Data on Minnesota Exports for Third Quarter 2015 – Published November 2015

Minnesota exports drop 10 percent in the third quarter to $5.0 billion

Minnesota exports of goods (including agricultural, mining and manufactured products) dropped to $5.0 billion and represented a decrease of 10 percent (or $568 million) between the third quarters of 2014 and 2015. Minnesota ranked 22nd by export value in the third quarter of 2015. U.S. exports fell 8 percent during this period; 42 states experienced decreased exports. For the first nine months of 2015, Minnesota and U.S. exports have fallen about 6 percent.

For the manufacturing sector, Minnesota exported $47.7 billion in the third quarter of 2015. Both U.S. and Minnesota exports declined 10 percent year over year.

Exports Decline the Most to Canada and Markets in Asia; Some Growth to EU Markets

- The state’s exports to North America dropped 10 percent as exports to Canada plummeted 27 percent to $1.1 billion. Exports to Mexico dropped slightly by 1 percent to $635 million.
- Minnesota exports to Asia decreased 10 percent, due to significantly weaker demand in major markets such as the Philippines ($109 million, down 31 percent), Japan ($259 million, down 15 percent) and Singapore ($116 million, down 19 percent). In contrast, exports to China were flat at $554 million, up 2 percent to Thailand ($61 million) and up 6 percent to Malaysia ($38 million).
- Other bright spots for Minnesota exports were markets in the European Union, to where exports increased 4 percent to $1 billion. Exports grew strongly particularly to Germany ($217 million, up 29 percent), Austria ($29 million, up 51 percent), Poland ($30 million, up 44 percent), Spain ($23 million, up 54 percent), and the United Kingdom ($36 million, up 8 percent).
- Exports also increased 7 percent to Central and South America ($262 million) and the Middle East ($115 million).

Figure 1. Exports Fall For Majority of States

The group visited many Changsha Gardens to view the architectural style and landscape designs, including a visit to the famous Aiwan Pavilion at Yuelu Mountain. A highlight of the trip was the signing of a Sister Friendship Park Agreement between Phalen Park and Yanghu Wetlands Park, located in Changsha. The Sister Friendship Park Agreement opens the way for future cultural exchanges.

The Chinese Garden Society group also traveled to Feng Huang Phoenix Ancient Village and smaller villages to conduct research on Hmong (Miao) culture, one of the main ethnic groups in the Changsha area. The Hmong in Minnesota claim the Changsha area as their ancestral home.

continued on page 16
Publisher’s Pronouncements

Greetings!

All of us at China Insight hope you were able to enjoy a great holiday season and we wish everyone a healthy and a prosperous 2016. As we resume our regular production schedule, we begin our 15th year of publishing and continue our mission of promoting cultural and business understanding between China and the U.S. To enable us to continue, we are seeking a few advertising representatives (see ad on p. 11).

Included in this month’s issue is the second part of our series on presidential candidates and their positions on China. This article is written exclusively for China Insight by contributors Joe Pearman and Chang Wang. On the front page, we have published an update on the proposed Chinese Garden at Lake Phalen, St. Paul. There was also an update on the Chinese Garden now being constructed at the University of Minnesota Arboretum in Chanhassen during CAAM’s Annual Meeting/Banquet. It’s nice to see that the Chinese community is working on Chinese gardens at three different locations - the two mentioned above and one near the Minneapolis Institute of Art in Minneapolis, since there are at least eight Japanese gardens in the metro area.

We are sad to report on the recent passing of two individuals who have contributed to China Insight and the Chinese community in their support of Chinese arts and culture: contributing writer Raymond Lum and local philanthropist Bruce Dayton (see Memoriam).

As we prepare to celebrate Chinese New Year on February 8, the Year of the Monkey, we invite you to enjoy many of the Chinese New Year celebrations that will take place throughout the Twin Cities announced in this issue, including events of the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association-MN Chapter, CAAM Chinese Dance Theater and Twin Cities Chinese Dance Center.

For those of you who wish to learn more about the custom of celebrating Chinese New Year, visit our website at www.chinainsigh.info to access the February 2013 edition of China Insight (pages 9 and 11) from the archive link for articles about Chinese New Year customs and traditions. Chinese New Year typically takes place after the Winter Solstice and is celebrated by millions of people across the globe. Chinese New Year is a time of new beginnings and signifies a fresh start for everyone. It is very much a family event and is a time of reunion and thanksgiving.

Thank you for continuing to support China Insight and please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any comments to aid us in continuing to serve the community. Sincerely,

Gregory J. Hugh
China Insight, Inc.
Publisher-CEO

IN MEMORIAM

Raymond Lum was a native of Chicago’s Chinatown and a boyhood friend of Greg Hugh, publisher of China Insight. Ray had been a contributing writer for China Insight over the past seven years and provided many book reviews and a series on Chinese genealogy, which he unfortunately was not able to complete. He was Harvard’s librarian for South and Southeast Asia and an instructor of Chinese at Harvard University Extension School. He held a master’s degree in library science from the University of Michigan and an M.A. and Ph.D. in East Asian Languages & Civilizations from Harvard University. From 1968 through 1970, he was a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Sarawak, Malaysia. He was a resident of Arlington, Massachusetts.

1942-2015

Much has been written about philanthropist Bruce Dayton in mainstream media. He was known for his business acumen and how he led the Dayton Department Store chain that was sold and focused on building what is now Target Corporation. He also carried on his family legacy of civic giving and was extremely generous to the Minneapolis Institute of Art where he has donated many priceless Chinese art pieces and furniture. The Chinese Heritage Foundation named him an Honorary Chinese Minnesotan of Note in 2007. He and his wife Ruth Stricker recently made a generous donation to the Chinese Heritage Foundation’s commission of an English opera of the “Dream of the Red Chamber,” thus continuing his mission to share Chinese culture. A separate article on the “Dream of the Red Chamber” can be found elsewhere in the paper.

1918-2015

About CHINA/INSIGHT

CHINA/INSIGHT is a monthly English language newspaper fostering business and cultural harmony between China and the U.S.

CHINA/INSIGHT is a Member of The Minnesota Chapter of the Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA).

Submissions & Correspondence

CHINA/INSIGHT welcomes guest articles and letters to the editor. Correspondence should be addressed to:

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Where do old Chinese mobiles go?

The average Chinese replace and upgrade their mobile phone every 8-12 months, discarding 80 million devices each year, according to Guangzhou-based newspaper New Express. Mobile phones contain many nonbiodegradable materials including heavy metals such as copper, lead and mercury, which pollute the soil and contaminate the water table. Guizhou in South China’s Guandong Province is known as the e-waste capital of the world. A small family-owned concern processes 60 percent of the phones and old computers. Its informal “recycling” process causes significant pollution to the environment as China does not have up-to-date recycling processes for mobiles and computer components.

Rural consumers shopping online

The People’s Republic of China’s Ministry of Commerce reported that 77.14 million rural consumers spent approximately US$28.2 million online in 2014, representing a 40.6 percent increase in order volume and a 60 percent increase in sales from a year ago. Of that, US$27.9 was spent on a one-stop service site for rural farmers. E-commerce giants Alibaba, JD.com and Suning also are focusing on their competition in rural areas. As of the end of September, Alibaba has built 109 county-level service centers in 21 provinces and set up rural service points in 4,247 villages. Its average daily orders has surpassed 50,000 items, according to TechWeb. JD.com has completed 700 county-level service centers.

Umbrella Soldiers win seats

Young supporters of Hong Kong’s 2014 pro-democracy demonstration (“Umbrella Revolution”) last year are known as “Umbrella Soldiers.” Even though the demonstration may have yielded concrete election changes, it did instill interest in politics of governance in the younger generation. Many registered to vote for the first time. In the district elections of November 2015, the first after the demonstrations, dozens of Umbrella Soldiers ran for election. The pro-democracy campaigners managed to take four council seats away from the pro-Beijing camp in the November 2015 elections. These new, young pro-democracy voters are making some inroads by showing their power.

The elections drew a historical high of 47 percent voter turnout, many saying that last year’s pro-democracy demonstration had motivated them to cast their votes. Joshua Wong, the teenage face of the demonstration changes, it did instill interest in politics of governance in the younger generation. Many registered to vote for the first time. In the district elections of November 2015, the first after the demonstrations, dozens of Umbrella Soldiers ran for election. The pro-democracy campaigners managed to take four council seats away from the pro-Beijing camp in the November 2015 elections. These new, young pro-democracy voters are making some inroads by showing their power.

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Pathetic proficiency

A recent report on Hong Kong students’ proficiency in English would be funny if it weren’t so pathetic! The Diploma of Secondary Education English exam report stated students struggled with pronunciation. E.g., “My doctor is in the sour” actually was supposed to be “My daughter is in the shower.” Sad to think this former British colony now ranks 33rd out of 70 countries in English language proficiency.

Sovereignty at last

Taiwan finally gained independent status the last week of November 2015. But instead of joy, it’s government and citizens are treating this change in status with fear. Why? Because its sovereignty status was recognized not by mainland China but ISIS in a four-minute tirade made by its leader, promising to pay the victim’s medical bills for a wound “not serious” and the shop owner scratched the man’s neck!

