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July 2015



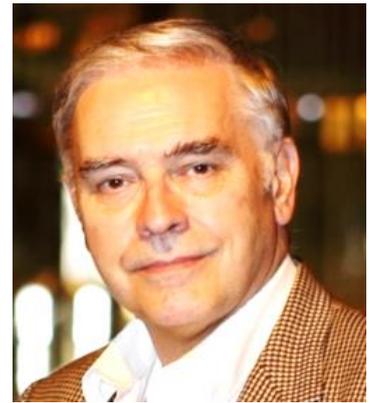
HAN DYNASTY JADE BURIAL SUIT

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President's Message

It was with deep regret that I read the notice announcing the passing of RASHK member Mr James Bertram, who passed away unexpectedly but peacefully in France on 18 June 2015. James was a long time member of the Society. In recent years, he and his wife Christine were very keen members and regular participants in the overseas trips. On behalf of the Council and Members, I wish to extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to James' family.



Our programme in May and June was certainly hectic, but I think if numbers indicate anything it was also successful. The hot and at times very wet weather meant the emphasis was on indoor talks. We had four talks, all very well presented ranging from Robert Nield's talk on Chinese Treaty Ports to Dr Yannick Kuehl, Director of the World Wild Life Fund, talking about the legal and illegal trade in wildlife in Asia. Professors Mike Ingham and Ian Aitken, of Lingnan and Baptist Universities combined to give a very interesting talk about the development and significance of Hong Kong documentary film. Completing the programme for this period was Ian Lambot whose talk entitled *City of Darkness Revisited* explored the ever-popular topic of the Kowloon Walled City. I was delighted with some of the attendance figures that in two cases exceeded fifty. It is good to see a full house but I would like to ask for member's co-operation and remind you that to avoid disappointment it is best to book in advance. In response to member's suggestions, we have made booking, which now includes payment at the door, as easy as possible so please do your bit and drop an email if you are attending. I also note that we still have some members who have not posted their annual subscriptions, please do so immediately.

Some of you may be curious about the apparent recording of recent talks. I certainly feel, and I know some of you, both resident and overseas, feel the same, that many of our talks are of a standard and quality that deserve to be recorded and made available for subsequent viewing. There are many reasons for this. Having thought about it for some time it was a coincidence that I recently met RASHK member Gary Brightman who together with Steph LeGall accepted an invitation to undertake a trial recording of certain talks. I hope that Council will be able to look at the recordings and then decide how we want to develop this resource. I would like to thank Gary and Steph for their interest and support in this project and I look forward to reporting to you on this idea in the future.

Summer is well and truly here and I was amused to read recently that temperatures in Britain hit 35 degrees Celsius one day recently. The last time this happened was in 2006. They have been doing that regularly at Chek Lap Kok for the latter part of June. It is customary for the Society to take a break in July and August but this year the opportunity presented itself to schedule a lecture by Dr Maisie Meyer, a visiting speaker from the UK. Her subject is one which I think will be of interest to many members. I very much hope that those of you who are in Hong Kong will endeavour to come along to the CVA for this talk.

It is some time since we had our last Member's lunch and, as this is usually a popular event; a date in July has been selected for the next Curry Tiffin. Please mark Friday 17 July in your diaries. This will also be in the nature of a 'Farewell' Luncheon for one of the Society's stalwarts, Mrs Rose England. Rose will shortly be returning to England, although I am reliably informed that she will be making trips back to visit family. I would like to place on record my sincere appreciation to Rose for her wonderful contribution and support to the Society over many years, but more particularly the past two years. For those who are not sure Rose is the person who regularly manages the event reception and co-ordinates the dinners at the Helena May. I look forward to seeing as many of you at the lunch as possible.

President's Message

The cover of this issue of the newsletter will probably be familiar to many of you. It is the jade facemask, which forms part of a Han Dynasty burial suit. In this case, the suit once clothed a Chinese princess named Tou Wan, who died in 104 B.C. and was the sister-in-law of Emperor Wu-ti. This picture was chosen as a similar burial suit is one of the main exhibits in a major exhibition, which is now on show at the Hong Kong Museum of History, entitled *The Rise of the Celestial Kingdom*. I was privileged to be invited to the opening of this exhibition, which took place on 23 June 2015 and was presided over by the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Director, State Administration of Cultural Heritage. Once again I hope that the Society will be able arrange a special guided tour of this important exhibition which runs until early October.

Several other ideas are being considered for the new programme but as always your thoughts and ideas are welcome, so please feel free to make your suggestions. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very relaxing and enjoyable summer and safe travels?

Michael Broom
President



Future Activities

LECTURE

The Shanghai Express: From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo

Wednesday • 15 July 2015

With the world's attention now focused on Iraq and the expanding Chinese economy, it is an opportune time to draw attention to a small number of adventurous Baghdadi Jewish merchants who began settling in Shanghai in the mid-19th century and organized a community that maintained itself with distinction for a century.

