

Re-Orienting
CHINA

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CHINA

TRAVEL WRITING
AND CROSS-CULTURAL
UNDERSTANDING

LEILEI CHEN



University of Regina Press

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For Xiaoguang Xue (薛晓光)
and our daughter,
Sarah Zhenchun Xue (薛真淳)

*The man who finds his country sweet is only a raw
beginner; the man for whom each country is as his
own is already strong; but only the man for whom the
whole world is as a foreign country is perfect.*

—Hugh of Saint Victor (c. 1096–1141)

读万卷书，行万里路。——中国古训

Read ten thousand volumes; travel ten thousand lis.

—An ancient Chinese maxim

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China (with selected locations referenced in this book)

A Prologue

DEPARTURE

Travel needs to be rethought in different traditions and historical predicaments. Moreover, when criticizing specific legacies of travel, one should not come to rest in an uncritical localism, the inverse of exoticism. There is truth in the cliché, “Travel broadens.”

—James Clifford, *Routes*

The only place in which the human subject dwells is between.

—R. Radhakrishnan, *History, the Human,
and the World Between*

Growing up in China, I imagined Canada as many do: as a paradise on Earth. I conjured up images of its fall season—the most romantic—with the red leaves of maple trees. I had heard about its government programs, providing the Canadian people with the best social welfare; I knew of its reputation for being one of the most popular destinations for Chinese emigrants. So, I was thrilled when I was offered a doctoral scholarship to study in Canada because I would finally see this paradisaical country with my own eyes.

However, my first two years of living in Canada were marked by a series of shocks. I did not see many red leaves in Edmonton during the first fall, but I did encounter its first snow in mid-September—which surprised even Edmontonians. Much more disturbing, as school started, I began to learn of the Canadian history of residential schools where First Nations children were starved, tortured, and sexually abused. I was appalled to hear of the evacuation and internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second

World War when they were deprived of their property and freedom simply because of their country of origin. I could not believe my eyes when walking through Vancouver's Downtown Eastside in the summer of 2006, its conspicuous poverty and disorder contrasting so sharply with the affluence of glass skyscrapers in the adjacent block. I learned later that many women were trapped in drug use and prostitution there; they were abused and murdered and it was common for them to go missing. My idealized perception of Canada was shattered. Suddenly, in hindsight, the early snow that had denied my dream of the beauty, romance, and warmth of red autumn forests appeared to have been an omen; this seemed in fact to be a cold country, one that supposedly championed peace and equality but neglected socially underprivileged groups and implemented racist policies.

Yet the transparency of the country's problems was equally striking. I mean the problems not of the obvious kind, like those of the Downtown Eastside visible to any first-time visitor, but of the dark periods of Canadian history that had become the core content of university curricula. I learned of Canada's residential school system and the situation of the missing women in Vancouver, and in the writing of Joy Kogawa I read of the internment of Japanese Canadians. In comparison, when I recalled my post-secondary education in China from 1988 to 1995 and teaching at a university there from 1995 to 2004, I did not remember much discussion about the wrongdoings of the Chinese government in the courses offered there.

It was only then, while residing in Canada, that I started to reflect critically on my home country—and began to re-orient myself to China. Did China not treat its social minority groups differently than it did the Han people, enforcing different policies among these groups?¹ Were the teenage girls in Dongguan—an area of “endless factories and . . . prostitutes”—not trapped in a situation of sexual exploitation?² These young women had no chance of a better education or improved life conditions, yet their deplorable situation hardly elicited any response from the government.³ Much like

1 Han is the major ethnic group in the People's Republic of China. The scope of this book does not cover a comparison of Canadian and Chinese policies on minority peoples, but I recommend Susan D. Blum, “Margins and Centers: A Decade of Publishing on China's Ethnic Minorities,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 61, no. 4 (2002): 1287–310.

