



China Currents



A Publication of the China Research Center

Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 2010

China Currents Home

Articles



China's 80's Generation: Working for the Future

by Rory Zimmerman



China's Higher Education Reform

by Guo-hua Wang



Developing Western China: Xi'an's Maturing Economy and the Role of Producer Services

by Susan M. Walcott and Chen Ying



From Grits to Rice: Teaching Chinese Language and Culture in Georgia

by Valerie Pepper

Center News



China Research Center co- sponsors West China Conference in Chengdu, Sichuan Province



Study Delegation from Taiwan's National Chengchi University visits Georgia Tech



CRC Associate and Board Member, Dr. Hanchao Lu, publishes two books



China Research Center Advisory Board Member, Guanming Fang, is named the new chairperson of the Georgia China Alliance

Commentary



The China Trade Deficit and U.S. Job Loss

by Penelope B. Prime

Video Link



John W. Garver Discusses China and Iran: Brookings Institution Discussion on U.S.-China Global Challenges

please click on "Session Two"

Notable Link



The John Fairbank Memorial Chinese History Virtual Library

China's 80's Generation: Working for the Future

By Rory Zimmerman



Chinese born in the 1980's, known as 80 hou (baling hou in putong hua), are famous to Westerners as the first generation born during the enforcement of China's one-child policy. The 80 hou is a generation of more than 200 million only children with common burdens and opportunities. Their thinking is formed by traditional Chinese culture and Confucian morals, but they are beginning their careers in a nearly full-blown market guided by rules of the WTO. Many of them are single-handedly responsible for providing financially for their parents' retirement. As the 80 hou fulfill their responsibilities and accomplish their social goals, their unique perspective is sure to influence trends in the global

economy.

For the past decade it has been in fashion to refer to the 80's cohort as the "little emperors," implying a generation of self-important only children who have chipped away at traditional Chinese filial piety with excessive demands for material goods that doting parents and grandparents are only too happy to provide. Indeed, some

80 hou in Beijing have lived up to the "little emperor" stereotype. Many come from families that gained wealth and residential property portfolios after receiving government reimbursement for vacating hutongs demolished to pave the way for Beijing's rapid urbanization. These families gained financial security by investing the reimbursements into newly developed apartments in the late 1990s, in some cases purchasing multiple units. As prices of apartments in Beijing escalated over the past ten years, many became set for life by cashing in one property while living in another, and renting a third unit to produce a stable income. Beijingers with such luck have been known to allow their only children to lead a leisurely existence. They can choose to work if they want to have more spending money, but there is no need for them to provide financially for themselves or their parents. However, this leisure class of fortunate 80 hou, said to have never tasted bitterness, represents a tiny sliver of the 80 hou demographic. The vast majority of the 80 hou honor their traditional role and work to carry out their responsibility within the family unit. As such, the majority of this generation is under serious pressure to fulfill the role of breadwinner for their families while at the same time attempting to advance in their careers and achieve their social goals.

80 hou remember the rarity of consumer goods throughout their formative years. China's economic transition was just getting under way, and scarcities created by central planning still prevailed. As a result, they are in tune with the anxieties of their elders' generation, prone to working long hours, and attentive to saving more than half of their monthly income. They also are the first generation to grow up exposed to Korean and American pop culture, and many are die-hard fans of Michael Jackson, *NSYNC and Guns N' Roses. But while they admire the boldness and free-spirited attitude of Westerners, their identity is ingrained by Chinese tradition. Educated 80 hou are well read in the Chinese classics, and they express great pride

in their country. The 80 hou were shocked and appalled when they were first exposed to Western criticism in 2008 when the media highlighted protesters who defiled the 2008 Olympic Torch relay to China. Chinese 80 hou viewed with disdain the cultural tendency of French and other Western peoples to protest. Protesting in France is a political and cultural norm for communication between the people and the government, but this Western style did not translate well. Many Chinese found the protests absurd and offensive. In response, the 80 hou rallied together in online communities to express their great love of country and the dignity inherent in traditional Chinese culture. 80 hou also enjoy the ability to indulge in online shopping and entertainment. Fashion has become a passion for this generation, and the Louis Vuitton logo has made great inroads into 80 hou as a status symbol, yet they still recognize fine Chinese cuisine as the greatest luxury in the world.

As the 80 hou grew up, their education was the center of attention for grandparents and parents within the home. Everyone's resources were put toward advancing the child's education and skill. As young adults they were able to enter the workforce throughout a period of openness, which included China's acceptance into the WTO. Their first steps in establishing careers were taken during a period of economic boom. They have experienced greater opportunity at the start of their careers than most of the 90s generation probably will enjoy. The 90 hou are entering the workforce at a time of global economic recession. They do not remember past scarcities because their experiences have been shaped by a period of prosperous economic development and urbanization. However, the 90 hou may face more scarcity as adults entering the job market than the 80 hou.

80 hou are an important generation for their experience of entering the workforce at the moment when the Chinese economy became widely acknowledged as a driving force of the world market. Furthermore, 80 hou have come of age in an era of freedom to move, study, work and earn. Career advancement is obtainable in the modern market, but the tendency of young professionals to expect consistent praise, higher salaries or managerial positions--often cited as characteristic of America's Gen Y-- is antithetical to mainstream Chinese culture. While 80 hou have big dreams and high hopes for themselves, they are not likely to directly ask their bosses for new opportunities. Instead they pursue practical ways of preparing themselves for career advancement, like studying new skills or learning new trades.

Since Beijing has developed into a modern metropolis, millions of the 80s generation have migrated to the capital seeking better paying jobs and more access to international culture. This generation shares a common dream of home ownership, but the price of buying an apartment home in Beijing or Shanghai is so exorbitant that few can manage such a feat without financial contributions from their families. Average gross salaries for successful white-collar workers can range from 1,000 RMB to 3,000 RMB a month (about \$140 - \$400)¹. The going rate for residential property in Beijing is at least 16,900 RMB (\$2,500) per square meter², and the price of a 90 square meter apartment can be higher than 1.9 million RMB (\$279,400)³. The mainstream mindset of the 80 hou is to qualify for a good paying white-collar job, work long hours, and save most of one's income so as to eventually buy an apartment. The large rent-to-price ratio (approximately 1:546) does not deter people from pursuing investment in the real estate market or viewing it as a sound investment. The rent-to-price ratio compares the cost of renting a home to the cost of purchasing one. Buying a home is paramount because it meets the financial and social needs of adult Chinese today. After they buy a home, they can provide a place

for their retired parents, marry and have a baby. Afterwards, savings will be directed towards giving their only child the best chance possible to succeed in education and career.

