACU's New President
- 7 A Visit to Gansu province
- 9 Qing Dynasty Imperial Dress
- 12 The Animal Fur Trade and China and comments
- 14 Mr Life with New China
- 15 The Heshibi
- 16 Janice Dickson – A Tribute
- 17 Riding out the Coronavirus
- 19 Sino File of Current Affairs
- 24 Sinophile
- 25 China Eye Diary
- 26 Tomb Sweeping, Qing Ming
- 27 Chinese Opera

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SACU E mail Newsletter

SACU issues a monthly E mail newsletter providing details of events and news about China. Members are invited to send details of happenings to SACU. If you wish to receive this newsletter, please let SACU have your E mail address, which will be sent out bcc (blind copies). This means that nobody else can see your E mail address. SACU will not use your E mail for any other purpose other than SACU business. It will not be passed to anyone else without your permission and you can unsubscribe at any time. Please send details to Ros Wong, membership@sacu.org.uk

The Summer issue (Number 66) of China Eye will be available in early June 2020. Please send news or articles for inclusion before 20 May 2020 to Walter Fung, 11 Collyhurst Avenue, Walkden, Worsley, Manchester M28 3DJ. Tel 0161 799 6944, E mail; walter.fung888@btinternet.com

Front cover: Liquor store in Pingyao (WF)
Back cover: Ancient Street in Pingyao (WF)

All photographs are by the authors except where stated.

Welcome

Some good news to start off. Michael Wood has accepted our invitation to become President of SACU. Please see pages 4 and 6.

The Coronavirus

China is again central to the news again due to the coronavirus. The views of the World Health Organisation seem generally supportive and have praised the overall handling in China but it seems that the Wuhan authorities may have been able to release the information quicker. This has given the 'China bashers' fuel for anti-China comments; some were very scathing and could even be considered racist and insulting. As a consequence, three Wall Street officials have been expelled from China. However, these comments were only for a short period of time with attitudes changing. The way China has so far contained the virus mainly to Hubei province has impressed the world. The speed of construction of two 1,000 bed hospitals in 'days' and the drafting in of thousands of PLA doctors and nurses was also impressive.

The situation is on-going with new developments each day. The comments made on page 13 were written in early February. There have been several incidents of Chinese people being harassed in connection with the coronavirus. As I write this report (3 March) there is news of a Singapore Chinese student being assaulted and injured in central London, which is very worrying and quite frightening.

Some Chinese associations in the UK have not only sent messages of support to China, but also helped in more practical ways by sending cash and supplies to China.

SACU also sends support to China in the following paragraphs.

Our Chair, Zoë Reed, wanted us to take a moment to reflect on the situation in China and offer an expression of support for the sacrifices ordinary people are making which is of benefit to the whole world. This is the time for all of us with connections to friends, family and colleagues in China to let them know how grateful we are.

Zoe writes: I'm sure everyone in SACU is thinking with friendship and understanding about the very difficult situation for everyone in China right now as they work hard to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus and support those who have already caught it. It's obviously important for us all to equip ourselves with the facts of the situation so we can, in line with our aims, help overcome misplaced suspicion and increase understanding about China in the UK.

For those of us with friends and family in China it can be particularly worrying, and I know some SACU members are doing the best they can to support from afar. I've been in contact with my family in Lanzhou and get lots of videos by WeChat from my niece, Juanjuan, of her daughter learning

English. They are using the enforced time at home to good effect! With her permission I am sharing below some of Juanjuan's WeChat messages because I think they give a sense of daily life. She lives with her husband, Deye, and young daughter on her husband's university campus where he is a lecturer. Her mother, Sun Kun, and father, Xiaohu, live on another university campus where my niece works.

- "It is very serious about the virus, we are all staying at home. Every family has a pass card to enable them to enter only their living area. Because I am on the university staff, I can use my university card to enter my university campus to visit mum and dad. Even to move around the campus where we live, I have to have a pass card."
- "Xiaohu's older sister's neighbours [a family of 4] are infected with the virus- they live on the 18th floor and Xiaohu's sister lives on the 24th floor. So now the whole building is in quarantine. The social worker helps every family to buy food and necessities. Everyone is following the rules and cooperating together. It will last for 14 days. Sometimes I call my aunt on WeChat to say hello – they are all fine at the moment."
- "Normally the Spring Festival lasts 7-8 days, but this year, because of the virus, some people's holidays are prolonged for several days. My friend who works at the bank went back to work several days ago, but they have a shift system and sometimes they work from home. The government offices are on duty 24-7, some of them even went back to work ahead of time, they organize and help hospitals to work normally, helping people's ordinary life."
- "In Lanzhou the restaurants and cinema complex etc are not open yet and there are less buses and taxis. Some vegetable markets are closed but the supermarket is open so people can buy food there, but there are fewer places to buy things; the pharmacies have sold out of face masks."
- "My uncle's daughter is a nurse in Gansu hospital and has gone to Wuhan to help as part of 3rd group from her hospital; all the doctors and nurses have cut their hair really short to reduce the risk of spreading virus."
- "It was announced that no schools or universities are allowed to start the new term until 1st March. Lots of schools are choosing to offer on-line courses. Deye will give his first on-line course to his students on 25th February. Since we are both university lecturers we are required to stay at home. However, every department has to have one staff member on duty each day – so I go in when it is my turn."

Can you contribute to SACU' Mission?

To promote friendship and mutual understanding between the peoples of Britain and China.

To provide facts and analysis about China – not uncritically but always from a firm basis of friendship.

To help the British people understand the meaning of China – past and present.

SACU Council strives to achieve these aims but needs support of individual members. All SACU Council members are volunteers, nobody is paid. If you can help, please contact **Corinne Attwood, SACU company secretary** on 01273 205899 or email: secretary@sacu.org.uk In particular we need members who can help arrange events and especially help establish local branches outside of London.

New Membership rates from 1 October 2019:

Individual	£23
Retired/Unwaged	£18
Students (PDF only)	£10
Institutions and Libraries	£27
Overseas Airmail	£35
Overseas (PDF only)	£13

Please make cheques payable to 'SACU', but to reduce the administration burden, please consider paying by standing order, or preferably use Paypal via our website; www.sacu.org.uk Send applications and renewals to SACU Membership Secretary, Ros Wong, 108 Salisbury Street, Bedford MK41 7RQ. Mobile: 07906 956426, e mail: membership@sacu.org.uk Please be sure to include, full name, address, post code, telephone number and e mail address. Your e mail address will be used only for SACU purposes.

It will not be passed to anyone without your consent. In circulars such as the SACU E mail newsletter your e mail details will be 'blind' and not visible to others.

The SACU E mail newsletter is issued about once every month and provides news and details of events involving China or Chinese culture. For your copy, please let the newsletter editor have your e mail address. Contact **Ros Wong** at membership@sacu.org.uk Please remember, you can unsubscribe at any time.

Michael Sheringham assists in the compilation of the SACU E mail Newsletter, but information and enquiries should be directed to Ros Wong.

Chinese Brush Painters' Society (Yorkshire)

This society was launched in February 2006 to provide a focus for all who are interested in Chinese Brush Painting. The society arranges workshops with Chinese and other experienced tutors and provides information and assistance to members on all aspects of the subject. Currently the group has over 140 members who travel from Cumbria, Cheshire, Nottingham and Lancashire as well as from all parts of Yorkshire to attend workshops. These workshops usually take place at a weekend, sometimes two days.

They are suitable for beginners or experienced artists. The group produce a regular monthly newsletter packed with information.

Meetings are currently held every month at the Pool-in-Wharfedale Memorial Hall, Arthington Lane, Pool-in-Wharfedale LS21 1LG. (on the A659 at the bottom of Pool Bank, just off the A658 between Bradford and Harrogate). This venue has excellent facilities and car parking. **Further information from the secretary, Anne Allan. Tel 01422 368482 or e-mail mail@anneallan**

Website; www.cbpsyorks.co.uk

Forthcoming Events

Please keep you eye on the SACU website and E mail newsletter. You are reminded that SACU has a memorandum of understanding with The Meridian Society. SACU members are welcome at their events and vice-versa. The Meridian Society are organising a tour of Hunan province later this year. Details to follow; they will be on both the SACU website; www.sacu.org.uk and the Meridian website. www.themeridiansociety.org.uk

Michael Wood as President:

We were delighted to issue the press release at Chinese New Year on 25th January 2020 announcing that Professor Michael Wood is our new President. Please see page 6 of this issue of China Eye. We are now arranging his first two public talks for SACU as President. In the spring he will present *Du Fu: China's Greatest Poet*, his co-production for CCTV and BBC. In the autumn he will talk about his forthcoming book *The Story of China*. **We will publish venues and dates as soon as finalised, on our website www.sacu.org.uk in our newsletter and social media channels.**



Manchester SACU New Year meal at the Pin Wei Restaurant on Princess Street, was enjoyed by nine members. The food was excellent and some useful business was also discussed. Amongst the SACU members were Bryan Sitch of the Manchester Museum, Feixi Yu of the UCLAN Confucius Institute, Hui Cooper, a Chinese to English translator. Jenny Clegg, a SACU Vice-president, Linda Rosen and Cilla Hollmann-Sykes. (Apologies, in the excitement I forgot to take a photograph of people!)

SACU MEMBERS-PLEASE HELP DELIVER OUR ACTIVITIES, JOIN OUR WORKING GROUPS

SACU is a membership organisation with no paid staff – just lots of great people like yourselves who fit in a bit of time around their busy lives to help deliver SACU’s mission. Council members and officers hold overall responsibility for the organisation as well as carrying out specific roles. In addition, they work with others to deliver our projects and activities according to their capacity and interests. SACU is at a stage now where we need more practical people to get involved and help deliver our programmes. It is also important that as a membership organisation we find ways that encourage members to participate in our activities.

Everyone will be aware of the climate of opinion about China at the moment fuelled mostly by ignorance and fear – and this means the work of SACU to promote friendship and understanding between the people of China and UK and help overcome misplaced suspicion is all the more important. So please consider getting involved.

To make it easier for members to get involved in the working of SACU, the Council has reorganised its operations so that

- There are now 3 Working Groups structured around delivering our Mission which any SACU member can join provided they are willing to work practically and help in delivering the activities. Working Groups deliver programmes which have been agreed by SACU Council and are accountable, through their convenor, to SACU Council.
- Quarterly meetings of the Working Groups are held in the afternoon of the Council meetings so that members of the Working Groups can meet face to face – these are mostly in London with one meeting each year in Manchester.
- The Convenor of each Working Group has a space on Microsoft TEAMS where virtual video meetings and group conversations [rather like WhatsApp] can take place for those who find it difficult to attend the quarterly meetings and as a space to continue the communication and work between meetings.