The People’s Republic of China’s Ministry of Commerce reported that 77.14 million rural consumers spent approximately US$28.2 million online in 2014, representing a 40.6 percent increase in order volume and a 60 percent increase in sales from a year ago. Of that, US$27.9 was spent on a one-stop service site for rural farmers. E-commerce giants Alibaba, JD.com and Suning also are focusing on their competition in rural areas. As of the end of September, Alibaba has built 109 county-level service centers in 21 provinces and set up rural service points in 4,247 villages. Its average daily orders has surpassed 50,000 items, according to TechWeb. JD.com has completed 700 county-level service centers.

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A hungry rodent wanted to partake a vermicelli plate with a patron at a noodle shop in Hong Kong. It left its fair in the air conditioning unit above where the man was sitting, jumped onto his shoulder when his plate of vermicelli arrived. Shrieks from other patrons sent the approximately 5-inch long rat scurrying into the shop kitchen, but not before it scratched the man’s neck! Fortunately, doctors proclaimed the wound “not serious” and the shop owner promised to pay the victim’s medical bills AND clean up his act, literally.

Firemen at Fuzhou Changle Airport responded to a fire on a passenger plane on the runway. Unfortunately for them, they sprayed down the wrong plane – the one that reported the fire to the control tower! Turned out the “fire” coming from the engine of the other aircraft was deemed “normal!” Oh well…what’s a 90-minute delay compared to aviation disaster in the air, huh?

Nine-dash maps

As of January 1, China will have map monitors making sure that maps depicting Chinese territories will be “up-to-date!” According to TechWeb, JD.com has completed 4,247 villages. Its average daily orders has surpassed 50,000 items, according to TechWeb. JD.com has completed 700 county-level service centers.

By the numbers

The Chinese online shopping frenzy known as Singles’ Day, takes place every Nov. 11 when singles buy gifts for themselves to compensate for their “single-hood.” Its 24-hour sales volume was more than Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday in the U.S. combined. 2015 Singles’ Day sales did not disappoint!

9.3 billion in sales took place in the first 12 hours of Singles' Day, almost doubling the $3.9 billion in the first hour of 2014. 8 minutes was all it took to rake in $1 billion in sales after the event kicked off at midnight. In 2013, it took 50 minutes to reach $1 billion.

72 percent of the sales in the first 90 minutes were done through Alibaba’s mobile app. Over the 24-hour period, 68 percent of sales were made on mobile devices.

40,000 merchants took part in this year’s event, compared with 27,000 in 2014. This year included 5,000 merchants from overseas.

213 countries participated in this year’s online event.

100 million orders were processed by Alibaba in the first hour.

760 million packages will be sent on the day, representing a 42 percent increase over the same period last year.

60 percent increase in Alibaba’s sales for 2015 Singles’ Day, totaling US$14.3 billion in gross merchandise volume (GMV), does not take into consideration the eventual returns. Also, since Alibaba makes its money off fees and commissions from the sellers on its site, its revenue is not US$14.3 billion.

1.6 million bras sold on Singles’ Day, folded and stacked would reach three times the height of Mt. Everest.

10 million orders were recorded by Alibaba’s rival JD.com.

5 top smartphone brands sold during the 24-hour period are: 1) Huawei, 2) Meizu, 3) Xiaomi, 4) Apple and 5) Qiku. No finalized sales figures are released, but fifth-placed Qiku was reported to have sold 80,000 phones within the first 10 hours.

Singles' Day: online shopping frenzy

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The promise of China’s G20 presidency

By Andrew Sheng and Xiao Geng, China Daily, Dec. 2

China has assumed the G20 presidency since Dec 1. Over the next year - and especially at the organization’s September summit, to be held in Hangzhou - China plans to help lay the groundwork for a world economy that is more “innovative, invigorated, interconnected, and inclusive.” The question is how.

The G20 has gained some momentum, and China can benefit. If the current United Nations Climate Change Conference produces a binding global agreement to curb greenhouse-gas emissions, that momentum will become even stronger. Given that the G20 countries represent two-thirds of the world’s population and 85 percent of its GDP, they would be integral to the implementation of any deal. By providing a framework for these countries to meet regularly to discuss global challenges like climate change, the G20 - which is, at best, a club of self-selected members - gains legitimacy.

All of this bodes well for China’s capacity to help counter the global slowdown in growth, trade, and investment. And not a moment too soon: The ongoing slowdown in growth, trade, and investment. And not a capacity to help counter the global slowdown in growth, trade, and investment. And not a capacity to help counter the global slowdown in growth, trade, and investment. And not a capacity to help counter the global slowdown in growth, trade, and investment.

The same brand of pragmatism that China currently faces, because it could exacerbate desperation and instability in already-fragile countries, while compelling more robust economies to turn inward, rather than address proliferating crises.

Fortunately, China has lately been showing its commitment to becoming a more responsible global stakeholder. Perhaps most notable, it recently led the establishment of the Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which will serve largely as a vehicle for Chinese foreign investment.

Specifically, the AIIB will (among other things) provide funding for China’s ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, which aims to enhance trade linkages throughout Asia, across the Middle East, and into Europe, through massive infrastructure investment. The fact that more than 50 countries signaled on as founding members indicates that members’ interest in securing resources to meet urgent infrastructure trumps geopolitical competition.

The same brand of pragmatism was apparent in China’s response to its exclusion from the recently agreed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement, spearheaded by the U.S. and including 12 Pacific Rim countries. Instead of grandstanding, China has shown its willingness to pursue different types of trade arrangements, as needed. If China can grasp the opportunity of the G20 presidency to broker a deal to conclude the World Trade Organization’s long-stalled Doha Development Round, its credentials as a global stakeholder would be enhanced.

There is more promising news. The Chinese renminbi has joined the U.S. dollar, the British pound, the euro, and the Japanese yen in the basket of currencies that determines the value of the International Monetary Fund’s reserve asset, special drawing rights. With the renminbi moving one step closer to becoming a reserve currency, China’s capacity to help the world - and especially emerging-market economies - cope with impending market volatility will be greatly enhanced.

Building a robust, unified, and fast-growing global economy will be extremely difficult even under the most favorable circumstances. It will be impossible if large swaths of the world - most notably, the Middle East - remain mired in chaos and violence. Given this, China could, like Turkey, use its G20 presidency to promote consensus on the need to end the Syrian conflict and to support long-term peace and economic development throughout the Middle East by pursuing strategies that revive trade, investment, and employment.

Next year, the G20 has an important opportunity to show that it can deal effectively with global crises, from the risk of secular stagnation to the scourge of transnational terrorism. With the right mix of realism and power sharing, China’s G20 presidency could catalyze important progress - and perhaps even place a firm foundation beneath a new global economic architecture fit for the 21st century.

Andrew Sheng is distinguished fellow of the Asia Global Institute at the University of Hong Kong and a member of the UNEP/Advisory Council Sustainable Finance. Xiao Geng is director of the EFF Institute, and professor at the University of Hong Kong and a fellow at its Asia Global Institute.

Events

Celebrate CHINESE NEW YEAR with CAAM Chinese Dance Theater

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater will present its 2016 Chinese New Year Show “One Earth One Home” on Jan 30 & 31 at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul. Vibrant costumes, agile movement and energetic styling on a professional stage are hallmarks of CAAM Chinese Dance Theater’s annual production. Intended to celebrate the Chinese New Year season the show features dances to delight and entertain, inspired by Chinese stories of man’s relationship with animals and nature.

CAAM CDT explores stories and values of various groups in China through dazzling movement and heartfelt stories, display of jumps, turns and acrobatics intertwined into a fantastical presentation.

CDT has built a reputation in arts and dance circles with its entertaining, professionally choreographed and marvelously executed programs. CDT also is recognized for its welcoming and inclusive work in the broader community with its extensive outreach in schools and in the community. This production is supported by Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Grant, and a grant from the RBC Wealth Management as well as numerous individual and organizational financial donations and countless hours of volunteers from the CAAM CDT community.

Tickets for the 90-minute performances are available online at tickets@oshaugnessy.org.

Date & time: Sat., Jan. 30, 7 p.m.
Sun., Jan. 31, 2 p.m.
Location: O’Shaughnessy at The College of St. Catherine
2004 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul, MN
Cost: $15

Two 45-minute matinee performances, ideal for school and group field trips, are scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 2 at 9:45 a.m. and 11:45 a.m.
Ticket cost for the shorter performances is $7. If interested, please email admin@caamdt.org.

Jewish violin meets Chinese pipa on January 14

Violinist Steven Greenman, one of America’s finest practitioners, composers and teachers of traditional East European Jewish klezmer music and local pipa artist Gao Hong, four-time winner of the Mcknight Artist Fellowship for Performing Musicians, will team up for three performances on January 14 around the Twin Cities. All concerts are free and open to the public.

Greenman and Hong will be at:
Kang Le Adult Day Care Center, 5593 West 78th St., Edina; 612-208-3848
Thursday, 11 a.m.
Sholom East Campus Auditorium, 740 Kay Ave., St. Paul; 651-328-2000
Thursday, 2 p.m.
McNally Smith College of Music Auditorium, 19 Exchange St. East, St. Paul; 651-291-0177
Thursday, 7 p.m.