Tens of millions of the 80 hou are not white-collar professionals. They are young men and women who migrated from the countryside into China's major cities to work as servers in restaurants (fu wu yuan in putong hua) or guards at apartment complexes (bao an). They came from subsistence farming societies and moved to the eastern cities to earn a near subsistence wage. The meager salaries are saved to provide their families with health care. Illness can devastate these farming families. Middle-aged parents and young adult children work far from home all year, saving their salaries and pooling their earnings at Spring Festival family reunions. These working poor do not have enough money for a college education and do not qualify for white-collar jobs. They carry on a long-standing tradition of living for the next generation, which is an all-too-common experience for the peoples of developing nations. Parents work throughout their lifetimes, saving for basic nourishment and the advancement of their children's education. They do not entertain the idea that they will climb the social ladder themselves, but save their money to provide for family health care and direct their hopes toward the future of their progeny. For the 80 hou working poor, the menial jobs available in the city provide important perks such as free room and board. As the famous Chinese idiom proclaims: "To the people food is heaven." The migrant working poor of Beijing may earn an average of only a few hundred RMB a month, but they are able to save the majority of their pay for their families because rent and food are provided by their employers.

Despite the pressure to provide for their families and a high-level of competition for jobs and educational advancement, many individuals of the 80 hou pursue their career ideals with gusto. Three such individuals are profiled here. They come from a variety of backgrounds including highly educated families, subsistence farmers, and well-connected families. Each of the three has experienced times of scarcity and has suffered anxiety over finances, some more than others. What these three 80 hou share is their extraordinary attitude toward life in their quest to provide for their families while achieving their own goals. Each has taken whatever life presented and pursued individual social advancement. Each depends upon him or herself to provide financial security, and considers marriage a future prospect and not something to depend upon for social success. These three are not overcome by the pressure to provide, and they are far from complacent about their careers. In fact, they are passionate about fulfilling their ambitious dreams. Their individual stories follow.

Helen Zou

Helen Zou was born in a town southwest of Chongqing municipality. Her father was a well-known local lawyer and her mother a homemaker. In her youth, Helen assisted her father as a scribe, using her good handwriting to copy legal documents for his practice. Copy machines were a rarity, and when available, far too expensive. Her father was most impressed by her talent and intelligence. He encouraged her to pursue law or medicine, saying that a career as a lawyer, teacher or doctor was most suitable for women. She was intent upon following in her father's footsteps and studying law, but later, as his health failed, she wanted to become a doctor, so she could cure him of his ailments. However, he died the year before she was to choose a college major. Since she could no longer cure her father, she no longer found it

practical to study medicine, and as her understanding of the red tape complexities of China's legal system grew, she gradually lost interest in pursuing a law degree.

Helen often read English novels and watched American movies. She had a great desire to travel to foreign countries. She remained at the top of her class throughout middle school and high school. When the time came to choose a college major, Helen chose English language. She graduated from Chongqing Three Gorges University in 2004, and had a secure job offer teaching English at Dalian University. She declined the offer and went to Beijing in search of more exposure to international culture. She started her work experience in Beijing as an employee of a Chinese state-owned company. In 2006, Helen began working as the assistant to an entrepreneur of a high-tech Chinese company preparing to make its IPO on NASDAQ. In this growing company she had the chance to participate in the functioning of projects from IPO to HR restructuring. Currently, she works for this company as an investor relations specialist. Helen enjoys being close to information, constantly aware of company affairs and industry trends. She recognizes the importance of delivering the right messages to investors. Her goal is to complete an MBA degree abroad to increase her understanding of finance and business ethics. Her career goal is to be the investor relations executive preparing Chinese companies for their IPOs on Western stock exchanges by overhauling their financial systems management and advertising these opportunities to investors.

Despite her strong work ethic and obvious talent in disseminating bilingual financial communication, she does not receive sufficient training for advancement opportunities from her company. Most booming Chinese companies have not yet developed a framework for conducting career mobility or training incentives for employees. The majority of employees in successful Chinese companies are content to have a secure job with decent pay in the big city. They do not feel the need to push for more opportunity. Those who are anxious to elevate their positions must constantly face the disappointment that their long hours and good efforts will not afford them advanced progression into managerial or decision-making roles. Helen is currently preparing for the TOEFL and GMAT examinations, studying in the evenings after work and on weekends. She will use her savings, accumulated over the last six years, to support her dream of studying abroad and attending an American university to complete her MBA degree. She must excel in these exams, since being awarded a scholarship by a foreign university is a financial imperative for her to accomplish her dream. As a 28-year-old, single woman in China, her career ambitions are countered by her responsibility to provide for her widowed mother. Helen must be able to afford her educational goals while providing for herself and her mother. The portion of her income not directed toward necessities and savings is spent trying her hand at the Chinese stock market. She views such investment as a hobby and not as a resource for financial gain. Such play enriches her experience in calculating risk in the Chinese stock market.

Helen considers marriage a future concern. Although she enjoys dating in her free time, she views such interaction as no more than interesting and fun. Helen believes that as she achieves her career goals, she will come into contact with a most suitable mate. She is certain he will be a dynamic individual with lots of international perspective. She looks forward to the day she can settle down with financial security and provide a stimulating home environment for her future family to thrive.

Yongbin Fang

Yongbin Fang was born to subsistence farmers in Anhui Province. His parents were born in the 1950s and as adolescents in the 1960s survived periods of starvation by chewing on seeds that they randomly found while sifting through the dust of the barren earth. Their parents, Fang's grandparents, were tormented by purges and eventually defeated by starvation. In the fertile 1980s, Fang was born into a family with survivors' spirit. He grew up helping his family reap the corn during the harvest season and attending the local school in the off-season. It was there that he gained literacy and studied basic mathematics. As a kid in the 1990s, he gazed wistfully at the skyscrapers towering off in the distance. Often the men of his village went to the city to work as construction laborers. They always returned home with cash for their families.

Fang dreamed of becoming an architect. At the age of 17, he left school and went to Suzhou to be a carpenter's apprentice. He worked for the whole year, learning the trade and earning only room and board. During the Spring Festival family reunion at the end of that year, his parents told him it was time to earn an income, so he followed his uncle and father to work as a carpenter on construction sites in burgeoning Beijing. Since he was young and nourished by his dream of becoming an architect, he proved to be a fast learner. The boss took notice of this and sent him to work as a mechanic at the garage he owned. There Fang mastered new trades and decided to invest in getting his driver's license. This new skill enabled him to earn a higher income by working as a bus driver for private kindergartens in Beijing. The savings he accumulated by working a better paying job was immediately invested into his educational advancement. He put himself through university while working full-time, earning a degree in interior design. The foreign English teachers working at the Beijing kindergartens often sought Fang's help and friendship. He realized the next useful skill for him to master was English language. So again he used his income to support his educational advancement. He completed an independent study program at Beijing Foreign Studies University and successfully passed all the exams to earn a diploma in English language and literature. He used his new skills by working as a translator for Chinese public relations firms, and prior to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games he landed a job as a translator for a German news corporation that conducts all their China reporting in English, as it is more commonly spoken in China than German. He continues to adapt his skills to creatively strategize his financial security. Currently, he takes every opportunity to learn about professional photography so that he can advance his career into higher realms of the media industry.