2 Leslie T. Chang, *Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2008), 28.

3 Shui Hing Lo, *The Politics of Cross-Border Crime in Greater China* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2009), 89–90.

those women in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, these Chinese girls remained a marginalized social group in the midst of south China's economic prosperity, being neglected and abandoned by their country.

Such rediscovery of home and abroad is what makes travel productive for me. What were originally two radically disparate places, Canada and China, have become "closer": I now see they share things in common. The former no longer remains that idealized paradise drastically different from home, but a country—with all its charms and blemishes—that resembles China, and perhaps any other country around the world. While still different, the two nations are no longer polar opposites in my mind. I can observe similarities with the more nuanced and critical vision that has come from my travels.

Canadian author Margaret Laurence wrote about this productive transformation of perspective in her essay collection, *Heart of a Stranger* (1976). After years of travel in Africa and Europe, Laurence held a different understanding of herself and her Canadian prairie home:

The process of trying to understand people of another culture—their concepts, their customs, their life-view—is a fascinating and complex one, sometimes frustrating, never easy, but in the long run enormously rewarding. One thing I learned, however, was that my experience of other countries probably taught me more about myself and even my own land than it did about anything else. Living away from home gives a new perspective on home.⁴

What both Laurence and I have experienced is the transformative power of travel that results from interacting with the foreign. Negotiation with

4 Margaret Laurence, *Heart of a Stranger*, ed. Nora Foster Stovel (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2003), 3. A number of books contain similar transformative travel experiences. See, for example, Cheng Li, *Rediscovering China: Dynamics and Dilemmas of Reform* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 10; Yunte Huang, *Transpacific Displacement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 2; Tzvetan Todorov, *On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French Thought*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 83–89; Emily Buchanan, *From China with Love: A Long Road to Motherhood* (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2005); and Eva Hoffman, *Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language* (New York: Dutton, 1989).

otherness unsettles familiar ideas and allows the traveller to re-see what is considered “normal” at home, with fresh, critical eyes. The traveller becomes re-oriented to home.

To unlearn preformed ideas about home and abroad means to compromise the radical difference previously conceived to be between them; it also means to reimagine the foreign as relatable and the other as affiliated with the self. And finally, in one’s departure and then arrival in another place, one is able to find him/herself as “the human subject dwell[ing in] between.”⁵

5 R. Radhakrishnan, *History, the Human, and the World Between* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 8.

Introduction

ON TRAVEL WRITING ABOUT CHINA

Since the publication of Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1978), the study of travel literature has grown exponentially. Scholarship on travel writing pertaining to China, however, appears scanty. Only a few full-length scholarly books have been published in this field, and the majority focus on travel narratives written between the Victorian period and 1949, when China became a Communist country. These include Susan S. Thurin's *Victorian Travelers and the Opening of China, 1842–1907* (1999), Nicholas Clifford's "A Truthful Impression of the Country": *British and American Travel Writing in China, 1880–1949* (2001), and Jeffrey N. Dupée's *British Travel Writers in China: Writing Home to a British Public, 1890–1914* (2004). Collections of individual essays on travel writing about China include *Ways of Seeing China: From Yellow Peril to Shangrila* (2005), by Timothy Kendall; *A Century of Travels in China: Critical Essays on Travel Writing from the 1840s to the 1940s* (2007), edited by Douglas Kerr and Julia Kuehn; and *Asian Crossings: Travel Writing on China, Japan and Southeast Asia* (2008), edited by Steve Clark and Paul Smethurst.