The concerts are presented by International Friendship Through the Performing Arts and funded through the Minnesota Regional Arts Council.

News

Chinese consumption-boosting measures

To encourage consumption and stabilize the struggling economy, the Chinese government outlined a number of measures on Nov. 23 that it will increase imports, make it easier for overseas shoppers to get tax refunds and allow foreigners to visit more of the country for 72 hours without visas, the central government said on Nov. 23.

The government also said China will start to import more advanced equipment and daily consumer goods.

It promised to support the development of “emerging industries with strategic importance,” a category that includes energy conservation and environmental protection, next-generation information technology and new energy vehicles.

The announcement also specified 3D printing, robotics, gene engineering, wearable devices, smart home appliances, and digital media as targets for development.

Andrew Sheng is distinguished fellow of the Asia Global Institute at the University of Hong Kong and a member of the UNEP/Advisory Council Sustainable Finance. Xiao Geng is director of the EFF Institute, and professor at the University of Hong Kong and a fellow at its Asia Global Institute.

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The general’s eponymous chicken

By Elaine Dunn

Quick, which general from Hunan Province, China, is better known than Mao Zedong in the U.S. and not because of his role on the battlefield? Answer: General Tso.

Walk into any of the approximately 50,000 U.S.-based Chinese restaurants or Asian buffets and you’ll come across a dish called General Tso’s chicken (左宗鶴). This sweet, slightly spicy, deep-fried chicken nugget dish is one of the most ubiquitous – and popular – dishes in America. So was this chicken dish really a favourite of General Tso?

Who is General Tso?

First of all, who is General Tso? General Tso is a real general from the Qing Dynasty. He was born Zuo Zongtang (左宗鶴), in pinyin, in 1812 in a small village 50 miles north of Changsha, the provincial capital of Hunan Province.

In China, he is known for his ruthlessness during the Taiping Rebellion, China’s deadliest civil war, and certainly not for the chicken dish associated with his name. He was the son of poor peasant farmers. After failing the official court exams seven times, he abandoned his ambitions of becoming a civil servant, instead returning home to farm silkworms and study on his own. When the Taiping Rebellion started in 1850, the governor of Hunan Province brought him in as an advisor. In 1860, he had his own garrison of 5,000 volunteers, which he successfully led in driving the Taiping rebels out of Hunan. In 1864, he and his mentor governor Zeng Guolan ended the rebellion and he was made a viceroy and governor-general of Fujian Province.

His military success continued. He called for a war against the Russian forces in Xinjiang in 1876, ending Russian occupation of the border city of Yining (伊寧). With the outbreak of the Sino-French War in 1884, Zuo took on his fourth and last commission, overseeing coastal defense of Fujian. He died of natural causes in 1885 after a truce was signed between the Chinese and the French.

How General Tso’s chicken came to be

Former New York Times reporter Jennifer Lee went on a pilgrimage to trace the origin(s) of this popular American chicken dish. In a November 2013 TED Talk, she debunked many myths about the dish, including:

- No one in China, except for maybe the graduates who have studied in the U.S., has heard of General Tso’s chicken, not even the general’s relatives!
- The general is known for his military distinction in China, NOT for a chicken dish.
- The general, though, did raise chickens; but he actually preferred pigs.

According to Lee in her “The Fortune Cookie Chronicles,” Chinese food in the U.S. was largely shaped in the 1970s by three Chinese chefs and President Richard Nixon. Apparently after Nixon’s historic visit to China in 1972, Americans demanded Chinese food beyond the realm of chop suey, egg foo young and chow mein.

The three Chinese classically trained chefs fled to Taiwan when the Communists took over the mainland. They eventually settled in New York City and opened their own restaurants in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Chinese Heritage Foundation local donors treated to “Dream of the Red Chamber” opera sneak preview

By Greg Hugh

The Chinese Heritage Foundation (CHFF) held two special events recently to provide supporters of “Dream of the Red Chamber” with an exclusive preview of the adaptation of this classic Chinese novel into an English opera to be produced by the San Francisco Opera company, in the fall of 2016.

On Nov. 7 a select gathering of donors enjoyed an intimate dinner hosted by CHFF at the home of Ming Tchou, founder of CHFF and lead donor for the “Dream” opera. The group was provided with a personal presentation by the “Dream of the Red Chamber” opera composer and co-librettist, Bright Sheng and co-librettist David Henry Hwang, newly in to the Twin Cities for the occasion.

Sheng and Hwang discussed how they collaborated on adapting the extensive and complicated novel by 18th-century Qing Dynasty writer Cao Xueqin to come up with a two-act opera that focuses on the love triangle with the political intrigues in the background. Members of the creative team assembled by the San Francisco Opera Company were also announced: the team will be led by Taiwanese director Stan Lai; production designer will be Tim Yip; and conductor, George Manahan.

The following day, a larger group of donors were invited for a luncheon presentation at the Marsh in Minnetonka, Minn. Sheng and Hwang again gave a presentation to the group on how they collaborated in the composing and writing of the “Dream” opera. As a special treat, original musical excerpts were performed by soprano Jing Jing Li from the China National Opera House in Beijing, who had only recently arrived from Beijing with pianist Eric McNamney and Brad Benoit with the Minnesota Opera.

Note: See companion article elsewhere in the paper on how the San Francisco Company plans to put on the opera. Additional articles about “Dream of the Red Chamber” can also be found at www.chineseheritagefoundation.org.
100 Days Reform of 1898

By Pat Welsh, contributor

Kang Youwei

In 1898 the Chinese government experienced a short period of attempted reforms called the Hundred Days Reform Movement (百日維新 or 百日變法). This reform movement was instigated by Kang Youwei (康有為), who had the support of Xu Zhijing (徐繼畬), Yang Shenzhu (楊樹柚) and Yang Rui (楊銳). The reformers held that China needed more than “self-strengthening” and that innovation reformers held that China needed more than “self-strengthening” and that innovation

By Pat Welsh, contributor

Bureau. This promotion was motivated by the recognition that the Chinese government needed to be better informed about Western affairs and technology. Fourth, a bureau of agriculture, industry and commerce was established within the government. Fifth, orders were proclaimed abolishing the sincere appointments in the offices of imperial supervisions of instruction, office of transmission, court of imperial entertainments, of state ceremonial, of imperial equities (horse stables) and the grand court of revision. These sinecures provided little or no work but nonetheless paid a salary. Also abolished were the governorships of Guangdong, Hubei and Yunnan, the director-generalship of the Yellow River, the grain transportation taotai (漕台), which had not taken charge over transportation affairs and the salt taotai, which until then had no salt fields. Finally, the grand secretaries, the six ministries, the governor generals and all provincial governors were ordered to ponder carefully and report on the question of whether or not other civilian and military posts should be abolished.

Other reforms were undertaken later with mixed results. One was the building of a more modern educational curriculum that studied math and science instead of focusing on Confucian texts. Another was Kang’s attempt to change the government from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy with democracy. The new administration seemed to get off to a good start. Six reforms were immediately undertaken. However, even though Kang Youwei had the emperor’s support, he never had the support of either the Empress Dowager Cixi or the Councilors of the Grand Council (總理衙門), which advised and directed matters of governing policy approved by the Empress Dowager or of Ronglu (容務), the governor-general of Zhih who wielded military power. Six men for execution

Yuan Shi’ai (袁世凱), engineered a coup d’état that placed the emperor under house arrest where he remained until his death in 1908. Cixi then took over the government as regent. She then had eight scapegoats arrested of which six were executed, one was exiled to the frontiers and one was given life imprisonment. The executed scapegoats included the four probationary secretaries appointed by the emperor to the Grand Council. Kang Youwei avoided arrest by fleeing China on the day before the coup. With the coup d’état, the 100 days reform seemed to have come to an end. All of the innovations proclaimed during the Hundred Days’ Reform were rescinded within one month. In short, everything was reverted back to before. China then entered a two-year reactionary period that would end in 1900 with the failure of the Boxer Rebellion.

Prince Gong

ambitionness of the reform effort by the new probationary secretaries of the Grand Council actually hindered its success as it attracted opposition. Another part of the failure was due to Kang’s underestimation and misunderstanding of the political realities of his time. For example, Prince Gong
Trendy Chinese Internet words you should know

All China Tech News, Nov. 24, 2015

1. The essentials

牛 niu
From the Chinese word for “cow.” Niu simply means “awesome.” E.g. This tech news site is so niu!

萌 meng
The word “meng” comes from Japanese animation, and is used to say something is very cute. “Mai meng” (literally, to sell meng), means someone is pretending to be cute. E.g. Chinese pop star Luhan is the love of my life. #mengmengda

驚 jiong
This is an ancient Chinese character meaning “light” or “window” that Chinese net users have repurposed as an emoticon. It symbolizes a person with an open mouth, used to express shock, dismay, or awkwardness, or anything else the character conjures in your mind. E.g. So I walked her all the way home, and then she was like: actually, I have a boyfriend. Friend: 驚.