In 2007, his parents and uncle combined their savings to help Fang purchase a small apartment in east Beijing. This investment provided Fang a secure living situation to support his career in Beijing. They hope that the money invested in the home purchase will prove to be an asset to them all in the future. Fang saves 80 percent of his monthly income to put toward basic necessities for his parents and himself in the future. His mother is still a housewife and subsistence farmer in the countryside. His father and uncle are migrant laborers who earn petty cash on construction sites. They are reaching the age of retirement, which to Fang means "forcibly jobless" because no one wants to hire elderly construction workers. He is not convinced the social insurance system will guarantee security for him and his family throughout their elderly years. The pension and subsidies directly accessible to his family are too low to rely upon in times of illness. Fang is responsible for providing for himself, his parents and his uncle over the next decades. Such responsibility leads to his high propensity to save, as well as hard work, will power and self-sacrifice. As his family has supported him, he will support them.

There is little time and few resources left for Fang to start a family of his own. Fang's peers in the hometown married in their early 20s and have raised large families. Fang has consistently resisted social pressures to fit in with his hometown peers and return there to marry a local girl. He centers his life on providing for his family and pursuing a professional career. He finds the girlfriends of his generation to be overly demanding. They require the suitor to own an apartment, and if that is achieved, then they chirp on about the location and quality of apartment necessary for them to agree to marriage. Men of the 80s generation must achieve a high level of material success to please the modern Chinese woman. Fang hopes to marry a woman with perspective and goals similar to his own. To afford such a wife and then have a child would be a privilege, but for now such a lifestyle is a luxury just out of his reach. At the age of 30, he still has plenty of time. Fang will continue to pursue his career ambitions and uphold his ideals for family life, making progress step-by-step. As the famous saying goes, a journey of a thousand "li" starts with a single step.

Candace Sun

Candace Sun was born in Anshan City, Liaoning Province. Her maternal grandfather was an engineer and her paternal grandfather a battalion commander in the Chinese Army. Her parents did well working in factories, and in the 1990s found success as small business owners. Candace's parents encouraged her to learn traditional Chinese arts and she excels at painting and calligraphy. Ever at the top of her class, she often won school competitions. In elementary school, she was the champion of an academic competition and was awarded a set of the four Chinese classics of literature. She cherished these great works and spent her free time reading the classics and learning other tales of Chinese philosophy.

In 2000, Candace was accepted into Beijing Wuzi University. There she earned a degree in economics. After graduating at the top of her class, she went to work full time at the company that had provided her college internship. She began working in the art department of a Chinese online gaming company as a professional 3D artist. Her skills in calligraphy and her knowledge of the classics and Chinese mythology were greatly appreciated by her employers. She provided real value to the company's product line, so once the company launched their IPO on NASDAQ, she was one of the original team members to be handsomely rewarded in stock options. Candace advanced to middle management leadership positions and received English language training from her company. Her ability to clearly express herself in English, and the value she contributes to the development of company product lines provides her more certain opportunity for career advancement.

In 2009, she put her assets into purchasing a fine apartment in one of Beijing's up-and-coming residential neighborhoods. She views home ownership as a long-term investment and as a way to provide for her parents' retirement. They live together in her apartment home, carrying for her nourishment as she fulfills the role of breadwinner. Candace's career goal is to become a senior professional manager for the company. She has successfully passed all graduate admissions examinations to enroll in the MBA program at the University of International Business & Economics in Beijing. She will attend graduate school part-time, while she continues to work full-time in the field of 3D design. She intends develop her skills to add value to her company's product line and is enthusiastic about contributing to making her company become one of the leading online game companies in the world. She enjoys her work and joyfully pursues her career. At 28 years old, she feels no pressure to

marry anytime soon. She has a laissez-faire, or traditional Chinese Taoist wu-wei, go-with-the-flow attitude towards marriage. She has faith that a suitable partner will come into her life as she authentically pursues her dreams.

Conclusion

China's 80s generation is bound together by common burdens and opportunities. They endured serious pressure to excel at rote-learning throughout their secondary and college education. As they find their way in the robust modern economy, those with the best credentials have great chances to try a wide variety of positions and job descriptions. There is room for them to pursue entrepreneurial business endeavors or to devote their daily lives to growing Chinese multinational companies. It's characteristic for the 80s generation to work long hours and respect traditional protocol for obedience in the work place. Those who want to advance their professional careers at a faster rate to higher levels will benefit from training that stimulates their creative problem solving skills and nurtures their confidence in taking innovative approaches towards career development. Those who proactively attain the credentials needed to advance to higher levels of industry, by saving and investing in advanced training, will be prepared to take new job opportunities when they are presented to them. In this way, they may make their dreams into reality, support their families, and infuse resiliency throughout the Chinese economy.

1. Interview with Beijing local, Emily Wang.
2. "Beijing's housing prices dropped 8000 yuan" China Daily, By Cai Muyuan (chinadaily.com.cn) http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2010-05/11/content_9836345.html.
3. "Homebuyers reeling from Beijing property measures", Mon, May 17, 2010, AFP, <http://www.asiaone.com/Business/News/Story/A1Story20100517-216615.html>

Rory Byrne Zimmerman works in Beijing. She is grateful to her friends and colleagues whose opinions and personal experiences contributed greatly to this article.

China's Higher Education Reform

By Guo-hua Wang



Education reform in China has reached a new and crucial stage. The driving force is the need to produce an increasingly knowledgeable workforce equipped to handle the challenges of an economy that is not only growing extremely rapidly, but also becoming increasingly diversified and sophisticated.

The latest reforms are outlined in a comprehensive plan formally called "State Guidelines for Medium-to-Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan between 2010 and 2020," otherwise known as the Development Plan.¹ A second round of national discussion of the Development Plan has just been completed, and more than 30,000 suggestions were collected, reflecting national involvement in such an important issue. This plan is enormous and comprehensive, and is based on studies of various educational models.

The plan has backing from the highest levels. For example, in September of 2009 Premier Wen Jiabao visited five classes in a middle school in Beijing. He had lunch with students, and held a discussion session with teachers. On October 31, 2009, the government named Yuan Guiren as the new minister of education to lead the reform. The Development Plan's scale, depth and detailed specifics clearly demonstrate the government and Party's determination and ambition.

