‘Talking of China…’:

BBC Radio Talks on the People’s Republic of China 1949 - 1976.

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Abstract

Unlike many of the studies of the geopolitical consequences of British radio, this project centres on the BBC's Home Services as opposed to its External Services, focusing on the talks given by travellers to the People's Republic of China. This project covers a period of significant changes in the geopolitical landscape of the Cold War, along with great changes in the relationship between Britain and China. Despite this, the main finding has been that the speakers were largely positive in their accounts. In both their remarks on China's ancient civilisation and the modern changes implemented by the Communist Party, travellers were often complementary.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Despite the restricted opportunities for visiting the People's Republic of China (PRC) between 1949 and 1976, people still travelled there and many reported on their experiences upon their return. The broadcasts of these reports and conversations, on the BBC radio Home Services, are the focus of this research. This project covers the period often called the Mao era, which lasted from the founding of the People's Republic on 21 September 1949 to the death of Chairman Mao on 9 September 1976 and Deng Xiaoping's consolidation of power. This period saw great changes in the relationship between Britain and China, a relationship which has always been complex, and includes the Korean War (1950-53), the Sino-Soviet split (1956-1966), and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), along with many other events.

This project connects with a previous piece of work, which focused on domestic BBC radio broadcasts on travellers' experiences of the Soviet Union between 1945 and 1970, and also attends to some of the same gaps within the literature. There has been a great deal of work done on popular geopolitics and the Cold War, looking at how Cold War policies and strategies were activated and sustained through popular media. However, the majority of research conducted in this area so far has focused on American media or culture. Likewise, many studies into the Cold War and popular geopolitics centre around engagements with the Soviet Union, rather than the PRC. It is now entirely orthodox to claim that popular representations of global geopolitics need to be investigated alongside elite understandings. Indeed, terms such as 'geopolitical culture' have been deployed in order to consider how film, cartoons, comic books and television contribute to expressions of popular geopolitics and how and with what consequences audiences react to those media (Dodds, 2007). However, whilst there is this wealth of research into popular geopolitics, there has been an absence of research into the geopolitical consequences of radio broadcasting. When work has focused on the importance of BBC broadcasting, the majority of it has looked at its World Service and not the domestic broadcasting. As well as connecting with literature on popular geopolitics, radio studies, and the BBC, this research is set within the literature on Western images of China, and twentieth century travel to communist countries.

This project centres on the examination of the microfilm transcripts of the radio talks, held at the BBC Written Archives Centre. Using the index card catalogue at the archive, along with the BBC genome website, talks given by travellers to the PRC were identified and, for the most part, located and studied. As there are no audio recordings of any of these talks, an important part of this project was trying to understand the experience of listening to radio

broadcasts in this period, and to this end recordings from the same period were listened to, along with research into the conventions of broadcasting at the time.

In chapter 2, literatures on popular and radio geopolitics are explored, along with the debates around the BBC's reputation for impartial and independent broadcasting, and a brief summary of the history and structure of domestic radio broadcasting. Following this is a discussion of literature focused on Western images of China, and then that on twentieth century travel to communist countries. In the methodology (chapter 3) the power relations surrounding archival research and the BBC Written Archives Centre are discussed, followed by a description of the process involved in locating and selecting the talks, and how they are referenced within the body of the thesis and reference lists. The various actions taken in an attempt to mitigate the problem of being unable to actually hear any of the talks studied are also discussed. Chapter 4 is the first of the analysis chapters, which explores the various commentaries and discussions speakers gave on issues of Chinese civilisation and politics, including the country's ancient history and modern changes as a communist state. The ease with which people could travel to China, and the different attitudes towards visiting it demonstrated by speakers over the years is discussed in chapter 5. The third analysis chapter (chapter 6) focuses on travellers' reports on everyday life in China, and why this persisted as a popular topic of discussion across the period. The fourth analysis chapter (chapter 7) focuses in detail on three of the speakers looked at during this project: Mary Adams, Richard Harris, and Gladys Yang. It explores their histories, getting to know the voices more intimately, and how these life experiences might have informed their attitudes towards China. The conclusion (chapter 8) then discusses the different channels and times at which the talks were broadcast, reflecting on what it meant to listen to radio in Britain in this period. It also contains a methodological reflection on the challenges of being unable to hear these voices, a discussion of the image of China presented in the broadcasts, and considers where this research has extended or complimented existing literature.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This project centres on radio talks on travellers' impressions of China, broadcast on the BBC Home Services between 1949 and 1976, and, unsurprisingly, the germane bodies of literature are diverse and varied, ranging from the history of Western images of China, to the geopolitical implications of radio broadcasting, and more. First, the literature on popular geopolitics and the Cold War is discussed, followed by an examination of the power of radio, and a discussion of why relatively few scholars have focused on it, despite radio being one of the most pervasive mass mediums. The literature on BBC radio, which has predominantly focused on its Overseas Services, is then discussed, including the challenges levelled at the Corporation's reputation for reliable and impartial broadcasting; the BBC's domestic broadcasting is then examined. People have discussed and debated China for centuries, and the various themes, ideas, and images produced are then discussed. Lastly, Western travel to communist countries during the twentieth century and the narratives of fellow travellers that developed are analysed.

2.1 GEOPOLITICS AND RADIO

Within the field of critical geopolitics, it is argued that conceptions of places are shaped and constructed through the workings of elites in a position to influence statecraft, and that these conceptions are used to influence and reinforce political behaviours and policy choices, as well as affecting how we, the people, process our own notions of places and politics. Some people deny the importance of this 'soft power', succumbing "to the 'concrete fallacy' that espouses that something is not a power resource unless you can drop it on a city or your foot"; however, the ability of different actors to shape attitudes and contextualise understandings through the construction of 'imaginary geographies' is of considerable importance (Nye, 2008: 96). Said's *Orientalism* has been one of the seminal works within this field, in which the creation, evolution, and impact of a set of 'imaginary geographies' focused on the Orient are analysed (Gentz et al., 2009). From this sprang a debate over whether Anglo-American geopolitical thought, from Mackinder's *The geographical pivot of history* (1904) onwards, has been based upon a Western discourse in which the 'East' has been designated as a danger to the 'West'. In his paper, Mackinder outlines his fears that "[w]ere the Chinese, for instance, organised by the Japanese, to overthrow the Russian Empire and conquer its territory, they might constitute the yellow peril to the World's freedom ..." (1904: 430). In the decades that followed, the oriental codes of the West were remade as the codes of the Cold War (Pietz, 1988). Cold War geopolitics developed alongside narratives of 'containment' and 'dominoes' (O'Sullivan, 1982) and critical geopolitical

analyses have demonstrated how places were thereby defined, variously as strategically important or as threats, and how those designations shifted dramatically over the years.

The ability of elite groups to "create the conditions whereby peripheral or semi-peripheral states selectively adopt and use the geopolitical reasoning of the hegemon", was the reason for the initial focus on high-level decision making (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1992: 195). Critical geopolitics' purview, however, is not limited to groups with the ability to influence foreign policy apparatus. The focus on 'popular geopolitics' has seen examinations of the circulation of geopolitical power through 'ordinary experience', popular culture, and everyday life rather than through familiar networks of statesmen and ruling elites (Sharp, 1993).

The Cold War was "an ideological and territorial conflict between two superpowers and a coterie of allies, [which] manifested itself through *inter alia* government propaganda, sporting contests, and media broadcasting and listening" (Gillespie et al., 2010: 12). There have been many studies of how geopolitical power in this period was circulated through popular culture. One of the key figures in this has been Joanne Sharp, whose analysis of the *Reader's Digest* has shown how the magazine had a significant role in framing the Soviet Union as a Cold War opponent (1993, 2000). Sharp analyses how Cold War strategies and policies were activated and sustained through popular media, with the USSR being represented as a dangerous 'Other'. She also underlines the importance of linguistics to the Cold War, especially words which have been granted the power of 'the truth'. What happened was not necessarily important, rather how it was described and explained, and by whom. Focusing on the effect of a children's toy, Fraser MacDonald analysed how Cold War policies were circulated in and through popular culture and everyday life. Toys such as the ones of the Corporal missile – Dinky Supertoy no.666 – are "licensed correlates that encourage an interest in and support for the original hardware in its strategic context" (2008: 624-626). This children's toy 'domesticated' the Corporal missile, and demonstrates how the widespread enthusiasm for space exploration in the 1950s aided the easing of nuclear weapons into the political mainstream, and naturalised the anxieties of the Cold War.

As one of the most pervasive mass media, radio reaches the most distant corners of the planet and beyond, and is heard by millions of people every minute of every day. Despite this, relatively few scholars have analysed in depth the geopolitical implications of radio broadcasting (Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009). The preoccupation with visual media, and the visual tradition of geopolitics more generally, makes the neglect of radio by previous research in popular geopolitics unfortunate, but not wholly unsurprising. As Ó Tuathail notes in *Critical geopolitics* (1996), whether it be in the form of the Olympian gaze, or maps and other representations of geopolitical space, the intellectual tradition of geopolitics has long

been preoccupied with the visual. A further challenge for research into radio is the ephemeral quality of the medium: radio first developed as a live system of transmission, with the technology able to record it being developed later. There are frequently no official recordings of programmes and when there are, they are normally in written form.

Radio, along with other electronic communications technology, and factors such as international capital flows, migration, and trade, has helped to make nations 'leaky containers'. Adams work on US-French geopolitical relations demonstrates how:

> "Geopolitical discourses now reverberate in a multitude of communication spaces stretched between nations via a range of media, exacerbating tensions between national populations with different interests and worldviews but also forming ephemeral supranational communities that dissipate tension." (Adams, 2007: 2)

As the power of radio broadcasting improved during the twentieth century, broadcasts began streaming over nations' cartographic boundaries, and as international broadcasting increased, a new form of interventionism developed. Pinkerton (2008a) notes that this was not territorial infringement in the traditional sense but an audio-visual interventionism, with 'ethereal battlegrounds'. Radio was strongly embedded in the geopolitics of the Cold War, as radio broadcasts were, and indeed still are, used to target the populations of other countries (Gillespie et al., 2010). Radio, and media more broadly, has a significant influence on people's attitudes and understandings of places.

2.2 The British Broadcasting Corporation

The majority of studies which have looked at BBC radio have focused on its Overseas Services, and the impact it has had internationally. The BBC is one of the largest media organisations in the world, broadcasting in over 28 languages worldwide, and its news and entertainment services reach over 376 million people each week (BBC, 2018). Furthermore, since its creation in 1922 the BBC has gained a reputation for reliable and impartial broadcasting. People still use the BBC to 'check up on' and validate information they have heard from other sources. This reputation gives the BBC significant potential power and influence over people's understandings of events, places, and people.

However, the Corporation's reputation for reliable and impartial broadcasting has been challenged, with arguments that it is a "carefully cultivated myth", and that the degree to which its reputation has been historically and geographically disputed has been underestimated (Hale, 1975: 48). In Iran, for instance, the BBC's reporting on the 1953 CIA-backed coup against the Mosaddeq government led many Iranians to view the Corporation as unreliable and an agent of British imperialism (Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009). Streberny

and Torfeh have looked at how BBC-government dynamics have evolved since the launching of the BBC Persian language service in Iran in 1940, changing from "overt government direction to more arms-length framing to a laughing recognition by a senior minister of the difficulty of influencing broadcast output" (2008: 532). Despite this they argue that the perception by the current Iranian regime of government–broadcaster collusion is perhaps stronger than ever. This accusation of being a cultural agent of British imperial interests can be found elsewhere in South Asia. For instance, in India it was argued throughout the 1960s that the BBC had carried out a campaign of 'poisonous propaganda' against India, from their coverage of the 1961 liberation/invasion of Goa to the 'Louis Malle affair' in 1970 (Pinkerton, 2008a). Throughout the intervening years, it was claimed that the BBC had committed a series of audio-visual offences against India, including their reporting of the 1965 India-Pakistan conflict, where they were accused of being pro-Pakistan and exacerbating the tensions between the two countries. It was argued that the difference between the Corporation's treatment of Indian issues before independence and after exemplified their 'imperialist' attitude: "despite the retreat of the formal structures of Empire, the BBC remained a cultural agent (in the eyes of the Blitz National Forum) of renewed 'British imperialist interests'" (2008a: 543).

The BBC strived to establish a reputation for reliable and impartial broadcasting, and this status was largely solidified during the Second World War, partially through the Corporation's willingness to be critical of the British government. Furthermore, by the end of the conflict a clear division was evident between the overt propaganda produced by broadcasters in other nations and the BBC's reliable news broadcasting (Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009). It has been argued that, during the Cold War, the BBC remained factual, with no divergence between Overseas and Home Services' policies; consequently British listeners "heard as much during the early stages of the Berlin Airlift about Soviet statements as about British and American statements, and the day-by-day account during the last stages of the blockade of the complex diplomatic manoeuvers did nothing to exaggerate the British role" (Briggs, 1995b: 467). Overt propaganda filled other countries' broadcasting, including America's, which was rejected by the BBC on their domestic Home Services, as well as their Overseas broadcasting. One of the Corporation's central tenets is ensuring the space for the communication of different points of view; upholding this pluralism of opinion could, however, prove difficult in 'crisis moments' and not all views were expressed equally at all times (Briggs, 1995b).