2. Insults

屌丝 diaosi
Originally used to refer to male pubic hair, this term came from Baidu’s reddit-like forums, where football fans used it to refer to themselves in a deprecatory way. Now it means a loser, deadbeat, someone who has no chance of ever getting a house, a car, or a girlfriend. E.g. She would never go for a diaosi like me.

3. Dating terms

握草 memeda
Memeda is a kissing sound used by couples on QQ and other kinds of messaging services to express their affection for each other. According to Baidu Baike, if you say it to someone and they say it back, it means your affections are reciprocated and you can try to get in their pants. E.g. Hey babe, thanks for making dinner tonight. Memeda!

约炮 yuepao
Literally means “meet cannon.” Comes from a slang term “to shoot a cannon,” meaning to have sex. If you’re setting up a cannon meeting, it means you’re trying to hook up with the other person, like a booty call or a one night stand. E.g. If you use it the right way, WeChat can be a magic yuepao machine.

高富帅 gaofushuai
Literally, tall, rich and handsome. Refers to the ideal boyfriend, the Chinese version of prince charming. E.g. Have you met the gaofushuai she’s dating? How do I get me one of those?

Masterpieces of Chinese painting on exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Horses and Grooms, Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), ca.
Zhao Mengfu (Chinese, 1254–1322), Zhao Yong (Chinese, 1289–after 1360), Zhao Lin (Chinese, active second half of the 14th century)
Handscroll; ink and color on paper; 12 1/4 in. x 29 ft. 2 1/2 in. (31.1 x 890.3 cm)

NEW YORK Over the past 40 years, The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s collection of Chinese painting and calligraphy has grown to become one of the greatest and most comprehensive in the world, a testament to the discerning eye of its renowned Department of Asian Art, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2015. To help mark the occasion, the department will present the special exhibition entitled “Masterpieces of Chinese Painting from the Metropolitan Collection,” which encompasses the vast historical sweep of the brush arts of China, dating from the Tang dynasty (608–917) to the present. By highlighting the collection’s most notable works of art, the exhibition will provide visitors with a rare opportunity to learn about the history of Chinese painting and calligraphy through some of the best examples available from each era. Featuring a total of 110 works, the exhibition will be presented in two rotations.

The first rotation will be on view through April 17, 2016, and the second rotation will be on view from May 7, 2016, through Oct. 11, 2016. The exhibition will begin with a riveting concentration of early works from the Tang and Song dynasties (960–1279), including the oldest and most storied piece in the Museum’s collection of Chinese art — Han Gan’s “Night Shining White,” an eighth-century painting of the favorite horse of Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756). The painting bears seals and inscriptions dating to the eighth century that document more than 1,200 years of provenance.

Alongside this work will be one of the few surviving Chinese paintings from the 10th century — the imposing “Palace Banquet,” which depicts a lavish courtly scene in the women’s quarters of the palace.

The exhibition will continue with one of the world’s most important collections of Song dynasty calligraphy, “Biographies of Lian Po and Lin Xiangru,” by Huang Tingjian (1045–1105). Across from this will be one of only two surviving works by the Northern Song master who was recognized as the court’s greatest painter of figures: “Classic Filial Piety,” by Li Gonglin (ca. 1041–1106).

During the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279), the leading calligraphers in the empire were its emperors and empresses. Works on view will include a selection of imperial calligraphy paired with works by the top court painters, Ma Yuan and Xia Gui.

Art of the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), when China was ruled by the Mongols, is a particular strength of the Met’s collection. Works of art from this period will include Zhao Mengfu’s well-known “Horse and Groom;” Zhang Yucai’s dragon painting, “Beneficent Rain;” and masterpieces by two
Masterpieces of Chinese painting
continued from page 7

heroes of the literati painting movement, Ni Zan and Wu Zhen. An exquisite painting by the plum blossom specialist Wang Mian — a delicate and masterly depiction of a blossoming branch bending in the wind, flower petals scattering in the wind — will also be on view.

A selection of works from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) will include “Elegant Gathering in the Apricot Garden,” a celebrated 15th-century painting that captures beautifully the elegance of early Ming literati culture, and the imposing “Two Hawks in a Thicket,” by the court artist Lin Liang (ca. 1416–1480). Also on view will be a selection of masterpieces that show the intense vibrancy of the figure painting tradition during this period.

The final gallery will be devoted to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). In addition to the strikingly modernist-like ink painting “Birds in a Lotus Pond” by Zhu Da (1626–1705), and the sumptuous “Whiling Away the Summer,” another ink painting, by Wu Li (1632–1718), the gallery will display two massive handscrolls from the Qing imperial court that document inspection tours of the southern part of the empire taken by two emperors, Kangxi (r. 1662–1722) and Qianlong (r. 1736–1795). The scrolls will fill an entire wall more than 50 feet long, providing a rare opportunity to view them side by side.

The exhibition is organized by Joseph Scheier-Dolberg, Assistant Curator in the Department of Asian Art and made possible by the Joseph Hotung Fund.

2015 Art and culture delegation

By Tao Peng, contributor

Last year marked the 20th year of the Red Wing, Minn., and Quzhou, China, sister-city relationship. To commemorate this special occasion, Quzhou sent an all-female art association to Red Wing the first week of December 2015 to strengthen the relationship and further our culture exchange.

The delegation of 15 visited other cities in U.S. before stopping in Red Wing for three days on its official delegation visit. The Red Wing Sister City Commission wanted this visit to be mainly about arts and culture exchange, but since it was the first visit to the United States for many of the delegates, the Red Wing contingent prepared some events to introduce them to some U.S. history.

First, a little background on the group. The Quzhou all-female art association is a nonprofit organization whose main interests are visual arts, mostly painting. The art association was formed in 2012. Prior to that, they were just a small group of a few individuals meeting on a monthly basis to paint. According to Wang Xuerong, chair of the art association and lead delegate, who is also one of the founders of the association, this art association is now 40-member strong. The main reason they formed the association was to make it easier to conduct cultural exchanges with other cultures.

The delegation had prepared and brought with them some art to Red Wing. We agreed it would be a good idea to do an art exhibit of the works they brought and, along with couple of local artists, made the exhibit open to the public for viewing during their Red Wing visit. As a treat, the Quzhou all-female art association also spent three months practicing

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San Francisco Opera presents world premiere of “Dream of the Red Chamber”

San Francisco Opera’s world premiere commission “Dream of the Red Chamber” by renowned Chinese-American composer Bright Sheng, will open at the War Memorial Opera House on Sept. 10, 2016. Based on the book “Dream of the Red Chamber” (also known as “The Story of the Stone”) by 18th-century Qing Dynasty writer Cao Xueqin, the two-act opera will feature an English-language libretto by the composer and acclaimed playwright David Henry Hwang, winner of the 1988 Broadway Tony Award for Best Play for “M. Butterfly.”

Iconic Taiwanese stage director Stan Lai, one of the most celebrated playwright/directors in Asia, makes his Company debut with this adaptation for the opera stage. Academy Award-winning art director Tim Yip joins the creative team as production designer. Yip received the Oscar for his art direction of Ang Lee’s “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon” (2000), as well as a British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) award for the film’s costume design. American maestro George Manahan, acclaimed for his advocacy of new works, will conduct the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus for the six performances running Sept. 10-29.

Bright Sheng, Stan Lai and Tim Yip joined San Francisco Opera General Director David Gockley to share artistic and production design details of the new work at a press conference held at the War Memorial Opera House on Dec. 16.

The “Dream of the Red Chamber” world premiere cast includes an array of established and rising Asian singers: Chinese tenor Yijie Shi (in the role of Bao Yu); South Korean soprano Pureum Jo (Dai Yu); Chinese mezzo-soprano and current San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow Nian Wang (Bao Chai); in her U.S. debut, Chinese contralto Qiulin Zhang (Granny Jia); South Korean mezzo-soprano Hyuna Kim (Lady Wang); Taiwanese soprano and Merola Opera Program alumna Karen Chia-Ling Ho (Princess Jia); and Chinese-American mezzo-soprano and San Francisco Opera veteran from 1990 to 1993, Yanyu Guo (Aunt Xue).

Cao’s novel, a masterpiece of Chinese fiction, is a detailed, episodic record of the lives of the members of the Jia clan, whose good fortune is assured when one of its daughters becomes an imperial concubine, and then declines after her downfall. The story centers on a love triangle consisting of the main character, Bao Yu, his beautiful cousin Dai Yu, and his future wife, another beautiful cousin named Bao Chai. Bright Sheng and David Henry Hwang have adapted the novel with a focus on eight central characters to tell the tale of the illustrious Jia clan and trace the Jias’ fall from the height of their prestige. Cao’s original story, often considered semi-autobiographical, is framed by Sheng and Hwang with a prologue and epilogue led by The Monk, who may be the author himself.