Dr Meyer takes her audience on an exciting journey, telling us, with the help of computerized photographs, how, in this faraway outpost of the Jewish Diaspora that never numbered more than a thousand people, the Baghdadis accomplished deeds that leave us shaking our heads in wonder. As we watch and listen, we are introduced to the customs and occupations that the Baghdadis carried with themselves to China, and we are quickly made aware of the nature and commitments of the vibrant community they created and nurtured. We learn about the business acumen the transplanted Sephardim displayed and how this enabled Shanghai to become one of the world's leading financial centers. We learn too, with lingering regret, of their participation in the opium trade - in an era, it must be understood, that this was entirely legal and even socially acceptable.

We take a glimpse at the institutions they established to safeguard their Judaic heritage in their alien surroundings, and we commemorate their heroic, though unsuccessful, efforts to bring what was left of the ancient Jewish community of Kaifeng back to the Judaism of its forebears. We observe the relationship between the Baghdadis and the Russian Jews who began arriving in Shanghai around 1895 as refugees from Czarist persecution, and in time attained a population of 6-8,000. The humanitarian efforts of the Shanghai Baghdadi Jews to accommodate some 20,000 victims of Nazi persecution reflect further credit to the ethos of this remarkable community. We end with a feeling of sadness that because of the Japanese occupation of Shanghai in the World War II period and, shortly thereafter, the city's incorporation into the Peoples' Republic of China the Jews of Shanghai were forced to leave the country and scatter across the globe. Obviously, the Baghdadi Jews of Shanghai stand out as having established one of the most noteworthy communities in the Jewish Diaspora. Their memory must be preserved.

The Speaker



Dr Maisie Meyer pioneered the research of the Baghdadi Jewish community of Shanghai, having appreciated over 30 years ago the unique mix represented by its various components. Over this period, she has forged relationships with many of the families and individuals who paid a large part in this burgeoning community. Her ground-breaking book *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo: A Century of Sephardi Jewish Life in Shanghai* (Lanham M.D.2003) is widely considered as the definitive history of the Baghdadi Jewish merchants who settled in Shanghai in the mid-19th century. Her determination to preserve the memory of this community and the unrivalled access that she has enjoyed to both the key characters and previously unseen source material has resulted in her recent publication *Shanghai's Baghdadi Jews: A Collection of Biographical Reflections*.

Dr Meyer is a double graduate in English and Humanities, both with honours and obtained an MA degree in International History at the London School of Economics. The British Academy awarded her a scholarship to do a PHD. The subject she chose to research reflects her personal autobiography. It

Future Activities

gives her a deeper understanding of Shanghai Baghdadi Jews, their emulation of a British lifestyle and their desire to appear as British as possible within the parameters of their faith.

Speaker: Dr Maisie Meyer, PhD
Date/Time: Wednesday, 15 July 2015 / 6:30pm Reception, 7.00 pm Lecture
Venue: Auditorium, L4, Centre for Visual Arts, 7A Kennedy Road, Mid-Levels
Admission: RAS Members Free; Non-Members / Guests \$125.
Booking: Please email in advance to president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk to reserve your place, and pay at the door.

Curry Tiffin Lunch at Zetland Hall

Friday 17 July 2015

A curry tiffin lunch has been arranged for RASHK members and their guests. The menu offers a buffet style selection of meat and vegetarian curries with salads and desserts. The chef who prepares the lunch is from Shaafis, the renowned NT establishment.



This will also be an opportunity to say farewell, for the time being, to Mrs Rose England, a long-time member of the Society who will shortly be returning to the UK. Rose has been a stalwart of the Society and for the last two years has been principally responsible for organising the event reception desk and post event dinners at The Helena May. I hope as many of you as possible will take the opportunity to attend this lunch to say 'thank you' and 'farewell' to her.

As always the curry lunch affords members the opportunity to meet in convivial surroundings and exchange thoughts and ideas about what you would like to see the Society doing, so I do hope to see as many of you as possible at this event.

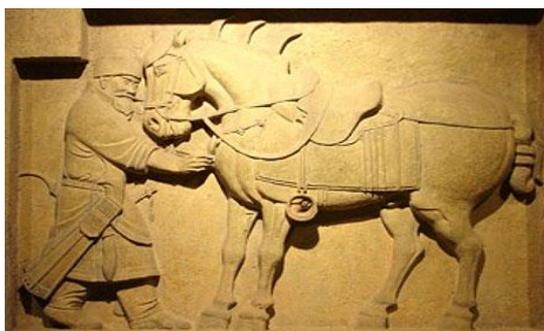
Date/Time: Friday, 17 July 2015. Pre-lunch drinks 12:00 noon/ Lunch 12:30 pm
Venue: Banquet Hall, Zetland Hall, 1 Kennedy Road, Mid-Levels (next to Kennedy Road Peak Tram stop)
Cost: \$150 per person
Dress: Smart casual
Booking: Please email in advance to president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk or telephone 2719 4974 to book your place.