However, as the BBC's overseas reputation for impartial and independent broadcasting has been challenged, the extent of the BBC's domestic editorial independence from government interference has also been called into question. Files concerning the Information Research

Department (IRD), a defunct Foreign Office division tasked with collecting confidential information about Communism and creating factually based anti-Communist propaganda for distribution, were released in 1995. They showed that the IRD was in contact with the BBC continuously, and sought to influence the programme content of both overseas and home broadcasts on more than one occasion (Wilford, 1998). In Overseas broadcasting, consultation with the pertinent government departments was required by the BBC to ensure programmes were 'planned in the national interest'; however, independence in the preparation of these broadcasts was also included in the same Government White Paper in 1946. The Foreign Office, and the IRD, therefore did have a legitimate interest in the BBC's Overseas Services. In terms of domestic broadcasting, the BBC theoretically had absolute editorial independence, yet it has been proven that there were several instances where the Foreign Office objected to planned programmes which were subsequently reconsidered: "[o]n both occasions the Foreign Office explicitly acknowledged the Home Service's editorial independence; yet on both occasions they chose to ignore it." (Wilford, 1998: 365). Despite this contested reputation, many still turn to the BBC when validating information received from other sources, giving it significant potential influence.

When studying the importance of BBC radio broadcasting, the majority of attention has focused on its external services, as with Pinkerton's (2008a) analysis of the BBC World Service in South Asia (see also Rawnsley, 1996 and 1999). However, radio was of great importance within Britain, not merely as one of the most significant sources of news and information. Radio's capacity to traverse space and bring people and places into close contact meant it was instrumental in extending cultural practices, symbols and narratives to millions of people simultaneously across great distances, building national unity through the dissemination of shared sounds and the performance of collective rituals (Pinkerton, 2014). The use of domestic space was transformed, with the boundaries between the public and the private blurred, and the family hearth idealised as the site of ease and entertainment. It was radio that shaped the new voice of public intimacy, which created the nation as a mediated collectivity (Frith, 2003). It offers its listeners a 'bridge' between the individual and the mass, and plays an essential role in community building, making the individual *feel* part of something greater. As well as playing an important role in people's everyday lives, radio has also been a large part of the making of 'extraordinary' rituals and ceremonies (Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009).

During the Second World War the importance and prevalence of radio talks increased rapidly, as they proved to be extremely effective at engaging and informing civilians (Briggs, 1995a). Radio was of such importance that the structure of BBC radio channels and programmes conditioned the patterns of living in Britain and established the rhythm of

everydayness, with programmes such as Breakfast Time, the 9 o'clock news, and Friday Night is Music Night developing into fixed points in people's routines. In 1946 the BBC resumed its Television service, after the wartime closure, and less than ten years after recommencement, television had firmly established itself in Britain, more firmly than in any other country except the United States. However, even with the growth of television services during the 1950s, there were nearly twice as many Sound licences than combined Sound and TV on the first night of commercial television in 1955, 9,414,224 and 4,503,766 respectively (Briggs, 1995b).

After the Second World War, BBC domestic radio broadcasting was divided into a tripartite system, consisting of the Home Service, the Light Programme, and the Third Programme. The three programmes had their own distinct style or tone, but were intended to create a 'cultural spectrum', and lead into each other. The Home Service was considered the staple channel, the "BBC rock on which all else was founded" (Briggs, 1995b: 59), and consisted primarily of speech based programmes, covering the news, and topical talks and discussion. The Light Programme was principally devoted to light entertainment and music, such as popular variety shows including *Woman's Hour*. The Third Programme was intended to be a channel of "a high cultural level, devoted to the arts, serious discussion, and experiment, which would provide an intelligent alternative at peak hours" (Briggs, 1995b: 60). There had been a significant increase in people's interest in serious literature and drama, and intelligent discussion during the war, but public tastes changed over the years and there was a drift towards a desire for lightness, and by the mid-1950s the audience for serious talks was declining (Calder, 1969). Consequently, Ian Jacob, the Director-General of the BBC, increased the topicality of talks, including greater, and improved, current affairs coverage, as well as reducing the length of most broadcast talks to below 30 minutes (Briggs, 1995b; 1995c).

The Home Sound services were restructured in 1967 as Radio's 1-4. Radio 1 was created as a 'pop station', launched in an attempt to meet the demand for current, popular music created by the various pirate radio stations, and some of the Light Programme's music shows transferred to this new station. The primary successor of the Light Programme was Radio 2, but in the early years much programming and music was common to both stations. The Third Programme, naturally, became Radio 3, and the Home Service became Radio 4 (Briggs, 1995c). The Corporation's monopoly on radio broadcasting came to an end on the 8th October 1973, when the London Broadcasting Service, followed by several other commercial stations, started broadcasting (BBC, 2016a), but even in the face of this competition the BBC continued to be the main provider.

2.3 WESTERN IMAGES OF CHINA

Western engagements with and representations of China is an area which has been the focus of much discussion by scholars. One of the most influential works in this field has been Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), in which Western attitudes towards the East are analysed. Said considers orientalism as a powerful European ideological creation, one which enables colonial administrators, writers, and philosophers to handle the 'otherness' of Eastern culture. He surveys the works of people like Homer, Disraeli, and Kipling, whose imaginative depictions have played a large part in the creation of the West's romantic and exotic picture of the Orient, analysing how these ideas can be a reflection of European imperialism and racism. Whilst designed predominantly as a critique of the Western study of West Asian civilisations, his key ideas are equally applicable to the study of China.

Orientalism begins with the assumption that "the Orient is not an inert fact of nature. It is not merely *there*, just as the Occident itself is not just *there* either" (1978: 5). Instead places such as the 'Orient' and 'Occident' are man-made, with their creation being bound up in a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of complex hegemony. Said argues that the Orient "was Orientalised not only because it was discovered to be 'Oriental' in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it *could* be – that is, submitted to being – *made* Oriental" (1978: 5-6). Whilst this process of distinguishing the Eastern 'Orient' from the Western 'Occident' became especially prevalent during the period of European imperialist expansion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Said argues that we should not say that Orientalism was simply a rationalisation of colonial rule, as this ignores the degree to which Orientalism justified colonial rule in advance, not just after the fact. He reflects that men have always separated the world into areas having either real or imagined differences from each other, and the absolute division of East and West was centuries in the making, developing from countless voyages of exploration, previous contact through war, and trade connections.

Said identifies two principle features of the relation between East and West since the middle of the 1700s. First, the growth of systematic knowledge of the Orient in Europe, information reinforced by both the colonial encounter and the widespread interest in the alien and unusual, in the growing fields of ethnology, comparative anatomy, philology, and history; this systematic knowledge was further augmented by works of poets, novelists, translators, and gifted travellers. The other feature of relations between Europe and the Orient was that the former was always in a position of strength, not to say domination. Many terms were used to describe the Orient, frequently ones such as irrational, depraved, childlike, and different. The European, consequently, was rational, virtuous, mature, and normal. Said discusses how "texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to

describe", and that knowledge of the Orient, because produced out of strength, in a sense creates the Orient, the Oriental, and his world (1978: 94).

In *Western images of China* (1999), Colin Mackerras has presented and analysed such images, tracing how they changed from era to era, and relating both the images and the changes they underwent to the politics and intellectual environment in the West. He begins with ancient Roman and Greek writings on 'Serica' (China) and moves through the ages to the end of the twentieth century. Mackerras considers how the accuracy of the information on China imparted by the various writings and cultural artefacts is less important, for the present purposes, than the views of China they imparted. Marco Polo's book on his experiences in China, usually called in English *The Description of the World* or *The Travels of Marco Polo*, published circa 1300, was the first time Europe possessed a detailed narrative about China based upon more than hearsay and speculation, and was immensely popular and consequently influential as a source of images of China. One scholar has controversially argued that Polo did not, in fact, visit China, and travelled no further than the Black Sea or Constantinople, as there are many significant areas which are notably absent in his work, including any mention of the Great Wall, tea cultivation, or foot binding (Wood, 1995). However, Mackerras argues that regardless of debates over accuracy, because of Polo's account, Cathay, as he called North China, became for over two centuries synonymous with Eldorado – a fabulous land of wealth on the far side of the world (Mackerras, 1999).

Representations of China have fluctuated along a spectrum from laudatory to vitriolic, and Mackerras notes that these shifts are bound up with particular Western interests and agendas at the time of the production of the images. European images of China from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century were more positive than at any other time before or since, and this was primarily due to the reports by Jesuit missionaries. He considers how, since the Jesuits had chosen to work from the top down, it was in their interests to show the ruling classes as effective and to get on well with them. Hence there was a tendency to downplay criticism of China in public statements and in the second half of the seventeenth, and all of the eighteenth centuries they presented Europe with an extremely, indeed unduly, flattering picture of China. As Mackerras notes, there were other Catholic orders working in China by the seventeenth century, who had significantly more negative views of China and its society. However, "the Jesuits were incomparably more important and influential during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than any of the rival religious orders" (1999: 29). When publishing the writings of the Jesuit missionaries in China, the editors of the Society omitted sections which could undercut the value of Jesuit missionary work, or show differences of opinion about China that rival orders could exploit.

Similarly, Mackerras considers how the decisive shift away from these positive eighteenth-century images to a far more negative view of China was predominantly bound up with the rise of European, especially British, imperialism. For the first time, Britain became a leader as a formulator of Western images of China. This was the period when the 'orientalist' approach to China identified by Said reached its height, when Europe colonized not only parts of China, but also knowledge about it. In *Forging Romantic China: Sino-British Cultural Exchange 1760–1840*, Peter Kitson argues that Britons constructed a 'new' idea of China during this period, one which enabled British power in the 'Far East'. The new body of textual and cultural artefacts produced during these years created a new form of knowledge about China, with the process being inflected by Britain's own increasingly national concerns. He states that the "representation of the Qing empire in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries suffered a staggering reversal of fortune from admiration to degradation, largely as a result of the combined onslaught of missionary writing, economic theory, Oriental scholarship, and colonial conflict, as well as from an increasingly racialized conception of human difference" (2013: 13). David Porter argues that the dismissal of China's legitimacy and forgetting of its massive impact was a form of "instrumental amnesia" that deliberately occluded "rival claimants to exemplarity" and the memory of "a more truly cosmopolitan early modern past" (2010: 305).

Both Mackerras and Kitson argue that the change in representation began, largely, with the reports by the Macartney embassy. In 1793 the British government sent the first diplomatic mission to China, the Macartney embassy, which generated masses of textual commentary attacking the rosy images of China from the earlier Jesuit-inspired writing. This negative representation was then added to by the increase in influence of the Protestant missionaries in China throughout the nineteenth century. As Kitson argues, like the earlier Jesuits, whilst the Protestant missionaries had a slight impact on China, they had a considerable one on the mind of the West. The British Protestant missionaries of the early nineteenth century, however, were conservative and narrow-minded, quite different from the humanism of the Jesuits. They regarded China mainly as a country of heathens 'who lacked the light of God and must be rescued from eternal damnation', and the images they conveyed to the West were correspondingly condescending and negative.

In addition, Mackerras argues that the nineteenth century in the West saw a rise of a self-confident and prosperous middle class, which created people with the time, money and inclination to travel, even under the most uncomfortable conditions. In their reports, these travellers quite naturally cover a vast range of topics, and through their works likely reached a wider readership than the scholarly or diplomatic literature, but the images portrayed by the writers of the various callings do not necessarily differ essentially. The rapid

technological advancements during the Industrial Revolution led most Westerners to be extremely sure of themselves and to look down on those they regarded as backward or inferior, including the Chinese. The criteria for judgement were European. Patrick Weir has argued that it was during this period that travel writing emerged as a genre of writing, and that it served as "a mode of bringing the 'other' under representational regimes of colonialism alongside its material and economic conditions" (Weir, 2018: 5). Drawing on Said, he argues that systematic economic imbalance and threat of military force were combined with essentialist cultural imaginaries which positioned the colonised in wholly separate social and political spheres to create the politics of domination. It is surely an exaggeration to argue that in the nineteenth century "every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric" (Said, 1978: 204). Yet on the whole, Mackerras and Kitson emphasise that the images conveyed by Western observers conformed to the expansionist aims that had brought them to China to begin with, and their attitudes were in accordance with the imperialism of the era.