Two aspects for higher education reform are key: a relaxation of central control, and opening up of the college admission process. The Development Plan specifically calls for the government to release central control, give universities autonomy, and allow presidents and faculty to run their schools. The government's function is to be limited to providing services and funding, and to making general educational policies. Universities will be governed by national higher education laws combined with regulations set up by institutions themselves. Another striking aspect of the reform plan is modification of the college admission process. The Development Plan states that it will change from the "one-exam-decides-all" method to a thorough evaluation of a student as a whole person using multiple tests and factors.

The plan is divided into four sections. Each section covers several chapters and each chapter includes numerous issues. Section One describes the plan's overall strategy. Section Two lays out missions to accomplish and goals to achieve. Section Three outlines the reform of the educational infrastructure. Section Four provides measurements to ensure implementation. Six chapters are devoted to specific measures, which include the following: strengthening the quality of teaching faculty;

increasing the government funding of education to 4% of GDP by 2012; completing education laws and regulations; and ensuring every step of the reform meets the laws and regulations. In order to accomplish these missions and goals, the Development Plan encourages educational institutions to design their own reform programs and policies.

The defined missions of the Development Plan for higher education are to greatly improve the overall quality of education; to advance science, technologies and culture; to accelerate China's modernization process; and to make China a great nation with strong higher education. The goals of the reform are to advance teaching and scientific research; promote collaboration between universities and research institutions so as to speed discovery and innovation; enhance the ability to serve society by providing knowledge consultation and by transferring technologies and research results into products; nurture outstanding talent; and to cultivate a group of internationally recognized Chinese universities and a number of top- ranked Chinese universities in the world by the end of 2020. In short, the goal is to make China's higher education internationally competitive.²

Establishment of Chinese Universities

To understand just how significant the current reforms are designed to be, a brief review of Chinese educational history is in order. In fact, the formal establishment of a higher education system in China is relatively recent. It is widely accepted that the first modern Chinese university was established in 1895, right after the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), which shifted the dominant influence in Asia from China to Japan. The national shame of this defeat awakened the empire of the Qing Dynasty, which accepted a proposal of Mr. Sheng Xuanhuai, a higher official of the dynasty and an industrialist, to empower the government by building up modern universities to educate and nurture talent with modern technologies in addition to classics. Beiyang University (now Tianjin University) was established in the city of the same name in 1895, followed by Qiushi Academy (currently Zhejiang University) in 1897, and Jingshi University (now Beijing University) in 1898. By the time the People's Republic of China was founded, there were 227 higher institutions in China.³

The government that took over in 1949 reorganized higher education according to the model of the Soviet Union. Private universities, including those established by missionaries, were folded into the state. Soviet higher education emphasized specialization rather than comprehensiveness, and reflected the new political ideology and desire for economic development. As a result, some specialized subject colleges were established or separated out from some comprehensive universities. This higher education system served the purpose of the government at the time, and trained the first generation of highly needed intellectuals to build the new economy.

As Maoist-inspired political changes swept the country, Chinese higher education went through ups and downs. From 1958 to 1963, it experienced the Great Leap Forward. The number of Chinese universities and colleges was greatly increased from 229 in 1957, to 841 in 1958, to 1,289 in 1960. The "mistake" was corrected in the following years. In 1963, the number of universities was reduced to 407. ⁴ The Cultural Revolution started in 1966, pitting student Red Guards against teachers, and paralyzing formal education. A generation of students in the subsequent years essentially lost the opportunity to receive higher education. In 1970, the government allowed certain universities to re-open. However, the admission of college students

was mainly decided by recommendations from peasants, workers and soldiers"and primarily based on the applicants' political behavior. In 1977, Deng Xiaoping regained political power and eventually became the paramount leader of the country. One of his first decisions was to resume the national examination system for college admissions. Three national examinations were held from 1977 to 1979. About 18 million high school graduates from 1966 to 1977, who were willing and able to take the exams, participated in these historical educational events, and about 880,000 of them were fortunate to become college students.⁵ The college students from these three years have played important roles in advancing social and economic development in China as envisioned by Mr. Deng.

Prelude to the Current Higher Education Reform

With the formalization of a regular national college entrance examination system in the 1980s, Chinese higher education was in the process of recovering and adjusting from previous social upheavals. In 1993, as market reforms deepened, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council jointly issued a Program for Education Reform that allowed the establishment of private universities. The Program proclaimed that "the State encourages all sectors of society, including enterprises, institutions, public organizations or groups as well as individual citizens, to run higher education institutions in accordance with law and to participate in and support the reform and development of higher education."⁶ Under this policy, some new colleges were founded by non-government entities, which symbolized a major change in the Chinese higher education structure, which used to be completely controlled by the central government. Such a move led to a significantly expanded scale of higher education. College enrollment experienced an unprecedented growth. According to 2007 Ministry of Education statistics, "in 1990, less than 4% of the 18-22 age group was enrolled as students in higher education institutions compared to 22% in 2005."⁷

As the number of universities grew, the demand for education quality also increased. For the first time in Chinese education history, the nation implemented university rankings using a set of criteria and standards to assess quality. A major event in the effort to improve the quality of higher education by the Chinese government was Project 211, launched in 1995. One hundred universities were selected to receive special funding to improve their overall performance. Subsequently, in 1998, the Ministry of Education launched another major initiative named Project 985. The first phase of Project 985 aimed to propel 10 Chinese universities to rankings among the best in the world in the 21st century. This program was subsequently expanded, and additional universities were selected. These two government-funded projects and the university ranking system have made a significant impact on the quality of China's rapidly proliferating institutions of higher education.

In 2001, China was officially admitted to the World Trade Organization, which provided a great arena for exchanges with many other countries leading to opportunities to integrate Chinese education with the world. For example, the Ministry of Education has dispatched many presidents and party secretaries of top-ranked universities to visit and study in developed countries such as the United States and Great Britain. To promote multidisciplinary, academic collaborations, in early 2000 many old Soviet-style subject colleges were combined into comprehensive universities along the lines of large American universities.

Another important change in China's higher education was the 1999 Higher Education Law. It stipulated that "universities are independent legal entities under democratic management."⁸ However, as Lin Jianhua, vice president of Beijing University, pointed out: "Current law gives considerable autonomy to Chinese universities, but their rights have been vaguely defined."⁹ Together, these developments during the past 20 years have set the stage for the current movement to reform the Chinese education system.

Future Prospects

In order to further reform Chinese education and stimulate economic development in the next decade, Premier Wen Jiabao chaired an Executive Committee that was formed to draft an education development plan in 2008. That committee produced the current reform plan. It is a grand plan that reflects a balance of interests and influences of various groups. By its very nature, education reform inevitably affects wide areas of society. Xu Zhihong, Deputy Chairman of the National People's Congress, pointed out that "as the reform goes deeper and deeper, we will find a lot of fundamental difficulties."¹⁰ Premier Wen echoed that sentiment when he said "We are now facing a lot of dilemmas."¹¹ One concern is that autonomy for institutions of higher education "will go hand in hand with losing crucial connections " and influence " with powerful government departments."¹² While the plan encourages nurturing students' creativity and independent thinking to foster scientific innovation, it certainly collides with cultural values that cherish obedience as a virtue. Such a cultural collision can only be resolved with time and collective efforts.

