

# A Journey Between China's Past and Present

Peter Hessler

**M**y students were hungry. In rural China, it was the first time such a statement could be made in the figurative sense, which was the joy of these young people, coming out of poverty and into college. Almost all of them had grown up on farms, along with 800 million other Chinese, but many members of the younger generation would never touch a plow or weed a rice paddy. They were leaving the farms, bound for the cities; by the year 2000, almost 90 million people had already departed the countryside. My students were among the lucky ones—they had been born around the time Mao Zedong died in 1976, and they grew up with Deng Xiaoping's changes, the period known as *Gaige Kaifang*, "Reform and Opening." These reforms began in 1978, and since then China shifted steadily toward free-market economics and increased contact with the outside world.

In a small way, I was part of the new cultural landscape. After years of negotiations, the Chinese had finally invited the U.S. Peace Corps into the country, and in 1996, I became a member of the third group of volunteers to arrive in the People's Republic. Along with another recent college graduate named Adam Meier, I was sent to Fuling, a small city on the Yangtze River. We were the only foreigners at the college; the city hadn't had an American resident for nearly half a century. Our job was to teach college English majors, many of whom had been studying the language for six years without any contact with a foreigner. That's where the hunger came from—they wanted to learn; they wanted to understand; they wanted answers to questions that had piled up over years of isolation. What do Americans think of China? Why are some Americans so rich while others are so poor? Why are guns legal? Is it true that American families abandon elderly people after they reach a certain age? Did the Washington Bullets really change their name to the Wizards because of inner-city violence?

When American parents host their adult children for a family meal, is it true that they hand them a bill afterwards?

It was strange to hear the things they believed, the things they were taught. The college issued a Chinese-published textbook entitled *Survey of Britain and America*, which explained that Americans refer to the lower part of their nation as the "Sunny South," because of the fine weather. According to the book, most people in New England work in factories ("They are good at making watches and clocks"). A chapter about "Food and Dining Customs" began: "Eskimos near the North Pole prefer raw meat to roasted meat of sheep and goats." There was information about American slang ("for example, 'draw one' or 'shoot one' means 'pour a cup of coffee'"). A chapter on religion focused largely on the Jonestown massacre. The U.S. political system was described as "the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie [*sic*]." History was covered quickly, and if some judgments seemed extreme, they at least had the virtue of being easy to remember. ("Theodore Roosevelt carried a mad policy of aggres-

sion and expansion abroad.") In Chapter IV, "Social Problems," the book explored the oddities of the American character:

Homosexuality is a rather strange social phenomenon that most people can hardly understand. It widely spreads. One reason for this may be the despair in marriage or love affairs. Some people fail in marriage and become disappointed with it. ... Another reason may be that some people just want to find and do something 'new' and 'curious,' as the Americans are known as adventurous. So they practised homosexuality as a kind of new excitement.

As a teacher, I often wondered: Where to begin? For decades in China, the outside world had been distant and abstract, but now it appeared in scattered facts and anecdotes. Some were accurate, others half-true; occasionally, something was completely mythical. And every move that Adam or I made became representative of the "real America." Because of us, the Fuling students believed that all Americans play Frisbee, wear baseball caps, and carry Nalgene bottles full of drinking water. They often commented on our brilliant blue eyes. (In fact, mine are about as blue as tree bark, but people see what they expect to see.) When an American friend visited and wrote on the blackboard with his left hand, a ripple of amazement swept through the class—in China, where calligraphy follows strict rules, everybody writes with their right hand. (At another Peace

Corps site with a southpaw teacher, students were given a survey and reported that 50 percent of all Americans are left-handed.) Sometimes we succeeded in breaking down stereotypes; other times, we unknowingly reinforced them. One student named Richard wrote an essay entitled “Why Americans Are So Casual”:

For example, when Mr. Hessler is having class, he can scratch himself casually without paying attention to what others may say. He dresses up casually, usually with his belt dropping and dangling. But, to tell you the truth, it isn't considered a good manner in China, especially in old people's eyes. In my opinion, I think it's very natural.

After finishing the Peace Corps, I moved to Beijing and became a freelance writer, but I always tried to maintain some contact with education. Often I found myself thinking about schools on the other side of the Pacific. Once, I accepted an assignment from the American *Junior Scholastic Magazine*, which asked me to profile two “average” Chinese middle-school students. After I submitted the story, an editor came back with a request: Insert something about the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. I resisted, explaining that the tragedy wasn't so relevant to the children I wrote about; the event was undoubtedly important, but it belonged in a different type of story. It would be like describing the daily routines of a middle-class American kid and then, out of nowhere, embarking on an account of the Rodney King beating.

But it's hard to think about context when certain facts and details are so vivid. Over the years, I've often spoken in American classrooms, and the children's questions sometimes remind me of the way I felt back in Fuling. Is it true that Chinese people eat dogs? Why do the Chinese kill girl babies? Why aren't they allowed to go to church? Do people really go to jail for criticizing the govern-



Local residents in Shanghai walk past a training center of Wall Street English, one of China's leading English language-training companies, April 16, 2009. (Imaginechina via AP Images)

ment? Why do they force migrants to work in terrible factories? Often there's at least a grain of truth behind the questions, but sometimes that's the hardest part. It's also true that the Washington Bullets changed their name because of inner-city violence—but this fact isn't necessarily the best starting point for a kid from rural China hoping to learn something about the United States.

Both of these nations are enormous and complicated, and they have far more diversity than most outsiders realize. As a teacher, it makes for a significant

challenge, but there are a few elements that should make the job easier in the United States. Nobody in an American classroom needs to get stuck with the equivalent of *A Survey of Britain and America*—nowadays there's a greater range of articles and books published about China than ever before. And over the past half-century, many of China's changes have followed distinct trajectories. As a teacher, it helps to think about movement: the various shifts and developments that have led the nation to where it is today.

## Class Activity

Political cartoons often feature stereotypes. How and why do we form them, and, if we choose, how do we change them? How do stereotypes influence relations between countries? While working with the Peace Corps in Fuling, the author observed students who, in their small inland city, had been isolated from direct contact with Westerners. He describes the stereotypes that students on both sides of the Pacific had formed. Based on his descriptions, students should create political cartoons illustrating the stereotypes that Chinese students have had of Americans or that American students have had of Chinese students. Individual cartoons can be compiled into a single cartoon or booklet featuring an introductory essay in which students comment on changing perceptions and the impact of stereotypes on international relations. —*Patience Berkman*

In terms of modern China, the nation's path was changed irrevocably by the Opium War of 1839-1842. This conflict with England marked the beginning of a great decline, when the Chinese, long isolated from European powers, first realized the technological superiority of foreign nations. Interactions with the outside world became intensely traumatic, and reactions swung wildly. Some Chinese blamed the weakness of their own cultural traditions; others felt victimized by immoral foreigners. The outside world could represent a threat, but it could also be an opportunity, and for decades Chinese intellectuals struggled to find some kind of balance.