The Working Groups and their associated activities are as follows

(a) UK Public education activities – engaging in current issues/countering negative stereotypes:

Coordinator Zoë Reed

- Holding public events in a number of locations in UK both large scale public meetings and small scale. Potential topics and speakers have been identified for the current year’s programme and we have a number of ideas under development – *need practical help to identify venues and make events happen; to work on promoting the events widely to the public; to organise the venues*
- use of Social Media to promote our perspective; *How can we get better at this?*
- SACU speakers e.g. in Schools and Colleges – *developing a Speakers’ Bureau*

(b) Membership support and development activities: Coordinator Ros Wong

- Holding locally based member-only, small scale social events to encourage members to meet up and discuss matters, this includes the SACU ChinaCafes model – *need people to lead on local events and organising small scale social activities*
- Developing a Membership Discussion Forum (? Website-based or other) – *needs a lot of practical thought and planning before we can consider launching this*
- China Eye; Website; Membership monthly eNewsletter – *we are looking for people to work with the Webmaster and the China Eye Editor.*
- Essay Competition [in conjunction with Peking University] – *this is in hand for the 2020 competition, however if members are aware of a school that might be interested please make contact and we can provide an updated information sheet*

(c) Working with Chinese heritage people in UK; Working in China with Chinese organisations:

Coordinator Linxi Li

[nb this is SACU’s USP – a friendship and understanding organisation that does practical things in China that challenge stigma and thereby builds understanding]

- GHCEF activities – *we need some fundraising expertise as we have the links and ideas for an education programme to run in conjunction with a Chinese organisation but in-sufficient funds*
- SACU Educational Tours – *generating interest in joining a tour possibly in 2021*

Zoe Reed SACU Chair

Michael Wood – President of SACU

SACU is delighted to announce in this Chinese New Year period that Michael Wood has accepted our invitation to be our Society's President. Michael, who is Professor of Public History at the University of Manchester, is a historian and television documentary maker whose books and programmes on British history, on India and on China have been hugely popular with large audiences over many years. We are thrilled to have so prominent a new President to work actively with us in promoting a better understanding of China.

Indeed, Michael will be hitting the ground running as we are pleased to announce his first two public talks for SACU as its President. In the Spring there will be one on his co-production for CCTV and BBC Du Fu: China's Greatest Poet which he describes as 'a road movie in the footsteps of Du Fu' - the film has readings of the poetry by Sir Ian McKellen. In the Autumn he will be talking about his soon to be published book *The Story of China*. [Venues and dates will be published on our website www.sacu.org.uk and through Eventbrite and social media] SACU was founded in 1965 by, amongst others, the renowned Sinologist Joseph Needham. His major work *Science and Civilisation in China* was the first to bring alive to Western audiences the historical significance of the many discoveries and inventions in China which predated those in the west in some cases by centuries.



Michael at Belt and Road Symposium (Manchester)

SACU has been working for over 50 years to promote friendship and understanding between the peoples of China and UK. At its 50th Anniversary celebration event the Chinese Ambassador said that SACU's mandate is "to advance China-UK understanding and friendship. It is the mandate to carry forward, in this new age and with new ideas, the lofty cause of bridging gaps and strengthening bonds." SACU appreciates that an understanding of history as well as working with the power of film and the media are necessary for it to advance its mandate in this new age. We therefore see Michael as a great asset to help us in the continuing delivery of our mission, being an eminent historian and filmmaker and also someone with a profound understanding of and affection for the peoples of China.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.sacu.org.uk or contact our Chair, Zoe Reed for further information or for interviews

More about Michael Wood

Michael has had a full and varied career gathering an enormous amount of expertise and experience over forty years. As a historian broadcaster and film maker he has brought history alive for viewers and readers in Britain, the US and worldwide. He is the author of several highly praised and best-selling books on English history including number one best sellers *In Search of the Dark Ages* and *Domesday*, and also *The Story of England*.

He has made 120 documentary films, among them *In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great* (to date seen in over 150 countries and territories) and *The Story of India*, which the *Wall Street Journal* described as 'still the gold standard' of documentary history making'. Michael's *Story of England* series (BBC) was called by *The Independent* 'the most innovative history series ever on TV'. Of His recent *Story of China* (BBC 2), the state news agency in China, Xinhua, said it had "transcended the barriers of ethnicity and belief and brought something inexplicably powerful and touching to the TV audience".

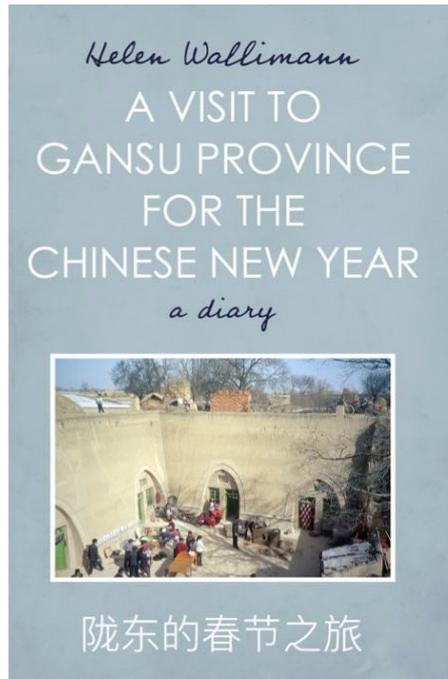
Michael continues to make films with his company Maya Vision with his partner the award-winning producer director Rebecca Dobbs. Latest, for the poet's 2000th anniversary, was *Ovid: The Poet and the Emperor* with readings by Simon Russell Beale and music by Bob Dylan. Michael's interest in China began at school with AC Graham's *Poetry of the Late T'ang*, was extended at Oxford where he shared a house with a Sinologist and continued with visits to China from the early eighties, first filming there in the late eighties. Since 2013 he has made a dozen visits making films, above all for the six-part *Story of China* which set out to give the general viewer an introduction to the grand sweep and creative riches of Chinese history. It has since been seen on PBS in America and in many other countries across the world.

His feature articles on China and Chinese culture have appeared in *The Guardian*, *Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, and *Radio Times*. More recently in 2018 he made a series of films on Deng Xiaoping's Opening Up and Reform 40 years ago, whose promo this year on the TenCent website had 100 million hits in 24 hours. He will continue his links with China with the forthcoming 'China's Greatest Poet', a coproduction for CCTV and BBC. His next book project, his first major book in nine years, is *The Story of China*, due for publication in September 2020.

Currently Professor of Public History at the University of Manchester, Michael has honorary degrees from many UK universities and is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the Royal Society of Arts and the Society of Antiquaries; He is a recipient of the Historical Association's Medlicott Medal for 'outstanding services and current contributions to History' and recently received the British Academy President's Medal for services to History and Outreach.

Press announcement on 25 January 2020. Zoë Reed 07768 207702 or e mail; Chair@sacu.org.uk

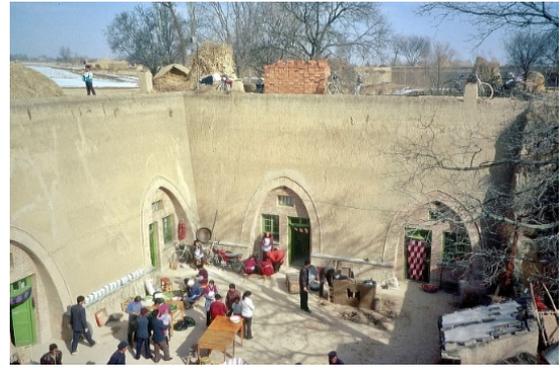
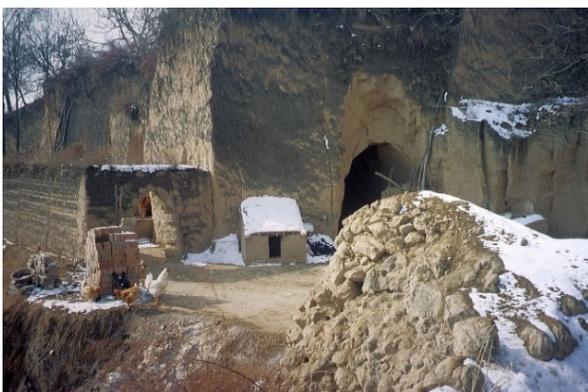
HELEN WALLIMAN VISITS GANSU



This article is a short extract from Helen's book to be published later this year in which she records her visit to a village in Gansu province in China's north-west. The village is miles away from the large cities and life is at a slower pace and is conducted in traditional ways.

In the afternoon we went, on foot, to the home of one of Yang Tao's uncles: a big wedding with about two hundred guests was to be held there on Saturday. Yang Tao expected to meet several of his relatives there who'd be helping with all the preparations.

We continued on our way, past a dried-up pond and along the edge of fields dotted with the occasional grave mound. We passed what looked like chimneys emerging out of the flat ground, turned right and descended a steep path carved into the side of a deep gully. Coming to a flat space with a tree in the middle, we saw, ahead of us a rough cave, presumably for cattle; and a throughway leading – as I later saw – to a platform with a couple more rough caves and the latrines. To our right, there was a high adobe wall with a big roofed gate. It was the entrance to the *yaodong* to which the chimneys belonged.



We went through into the courtyard where we were greeted by two young men who were busy building a cooking-stove with loess bricks and adobe.

I looked around. The courtyard is cut vertically out of the hill, the loess façades looking as solid as if they were concrete. On the three sides you see the entrance vaults, each containing a door and two windows. The couple of caves on the left are for storage, the couple on the right are a kitchen and more storage room. The three south-facing caves on the long side opposite the entrance gate are all living/bedrooms. Yang Tao told me to take a look inside. Contrary to what I'd expected, the caves didn't look in the least bit primitive. They were furnished much like other rooms I'd seen in China, the only difference being the *kang*. They were also fairly big: about four metres high at the apex, five or six metres deep and three to four metres wide. They seemed to have been newly painted and were quite bright, although the only light coming in was from the door end.

By midday, a large number of people had come to help with the preparations for the wedding. It had grown quite warm in the sun. The sky was clear blue – unlike the veiled skies of Xuzhou. Women wearing padded trousers and *mian'ao* with sleeve-protectors were preparing leeks, carrots, onions, or peeling great heaps of garlic. Others were plucking chickens.



A girl sitting on a little stool was grinding spices, pushing the grinder with her feet.



One of the men we'd seen on arriving was plastering the new cooking-stove with clay. In one of the caves, two old men were writing good luck characters with a brush on red paper...

I went back out through the entrance gate and saw several men squatting on the ground outside, cigarettes dangling from their lips, scaling fish.



Two other men were constructing another cooking-stove, complete with an electric fan. The wiring did not inspire confidence!



I followed the path up to the field above the cave and looked down into the busy courtyard. It was quite frightening, as there's no fence. If you fell, it would be a straight drop of eight metres at least.

There were no people in the fields. A crow flapped croaking across the sky above my head, then wheeled and landed in the middle of a field, startling some little birds

which flew up in a flurry of wings and chirpings before settling in the next bush.

By about half past three, most of the preparations were completed, and people had started to get hungry. A big pile of dough had been prepared. Now it was squeezed through the noodle press into boiling water in the pan that was standing on one of the newly constructed stoves. It was getting quite cold, so people took their bowls and ate at the tables under the marquee that had been put up that afternoon. The older people moved into one of the caves.



After the snack, I walked home with Yang Tao, had a rest and wrote my diary sitting on the heated kang in my room.

Three members of Yang Tao's extended family are getting married tomorrow, so we'll be going to two other weddings besides his cousin's. Apparently, this year the 18th of January is an auspicious date. And of course, the Spring Festival is a good period, because everyone comes home to their families for the holiday.