Robert Bickers, in *Britain in China: community, culture and colonialism 1900-1949*, using a selection of works and writings, examines the different commentaries on China circulating in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century. He considers how, by the turn of this century, China had been a strong focus for Britain for many years, and there was no shortage of literature on it, written by a range of missionaries, academics, or sinophiles. In addition to this, there was a large body of Britons who lived and worked in China's treaty ports, and Bickers argues that these residents dominated writing on China available in Britain from the end of the nineteenth century until the 1930s. The Treaty of Nanjing, signed in 1842 at the end of the first Opium War, ended the previous trading agreement between China and foreign merchants – the Canton system – where all foreign trade was confined to Canton (Guangzhou). The Treaty of Nanjing ceded the territory of Hong Kong to Britain and allowed British merchants to trade at five 'treaty ports' and with whomever they pleased.

Books were not the only source of information and views on China, and even if someone had not read anything on China, it is unlikely that anyone in the early twentieth century would be completely unfamiliar with China as news.

> "The Boxers, the anti-Manchu revolution in 1911, the warlord disintegration of the 1920s, and the Nationalist revolution of 1923-28, were all firmly fixed in the British popular imagination. Even if these exciting events had passed him by, British popular culture was steeped in China and the Chinese. In thrillers, on the stage, in romances and in film, in both children's and adults' literature, China and the

> Chinese – and the Chinese in Britain too – were represented to such an extent that those pleading for improvements in relations between Chinese and Britons routinely joked about the fact." (Bickers, 2017: 23)

Furthermore, Britons of all classes and from all parts of the country, urban and rural, north and south, might encounter friends, relatives, neighbours or acquaintances who had experience of China. As Mackerras notes, whilst we have some clues as to what people learned verbally about China, we know much more about what they may have read. People who were going to travel to China were regularly given lists of suggested reading, such as the War Office's 1928 pamphlet about Shanghai, which recommended Gilbert's (1926) *What's Wrong with China*. As the absence of a question mark suggests, Gilbert set out to describe China's faults, and the book was a hugely popular polemic, anchored on the assertion that China "is already spoiled and capricious beyond words, simply because she has been consistently overpraised and overrated when she should have been spanked" (1926: 7). Fictional works were also often recommended as sources of information about China's past and present, such as Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* (Bickers, 2017). One of the most popular series was Sax Rohmer's Fu Machu stories; as a popular fiction series in the crime and mystery genre this would not have been thus recommended, but Bickers emphasises that it is unlikely that many Britons would have reached adulthood in the two or three decades after 1913 without having read works like his Fu Manchu novels. Most of his series was set in London's Limehouse district, long the subject of Victorian literary interest. The first Fu Manchu story was serialised in the wake of the Xinhai revolution of 1912-13 and launched a villain with all the:

> "cruel cunning of the entire Eastern race, accumulated in one giant intellect, with all the resources of a wealthy government – which, however, already has denied all knowledge of his existence… Dr Fu Manchu, the yellow peril incarnate in one man" (*The Mystery of Dr Fu Manchu*, 1913: 23)

Inspired by the unrest in China, as well as the increasing notoriety of the Limehouse district in London, the 'Yellow Peril' genre often focused on Chinese invasion of Europe, and their rooted insecurity related to pre-World War I invasion stories about Germany. Bickers notes that yellow Peril fears also lay in the sense that European colonialism might one day have a price to pay, and start paying it in Asia. Rohmer published another twelve Fu Manchu books during the next five decades, their popularity taken advantage of and reinforced by film adaptations and by their copyists of the 1930s. Other writers successfully exploited and extended this genre; often loading their works with explicitly political messages, and often relocating the Limehouse or Fu Manchu genre to China itself, or parts of the British Empire

with Chinese populations. Even novelists who claimed direct experience of China, and interwove fact into their narratives, took on board the Yellow Peril theme in its Limehouse guise: it sold. Many travellers to China, consciously or otherwise, articulated their experiences and ordered this new world through drawing upon fiction. A *Daily Express* correspondent in 1928 "wrote on Shanghai with 'hazy ideas of Sax Rohmer's Chinese underworld and opium den life flitting through his mind'" (Bickers, 2017: 57).

During the first half of the twentieth century, Bickers argues that a common representation of China in both fiction and reportage was as exotic and poisonous. Consequently, the 'China' that developed in the British imagination in the 1930s – and which attracted literary pilgrims and sojourners – was that of Backhouse's '*Décadence Mandchoue*', Johnston's *Twilight* and Victor Segalen's *René Leys* (1922): exotic, erotic and aristocratic. These were elegiac and frequently rooted in a Peking of the authors' own imagination and selective experience. Exoticism could go further, into the homosexual pornography of Backhouse's 'memoirs', or the softer, more picturesque Kai Lung novels of Ernest Bramah, and those of Charles Pettit or Maurice De Kobra, which exploited exotic, and erotic, Chinese imagery and scenes. Like other foreign settings, China was often merely a suitably distanced setting for erotica (Bickers, 2017).

In this period there were also several ways in which British people could 'experience' China for themselves, without having to travel to the far side of the world: for many people "[China] was a spectacle they might view on the stage, at the theatre, the opera, or the ballet, or else might seek in the streets of East London or at exhibitions" (Bickers, 2017: 46.). At the 1924-25 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, two years after Somerset Maugham created a Beijing street scene on the London stage, a 'Hong Kong Street' was recreated with 'the Chinese people living and working in it'. The spectacle could now be walked through; the exhibition had been exactly calculated to convey a frisson of the dangerous East, easily reachable in ten minutes from Piccadilly. Britons might not go to Wembley, but many of them visited 'Limehouse' in fiction and the press, and some even visited the district itself, braving the mysterious and dangerous Orient on a day trip to Wapping. Bickers argues that during the first half of the twentieth century in Britain, for the most part, "factual reporting and popular culture's fictions identified difference, taught distance and encouraged distrust. China and the Chinese were denigrated, their politics and society ridiculed" (2017: 23).

As noted by Mackerras, there were alternative images of China presented during this period, ones which were not as negative. The first half of the twentieth century also saw the development of a radical tradition of journalism, which not only believed that the Chinese Communist Party could win, but welcomed that possibility. Originating mainly in the United

States, some radically socialist and feminist people put forward a far more positive image of China and the Chinese. He argues that the three most famous names are Agnes Smedley (1892-1950), Anna Louise Strong (1885-1970), and Edgar Snow (1905-1972), all of whom wrote widely in newspapers and books to bring the activities of the Communist forces to the world's attention and to promote a favourable image of the changing course of China's history. Agnes Smedley came from a very poor background, and Mackerras argues that her life experiences and those of her family made her into a radical feminist and socialist. She was extremely critical of the semi-feudal, peasant mentality of traditional China, and positioned the Communist Party as the only group willing and able to change society. Strong wrote numerous books and articles, not only about China, but also about the Soviet Union, Spain, and Mexico, and was published by prominent commercial American publishers between 1926 and 1946. She wrote glowingly about the society she found during her time living with the Communist forces in 1946 and 1947. With regards to Snow, Mackerras argues that "[f]or Western images of China, the most influential of these three American journalists is Edgar Snow" (1999: 70). Snow went to work in China in 1928, and in 1936 had the opportunity to visit the revolutionary base area of northern Shaanxi and interview Mao Zedong. From this he wrote *Red Star Over China* (1937), which Mackerras argues transmitted an image of the Chinese as dedicated to national integrity and social justice to the West. It was controversial in Britain, as they were Communists, but also of strong appeal to the left, with over 100,000 copies sold within a few weeks.

The victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949 caused massive ripples in the international geopolitical arena, and marked a critical juncture in Western attitudes towards China. In *Passport to Peking: A Very British Mission to Mao's China* (2010) Patrick Wright focuses on the story of the British politicians, scientists, and artists who travelled to China in 1954, going behind both the Iron and Bamboo Curtains in their journeys. He argues that the Western world conceived itself as threatened by a monolithic, expansionist communism, by the Cold War. And it was easy to add China in 1949 to this existing monolithic and expansionist block. Yet he notes that there were some in Britain who were more accepting of the communist victory; the brutality and corruption of the Nationalist regime had been witnessed first-hand by many Westerners, and the conduct of the communist forces had been drastically different. Additionally, he notes that the Chinese communists were viewed by some as 'agrarian reformers', rather than advocates of the Soviet model. The UK government recognised the PRC in January 1950, only a few months after its formation in October 1949, and Wright argues this was primarily motivated by a pragmatic desire to safeguard its substantial economic and commercial interests in China and Hong Kong. However, it also wished to try and avoid creating further tension within its fracturing Empire,

as both India and Pakistan had already recognised the 'New China'. He argues that the attempts at improving diplomatic relations between Britain and the PRC were, however, largely unsuccessful. Many people in Britain were still strongly against communism, agrarian reformers or not, and also argued that the UK needed to support its ally, and financial supporter, the United States. In addition to this, within six months of Britain recognising the PRC, the Korean War began, and relations between the East and West plummeted.

Mackerras argues that, on the whole, the images of China that Western governments tried to convey to their peoples were more negative during the years following the communist victory through to the late 1960s than at any preceding time. However, there were certain variations and gradations within the category of 'the West': the peoples of the United States and Australia accepted a more negative image of China than those of most other Western countries; and different views existed within each of the countries. He argues that what affected the West's images of China in those years was less ignorance than politics and ideology. Because of the severity of the Cold War split between the 'free world' and 'international communism', and the strains between left and right in politics in Western countries, attitudes towards China were a litmus test of one's ideological position on international issues. The significance of politics on Western attitudes to China can also be seen by the impact of Nixon's famous visit to China in 1972, which Mackerras considers to be "a major dividing point in Western images of that country…it symbolised that the United States no longer regarded China as a major enemy, perhaps not even as an enemy at all" (1999: 98). He notes Harold Isaacs' description of the direct impact of the new US diplomacy and Nixon visit on American's images of China.

> "When the American pendulum swings in such matters, it swings high and hard…When the president…announced his forthcoming trip to Peking, the passage from the China-minuses to China-pluses became a mad and even gay rush. Pearl Buck reappeared to remind everyone how great a time it was when Americans and Chinese were friends. The 'lo-the-wonder-of-the-wonderful-Chinese' reappeared in the country's print and on its screens" (1972: xxv).

Isaacs goes on to comment on an expansion of interest in Chinese food, art, fashions, and acupuncture. Before this time, the US had held one of the most negative attitudes towards China, whilst post-1972 Mackerras argues that there was a mania for everything Chinese, and the number of Americans travelling to China rose quickly.

2.4 TRAVELLING TO COMMUNIST CHINA

In his discussion of the experiences of the various 1954 delegations to China, Patrick Wright also describes the "storms of outrage" that met returning travellers in the 1950s and the anxieties the delegates felt over the risk of being branded a fellow traveller or "ideological renegade" from their decision to visit the PRC (2010: 7; 17). He considers the restrictive nature of travel in China, and discusses the conducted tours the travellers were part of, being shown selected sites in the PRC and staying in the hotels constructed and reserved for foreign guests. The origin of this narrative of fellow travellers can be traced to Western travel to the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s, and in an earlier book, *Iron curtain: From Stage to Cold War* (2009), Wright discusses how Soviet travel agencies offered a vision of a new civilisation, and used Potemkin-like devices to reinforce the illusions constructed for the foreign travellers. He states that by 1939, the trope of the duped British visitor to the Soviet Union was firmly established. Matless et al. (2008) discuss the impact this trope had on British geographical travel to the eastern bloc in the post-war decades, arguing that the travellers were writing in a context of heightened suspicion and sensitivity to fellow travellers. In their analysis of articles published in the *Geographical Magazine*, along with other published work, they found that whilst many of the accounts gave a positive view of the eastern bloc, the authors avoided uncritical praise, whatever the motivations behind their report. Despite this distrust over travellers' reports on the eastern bloc, Matless et al. argue that the restrictions on travel and relative lack of information about eastern bloc countries "could give individual travel accounts greater cultural currency" (2008: 359).

The narrative of fellow travellers had a similar impact on Western travel to the PRC, both because it was a communist country, and because the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) carefully controlled and managed the foreign presence in China, both foreign residents and visitors, with access to the PRC being extremely restricted between 1949 and 1976. In *Making the foreign serve China: managing foreigners in the People's Republic* (2003), Anne-Marie Brady discusses the CCP's adoption of the 'delegation' system developed by the Soviet Union and notes that the only way to access China during the 1950s to 1970s was as part of a conducted tour. Consequently, there were the same concerns over the accuracy of what travellers were shown and apprehensions over appearing naïve or duped in their reports of their experiences. The restrictive nature of travel to the PRC and relative lack of information about communist China, however, created a similar situation where first hand reports were given greater weight, despite mistrust over travel to communist countries.