In such a climate, the rise of Communism was natural. It involved new, foreign concepts, but it also connected with certain Chinese traditions: the importance of group thinking, or the Confucian intellectual distrust of business. And the nationalist isolation of Mao Zedong was appealing after decades of conflicts with foreigners. In the new People's Republic, China closed itself off from much of the world, ending all private enterprise while seeking to redefine the way citizens lived and worked. All of these elements—the fear of foreigners, the sense of disillusionment with China's own traditions—culminated in the chaos and destruction of the 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution.

When a nation attacks both its own traditions and the ideas of the outside world, there isn't much left. By the time

Mao Zedong died in 1976, most Chinese people were exhausted by politics, and the next generation never forgot the lesson. In Fuling, when I asked my students to write about their parents, a girl named Eileen responded:

Today, when we see those days with our own sight, we'll feel our parents' thoughts and actions are somewhat blind and fanatical. But if we consider that time objectively [*sic*], I think, we should understand and can understand them. Each generation has its own happiness and sadness. To younger generation, the important thing is understanding rather than criticising. Our elder generation was unlucky; they didn't own a good chance and circumstance to realize their value.

Deng Xiaoping's Reform and Opening was essentially based on such attitudes. In China, there was never a real historical reckoning—Deng himself said that Mao was 70 percent correct, and 30 percent wrong, and left it at that. He ignored other, more troubling numbers, like the estimated tens of millions who starved to death during the 1958-1961 Great Leap Forward, one of Mao's tragically misguided political campaigns. Deng's goal was to look ahead, and his brand of pragmatism wasn't obsessed with theory or definition. When he initiated free-market reforms, he simply called it "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics." And he

resolved the old uncertainty about foreigners in the simplest way possible. For Deng Xiaoping, there was no question that the opportunities outweighed the threats, and he led the Chinese to see the outside world as a potential marketplace and a source of new ideas.

Mostly, Deng counted on young people like Eileen. He knew that the average Chinese would be grateful for any opportunity to improve their lives, and he essentially turned them loose. Individuals were allowed to start businesses, and farmers could migrate to the cities. Today, more than 130 million Chinese have left the countryside, the largest migration in the history of the world. Most of them have found work in the factory towns of the coastal regions, producing goods for export. In economic terms, there's no question that Reform and Opening has been a success. During the first 30 years of the policy, China's economy grew at an average annual rate of nearly 10 percent, and more people were lifted out of poverty than in any other country, at any other time.

For the most part, the citizens have done the hard work themselves. After Deng Xiaoping, there haven't been any visionary national leaders, and China hasn't been shaped by ground-breaking policies or events. The nation has been driven by the rise of the individual, but the relationship between citizen and government remains essentially passive. People demand precious little of the Communist Party. There's no nationalized health care or retirement pension, and schools are poorly funded. There's no free press, no independent labor unions, no opposition political parties. The gap between rich and poor has grown wider than at any other time in the history of the People's Republic. In factory towns, when I talk with workers, they often say the same thing: "If you have a problem, you have to solve it yourself." And thus far most people seem satisfied with this arrangement. Decades of poverty and political instability created a population of tough, resourceful individuals, and they have been grateful for the opportunity to improve their lives. Even last year,

when people around the world became pessimistic about the financial system, a Pew Research study showed that 82 percent of Chinese viewed their economy as good—the highest rating in all countries surveyed.

As always, it's an issue of context. When I taught in Fuling, that was the hard part about introducing America; scattered facts and anecdotes often obscured the big picture. But my students taught me to avoid seeing China in the same way. For them, the key point of comparison was China's past rather than the outside world, and they were inclined to be grateful that things were better than they had been for their parents. But already this has started to change. English is now a compulsory subject for all Chinese from third grade on, and people have a better understanding of foreign countries than ever before. In local terms, they show signs of demanding more from their leaders. Each year there are tens of thousands of small protests, usually because of some localized instance of government corruption or unfairness. There has yet to be a national equivalent: the Chinese people haven't made any sort of concerted effort to overhaul the larger system, and the Communist Party shows no sign of collapse. But the country's fundamental trajectory—toward economic freedom, increased individual mobility, and a strong sense of self-reliance—suggests that someday bigger changes will occur.

Like many Americans living abroad during the past decade, I've often found myself pessimistic about the future of my own country. In the years after the attacks of September 11th, there have been frequent calls for Americans to learn more about the Middle East. Invariably, the prime inspiration is fear: People need to study Arabic in order to protect against terrorists. It reminds me of the century-long Chinese debate about the outside world, the question of threat versus opportunity. And I know that people don't learn languages because they're afraid. In Fuling, my own students were not motivated by fear, or anger, or xenophobia; those old reactions had, at least to a large degree, been set aside. They studied English because they were hungry to learn about the outside world, and they had faith that education would improve their lives.

For the United States, this has been a period of troubled foreign relations, but I've found attitudes toward China to be a bright spot. Americans are truly interested—a rarity when it comes to the developing world. The Peace Corps often warns volunteers about the transition back to U.S. society, where most people won't show the slightest interest in Burkina Faso, or Uruguay, or wherever else the volunteer spent two years of his life. But I've never found that to be the case with China. Inevitably, Americans have some misconceptions, and they're inclined

to overstate the potential threat of the People's Republic. But for the most part the interest is sincere and surprisingly open, and it's growing all the time. An enormous number of young Americans are even studying Chinese—the first time that so many people in the United States have been inspired to tackle a difficult language of the developing world. And motivations are also unique. It's not a question of national defense, or even of “saving China,” like the missionaries of the nineteenth century. Nowadays, young Americans want to learn about China because they're fascinated by the place, and they're convinced that better knowledge will benefit them in the future. It speaks to a healthier attitude toward the developing world, one based on partnership and mutual benefit rather than conflict and condescension. To all the teachers who introduce Chinese subjects to their classrooms, I salute you, and I hope that you are blessed with students as enthusiastic as the ones I had in Fuling. 📖

**PETER HESSLER** is a journalist and award-winning author of *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze (2001)* which chronicles his experiences as a Peace Corps volunteer teaching English in Fuling, China. His most recent books are *Oracle Bones: A Journey Between China's Past and Present* and *Country Driving: A Journey Through China from Farm to Factory*. Currently living in Beijing, he has contributed to several major publications and was a contributing editor of National Geographic's issue on China. He can be contacted via his agent, William Clark, at [wmlark@wmlark.com](mailto:wmlark@wmlark.com).