Within the limited field of study on travel literature pertaining to China, the critical debate focuses partly on the objectivity and fictionality of the narratives. Nicholas Clifford, in his study of British and American travel writing in China from 1880 to 1949, accounts for the truthfulness of travel writing. His reading follows the quest of travel writers for authenticity, for "the desire to discover what it is that constitutes the true heart of the culture

and people under observation”; this critical approach, he claims, is “that of a historian, not a literary or cultural critic.”¹

Clifford may be referring to the earlier, postcolonialist approach to the study of travel writing where the “literary or cultural critic” tends to question the objectivity of the genre and to read travel writing as a kind of literature that proliferates imperialist ideologies and Western supremacy.² Not only does his “historian’s approach” conflict with the postcolonialist approach, but his trust in the authenticity of the genre is also ironically combatted by travel writers themselves—especially those who have written about China since the mid-1980s and acknowledge that some fictionalization was inevitable and even necessary in their accounts. The award-winning British travel writer Colin Thubron—who published *Behind the Wall: A Journey through China* in 1987—states that “objectivity is a chimera”; for him, the subjective aspect of travel writing is inevitable.³ Paul Theroux, a prolific travel writer who writes not only about China but also about India, the South Pacific, Islamic Asia, and the United Kingdom, claims that “travel is frequently a matter of seizing a moment” and that it is “personal.” The writer Pico Iyer acknowledges that his travel writing is “just a casual traveler’s casual observations, a series of first impressions and second thoughts loosely arranged around a few broad ideas.”⁴

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- 1 Nicholas Clifford, “A Truthful Impression of the Country”: *British and American Travel Writing in China, 1880–1949* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), xx.
 - 2 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes* (London: Routledge, 1992); David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Ali Behdad, *Belated Travelers* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).
 - 3 Colin Thubron, “Both Seer and Seen,” *Times Literary Supplement*, July 30, 1999. See also Thubron, “Travel Writing Today: Its Rise and Its Dilemma,” in *Essays by Divers Hands: Being the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, New Series, Volume XLIV*, ed. A. N. Wilson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), 168, 178; and Susan Bassnett, “Interview with Colin Thubron by Susan Bassnett,” *Studies in Travel Writing* 3, no. 1 (1999): 152.
 - 4 Paul Theroux, *Riding the Iron Rooster: By Train through China* (New York: Putnam, 1988), 389; Pico Iyer, *Video Night in Kathmandu and Other Reports from the Not-So-Far East* (London: Bloomsbury, 1988), 25. For other examples of the personal rhetoric of the genre, see Julie Checkoway, *Little Sister: Searching for the Shadow World of Chinese Women* (New York: Viking, 1996); Emily Prager, *Wuhu Diary: On Taking My Adopted Daughter Back to Her Hometown in China* (New York: Random House, 2001); and Rosemary Mahoney, *The Early Arrival of Dreams: A Year in China* (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1990).

Objectivity in the genre of travel writing proves to be a myth for the American cultural and literary historian Paul Fussell as well. In his study of British travel literature between the wars, Fussell defines travel writing as a genre dealing with the exotic or comic anomalies, wonders, and scandals of the literary form *romance*.⁵ Public media also assume a tolerant attitude toward the genre's embellishments: *BBC News Magazine* published an article by Stephen Smith, titled "When Travel Writing Is Off the Beaten Track" (November 23, 2012), in which the author justifies fictionalized elements in travel books by sharing stories about travel writers such as Norman Lewis and Bruce Chatwin.

In addition to authenticity versus fictionality, the critical debate in the field of travel writing about China also centres around the traveller's relationship with otherness. Kendall's essay "Traveling to Mao's Republic," one of the few works that address post-1949 travel books about China, argues that Australian travel writing from 1963 to 1973 articulates an orientalist ideology. Like earlier critical voices that focus on the imperialist ideology of the genre, Kendall argues that the travel accounts he has studied follow the convention of representing China as the Oriental other, a practice that dates back to Marco Polo's time.⁶ Thurin observes that the hierarchical relationship between the traveller and China can be reversed; that is, the Victorian travellers she studies also called China "the most well-educated society on earth."⁷ For Thurin, Mary L. Pratt's theory of gazing as an imperialist trope of conquering is inapplicable in the case of these Victorians, since all six of the travellers have experienced the Chinese people's stares back at them—as "foreign devils."⁸

The most recent scholarship, represented by the essays collected in *A Century of Travels in China* (2007) and *Asian Crossings* (2008), moves

5 Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Traveling between the Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 203.