The commission of “Dream of the Red Chamber” was initiated and funded by the Chinese Heritage Foundation Friends of Minnesota, with leadership support from the Dr. M. F. Tchou Memorial Fund of the Chinese Heritage Foundation, Benjamin Y. H. and Helen C. Liu, and Ruth Stricker and the late Bruce Dayton. San Francisco Opera General Director David Gockley commented: “A while back, the idea of producing an opera on the great Chinese novel “Dream of the Red Chamber” had been suggested to me by Kevin Smith, formerly with Minnesota Opera, and Pearl Bergad of the Minneapolis-based Chinese Heritage Foundation. I was very interested from the start and after familiarizing myself with this great episodic story, I agreed. Over 20 years ago in Houston, I worked with Bright Sheng on the creation of a new work and have followed his career ever since. Asking him to create this new opera seemed to me to be the logical and right choice. In conversations with Bright, I asked that “Dream of the Red Chamber” be composed in a beautifully lyrical style, nostalgic and retain aspects of a traditional Chinese soundscape. I’m very pleased to say that he has indeed succeeded in these efforts. We have cast a remarkable all-Asian cast and I’m confident that we have assembled a very innovative creative team to bring this new work to the stage.”

Pearl Bergad, executive director of the Chinese Heritage Foundation, stated: “The Chinese Heritage Foundation initiated this project in order to fulfill its mission to showcase the best in Chinese literature and, at the same time, to encourage innovation in the arts. Partnering with San Francisco Opera, with vast resources at its disposal, has led to the creation of a first-rate 21st-century treatment of an 18th-century novel. This opera will definitely attract and engage a new audience to this timeless Chinese love story.”

In anticipation of the upcoming premiere, David Gockley has invited Bay Area civic leaders Gorretti Lo Lui and Doreen Wuu Ho to collaborate with the Company to develop community partnerships and fundraising initiatives in support of this new opera. Among several distinguished community supporters, San Francisco Opera gratefully recognizes the participation of San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee and First Lady Lee, in addition to author Amy Tan, Asian Art Museum Board President Timothy Kahn and Kathy Cheng of the San Francisco Boys and Girls Club.

“Dream of the Red Chamber” marks David Gockley’s 43rd career world premiere and eighth commission for the Company to date, including 2008’s “The Bonesetter’s Daughter” by Stewart Wallace, based on Amy Tan’s novel and featuring a libretto by Tan. Gockley is currently in his 10th and final season as San Francisco Opera’s General Director; he retires at the conclusion of the current season, capping an internationally acclaimed and award-winning career spanning 44 years as one of America’s most prominent opera impresarios. San Francisco Opera will present “Dream of the Red Chamber” as part of the Company’s 2016–17 Season. Tickets will go on sale to new and renewing San Francisco Opera subscribers on Jan. 12 at the San Francisco Opera Box Office by calling (415) 864-3330 or online at sfopera.com. Single (non-subscription) tickets will go on sale beginning June 27.
The woman who devoted her life for the truth

By Elaine Dunn

One of Fox News’ slogans is “Before there is history, there is news.” Therefore, hard-to-stomach news should be vigilantly reported so hard-to-stomach historical events would not repeat themselves. And it seems that the 50th anniversary of the decade-long Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The brutality and violence the government exerted against its own citizens is a dark spot in Chinese history, an event the post Cultural Revolution generations don’t know much about as it is still being stifled. To ensure it will not be repeated, Chinese novelist Ba Jin in 1986 called for the establishment of a museum in order that future generations can learn from and the painful lessons of these 10 tragic years.

The Cultural Revolution was initiated by Mao Tse-tung in order to change the Chinese way of thinking. It taught young Communist Party members to be suspicious of everything that contradicted Party principles. People had to mistrust other members against each other and neighbors against neighbors. It was under these oppressive and fearful circumstances that appeared one dissident voice – the voice of Zhang Zhixin.

Zhang was born Dec. 5, 1930, to a middle-class Tianjin family. Therefore, in 1969, Zhang attended Hebei Teacher’s College and became a member of the People’s Volunteers Army during the war in Korea. She was then selected to study in a military school and then to study Russian at Renmin University (中國人民大學) in Beijing. Working at the school, she met and married a colleague in 1955 and joined the Communist Party. Her husband worked in the Party’s propaganda bureau.

In 1969, Zhang was sent to a re-education camp as an agricultural laborer. She continued to study Marxism at the camp. However, she also wrote her memoirs. She intimated that Mao’s Great Leap Forward weakened scientific attitude; and she was criticized for expressing her propensity for diminishing democracy. She also criticized Mao’s wife Jiang Qing and her “Gang of Four,” accusing Jiang of using Mao’s name to destroy China’s cultural and performing arts.

On September 18, 1969, she was arrested and accused of class enemy. It was common practice during the Cultural Revolution. At a public meeting held to criticize and humiliate her, Zhang steadfastly refused to retract her criticisms, saying, “You should not force me to deny what I think is right. It is impossible for me to surrender. It is better to live with honesty than with flattery…”

Zhang was sentenced to death in 1970. However, her sentence was reduced to 10 years imprisonment, where, by all accounts, she underwent extreme torture and prolonged solitary confinement. She also was repetitively raped by prison guards. It was said that she smeared her feces just to prevent the guards from approaching her! Perhaps even worse would have been the more merciful sentence.

In 1973, Zhang refused to take part in criticizing Lin Biao, a member of Mao’s inner circle. Instead, she used the opportunity to declare that Mao was the real source of chaos and extreme threat. She was charged with being counterrevolutionary and committing crimes against the Party. She was subsequently sentenced to death a second time in 1975. As a prison official actually objected to the death sentence, saying her actions and criticisms were because she had genuinely gone mad. However, the Party directive was to “kill her and have it over with.”

While in prison, Zhang communicated her thoughts with her son and daughter by writing on toilet paper. After spending six years in prison, on the morning of April 4, 1975, Zhang was executed. The execution of Mao and her “Gang of Four,” but not before the prison doctor was directed to slit her larynx to prevent her from proclaiming the loyalty to the Party before dying – a claim Zhang maintained throughout her incarceration. “Whatever happens, I’ll remember I’m a Communist Party member and keep in mind the virtues of justice, truth and honesty,” she had said.

Zhang’s mother composed and had the following inscription engraved on her tomb: “A pursuer of truth, and more important, a follower, whose body is no longer on the earth, but whose spirit lives on.”

When the Cultural Revolution ended, Zhang’s relatives petitioned the authorities to have her declared a “revolutionary martyr.”

Zhang’s case was reinvestigated in March 1979. The then Party chief of China denounced the cultural revolution. Accusation against Zhang was absolutely fraudulent. She was cruelly killed. She was a good Party member, who fought bravely for the truth and her faith even in face of death. Party members should learn from her.

The provisional paper published the article “Devoting Her Life for the Truth” on March 31, 1979, in Zhang’s honor. It was well received nationally and caught the attention of Hu Yaobang, the Party’s personnel department chief. He had it republished in People’s Daily, the Party’s official newspaper.

Now, 41 years after her death and half a century after the Cultural Revolution began, a statue had been erected in People’s Park in Guangzhou to commemorate Zhang’s struggle for truth. In April 2014, on the 39th anniversary of her death, a Weibo user posted an illustration with the following text, which was promptly censored by Sina.

To me, the toughest part about an event is to sum it up at the end with words. I constantly struggle with it because words such as “great” or “happy” cannot reflect the true feeling of the participants. Since I spent a few days with the artists, I will use words to paint a picture, so you can sum it up for yourself. Imagine two groups of people gathered in an area hugging each other while tears run down their faces. To bystanders, it looks like a group of lifelong friends or family members saying goodbye, but that is not true. Truth is these two groups only met just three days ago. They were total strangers up until then. After spending three short days together, no one wants to leave, no one wants to say goodbye. This is what happens when two groups of people are willing to open their minds and hearts to understand each other, and to accept each other. They will overcome any differences to become close friends even in three days.

Deputy director Hu summed it up best by saying: “I believe this delegation visit not only enhanced professional knowledge, but also rewarded us with precious friendship. We gained deeper understanding of each other. They will overcome any differences to become close friends even in three days. Furthermore, we became closer. I hope the friendship between our two cities will continue to expand with more delegation visits. Quzhou and Red Wing friendship will experience long history like the mighty Mississippi.”

Today, we commemorate Zhang Zhixin! For Maoming, for Pingdu, for Jiannianjiang! Alas, Zhixin, you placed your head on the scale of life, taking all the weight out of those heedless of humanity. For liberty, for truth, Zhixin, you feared not the dangers brought by the fierce and cruel, and walked calmly to your execution ground! [39 years ago today, on April 4, 1975, Zhang Zhixin sacrificed her life for truth.]

“Maoming, Pingdu and Jiannianjiang refer to various protests over the environment, land and human rights disputes. Today, the museum that novelist Ba Jin calls his has yet to be built. Being on the opposite side of Beijing remains dangerous. Dissidents are routinely detained indefinitely.

On the 50th anniversary of the Cultural Revolution, a silenced dissident voice from that troubled period cannot be more relevant as a reminder of why a tragedy like that can never be allowed to be repeated.

2015 Art and culture delegation

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some Chinese traditional dance and open to share with people of the Red Wing. We reserved the local Sheldon Theater, organized some local acts and put together a multicultural variety show, and opened it free to the public. To my surprise, we had really good turnout for the show, despite it was early in the afternoon on a weekday. It was great to see so many people come out in support of and enjoy the performance.