## Personal Experiences of China

### Life on Liberation Avenue

Ryan Bradeen

It was only a day or two after arriving in Wuhan, capital of Hubei province, that my wife christened our new neighborhood “The dodgy end of Liberation Avenue.” Not that the other end of Liberation Avenue is a glittering high-end district, but, in a down-on-its-heels city of nine million in central China, this is a down-on-its-heels neighborhood. Liberation Avenue is one of the central corridors of Wuhan and at the

heart of Qiaokou [pronounced “Chi-ow-ko”], our new home in the northwestern outskirts of the city.<sup>1</sup> We moved here in September 2008 to open an English school on the campus of Wuhan #4 High School.

In Qiaokou, Liberation is strangled with convoys of public buses jammed with commuters heading into the city center, dented turquoise Citroen taxis challenging sparkling private cars for the slightest gap, lumbering cargo trucks, and darting motor scooters. Traffic weaves around giant concrete pylons of an elevated commuter rail project stalled dead in its tracks for two years due to lack of funds. Bicyclists are relatively few here, dissuaded by the freelance “chicken” buses charging backwards

Small family run shops line the school-side of Liberation Avenue.

(Ryan Bradeen, Feb. 28, 2009)



down the bike lanes. Pedestrians either take their chances in the bike lanes or step gingerly around the rubble of sidewalks that have been dug, buried, and re-dug month-after-month in a seemingly endless gas line project.

Long-time residents of Qiaokou claim that this neighborhood has changed less than any other part of Wuhan. Guests from other Chinese cities consider the area to be trailing their hometowns by five or more years. If so, the dramatic remaking of this 1.5 km stretch of Liberation Avenue that we have witnessed in the last six months is even more telling of urban China's experience over the previous three decades.

Much has been written about the remarkable transformation of the Chinese economy and the blistering pace of its economic growth since Deng Xiaoping's 1979 "Four Modernizations" reforms in agriculture, industry, technology, and defense. In these 30 years, China has maintained a stunning annual economic growth rate of roughly 10 percent, and lifted 400 million people out of poverty. The World Bank estimates that 75 percent of the world's decline in poverty in the past 20 years has come from improvement in the lives of Chinese people.<sup>2</sup> China is in the midst of an economic expansion that has its nearest American parallel in the Eisenhower era of post-World War II highway building, urban renewal, and the opening of the suburbs. But despite 30 years of record economic development, neither Wuhan nor the Qiaokou neighborhood has been remade in a day. The

fruits of economic expansion have been distributed unevenly, with interior cities like Wuhan lagging their coastal counterparts, and outskirt neighborhoods like Qiaokou only belatedly gaining the attention of Wuhan city planners. And even when development comes, it is a process that disrupts, complicates, and strains daily life for years on end. The first major Qiaokou efforts at post-reform redevelopment began in 1998. Since then, residents have struggled with growing pains that have destroyed homes and displaced residents, torn up sidewalks, tangled traffic, and transformed simple tasks like going to the market into harrowing journeys.

The symptoms of economic growth or decline are often visible to the naked eye; new construction or abandoned buildings, store openings or closing, housing developments or blighted neighborhoods. Six months of observation of a Chinese neighborhood has allowed me to paint a reasonable portrait of its economic development. For students in the United States, modern (and free) tools like Google Earth allow them to explore Qiaokou (or any community on the planet for that matter) through satellite imagery. Using the Google Earth .kml file (downloadable from this author's blog), students can see for themselves many of the areas and buildings mentioned in this article.

As the Google Earth tour will reveal, Wuhan #4 High School is the center of the Qiaokou neighborhood. Newer class buildings embrace a handsome British missionary schoolhouse constructed in

1906. When the mission school was first established, the campus was surrounded by farm fields. The agricultural origins of the area are preserved in street names such as Ancient Fields #1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 Roads. Lanes like Han Family Village Alley recall entire hamlets that have been absorbed as the city has expanded.

After 1949, the fields of Qiaokou were converted to factory floors. Shabby seven-story walk-ups were thrown up to house workers, and to offer commercial space on the first floors. These buildings still comprise the majority of housing in the district, though tight clutches of older, dilapidated mud brick two- and three-story houses still stand around the ancient agricultural village hubs. But today wide and busy Liberation Avenue might as well be a river; the two sides of the street seem like entirely different towns; one affluent and modern; the other gritty and poor.

When we arrived in September, the opposite side of the street was largely covered in iron scaffolding and netting. The staging concealed a four-star hotel and shopping mall that will anchor the outside façade of the newest housing complex in the neighborhood, Han River Sunset. This luxurious compound of condos and villas backs onto the Han River shoreline. Every month, upscale retailers have opened new storefronts including a hair salon, several spas, a fitness club, home appliance outlets, and clothing stores with names like Euromoda. This new retail strip ends at the German superstore Metro, which opened in 2001, just after the completion of the first new residential compounds that began middleclass migration into the neighborhood.

The school-side of Liberation Avenue has changed much more slowly. The majority of the small, run-down shops cater to the 2,500 students at Wuhan #4 High School and similar numbers at the adjoining middle and elementary schools, as well as students from a sizeable school for the deaf nearby. If we leave school directly after class, we inevitably run into mobs of students in the shops buying dinner, school supplies, magazines,

and DVDs or milling among the gauntlet of snack carts outside the school gates. In general, these family-run businesses seem frozen in place by a complacency engendered by serving a largely captive and undemanding student market, lack of capital, and a sense of impending doom—awaiting the news that their building is next to be torn down.

In mid-October, seemingly overnight, the windows disappeared from an apartment block next to the school. A crew of workmen appeared the next day and began to tear the building down brick-by-brick using pickaxes, sledgehammers, and shovels. Slowly, light began to shine through the building like a worn curtain as the back wall came down. Then one day, the building was gone. Rumors of what will go up in its place abound; some say a big Cantonese restaurant; others say a housing development. The residents of the old building vanished with the windows.

Further up, at the intersection of Liberation Avenue and Ancient Field #4, there is no guesswork about what the future holds. Billboards and neon lights running down the sides of the high rises proclaim the imminent completion of Hong Kong Impression Phase #2. From our balcony in the back building of Phase #1, we have watched the seven 30-story buildings go up. Work begins by 5:00 a.m., seven days a week, and, in warmer weather, continues until after 8:00 p.m. Workers live on site in the standard blue pre-fab bunk houses seen at building projects all over the country. When Phase #2 is complete, it will be the largest of five modern residential complexes built in this neighborhood in the last ten years. In total, modern living space for 15,000 people has been constructed; enough to house a population greater than that of 95 percent of the towns in my home state of Maine.