About the author

Helen Wallimann was born in England where she worked in publishing before going to Switzerland where she was a grammar school teacher (1973-2001). She taught English in Changchun (1989-90) and Xuzhou (2002-03) and English didactics in Gansu Province (2008 and 2011). She has translated three novels and a collection of Swiss folk tales from German, and, from Chinese, several articles in books on contemporary Chinese art as well as poems by well-known modern Chinese poets.

Frances Wood has read the book and provides these impressions

Helen Wallimann's descriptions and photographs of a New Year stay in Gansu give a wonderful, lively picture of daily life for millions of Chinese people, far from the neon and skyscrapers of China's coastal cities. Red cheeks, resilience and resourcefulness characterise her friends in Gansu who work hard for their future whilst remaining closer to the traditions of the past. Both text and pictures inform, and for those who have been lucky enough to visit China's rural northwest, conjure instant recall of freezing sunny mornings with the smell of little stoves fuelled with coal-dust briquettes, the soft pad of cloth-soled shoes and the sight of yellow sweet-corn stored in stacks around tree-trunks.

QING DYNASTY IMPERIAL DRESS ACCESSORIES – PART II

MALE DECORATIONS OF POWER

David Rosier

In previous articles I have concentrated primarily on the mandated court costume, primarily robes, that the 12 Ranks of the Imperial Clan plus the 9 Ranks of both Civil and Military Officials were required to wear. The driving motivation of this 2000-year-old protocol being the objective, through visual clues, to indicate the rank and status of the individual wearer.



Fig 1: Military Official
Winter hat, ceremonial finial & Peacock Feather Plume

This mandated system, however, extended beyond just robes and incorporated a range of dress accessories,

described in detail within the Court Costume Regulations, which were worn primarily as an additional indicator of the rank of the wearer. My last article provided an insight into the nature, purpose and construction of Official Headwear plus Hat Finials and now I wish to consider Court Necklaces, Ceremonial Belts and Award Plumages worn by the male members of the court. The next article will specifically consider dress accessories of the ladies of the court.

Peacock Feather Hat Plumages (*Hua Yu*)

Despite evidence to the contrary in Jackie Chan ‘Period Drama’ films made in Hong Kong, the Eyed Peacock feather, worn with a formal or semi-formal court hats (Fig 1), was a rare and highly prestigious award given by the Emperor for exceptional services to the court. Predominately, these were awarded for exceptional military service to nobles and military officials, but the Emperor could, if he so chose, single out any contribution that he felt required special recognition.

The Peacock Feathers Plumages (*Hua Yu*) were awarded with 3, 2 or 1 eye. It would be perfectly logical to assume that a 3

eyed feather would be reserved for the most exceptional of endeavours but that was not the situation. The reality of the matter was that in an environment where rank and status were the most critical aspects covered by the Costume Regulations the highest award criteria was reserved for those of the highest standing in terms of hierarchy membership and rank achieved.



Fig 2: Portrait of a First Rank Prince

2 eyed *Hua Yu*

18th Century



Fig 2a – 3 and 2 eyed *Hua Yu* Plumages

The 3 eyed Peacock Plume was therefore reserved for the Imperial Clan, but only those in Ranks 1 to 4, whilst the 2 eyed Plume was reserved for other levels of the nobility (Ranks 5-12). Beyond the nobility, the one-eyed plume was awarded to Officials, Civil and Military, ranks 1 to 5 and for an official ranked 6 to 9 they could receive a ‘Black Quill’ of horsehair which carried no distinctive markings.

The plumages would normally fit into a carved holder made glass or jade which was then tied to the base of the hat finial.

Fig 3 Hua Yu & Lan Yu (one eyed & plain feather)

Court Officials

19th Century



Regrettably, by the later years of the dynasty these prestigious awards were openly for sale as part of a ‘Cash for

Honours’ initiative created to raise additional funds for a virtually bankrupt court. Despite this corruption of the system the high purchase price meant these awards still remained relatively rare. Plumes would have been presented, or bought, in specially designed boxes lined with yellow silk covered paper or in a simple paper wrapper. These items were produced by specialist workshops such as the Wan Sheng Feather Shop in Beijing.

Court Necklaces (Chao Zhu)

Formal court necklaces were the creation of the Manchu and were deployed for the duration of the Qing Dynasty. There appears to have been no comparable item from earlier times.

The early Manchu Emperors were devout Buddhists and the court necklace appears to have originated in 1643 based upon a rosary given by the Dalai Lama to the young Emperor Shunzhi (1644-1661). Formal adoption of the court necklace, known as a *Chao Zhu*, appears to date to the review of Qing Court Costume Regulations in the late 17th century under the direction of Emperor Kangxi (1661-1722).



Fig 4: Emperor’s Chao Zhu 19th Century

Each necklace was of an identical structure with 108 beads divided by 4 large beads (*Fo tou*) which represented the four seasons. These beads created groupings of 27 beads per section.

From the circle of beads hung 3 Counting Strings. These were originally used to keep track of prayers offered to the Buddha but later in the dynasty they became an abacus for quick calculations. There were 2 strings to the right and 1 to the left.

Finally, from the upper central dividing bead hung a long drop counterweight known as a *Bei yun* which feature a large semi-precious stone mid length of the fabric cord. The cord fabric had to match the mandated colour of the robe and belt.

An Emperor’s necklace (Fig 4) would be made of Eastern Pearls (freshwater pearls from the rivers of Manchuria), dividing beads of coral and lapis lazuli, jade beads on the counting strings and a cat’s eye on the counterweight string.

With regard to the nobility and officials their necklaces would have been constructed with materials of a colour that reflected their rank (Fig 5). Red, coral and pink were used for the highest ranks followed by blue, crystal, white and then a variety of materials such as base metal and carved wood.

As with all dress accessories covered by the regulations the item would be stored in a purpose-built ornate box or a doughnut shaped box made with red lacquer.



Fig 5: First Rank Official’s Chao Zhu in Presentational Box 19th Century

The ladies of the court also wore court necklaces, in fact 3 of them, and this will be discussed in the next article.

Robe Belt (Chao Dai)

Court robes had no pockets so, as a consequence, items of practical, as well as ceremonial, usage would be attached to a belt known as a *Chao Dai*. These belts, or girdles, were of tightly woven silk and were worn closely around the waist.

As with all regulated costume this item, beyond its practical usage, had a function in terms of indicating the wearer’s rank and status. Detailed regulations therefore existed which created distinctions in construction by rank.

The colour of the woven silk was a reliable indicator of approximate rank and would match the colour of the robe silk ground and the cord of the court necklace.

Fig 6: Ceremonial *Chao Dai*



First Rank Official
19th Century

Fig 6a: *Chao Dai* Presentation Case



The most important aspect with regard to specific rank determination was the 4 ornamental plaques that were incorporated into the woven section of the belt. The design had

their origins in the Ming Dynasty when the decoration of belts was a key indicator of rank.

Three of the plaques were purely decorative although each had a hook from which an accessory could be attached. The fourth plaque was designed as a buckle which secured the belt around the waist.

Plaques could be bordered with gold, silver or a base metal and there would be a central design of jade, agate or a similar material which would be decorated with semi-precious stones. The materials deployed were defined within the regulations according to the rank of the wearer. The Emperor would wear a belt with 4 gold plaques set with lapis lazuli and surrounded by pearls.

Ceremonial belts would have a pair of fragrance purses, kerchiefs and decorative containers suspended from the belt (Fig 6). Belts worn on an informal bases were of similar construction but would have a far larger number of items suspended from the belt. The decision as to which item to wear was purely based on personal needs. These belts were worn by both men and women and the items suspended would normally be decorated with fine embroidery produced by specialist workshops. This will be a topic for a future article.

Finally, as with all formal dress accessories, the belt would be stored in a purpose-built decorative lacquer box (Fig 6a).

Non-Regulated Male Dress Accessories

There is an additional item of dress that is worth mentioning although it was not defined specifically within the regulations. The item was worn with semi-formal court costume should the individual wish to embellish his court attire.

This item was known as an Archer's Thumb Ring which obviously originated as a protection worn by archers, normally on the right thumb, to prevent the bow string cutting into the flesh.

Over the centuries this had evolved into an item of male jewellery favoured by the Scholar-officials, and the Literati, which was often worn on both thumbs. A tradition had developed whereby these objects would often be presented as a gift from an Emperor, on his birthday, to leading scholars and officials.

Fig 7: Selection of 17th Century Archer Rings



The Archer's Ring, which would typically be 2-3cm wide, was constructed from a decorative stone such as jade, agate, tourmaline which could then be carved with a range of auspicious symbols. There was, however, no restriction on the material that could be used and as a consequence a vast range of examples exist including rings carved from wood and resin. This has resulted in this becoming a specialist collecting area that has the attraction of a plentiful supply, infinite variety of design and material and remains relatively affordable.

In the next article we will focus on the accessories and jewellery worn by the ladies of the court.

**Meridian Society Tour to Hunan Province
October 2020. Details to follow. Please watch
this space and the SACU E mail newsletter
for further details.**

The Animal Fur Trade and China

Andrew Hicks, a SACU Council member recently wrote a letter of complaint to a charity that campaigners against the fur trade and the cruelty to animals which are killed to provide fur. This charity singled out China and condemned the practice as though China was the only place in the world where this happens. I believe we all support campaigners against cruelty to animals but this particular charity, highlighted the cruel activities specifically in China. The trade is operative in many other countries, especially Asia, I suspect it goes on in many other areas of the world but is not reported. Singling out China in such a disagreeable manner seems unfair and the terms used to condemn China borders on racism.

Killing animals for their fur has been going on since time began. Before the invention of textiles, it was the only way of providing clothing and was therefore essential to survival. In modern times here is no need for it. We have technology and modern ways of producing coverings and we are more enlightened, but the practice is very deeply established. It is a profitable business and is difficult to stop quickly. China, as it develops and standards of living increase, is becoming more and more 'animal friendly'. Animal rights organisations are rapidly growing. A recent survey has shown that there are more pet cats and dogs in China than the US and I have seen pet hospitals and pet shops in some of the large cities in China.



Pet shop in Nanjing, China photographed in 2017 (WF)

Text of Andrew's letter;

'I write to complain about your fund-raising leaflet inserted into my copy of a national newspaper of 24 January 2020.

You ask for donations to publicise 'the hidden hell of China's fur industry'. There is 'horrendous cruelty to cats and dogs in Chinese live-animal markets'... 'dogs are snatched off the streets in China.' 'In China the unregulated fur trade is responsible for the torture and killing of untold numbers of cats and dogs'.

There are further wild, prejudicial, inaccurate and unbalanced assertions about the Chinese, thus demonising one fifth of humanity and exploiting deep seated anti-communist Cold War racial prejudice in order to boost your fund raising.

You ought to know that a typical dog snatched off the streets of China is short haired like the one on the back and front of your brochure and so is unsuitable for commercial fur. It will probably have old injuries and imperfections making it valueless. You thus focus on the vile Chinese stealing peoples' puppies rather than on fur farming which would be more to the point.