Ethical issues go hand in hand with education reform. A big concern among ordinary people arises from the reform of the GaoKao, or national college entrance examination. With GaoKao no longer the only criterion for admission, various other factors such as teacher recommendations and extracurricular activities will enter the picture. Because of these changes, people are worried that new kinds of bribery and corruption will emerge. It is essential that relevant laws be established and enforced. Ethical education should be part of the reform plan. Ultimately, the success of higher education reform will be inextricably intertwined not just with the political and culture development of the society, but also with its ethical evolution.

References:

1. The plan, "State Guidelines for Medium-to-Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan," (国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要), <http://www.chinanews.com.cn/edu/news/2010/02-28/2142843.shtml>
2. Ibid.
3. Hayhoe, Ruth, China's Universities 1895-1995, a Century of Cultural Conflict. New York: Garland Publishing, p.75 (1996).
4. Kang, Ouyang, "Higher Education Reform in China," Policy Futures in Education. 2(1): 141-149 (2004).
5. Ibid.
6. Yang, Zhong, "Globalization and Higher Education Reform in China" <http://www.aare.edu.au/05pap/zho05780.pdf>
7. Brandenburg, Uwe and Zhu, Jiani, Higher Education in China in the Light of Massification and Demographic Change: Lessons to be Learned for Germany. Gutersloh: CHE, p. 21 (2007).
8. Feng, Jianhua, "Calls for University Reform," Beijing Review April 9, 2009.
9. Ibid.
10. Xu Zhihong "Talks about Higher Education Issues" China.com.cn http://www.china.org.cn/china/NPC_CPPCC_2010/2010-03/10/content_19572188.htm

11. Ibid.
12. Cyranoski, David, "China Debates University Reform," *Nature*, 464 (2010)
<http://www.nature.com/news/2010/100316/full/464336a.html>

Guo-hua Wang is the East Asian Studies Librarian at the Woodruff Libraries at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

Developing Western China: Xi'an's Maturing Economy and the Role of Producer Services

By Susan M. Walcott and Chen Ying

Xi'an, famed for its Terracotta Warriors of ancient times and as a strategic interior location in Maoist China, is rising again, as a provider of producer services.

Historic Roots

Xi'an's importance as the major city in central western China extends from its history as the imperial capital of China, anchoring the eastern terminus of the Silk Road, to its current status as the capital of Shaanxi Province and a major destination for both tourism and high technology development. The famous Terracotta Warriors--Great Wall architect and Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi's lifelike funerary soldiers and horses--as well as the nearby Banpo excavations of some of China's earliest archaeological finds, attest to the site's strategic location at a fertile bend of the Yellow River. Beyond its agricultural riches, as the ancient imperial capital Xi'an functioned as a wealthy Silk Road entrepot for trade with lands from India to Rome. The impressive mosque constructed to honor Moslem mariner Admiral Cheng Ho in his hometown still attracts worshippers, another lingering sign of Xi'an's role as a doorway from Han China to the Western lands.

Following the Communist victory in 1949, elements in the PRC's leadership became concerned over the perceived vulnerability of mainland China's east coast cities to an invasion. A series of interior secondary cities were chosen as a "Third Line" for the relocation of technical research universities and strategic industries. These later formed the basis for Xi'an's rise to new regional prominence around the turn of the 21st century.

The three main components of modern Xi'an's producer services sector are financial services (banking, insurance and securities), information consulting (advertising, law and accounting), and computer services (software, data processing and database services). In the decade from 1997-2006, employment in Xi'an's financial services firms increased from 30,000 to 43,000 employees; information consulting employment almost doubled from a 60,000 base; and computer consulting doubled from 16,000 to 32,000. Clearly, Xi'an's service-based economy, also referred to as the tertiary sector, was experiencing lift-off.

New Urban Patterns

As in the east coast economic powerhouse cities of Shanghai and Guangzhou, the location of Xi'an's service sector is largely the result of State intervention. To accommodate a new concentration of highly educated, skilled and relatively affluent residents, Xi'an launched major construction projects for office parks, research centers, middle-class and upscale housing, and accompanying amenity landscapes. New city quarters took shape predominantly on the south side of the city and in dedicated space within the old walled city, the traditional central business district. Also catering to the tourist trade of increasingly affluent Chinese as well as foreigners, a shopping mall close to new hotels sprang up (complete with a Starbucks offering local market flavors such as red bean coffee). Urban planners installed a mock-up of new Xi'an in the lobby of its largest high-tech industrial park headquarters, featuring trendy greenbelts and park spaces such as seen in Shanghai's new modern urban showcase of Pudong and the Zhangjiang high-tech Park.



Key universities with promise for research breakthroughs in commercial areas were chosen as investment targets. These institutions were then provided with extra funds, enlarged, and in many cases moved to new campuses. The new locations were often developed in tandem with nearby high-tech parks to house hoped-for spillover businesses based on breakthrough products. Xi'an Jiaotong University's high-tech park pioneered this concept in western China, which

Chengdu's Sichuan University used in turn as its model. Examples of such development include special facilities for students returning from at least one year of education abroad, with ideas for promising practical research projects, and business incubators for fledgling entrepreneurs.

Economic Bases of Development



A traditional model of economic development consists of five stages: primary level extractive activities such as agriculture, fishing, or mining; secondary-level manufacturing activities; a tertiary level of services provision; a quaternary level of occupations involving knowledge creation; and quinary-level command and control functions. A maturing, increasingly developed economy shifts its economic function concentration up the ladder of these stages, though progress is not perfectly linear. China's predominance at the secondary stage does not mean that it is less advanced than India, whose economic modernization focuses on tertiary-sector service occupations.

However, while China is widely hailed as the 'factory of the world' for its manufacturing prowess, Chinese economic planners have expressed concerns since the 1990s that the country's most advanced urban centers lacked a significant tertiary sector. Central government funding began to target what were seen as the roots of a new growth-inducing base for more innovative, higher skilled and higher

paying jobs.
Xi'an High Tech Park Headquarters

China has sought to fund economic modernization based on promoting innovative industries through a number of schemes such as the Spark Plan, the 863 Plan, the Torch Plan, and several other technology-targeted programs. China's service sector is based more on domestic innovations and firms than India's, which is linked more with global foreign companies. For China this promises more return on investment through less leakage outside the immediate area. Following proclamation of the "Develop the West" policy, Xi'an became a major target for accelerated attention along with Chengdu and Chongqing. From 1997 to 2006, the industrial output value of Xi'an's service industry increased at an annual average rate of 13.74%, compared to traditional service industries of 0.74%, and represented a growth from US\$8.113 billion to US\$25.85 billion.