The delegation also had the opportunity to visit the Red Wing Poetry Pottery Museum, where they learned about the 140 years of Red Wing Pottery history. Other sites visited included Red Wing City Hall, Red Wing Shoes, and Red Wing area senior center, where they spent three hours playing games and visiting with local seniors. The delegates had enjoyed delegation visits because it is chance for me to get to know people and learn a little more about my own cultural heritage there is no.

Wang, the head of the delegation and chairperson of the art association, was very impressed with Red Wing Pottery’s history and beauty. She felt that is one of the true American folk culture the delegations had experienced during this visit. She also expressed true appreciation of the warmth and welcome they received since arrival, which was above and beyond of any other U.S. cities they visited on this trip.

Guo Ping, one of the youngest delegates, who is traveling with her mother, also a member of the art association, told me after arriving in Red Wing that this is the first time on this entire trip that she felt truly relaxed, and had time to truly immerse in the people and culture of the city. Guo, who identifies herself as a traditional woman, told me that she likes people who are genuine; she felt that in Red Wing, everyone is nice and honest - Red Wing made her feel at home, and the Red Wing lifestyle suits her personality.

He is also the vice chair of the Red Wing Sister Cities Commission and group organizer for the Minneapolis Chinese Language and Culture Club.

Red Wing artist Dawn Erickson with delegate Guo Ping at screen printing workshop.

Red Wing artist Dawn Erickson with delegate Guo Ping at screen printing workshop.

of friendship exchange, told me that she was little uneasy when leaving for Red Wing because most the delegates are in their late 50s to early 70s. She was not sure whether the delegates could get used to the travel and cultural differences. This was also the largest delegation Quzhou had ever sent to Red Wing; she was afraid it would overwhelm Red Wing. Now she is overjoyed to visit the Red Wing Sister Cities Commission and group organizer for the Minneapolis Chinese Language and Culture Club.

To me, the toughest part about an event is to sum it up at the end with words. I constantly struggle with it because words such as “great” or “happy” cannot reflect the true feeling of the participants. Since I spent a few days with the artists, I will use words to paint a picture, so you can sum it up for yourself. Imagine two groups of people gathered in an area hugging each other while tears run down their faces. To
China 1945: Mao’s Revolution and America’s Fateful Choice


By Richard Bernstein
464 pp., Knopf
Doubleday Publishing Group, November 2014

In a speech soon after the release of the U.S. State Department’s White Paper on China in 1949, which finger-pointed the imminent “loss” of the country to the Communists at the “demoralized and unpopular” government of Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Zedong practically gloated. Why had the United States continued to aid Chiang in his fight once it recognized that the Kuo-min-tang no longer enjoyed the support of the Chinese people?

Mao accused America of cloaked imperialistic designs, but his ambiguous remarks can also be interpreted to suggest that a “wiser” choice might have forestalled what he later termed his “lean to one side”—the Soviet side. But had the U.S. remained neutral in the civil war that erupted soon after Japan’s surrender (or more vigorously supported Chiang before or afterwards, for that matter), might the ensuing quarter century of distrust and animosity, which led to devastating warfare in Korea and Vietnam and the deaths of thousands of American and Chinese servicemen, have been avoided? Was a colonial opportunity missed? Might the diplomatic breakthrough of 1972 have come a generation earlier?

After all, the Communists had been friendly allies of a sort during the Sino-Japanese War, their guerrillas spiriting downed American airmen to safety. At the same time, U.S. diplomats and military officials at bomb-battered Chungking labored to maintain a fragile truce between the KMT and CCP, and brokered an agreement for an inclusive, democratic peacetime government.

Richard Bernstein, the author of many books and articles on Asian culture and politics, and the first Beijing bureau chief in Time magazine, attempts to answer these questions in “China 1945: Mao’s Revolution and America’s Fateful Choice,” his fine narrative history of Sino-American relations during the Second World War. From the bitter clashes of the Generalissimo and “Vinegar Joe” Stilwell over the Burma campaign, through the seduction of the “Dixie Mission” at Mao’s desert Yenan base, to the first skirmishes between Communist rebels and a post-war occupying force of U.S. Marines, Bernstein traces the complex evolution of a relationship and its culmination in a watershed moment of east-west history.

Set against a devastating backdrop of total war and almost unimaginable suffering, Bernstein’s story features a memorable and colorful cast of characters. The shrewd and calculating Stalin and his acolyte Mao, “two of the greatest masters of deception that the world has ever known,” pass and receive instructions by secret radio. The spontaneous Choctaw “war whoops” of General Patrick J. Hurley — Roosevelt’s naive, erratic and bewildered special emissary — charm and perplex his Chinese hosts on both sides of the political divide. Meanwhile, Zhou En-lai, the urbane external face of the CCP and mastermind of its campaign to influence American public policy and opinion, plays the “beauty trap” of ancient China’s Thirty-Six Stratagems for Waging War and Politics, in the form of his qipao-sheathed celebrity assistant.

Prime targets of that political and personal seduction were America’s experienced “China hands”—Chinese-speaking Foreign Service officers such as the Sichuan-born John Stuart Service and John Paton Davies—served early on Chiang’s leadership, recognized the growing unpopularity of his government, and urged the United States not to alienate itself from the almost certain victors of China’s looming civil war. This amorphous group of diplomats, military officers and journalists later suffered for their views, first victims of the Cold War witch-hunts and paranoia that would plague America for decades.

But while admiring of their bravery, intelligence and honesty, and stressing that few could have more capably interpreted the “maelstrom of intrigue” that surrounded them, the author writes:

Service and the other diplomatic pros made a major mistake, which was to become starry-eyed about Mao, to stress the “democratic” impulses of the CCP, to miss utterly the repression of dissent that the Communists engaged in even as they called on the KMT to respect civil rights. They were duped ... there is nothing to avoid that conclusion.

That misapprehension about the true political nature of the Chinese Communists of the era, the underestimation of their essential identity and character as members of an international club of proletarian revolutionaries, with Stalin at its head, makes any debate about missed opportunities moot. The CCP stood in fundamental opposition to core American goals and values.

Moreover, Bernstein observes, hindsight makes clear that a non-aligned China would have been “psychologically impossible” for its new leader, who by the end of the Second World War had reached the status of “demigod.” That Mao was a visionary revolutionary who craved absolute power, relished violence, and would soon betray his closest colleagues in forging a “profoundly illiberal, destructively totalitarian regime.” Knowledge of the “demonic madness” and tens of millions dead to come, and of the crushed aspirations of China’s most idealistic and independent-minded citizens, makes China 1945 a somber read. The unlucky Chiang Kai-shek, who but for the Japanese invasion would almost surely have presided over a unified nation on route to becoming a significant and democratic world power, and who wept on the day of Japan’s surrender in full knowledge of what China had lost, emerges a tragic if more sympathetic figure.

Chiang’s most-criticized “defence in depth” against the invaders, trading territory for time, the author writes, ultimately proved a sound strategy. Furthermore, Nationalist troops deserve far more credit for their tenacity, endurance and sacrifice than they often receive (the contribution of the Communist guerrillas, however, has been enormously exaggerated). “Can there be any doubt from the standpoint of a later time that the KMT would have been a better alternative for China?”

But before two atomic bombs brought WWII to an abrupt end, Chiang and Roosevelt had fundamentally incompatible priorities — the one striving to preserve his government’s authority over a wrecked and divided China, the other to bring the war against Japan to its earliest conclusion at the minimal cost in American lives. Forced to refrain temporarily from seeking to destroy a revolutionary movement about whose ultimate aims he held no illusions, Chiang then found the immediate post-war situation drastically altered by the 1.5 million Soviet troops who poured in to “liberate” Manchuria. The impossibility of a war-sick America’s Fateful Choice

Not that direct military intervention by the United States would likely have resulted in anything but a much larger and more perilous Vietnam-style quagmire, Bernstein argues, concluding:

The events of late 1944 to early 1946 show that both arguments are wrong, the argument that it was a mistake not to cooperate with the Communists and the argument that more support should have been given to Chiang Kai-shek. Both positions are based on the notion that it is for the United States to shape the world to its specifications and that, if it takes the right actions, it has the ability to do this ... But it was not American policy that determined the outcome in China. It was the forces on the ground over which the United States, with its vast but not unlimited power, never exercised decisive control.

That uniquely American confidence in the unlimited possibilities of a combination of right decisions, good intentions and overwhelming military might has of course been tested (and dented) again in the decades since 1949 — in Southeast Asia, and more recently the Middle East. In that respect, the “loss” of China was America’s first salutary lesson in the limitations of its new “superpower” status, even if not universally learned, as well as the value of less than perfect outcomes.

Bernstein’s elegant and informative new study paraphrases US Secretary of State Dean Acheson’s preface to the White Paper on China:

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Tim O’Connell is a China trader turned writer and historian who has lived in Hong Kong and Beijing since 1981.
Dancing with the dragon
U.S. presidential candidates and their relationship with China
Part II: The Republicans

By Joe Pearman and Chang Wang, contributors

Editor’s note: Last fall, Chang Wang and Joe Pearman began a series of articles in this paper that focused on doing business with China and the Chinese people. This year China Insight invites them to explore another timely issue: the positions of U.S. presidential candidates on China, and how those positions are likely to be received by the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Joe McKenzie Pearman is a second-year business student at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Chang Wang is chief research and academic officer at Thomson Reuters and an adjunct professor at the University of Minnesota.