You specifically vilify Chinese people though you ought to know that dog meat also is traditionally eaten across much of Thailand and Indo China and Asia generally. Why do you expressly urge people to refuse to buy Chinese fur only?

Why is it all about China and not for example the cuddly Thais?

You should surely campaign against all commercial fur and highlight illegal sourcing of fur generally throughout Asia and the world, thus avoiding such specific and deliberate offence to China. This you of course do in order to tap into and inflame old prejudicial stereotypes that bring in the cash.

You ought to know that dogs sold in live-animal markets are sold for protein and not primarily for fur, a consequence of poverty. Campaigning against theft of dogs for the fur trade is an inaccurate disconnect.

You make it implicit that these hideous practices are universal in China when you ought to know that they only now occur in a few poor rural areas such as the South West. The practice has almost gone and is universally condemned by the vast majority of urban Chinese and is campaigned against by local NGOs there. Your brochure gives no such balance to your message.

You ought to understand that collecting stray dogs has been tolerated in poor areas as a necessary control mechanism and for food. Poor people need cheap protein. If there are no vets or no money for vets, dogs breed uncontrolled and spread rabies and other diseases without restraint. Local farmers keep dogs and they sell the puppies to dealers who come round with a motorbike and trailer cage, often paying one plastic bucket for one dog. But for this feral dog can be a major problem.

In NE Thailand for example dogs are thus collected and with many hundreds in appalling conditions are trucked via Sakhon Nakon (which has a tradition of dog meat) to the border, through Laos to Vietnam

where the cargo is sold. The trade is illegal but the police can be bought which is an outrage.

Only when poverty is defeated will people have better access to protein and the money and facilities to keep dogs in good condition and control their fertility, thus ending the illegal production of dog meat and fur. You vilify China but China has been the most effective in moving forward and ending poverty and in consequence such arbitrary cruelty.

Charities have to shout loudly about their causes but you tread way beyond the fine line of what is appropriate. Your message is lurid and inaccurate, certainly xenophobic and inflammatory and is arguably racist in its intentional demonisation of the Chinese in order to pull in the money.

I of course abhor the collection of street dogs but the problem is more nuanced and complex than you suggest and will only change with time and a good economy. I will campaign with you against the use of fur but not just of China-sourced fur.

Your leaflet is irresponsible, demeans your campaign and severely damages your reputation.

I have made formal complaints to the Advertising Standards Agency and to the Fundraising Regulator.

I have also told the newspaper concerned that I will no longer be buying their paper.

I know China and SE Asia well and deeply regret the damage you are doing to relationships between peoples just in order to bring in the bucks.'

Andrew Hicks.

Andrew did receive prompt cautious replies to his letters. They did take his complaints seriously but did not accept them. They did however send full and detailed explanation of their views. It was not what Andrew would have liked, but at least the point has been made and maybe they will be a little more careful next time.

Some further comments from the China Eye editor;

I am afraid some people are easily led and influenced and some always find a reason for mischief and racism. Leaflets with descriptions as scathing as this about China are upsetting to many Chinese and could certainly trigger racism which could further lead into more serious incidents.

Very recently there have been many cases of racism against Chinese people caused by the coronavirus emergency. The chance of infection in the UK is minimal, but some Chinese in the UK have been the victim of racist harassment as is

evident from (1) the paragraph in the I newspaper of 30/1/20 (see Sino File), (2) an interview with a Chinese journalist in the Emma Barnett show today (3 February) and (3) one of my nieces has drawn attention to her experiences on Facebook. As I write this, racial harassment towards Chinese has even been discussed and condemned in the British parliament. The civic and academic leaders of Liverpool have sent a message of support to the Chinese community and Chinese students studying in the city condemning racial harassment as a result of the coronavirus. The leaders included the metro mayor, the city mayor and the five borough mayors. The message was also signed by the vice-chancellors of the three Liverpool Universities.

Comments, name calling and gestures can be upsetting and are best ignored. Name calling sometimes starts as a joke but matters can escalate. More extreme incidents can happen as can be seen from the photographs below. In addition, a Chinese takeaway owner in Edinburgh was killed in a racist attack during October 2014. Another was killed in Wigan in April 2005, but this incident was declared, 'not racist'.



Chinese gravestones desecrated in Anfield cemetery, Liverpool 2007. Amongst them was my grandfather's. (WF)



Monument in Anfield cemetery to all Chinese who have died in Britain, damaged in 2007 (Silk Road News)



One of 30 Chinese laundries wrecked during the seamen's strike in Cardiff in 1911 (photo from Barclay Price's book, *the Chinese in Britain* but in the public domain)

My Life with New China

Dr Wenlie Liang

Wenlie has set a ten-year plan for himself. He is determined to write his memoirs linked to the history of China and improve his written English at the same time. Furthermore, after completing this task he intends to write a new history of the Chinese in Britain. He hopes his friends and associates will help him in this project. Wenlie has recently joined SACU.

My childhood.

My name is Dr Wenlie Liang, Ph.D. in Physics, a former senior research scientist at the National Physical Laboratory in the United Kingdom. I am 78 years old.

In March 1941, I was born in Chengdu, China, in the middle of the Anti-Japanese War. Children before the age of five often do not have any lasting memories. What I know now about this period comes from the stories of my parents.

After Japan surrendered in August 1945, in the early spring of 1946, my father moved the whole family from Sichuan to his hometown in Changsha City, Hunan Province, located in central China. A small western style building with two-stories was built in Liu-fang-ling district, Changsha City. Here's the first photo with my own eternal memory, taken in front of the little western style building.



It was also in Changsha where I began to receive my education. When I was five and a half years old, my father sent me to a primary school affiliated with Changsha Normal University in Hunan Province. What I had been taught in school I can't remember at all, but what I do remember is my life after school:

The first thing I remember is raising silkworms. Every afternoon after school, we went to the hills at the back of the school to pick mulberry leaves to feed the baby silkworms. First of all, we had to hatch them from the sand grain, where tiny silkworm eggs would hatch into something just like a

small black dot baby. With the tip of a brush, we would move them carefully onto a piece of a mulberry leaf, and would keep them in a small matchstick box. We would put them in our schoolbags and sneak a look at them during lessons.

As they grew up, they slowly needed bigger and bigger boxes. After 7 to 8 moultings, they finally grew into mature silkworms. It was then time to prepare clumps of grass made by knotting blades of grass to support them. After two nights of waiting patiently, we finally saw the white flowers of the cocoons on the grass clumps. When we saw the cocoon heaped on the grass clumps, I could not begin to describe the excitement I felt. The memories of the silkworm activity have stayed with me throughout my life and became one of my lasting memories and this shaped my personality.

Life in Changsha, Hunan province, was not long, and China's civil war once again broke out. The Kuomintang and the Communist Party resumed their war over who would rule China, and Changsha, located in the Central Plains, was a battleground between the two parties. Our whole family had to go back to Sichuan in the face of the continued fighting.

From my childhood memory, traveling from Changsha, Hunan province, to Chongqing and Chengdu in Sichuan province, was a wonderful experience. We went by boat, going through the Xiangjiang River, then into the Dongting Lake, into the Yangtze River, through the Jingzhou twisting water route, then into the Three Gorges, and then directly into Chongqing city, it took 7 days and 7 nights. Along the whole waterway the beautiful scenery was unlimited. For a 7, 8-year-old child, this is was a good education and a stimulating experience for me.

After arriving in Chongqing, we didn't stop, but went on directly to Chengdu by long-distance bus. After 3 days traversing the winding mountain road, travelling through Neijian, Zhizhong, Longchang, we finally reached the rich and flat Chengdu Plain, which people call 'The Kingdom in The Heaven'.

In the autumn of 1948, our family lived in the big compound house of the Yu family. The house had a long hall, three small buildings and a great backyard behind the gate, where the five Yu ladies and their families lived. We children called them aunts: the eldest aunt with her husband was the most senior, then the second aunt. My mother was ranked the third most senior, so she was known as the third aunt. I had one brother and one sister; my brother was older than me and my sister was younger. The fourth aunt had eight children as did the fifth aunt and so there were altogether more than thirty people living in this big court-yard house. The big extended family all living together was the custom in those days.

My Primary School Days

After arriving in Chengdu, my father arranged for me to join the class at the church school. I began to know The Lord Jesus and the Virgin Mary, and the solemnity of the church service.

Especially after Sunday worship the children would get delicious Western cakes. They tasted like food from paradise and were indescribably delicious! Some aspects of my church schooling seemed a bit ridiculous for me to accept. One such thing I did not understand was the explanation of kindness, which I was taught, was if someone hits the left side of your face, you should also let someone else hit the right side of your face. For a small, combative seven to eight-year-old boy, this was almost impossible to comprehend, let alone accept.

Soon I transferred to the third grade of Shaocheng Park Elementary School, where Chinese children are generally enrolled. This was in the closing years of China's civil war.

On October 1, 1949, Chairman Mao Zedong solemnly announced the formal establishment of the People's Republic of China on the upper floor of Tiananmen Square in Beijing. He declared that after a century of humiliation and exploitation, China had finally 'stood up' and the Chinese people have stood up ever since! At the same time, Mao announced that we must carry out the revolution to the end!

On October 20, 1949, the PLA's Second Field Corps bid farewell to the citizens of Nanjing and embarked on a journey into the southwest! On December 27 of the same year, Li Zhen, commander of the 18th Kuomintang Regiment, announced his surrender to the Communist Party in Chengdu. Chengdu had finally received peace and liberation! Since then, Chiang Kai-shek has fled to Taiwan, with China now being ruled by the victorious Communist Party. My childhood also changed the direction of growth with the founding of New China! I became a new generation of Chinese youth born in the old society, growing under the red flag and the new China captained by the Great Helmsman.

My Ten-Year Plan

On March 7, 2020, I will enter the 81st year of my life. If my father is included, my story will cover nearly a hundred years of modern Chinese history! That is to say: my personal memoir, will be a reflection of China's century of historical changes of the true picture! That's what motivates me to write my personal memoirs in English. I want to reflect on the changes that China was undergone over the past hundred years through the memories of my own experience!

I know that personal memoirs alone cannot reflect the historic changes of China over the past hundred years! I have been away from China for 35 years, and I am determined to take half a year to return to China for a root-seeking trip and to let me re-understand today's China! Fortunately, I have many brothers and sisters, relatives and friends still living in China. They will help me keep informed up with the nature of the new Chinese era.

The Heshibi - Imperial jewel

Over 2,700 years ago there is a story that a man named 'He' found a large piece of jade. Mr. He presented his block of rough jade to King Li of the Chu kingdom (c. 700BCE). As punishment for presumed deception and impudence the first ruler had He's left foot chopped off. When the next ruler King Wu came to power Mr. He again presented the jade and the same thing happened so poor Mr. He had his right foot cut off too. Understandably upset, Mr. He remained adamant that the stone was a very special jade. The following, third king of Chu put the matter to the final test and had the stone cut and polished. It proved to be a flawless piece of white jade from which a large ritual disk with a central hole (called a 'bi') was carved. From then on it was called 和氏璧 Hé shì bì 'Mr. He's bi'.