Cheques should be made payable to *The Royal Asiatic Society HK Branch* and sent to:
RASHKB, c/o M B Broom, Apt D, 15/F, Tower 15, Caribbean Coast, Tung Chung, Lantau.

Future Activities

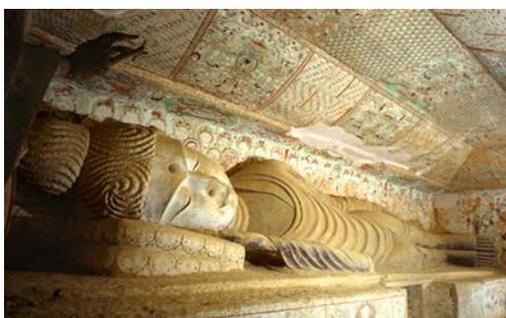
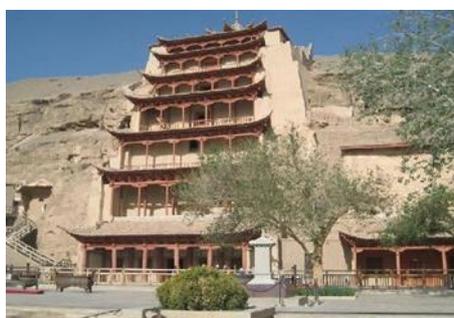


The Silk Road Tour – East Section - Shaanxi & Gansu Friday, 11 to Sunday, 20 September 2015 (10 days/9 nights)



From the Terracotta Warriors to the Maijishan Grottos and the Mogao Caves

This 10 day/9 night tour is along the first section of the Silk Road, extending from Xian, via Tianshui and Lanzhou to Dunhuang, and returning from Xian. We will spend around three days in Xian, visiting the major sites including the Terracotta Warriors, the Forest of Steles, the Shaanxi Provincial Museum, the City Walls and the Wild Goose Pagoda. At Tianshui we shall visit the amazing Maijishan cliff and grottos, the ancient Fuxi Temple and other sites nearby. At Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu Province, we shall see the Bingling “1,000 Buddha Caves” and the Gansu Provincial Museum. Dunhuang is famed for its UNESCO recognized Mogao Caves, and we shall have special viewing of some of these. The tour will involve quite a bit of walking and steps to see inside the caves and some long coach/train journeys to cover the necessary distances between the remote sites. It is hoped this visit to Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces may be the first of two visits to the Silk Road with the westerly section in Xinjiang (Turfan, Urumqi, Kashgar etc.) to be visited in the future.



For more details, please contact:

Eugenia Choi (ras@phoenixtrvl.com; 2722 7378) and/or **Rocky Dang** (rockydang@yahoo.com; 9182 3483)
Phoenix Services Agency (Hong Kong) Ltd. Travel Agent License No.:350706

Future Activities

Suggested Itinerary (subject to changes, where necessary)

11 Sep (Fri) Flight from Hong Kong to Xian.

Meet at airport and transfer by coach to Hotel via the Tomb of Emperor Jingdi (a Han dynasty tomb, known locally as Han YangLing Mausoleum, containing 50,000 doll-sized terracotta figures). Overnight at hotel in Xian.

12 Sep (Sat) Xian

After breakfast, by coach to the site of the Terra Cotta Warriors and its museum. Dumpling banquet lunch. Afternoon visit to City Walls, Drum Tower, Bell Tower, Great Mosque (one of the four famous ancient mosques of China) and Big Wild Goose Pagoda (first built under orders from the Tang Emperor Gaozong Li Zhi in 652 AD to safeguard the 657 volumes of Buddhist scriptures brought back from India by the Monk, Xuan Zhang). Overnight at same hotel in Xian. Tang Dynasty cultural show.

13 Sep (Sun) Xian

By coach in Xian to Forest of Steles (The Beilin Museum with its collection of 2,300 stone tablets including the famous Nestorian Stele, dating back to the 7th century), Little Wild Goose Pagoda (completed in 709 AD), Shaanxi Provincial Museum, Ban Po Neolithic Village (6,000 year old site of a matriarchal clan community) and, if time permits, Famen Temple (whose 13 storey pagoda collapsed in 1981 revealing great treasures). Overnight at same hotel in Xian.