Producer Services



Producer Services form a prominent sector within the services category. Increasing in importance since the 1960s, producer services emerged as an important function of Xi'an's economy starting in the 1980s. Firms in this sector serve manufacturing, business and government needs rather than sell directly to individual consumers. Their location is not tied to the traditional downtown central district, but needs to be close to their business customers and in

the vicinity of high-speed Internet lines due to their information-intensive nature. Firms engaged in producer services are often housed in office towers, since the expense of telecommunications infrastructure makes this a congenially concentrated footprint. The growth of producer services accompanied the external substitution of service functions formerly performed in-house. Reasons for externalization include cost as well as expertise; the increasingly complex nature of business requires complex services, from financial to computer consultants. This condition has been found to be particularly positive for promoting localized growth within highly populated metropolitan regions anchored by advanced cities.



The location pattern of Xi'an's producer services subsectors varied by proximity to their target market. Financial services cater largely to decision makers engaged in the processing of information for the traditional FIRE (finance, insurance, real estate) companies that occupy a concentrated nucleus in the central business district. Information consultancy services concentrate close to their clients in the southside university and research park region, as well as in the central business district. Due to the particular need for fast communication, computer services are the most agglomerated along the southern research periphery of knowledge-intensive industries.

To illustrate its development stature, Xi'an also acquired a new pedestrian mall, though less bustling than Beijing's Wangfujing or Shanghai's Nanjing Road complex " but still a statement of retail strength for a west China inland city in a largely poor province. As in Chengdu, another major western city with a new pedestrian mall area, nightlife can be more vibrant than during the day when many workers are occupied.

Construction of new university sites, predominantly on the south side of Xi'an where relatively inexpensive land was available, allowed signs to emerge of new cultural and social patterns. The newly relocated Shaanxi University campus, which retains its older site closer to the central city, sports a towering new statue in front of the massive library: China's rehabilitated sage Confucius. According to several students and faculty questioned concerning the prominence of this decidedly post-Cultural Revolution figure, Confucius' distinction lies with his promotion of education.

Implications for Xi'an's Future



Government policy--pouring funds into key western China locations in order to stimulate the development of future wealth in the services sector--seems to have been successful in Xi'an. This metropolis managed to retain important parts of its visible history in the form of pavilion towers and a uniquely intact wall around its old urban center. Outside the surrounding moat, new Xi'an features glass office towers largely occupied by the new services sector. Among the most important of these are the featured producer services, mirroring and sustaining the strength of its economically pioneering and relatively advanced client firms. The orderly and rational nature of the agglomerated producer service and client companies along Xi'an's southern boundary indicates the power of state-level urban planners to complement economic construction with physical infrastructure, creating a reinvigorated oasis of affluence in the dry lands of west China.

Susan Walcott is Professor of Geography, specializing in economic geography and Asian Studies, at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Chen Ying is Professor of Geography at Shaanxi Normal University in Xi'an, specializing in urban geography.

From Grits to Rice: Teaching Chinese Language and Culture in Georgia

By Valerie Pepper



When I was a Chinese Studies major in the early 1990s, the most popular Asian language to study was Japanese. There was little interest in studying Chinese on college campuses, and virtually none at all at the K-12 level. Due to China's economic boom over the last decade, interest in studying not only Chinese language but also Chinese culture and history has increased substantially.

Fortunately, the state of Georgia, with the financial support from China, has expanded Georgia's ties to China with the recent establishment of two Confucius Institutes, non-profit public institutions established for the purpose of promoting Chinese language and culture around the world. The Institutes are under the supervision of China's "Hanban" or Office of Chinese Language Council International, a division of the Chinese Ministry of Education. There are currently more than 282 Confucius Institutes in at least 88 countries worldwide, and the United States has more Confucius Institutes than any other country with more than 63.

Emory University

In March 2008, Emory University, the Atlanta Public Schools, and Nanjing University partnered to establish the first Confucius Institute in Georgia. It is also the first and only Confucius Institute to be jointly administered by a private university and a public school system. The Emory-APS-Nanjing University collaboration is comprised of the following three components:

- K-12 Chinese language and culture learning via partnership with the Atlanta Public School system
- Scholarly exchanges with Nanjing University, including lectures and conference such as the March 2010 conference at Emory on Chinese literature, culture and media
- Public outreach and community activities including Evening at Emory classes on Chinese language and culture

Located in the Kirkwood neighborhood, just a few miles east of downtown Atlanta, Coan Middle School is one home to this Institute. Along with Toomer Elementary, Carver, North Atlanta and Maynard Holbrook Jackson high schools, Coan Middle School is one of five Atlanta public schools that currently offer modern standard Chinese language instruction. (Toomer Elementary has offered Mandarin Chinese for its K-5 students for the last four years.) Last summer, three Atlanta Public Schools educators - Dr. Shirlene B. Carter, principal at Maynard Holbrook Jackson High School; Tonya Saunders, principal at Toomer Elementary; and Dr. Lisa West, model teacher leader with the Office of High Schools - joined a large delegation that traveled to China to expand Chinese-language programs in U.S. schools. This trip was sponsored by Hanban, the Confucius Institute's headquarters in Beijing, and

provided the delegates with a more in-depth look at China's educational system as well as the opportunity to learn more about Chinese culture. (APS website article, 7/23/09)

One element of regular programming at Confucius Institutes has been teacher training workshops. These workshops were established to help Chinese language teachers improve their teaching skills. In addition to sharing best practices for teaching Chinese to non-native speakers in grades K-12, the workshops also provide tools such as new software and textbooks donated by Hanban. The teachers receive Continuing Education Units through the Emory Center for Lifelong Learning, and teacher certificates from Hanban. In the fall of 2008, the Confucius Institute in Atlanta sponsored a teacher training program with the High Museum of Art and more than 180 K-12 teachers with backgrounds in the language arts, history, math and art participated. With support from China, the Confucius Institute of Atlanta also offers intensive summer training workshops for Georgia's Chinese teachers to help them keep abreast of new developments in the field of Chinese language instruction. The Institute also organizes Chinese culture workshops for teachers who want to incorporate Chinese calligraphy, holidays and folklore into their language classes.

One of the most popular of the Confucius Institutes-sponsored educational exchanges has been the Chinese Bridge Summer Camp program, during which U.S. high school students travel to China for two weeks. Last year, 29 Georgia high school students (out of more than 1,000 U.S. students) participated in this program, and interest in the camp continues to rise this year. Students attend language classes and cultural workshops, and go on sightseeing tours of China's rich cultural history. Students get a glimpse of their Chinese counterparts' lives by living in high-school dormitories and spend at least one night with a Chinese family.