The jade became famous all over China. Much later King Zhaoxiang of Qin (r. 306-251BCE) decided that he wanted to possess this famous piece of jade. He heard that the king of Zhao had recently taken it from the kingdom of Chu and offered 15 cities in exchange for the 'Heshibi'. The Zhao king agreed but once king Zhaoxing had his hands on the jade he reneged on the agreement. The Zhao king was affronted but managed to take back the jade by carrying out a wily deception (some say by claiming the jade had a tiny flaw in it). From these stories two idioms entered the Chinese language: 价值连城 Jià zhí lián chéng 'as valuable as several cities' meaning 'priceless' and 完璧归赵 Wán bì guī zhào 'returning the jade bi back to Zhao' meaning 'returning something to its rightful owner'.



Legend has it that the first Qin Emperor had the jade bi carved to become a seal and this became known as the 传国玉玺 Chuán guó yù xǐ the great 'Ancestral seal of the nation'. This sounds physically impossible as a round disk cannot really be made into a square seal so it seems two legends of precious jade heirlooms became conflated. It bore the inscription 受命于天既寿永昌 Shòu mìng yú tiān jì shòu yǒng chāng 'By the grace of heaven, Emperor, living long and forever flourishing'.

The seal became the chief Imperial crown jewel for many centuries until it was lost sometime before the Ming dynasty. An Emperor's possession of the great jade seal was akin to having the Mandate of Heaven.

Rob Stallard

Janice Dickson – A tribute

Janice Dickson, the Chairman of the Scotland-China Association (SCA) died suddenly at home in Edinburgh on the 3rd December 2019. The news came as a complete surprise to me as I had spoken with her on the phone and exchanged e mails as late as 11th November. I had no idea she was ill with cancer. She was also a member of SACU and occasionally passed on news items to me for China Eye. A service to her memory was held in the Lorimer Chapel at Warriston Crematorium in Edinburgh on 18th December 2019. The chapel was filled to capacity; an indication of her extensive network of family, colleagues, contacts and friends.

Janice Arkell was born in 1944 at Harrow, London and attended Sussex University to read history. As well as China, she had a keen interest in Egypt and Germany. She married Ian Dickson of Ian Dickson Travel Ltd in September 1972. Ian died in June 2011 and Janice managed the company since then. She joined the SCA after arranging a Ladies Delegation to China in 1987 led by Lady Provost Catherine Mackay.



Janice presented our Tibetan guide with traditional Scottish headgear (SCA Tibet Tour 2009)

I first met Janice in early 2009. She was conducting a delegation of the Chinese Peoples Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) around the UK, which included London and meeting SACU members. Over lunch, I mentioned that I had booked to go to Tibet with the China Travel Service, but the tour had been cancelled. Janice immediately said, 'Come with us'. The SCA was arranging a tour later that year to Tibet. I wanted to meet my future travelling companions and so I attended the SCA AGM in June that year instead of the SACU AGM which was on the same day that year.

The Tibet Tour started in Beijing, where we were warmly met by Janice's local agent. Following a day or two in Beijing we travelled to Lhasa over two days by train. We were some of the first travellers on this newly opened rail route. After visiting several places in Tibet, we travelled back home via Chengdu. The tour included some 'official' business as we met representatives of the CPAFFC in each of the places we stayed, including Beijing, Lhasa and Chengdu. Janice had met virtually every CPAFFC representative before and was greeted like an old friend. In Chengdu, we visited the Jianchuan

Museum Cluster – a large group of about 12 individual museums. They were set up from the private collections of Mr Fan Jian Chuan, a prominent Chengdu entrepreneur. Of course, Janice knew him well and he spent some time with us.

Janice was managing director of Ian Dickson Travel Ltd in Edinburgh, which had specialised in tours to China for many years. I believe that the company was involved with the Queen's Tour to China in 1986. Janice not only arranged tours to China for both tourists and business people, she also arranged itineraries for Chinese trade delegations and Chinese officials around the UK. On one occasion, a delegation's itinerary included Manchester and she asked me to arrange for local Chinese speakers to meet them. I was able to do this, but Janice warned that they had already changed the itinerary and date several times. In the end, they cancelled the trip at the last minute. Janice had booked, planes, hotels, trains and minibuses with drivers and interpreters for them. She seemed not in the least bit annoyed and said that this was 'quite normal.' She was not only a friendly highly competent professional but also had tremendous patience and understood her customers. She had numerous contacts in China both as managing director of Dickson Travel Ltd and also as Chairman of the SCA.



Janice (on the right) on the New Silk Route Tour 2018

Looking at the SCA's 50th Anniversary booklet, it seems that almost every year from the mid-1980s onwards, there was a visit of the CPAFFC to Scotland or the SCA to China. No doubt Janice made the arrangements. She thus contributed substantially to people-to-people contact and friendship between the peoples of China and Scotland and of course the UK in general.



At the Baillie University, Beijing with Zoe Reed and the university president (SACU Needham Tour 2013)

Janice made the travelling arrangements for the SACU tours in 2013 (Needham tour), in 2016 (SACU 50th Anniversary Tour) and in 2018 (New Silk Road Tour). She came herself on the Needham Tour and New Silk Road Tour. I went on all of these tours and also three Meridian Society tours to China. Janice arranged my international flights for each of these trips and also applied for my Chinese Visa on a number of occasions. Before joining tour groups, I usually visited locations on my own, such as Beijing, Guangzhou, Nanjing and Tianjin. Janice was always able to book the most convenient and economical flights, hotels and also trains in China. She was always helpful with useful suggestions and nothing was too much trouble. The SACU New Silk Road Tour in 2018 would never have taken place without her patience and flexibility.

She was Chairman of the SCA since 1991 and was central to many of its activities, especially in Edinburgh. She will be sadly missed at Ian Dickson Travel and in the SCA but also in SACU. She leaves behind a daughter, Miranda and two grandchildren, Violet and Zachary to whom we extend our condolences. I have attended the SCA AGM every year since 2009 and hope to continue to do so. However, it will not be the same without Janice.

Walter Fung

Riding out the coronavirus epidemic in China's capital

by Tamara Treichel

Tamara is a member of SACU who has already contributed a number of articles for China Eye on a variety of subjects. She has lived in Germany and the U.S. but is currently living in Beijing and working in the media industry there.

When news broke of a mysterious virus causing respiratory illness said to have originated in Wuhan, I was about to enjoy several days off due to the Spring Festival holiday at home in Beijing. I vaguely remember Beijing having only two cases at the time. I was chatting with a Chinese coworker, deliberating whether I should return the movie tickets for the Spring Festival blockbusters my boyfriend and I had booked online. "Nature has turned against us," a Chinese coworker observed. I wasn't so sure about that. "Nature is not for or against... it just is," I mused. While nature I believed was ambivalent, I would discover that people's attitudes towards the virus it had produced definitely weren't!

There were bags of face masks stashed on an office desk and some coworkers were helping themselves. Some of my coworkers were already wearing masks in the office, and there was a sense of nervousness and hush. No one encouraged me to take any masks; but in retrospect, I think I should have been more proactive and asked to help myself. However, a Chinese

coworker kindly offered me some from her bag, and I gratefully accepted.

Little did I know how valuable these face masks would be to me and my boyfriend Jackie in the coming weeks, as people made a run for the pharmacies to stock up on them. (Note: the usefulness of face masks in preventing the spread of the new virus, dubbed novel coronavirus, is controversial, but in China they are widely believed to be effective. Another issue is what types of masks work.) When I visited a pharmacy and convenience store, they were sold out and had no idea when new stock would come in. Searching for masks would become somewhat of a search for the Holy Grail for us in China. "Good afternoon my foreign friend... be a bit careful these days," a Wechat message from a Chinese acquaintance read several days later. It was a security guard at my local Yonghegong subway station whom I was friendly with, and whenever I met her in the subway station, we would wave to each other. She would later ask me by text whether I knew where to buy masks – maybe she thought I had connections abroad? – but I was sorry to tell her I couldn't help. I was relieved to see, however, that she later found a rather high-tech mask which she wore while working in the subway.

Things started to get bizarre as the virus spread during the Spring Festival. It turned out I didn't have to worry about going to the movies as the theaters were promptly closed, as well as the Yonghegong Temple across the street, which attracts thousands on the first day of the lunar new year. Temple fairs were canceled. My boyfriend and I spent the Spring Festival hunkered down in our hutong house, living off the food we had stockpiled for the festival, watching movies, and holding our breath with the rest of China.



At the end of January, the U.S. embassy issued a level-four travel advisory for China, warning Americans not to travel to the country, and Americans in Wuhan were subsequently ferried out on evacuation flights, as were nationals of other countries. China's neighbors started to close their borders. Flights out of China were starting to be suspended, and my mother asked me whether my boyfriend and I wanted to come spend several months with her in the U.S. until the virus had disappeared.

My gut reaction was to take her up on this offer, but the logistics of it were complicated. My boyfriend, who is Chinese, was highly unlikely to get a visa on such short notice, or at all under these circumstances. So I made the choice of riding out the epidemic with my boyfriend here in Beijing; after all, he wasn't from Beijing, and leaving him stranded alone under these circumstances was not an option for me. "Thank you for sticking things out with me, I am very moved," Jackie told me one morning, with tears in his eyes.

I read an article in the Beijinger magazine that stated that as of February 9, 70 percent of foreigners in Beijing chose to stay, either out of conviction that things would look up soon or because they simply couldn't leave for various reasons. Some however did push the panic button and left, for example, I had an American acquaintance who scrambled to get on a flight back home because his mother was seriously ill and he didn't know whether he would be able to see her again in the next couple of months. Upon landing, he put himself under a quarantine.



My Chinese and foreign coworkers became part of a successful "work from home experiment" that has been encouraged throughout China during the epidemic. I edited news stories from my home computer and communicated with my coworkers in a Wechat group of over forty people. Every day, I also sent a Wechat message to my office saying I was in good health. I felt very fortunate that I was not temporarily out of work like many others and that my employer was acting in a morally and socially responsible way by having us work from home to avoid the risk of infection.

Part of my job was keeping up with the news cycle. Every morning when I woke up, the latest numbers of infected and deceased flashed across my phone, and the media reports coming out of Wuhan and Hubei at large were harrowing. Especially poignant were the stories of healthcare workers infected in the line of duty, e.g. a 29-year-old doctor who was engaged to be married and died from COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus. When my boyfriend and I were first exposed to such stories, we were shell-shocked as they were taking place not too far away, but gradually became used to the "new normal" of living in the midst of an epidemic.

Misinformation and conflicting reports were rampant, and like many, I did not know whom to believe and which clickbait article to read next. Common sense was our best friend – practicing good hygiene, such as washing one's hands, avoiding mass gatherings, trying to stay at home and sustaining one's physical and mental health. Not giving in to irrational fear and hysteria but remaining vigilant. A sense of routine and interacting with others as part of the infinitely large cyberspace community also helped.

Compared to those in Hubei Province, we in Beijing have been very fortunate – we had access to goods we needed, could leave our apartments, move relatively freely, and could still run errands. However, everyday errands, like shopping or going to the ATM were fraught with complication – we had to pass through fever checks and barricades to get out of our buildings or hutongs, and show residence cards that our community center issued to us, and I was now nervous about the germs on the ATM keypad so I used a pen to put in my pass code.