14 Sep (Mon) Xian to Tianshui. (Maijishan Grottos)

Xian to Tianshui, about 6 hours by coach or train. The Maijishan Grottos near Tianshui are one of the most famous series of caves with ancient Buddhist sculptures and murals dating from the 5th century AD on. Overnight hotel in Tianshui.



Future Activities

15 Sep (Tue) Tianshui

We will visit Maiji Caves, Xianren Cliff, Shimen Mountain, Quxi and the Maiji Arboretum, Tianshui Immortal Cliff (with its dramatic examples of Danxia landform in red sandstone) and Fuxi temple (a rare and ancient temple of this legendary god). Overnight in same hotel in Tianshui.

16 Sep (Wed) Tianshui – Lanzhou.

About 4 hours by coach or train. Visit Irrigation wheel on Yellow River, Mother statue of Yellow River, Five Springs Hill and White Pagoda Hill. Overnight in hotel in Lanzhou.

17 Sep (Thu) Lanzhou

By coach to Gansu Provincial Museum, Bingling Si, (50 km journey with further fine caves and Buddhist stone carvings and murals dating from the 5th century AD onwards). Overnight in same hotel in Lanzhou.

18 Sep (Fri) Lanzhou – Dunhuang . By air.

Overnight in hotel in Dunhuang.

19 Sep (Sat) Dunhuang (a desert oasis and key trading post on the ancient Silk road).

Mogao Caves (another of the major Buddhist grotto sites with many caves, sculptures and murals), Crescent Moon Lake (an oasis), Echoing Sand Mountain (also known as Sound Singing Hill on account of the noise the sand makes in the wind or when disturbed). Overnight in same hotel in Dunhuang.

20 Sep (Sun) Dunhuang – Xian – Hong Kong.

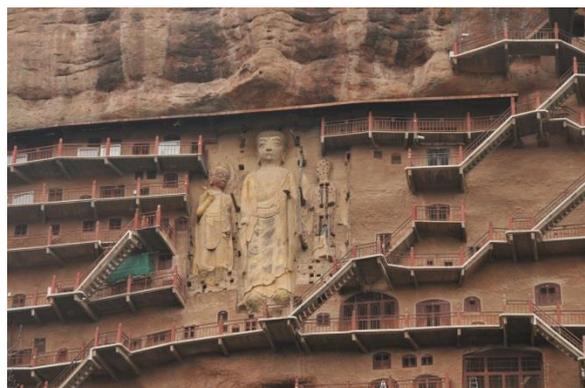
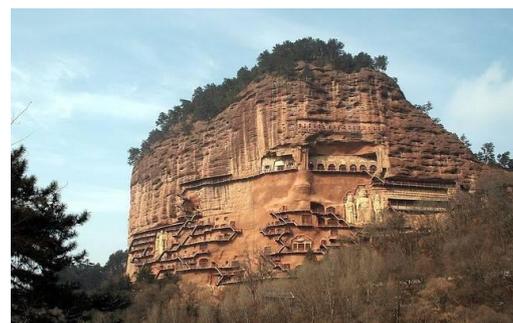
Morning by domestic flight, connecting to international flight to return to Hong Kong in evening.

Estimated Cost: HK\$24,780/ per person on twin/double room basis

Single-bed room: HK\$4,800 supplement; Non RASHK Members: HK\$700 supplement

Please contact Rocky Dang for expression of interest by: 20 July 2015

rockydang@yahoo.com / Tel: 918 234 83



Future Activities

LOCAL VISIT

Heritage Visit to the Tang Clan Villages of Ping Shan

Saturday • 17 October 2015



The programme for the visit is to pick up from Tsim Sha Tsui at 10 am and take a private coach to the Tang Clan Heritage Museum (the former Ping Shan Police Station) in Yuen Long, where we will get an escorted tour of the exhibits by a staff historian.

Then we walk the Ping Shan Heritage Trail, accompanied by a qualified AMO guide, to visit the old villages and many historic Chinese monuments, including Yan Dun Gung Study Hall (recently restored), Kun Ting Study Hall, Tang Ancestral Hall, Yiu Kiu Ancestral Hall, Hung Shing Temple, Ching Dynasty well, Earth God Shrine, Tat Tak Communal Hall (HQ of the resistance army during the 6 day war of 1899), now under restoration and finally the Tsui Shing Lau (the oldest pagoda in HK - photo above).

Opportunity to sample some traditional Hakka snacks on the way around

Return by coach, via Sham Cheng for a traditional healthy NT lunch – and we plan to arrive back in TST by about 3 pm.

**For your advance notice only please – cost and details are still to be worked out
by Davina and Bill - (heritage@netvigator.com)**

[Further details, including cost and a registration form, will be published in the September Newsletter.]

Future Activities

DAY VISIT

Dapeng, Guangdong Province.