Our apartment is in a pleasant complex of twelve 11-story housing blocks comprised of two- and three-bedroom units. Much attention was paid to making the gardens and pathways between buildings lush and inviting, with long corridors of

## Class Activity

This article presents a micro study of the impact of rapid urban/economic development in Wuhan, and raises questions about the human and environmental costs of urban redevelopment in Wuhan. Students should prepare a cost-benefit analysis after listing examples of positive and negative effects or changes, and compare their findings. What is being torn down and paved over? What is the human cost? Students should consider the larger question of China and the environment: How serious and effective is the government in terms of establishing and implementing environmental policy? Excellent starting points for this topic can be found at [www.pbs.org/kqed/Chinainside/nature/environment.html](http://www.pbs.org/kqed/Chinainside/nature/environment.html) and [www.nytimes.com/interactive/2007/08/26/world/asia/choking\\_on\\_growth.html](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2007/08/26/world/asia/choking_on_growth.html).

The article also touches on the lives of Chinese high school students as Wuhan undergoes an urban makeover. After reading the article, students should discuss opportunities that have opened up for teens from Wuhan # 4 High school and the other nearby schools that did not exist before. As a follow up, teachers might ask students to bring to class images related to teen culture in both China and the United States along with short paragraphs describing the contexts and significance of their image, and comparing the teen cultures of the two countries. —*Patience Berkman*

willows, bamboo, and pools separating the units. Young couples and mid-career professionals bought most of the condos; only a few rentals like ours remain. Units are sold bare; not even flooring, ceiling lights, kitchen sinks, or toilets are included. Home improvement has become something of a national pastime, and “DIY,” as in “do-it-yourself,” has made its way into advertising and everyday conversation.

Our introduction to DIY in China came immediately upon arriving. The lane into our compound was lined with banners hung from streetlights announcing the grand opening of B&Q, a British home improvement big box retailer on the model of Home Depot (the clerks even wear the same orange aprons). B&Q was the first of several international retailers to open in a new shopping center just a short walk down Liberation from Wuhan #4. As the Chinese New Year approached, their signs were unveiled: Wal-Mart, KFC, Dairy Queen, Nike, Adidas, even a Papa John’s Pizza. About 20 high-quality domestic retailers and restaurants filled in the remaining space. On opening day, the mall was mobbed with holiday shoppers, pockets stuffed with cash. As we walked home, joining

a stream of neighbors loaded down with purchases, we passed the open storefronts of the two dozen small sundries stores along Liberation Avenue selling plastic basins, underwear, and cheap shoes. The storeowners sat idly in the entryways, played cards, chatted with neighbors, or napped. Some wearily watched the parade of Wal-Mart shoppers. Our lives had just gotten materially better, but theirs were opening up underneath them as the plug was pulled on their businesses. Mentally, one could check off which buildings would be next to go down, but only guess where their residents and shopkeepers would end up.

In the real estate business, they would call this 1.5 km stretch of Liberation Avenue a “gentrifying neighborhood” (Emphasis on the “-ing”). A smart guy would buy up apartments now while they were cheap so that once the elevated rail is finished, the sidewalks repaved, the hotels opened for business, and Qiaokou becomes a fashionable district, he’d be sitting on prime property. Until then, watch your step. The process of growth is messy, and the growing pains are felt throughout a community; by those uprooted when their buildings are torn down, by those searching for a better

quality of life in the modern compounds, and by those who stay put despite the upheaval in their daily lives.

Often China's high rates of economic growth are heralded for the glorious end results, rather than as a gritty and unpleasant process spread unevenly across a huge country over many years. Growth hurts. For every old building torn down or field paved over to make way for shopping malls or housing complexes, who has been moved out of homes, whose business has been shut down, what damage has been done to the environment, and what history has been lost? For the teacher in an American classroom, these questions can help students appreciate the process of economic development in a developing country. These same ques-

tions have powerful parallels in students' own communities and can help students become more aware of how macroeconomic ideas like national growth rates can have local manifestations. Such local development issues provide an excellent opportunity for study and possibly participation in local public life. That public debate is in itself worthy of study and comparison to China, where transparent and public debate over local issues is largely unknown. 📷

#### Notes

1. Many of the sites mentioned in this article are labeled and photographed in the Google Earth .kmz file downloadable from <http://rbradeen.blogspot.com/>. The .kmz file will allow teachers and students to see much of this stretch of Liberation Avenue using satellite imagery and photographs.

2. FinFacts Team, "China Responsible for 75% of Poverty Reduction in the Developing World since 1980," FinFacts.com (Oct. 12, 2005), [www.finfacts.com/irelandbusinessnews/publish/article\\_10003611.shtml](http://www.finfacts.com/irelandbusinessnews/publish/article_10003611.shtml).

**RYAN BRADEEN** was formerly the director of the *Bo Xue Intensive English Program* at Wuhan #4 High School in Wuhan, China. He recently joined the U.S. State Department as a member of the Foreign Service. Ryan has led numerous professional development seminars and study tours to East Asia for the National Consortium for Teaching about Asia (NCTA) and Primary Source. With a recent trip to Inner Mongolia, he has visited 20 of 33 Chinese provinces or administrative districts. Notes, images, and a Google Earth .kmz file from the dodgy end of Liberation Avenue can be found on his blog, <http://rbradeen.blogspot.com/>, and web album, <http://picasaweb.google.com/rbradeen>. He can be reached at [rbradeen@gmail.com](mailto:rbradeen@gmail.com).

## Personal Experiences of China

# Richard's Story

## Richard Wang

I'm just a country boy. I grew up in Pangliu Village, about 30 kilometers south of Xi'an, the Shaanxi provincial capital. I have been living in Xi'an for over 30 years now, but my country life left a deep impression on me. Often, I recall what happened to me when I lived and studied in the countryside.

There are two lives in China: one is the rural life; the other is the urban life. The two lives have a world of difference. Many American visitors—when they see the big cities such as Beijing—have said to me, China is a developed country. I often tell them that this is not the full picture. They have to see the countryside and know the rural life. Then they can understand why we always say China is a developing country.

In China, we have a strange system called *Hukou*, or household registration system. It started in 1956. According to this system, the government registers households with either a rural or urban Hukou. When one is born in a village or his family lives in a village, then he is registered with a rural Hukou and regarded as a country boy (approximately 70 percent of China's 1.3 billion people are registered with rural Hukou).