Non-essential doctor's and dentist visits were indefinitely postponed, as well as appointments with the hairdresser. I saw an elderly man on the street walking his poodle, which was also wearing a mask, a protective outfit and little slippers as there was uncertainty whether pets could also contract the virus.



Activities at home included emailing concerned friends abroad and assuring them of our safety, checking in with local friends, reading and writing, exercising in our small private courtyard, and engaging in home improvement. We also interacted with my boyfriend's family back in the Xi'an area as well as Chinese and foreign friends via Wechat. Not surprisingly, our bonds grew stronger during this difficult time. These are some of their reactions to the crisis. When I called to check in on my Chinese landlord, who was in his 70's, his voice was laced with fear. "Don't go out," he advised me. "Not now."

One African friend who was a father to two teenage boys texted me: "Boys are stressed with staying at home and doing homework all day. I do not know how to cheer them up. They played all computer games and got tired of them." He observed that one of his boys started to laugh hysterically after napping.

Sino File of Current Events compiled by Walter Fung

The Coronavirus

It is so unfortunate that this issue arose during the Spring Festival. It could not have happened at a worse time. However, the action taken by the Chinese authorities has generally met with approval, if not praise by the rest of the world. The comparison with SARS is discussed and it seems that the lessons learnt have been taken into account. The world is astonished and impressed that a 1,000-bed hospital has been erected in 'days'. The Mayor of Wuhan has actually apologised for not acting faster and he offered to resign. It seems that the world has recognised that what happened could not have been foreseen and I have not seen any reports even in the western press criticizing him.

The director-general of the World Health Organisation in Geneva has congratulated the Chinese government for the extraordinary measures taken to contain the outbreak despite the severe social and economic impact these measures are having on the Chinese people.

According to the I newspaper (31/1/20), the health chief of Huanggang city, which has 500 reported cases, was sacked by the Chinese government. This was following public anger because she could not answer questions about the outbreak on state television.

The city and provincial (Hubei) have been open regarding information and reported the situation as it developed. Many medical researchers around the world are working frantically to develop a vaccine. They are able to do this, because medics in China quickly published the vital genome of the virus, presumably via the internet. Laboratories in Colindale, London and in Hong Kong University believe they are close to developing a vaccine, but it takes time to test and approve its safety. (*Press coverage has been extensive but the report in I on 25/1/20 was especially useful.*)

The I newspaper of 30/1/20 reported that some Chinese Nationals living in the UK have been 'stigmatised' when they cough or sneeze. People appear to be afraid that they will spread the virus!

The coronavirus issue is now very much ongoing and has become a global issue with new developments every day.

The Shanghai Cooperative Organisation (SCO)

Many people have not even heard of this, yet it includes more than half the population of the world, 20% of GDP and 60% of the Eurasia land mass. Originally it was five countries, but now members are: China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Observer States: Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia. Dialogue Partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey. There is an SCO Secretariat, an SCO Regional Anti-

A Brazilian friend who lived alone was frustrated because the gym was closed, and he enjoyed socializing there. Even though he could work from home, he preferred going to the office and wearing a mask although it was hard to breathe in them long term. He was confident that the situation would soon return to normal. "We need to cling to that, otherwise we get crazy," he said.

"We know nothing really about the virus," an American friend who had lived in China for decades told me. He had been here during the SARS epidemic and was trying to power through this one by working on his creative projects. "True," I thought. "But we know our own reality." And this was it.

What was greatly concerning was that not only Chinese people around the world, but also foreigners associated with China were being stigmatized because of the virus. One acquaintance from Romania who was still in China and produced content for a local media outlet posted on Wechat that she had become the victim of online abuse from her country fellows by virtue of her relations with China, which she found distressing and demoralizing. I urged her to "ignore the bad and focus on the good," but that was certainly easier said than done!

While the outbreak brought out the worst in people, it could bring out the best. Although I felt helpless and frustrated that there wasn't a lot I could personally do to help, I was touched by the many people, Chinese and foreign, who had expressed their concern for us, and I tried to do my modest part to help boost morale. Here are two examples.

I have a young coworker who was originally from Wuhan, Hubei, the epicenter of the outbreak, and I made a point of checking in on him via Wechat several times to see how his family were doing back in Hubei. He said his family were safe, but isolated at home. He had spent the Spring Festival alone in Beijing because the virus had "killed" his travel plans of going home.

Similarly, I tried to encourage a Chinese friend whose English name was Anna and who was under indefinite lockdown in the city of Yichang, Hubei. I was impressed by how stoic and appreciative she was. Anna told me that she bought a small piece of meat for a whopping RMB 190 (about 27 U.S. dollars/21 GBP) but was understanding because the drivers' efforts to deliver goods to the city posed a health risk for them. When the drivers return from their run, she said, they would have to be quarantined for 14 days.

Without a question, it must be psychologically hard not to be able to leave one's apartment except maybe once or twice a week to buy a limited selection of groceries at inflated prices. Still, for Anna and many of us in China, optimism prevailed. "With your encouragement, everything will be fine, you guys also take care of your health, we can do it together," Anna texted me.

Terrorist Structure, an Interbank Consortium and a Business Council.

The SCO was originally the ‘Shanghai Five’ when it was established in 1996 in Shanghai. Regional security has always been top of the agenda whilst maintaining peace and stability in the region. In addition, economic cooperation and cultural exchanges are taking place through people-to-people contact. The 19th Summit meeting was held in June 2019 in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan.

Driverless train capable of 350kph in China.

This high-speed bullet train connects Beijing with Zhangjiakou, two of the main host cities of the 2022 Winter Olympics. Journey time has been slashed from three hours to just 47 minutes. The Jing-Zhang high-speed railway also stops at Yanqing, another host city, along with seven other stations, including Badaling Chang Cheng, home to one of the Great Wall of China’s most popular sections. Although the trains are completely autonomous, stopping, starting and adjusting speed, a human driver will be on board every train.



A Chinese High-speed train in Nanjing Station (WF)

As well as being driverless, some of the trains are also “smart”, offering onboard 5G, intelligent lighting, touch-screen control panels and wireless charging docks. There are also more than 2,500 sensors onboard to collect data and detect any “operational abnormalities”. The first trains started running on 30 December 2019, with around 30 services between Beijing and Zhangjiakou every day. The line, which took four years to construct, is part of China’s preparation for hosting its first Winter Olympics. The trains have been designed with extra storage space for sports equipment and a dining car that can be converted into a mobile media centre for journalists.

This is not the only high-speed Chinese rail line. In July 2019, *The Independent* reported that plans had been announced for a high-speed link that could see bullet trains reaching speeds of 800kph. This would make the trains the fastest in the world and almost matching the speed of commercial planes.

Plans for a rail link between Chengdu and Chongqing in China’s Sichuan province involves maglev (magnetic levitation) technology, which is currently used on the line between Shanghai Pudong airport and the city. This is currently the fastest commercial train in the world. The Chengdu to Chongqing train would run at between 600 to 800kph, halving the journey time between the two cities to just half an hour. *(From the internet 10/1/20)*

From the British Press

Belfast welcomes Chinese business

Belfast’s lord mayor, Nuala McAllister has welcomed a ‘new era’ in relations with China after a three-day summit on business links between China and Northern Ireland. The UK-China regional leaders meeting in Belfast brought together 100 delegates to develop links between the two countries focusing on technology. *(From I 4/12/19).*

China to crack down on single-use plastics

China will ban non-degradable bags in major cities by the end of the year. The ban will be extended to all cities by 2022 and to fresh produce markets by 2025. Restaurants and fast-food outlets will not be able to use single-use straws by the end of 2020 and plastic utensils and courier packing be phased out. The policy requires restaurants in all towns and cities to reduce their consumption of single-use plastic items by 30% by 2025. Reusable solutions are being urged. *(From I 18/1/20)*

London best for Chinese yuan

London is still the largest world centre for renminbi clearing. Over three trillion yuan passed through the City between September-November 2019. A increase of 22.7% over the period last year. *(From The Daily Telegraph 31/1/20)*

Huawei revenues set too hit high

Despite sanctions, Huawei’s revenues will hit a record \$122 billion; its chairman Eric Xu announced the forecast for sales in 2019, up by 18%. He said that the figure of 850 billion yuan (£92 billion) was below initial projections, but it showed that the business remained solid and stood strong in the face of adversity. Because of the US ban on sales to Huawei, it was predicted in May 2019 that sales would be flat. 2020 is likely to be a difficult year; however, Huawei has been able to continue to buy parts from American companies that make them outside the US. Mr Xu added that the US government ban is strategic and long-term, but it is a great opportunity for Huawei to motivate itself and ‘build up some muscle’. *(From The Times 1/1/20)*

Chinese lead ‘attainment 8’ in British schools

A recent report from the National Education Opportunity Network details achievement of school boys and girls from different social and ethnic backgrounds. The rating of ‘attainment 8’ in school league tables is based on average point scores across eight GCSEs. The best results were achieved by Chinese girls from well-off backgrounds who had a score of 66.7; however, Chinese girls from poorer backgrounds achieved a score of 60.8. The scores of boys from poorer backgrounds (i.e. had free school meals) were: Chinese boys 52.9, Indian boys 44.3, black Africans 37.7, white British boys 28.2 and black Caribbean boys 28.1. White boys from more affluent homes had a score of 45.3. *(From The Times 30/12/19)*

China’s population tops 1.4 billion

The National Bureau of Statistics recorded that the Chinese mainland population reached 1.4 billion at the end of 2019. This, however, is the third consecutive year when the overall number of births among China’s working population dropped by 890,000 people. *(From I 18/1/20)*

Pinyin developer dies, aged 111 years

Zhou Youguang, a Chinese linguist and considered the father of the Pinyin system to represent the pronunciation of Chinese characters has died in Beijing aged 111 years. He was born into a wealthy family in 1906 during the Qing Dynasty. He worked in finance in Chongqing and in the late 1940s even had a spell working for a Chinese bank on Wall Street. He returned to China after 1949 and worked as a linguist. In 1955 he was appointed to co-chair a committee to develop a Romanised system for Mandarin Chinese, which was being promoted as the national language (Putonghua). Pinyin has helped boost literacy in China from about 20% in the 1950s to over 90% today. *(From The Financial Times 16/1/20)*

Note; A major article on Zhou Youguang appeared in the July 2019 issue of *China Today*. Also, Peter Hessler in his book, *Oracle Bones* (published 2006 by John Murray), interviewed him in China.

Single women should be allowed to freeze eggs.

Zhou Yuan, a delegate of the Provincial People’s Congress in Zhejiang has proposed that single women should have the same reproductive rights as married ones to help boost China’s low birth rate. Chinese law allows only married women or those suffering from cancer to receive fertility treatment including egg freezing, which has to be paid for themselves. He

believes single women could then better juggle university, work and family. This was reported in *The Paper*, a state-run news site. Although the one-child policy was relaxed in 2016, single mothers are frowned on and married women must be at least 20 years of age. *(From I 17/1/20)*

End of poverty in Jiangsu?