Within Britain, there were several organisations in the 1950s to 1970s whose aim was improving Britain-China relations, and which were heavily involved with facilitating travel to China; the two most significant groups were the Britain-China Friendship Association and

the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding. In *East Wind: China and the British Left* (2012), Tom Buchanan discusses that, until the mid-1960s, the Britain-China Friendship Association (BCFA) played the principle role in organising the British left's solidarity with the PRC, organising regular delegations to China, including the 'icebreakers' delegation to China in 1952, as well as the organisation of the 1954 'cultural' delegations. Buchanan notes that, whilst hardly a mass movement, with a peak membership of 2,698 in 1955, the BCFA had a large number of institutional affiliations with trade unions and cooperative societies. The Sino-Soviet split had significant ramifications for the organisation, causing it to fracture from internal disputes between supporters of the Soviet Union and those who sided with China. Tensions between the Soviet Union and the PRC began in 1956, when Khrushchev denounced Stalin, and in 1964 Mao declared that a counter-revolution had occurred in the USSR and re-established capitalism; consequently, the Warsaw Pact countries broke relations with the PRC. This led to the almost complete collapse of the BCFA, with many of the central members leaving the organisation and setting up the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU) – which was established in 1965. Throughout the mid to late-1960s, given the weakness of Britain's diplomatic presence in China, SACU offered a rare point of contact with the PRC authorities. Indeed, during these years a visa obtained by SACU was one of the only ways for a Briton to go to China. SACU sought to build support for China in non-political and academic circles rather than preaching to the already converted left. As Buchanan notes, the BCFA had had strong, overt links with communist organisations and Parties, and SACU aimed to distance itself from this and appear more balanced, and less like mere fellow travellers. The Society is still active today, and its stated aims still include helping overcome misplaced suspicion and increasing understanding of China within the UK, and providing facts and analysis about China – not uncritically but always from a firm base of friendship.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In order to understand a radio talk on China, broadcast on the BBC between 1949 and 1976, it is important to reflect on such areas as the wider geopolitical context, the BBC as an organisation, the various Western images of China, and travel to communist countries in the twentieth century. The state of international geopolitical relations impacted the number of people who could travel to China, and the number and type of programmes on it broadcast. Furthermore, it is important to consider the ways in which radio, and media more generally, was embedded within the geopolitics of the Cold War. It is also important to reflect on the BBC as a powerful organisation with a reputation for reliable and impartial reporting, and the impact this will have had on the reception of the talks. That this reputation has been historically and geographically contested, with accusations being made that it is an agent

of British imperialism, should also be considered. With regards to domestic broadcasting, for a large part of this period the BBC had a monopoly on broadcasting. China has been a topic of interest and discussion for centuries, and a wide range of images and ideas have been produced, which have been heavily bound up with Western attitudes and agendas. For instance, the dominant negative representations in the nineteenth century were closely linked with the rise of European, especially British, imperialistic ambitions. It is important to consider the wider context of Western travel to communist countries in the twentieth century and the concern over fellow travellers which had developed. There was heightened suspicion over the conducted tours of China and the reports given by travellers, and this created a sense of anxiety over travelling to the PRC for some people.

3 METHODOLOGY

This project is based upon archival research, conducted at the BBC Written Archives Centre (hereafter BBC WAC), with the transcripts of 71 broadcast talks on China being analysed in detail. Both the index card catalogue provided by the archivists at BBC WAC and the BBC genome website were central to the identification and selection of the programmes studied. Researching this kind of material requires a number of methodological reflections, including specific questions of access to sources, the location in which the material is held, and the implications and challenges of the format of the material.

3.1 ARCHIVES

Far from being the neutral, passive repository of facts they were viewed as for so long, it has been argued that archives are active sites where social power is negotiated, contested, and confirmed. Schwartz and Cook argue that "archives are established by the powerful to protect or enhance their position in society. Through archives, the past is controlled. Certain stories are privileged and others marginalized" (2002: 1). This echoes Derrida's argument in *Archive Fever*, in which he states that "[t]here is no political power without control of the archive, if not memory" (1996: 4). The BBC WAC was established because the Corporation, a powerful organisation, felt it was necessary to record and assemble the material broadcast on its stations, together with its correspondence, publications, plans, posters, and other records. What is included in the archive is, unsurprisingly, entirely dependent upon what the BBC judges to be appropriate and important. Likewise, the archive is not available to everyone, and the regulations governing who is permitted to access it are decided by the BBC.

Furthermore, Caversham Park, the site which houses the BBC WAC, was until May 2018 also the location of BBC Monitoring, whose role is to track, translate, and analyse media worldwide. It listens in on radio transmissions from around the world, translates and analyses print journalism from 150 countries and 100 different languages, as well as monitoring the internet. The monitoring service began at the outbreak of the Second World War, with its primary purpose to inform the War Office of propaganda by Nazi-controlled media outlets and broadcasts by Axis Powers. The organisation played a key role in the Cold War, helping observers track events during the global tension, such as the invasion of Hungary by the Soviet Union in 1956, the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and its fall in 1989, and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. It "crosses the divide between news and intelligence-gathering" (BBC, 2016c). Furthermore, although BBC Monitoring is editorially and administratively part of the BBC, it was not until 2013 that it became financed by the licence fee. Before this time it was funded by its stakeholders and subscriptions from official

and commercial bodies throughout the world, with its largest financers being the Cabinet Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Ministry of Defence. Its customers also include private sector and third sector bodies, as well as other government departments (BBC, 2016b). Thus, we can see that it is intertwined within global networks of power.

3.2 Material Identification

The archive, however, has contradictory aspects. On the one hand, it is a site of structure, control, and rigorous monitoring, whilst, on the other, it is a site of disorder. Not all of the index cards provided, in which the broadcasts related to China from 1949 to 1968 are listed, were in chronological order. Additionally, the catalogue does not extend beyond 1968, with the exception of a partial, fragmentary listing of material up to 1971, after which there is no record in the archive of what transcripts are held on the microfilm reels stored there.

Access to the BBC WAC is through pre-arranged appointment, and upon arrival the index cards cataloguing talks on 'China' broadcast between 1949 and 1968 were provided. Using these, along with the BBC genome website, programmes which appeared to be on accounts of people's travel to China were identified, and the transcripts of 71 programmes were studied in detail (see Appendix 1). There are many more programmes which could have been focused on, which would have been relevant to the project, and it was necessary to make a decision over which talks to try and find the transcripts and study in detail. There were several factors which influenced this decision, including the time constraints of the project. There was only a single year to complete the project; had there been more time, it would have been possible to make additional trips to the archive to study the other programmes. The index cards, and many of the BBC genome listings, only provide the title of the talk, the speaker, and the channel on which the programme was broadcast. Using this information, it was possible to locate talks on already identified topics, themes, and individuals, such as broadcasts on the 1954 Labour Delegation to China led by Clement Attlee. As well as this, using the formulation of the project as being interested in programmes on people's travel to the PRC, titles which appeared to be relevant were selected.

That a programme is about the speaker's visit to China, however, was not always evident from the title and it was only through reading the transcript itself that this became clear. An example is Wendy Dewar-Durie's (1959) talk, *The Day I Met My Waterloo*, where she discusses her time living in China with her family, and the relationship she had with her household staff. Relevant material was often chanced upon whilst looking for a different talk, either as it was by the same speaker or part of the same series of programmes, as the

transcripts are organised either alphabetically by speaker, and then chronologically by date broadcast, or by programme title, such as ‘Woman’s Hour’, and chronologically within that. The index cards do not provide a complete list of the talks which were broadcast on China, however, as ones which are not listed were discovered during the course of the research. Additionally, for some of the programmes catalogued in the index cards it was not possible to locate the transcripts for them in the archive.

The BBC genome website, which contains the BBC listings information which the BBC printed in the *Radio Times* between 1923 and 2009, was useful in identifying potentially relevant talks through using keyword searches and was crucial in locating post-1968 talks, as the BBC index card catalogue system finishes in 1968. One can search for specific programmes, speakers, or topics within a specified range of years. A broad search for talks on ‘China’ between 1949 and 1976 formed a starting point, with additional searches being run on phrases like ‘panda politics’ and ‘Mao’, along with searches on key speakers, such as Gladys Yang and Richard Harris. However, as with the index cards, transcripts no longer exist for all broadcasts and so it was not possible to find all talks listed on genome.

The index cards list 473 programmes on ‘China’ as being broadcast on domestic BBC channels between 1949 and 1971, and figure 1 shows the number of talks broadcast each year. From this, it is possible to see the changing level of interest in China across the period. As discussed previously, the index cards only cover up to 1968, with an incomplete record through to 1971, and therefore the graphs do not cover the complete period looked at in this project.

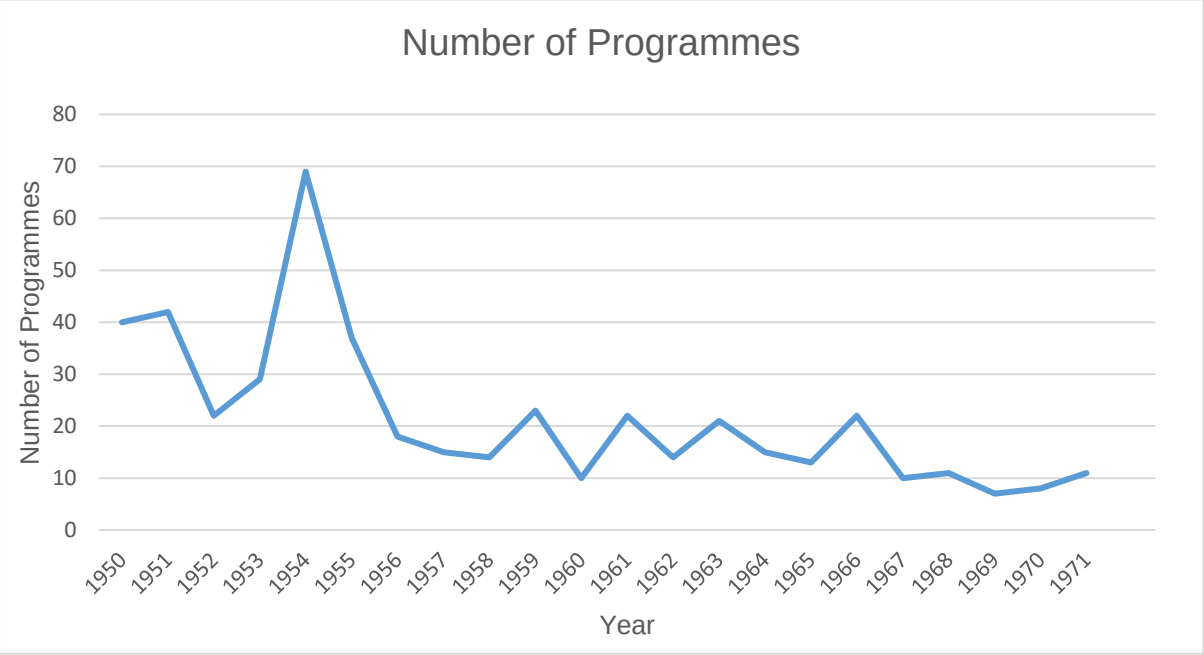


Figure 1 Graph showing the number of programmes broadcast on 'China', on domestic BBC channels between 1949-1971.

In addition to this, the cards were used to categorise the talks by topic, such as 'economics', or 'science' (see Figure 2). For some programmes it was not possible to tell from the title alone what it was about, such as *Discussion on China* (Home Service, 8th April 1953), and thus they were categorised as 'unknown'. A count of all the relevant programmes allows us to see which parts of China were thought to be the most interesting or important, and whether this differed throughout the period. Programmes were assigned to more than one category where appropriate, for instance *A Virgin and Child in Medieval China* (Third Programme, 20th April 1956) would be categorised as both 'history' and 'religion'. Consequently, values are not reflective of the absolute number of talks broadcast during the period.