Saturday • 24 October 2015

A one-day visit is being contemplated to the town of Dapeng in Eastern Guangdong. The visit is scheduled to take place on Saturday 24 October and will involve an early start leaving Kowloon before 9 am. The journey to Dapeng will be by coach and will take approximately three hours. We will arrive in Dapeng at noon and lunch will be organised at a local restaurant.

The afternoon will be taken up by a guided tour of some of the historical parts of Dapeng, led by Past President, Dr Patrick Hase. Hopefully time will permit a tour of the more historical parts of the town including sections of the wall and the surviving gates. We will also visit the museum and the residence of the Chinese commander, who opposed the British at the battle of Kowloon Bay at the beginning of the Anglo Chinese War in 1841.

The return trip to Kowloon will be timed with the intention of arriving back in Tsim Sha Tsui at approximately 7 pm.

Members wishing to participate in this visit are reminded to ensure they have the appropriate visa for entry into the PRC.

Further details, including timings, cost and itinerary, together with an application form will be published in the September Newsletter.

RASHKB OVERSEAS TOUR

Central Vietnam: Danang, Hoi An, Hue.

11 December to 15 December 2015 (5 days/4 nights)

We shall fly directly to Da Nang in Central Vietnam where we will visit the Danang Museum. This houses a collection of stone sculptures from the Hindu Cham civilization, which occupied Central Vietnam in the first millennium through to the 14th century AD. We take a short drive to the China Beach, Marble Mountain and on to the ancient town and historic Cham port of Hoi An, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. It controlled the strategic spice trade with Indonesia. Hoi An was a major international port in the 16th and 17th centuries - and the Dutch and Portuguese influences are still discernible and are exemplified in its fascinating museum. We have a day excursion over the spectacular Haivan Pass to Hue, the Imperial city of the Nguyen dynasty from 1802 to 1945, to visit the palaces and take a boat on the Perfume River. This will be a more relaxing tour spanning over a long weekend. We intend to stay all 3 nights in a resort hotel.

Future Activities



Further details will be posted in subsequent Newsletters and by e-mail to Members, or you may contact rockydang@yahoo.com to register your interest and for more details.

Any member who would be willing to write a review of an RAS activity for the Newsletter should please contact Mr Michael Broom, Hon Activities Co-ordinator, either by email on president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk or by telephone on 2719 4958

Recent Activities

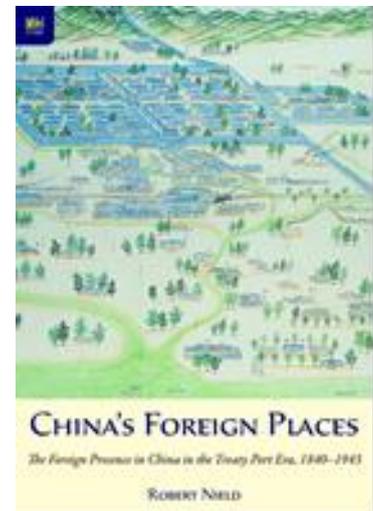
China's Foreign Places

The Foreign Presence in China in the Treaty Port Era 1840-1943

Friday • 22 May 2015

written by Veronica Pearson

Robert Nield's talk was based on his recently published book. *China's Foreign Places* is effectively an encyclopaedia containing brief histories of 81 locations of varying importance, 69 of which Robert has visited, usually accompanied by Nick Kitto whose photos add so much to the visual impact of the book along with maps, postcards, paintings and old photos – a number of which we saw at the presentation. The last book to deal with this subject in a comprehensive fashion appeared in 1867, when 'comprehensive' could be claimed with far fewer entries.



The phrase 'foreign places' was chosen over the more familiar 'treaty ports' for the sake of accuracy. There were 53 treaty ports but also open cities (58), ports of call (22), hill stations and holiday resorts (8), opium receiving stations (7), landing stages (10), leased territories (6) and many more besides – over 200 in all. Some were little more than wooden piers (e.g. West River ports-of-call). Others were major cities, like Shanghai and Hong Kong and the less familiar Hankow, the commercial hub of China's nine interior provinces.

For the consular staff and traders many of these places were not comfortable postings. The first British consul arrived in Samshui on the West River in 1897, after a 12-hour journey from Canton, only to find that there was no accommodation. He was invited to take up residence in a temple which was then formally opened as the British Consulate. 'Differences in understanding' of treaties were not uncommon between Chinese authorities and foreign powers. Newchwang on the Liao River in Manchuria was acquired by the British in 1858 as part of the Treaty of Tientsin. The consul arrived in 1861, discovered that Newchwang was over 100 kilometres upriver and was effectively unreachable and unliveable. So he took up residence in a mud temple (a surprisingly common occurrence amongst consular officials at this time) in a tiny settlement named Yingkou just inside the mouth of the Liao and renamed it Newchwang. And thus it remained, being described in an 1867 report as 'little more cheerful than an Arctic swamp'. Eventually, foreigners realized it was often unnecessary to establish consulates or trading company offices in order to do business. They could trade directly with Chinese businessmen at a fraction of the price.