The promotion of Chinese language and culture at Georgia schools and universities has already begun to pay off. The Confucius Institute in Atlanta organized a Chinese Speech Contest and sent the first prize winner, Jack Kelleher, to the bi-annual Chinese Bridge Chinese Proficiency Contest in 2009, where he won third place and a scholarship to study in China.

As part of its public outreach effort, the Emory-based Confucius Institute is collaborating with The Evening at Emory program to offer both classes in conversational Chinese language and in calligraphy. The Confucius Institute has also organized and sponsored a wide variety of cultural events and activities around the city, such as the Mid-Autumn Festival Gala, the Sino-U.S. Friendship Photo Exhibit at the Emory Woodruff Library, and the Carter Center exhibit celebrating the 30th anniversary of Sino-U.S. relations.

Kennesaw State University

Georgia's second Confucius Institute is a partnership between Kennesaw State University and Yangzhou University that was formally established in August 2009. The director, Ken Jin, had developed a strong academic exchange relationship with China many years ago. According to Mr. Jin, there are five programs associated with Kennesaw State University's Institute that are simultaneously promoting Chinese language and culture in Georgia:

- The Chinese Language Education is a statewide program that provides support and training for Internet-based Chinese instruction in collaboration with Georgia Virtual Schools, as well as Chinese language instruction for Pre-K students.
- The Study in China program develops overseas study opportunities for high school and university students, as well as for teachers and education administrators from all over the state.
- The International Business Education program develops Georgia-based programs for Chinese business executives and MBA students to learn from top business leaders in Georgia.
- The Chinese Cultural Events program sponsors Chinese New Year celebrations and the Lake Lanier Dragon Boat Festival, as well as other cultural events.
- The Life Enrichment program provides classes for the general public covering a variety of topics such as Chinese cooking, calligraphy, painting, martial arts, and Chinese medicine

The KSU Confucian Institute has most recently focused on Chinese language education at the Pre-K level. There are already numerous K-12 programs throughout the state, and now the directors of both the Emory and KSU Confucius Institutes are responding to requests from Pre-K administrators and offering Chinese language classes to their pupils. According to Mr. Jin, there are approximately 82,000 pupils in Pre-K classes throughout the state.

One of the most exciting and potentially far-reaching of programs is the collaboration between Georgia Virtual Schools (GVS) and KSU's Confucius Institute. Since 2005, GVS, a department of the Georgia Department of Education, has been providing technology services to middle- and high-school students. Although GVS already had been using a first year Chinese-language software program for the past two years, they were interested in improving this software. Last summer, GVS teachers and administrators went to China as a part of the Education Leadership program sponsored by the Confucius Institute at KSU, and they are now working with software developers in China to develop a new language learning program that will include three versions: online, CD-ROM and LAN. This new software (called "Great Wall") will be launched this fall, according to Jay Heap, program developer for GVS. Third- and fourth-year Chinese language learning programs should be ready for the 2011 school year.

The dearth of qualified Chinese language teachers in Georgia, as well as lack of funding for in-school language programs, is the driving force behind this new educational software. On the bright side, the availability of Chinese language software that can reach thousands of school children all over the state of Georgia at minimal cost is an exciting prospect. Without this technology, Chinese language instruction would not be available to most of Georgia's students. In one notable exception to this general situation, KSU's Confucius Institute is working with the staff development program for Cobb County (Georgia) schools and has placed Rong Li, a KSU graduate and Chinese language teacher, at North Cobb High School, where he teaches Chinese language and culture.

Shirley Davis, assistant professor and director of North Georgia Colleges and Universities, met Ken Jin at the World Language Academy in Hall County to discuss the possibility of her students, a group of educators known as "North Georgia-Pioneer Rising Stars Leadership Collaborative," going to China for their yearly

international trip to study best practices. In July 2009, 12 education leaders went to China and over 13 days, they visited middle schools, Yangzhou University and the Hanban Institute in Beijing. This summer, Ken Jin and Shirley Davis will return to China. About 60 educators from Georgia and neighboring states already are interested in joining them. Due to the overwhelming interest in the program and the target participation of 30 educators, all interested participants are required to submit a written proposal stating how they will use the knowledge gained from this experience.

The Study in China program known as "Chinese Bridge" began last year with 28 Georgia high school students and 3 teachers spending 2 weeks visiting Chinese students and sightseeing in Beijing and the Shaolin martial arts school in Henan Province. This summer, more than 100 students have expressed interest in attending the Chinese Bridge study abroad program. The Coca-Cola Foundation, a supporter of youth leadership programs, has reached out to KSU's Confucius Institute to discuss plans for a specialized program to send a smaller group of high school students to China.

Dr. Binbin Jiang, associate professor of Educational Leadership at Kennesaw State University, recently developed and implemented a "Multicultural Education and International Education" graduate seminar and in conjunction with this course, led a group of 8 students to China last summer. The Confucius Institute helped to organize and provided some financial support to the students participating in this overseas educational exchange.

As part of the graduate seminar, the students are required to write a paper about what they learned from their trip to China and how they will use that knowledge in their teaching plans. After completion of this assignment, Dr. Jiang's students presented their papers at the 2009 Southern Regional Council Education Conference held in Atlanta last fall. One student who works as a school counselor wrote about how this trip helped her empathize more with non-native English speaking students and another who teaches high school level Spanish has already spoken with her school's principal about collaborating with a Chinese high school to establish a sister school relationship. Another graduate student wrote about how principals worked with teachers in forming "distributive leadership" whereby the teachers are involved in school leadership activities.

Conclusion

It is impossible to learn a new language without learning something about the culture that utilizes those words and expressions. With the support of the Chinese Ministry of Education, Georgia educators and modern technology, Georgia Virtual Schools is providing students a unique and cost effective opportunity to learn Chinese. Through Chinese language and culture courses as well as study abroad opportunities, Georgia students are broadening their horizons by learning about the world's most populous country and fastest growing economy. The two Confucius Institutes recently established in Georgia present a wonderful opportunity for both students and educators to learn more about a country with a people, history and culture very different from their own.

Valerie Pepper has a B.A. in East Asian Studies from Indiana University. She has worked in marketing and sales management for both Chinese and U.S. companies in China and Taiwan. She will be attending the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University this fall to pursue a Master's degree in Public Policy. Her thesis will focus on the recent emergence of China-based social enterprises.

Center News

China Research Center co-sponsors West China Conference in Chengdu, Sichuan Province

The China Research Center was one of the co-sponsors of the 7th Annual Consortium for Western China Development Studies Conference, "China Regional Development Model: Ten Years of West China Development," held at Sichuan University in Chengdu on July 5-6, 2010. Keynote speakers included Sichuan Province government officials, Vice President of Sichuan University, Dr. Changwen Zhao, and Dr. Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University.