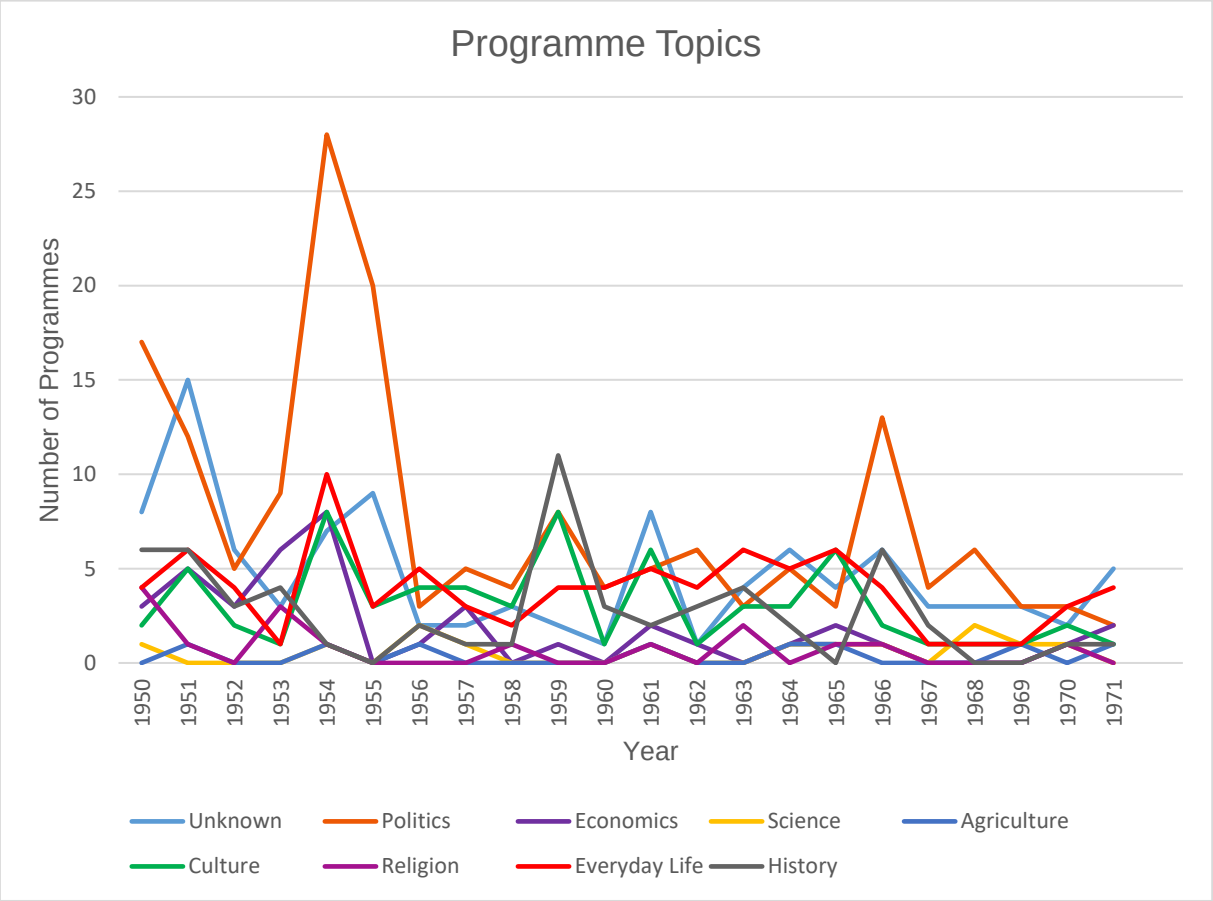


Figure 2 Graph showing the change in prevalence of each category of topics in BBC talks on 'China', 1949-1971. The category 'Culture' contains talks which include topics such as discussions of art exhibitions in China and sporting events. 'Everyday Life' includes talks on things such as comparisons on British and Chinese shopping habits.

Within the body of the dissertation the talks are referenced in the Harvard style, for example:

> (Harding, 1968) ⟶ Harding, J., (1968). Two Years in China, Radio 3. *BBC Transcript,* Film T197, 1-9.

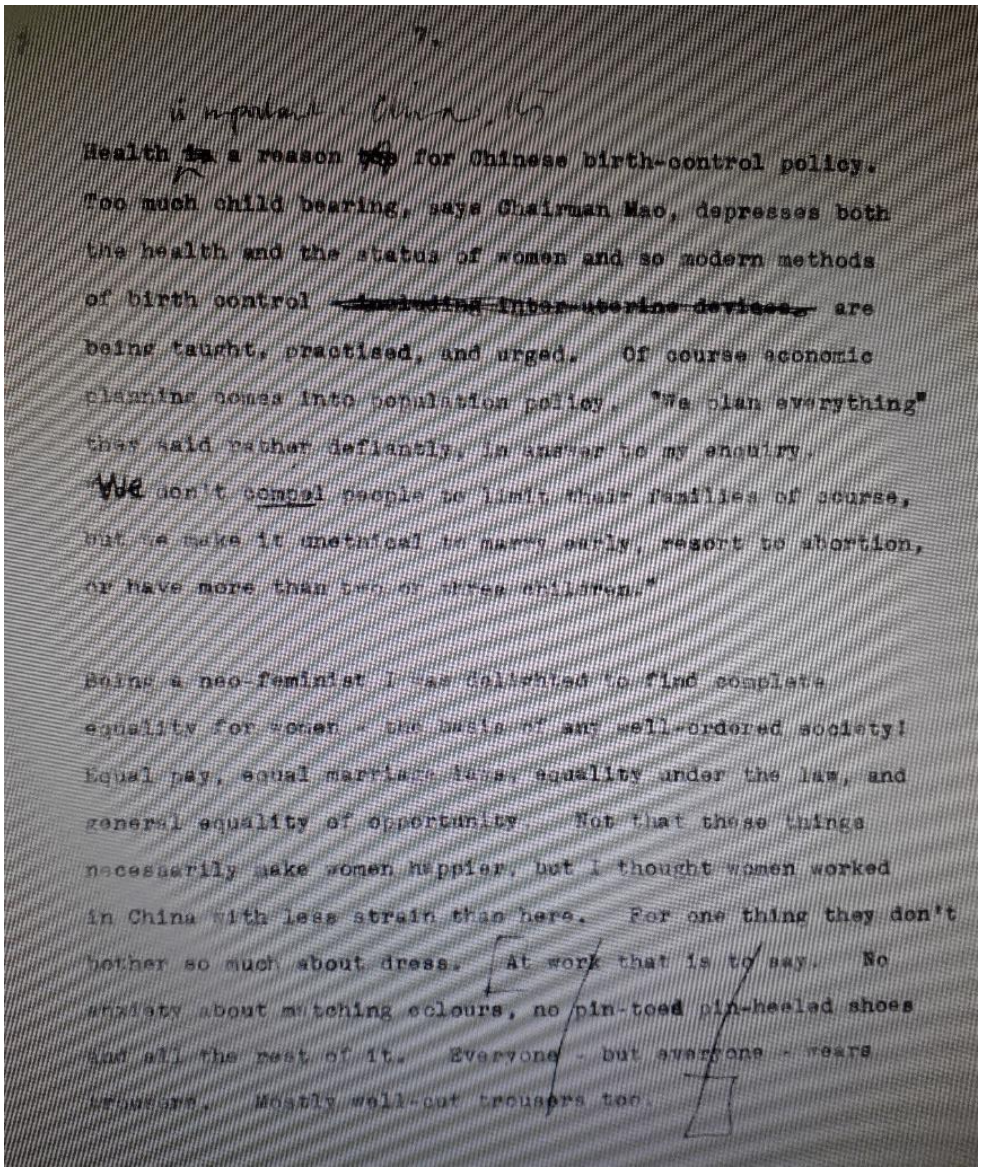
When there is more than one person in a talk, it is important to specify which speaker is making a particular point, and consequently the individual from whom a quoted extract is taken is either named during the discussion of the point – 'McLeod argues that…' – or is indicated in the reference of the talk – (McLeod in McLeod and Macdonald, 1971b).

> (McLeod in McLeod and Macdonald, 1971b) ⟶ McLeod, L. and Macdonald, L., (1971b). Acupuncture, Radio 2. *BBC Transcript*, Film 115/116, 1-4.

In many of the talks the opening announcement broadcast at the start of the programme, in which the topic of the talk and the speakers are introduced, is included in the beginning of the transcript, with the person giving/reading these segments being listed as the 'Compère'. When discussing points made in these opening descriptions, the Compère is referenced in the same way as individual speakers in multi-person talks discussed above: 'as the Compère says in the introduction to Adams talk', or (Compère in Adams, 1965).

With regards to the creation of the transcripts themselves, there are two general types. There are the scripts of the talks that individual speakers gave, which were written before recording, and on which it is often possible to see the changes made to the content as it went through the editing process, with sections being scored through or moved to another part of the talk. An example of this can be seen in figure 3, where a page of the transcript of Mary Adams (1965) talk is shown. For the transcripts of discussion programmes, the talk has been typed up after its recording, and these include the hesitations, repetition, and overlaps from the talks. It is quite rare for conversations to be converted into archived written documents and there is, unfortunately, no information on the transcripts about who was responsible for doing this.

The reference list includes the talks discussed in the project, whilst a full list of the materials studied can be found in Appendix 1.



Health as a reason for Chinese birth-control policy.
Too much child bearing, says Chairman Mao, depresses both
the health and the status of women and so modern methods
of birth control ~~including inter-uterine devices~~ are
being taught, practised, and urged. Of course economic
planning comes into population policy. "We plan everything"
they said rather defiantly, in answer to my enquiry.
We don't compel people to limit their families of course,
but we make it unethical to marry early, resort to abortion,
or have more than two or three children."

Being a neo-feminist I was delighted to find complete
equality for women - the basis of any well-ordered society!
Equal pay, equal marriage laws, equality under the law, and
general equality of opportunity. Not that these things
necessarily make women happier, but I thought women worked
in China with less strain than here. For one thing they don't
bother so much about dress. At work that is to say. No
anxiety about matching colours, no pin-toed pin-heeled shoes
and all the rest of it. Everyone - but everyone - wears
trousers. Mostly well-cut trousers too.

Figure 3 Adams (1965) A Month in China, page 7.

3.3 LOST VOICES

The same challenge that has faced countless radio scholars before also presented itself in this project: how do you recreate the sound of a voice that you cannot hear? Whilst the BBC has an excellent record of the material it has broadcast across the decades it has been in operation, without which most of the content of its programmes would have been lost, the only record of the talks looked at in this project is in written form. As Dolan has argued, there is an intrinsic tension between the aural and textual sources used in many studies, with written documentation frequently being viewed as a “poor substitute for a voice that cannot be heard” (2003: 67). The experience of reading the microfilm transcripts kept in the BBC WAC is greatly different to what listening to the programmes at the time of broadcast would have been. The most obvious difference is that it is not possible to *listen* to the talks,

and therefore you do not get the impact of hearing the speakers and their voices. Looking at a transcript in the archive is also a very different experience compared to listening to the talks at home, as the majority of the programmes would have been. Several actions were taken in an attempt to mitigate these issues, such as listening to a variety of available audio recordings of radio programmes broadcast between 1949 and 1976. Furthermore, some of the speakers were well known figures, such as Alan Bullock, and recordings of them can still be found, thus allowing their voices to actually be heard. In order to better understand the 'sound' of the programmes, research was undertaken into the different radio channels, as well as the more general conventions of radio during this period.

3.4 CONCLUSION

As with all archival research, it is important to recognise the power relations surrounding the archive, including the participation in and access to the archive, its constitution, its location, and its interpretation. This project also presented the same complexities that have faced others studying radio, with the challenges of the medium's ephemeral nature and the predominance of text based records. The range of material studied allowed examination of questions of everyday life, Chinese civilisation and politics, and travel to communist China during the 1950s to 1970s, and revealed particularly interesting individuals, which are explored throughout the following chapters.

4 CHINESE CIVILISATION AND POLITICS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The difference between China's civilisation and political system and that of Britain, or other Western countries, has long been a subject of interest and commentaries. As travellers in the nineteenth century reported on China's imperial despotism, travellers to the PRC reflected on the organisation of modern China, ranging from the aspects of ancient China still visible, to the communist system of agricultural communes. In this chapter, the admiration many speakers expressed towards China's ancient civilisation is first discussed, and how these reports demonstrate a shift away from the negative representations of the nineteenth century discussed earlier. The continuity that several speakers argue exists between traditional Chinese civilisation and aspects of the communist system, such as morality in government, is then examined. Following this, positive accounts of modern China are discussed, along with several broadcasts in which it was argued that the PRC could function as a suitable development model. Lastly, several of the critical commentaries, which appeared most frequently at times of heightened geopolitical tension, are analysed.

4.2 CHINA AS ANCIENT CIVILISATION

Throughout the broadcasts, many speakers are extremely positive about the ancient aspects of China's civilisation and are respectful of how it is a "civilisation much older than ours" (Bracegirdle in Bracegirdle and Lee, 1965: 4). Following his trip to China with one of the 'cultural delegations' in 1954, British artist Denis Mathews appeared on the BBC Home Service to describe his experiences. A significant part of his talk was dedicated to describing the restored palaces he saw, and the traditional art techniques he was shown. It was these 'ancient' aspects of China that he was the most excited to experience and he emphasised that "the love of the tradition of earlier times is seen in so many ways, I was glad to see" (Mathews, 1955: 3). During his trip he spent time with Chinese artists who demonstrated traditional methods for preparing ink, and the different types of brushes and pestles. Mathews was deeply impressed by the subtleties and complexity of the process, and had a great amount of respect for the skill of the Chinese artists. In April to June 1973, the series *China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation* was broadcast, consisting of fourteen weekly episodes in which a changing panel of 'China experts', made up of academics, journalists, and diplomats, argued passionately that China's ancient civilisation was exceptional, sophisticated, and complex: "China was incomparably more civilised, incomparably richer, incomparably larger than any culture or any dominion" (Harris in Harris et al., 1973a: 2). Furthermore, it was argued that this this "old civilisation is still

there", meaning that "[t]he Chinese are the really civilised people, always were." (FitzGerald in Harris et al., 1973e: 2).