Viewed from a modern perspective the predatory commercial and territorial penetration of foreigners into China cannot be justified and it would come as no surprise if all visible reminders of their unwelcome presence had been razed or allowed to crumble. This is not the case; and we were shown many examples of outstanding buildings that remain and are maintained, e.g. the Catholic Cathedral in Wenchow, the Customs House in Canton and the British Consulate building in Foochow. We were told of at least three such monuments to colonialism shifted intact via rollers and moved in order that demolition could be avoided. Many taxi drivers, bystanders and building caretakers were approached in efforts to locate old buildings. Most responded positively to requests for assistance, sometimes tempered by puzzlement as to why anyone should be interested in what had, for them, become a normalized part of the architectural landscape. Should you ever be in Tientsin, Robert and Nick heartily recommend staying at the restored Astor House Hotel! And feel free to visit Nick's website (nicholaskitto.com) to explore images of these buildings.

Recent Activities

Hong Kong Documentary Film

Wednesday • 27 May 2015

written by Gillian Bickley

It is always a pleasure to listen to scholars talk about ground-breaking research and this was a pleasure experienced by those who attended the lecture, held on 27 May at the Centre for Audio-Visual Art, jointly given by Professor Ian Aitken, Director of the Academy of Visual Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University, and Michael Ingham, Associate Professor in the Department of English at Lingnan University.

Initially and with few exceptions, their interest to explore documentary film-making in Hong Kong met scepticism and the comment -- often heard in relation to Hong Kong studies -- that little in their chosen area exists. A notable exception was the documentary film-maker Law Kar, active in the 1960s and 70s, who gave considerable encouragement.

Happily, supported from the General Research Fund which enabled a full-time research project beginning in 2007 up to the present, a pleasing history became clear.

There have been Hong Kong documentary films from the end of the nineteenth century. Originally, the films were very short, including travelogues for audiences in the USA and the UK, made by companies who specialised in this genre. The first World War caused the decline of this first period of Hong Kong documentary film. (The main supplier of a chemical used in the film-making process -- nitrate -- was Germany.)

After the post-war resumption of Hong Kong documentary film-making, interesting topics included a film about Chiang Kai Shek, a film about the Japanese / Chinese War, *The Battle of Shanghai*, which unsurprisingly supported the Chinese side.

After the communist Government came to power in China, films promoting a favourable image of the PRC to Hong Kong viewers came to the fore. This objective was addressed by building an affiliation with the Chinese landscape and by presenting the PRC as benevolent towards Hong Kong, for example in the film, *Water comes over the hills from the East* (1965). Although the main content of such films is descriptive, there was a clear propaganda imperative.

The speakers mentioned the Hong Kong Film Unit (active from 1959 to 1973), the pressure on RTHK following the resumption of Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong and the RTHK television documentary, *The Hong Kong Case*, about the Tiananmen Square crackdown.

Members and friends were treated to an extract from Tammy Cheung's 2002 "direct cinema"-style documentary, *Rice Distribution*, and would happily have seen more. But time was up. Fortunately for the audience and for those unable to attend, although only a few of these Hong Kong documentary films can be bought in shops, there are other opportunities to view them. Some are scattered in various depositories, including the Hong Kong Public Records Office in Kwun Tong, and the Hong Kong Film Archive (quite close to Sai Wan Ho). Mention was also made of the Hong Kong Documentary Film Festival, which shows films that may not be shown on the Mainland.

Happily, also, the fruits of this research are available in *Hong Kong Documentary Film*, an initial publication of this large-scale research project (which ranges beyond Hong Kong), published last year by Edinburgh University Press, UK.

The speakers also referred us to a useful website, made freely available to the general public, only a week before this talk: <http://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/documentary-film/>.

Recent Activities

If readers click on “Links” they can spend a happy time seeing what they can find. At my first attempt, I found a 1958 documentary film, “Achievement in Hong Kong” at the following link: <http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/4438>

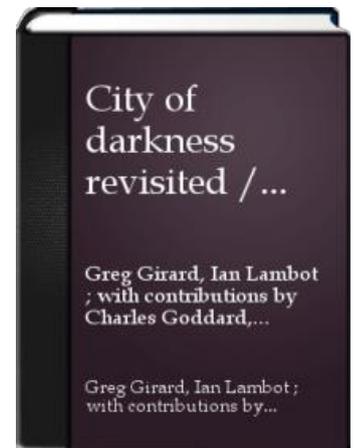
City of Darkness Revisited

Wednesday • 10 June, 2015

written by Colin Davidson

In 1993, Ian Lambot, together with Greg Girard, published “City of Darkness; Life in Kowloon Walled City”. This came to be one of the definitive works on this unique collection of buildings which has fascinated so many, for so long. Although the City was demolished in 1992, the book has continued to be in demand ever since.