The authors would like to remind the readers that they are endorsing neither candidates nor political party. Their purpose, they say, is simply to “call it like we see it,” and let the readers and voters, draw their own conclusion. Foremost, the authors hope to help the readers make an informed choice.

Part I of this article is available at www.chinainsight.info (select “Past Issues” under the Home tab).

Pearman: In this edition of “Dancing with the Dragon,” we present the Republican candidates and where they stand in relation to China, mainly the Chinese government. Owing to the large number of Republican candidates, we’re concentrating mostly on the candidates who are involved in Chinese issues and who we feel are likely to stay in the race for a while and have a decent chance to win the nomination. As before, we do not seek to persuade, merely to inform.

Wang: Within the Communist Party of China (CPC), the relationship with the United States is one of the key factors in evaluating the success or failure of CPC leadership. This is rarely known outside China, but it is with utmost importance in understanding U.S.-China relations. Therefore, the CPC is extremely invested in the U.S. economy, politics and the U.S. presidential election.

Historically, the Republicans have a far better relationship with the CPC than the Democrats do. I think we have to begin with an analysis of the man the Chinese leadership would most like to see win the nomination and become President of the United States: Jeb Bush. He’s their preferred candidate by far.

Pearman: What makes him so attractive to the men in Beijing?

Wang: He’s what I would describe as an ideal Western politician, from a Chinese government perspective. His father was an ambassador to China and a personal friend of Deng Xiaoping, who essentially charted the course of the contemporary economic reform. In fact, President H.W. Bush is one of the “Old Friends of the Chinese People,” which is a very select and “honored” group that includes Kissinger and, before he died, Nixon. Jeb Bush is, on his own merit, a mature, pro-business leader. He understands how important it is to respect the dignity and face of your opposite number, and he is more politely sophisticated than blunt.

Pearman: In a way, Jeb Bush seems a good deal like one of the top men in the CPC himself. He’s quiet, comes in by way of a political dynasty, and believes in compromise and mutual benefit. Unfortunately, all of that seems to be working to his detriment in the current race.

Wang: I agree, which brings us to the second important point: the sheer level of energy in this Republican primary. This is personified, of course, by Donald Trump, but it’s also seen in the fire of Ted Cruz, the blunt rhetoric of Chris Christie, and the enthusiasm of Ben Carson’s supporters.

Pearman: I can’t imagine Beijing is too happy about that. The Party leadership isn’t very fond of strong, boisterous popular sentiment, and I can’t help but imagine that they view Trump, in particular, as a kind of American Bo Xilai - a dangerous populist demagogue.

Wang: Trump is indeed the candidate the CPC is most afraid of, simply because they have little idea how to deal with him. Remember, these men are technocrats with engineering degrees who read their speeches off cue cards. Trying to deal with the aggressive bluster of a Trump, especially when he’s stated publicly that he intends to renegotiate America’s trade relationship with China, is not something they look forward to. And on another level, all of this political fervor and fighting feels unsympathetically to them. The Communist Party has a huge number of quarrels, of course, but these are treated as internal affairs, hidden behind a harmonious public front. They view public disputes as endangering the unity of the entire nation.

Pearman: Do you see any of the quarrels or complexity you mentioned having a bearing in how they view the current race?

Wang: I think that the more important question is if any of the candidates really understand how complex China really is. There’s a tendency to view China as a monolithic entity that can be “stood up” to; in fact, it’s really a nation governed by seven men, ruled by a party of 80 million, and containing 1.3 billion people. So even if a candidate has experience dealing with a facet of China, that does not mean that that one facet is translatable across all issues China. Nor does a relationship with a person always mean as much as they assume.

Pearman: Going off that, I think there’s sometimes too much media coverage on an individual, like Xi Jinping, and what they may want. That leads to the idea of a China that can be dealt with “man to man,” when the more important thing to understand, at least in my mind, is the interests of the Red Elite - the wealthy Communist families at the highest ranks of the Party.

Wang: There’s definitely a point to that, and it also seems that a great deal of media coverage misses important points in favor of bluster. For instance, Xi Jinping is often presented as a kind of supreme leader to the American public when, despite his strong centralist tendencies, he’s still first among equals. And that’s part of a larger problem: both the public and the candidates seem not to realize the incredible opacity of China. We don’t know much, and what we do know is often misinterpreted. I find there’s a special problem with propaganda - anti-American rhetoric is blasted over the airwaves every day in China, and Americans assume it’s aimed at them. It’s not; it’s aimed at the civilian population. The Communist Party isn’t trying to provoke America; it’s pacifying its own citizens, using the time-honored tactic of stirring up anger at a foreign “aggressor” to avoid tough questions at home. I’m sure the CPC would not mind, and even expects, the same tactics from Americans.

Pearman: How do you feel the idea of lost American trade is playing into this election?

Wang: I think it’s a big factor, but again, I think the candidates are oversimplifying. The United States has lost a great many jobs to China, but it’s not about leaving, either returning to America or heading out to other nations in the Pacific Rim. Donald Trump might claim that the TPP is eventuated to include the Chinese, but it’s not. It’s a way to punish China for trying to circumvent WTO regulations, and it’s really a poke in the eye for them. And as far as currency manipulation goes, that has been a disaster for China’s own economy - by keeping the value of their currency low, the CPC is guaranteeing high inflation.

Pearman: I’ve noticed that the candidates tend to feel confrontational toward China, and they fall into one of two categories. People like Trump, Carly Fiorina, and Chris Christie take a secular focus and attack China for its cyberattacks, economic drain on America, and expansion in the South China Sea. Others, in particular Marco Rubio, have attacked China on the basis of human rights, usually filtered through the lens of Christian faith (the One-Child Policy comes under special fire for its role in encouraging and sometimes forcing abortions). Rubio also tends to be blunt about the authoritarian nature of the CPC, which is understandable, considering his parents (as well as Ted Cruz’s) are escapees from Communist Cuba.

Wang: Yes, and this brings up an important point. After Trump, the person the Chinese leadership would least like to see as president on the Republican side is Marco Rubio. They do not want someone with the kind of personal and political stance in human rights that he has in the White House. Rubio also had written an editorial that lays out a detailed plan for American jobs in a deal with China; the CPC fears Trump the most, then Rubio, and after him, I think, would be Ben Carson.

Pearman: Would this be another case of not wanting to deal with someone they don’t understand?

Wang: Exactly. As a doctor and a devout Seventh-Day Adventist, Carson’s worldview is worlds away from theirs; he doesn’t really use the same decision-making framework.
I feel that they would see him as someone with Mike Huckabee’s problem: a man who has trouble remembering when he is supposed to be a politician as opposed to a pastor. There’s also Dr. Carson’s well-known blunder of stating that China has troops in Syria; the CPC might well ask if he might, as president, act on misinformation like that. In fact, in some ways, Rubio and Carson might be considered worse than Trump. While Donald Trump is a populist and a blusterer, he is still a fairly effective businessman, which means he is conversant with the ideas of exchange, compromise, and mutual benefit. His website, for all its grandiosity, still points to negotiating with China. He’s also expressed skepticism about the necessity of the U.S. military presence in the Pacific. On the other hand, should tensions between the U.S. and China ever heat up, the situation might become very uncomfortable very quickly for Chinese-Americans in the U.S. Trump has already indicated that he feels the decision to intern the Japanese in World War II might have been justified ...

Pearman: Where do you think Ted Cruz fits into this equation?

Wang: Ted Cruz, I feel, comes across as similar to Trump, with a few key differences. For starters, he has a personal stake in human rights, considering his parents are Cuban émigrés. He’s also more noticeably religious. However, he does strongly support trade and the economy, which would probably make dealing with him at least mildly palatable.

Pearman: I don’t think our article would be complete without mentioning two candidates who, while low in the polls, have had a notable presence in the debates. John Kasich, former governor of Ohio, a state that struggled owing to outsourcing, but has largely managed to rebuild. Carly Fiorina is a former Hewlett-Packard executive who has taken a strong stance against expansionism and cyberattacks. How do you think the CPC leadership would view them?

Wang: I believe that of the two, Governor Kasich would be received more favorably: despite his Rubio-like advocacy of rearming Japan and more troops in the Pacific, he has done a proven record in helping a state do business, which is something the CPC could work with. If nothing else, closer American military engagement with the Japanese would provide excellent propaganda fodder.

Caryn Fiorina, on the other hand, would make the Beijing leadership uncomfortable. Historically, very few women have held power in China (the last being the disastrous Dowager Empress Cixi, who effectively derailed modernization in the late 1800s, or possibly the deranged extremist Madame Mao). Hillary Clinton, as we mentioned previously, would be acceptable due to her long list of connections to China; Ms. Fiorina has none. Of course, the CPC expects Hillary Clinton would soften her tunes on the human rights issues once elected, just like her husband did. And finally, Fiorina’s blunt and confrontational, which are not qualities the CPC prizes in a female politician.

In the end, the CPC will always prefer Jeb Bush as the Republican nominee (and probably the president). But I feel that they may wind up agreeing “Anyone but Trump!”