6 Timothy Kendall, *Ways of Seeing China: From Yellow Peril to Shangrila* (Fremantle: Curtin University Press / Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2005). In contrast, May C. Chan demonstrates a heterogeneity among the voices of British travellers, noting that "a shared humanity" between the travellers and the Chinese contradicts the stereotype of authoritative British travellers. Chan, "Truth Stranger than Fiction: British Travel Writing on China, 1880–1916" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2005), 287.

7 Susan Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers and the Opening of China, 1842–1907* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999), 17.

8 *Ibid.*, 20.

beyond the binary opposition of the traveller and the other and continues to unsettle the perception of an antithetical relationship between China and the West. These essays explore travel as a form of self-discovery, a process leading to an increased consciousness of cultural heterogeneity, and an act of moving back and forth between knowledge of the self and of the other that defies any fixed and totalizing representations of each category.

Looking Beyond the China-West Divide

This project contributes to the critical debate outlined above in its position that although travel literature is a nonfiction genre, it is—like any literary text—ideologically loaded. The account of the traveller is subject to political ideologies at home, the expectations of readers, and the specific requirements of the writing assignment at hand. It is also limited by the traveller's preformed ideas, perspectives of observation, and conceptions formed during travel about the country visited. As a result, the objectivity of travel writing is limited and conditional.

It is also my commitment with this project to continue to move beyond the binary opposition of the traveller, on one side, and the Chinese otherness encountered along the way, on the other. I read travel writing as a process of cultural translation where the traveller is constantly interacting with the foreign culture and trying to make sense of it. I shift the critical focus to how travel literature translates foreignness to its home audience. For me, critical attention to the process of cultural translation is a matter of great urgency given the contemporary context of an increasingly globalized world where communication across ethnic and cultural borders is a daily necessity.

In the popular book *A Traveller's History of China* (2003), author Stephen G. Haw agrees with Lord Curzon, viceroy of India from 1898 to 1905, who described the daunting challenge of learning about China: "The East is a University in which the scholar never takes his degree. It is a temple where the suppliant adores but never catches sight of the object of his devotion. It is a journey the goal of which is always in sight but is never attained."⁹ Learning about Chinese history and culture, I believe, is like learning about histories and cultures elsewhere, including those of one's native country; it is a journey with no end. It is a process. Therefore, I do not aim to construct another version of China with this project. Being critical of a market

9 Quoted in Stephen G. Haw, *A Traveller's History of China* (New York: Interlink, 2003), 4.

hungering for quick translations of China, I am committed to examining the process of constructing “China” as represented in the accounts of certain travellers. I study how knowledge of China is produced through travellers’ translations of that country to themselves and to readers at home.¹⁰

Previous scholarship on travel literature about China before 1949 has shown that the translation of China as a place antithetical to the West has a long history.¹¹ In travel writing about China between 1949 and 1979, this antithetical mode of translation still predominates, arguably due to the oppositional political ideologies between China and the West in that period. From 1949 to 1979 China underwent a series of economic, social, and cultural reforms that conformed to Communist doctrines, including the Great Leap Forward, the Anti-Rightist Campaign, and the Cultural Revolution. It was not until December 1978 that the government adopted the opening-up policy that precipitated the country’s contact with the Western world. Under such circumstances, the travel books produced from 1949 to 1979 represent China as a country rigidly ruled by Communist doctrines and isolated from the West. Accounts of travel in China are replete with descriptions that highlight the country’s dramatic differences from home. The dominant Cold War ideology in the West and the lack of contact between the West and the people and culture of China result in translations of the country that lean almost entirely on the travellers’ perspective; the perspective of the Chinese—which may perhaps interest the home audience the most—is largely left out of travellers’ accounts.