Partly as a result of this success, Ian Lambot, again together with Greg Girard, published a second volume in 2014 entitled “City of Darkness Revisited”. This book provides a more in depth analysis of the history of the Walled City, how it functioned, the myths that surrounded it and its eventual clearance. This further study formed the basis of the presentation given by Ian Lambot to the Royal Asiatic Society.



The Walled City began life as a military compound under the jurisdiction of the Chinese authorities, and remained as such even after the leasing of the New Territories to the British in 1898. Although the Chinese soldiers left just two years later, the ownership and control of the city remained ambiguous. The compound went into neglect and was never more than a collection of two to three-storey buildings up to the second world war, when the Japanese demolished the walls to use the material to enlarge and improve Kai Tak airport.

After the war, the situation in Hong Kong changed considerably, as millions of refugees fled across the border from China. The City was taken over by squatters, and the population significantly increased, however buildings were still no more than four storeys high. Due to the uncertain nature of the jurisdiction of the Walled City, criminals were often detained there, but not brought to trial, for fear of the consequences from Beijing. As a result the criminal fraternity could do whatever they liked. The reputation of the City as a ‘Den of Iniquity’ took hold during the 1950s; one American magazine wrote of the “World’s Wickedest City”. It became a vaguely exotic destination frequented by, among others, local film stars and carefully guided Japanese tourists visiting the dog meat restaurants, striptease shows and other dubious attractions. Triads controlled many of the operations in the City, including the opium and heroin dens.

In 1958 there was a gruesome murder in the City, over which the British felt obliged to take action. It was discovered at this time that the Mainland Chinese were not interested in enforcing their control over the City, so after 1960, the nature of the community changed. It was no longer the lawless place of former ill repute, as the British were more inclined to take action in the City.

As more and more refugees flooded across the border with China, the population of the City grew during the 1960s. Factories became significant tenants and a Residents’ Association, comprising numerous factory owners was well received by the Communist Authorities during a visit to Beijing in 1963. Confidence grew from this, with the result there was an increase in construction, with many

Recent Activities

buildings rising to nine stories. Developers negotiated with the owners of the original shacks to redevelop them to provide much greater floor space – and with this a greater financial return.

From the mid 1960's various Hong Kong Government Departments intervened to a limited extent to support the City. Eight water stand pipes were erected, although only one of these was actually in the city – the others were at the perimeter. The Fire Services had powers of entry and the Police made frequent patrols. Rubbish was cleared from designated tips. There were metered electricity supplies, although these were frequently tampered with to supply free additional electricity. Fire was a potential hazard that was constantly feared. It could be said however that through the late 1960's and 1970's, conditions were really no worse than many other working class areas of Hong Kong. In terms of density however the City was unique; over 35,000 people lived in an area just 200 meters x 100 meters.

The City's dubious popularity resulted in buildings rising to 16/17 storeys in the 1970's – all walk-ups, as there were no lifts in any of the buildings. The one time when the Hong Kong Government intervened in construction was when a building exceeded the 150 meter height limit imposed for the nearby Kai Tak airport. All construction in excess of this height limit had to be demolished.

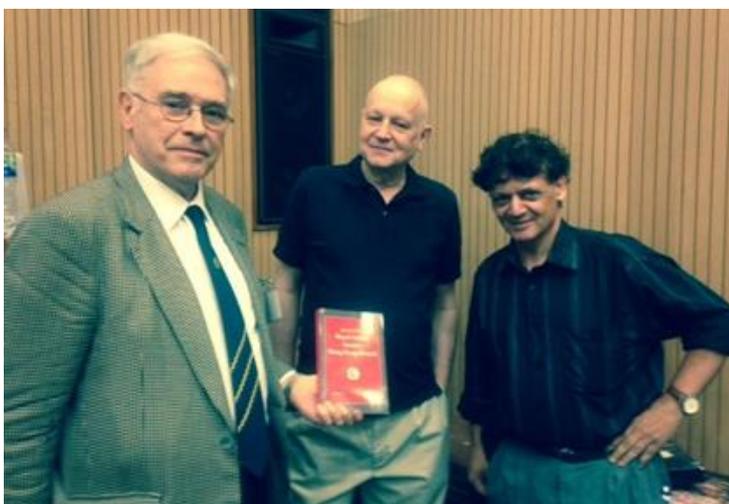
Ian Lambot started taking photographs in the City in 1989, when demolition of the city was already under serious discussion. He continued taking photographs for two years, until the city was cleared in 1992. By then the life and spirit of the City had gone, as virtually all the tenants had departed.