For many reasons that I don't quite know, the Chinese government invested little in the improvement of the life of rural people after the revolution in 1949. The rural people were not allowed

to move to, or work in, the cities. Since life in the countryside was much poorer than in the cities, young people tried very hard to change their Hukou to become a city person.

However, there were only two ways to change one's Hukou. One was to join the People's Liberation Army. When a person performed well and got a promotion to be an officer or if he learned special skills, then the government would give him a job when he retired from the army. This changed his Hukou, and he became a city person. The other way to change one's Hukou is for a person to work hard at his studies and go to university after passing the national exams. Then the government would give him a job in the city after graduation. His Hukou could change, and he would become a city person. If he failed in either situation, he had to live and work in the village all his life, and the same was true for his children. (During the 1980s, when China adopted the reform policy, things began to change—even though the Hukou was not abolished yet.)

### Early Years

While I was growing up, the Hukou applied to my family and me. My parents lived in Pangliu village, and I was born with the rural Hukou. In the 1950s, I attended elementary school in this village. China was poor. My parents were poor. There was no one-child policy, and my parents had six sons. I am the oldest. All the land was owned by the state. My parents worked in a commune to support us, but the system was not productive at all. They had to work all year round, but made no money. They earned only work points.



Richard (Guotang) Wang takes a minute from his busy day to relax in a restaurant in the city of Xi'an, where he and his wife currently live.

(Kathleen Woods Masalski, October 2008)

A man could get ten work points for a day's work and a woman, seven points, because men are supposed to do heavier jobs. After the two harvests (summer and fall), the commune got some cash by selling a certain amount of grain to the government, which set the amount of grain and the price. The cash income was divided by the total work points, and the result is the value of a day's work.

After the amount of grain was sold to the government, the rest was shared by commune members, according to the number in the family. But a person had to pay the commune with work points. My parents worked very hard, but they still owed the commune a few hundred Yuan (the Chinese currency). A day's work could only make .43 Yuan (about 5 US cents. The Yuan is also known as the renminbi or RMB).

### Elementary School

When I was young, we starved often. There was a famine in China from 1959 – 1961. Many people died from hunger. I was in elementary school, and I remember every afternoon I had to go with my friends to the fields to pick wild vegetables to supplement our food. Once or twice we stole the sprouts of alfalfa for animals from the other village. My mother also gathered the leaves and barks from elm trees for us to eat.

During those difficult years my parents always reminded me to study hard. They told me the only way to change my fate was to go to university. I did my

homework at night under the oil lamp. I became one of the best students in the class. (Today students can automatically go to middle school after elementary school. But at that time, students had to pass entrance exams.) My class had over sixty students because every family had many children. Upon graduation only five of us sixty students went to middle school. I was one of the five! It was the first success in my study career, but I was too young to get excited about it.

### Middle School

The Dazhao Middle School I attended from 1962 – 1965 is about two miles from Pangliu. It was a boarding school, and we were requested to live and eat there. There were six days of school each week. There was a students' restaurant serving noodles and simple dishes. My family was too poor to give me money to buy food. I had to carry my steamed bread or pancake made of wheat flour mixed with corn flour. Every Sunday, I took a bag of my food with some salt to the school. I could take three pieces for each meal. My mother could not give me more because my family did not have much. Each time, I took food for three days. On Wednesday afternoon, I either went home to get another bag, or my parents sent food to my school.

I could not eat more than three pieces. If I did, I had to starve the next meal. In winter, the steamed buns got cold and hard. Like the other poor students, I just tore the buns into pieces and put them

into a bowl with boiled water. After doing this a couple of times, the bun would get warm and soft. Then I put salt in it, and that's what I ate every day.

In the summer, it was even worse. Owing to the high temperatures, the steamed bun I carried for three days became moldy. We just scraped off the mold and did what I did in the winter. But still we couldn't eat more than three pieces. We always looked forward to going home on Sunday for noodles or porridge as our meals.

Sometimes my parents gave me money so I could buy noodles at school. It was a luxury meal to me. In the noodles, I could warm soup with bean curd, scallions, or some vegetables with oil. Even now, I don't like to eat steamed buns, but I do like noodles very much.

At middle school, we lived in the school dormitory with no beds. We had to sleep on the floor in a big room. The school put some straw on the floor, and all the boys in my class slept in three rows. It was hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Dozens of boys squeezed in the same dormitory, and that was ok in the summer, because we could wash often with cold water and just be naked in the bedroom. But it was hard in the winter. The school had no heating system for classroom or bedroom. Each of us had one cotton quilt to cover us, and a smaller one, to put on the straw. When it was really cold, two of us boys would sleep together to keep warm. Then we had two layers of quilts over us. To have a shower or a bath—at any time of year—was a dream. I don't remember having a shower or bath at school before I went to high school.

My score at the end of Dazhao Middle School was third in my class. I could decide whether to go to a university or a secondary vocational school. It was a risk to choose to go to high school because a student might fail in the entrance exams to a university. My parents wanted me to go to a vocational school so that I could help the family when I graduated. But our neighbor was one of my teachers at



Dazhao, and he told my parents I was one of the best students in class. He convinced them that I could pass the university entrance exams. Then I would have a bright future, and I could make more money for my family.

My father eventually agreed. So I applied to go to a high school, and I passed the entrance exams and became a student at Chang An #1 High School. The principal told us the first day of school that over 70 percent of students would go on to university. My parents were proud. They put all their hopes in me. They dreamed I would go on to a university and a high salary after graduation, when the government would give me a job.

Chang An #1 High School was six miles away. So I could not return to Pangliu to get the second bag of steamed buns during the week. The government gave me 5 Yuan a month subsidy. I could buy noodles and other dishes with that allowance. The most important thing was that I could move my rural Hukou to the school. It meant that I would not be a farmer and that I had an urban Hukou. The government provided us students with 15 kilos of grain every month. We had beds and showers in the dormitory. It was a big change in my life.

### **Cultural Revolution**

A Chinese saying goes, “A storm may arise from a clear sky.” While I was studying at high school, the Cultural Revolution started. Suddenly, our teachers were called counter revolutionaries, and we students were mobilized to criticize our teachers. I was too young to understand, but I had to do as the others. I was from a peasant family and had to follow Chairman Mao’s instructions. In 1966, I was selected to be on the Revolution Committee of the school and sent to Beijing to be reviewed by Chairman Mao on Tiananmen Square. No classes were held. All universities closed. We became Red Guards.

Soon, students were divided as either rebels or conservatives. I was seen as the

latter because I was not active in smashing things. Instead, I went back to Pangliu and worked in the fields. I made work points, and my brothers did too. As a result, my family finally paid off all the debt owed to the commune.