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- 10 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak maintains that the importance of translation studies is to examine the mechanism of transcoding from one language and culture to another. Spivak, “Translation as Culture,” *Parallax* 6, no. 1 (2000), 18. Sherry Simon also believes that translation is not about the transfer of “bodies of meanings” but “about disturbing the boundaries between texts and cultures, between the translator and her own ‘others.’” For Simon, the role of translation is to demonstrate “the instability of cultural borders and changing configurations of identity.” Simon, “Germaine de Stael and Gayatri Spivak: Culture Brokers,” in *Translation and Power*, ed. Maria Tymoczko and Edwin Gentzler (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 136.
- 11 See, for example, Chan, “Truth Stranger than Fiction,” 18; Kendall, *Ways of Seeing China*, 91–121; David Scott, *Semiologies of Travel: From Gautier to Baudrillard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4; Syed M. Islam, *The Ethics of Travel: From Marco Polo to Kafka* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 209; and Douglas Kerr and Julia Kuehn, introduction to *A Century of Travels in China: Critical Essays on Travel Writing from the 1840s to the 1940s*, ed. Douglas Kerr and Julia Kuehn (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007), 1–11.

William Stevenson's *The Yellow Wind* (1959), for instance, is a book about the author's travels in China between 1954 and 1957. It is full of demonizing portraits of the Chinese and sardonic comments about China's government and its policies. Stevenson reveals that he worked for *Toronto Star* publisher Harry C. Hindmarsh, and the book was written with Hindmarsh's instructions in mind: that is, the author was to focus on how the Chinese were indoctrinated by their government. Likewise, Harrison E. Salisbury, another author from this period, published more than ten titles on China and was reputed to be an authoritative correspondent "uniquely qualified to interpret Communist China"; still, China remains the polar opposite to the West in his accounts.¹² In Salisbury's book *To Peking – and Beyond* (1973), the narrative tends to construct a static, exotic kind of Chineseness, defining New China's spirit of self-respect and dignity as being "as specifically Chinese as Chairman Mao's poetry,"¹³ He acknowledges elsewhere that he is "a politically oriented observer," tends to forget "the Chinese people and their way of life" when writing about China, and is preoccupied with "ideology, differences in Marxist systems and balance-of-power politics."¹⁴

However, with this project I do not intend to dwell in travel writing's antithetical translation of China. Rather, I seek those moments where the travellers' accounts transcend such translation. I look for the connections and the commonalities that the travellers observe between themselves and the other—between home and China—and examine the transformations that result from their interactions with the foreign place.

Indeed, the travelogues about pre-1949 China already demonstrate a more meaningful interaction with otherness, despite the antithetical translational tradition of the genre I mentioned above; that is, the traveller not only develops a comparative vision that connects home and China but also experiences a change in perception of the self and the other that results from the cross-cultural contact. Travel books of this kind include Maria Bellonci's version of *The Travels of Marco Polo* (1984), Isabella Bird's *The Yangtze Valley and Beyond* (1899), Juliet Bredon's *Peking: A Historical and Intimate*

12 Eric Pace, "Harrison E. Salisbury, 84, Author and Reporter, Dies," *New York Times*, July 7, 1993.

13 Harrison E. Salisbury, *To Peking – and Beyond: A Report on the New Asia* (New York: Capricorn, 1973), 301.

14 Harrison E. Salisbury, introduction to *China Diary*, by Charlotte Y. Salisbury (New York: Walker, 1973).

Description of Its Chief Places of Interest (1931), Mildred Cable's *The Gobi Desert* (1987), Christopher Isherwood and W. H. Auden's *Journey to a War* (1939), George N. Kates's *The Years That Were Fat* (1952), Victor Murdock's *China the Mysterious and Marvelous* (1918), Matteo Ricci's *China in the Sixteenth Century* (1953), and Duarte de Sande's "An Excellent Treatise of the Kingdom of China" (2006).¹⁵

This more complex process of translating otherness also exists in the travel literature pertaining to post-1949 China. Travelogues such as Emily Buchanan's adoption travel narrative, *From China with Love* (2005), Jean Fritz's *China Homecoming* (1985), Martin Palmer's *Travels in Sacred China* (1996), Mark Salzman's *Iron and Silk* (1986), Judy Schultz's *Looking for China* (1995), Alice Walker's "China" (1994), and Naomi Woronov's *China through My Window* (1988) contain not only the thorny occasions of encounter with otherness but also the reflective moments in which the travellers reconsider their preconceptions about self and other, and about home and abroad.