Whilst undoubtedly a terrible slum which would eventually need to be demolished, Kowloon Walled City was a unique urban entity and community which brought together many people and activities in a most fascinating way. It is now over twenty years since it was demolished, yet it still entralls; the RAS lecture was attended by an audience of over 60 people.



Photograph of the 'Walled City' from the book

Our thanks to Ian Lambot for briefly bringing the old City back to life again.



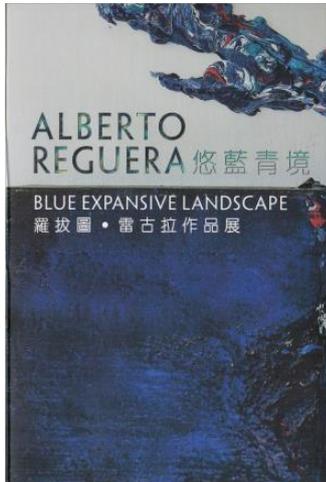
Ian Lambot with Michael Broom and Don Gasper

Photo courtesy of Helen Tinsley

Of General Interest

EXHIBITION

Alberto Reguera – Blue Expansive Landscape



Period: 5 June – 23 August 2015

Venue: 1/F & 2/F Fung Ping Shan Building, UMAG,
90 Bonham Road, Pokfulam

Tel/Email: 2241 5500 / museum@hku.hk

Opening Hours:

Monday-Saturday: 09.30 – 18.00

Sunday: 13.00 – 18.00

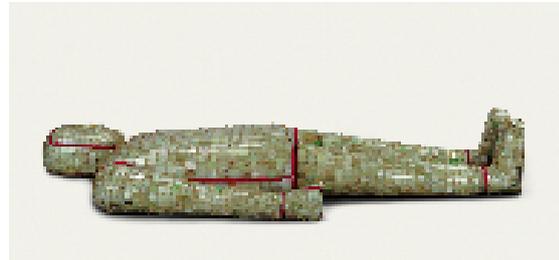
Closed on University and Public Holidays

Admission: Free

Website: www.hkumag.hku.hk

EXHIBITION

“The Rise of the Celestial Empire: Consolidation and Cultural Exchange during the Han Dynasty”



Period: 24 June – 5 October 2015

Venue: Special Exhibition Gallery, Hong Kong Museum of History

Admission (including “The Hong Kong Story Exhibition”):

Mondays, Thursdays – Sundays

Standard: \$20

Concession: \$10 for people with disabilities (& 1 accompanying carer, full time students, elders aged 60 or above)

Group: \$14 (20 persons or above)

Wednesdays

Standard: \$10

Concession: \$5 for people with disabilities (& 1 accompanying carer, full time students, elders aged 60 or above)

Group: \$7 (20 persons or above)

Holders of Museum Pass enjoy free admission.

http://hk.history.museum/en_US/web/mh/exhibition/current.html

Library News

LIBRARY DONATIONS

Over the past two months the RAS Library has received the following books. Our thanks as always go to those making these donations.

From Gilliam Bickley

- Pearson, Jan. *Tiger Autumn*. Hong Kong : Proverse Hong Kong, 2015.
- Gray, Lawrence. *Cop show heaven*. Hong Kong : Proverse Hong Kong, 2015.
- Carter, Andrew. *Bright lights and white nights*. Hong Kong : Proverse Hong Kong, 2015.

From Robert Nield

- Goodstadt, Leo. *Profits, politics and panics: Hong Kong's banks and the making of miracle economy, 1935-1985*. Hong Kong : Hong Kong University Press, 2007.
- Goodstadt, Leo. *Uneasy partners: the conflict between public interest and private profit in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong : Hong Kong University Press, 2005.
- Eng, Phoebe. *Warrior lessons: an Asian American woman's journey into power*. New York : Pocket Books, 1999.
- Lord, Bette. *Legacies: a Chinese mosaic*. New York : Knopf, 1990.
- Chong, Denise. *Concubine's children*. New York : Penguin Book, 1996, c1994.
- Hong, Ying. *Daughter of the river: an autobiography*. London : Bloomsbury, 1998.
- Choy, Wayson. *Paper shadows : a Chinatown childhood*. Toronto : Viking, 1999.

From John Leigh

- Morgenstern, Karl. *Eurasia Aviation Corporation: Junkers & Lufthansa in China 1931-1943*. Munchen : GeraMond, 2006.

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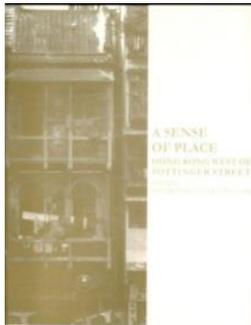
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within HK

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