Whilst speakers are often clear in their positive attitude towards the 'ancient' aspects of China, they also stressed that it is very different to British culture. Different, however, is not synonymous with bad. An example of this can be seen in the talk given by Ann Kingsbury who describes watching a funeral procession with her young daughter. In contrast to the solemn affair of a British funeral, it was an "an occasion for feasting", with fire crackers and professional mourners who "jigged about and turned around and beat their breasts and wailed and roared with laughter" (Kingsbury, 1960: 4). She admits that she "felt a little bewildered" but ends her talk by arguing that "the Chinese way is not ours, and I'm glad that it isn't" (Kingsbury, 1960: 5). That Chinese civilisation and culture is entirely different to that of Western nations is also repeatedly discussed and analysed by the speakers of the 1973 series, with C.P. FitzGerald arguing that this difference stems from China's own, distinct evolution, where "Chinese civilisation developed in an isolation which was quite complete for a very long time…in this development on its own China established its own attitudes and beliefs" (Harris et al., 1973a: 3). Richard Harris, the presenter of the series, who is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7, returns to this topic in a later talk, and states that "[m]ost people interested in China are ready to acknowledge differences between our own civilisation and China's…[encompassing] language, physiognomy, mythology, food, clothing, the arts and other qualities". These inherent differences, however, do not make the Chinese civilisation less than Western, rather it is "simply a civilisation very different from our own, and one that must be approached through its own values…[and] as a different but entirely valid model" (Harris in Harris et al., 1973b: 1).

The high esteem demonstrated by many of the speakers in these talks towards China's ancient civilisation is very different to the popular negative British attitudes in the previous century. As discussed in the literature review, Mackerras (1999), Kitson (2013), and Bickers (2017) have analysed how the dominant representation of China in Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was of stagnation and backwardness, with the change from earlier Jesuit-inspired admiration being heavily bound up with the growth of British imperialistic ambitions. The speakers in these radio broadcasts were respectful and appreciative of the fact that it was a "civilisation much older than ours" (Bracegirdle in Bracegirdle and Lee, 1965: 4) and of China's history as a 'centre of ancient wisdom'. This point was emphasised by Myra Roper, in her interview with Marjorie Anderson, a noted BBC broadcaster. Myra Roper was a British-born Australian educationalist, author, broadcaster, and expert on China. She first visited China in 1958 as part of an Australian women's delegation invited by the All China Women's Federation. Other trips followed as she

developed an interest in contemporary China, visiting another fifteen times, and she wrote several books about her travels. In 1963 she returned to China to make a documentary film for television, and her talk with Anderson is in response to the book she wrote based on this trip (Sobocinska, 2014). Rather than associate the ancient past with stagnation, Roper emphasises that people in China "are very much aware that they are the inheritors of the world's longest continuing civilisation…and all their ancient pride is back again" (Roper in Roper and Anderson, 1966: 2). The earlier change in British attitudes towards China was discussed in 1973 by William Watson during his two talks on the *Genius of China* exhibition and the archaeological expeditions he was part of in China. Watson was a British art historian who worked in the British Museum Department of Oriental Antiquities and was also Professor of Chinese Art and Archaeology at the University of London. He was a leading member of the teams that organised the *Genius of China* exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1973 and the *Great Japan Exhibition*, held in 1981-82. During his talks, he commented on the change in British attitudes towards China which began in the eighteenth century, where the earlier idea of China as a centre of ancient wisdom suffered a staggering reversal of fortune. He argued that the idea that China is "floral, quaint, exotic in a comfortable key – is a legacy of the eighteenth century. It was founded on the massive import into Europe of pretty trade goods…Afterwards the same opinion was affectionately fostered in our own very western tradition of Chinoiserie, that child of the Rococo. On screens and plates the lovable mandarins and pretty maids of Chinoiserie inhabit a timeless fairyland touched with buffoonery. In fact it would be hard to invent anything more remote from the Chinese imagination" (Watson, 1973a: 1).

Some of the delight travellers found in the traditional parts of China, however, stems from aspects of what they saw conforming to Oriental tropes. For example, Doreen White describes her excitement upon arriving in China: "I found myself in the China I'd always dreamed about – which I'd seen on the lovely Chinese scrolls, almost the traditional willow pattern plate" (White, 1961: 2). She went on to describe how she felt like she was in "an enchanted fairy tale" as she visited different parts of China (White, 1961: 2). Other speakers have similar reactions and Ann Kingsbury discusses the adventure she had touring a market, weaving between the different shops and stalls, and seeing all the different spices and produce on offer, and she says she experienced a thrill from having experienced the "mysterious East" (Kingsbury, 1960: 1). She was not alone in reporting delight in having encountered the 'mysterious East'; Lewis McLeod was a professional lighting cameraman whose work stretched from documentaries with the naturalist Peter Scott to stints covering wars in Vietnam and the Middle East. In 1971 Lewis visited China at a time when remarkably few were allowed to enter the country, a year before the historic visit of Richard Nixon.

During his tour of China, McLeod developed a sore throat and his Chinese hosts were quick to provide a medical person, who gave him the choice between Western medicine and traditional China acupuncture. McLeod was excited to be given the chance to experience the 'mysterious East':

> "Through the interpreter he asked what my problem was, what was my ailment and I told him and through my interpreter the first thing he said to me was 'What would you like, Western medicine or the needles?' So I asked to see what the Western medicine was like and he produced a thing that I can only call like a cannon ball – actually it was more like a horse pill. Well I won't have that, I'll have the needles. So this caused quite a bit of consternation amongst fellow delegates, they thought I was very brave trying the needles but I thought I'd try anything to try the mysterious East so I sat down" (McLeod in McLeod and Macdonald, 1971b: 1).

Whilst McLeod expresses delight at being given the opportunity to experience Chinese acupuncture, and jumps at a second chance to try it later in his trip, he also demonstrates a sense of slightly patronising Western superiority in his attitude towards it. He does not credit the acupuncture treatment with helping relieve his sore throat or headache, instead saying: "[w]ell, being a canny Scot, and trying to be polite to my host, I didn't say anything but I have this sneaking suspicion it may have been the tablet or the hot drink or the bath the night before" (1971b: 2). This attitude can also be seen in the talk given by Antonia Ridge, who was a Dutch-born writer and broadcaster, writing both fiction and non-fiction, for adults and children, as well as scripting and reading plays for BBC Radio's Children's Hour. In 1961 she went to visit her children, who were currently living in China, and gave a talk about her travels upon her return. Ridge was entertained by her cook's 'ritual' for preparing a celebratory meal: "they'd consulted the almanac, of course, to make sure it would be a lucky day to cook a feast. And it was. But to make absolutely sure Ah Wei burnt paper money and lit joss-sticks to the kitchen-god who keeps a celestial eye on Chinese kitchens" (Ridge, 1962: 5), her western cook however, "didn't need to consult almanacs and hang up good luck signs and burn joss-sticks and paper money" (Ridge, 1961: 6).

4.3 Communism and Civilisation

Whilst the Nationalist Revolution in 1911 and the victory of the Communist Party in 1949 were landmark moments in Chinese history, it was argued that they did not represent a complete break in the continuity of China's civilisation. Instead, "from Chinese eyes it's a change of dynasty" with the communist government being woven into the web of Chinese history (Landay in Beedham et al., 1977: 4). As suggested by its title, one of the central

arguments of the series *China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation* was that there was a great deal of continuity between traditional Chinese culture and its communist regime. During this series, American statesman and lecturer on American-East Asian relations, James Thompson argued that "the Chinese communist party grew naturally on certain aspects of traditional Chinese society, a group instinct, a collectivism that had existed underneath the rather gentle authoritarian society of China. It furthermore welded itself onto the authoritarian society of China" (Harris et al., 1973f: 6). Mao and the Communist Party leadership had stepped into the position previously held by the Emperor and the ruling classes. In the following programme, American academic, political scientist, and sinologist, Benjamin Schwartz also argues for seeing many of the modern aspects of China as being formed from its past: "For instance, even in the notion of the political leader of the society is also the moral teacher of the society. Mao recently said that he wants to be remembered mainly as a teacher. This resonates with a certain traditional Chinese way of bringing together what might be called high moral doctrine with politics" (Schwartz in Harris et al., 1973g: 1). Furthermore, he and Harris discuss how the collective organisation, which is fundamental to a communist regime, could also trace its roots to traditional Chinese culture: the 'family system' which had existed in China for thousands of years.

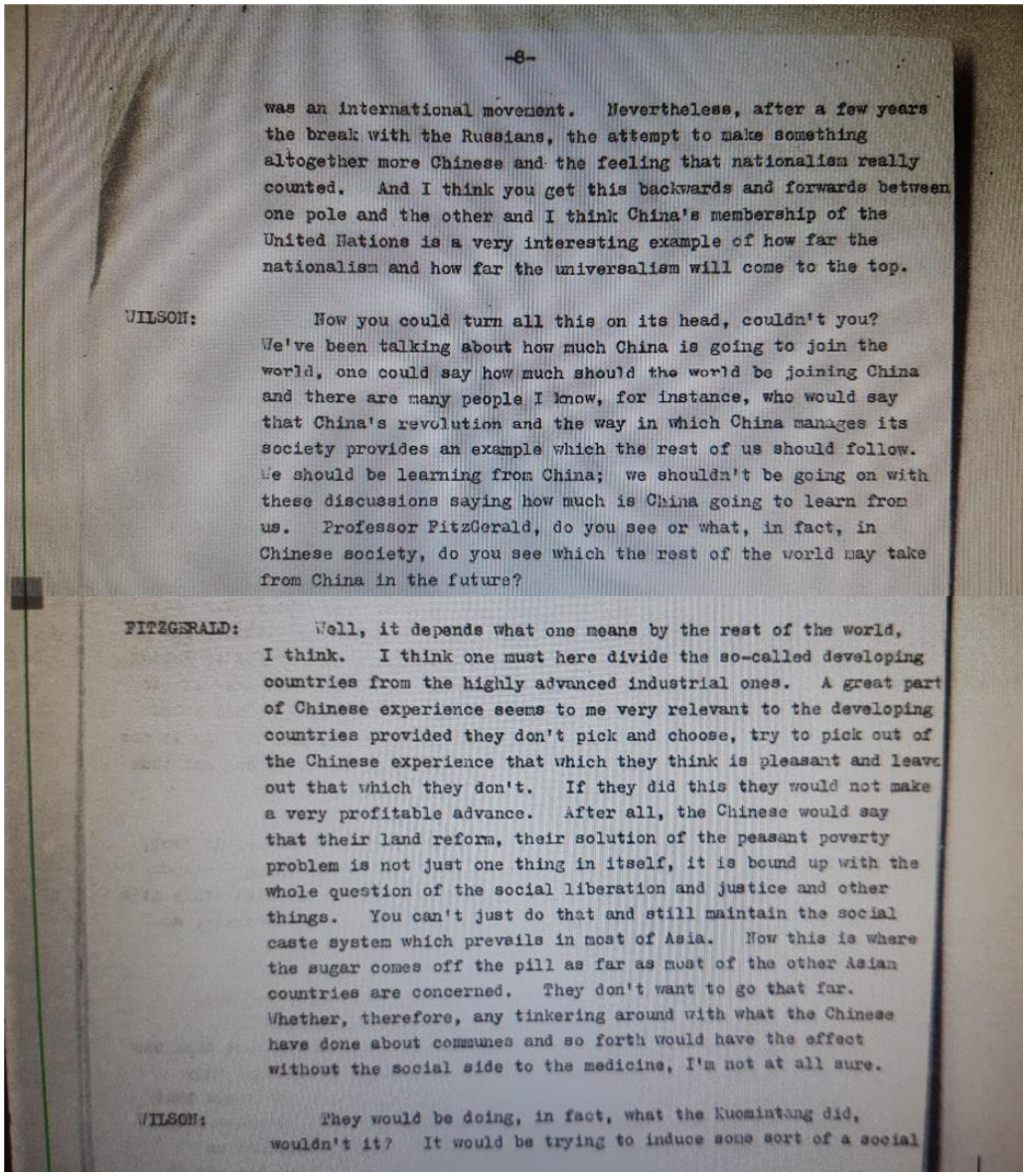
The modern changes occurring from the Communist regime were, understandably, the focus of much interest and discussion throughout this period. In many of the talks, travellers had positive reports about the improvements being made in China, approving of the progress in people's quality of life. Journalists George Gale and Derek Winterton said that during their tour they witnessed great improvements in the standards of living, with "an immense amount of reconstruction work going on; the entire of China tidied up, cleaned up" (Gale in Ray et al., 1954: 2). A similar commentary came from the Countess of Limerick after her tour of China with the British Red Cross delegation, praising the modern housing developments, as well as applauding the great improvements they witnessed in hygiene and new modern hospitals (Countess of Limerick, 1956). Distinguished BBC foreign correspondent Jim Biddulph visited China as part of a "more or less conducted tour" in the early 1970s (Biddulph, 1972: 1). He is also complimentary of what he saw during his time there, claiming that "now that the impressions are beginning to settle down, one part of [him] is left feeling that there is a very great deal to be said for what is now happening in China – the way they appear to be ordering their lives" (1972: 1). Throughout his talk he praises the "contented look on the faces of people in the villages we drove through" and "the scrupulous cleanliness" which is found throughout China (1972: 2). Part of travellers' interest in modern China came from its way of life being so different to that found in Britain; however, these

differences are not automatically negative, with many speakers reporting positively on what they experienced. Many talks include a section in which the organisation of the commune system is explained, both urban (e.g. Mathews and Mathews, 1961) and rural (e.g. Hill, 1956). In 1956 Conservative M.P. John Hill visited China as part of a Parliamentary delegation; also a farmer, he was “interested to examine rural life there under Communist rule” (Hill, 1956: 1). He reported that it was obviously an extremely different system to the one operating in Britain, but that the cooperative “reorganisation is coming to an early and successful conclusion” and has been able to solve some of the previous problems Chinese agriculture faced, such as vulnerability to floods, and the small size of individual holdings which inhibits the use of modern agricultural techniques (1956: 4). Hill does not debate the ideological merits or flaws of the CCP development method, instead he discusses the practical steps and changes made in improving rural agricultural production.