Note: This article was written and submitted before the GOP Dec. 15 debate in Las Vegas.

Minnesota Quarterly export statistics

Continued from page 1

Figure 3. Minnesota Trends in Exports of Vehicles, Top Five Markets, Third Quarter 2015

Pearman: Decreased Demand for Ores, Electrical Machinery, Vehicles, Cereals Spur Export Decline

• Exports of iron ore were slashed by 90 percent as Canadian demand fell by 99 percent (or down $123 million) to $1 million. However, demand for the state’s iron ore in China increased $12 million, from $27,000 one year ago.

• Sharp declines in demand by major export markets for electrical machinery fueled the 13 percent drop (or down $94 million) between the third quarters of 2014 and 2015. Exports were down the most to the Philippines ($90 million, down 27 percent); driven by decreased exports of integrated circuits and Canada ($76 million, down 29 percent); largely due to decreased exports of generators, telecommunications equipment and radar products.

• Canada generally accounts for more than 90 percent of the state’s mineral fuel/oil exports, which fell 52 percent to $46 million over all markets. In the third quarter of 2015, Canada’s demand for crude oil plunged by $46 million (or down 100 percent), fueling the overall trend.

• Minnesota’s 13 percent drop in global sales of vehicles to $487 million masks mixed activity among the top five markets, which represented 87 percent of these exports. Although these exports dropped to Canada (down 23 percent) and Australia (down 35 percent), they grew strongly to Mexico (up 30 percent, due to vehicle parts), Sweden (up 42 percent, due to snowmobiles) and Belgium (up 80 percent, due to motorcycles). Weaker segments included passenger vehicles, special purpose vehicles and public transportation vehicles.

• Cereals exports were down 55 percent to $53 million, driven by the 56 percent drop in corn (maize) exports. The main contributor was sharply lower demand by Mexico for corn from Minnesota ($26 million, down 67 percent).

• Other products suffering export declines of more than $30 million included optics/medical ($892 million, down 5 percent), aircraft/spacecraft ($89 million, down 34 percent), plastics ($281 million, down 11 percent) and wood pulp ($50 million, down 40 percent).

• Some bright spots of export gains of more than $15 million were pharmaceuticals ($84 million, up 67 percent), miscellaneous grains ($100 million, up 35 percent), beverages ($65 million, up 56 percent) and albumins/glue ($54 million, up 39 percent). Soybeans (particularly to Mexico and Costa Rica) and soybean meal (especially to Colombia and the Dominican Republic) drove export growth of miscellaneous grains.

Note: Minnesota Quarterly Export Statistics is the most current resource available for tracking the state’s export trends and is prepared by the Minnesota Trade Office (MTO) by the Department of Employment and Economic Development’s (DEED) Economic Analysis Unit (Thu-Mai Ha-Kim, 651-259-7180). The quarterly and annual statistics reports primarily cover export data based on the Harmonized Tariff System, collected by the U.S. Department of Commerce (USDOC) and distributed by the Global Trade Information Services. Note that an alternate source of agricultural export estimates – based on different methodology – is the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, although data is published only on an annual basis. Reports are available on DEED’s website at “Export and Trade Statistics”: http://mn.gov/deed/data/export-stats/.
New think tank set to project Chinese thought around globe

By Wang Hongyi in Shanghai, China Daily, Nov. 27, 2015

Fudan University in Shanghai recently launched The China Institute to promote the rise of Chinese thought and discourse around the globe.

The institute was jointly formed by the university’s China Development Model Research Center and the Center for New Political Economy. Its goal is to analyze the factors behind the rise of China, and carry out theoretical and policy studies on China’s development path.

“The institute will be a place that constantly produces original Chinese thoughts, Chinese theories and Chinese discourse. It will become a leading new type of think tank with considerable influence in the world,” said Zhang Weiwei, director of the institute.

In an interview with The New York Times earlier this year, Zhang Weiwei said discourse is very important for a large country like China which is undergoing rapid change and must establish its own power of speech as a way to overcome the ideological prejudices and misunderstandings of Western critics.

“China’s rise has global implications and provokes questions and suspicions,” Zhang told the Times. “To my mind, the country should face these squarely and explain itself clearly and confidently to its own people and to the outside world.”

In Zhang’s view, the establishment of the institute means Chinese academic circles will no longer be a “microphone” for Western academics. China should be more proactive as it rises, and should prepare to answer every question raised by the rest of the world, said Robert Lawrence Kuhn, author of “The Man Who Changed China: The Life and Legacy of Jiang Zemin,” the first biography of a living Chinese leader to be published in China.

The China Institute will organize high-level forums, workshops and various symposiums on issues concerning China’s development model and discourse.

The institute has already made a preliminary agreement with the China Center at the University of Oxford in Britain to hold an international symposium annually on the Chinese development model. It also cooperated with the Institute of China Studies at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences to establish the Shanghai China Dream Innovative Research Base. ♦

Academics get boost from Premier

By Zhang Yunbi, China Daily, Dec. 1, 2015

Premier Li Keqiang talks to leading postdoctoral talents after a group picture in Beijing on Monday. [XU JINGXING/CHINA DAILY]

Postdoctoral talents should play bigger role in innovation, Li says

Premier Li Keqiang told leading postdoctoral talents that China needs to give them a bigger role as the country builds an innovation-driven economy.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the postdoctoral system in China in 1985.

Li said on Monday that postdoctoral researchers are expected to closely track trends and strengthen international cooperation and exchange.

Li made his remarks as the latest figures show that China has enrolled more than 140,000 postdoctoral talents in the past 30 years.

Postdoctoral talents are a powerhouse of Chinese innovation. Postdoctoral fellows patented 64,912 inventions in 2009-2013, said Beijing-based newspaper China and Labor and Social Security News on Monday.

Li noted that the country should rely more on human resources, and the fruits of innovation should link better with entrepreneurship.

The premier suggested that businesses should play a larger role in cultivating postdoctoral talent, and the fruits of research should be converted into productivity faster. The talents “should dare to compete in the global arena” and promote themselves, Li said.

Tang Tao, vice-minister of Human Resources and Social Security, said in an April meeting marking the 30th anniversary of Tsinghua University in Beijing that “powerful exploration is expected for reforming and perfecting the postdoctoral system.” Liu Limin, vice-minister of education, said at the same meeting that over the past 30 years, the postdoctoral system has become an effective channel for nurturing talent.

The system is also now an important platform for boosting innovation and bridging the academic world with industry, Liu said in a release on the university website.

Zhong Zhaodui, a professor of railway telecommunications technology at Beijing Jiaotong University, said earlier this year that the cultivation of postdoctoral talents “is obviously lagging,” with the appeal and salaries of postdoctoral positions dwindling.

Zhong suggested increasing salaries and improved work patterns designed to free postdoctoral fellows from fulfilling a quota of published essays. ♦
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Because of this connection and the large number of Hmong living near Phalen Park, the China Garden design is expected to include Hmong cultural symbols and information about the connection between the Hmong communities in Minnesota and Changsha.

In November, Mealey-Lohmann, Zajicek and Slowiak hosted two architects from Changsha to travel to Minnesota. The husband and wife architect team, Jennifer Junfang Fan and Jon Youhua Wen, made several site visits to Phalen Park and met with architects from St. Paul Parks & Recreation to further work on a conceptual design, expected to be completed by mid-January 2016. Money for the design work came from a bill for the Minnesota’s Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, sponsored by Representative Tim Mahoney and Senator Foung Hawj that passed in the spring.

For more information, contact MN.China.Garden@comcast.net.

Chinese American Association of Minnesota holds 48th annual meeting banquet

By Greg Hugh

Peking Garden Restaurant located in St. Paul, as in the past years, was again the setting for CAAM’s recent annual banquet/meeting get-together attended by about 200 guests. The 48th annual meeting/banquet began with a registration/social hour followed by a formal program of events.

As guests settled into their seats, emcee Amy Ha Truong welcomed the gathering and introduced CAAM’s board of directors that included Mingien Chen, Le Ha, Connie Mei Ledford, Kahing Li, Vincent Mar, Laurie Mucciacciaro, and Binwen Yan. Chen provided the annual report on CAAM’s various activities throughout the year. Mucciacciaro followed with the 2015 financial report.

Kaimay Yuen-Terry, former CAAM president, was then introduced to provide an update on the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Chinese Garden.

Vincent Mar followed with scholarship awards that were acknowledged by the students with their acceptance speeches.

Following the scholarship awards was community arts activists Romi Slowiak, who spoke about a new project: the St. Paul-Changsha Phalen Park Chinese Garden. Complete details about this project can be found at www.MNChinaGarden.org.

The final presentation of the evening was made by Beatrice Rothweiler who spoke about the upcoming CAAM CDT dance performance.

As the guests began the 14-course dinner, emcee Yan Huss, with the assistance of board members, distributed door prizes throughout the meal. The evening’s program concluded with dance performances by members of CAAM-CDT, Xu Qian Music Studio, Litroung Ha accompanied on the guitar by David, a tai chi performance, Minhua Chorus and a solo vocal performance by Yan Yan Qiu accompanied on the guzheng by Lauren Moy.