Jiangsu province, population about 80 million claims to have only 17 persons living below the extreme poverty line, as of 31 December 2019. This would make Jiangsu the first province to achieve President Xi Jinping’s goal of eradicating poverty by 2020. Extreme poverty is defined as having a household income below 6,000 yuan (£660), which is about 50 cents more than the World Bank’s definition of \$1.90 per day.

The claim was posted on Weibo (China’s equivalent of Twitter), but was quickly questioned and eventually removed. *(From I 11/1/20)*

Tesla in China

China is the world’s largest market for electric vehicles. Tesla’s Shanghai factory began delivering Model 3s to Chinese customers in December 2019, just less than a year after construction of the site began. Tesla’s Model Y, a compact sports utility vehicle (SUV) is to be built in Shanghai. It is possible that this vehicle will sell more than all of the other cars Tesla makes combined, because people probably prefer a SUV rather than a saloon. Elon Musk, the co-founder and chief executive of Tesla has said that Tesla would build a design centre in China. *(From The Times 8/1/20)*

N.B. The *I newspaper* of 7 December 2019, reports that Chinese-built Tesla Model 3 cars will receive state subsidies. The model is on a list recommended for subsidies for new energy vehicles.

China eases two-child policy

Chinese couples wishing to have more than the two children permitted by law can now do so without the threat of losing their jobs as Beijing tackles a growing demographic problem. More than 30 provincial, municipal and regional governments have revised their family planning regulations to scrap the clause that those with state jobs would be fired if they violate the two-child policy. Now offenders may be warned but no longer face losing their jobs. Fines would also be drastically cut. Nearly 40 million people work for the state and another 40 million work for state-owned companies. *(From The Times 8/1/20)*

Yunnan schools raise awareness of physical fitness

In Yunnan province new guidelines on high school admissions put physical fitness on a par with maths, Chinese and English. Out of a total possible score of 700 points, physical fitness is now worth 100. The more points a student has, the better the secondary school he or she can attend. This is an effort to improve obesity rates of up to 20% and sedentary lifestyles amongst young people. *(From The Times 7/1/20)*

Fishing ban to revive depleted Yangtze

Commercial fishing is to be banned along the 3,900-mile long river, the world's third longest, to protect aquatic life. Fishing has been phased out in various sections and branches of the river during 2019, but from 1st January, all commercial fishing will be banned for the next decade. Thousands of fishermen are being forcibly retired. Overfishing, construction and sand excavation have contributed to deterioration of fish stocks and 92 species of aquatic life are believed to have become extinct. The ban will affect 14 provinces. The government has said that it will offer compensation and retraining. The river would be policed and the ban enforced with fines of 50,000 to 500,000 yuan (£55,000). It is hoped that the ban will replenish stocks with two to three generations of fish. *(From The Times 24/12/19)*

Chinese Minister of Science and Technology visits Manchester University

Mr Wang Zhigang recently visited Manchester University's advanced materials research facilities. He was accompanied by officials from the Chinese Embassy and was welcomed by President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell. He met Nobel Prize winning physicist Professor Sir Andre Geim, who was one of the team which originally isolated graphene in 2004. Mr Wang and his delegation visited the National Graphene Institute, Manchester Institute of Biotechnology and the Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre. *From University of Manchester Magazine Issue 13, Autumn 2019)*

HS2 to be built by Chinese?

The UK Transport secretary has played down suggestions that the Chinese state railway company could be called in to rescue HS2. The Chinese have stated that they could build the line in five years for less money, according to a letter seen by *Building* magazine. However, the Department for Transport said that it has not been discussed. Certain officials have commented that the Chinese don't have the UK legal system,

planning or property regulations. *(From The Times 17/2/20)*

China's footprint in Turkey

The number of Chinese tourists to Turkey has grown from 60,000 a decade ago to over 400,000 last year. China helped build Turkey's first stretch of high-speed rail and Huawei is involved in this country's 5G mobile network. Chinese investors are active in marble quarries to use in luxury flats being built in China. Last year China's central bank provided Turkey with a currency-swap agreement and it is expected that Chinese money will soon pour into Turkey in connection with the Belt and Road initiative. *(From The Economist 1/2/20)*

Beijing to restore relations with Kiribati ?

President Maamau of Kiribati has met President Xi Jinping in Beijing and it is hoped that ties will be restored. They were broken when Kiribati recognised Taiwan in 2003. There is a disused Chinese space tracking station on the Pacific island state. *(From The Times 7/1/20)*

From the Chinese Press

Belt and Road makes progress

China has signed agreements on Belt and Road cooperation with more than 160 countries and organisations. This was an announcement on Weibo, social media platform, on 24th December 2019 by Wang Wen, Executive Dean of the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University.

The 2018 Beijing summit of the Forum on African Cooperation was a great success and so far, 44 African countries and the African Union Commission have signed cooperation documents with China. *(From Beijing Review 2/1/20)*

New freight service in Kenya

The first cargo train services from Nairobi to the Naivasha Inland Container Depot (ICD) will boost connectivity and help the growth of Kenya's interior. On December 17th Uhuru Kenyatta, the president of Kenya and Wang Yong, the special envoy of President Xi Jinping commissioned the freight operation of the Chinese-built Nairobi-Naivasha Section, an extension of the Mombasa-Nairobi standard gauge railway. The Naivasha ICD will relieve pressure on the port of Mombasa and take the cargo nearer to Uganda and South Sudan. The construction of the railway had created more than 40,000 local jobs. *(From China Daily Global Weekly 20-26/12/19)*

Power from space

China plans to build a 200-ton megawatt space-based solar power station by 2035. The power station will capture the Sun's energy and convert it to micro-waves or lasers and then beam it wirelessly to the Earth's surface. This was announced by Wang Li at the sixth China-Russia Engineering Technology Forum in Xiamen, Fujian province, on 25/26 November 2019. He added that, 'We hope to strengthen international cooperation and make scientific and technological breakthroughs so that humankind can achieve the dream of limitless clean energy soon.' The concept of collecting solar power in space was popularised by science fiction author Isaac Asimov in 1941. *(From Beijing Review 12/12/19)*

Shell and China develop Europe's biggest battery

Royal Dutch Shell is cooperating with China Huaneng Group and the Chinese investment fund CNIC to develop a 100-megawatt battery near the village of Minety, in Wiltshire, to provide back-up electricity to the National Grid when wind and solar power dip.

The battery can be charged up in off-peak times when electricity is cheap and discharged at peak times. The battery will be constructed and operated by China Huaneng Group but this company will not have day-to-day control. Shell and its subsidiary company Limejump would control the battery remotely via the internet. The battery can power 10,000 homes for a day. *(From The Times 17/2/20)*

World's largest cabin for deep-sea research

China has developed the largest cabin for manned deep-sea research. It is capable of carrying three people deeper than 10,000 metres. It has recently passed all tests and will be able to explore the Mariana Trench in the Pacific Ocean. Further work is proceeding to install equipment both inside and outside the cabin. An estimated 10 hours will be necessary to travel to and from the depth of 10,000 metres. *(From China Today December 2019)*

Renewable energy generation

A report on the enforcement of renewable energy law was submitted to the bimonthly session of the National People's Congress Standing Committee on 24th December. The power in China from renewable energy resources amounted to nearly 1.87 trillion kWh in 2018, which represented 26.7% of China's total power output for that year. *(From Beijing Review 2/1/20)*

House renovation

China's housing authorities pledged to speed up efforts to renovate dilapidated rural houses on 23rd December 2019 as the deadline to eradicate absolute poverty by 2020 approaches. A housing minister has said that China will ensure that renovation work on 1.35 million dilapidated rural homes will be completed in 2020. Since the 18th National Congress, China has supported 17.94 million rural households in renovating their homes and improved garbage collection and sewage treatment. *(From Beijing Review 2/1/20)*

China tops 1.4 billion people

The population of China exceeded 1.4 billion at the end of last year, increasing by 4.67 million from the year before to 1.40005 billion. This excludes Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and Chinese living overseas. However, the working-age population, i.e. those between the ages of 16 and 59 decreased by 890,000. The number of people aged 60 and over accounts for 18.1% of the population. A total of 14.65 million babies were born in 2019, which was 580,000 fewer than the previous year, a decline for the third consecutive year. China allowed couples to have two children in 2016 to address concerns of an aging population. *(From Beijing Review 30/2/20)*

Cultural Tourism growing in China

Chinese consumers are embracing domestic cultural tourism taking special interest in sites with an historical significance. Being topped all other cities in the 2019 list of destinations, followed by Shanghai, Chengdu, Hangzhou and Xi'an. The most popular site was the Palace Museum in Beijing followed by the Shanghai Disney Resort, then the Giant Panda Research Base in Chengdu. Fourth place was Chongqing's Hongya Cave scenic spot. 'Red Tourism' which follows places associated with revolutionary activities is growing in popularity. These include Yan'an, Zunyi and Zaozhuang. China has 33,315 revolutionary sites and relics and statistics show that more than 800 million visits to these sites are made every year on average. *(From Beijing Review 30/1/20)*

President Xi holds talks with Greece

On 11th November 2019, President Xi Jinping held talks with President Prokypis Pavlopoulos in Athens. Xi emphasised the importance of cooperation between the two countries, which are the homes of two ancient civilisations. Cooperation in areas such as the economy, trade and culture will be strengthened, as well as Greece's active participation in the Belt and Road Initiative. *(From China Today December 2019)*

Shale gas production promising

The Fuling shale gas project operating in China's largest shale gas field generated over six billion cubic meters of gas in 2018. At the end of 2018, Fuling, near Chongqing, had produced more than 21.5 billion cubic metres in total. This is helping the move away from coal for generating energy. It is estimated that 3 billion cubic metres of shale gas is equivalent to 6 billion tons of coal in energy generation and also reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 4.2 million tons. *(From Beijing Review 10/1/19)*

Robots and drones selling well in China

A survey conducted by Alibaba's think tank AliResearch surveyed consumption over the first 11 months of 2019 in about 3,000 county-level areas. Robot vacuum sales in the top 10 Chinese counties reached 100 million yuan (\$14.6 million) and stir-fry robots were also selling well. In northeast counties, agricultural drones were beginning to have an impact. *(From Beijing Review 10/1/19)*

Copyright industries

In 2017, copyright industries added over six trillion yuan (\$872.2 billion) in value to the Chinese economy, accounting for 7.35% of GDP. Compared to 2013 when the figure was about four trillion yuan (\$581.5 billion), the value just four years later represented a 42% increase. Core copyright industries, which include publishing, recording, film, TV broadcasting and software accounted for 3.8 trillion yuan (\$552.5 billion) in 2017. The National Copyright Administration cited actions taken by authorities in copyright protection and people's awareness has led to the development of the copyright industries. *(From Beijing Review 10/1/19)*

Malaria eliminated in Xinjiang

Health authorities in Xinjiang announced on 21st December 2019 that the region had eliminated malaria, following an appraisal of a 19-year clean bill of health. China's central government had made malaria elimination a priority in response to the UN Millennium Development Goals and the World Health Organisation initiative. There were cases of malaria during 2011 to 2019 in Xinjiang but they were all cases which had originated outside the region. Malaria was prevalent for many decades, especially during the 1950s and 1960s. *(From Beijing Review 2/12/20)*