Whilst the development and modernisation debates did not originate with the Cold War, they were most fully articulated in this era, with Western, predominantly American, concern over the appeal of communism to decolonised and developing countries (Latham, 2003). In the 1970s, there were several discussions broadcast on China’s suitability as a development model, including a debate during the final programme of Richard Harris’s 1973 series on China between Harris, David Wilson, and C.P. FitzGerald. In 1973, Wilson was editor of *The China Quarterly* and had just completed his PhD in contemporary Chinese history. He had previously studied Chinese at the University of Hong Kong (1960-62) and then served in the British Mission in Peking, resigning from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1968. In 1974, he rejoined the Diplomatic Service, and was later appointed Governor of Hong Kong (1987-1992). C.P. FitzGerald was a British historian and author, who specialised in China and Far East Asia. He first visited China at age 21, and subsequently lived and worked there for over 20 years. Between 1946 and 1950 he worked there for the British Council. After leaving China, Fitzgerald served as a Reader in Far Eastern history at the Australian National University, from 1951 to 1953. He later became Professor of Far Eastern History at the university's Institute of Advanced Studies, from 1953 to 1967. The three speakers had first discussed the increasing integration of China with the rest of the world, with it becoming a member of the UN and improvements in international relations, when Wilson then raised the question of whether the world should be learning from China. FitzGerald argues that there is much that the developing world could take from China, but selectively choosing piecemeal aspects of the Chinese system would not achieve the same results. For instance, China’s land reform and “solution of the peasant poverty problem” is bound up with the question of social liberation and justice, which FitzGerald states is incompatible with the social caste system which prevailed throughout most of Asia

(for the complete extract of Wilson and FitzGerald's discussion, see Figure 4). Harris agrees with FitzGerald, arguing that it is not possible to simply export China's model, as China's 'essence' – culture, social organisation, history, etc. – is unique, yet there are still many things that other countries could learn from the Chinese:

> "I don't think that China can be this guiding star…you've got to make your own revolution in accordance with your own conditions. If Chairman Mao adapted Marxism to China so any African or Asian leader has got to adapt Maoism to his country" (Harris in Harris et al., 1973l: 9-10)



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was an international movement. Nevertheless, after a few years the break with the Russians, the attempt to make something altogether more Chinese and the feeling that nationalism really counted. And I think you get this backwards and forwards between one pole and the other and I think China's membership of the United Nations is a very interesting example of how far the nationalism and how far the universalism will come to the top.

WILSON: Now you could turn all this on its head, couldn't you? We've been talking about how much China is going to join the world, one could say how much should the world be joining China and there are many people I know, for instance, who would say that China's revolution and the way in which China manages its society provides an example which the rest of us should follow. We should be learning from China; we shouldn't be going on with these discussions saying how much is China going to learn from us. Professor FitzGerald, do you see or what, in fact, in Chinese society, do you see which the rest of the world may take from China in the future?

FITZGERALD: Well, it depends what one means by the rest of the world, I think. I think one must here divide the so-called developing countries from the highly advanced industrial ones. A great part of Chinese experience seems to me very relevant to the developing countries provided they don't pick and choose, try to pick out of the Chinese experience that which they think is pleasant and leave out that which they don't. If they did this they would not make a very profitable advance. After all, the Chinese would say that their land reform, their solution of the peasant poverty problem is not just one thing in itself, it is bound up with the whole question of the social liberation and justice and other things. You can't just do that and still maintain the social caste system which prevails in most of Asia. Now this is where the sugar comes off the pill as far as most of the other Asian countries are concerned. They don't want to go that far. Whether, therefore, any tinkering around with what the Chinese have done about communes and so forth would have the effect without the social side to the medicine, I'm not at all sure.

WILSON: They would be doing, in fact, what the Kuomintang did, wouldn't it? It would be trying to induce some sort of a social

Figure 4 Extract from the discussion *between David Wilson and C.P. FitzGerald in the talk China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 14 – Questions for China (1973). Photograph of the microfilm transcript held by the BBC WAC.*

Five months after Mao's death, another panel of speakers discussed the suitability of China as a development model. As with the earlier talk, they first examined the

improvements in international relations between China and the West during the 1970s, then the programme Chair, Brian Beedham, foreign editor of *The Economist*, asked the other guests whether post-Mao China would be seen as a potential model:

> "Do you think that the new China of Chairman Hua with its more practical pragmatic economic development image and less of it… less of the revolutionary élan is going to continue to be a model that people will want to follow?" (Beedham et al., 1977: 20)

Ross Terrill, an influential Australian historian and China specialist who has been Associate in Research at Harvard's Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies since 1970, argued that the new China would not be a model for the developing world, instead "the China of the past, the China that struggled against feudalism and against imperialism with such magnificent success, it will be the model" (Beedham et al., 1977: 20). This argument was supported by the other speakers, with John Gardner, a British academic specialising in contemporary Chinese politics, stating that:

> "I agree entirely with Ross, I don't think that [new] China can be held up as a model to the third world for two reasons, the one he gives that China has moved so far from the problems which still confront most of the third world, I think this means there is less and less to emulate and the second reason of course is that over the past six months the Chinese themselves have now pointed out that a lot has been wrong with their system which they say is due to the gang of four but the rather rosy view of China which tourists were bringing back a couple of years ago when all this was of course going on can no longer I think be held." (Beedham et al., 1977: 21)

In both of these two talks, communist ideology was considered as forming an important component of the Chinese development model, which contrasts with Hill's earlier discussion of the practical changes being made to improve rural livelihoods.

4.4 Critical Voices

Despite the many positive accounts of the improvements visitors saw being implemented by the CCP during their travels, there were some people who were considerably more critical. These accounts often appear at times of heightened geopolitical tension. In 1952 a talk was given by Diane Shipton during which she describes her "Journey out of China". She had arrived in China in 1949, and had flown "in smooth comfort from Hong Kong to Kunming", but when she was leaving, they "were then under Communist rule" (Shipton, 1952: 1). It was nearly impossible to obtain exit permits, and during her month-long journey

out she, and her children, were “forbidden to go out” and “never knew how long our imprisonments would last” (1952: 2). She describes the experience as traumatising and terrifying, and said that she is uncertain whether they will ever see her husband again. Between 1949-1976, the PRC was, for the most part, closed off to all but select foreign visitors, but in the period 1949-1952 most foreigners then living in China were forced, either directly or indirectly, to leave the country – after undergoing a process of ascertaining whether they were liable for criminal charges or for notional debts under the laws of the People’s Republic (Brady, 2003). Shipton states that her journey was surrounded with heightened levels of fear as there “were numbers of foreigners in prison for small, often unwitting offences” (Shipton, 1952: 1).

Following this period of heightened geopolitical tension immediately after the Communist rise to power, there was a period of improved international relations, beginning in 1953. This arose from a combination of several different factors, including the Korean War armistice, death of Stalin, and the acceptance of the ‘Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence’ as fundamental to now pacified Sino-Indian relations at the Geneva Conference in 1954. During this conference, Chou En-lai offered everyone an invitation to ‘come and see’ the changes being made in China, all expenses paid; consequently, 1954 saw an increase in the number of delegations travelling to China, and a corresponding increase in the number of talks on China being broadcast. One of the most prominent groups to go was the Labour delegation led by Clement Attlee, and this trip stimulated much discussion and controversy. One such debate was broadcast as a section on the programme ‘Behind the News’ immediately following the delegation’s return, and featured Father Martin D’Arcy, Alan Bullock, Jacob Bronowski, and was hosted by Kenneth Wheare. Many of the reports on the delegation’s experiences were broadly positive, however, during this talk there was a heated debate and strong criticism of China. Alan Bullock, a British historian and author of an influential biography of Hitler which had been published in 1952, begins by stating that the visit was “one of the most controversial incidents of the summer”, with many people arguing it implied the “Labour Party approved of what had been happening in China”. However, he argues that:

> “in a world where you’ve got the nations divided into two power blocks sitting and glowering at each other, how on earth are we ever going to get any way to a settlement towards even laying down the basis of co-existence unless we do discuss and unless we meet” (Bullock in Wheare et al., 1954: 1)

Father D’Arcy, a Jesuit and theologian, and a frequent and prominent broadcaster, however, disagrees, arguing that “the Russians and Chinese… communisms, they are in

enmity with the West. It is their firm belief by their philosophy that they must liquidate or destroy the capitalist West", and that when you are separated from people by real divisions of principle, you can't talk to them (D'Arcy in Wheare et al., 1954: 2). Bronowski, a British mathematician, poet, and humanitarian, and also a frequent guest on BBC radio and television, agrees with D'Arcy that emissaries shaking hands and making pleasant speeches will not solve the larger problems. However, he states that having no communication between the West and China is not the solution either. D'Arcy's rejoinder is that it is important to "be very sure of our meetings with them [Chinese and Russians] so that we are not taken in" and says that he can see no point in "easy and soft and pleasant exchange[s] of conversation [whilst] in the meantime the communisms of Russia and China are doing their very best to stab you in the back. That doesn't seem to be either truth or value" (1954: 5). This argument is then challenged by Bullock, who questions D'Arcy on who he thinks should visit China if he does not agree with visits by unofficial emissaries like Attlee. D'Arcy replies that he is not a politician, and therefore does not know what the best solution would be. However, he states that:

> "My simple answer to that is, if those at home really think that there is an active and effective thing which can be done by… then do it, then do it, but not as I call handshaking and pleasant talk, let us have something effective about it." (1954: 5)

Bullock then challenges that Attlee's meetings may have included some "unpleasant talk as well" and "said some tough things", and that people should not assume that the delegation merely achieved exchanges of superficial pleasantries (Bullock in Wheare et al., 1954: 5). Further debate on the topic, however, is prevented as Wheare then states that they must move on to the next topic: "I tell you what we'll have to do, it is a rather cowardly thing, we'll have to move on to the next subject" (Wheare in Wheare at al., 1954: 5). This talk demonstrates how deeply divisive the issue of communism was in Britain, with some people's suspicions and hostility towards China coming from it being a communist country, and part of the 'communist block'.

The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a new wave of negative reports on China, with some people claiming it was heightening international tensions and inciting conflict with India. Buchanan (2012) argues that, during this period, China was attempting to establish itself as 'cock-of-the-walk' in Asia. French journalist Tibor Mende gave two talks in 1959, following his return from a tour of China, in which he was extremely critical of the PRC, repeatedly describing the country as "baffling[ly] self-righteous" and as in a "mood of Messianic arrogance" (Mende, 1959: 1; Mende in Mende and Luard, 1959: 1). Mende suggests that

part of the reason behind China's aggressive behaviour towards India was the latter granting asylum to the Dalai Lama after he fled during the Tibetan Crisis in March of that year. During the late 1950s and early 1960s there were ongoing violent border skirmishes between China and India, which came to a head in 1962 with the Sino-Indian War, and led to heightened international geopolitical tension and China being viewed by some observers as bellicose and antagonistic.