In July 1968, I graduated from Chang An #1 High School, although I only sat in class for one year. Mao called on us graduates to go to the countryside to receive reeducation from peasants. I was sent back to Pangliu and my Hukou also changed back to a rural one. I was a young man of 18 and not afraid of hard work. However, my parents became desperate. In their eyes, I was the hope of the family. They had worked hard to support me for 15 years of schooling. Suddenly their bubble had burst. I officially became a peasant like my parents. It was a heavy blow for them. (They later died in their 60s, and I believe this was one of the reasons.)

I worked as a peasant along with my elementary school classmates. We had to do every job by hand. We harvested the wheat with scythes. About 30 of us, men and women, old and young, pulled the plows like cows and donkeys.

Besides farming, I did other work to help my family. I got up at 5 o’clock in the morning and went to a market to buy a few hundred kilos of persimmons, loaded them into a cart and, with others, pulled them to Xi’an. It was midnight when we got home. For 20 hours, we had walked over 60 kilometers and worked for only RMB 5 Yuan, or US \$0.70. I remember this hard work whenever I eat persimmons today.

Good luck came to me in 1969. I was chosen to be a teacher at Pangliu Village Elementary School. Because we had rural Hukou, I was not given the same salary as other state-supported teachers. The government gave me a monthly allowance as a peasant-supported teacher, at most RMB 14 Yuan, about \$2.10.

I appreciated the chance to work in the school and was active in all the Communist Party movements and did whatever the Party asked us to do. I tried

hard to become a model teacher. I got up early to clean the teachers’ conference room, worked extra hours if other teachers were sick, helped students after class, and visited their parents often. I was picked to be a Communist Party member (on probation)—the only teacher chosen. What an honor for me!

### **University Life**

After six years, the universities reopened. Students were recruited through recommendations from their working units (instead of by national examination). I won recommendations from both teachers and villagers and was interviewed by a teacher from Xi’an Foreign Languages University. I was scared—I spoke the local dialect—not Mandarin very well. How could I learn a foreign language? But I was assigned to that university. In 1972, I became a worker-peasant-soldier university student majoring in English.

My dream to go to university finally came true. The happiness of my parents was beyond description. I continued to work hard and perform well. I broke the university running record (400 and 800 meters) that had lasted 20 years! I was named class monitor. I was one of a very few students officially taken into the Communist Party.

China was closed at the time, and we students didn’t have many chances to speak with English native speakers. There were only two foreign teachers teaching English—one from England and the other from Sri Lanka—in the whole university. We were not allowed to listen to any foreign radio. When I was in Grade Three of the university, I was chosen to be in a special class, in which the two foreign teachers gave us more lessons. The university wanted us to stay on after graduation to become teachers. That class survived only one semester, for political reasons, and the university plan did not work out.

### **The Years of Reform**

I did get a good job after graduation. I was assigned to work in the Shaanxi

Provincial Foreign Affairs Office. We made arrangements for foreign government delegations when they came to Xi'an, and we sometimes worked as interpreters. We enjoyed many privileges. All my fellow villagers envied me.

In 1980, I was sent for one year to the United States to study travel and hotel management in Denver. To me, it was a miracle. When I returned from the United States, I worked for many years as a hotel manager and general manager for a travel company.

Then in 1995, I began my own travel agency. My family and I now have an urban Hukou and live in a big apartment flat and own a private car. My son

received an education in England. We live a very happy life. However, I never could forget my life in Pangliu Village. I dreamt of doing something to help the village school. In 1998, I met Anne Watt, co-founder of Primary Source. She and I worked together to start a project to help the school. Over the past 11 years, I have taken more than 1,000 American teachers and students to Pangliu Village.

Many kind visitors have donated money to the project—more than \$100,000. With this money, we set up a Sino-U.S. Friendship Library in the school and a clinic in the village center. Many village children from poor families have been sponsored, and many

books and sports equipment have been bought.

My personal dream of going to university and to live in the city was fulfilled a long time ago. My dream to help Pangliu Village and its school is also accomplished to some degree. But I'll continue to do more and to help make the village a much better one in the countryside. It is the goal for which I'll work for the rest of my life. 📖

**RICHARD WANG**, a travel agent based in Xi'an, China, has made travel arrangements for over 1,000 American teachers, students and school administrators. He often works as a national guide for tour groups. He can be reached at [richard\\_wgt@hotmail.com](mailto:richard_wgt@hotmail.com).

## Personal Experiences of China

# Juefei's Story

*An Interview with Juefei Wang by Kathleen Woods Masalski*

**Juefei, you and I have known one another for nearly 20 years, but I have little knowledge of what your life was like before you came to this country. I wonder if you would begin your story by describing your early years in China.**

I was born in Beijing two years after the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). In the Chinese way of saying it, I was born under the Red Flag. And I grew up under the Red Flag. I was the first son after five girls and was the center of my family until my younger brother was born four years later.

From the time I was in elementary school, I was a good student for two main reasons: the first, I had five role models to follow. My sisters were all good students. I always knew that the first thing that I had to do after school was homework. I was very happy. The second reason was my parents.

Because we had such a large family, my mother stayed at home; only my father worked. My parents had a difficult time making ends meet, which was true of many Chinese families at the time. My parents' friends said, "You have so many children, why don't you send one of them to work and then your family situation will change?" I remember my father saying, "No, I don't want to do that. My children should go to school, and they should go as far as they can. Once they finish college, they

can do more of what they want and what other people want." That was his philosophy. My mother backed him up.

**Did things change for you after elementary school?**

After elementary school, I entered the best secondary school in Beijing—it is still the best—the Fourth Secondary School of Beijing. At that time, in the 1960s, the better schools were segregated, and the Fourth Secondary School was a boy's school that had these traditions: working as teams, building school spirit, and creating intelligent energies toward the school and toward the outside.

At that time, the political situation was changing fast. I remember well my second year in junior high school. It was June 1966, and we were having study time, a 30-minute period before classes to study anything we wanted. There were about 45 students in the room when the English teacher, a Chinese woman, entered. She walked around the classroom, stopped next to me and said, "You're studying English," and I said, "Yes, I am." She said, "You are the only one studying English during this study time." She was happy and told me I must get ready for the examinations.

Later that very day, the loud speaker interrupted classes. A student from the high school read in the name of the Fourth Secondary School and the First Secondary School for Girls a letter that criticized education practices. The letter said that schools were not preparing students for society and that the entrance examinations to colleges were good only for those who were not revolutionaries. The letter stated that the schools were preparing only successors of the bourgeoisie class and that the



Dr. Juefei Wang (left) accepts gifts on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Houghton Freeman from Lian Ji (center, standing), lieutenant governor of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, at the tenth anniversary of the Vermont-Inner Mongolia performing arts exchange. (Courtesy of the Public Relations Office, Inner Mongolia University, April 2009)

children of workers, farmers, soldiers, and cadres did not have the same opportunity to study in the schools.