Spring Festival numbers up

The Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism expects about 450 million people travelling for the Spring Festival. This is up 7.6% on last year (2019), when 415 million people travelled. The rise in the number of

people travelling can be mainly attributed to the rise in people's disposable income. In 2000 the per capita GDP of China was \$856, by 2019, it had increased to over \$10,000. The Spring Festival is a traditional time for family reunions and Spring Festival Eve dinners with family and friends. *(From China Daily Global Weekly 24-30/1/20). This report was written before the coronavirus emergency.*

Chinese U3A, the CAUA

It seems that China has an equivalent of the University of the Third Age (U3A). In Beijing 2019, a new policy allowed people over 60 to use the buses free of charge and Guo Huijian, aged 62, takes bus 61B to Haidian Senior University to take painting classes twice a week. She is also enrolling for calligraphy at this educational institution which has 2,700 mature students. Courses also include photography and seal engraving and rubbing. Each course costs 300 yuan (\$44) per term. In China today, there are 76,000 senior universities with eight million students. As China's senior population grows, so there is a growing demand for these universities, according to China Association of the Universities for the Aged (CAUA). There are 250 million elderly people in China and analysts believe 50 million could eventually enrol in classes. *(From Beijing Review 30/1/20)*

Guidelines for health care for the elderly

Recently eight government departments, including the National Health Commission, jointly issued guidelines to establish and improve health care systems in China. By the end of 2018, there were 250 million people in China aged 60 years and over. Life expectancy at this time had reached 77 years. The basic guidelines agreed should be in place by 2022 and in addition, the number of health service institutions will be greatly increased. *(From China Today December 2019)*

Sinophile by Ivor and Flo Kenna

Beijing Review (BR) of 31st October 2019 contained an amazing item of news; 'The piano at the entrance of the Light of Internet Expo Center in Wuzhen (WIC), a new exhibition venue opened this year, had an unusual player. To the amazement of visitors, two huge robotic arms positioned before the keyboard moved dexterously over the keys and began playing a popular Chinese folk song. The two arms of the industrial robot were remotely controlled through 5G. Thanks to the negligible latency of the technology, they could play in perfect coordination. It was one of the many displays of 5G application at the WIC, which was fully covered by a 5G network. Other applications ranged from robot patrols and

remote surgery to ultra-high live streaming and automatic delivery, making Wuzhen a microcosm of a wondrous future world.'

No wonder the UK government wants a Chinese firm to help out with the UK's 5G despite US disapproval.

From BR of 14th November we learn that, 'sands from the desert cannot be used in concrete because it is too slippery. The sand used in concrete mostly comes from the rivers.' The Ministry of Water Resources has instructed that not too much sand is to be extracted from the Yangtze River. Later on in the same issue, old friend of SACU, Martin Jacques, is quoted: 'The rise of China has offered the world a new vision as, instead of following the obsolete path of imperialism and colonialism to copy the development plan of Western countries, China has followed its own path, drawing on its vast experience.'

More good news later on in the issue: we learn that Italy, one of the guest countries of honour at the Second CIIE is the first Group of Seven member to join the Belt and Road Initiative.

Another surprise in BR of 21st November: China has emerged as the world's largest producer of e-cigarettes, producing 90% of the product worldwide.

According to the editor of BR for 28th November, China is rather more democratic than we are; - 'On China's mainland, a community which usually has 1000 to 5,000 households is managed by a residents' committee of 10 to 20 members elected every three years by residents'. Later on in the issue the magazine reports, 'Brexit and populism are wreaking havoc in Europe, all fuelled by a growing economic crisis. And in the United States, the 2020 election campaign has been hi-jacked by an impeachment procedure, which is bound to fail, except with its ultimate effects on voters'.

From BR of 12th December, we learn that 490 of the world's top 500 companies have investments in China. The Belt and Road Initiative is a guarantee for Chinese companies to go global and foreign countries to develop in China. Also, we learn that Carbon Emissions Intensity in 2018 was 45.8% lower than 2005 levels. This is equivalent to 5.26 billion tons in total carbon dioxide reduction in China.

BR of 12th December reports that China and Russia have become reliable strategic partners, giving each other firm strategic support especially as they have similar stands on major international issues.

There is a fine picture of China's Tianen cargo ship getting loaded at the Lianyongang Port in the eastern province of Jiangsu. The issue features an excellent interview with Martin Jacques entitled, 'Biggest Change in History'.

In BR of 19th December is a good picture of a smart bus in an article on the development of intelligent cities. There is

nothing in particular in BR of 26th December except for 'China-US ties face turbulence throughout 2020'.

January and February 2020 will feature in next China Eye Sinophile. The magazine tends to come out rather late around Chinese New Year.

China Eye Diary

This year is the Year of the Rat. Years are in a sequence of twelve animals: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig.

2021; Year of the Ox
2022, Year of the Tiger
2023, Year of the Rabbit,
2024, Year of the Dragon.
2025, Year of the Snake

Chinese Festivals

4th April, Qing Ming (Tomb Sweeping). In China this year is a three-day national holiday (4-6 April)

1 May is Labour Day, the start of a three -day national holiday (1 May to 4th May).

1st June is Children's Day in China and a national holiday.

25th June is the Dragon Boat Festival and the start of a three-day national holiday (25 June to 27th June)



Dragon Boat Racing (Social life of the Chinese Doolittle 1866)

1st August is Army Day, a national holiday in China.

25th August is Chinese Valentine Day.

1st October is the Mid-Autumn Festival in China and the start of a Golden Week National Holiday (1 October to 8th October).

25th October is Chong Yang (Double Ninth)

Chong Yang is traditionally associated with walking in the hills. In the UK, many Chinese observe it as an autumn tomb sweeping day.

25th December is Christmas Day. It is not a national holiday in China, but you will see many Christmas trees and decorations. Supermarket staff may wear Santa hats. Many UK Chinese celebrate it in the same way as locals.



Chinese New Year 'Lucky Man' in Manchester Chinatown (WF)



Qing Ming at Anfield cemetery Liverpool, April 2018 (WF)

'Tomb Sweeping Festival' (Qing Ming) by Jennifer Lee Tsai

On the 15th day of the Spring Equinox, rejoice in the Festival of Pure Brightness –
清明 – remember and celebrate your ancestors when they were alive and well.

Repair and upkeep their graves on Tomb Sweeping Day, pray to your loved ones, make ritual offerings with the burning of incense and paper money.

Bring me a willow branch to ward off evil spirits who may wander in the earthly realm, perhaps a pomegranate or two, fly a coloured kite in the blue Spring sky.

Beseech those who are departed to bless those who remain, Bring me chrysanthemums to brighten the April day. See how the dead are with us, still.

Jennifer Lee Tsai is a British Chinese Liverpool- based poet, literary critic and editor, to whom acknowledgements are due.

There are Chinese cenotaphs at Cathays cemetery, Cardiff and in East London cemetery near Plaistow. There is also a large Chinese cemetery at Pantmawr, north Cardiff.



Chinese monument at Everton cemetery, Liverpool (WF)

Chinese Opera

Teresa Ray

Chinese opera is an art form of drama and musical theatre in China with roots going back to the early periods in China's history. There are many kinds of opera in China. According to incomplete statistics, there are more than 360 kinds of operas in various ethnic regions of China. Chinese Opera comes in many forms and each brings its own unique style. Here are brief introductions to six of the popular ones.

1. From the north there is **Beijing Opera or Peking Opera (京剧/京劇)**. It is one of the major operas in China and is considered to be the typical representative of the country's opera art form. Beijing Opera is noted for its colourful, artistic and diversified facial makeup. The different colour facial makeup symbolizes the personalities and characteristics in the opera.

2. From the south-eastern coastal regions there is **Shaoxing opera, also known as Yue Opera (越剧/越劇)**. It is the second most popular opera in China. Originating in Shengzhou, Zhejiang Province. Yue Opera traditionally features all male actors, even playing female roles. As the opera gained popularity, female actors began to replace male actors. Nowadays it is more often than not, an all female casts, even its male roles being performed by female actors.

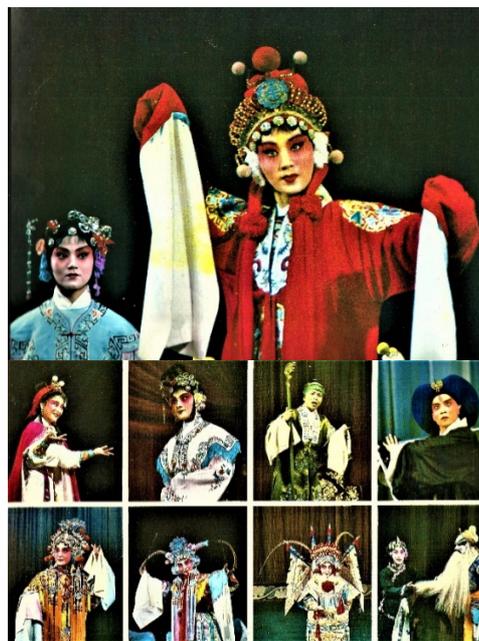
3. **The Yu Opera (豫剧/豫劇) originated in Henan Province** and is the most widely performed type of local opera in China. Yu Opera has the characteristics of being bold and unrestrained. The traditional repertoire mostly comes from historical novels as well as stories on marriage and morality.

4. **Huangmei Opera (黄梅戏/黄梅戲) originated in Huangmei County in Hubei province** during the 18th century. The original Huangmei opera was sung by women when they were picking tea. As Anhui and Hubei are neighbouring provinces, Huangmei Opera of Hubei Province was brought to Anhui. It gradually developed into a new style opera. The music is performed with a pitch that hits high and stays high for the duration of the song. It is unique in the sense that it does not sound like the typical rhythmic Chinese Opera.

5. **Ping Opera or Pingju (评剧/評劇) is a form of Chinese Opera from northern China.** Ping Opera is popular in Beijing, Tianjin, and northeast China. Ping Opera originated from Tangshan city in eastern Hebei province around 1910. It borrowed

the tunes and acting style of Beijing Opera, Hebei Clapper Opera, shadow show and drum melody and from these it developed its own style. Its songs are enunciated clearly and the librettos are easy to understand. In the beginning the female roles in Ping Opera had always been the dominant characters, and their songs are very tuneful and beautiful while the male tunes are the opposite. Slowly, the male tunes have been changed to that of a tuneful melody.

6. From the south there is **Cantonese Opera (粵剧/粵劇)**, It originated from a form of opera called Nanxi opera in the Song Dynasty in the 12th century in Wenzhou, Zhejiang province. During the late 13th century in Ming Dynasty. It slowly migrated to the southern province of Guangdong where it gained wide popularity. Later the popularity spread to Guangxi, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore and Malaysia where overseas Chinese resided. Cantonese Opera takes on the performing technique from movies and stage dramas. Thus, music, singing, martial arts, acrobatics and acting are all featured in Cantonese opera. Most of the plots are based on Chinese history and Chinese classics.



Beijing Opera (From Beijing Radio calendar of 1984)

About the author; Teresa is a long-standing SACU member who contributed to the production of China Now. She is the wife of Keith Ray, a former SACU council member who assisted in the establishment of China Eye in 2004 and designed the cover.

The Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding



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