Even travel books by government officials published between 1949 and 1979, when the Cold War ideology reigned and when the China-West divide was at its widest, contain those moments of rediscoveries and transformations of both self and cultural understanding. Harlan Cleveland was one of the distinguished American delegates who visited China in 1975. His 1976 *China Diary* sharply contrasts China's homogenizing Communist system with Western values of choice, enterprise, profit, and freedom from government, and the book impresses readers with the traveller's acute sense of displacement in the midst of the Chinese. But Cleveland witnesses at one point the miracle of acupuncture, which kindles his critical reflections on the ethnocentric nature of Western medicine.¹⁶ Similarly, John Kenneth Galbraith was president of the American Economic Association when he visited China in the early 1970s. The traveller's conspicuous sense of superiority associated with his elite social position renders China an ulterior, indistinct subject. Galbraith seems to show no interest in people he meets;

15 A number of studies highlight the complexity of the travel discourse about pre-1949 China. See Percy G. Adams, ed., *Travel Literature through the Ages: An Anthology* (New York: Garland, 1988); Peter C. Mancall, ed., *Travel Narratives from the Age of Discovery: An Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); and Elizabeth H. Chang, ed., *British Travel Writing from China, 1798–1901*, vols. 1–5 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010).

16 Harlan Cleveland, *China Diary* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1976), 23.

the Chinese professor with a PhD from Harvard is called “our Harvard friend,” and other native informers remain nameless in the author’s preferred “I was told” kind of passive sentence structure.¹⁷ His terse narrative style—with short sentences and sometimes sentence fragments—and use of plain statements instead of direct speech to record dialogue reveal less of the portrayed country and its people than of the narrator’s massive persona. However, even though Galbraith’s writing too leaves China a remote, alien place, he mentions twice how his first impression of the country “defeats all expectations.”¹⁸ When commenting on the relatively slow pace of the textile plant he visits in Peking, the traveller is even actually sensitive to the inadequacy of his conclusion.¹⁹

Such sensitivity, self-reflection, and comparative visions of home and abroad appear more frequently among the women writers who travelled in Communist China. Charlotte Y. Salisbury accompanied her husband—Harrison E. Salisbury, mentioned earlier—to China and recorded her journey in *China Diary* (1973). She writes not only of China’s difference but also of the “honest, unassuming” people she encounters there who contradict the clichés of China’s “strange, mysterious, exotic, even spooky, inhabitants.”²⁰ She criticizes the assembly-line style of children’s education in Shanghai’s Municipal Children’s Palace but reflects simultaneously on the idle children of New York’s streets and drugstores. She notices a change in her perception after she returns from China and begins to see her home, Bloomington, Illinois, through her “Chinese eyes.” China’s uniformity and collective spirit remain a problem at the end of her travel, but Salisbury feels the need at home for people to become more caring and attentive to one another: “‘Every man for himself’ may not be the motto we can live by any longer in this complicated, shrinking world.”²¹

Significantly, in his introduction to *China Diary*, the author’s husband, Harrison, expresses his admiration for the nuanced observations of China found in the book. He praises Charlotte for her detailed attention to Chinese people. Her insight provides him with “a third dimension” of China “in what had been up to that time [been] a largely two-dimensional vision” because,

17 John Kenneth Galbraith, *A China Passage* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973), 18.

18 *Ibid.*, 17, 23.

19 *Ibid.*, 51.