In my school, the Cultural Revolution began at that point. The next day the letter was published in newspapers and word went out to all other secondary schools. Students began to criticize their teachers. Schools closed for students to “make revolution.”

**It would be helpful at this time to hear more about your family.**

Both my father and mother were well educated. My mother’s father, my grandpa, was a navy officer during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894. China lost that war, and my grandpa, who escaped during one of the final battles, later established his own school. Grandpa

then sent his children to school, and my mother received a high school education in Tianjin in northern China. At that time, it was unusual for a girl to finish high school.

My father was from a well-known landlord family in Hebei Province near Beijing. In his family, there were five sons, and his grandfather, my great-grandfather, decided that one of these sons should receive an education. My father was chosen, apparently because he appeared to be brighter and more attentive to his study than his brothers. My father went to a private school in the village until he was ready for secondary education, and the family sent him to Beijing to study.

That school was run by Germans. My father admired the way the teachers in that school taught. He studied hard and

applied for Yenching University, the best university in China at that time.<sup>1</sup> The person who founded Yenching was Dr. John Leighton Stuart, a man born into an American missionary family in China, who grew up there, and was educated in the United States before doing missionary work in China. Dr. Stuart was the first president of Yenching, and eventually became the last U.S. ambassador to China before 1949.<sup>2</sup>

My father received his master’s degree the same year that World War II broke out in Asia in 1937. My father did not have a job and wanted to join his schoolmates who enlisted in the Chinese army, but he had already started a family. He tried to go to the Chinese occupied areas, but on the way was turned around because the Japanese did not allow people to do so.

## Questions for Students

What role do names play in identity in China and the United States?

In the autobiographical account preceding this one, “Richard” Wang took the name Richard when he became a guide for foreign tourists. (Many guides in China in the 1970s took that name “in honor of” their American guest, Richard Nixon, who was credited with “opening” China to the West during that decade.) Juefei Wang, on the advice of an American, decided to keep his Chinese given name in this country. In China, what is most important about a person is that s/he is part of a family; hence the surname comes first. Of secondary importance is the given, or individual, name, which follows. In this country, the given name comes first, followed by the surname. How might you explain Richard’s and Juefei’s choices of names, given their life journeys and professions? —*Patience Berkman*

My father had to have a job. His advisor introduced him to President Stuart, and my father joined the staff in the president’s office as an assistant for Chinese Affairs. He worked in that office for several years. This experience had major impacts on his life. Later on, he worked for the Nationalist government before 1949, and his position was quite high, although he never joined any political party. In 1949, he decided to stay on the mainland instead of going to the island of Taiwan.

My father got a job at the Union Hospital founded by the Rockefellers. It was, and still is, the best hospital in the country. It was set up to combine clinic, research, and teaching—the typical American model. My father was hired partly because of his experience dealing with Americans and his expertise in English. In the Union Hospital, all medical records were in English, and all Chinese doctors received education in English. I was born in that hospital. I saw my records later on, all in English. By the 1960s, my father was in charge of all medical records in the hospital. He applied his skills to create an effective medical record sorting and search system.

Soon after the People’s Republic was founded, political campaigns were launched one after another. My father had to rectify for what he did for, and with, the Americans and the National-

ists. Highly regarded professionally, my father had to go through so many political troubles. I remember my father returning home after a long day’s work, having dinner, and then bending over the table, writing into the night. I did not know what he was writing, but my mother told me that my father had to write for meetings. Later on, I learned that at those meetings my father was criticized. He had to write criticisms of himself.

### Was this during the Cultural Revolution?

That was even before the Cultural Revolution. I was 14 or 15 years old when the whole society was leaning toward a class struggle—workers and peasants against the bourgeoisie. All that had an impact on our school life. We did not really talk about it—about whose family was “good,” whose was “bad,” but everybody knew.

When the Cultural Revolution began, those from revolutionary families became the core who criticized teachers. When the Red Guards were formed, I could not join because of my family background. It was with the Red Guards that all the plans to make revolution were formed. The most I could do was stand by and watch.

Schools were immediately closed. At first, people thought for a few months,

but it turned out to be longer than three years. During those years, those from revolutionary backgrounds went out and wreaked revolution in society. Those of us who were not qualified had to find other things to kill our time.

So what I did ... my mother got to know a neighbor, a high-ranking administrator who loved literature. He had a collection of translated classics from different countries, including some from the United States: Hemingway, Twain, O. Henry, for example. I was allowed to go to the bookshelves in that house and pick any books I wanted to read. Because his rank was so high, the neighbor was not criticized—at least not at first.

On the streets, there were demonstrations, use of weapons, etc., by students of my age or older. Because of my not-so-good family background, I did not join any political group or anything. I worked with several friends and we tried hard to find out what happened in the schools before the Cultural Revolution and why Mao did not like the schools. Mao had said, “The more books you read, the more counter-revolutionary you become.” We interviewed teachers and administrators who had been criticized to find the facts.

### When I lived in China in 1988, I could find no one who had anything good to say about the Cultural Revolution. Do you share that opinion?

Back in the 1980s, I knew that I had had more experiences than most in my age group, because many stayed in the city and worked on their jobs. I was sent to the countryside to work on a farm from 1969 to 1974. I made friends, and I learned farm work and life skills. I was prepared for life when I left the farm. For a long time, I was not thinking about the good things that the experience on the farm did for me and to me—until I came to this country in 1985. People here asked me questions: “What did this experience do to you? What are the

impacts of that time?” In China, I was not asked those questions, and I did not think about it.

Looking back, I can better understand how that part of my experience relates to today. I know that Chinese culture will stay alive, remain strong, because back then in the 1960s and 1970s farmers tried hard to maintain the culture and the traditions that were there—even though they were criticized for doing that at the time. Chinese people in the rural areas will keep Chinese culture and traditions alive. I know it.

### Let’s go to how you happened to come to this country.

I came to this country to study. That was the only purpose. I went to college in Inner Mongolia and taught English in a high school for two years in Hebei Province. I applied for graduate school in 1979 and received my master’s degree in Comparative Education from Beijing

Normal University (BNU). I taught in the same university for three years.