Center Associates Li Qi and Penelope Prime presented their paper "Financing of Chinese Manufacturing Firms: Implications for Understanding Financial Development in West China." Dr. Prime has served on the Board of the Consortium since its inception in 2003. For more information on the Consortium and the conference go to <http://chinadatacenter.org/westchina2010/>.

Study Delegation from Taiwan's National Chengchi University visits Georgia Tech

Taiwan's National Chengchi University (NCCU) and Georgia Tech's School of International Affairs will conduct this summer 2010 in Atlanta a program allowing NCCU students to study "U.S. Economy and Enterprise." Under the program, eighteen NCCU students will spend three weeks in the Atlanta area from 17 July to 7 August. Students will attend lectures by Atlanta-area university faculty on various aspects of the U.S. economy, combined with visits to prominent Atlanta-area companies, governmental economic agencies (federal, state, city and county) and partisan organizations. The program will be directed by NCCU Professor of Economics, Yih-chyi Chuang. For most of the students this will be their first visit to the United States. The program reciprocates Georgia Tech programs during the summers of 2006-2009 under which groups of Tech students studied Taiwan's economy as part of a broader East Asia political economy program. For information about the program please contact Dr. John W. Garver, john.garver@inta.gatech.edu.

CRC Associate and Board Member, Dr. Hanchao Lu, publishes two books

The Birth of a Republic: Francis Stafford's Photographs of China's 1911 Revolution and Beyond (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 2010) is a collection of rare photos of this important historic period.

China's 1911 Revolution ended both the rule of the 267-year-old Manchu Qing dynasty and the more than 2,000-year-old imperial system, establishing Asia's first, if not lasting, republic. Because war correspondence was not an established profession in China and the camera was a rare apparatus in Chinese life at the time, photographs of the revolution are rare. Francis E. Stafford (1884-1938), an American working as a photographer for Asia's largest publishing company, Commercial Press in Shanghai, had unusual access to both sides of the conflict. *The Birth of a Republic* documents this tumultuous period through Stafford's photographic eye.

Stafford trained his lens on the leaders of the revolutionaries, the imperial court, and the generals and foot soldiers, as well as on the common people. His images thus capture the stock in trade of war correspondents and photo journalists, but he also documented scenes of everyday life, from the streets of China's cities to the muddy lanes of its villages, from paddy rice fields to factory workshops, from open-air food markets to the inner chambers of Buddhist temples and Christian churches. His remarkable photographs reveal sweeping social and political change, as well as the tenacity of tradition.

The 162 photographs presented here are from the collection of Stafford's grandson, Ronald Anderson, and are set in historical and cultural context through an interpretive introduction and extensive captions. This book will appeal to historians and general readers interested in modern China, revolution, and war.

A Man of Two Worlds: The Life of Sir Robert Hart, 1835-1911 (Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2009); Chinese title: ??????:?? ???

Related

websites: <http://baike.baidu.com/view/3688783.htm> and <http://www.amazon.cn/gp/product/B002SXKF34?ver=gp>

In A Man of Two Worlds: The Life of Sir Robert Hart, 1835-1911, historian Hanchao Lu presents a biography of Robert Hart, a British subject who served as the

Inspector General of China's maritime customs for nearly half a century (1861-1908). Not only did Hart control part of China's massive revenue generated from import/export tariffs and commerce, but also he was responsible for establishing China's modern postal system, building a new pilotage system, and, in an important way, reshaping Chinese foreign policy. Written in Chinese for the China audience, Lu challenges both the Chinese nationalist view of Hart as an agent of Western imperialism and the condescending Euro-centric view of Hart as the forefather of China's modernization. Lu asserts that there is no doubt that Robert Hart, as the "I.G. in Peking," was a product of China's subordinate position in the age of imperialism. And it is also undeniable that Hart placed British national interests first. He did not hesitate to side with his mother country when it came to conflicts of interest between Britain and the Qing empire. But as a longtime high-ranking Chinese official, Hart was also genuinely dedicated to his post. In his own words, "The Service which I direct is called the Customs Service, but its scope is wide and its aim is to do good work for China in every possible direction." Hart administered the most successful government organization in China, played a significant role in propelling China into the modern world, and performed a delicate balance act for advancing Chinese interests without undercutting Western interests. Twelve years after his entering the Chinese service, Hart claimed that "I shall never leave China contentedly unless I see

mines at work, railways in operation and telegraphs spreading. " He stayed in China for another thirty-five years without completely accomplishing his mission, yet by that time his accomplishments and devotion had already made him the most powerful and influential "hired foreigner" in modern China. Through Hart, Lu prompts readers to revisit the meaning of imperialism and nationalism, the complexity of modernity in the non-Western world, and the contemporary implications of the Western presence in China.

China Research Center Advisory Board Member, Guanming Fang, is named the new chairperson of the Georgia China Alliance

Georgia China Alliance, a nonprofit organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, today announced that it has appointed Guanming Fang as its Chairwoman to serve for a term of two years. In addition to naming its new chairwoman, the organization also announced the nomination of the following individuals to its Executive Committee: John Ray of J.P. Morgan Chase, Craig Lesser of The Pendleton Consulting Group, Matthew Patterson of Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Lei Shan of Merrill Lynch, Trae Westmoreland of Georgia Power, and Lei Fang, Ph.D, M.D. of Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP. Appointments to the Executive Committee are subject to approval by the Board of Directors of the Alliance. Rongrong Liu, a Research Associate at Center for International Trade and Security at University of Georgia, will continue to serve as the Executive Director of the organization.

Guanming Fang thanked John Ray, its immediate past Chairman, for his services and his significant contributions to the Alliance. "I am honored to have this opportunity to serve GCA, and look forward to working with the Executive Committee to build on the success John has achieved and to make this a better and stronger organization," said Ms. Fang. "I believe in the mission of GCA and am convinced that we have the resources and capabilities to provide a unique service to the Georgia business community, particularly the small and medium size companies that are interested in developing business ties with China." Guanming Fang is a Member at Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice PLLC, an AmLaw 100 law firm. Ms. Fang focuses her law practice on corporate transactions and leads the firm's China Initiative. Ms. Fang is a co-founder of Georgia China Alliance and has served on the boards of various nonprofit organizations.

Georgia China Alliance is a nonprofit organization founded in 2004 with a mission to promote commerce between the State of Georgia and China. GCA's members are a diverse group of Georgia's leading business, government, non-profit and educational institutions and a broad cross-section of individuals interested in improving business, trade, and investment ties with China. Activities organized or sponsored by the organization include hosting visiting Chinese government and business delegations; organizing seminars to discuss economic policies, political and business environments in China, developments in specific areas such as bioscience, and a wide varieties of other topics; and having other periodic educational and networking events. For more information about GCA, please visit www.georgiachina.com.