20 C. Y. Salisbury, *China Diary*, 138.

21 *Ibid.*, 197, 201.

he writes, he is “politically oriented” and preoccupied with ideologies and politics when looking at China. Charlotte’s account of China comes from her observation of the world “with clear, unclouded eyes” and “her response with a warm and frank heart.”²²

Interestingly, Charlotte Salisbury published another travel journal, in 1979—*China Diary: After Mao*—following her second visit to the country, five years after the first, in 1977. Like her first book, it is marked by an acute sense of difference between China and home, “them” and “us.” The account reveals Salisbury’s suspicion of the people she met there and her critical vision of the political propaganda that permeates almost everywhere she went. Despite what she perceived to be positive changes in the country, the limited scope of travel allowed for foreigners by the Chinese government is still present. She also mentioned more than once how foreigners were assigned different dining rooms based on their nationality. In a section called “A Few Do’s and Don’ts for Visiting China”—which she included in both books as part of the “Travel Tips”—she writes:

Don’t expect to be an independent tourist. Realize that while you may ask for anything, the Chinese will decide where you go and what you see.

Don’t make a fuss if you can’t see what you want. You’ll only meet a blank wall. Remember, you can’t change the system.

Don’t expect to be able to wander around freely in any communist country. Sometimes you can, more often not.²³

These warnings—though offered for practical reasons—undoubtedly highlight the difficulty of travelling in China in the 1970s. But because the list comprises part of her travel advice, it also implies the code of behaviour she abided by: when in China, do what you are supposed to do. This idea is also shown in her advice for woman travellers in terms of their appearance: Salisbury does not think it is appropriate to wear “bare, short or tight and revealing clothes when native women dress modestly.” She reminds her

22 H. E. Salisbury, introduction to *China Diary*.

23 The same tips appear in both books. C. Y. Salisbury, *China Diary*, 206; Charlotte Y. Salisbury, *China Diary: After Mao* (New York: Walker, 1979), 205.

readers at home, at the top of the don'ts list, “*Don't* forget that you are a traveling exhibit of American culture. Most Chinese have not seen many Americans. You may form their ideas of us and our country.”²⁴ The conflation of individual and collective identity is remarkable because the traveller's self-consciousness as such is not often seen in the genre, which is usually overpowered by the traveller's individualism.

Charlotte Salisbury's second book on China expresses a warm optimism for a potentially closer relationship between China and her home country. She describes the backdrop to her second visit—specifically, that her journey takes place after President Jimmy Carter's recognition of the People's Republic of China as “the only legal China”—and she envisions that “a whole new era has been ushered in.”²⁵ Salisbury is happy that contact across borders will no longer be limited to “guides and interpreters on business or tour groups,” but will expand to include exchanges of students, technicians, and more businesspersons: “American specialists will be going to China to study their methods, to learn what we can from them and to share our knowledge with them.” She is delighted that “American firms have contracted to build and equip hotels, even one in Lhasa in Tibet” and that “*Love Story* was translated into Chinese.”²⁶

While in favour of cultural exchange across the border, Salisbury does not believe in “the Americanization of China,” just as she insists that American woman travellers should be themselves even though she thinks they should not wear “bare, short or tight and revealing clothes” in China. She cannot believe the Americanization of China will ever happen: “I hope the Chinese will stay Chinese and our two peoples will get along, each of us keeping our special identity. In that way we will have much more to give to each other.”²⁷ Unlike those travel writers for whom the binary opposition of home and China seems to be hopelessly monolithic and inevitable, this writer envisions the possibility of a harmonious and productive relationship between China and the United States with each country's distinct characteristics remaining.

Lisa Hobbs's 1966 travel book, *I Saw Red China*, is another example of a work by a female writer who aspires toward a deeper, more productive understanding of Communist China. An Australian working for an

24 C. Y. Salisbury, *China Diary: After Mao*, 202.

25 *Ibid.*, v.

26 *Ibid.*, vi. *Love Story*, a novel by Erich Segal, was a popular bestseller published in 1970.

27 *Ibid.*, vi–v.