My research was in comparative education in English-speaking countries. I published a lot, translated a lot, and my research institute was ready to send me to England to study British education. At the same time, I had worked with many American groups. One of the groups had a professor from [the University of Vermont (UVM)] who later wrote me a letter asking whether I’d like to study there. I knew that Vermont had one of the most decentralized educational systems in the country, which interested me. Decentralization is a concept difficult for Chinese to understand—China is such a centralized system that it was hard to imagine how local control would work. So I spoke with my leaders at BNU. Many said no, don’t go, because I should not study for a second master’s degree. But my advisor, Prof. Gu Mingyuan, today the top person in education in China, said yes, go.

At UVM, I received a master’s degree in Foundational Studies of Education and then completed a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. For most of my career, I was on the faculty of UVM and ran a successful outreach program for teachers.

### What stands out in your long career in education?

Looking back on my education, several things stand out. I always had good teachers, who taught me skills that I am still benefiting from, still using in my work. When I write in Chinese, I remember the lessons from my elementary school teachers and from my mentor, Professor Gu, who taught me to write good scholarly work. He told me, “You must have evidence to support what you say. You must quote the original source.”

Another person, not a teacher, played a crucial role in my career. In 1993, Mr. Houghton Freeman visited our China

## TEACHING ACTIVITY

Reading firsthand accounts of the lives of individuals can help all of us break through stereotypes and “one-size-fits-all” thinking about others—in this case, Chinese people. Doing so encourages us to recognize traits that we all share and at the same time makes it possible to discover larger historic and cultural issues.

The two autobiographical accounts in this issue feature the lives of “Richard” Wang and Juefei Wang (no relation) that roughly parallel one another: the two men were born soon after the founding of the People’s Republic of China, into a generation considered “Born under the Red Flag.” Richard (the name he uses with foreign tour groups) grew up in rural Pangliu Village, south of Xi’an, while Juefei spent his early years in urban Beijing.

### Approaching the story and the interview:

Before introducing the story and interview, have students think about their own lives and construct a list of the more personal (family, friends, neighbors, teachers) and less personal (government, employer, spiritual leader, media, “social network”) factors that have influenced them over the years. As a class, discuss these factors (and perhaps others) that make up the “stories” that go into people’s lives. Remind students that countless stories like their own can become a part of a bigger story—history. What

are the advantages of putting together stories like theirs and generalizing about a generation of people, for example? What are the disadvantages?

Introduce the accounts of Richard (page 34) and Juefei. As students read about the lives of these two individuals, have them jot down the influences on the men’s lives. Divide the class into small groups to discuss and record the factors that have made a difference in these lives. Did the time and place of their births make a difference? How did their families, friends, neighborhoods, schools influence them? Were they affected by decisions made at the town, state, or national levels? What factors had the most impact in shaping their lives? What challenges did each face growing up? How did each respond? If they had an opportunity, what questions would the students ask these two men?

Given these two accounts, what hypotheses would the students make about life in China since the birth of the People’s Republic? How do their hypotheses support or contradict what they think they already know about China? The documentary film, *China: A Century of Revolution*, includes two segments, *The Mao Years* and *Born Under the Red Flag*, that provide context for the formative years of Richard and Juefei. A synopsis can be found at <http://ambrica.com/bornundertheredflag.html>. The feature film *To Live* documents the same era. — *Patience Berkman*

program, and he offered to support the Asian Studies program at UVM, under one condition—we should support programs in Vermont schools. Three years later, he said, “Why don’t we make this statewide? Why don’t we provide funding to schools for them to teach languages and cultures of Asia? Why don’t we make Vermont a model for other states?” Based on these three questions, we designed the statewide program for Asian Studies in Vermont.

From the bottom of my heart, without the support of the Freeman Foundation, nothing like this would have happened in Vermont. And working on the program has made me develop professionally.

**You have learned much from both Chinese and Americans involved in education. You said, too, that you learned much from ordinary Chinese farmers. What have you learned from ordinary Americans?**

I can only tell you what my Chinese friends have said about me. I left China in 1985, at age 34. I was a junior professor who had gone through quite a bit. When I spoke in public in China, my face would turn red. I taught, but I taught in the Chinese way.

I studied in Vermont for a year and a half before returning to my family. All my leaders and my friends in China said I was a different person when I returned. I had become outspoken, expressive, and I did not hide my feelings any more. I enjoyed talking more. People wondered what had happened to me.

I realize now that being in a more open environment, at UVM, in Vermont, in this country in general, I forgot what was prohibiting me from talking back in China. There I did not talk that much, but once I learned the rules in this country, I knew I could talk about what I was thinking about. A year and a half was not a long time, but it was sufficient for me to become a talker. Once I returned to China, I was

used to talking, and people saw the difference. So that’s one big change—24 years ago.

**Will you go back to China to live your golden years there?**

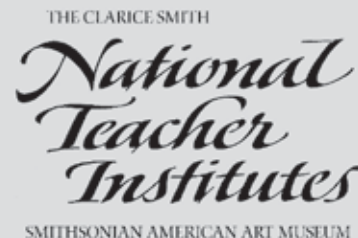
I might. Senior citizens’ lives are different there. When I take Americans to China, the Americans see senior citizens in parks, singing. They are amazed. I tell them that if I were in China I would do tai chi in the morning, do housework, then go to the park to sing. That is the typical life-pattern for urban retired people, who must retire in their forties and fifties—and to me, that’s a waste of human resources.

I promised my mother that someday I would be there with her and my father. My sisters, my brother, and I purchased a plot for my parents’ tomb. I was the older son, so I made the decision. I chose the plot because of the *fengshui*, the design, the space. Underneath the stone tablet there is a tiled space, and I said to my sisters and brother, our ashes can all go there. I said, I’m not sure about you, but I will be in there with my parents. ☸

**Notes**

1. Yenching was one of the institutions set up with money from the Boxer Rebellion that was given to the Americans, who left it in China for education.
2. Because Stuart became the last ambassador to China, his major role was to communicate with the U.S. government, reporting on the civil war between the communists and the nationalists. When the Communist army got across the Yangtze River and occupied Nanjing, the capital city for the time, Stuart left China. To the Communists, that was a great victory. On that occasion, Mao wrote an article, “Farewell to Stuart.” This is the final chapter in the four-volume book *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*.

**JUEFEI WANG** is program director for *The Freeman Foundation* and the former director of the *Asian Studies Outreach Program* at the University of Vermont. He has lived in the United States since 1985. He can be reached at [Juefei.Wang@uvm.edu](mailto:Juefei.Wang@uvm.edu). **KATHLEEN WOODS MASALSKI** is director of the *Five College Center for East Asian Studies* and co-director of the *National Consortium for Teaching about Asia*. She can be reached at [kmasalsk@smith.edu](mailto:kmasalsk@smith.edu).



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