A new wave of criticism began in 1966 with the launch of the Cultural Revolution; whilst its stated aim was to preserve Chinese Communism by purging remnants of capitalist and traditional elements from Chinese society, it paralysed the country politically, economically, and socially. Mao officially declared the movement over in 1969, however in China, since 1977, the decade 1966-1976 has been officially considered the period of the Cultural Revolution. Whilst it was difficult for the outside world to stay informed about what was happening within China, there were several broadcasts during this time which were critical in their reports. One of the early reports came from journalist Patricia Penn, who visited China a couple of months after the Cultural Revolution was launched. The Compère introduced the talk by stating:

> "Though the doors of China have opened a little in the past year or so, the Western journalists and broadcasters who are allowed in to report on the country are still few and far between. Patricia Penn was one of a group of journalists in Asia for whom the door was suddenly and unaccountably flung open." (Penn, 1966: 1)

Penn is negative in her account of her experiences in China, and suggests that the people she was allowed to speak to, under escort, were instructed on what to say prior to meeting with her, claiming that they "seldom looked at me, but straight ahead into the distance or at the table top as if reciting from memory, which it seems possible that they were" (1966: 2). Furthermore, she reports that there was "no field of activity that the long hand of politics doesn't reach" (1966: 2) and that she had "been struck by the anti-foreign hate element" she witnessed whilst there (1966: 4).

Another broadcast on China during the Cultural Revolution came from John Harding, in 1968. Harding went out to China in 1965 to work as an English language teacher, after he had "heard that the Chinese government was recruiting people to teach foreign languages, and it seemed you didn't have to be a communist to get a job, so [he] applied" (Harding, 1968:1), and he discusses his experiences during the Cultural Revolution, up until he left China at the end of 1967. Harding says that he, and the other teachers had arrived at the college one day in June 1966 only to be told that they had the day off, as "the students, it

seemed, were busy" (1968: 1). However, "the couple of days extended into a couple of weeks, but even then we had no idea just how busy our Chinese friends were to become, and how drastically things were to alter" (1968:1). Harding argues that the atmosphere in China was one predominately of confusion, fear, and insecurity as the Cultural Revolution grew in scope, and turned into a "reign of terror" (1968: 7). He discusses how "in Suzhou [they] passed a woman of fifty or so being paraded along the street by a small crowd. Her hair had been roughly cut off, and a placard round her neck said, 'Landlord's wife'." (1968: 5). He also stresses how serious and devastating the Cultural Revolution was for some people, and says that it led to the death of one of his friends at the college: "a young Chinese teacher in the French department, who was under attack and who hanged himself" (1968: 7). Along with the issues it created for Chinese people, Harding also argues that things became much more difficult for the majority of foreign people living and working in China. They were increasingly isolated, and there was "a gradual hardening in the general hostility towards [people from] countries with whom China had fallen out" (1968: 7).

4.5 Conclusion

Both China's ancient civilisation and modern communist organisation were viewed as being vastly different to life in Britain, yet in both cases, it was often emphasised that different was not synonymous with bad. Instead of associating traditional Chinese civilisation with stagnation and illegitimacy, as was a common attitude in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Britain, the majority of the speakers expressed admiration for China's ancient civilisation. However, some of the delight travellers expressed over traditional parts of China came from aspects of what they saw conforming to Oriental tropes, and an excitement of being in the "mysterious East" (Kingsbury, 1960: 1). Many travellers were also positive in their reports on modern, communist China, and praised the improvements in the standard of living being made. These positive commentaries came from a range of speakers, not just those who were active supporters of the CCP. Furthermore, the improvements achieved by Mao's China were viewed by some as an argument for the PRC as a suitable development model for decolonised and developing countries, despite many in the West advancing capitalist models in an attempt to counter the appeal of communism. However, whilst some people praised the achievements of the PRC, the majority of the negative reports centred on China as a communist country and the actions of the CCP, such as Father D'Arcy's distrust of communication with either China or Russia, and the widespread condemnation of the Cultural Revolution.

5 TRAVEL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Few people had the opportunity to visit China between 1949 and 1976, and travellers' reports on their experiences were a popular feature on the BBC. Foreigners' access to the PRC was strictly controlled, and some of the main institutions set up by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to manage foreigners travel to China are briefly outlined, followed by a discussion of the different factors which influenced people's ability to visit, such as an individual's occupation or nationality. Due to the restricted nature of travel to China, speakers emphasise their first-hand experience and use it to legitimise their authority to pronounce upon the conditions in China, and the different ways in which travellers are used as 'experts' are explored. After this, the concern over the conducted nature of travel to China and travellers being duped by the carefully selected sites featured in the tour, concerns which originate in the criticism of conducted tours of the Soviet Union in the early twentieth century, is explored, along with the counter argument put forward by many of the speakers. Lastly, the different attitudes with which people approached the prospect of travelling to China, ranging from excitement to apprehension, are explored.

5.2 TRAVELLING TO CHINA

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the number of foreigners who were able to travel to China was small and several institutions were set up by the CCP to manage contact with foreign visitors. In 1954 the Chinese People's Association for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries was set up, whose goal was to improve China's international image as well as being a means to facilitate nonofficial contact with other countries. Its purpose was to expedite the development of international relations. In 1966 it was renamed as the Chinese People's Friendship Association for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and again in 1969 as the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. A further CCP Central Committee foreign affairs organ was established in 1956 to handle foreign cultural and educational exchanges: the Foreign Culture Department. This was the Chinese equivalent of the Soviet Union's VOKS. The Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs was set up in 1959, and was a further organisation focused on the organisation of 'people's diplomacy'; it arranged exchanges with countries with whom formal diplomatic relations had not been established, and was a major channel for non-governmental exchanges.

Throughout the period of 1949 to 1976, and beyond, the number of foreigners who were able to travel to China was small. However, it still varied across time, and was influenced by a range of factors, such as a person's nationality, occupation, as well as the status of

political relations between the 'East' and 'West'. Immediately after the establishment of the People's Republic of China by the CCP in 1949, it was extremely rare for foreigners to be able to travel to China, and any who were already there were forced, either directly or indirectly, to leave. 1953 to 1954 saw a period of geopolitical thaw, with the armistice of the war in Korea and the Geneva Conference on Indo-China, and consequently there was an increase in the number of people visiting China. The early to mid-1960s saw another period of relative ease for foreigners' access, where the PRC courted greater support and relationships with Western nations after its break with the Soviet Union. The start of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 brought this time of greater openness to a close, and it was not until the early 1970s, after the Cultural Revolution had begun to wind down, that contact between China and the rest of the world was resumed. Following this, the PRC's foreign policy zigzagged between radicalism and new openness to the outside world for several years.

The ease with which one could travel to China was more complicated, however, than merely being dependant on the level of geopolitical tension between the communist and non-communist worlds, between the 'East' and 'West'. People from some countries on the Western side of the Cold War divide were able to travel to China with greater ease than others. For instance, it was far more difficult and unusual for an American to be able to visit than it was for people from other Western countries. For the majority of the 1950s to 1970s, the CCP had a deeply anti-US rhetoric and was extremely against Americans visiting China. Similarly, until October 1971, the US government had stringent travel restrictions which prevented Americans from visiting the PRC. This difference between Western countries could be seen when, in 1954, there was an increase in the number of delegations from non-communist countries setting off for China, with the exception of America. Labour MP, Desmond Donnelly, was one of the people who visited that year, as a Special Correspondent for the *Sunday Times*. It was his second visit in three years, and he discussed the changes he saw with American Edward Newman, an experienced foreign correspondent for the National Broadcasting Company of America. During their conversation, Newman acknowledges that whilst "it's still pretty rare for people to go to Communist China, in fact for Americans…it's non-existent" (Donnelly and Newman, 1954: 1).

One's occupation also impacted the ease with which one could go to China. It was even more difficult for journalists and diplomats to be able to travel to China, and once there, their movements within it were even more confined and closely monitored. Few of the non-communist journalists who were invited to go to China spoke Chinese and virtually none had been to China prior to 1949. This was the result of a deliberate policy by the Chinese

government, whereby old ‘China hands’ were the least likely to be allowed to visit (Brady, 2003). In 1966 a group of Western journalists were unexpectedly invited to tour China, among them was reporter and broadcaster Patricia Penn, and the Compère introduces Penn’s talk on her travels by commenting that, though the early to mid-1960s had seen a period of greater ease of access for most people, it had remained extremely difficult for Western journalists to obtain visas: “though the doors of China have opened a little in the past year or so, the Western journalists and broadcasters who are allowed in to report on the country are still few and far between” (Penn, 1966: 1).

As with visiting China as a tourist or as part of a delegation, it was unusual and difficult for foreigners to work and live in the PRC. In the period from 1949-1952, most foreigners then living in China were forced, either directly or indirectly, to leave the country and from the 1950s to the 1970s, the number of foreigners living in China – whether as students, diplomats, journalists, or foreign employees (the so-called ‘foreign experts’) of the Chinese government – was small. In the early 1960s, however, there was a new group of foreign experts invited to China, who were “chosen primarily for their professional qualifications rather than their political credentials” (Brady, 2003: 131). Since the CCP could no longer rely on the fraternal support of other national communist parties, it had to seek assistance from other sources, and so it let it be known through its foreign contacts that it needed foreign language experts and translators. In Maoist terms, these people were more ‘expert’ than ‘red’. John Harding was one the people who went to China during this period, arriving in Peking in 1965 to work as an English teacher for two years. Upon his return to the UK, he gave a talk on Radio 3 about his experiences of living and working in the PRC, and he begins by explaining how he came to have the opportunity to go:

> “In 1964 I was working in London and learning Chinese in my spare time. I’d heard that the Chinese government was recruiting people to teach foreign languages, and it seemed you didn’t have to be a communist to get a job, so I applied” (Harding, 1968: 1)

Despite living in China, Harding states that he, like other foreign residents, was largely cut off from Chinese society. Most foreigners lived in what was derisively called the ‘Golden Ghetto’ – the renamed Friendship Hotel – in luxury, and far removed from Chinese people’s lives. This made managing the foreigners more convenient, and kept them out of sight from ordinary Chinese, whose lives were much harsher. Harding explains that shortly after arriving in China, he was moved from his rooms at college and into the ‘foreigners’ hotel’, and soon after that, “at the polite insistence of the Party Secretary, the remaining foreigners had followed [him], so [they] were all rather cut off from events” (1968: 3). In those days the

Friendship Hotel was surrounded by dusty countryside, five miles from downtown Peking. A twice-daily bus was available to take foreigners into town and ordinary Chinese were not allowed into the hotel. Thus, whilst it was unusual and difficult for foreign people to be able to live and work within China, even for those relative few who had the opportunity, it was still difficult for them to experience the 'real China'.

Foreigners' travel within China, for both visiting tourists and delegates, and foreign residents, was carefully controlled. Most visitors were limited to 'friendship' tours, and during these they were guided through specifically selected sites and hosted in designated hotels which catered to foreign guests. It was extremely unusual for someone to be allowed to travel on their own, and even if they were permitted to travel 'alone', they would still have been accompanied by translators, local officials, and so on. In the case of resident foreigners, the only time they left their residence and workplace, for the most part, was if they were granted the privilege of participating in an organised group tour for foreign residents. Foreigners who were travelling outside their area of residence were required to carry a travel pass, in addition to their passports, which listed in detail the places where they were allowed to visit.

5.3 INSIDE CHINA

Despite the difficulties faced in being able to travel to China, and the restrictions on movement within it when one got there, the best way to experience and understand China, many people argued, was to travel through it. It is especially valuable as "so little is known first-hand of life today in Communist China" (Countess of Limerick, 1956: 5). The restrictive nature of Western access to China, along with a pre-existing idea of China as mysterious and inscrutable, meant that reports by travellers were seen as being especially valuable. Speakers emphasise their personal experience of the country and use their travels to justify their authority to pronounce upon the conditions in China. In the opening to his 1973 series of talks on China, Richard Harris comments on this focus and prestige surrounding reports by Western travellers who have been 'inside' China.

> "Most of the television programmes about China that you may have watched in the last few years, and most of the articles in magazines or newspapers that you may have read, almost invariably have been labelled as reports from inside China. I've been involved with contemporary China for the last 25 years, and all that time I have noticed this sense of China's insideness on the part of the western outsider.
>
> What lies behind this use of the word inside? Two things I think. The first is that China is inaccessible, that it's very hard to get into; the second is a feeling that

> China is incomprehensible, or, to dredge up that adjective current in the early days of contact between the British and East Asian civilisation, that China is inscrutable.
>
> To most people China's inaccessibility can be explained by its communist system – but that's by no means the case, though of course the communist habit works together with the natural Chinese instinct that foreigners should be kept at bay unless they come in the right spirit. But the other aspect of insideness is that China is somehow a mystery, and one that we westerners can never really solve." (Harris in Harris et al., 1973a: 1)

In many of the talks, the number and variety of different places the speakers travelled to during their stay in China was often stressed; for example, the Compère opened the interview of photographer J. Allan Cash by emphasising that "during his stay, [Cash] covered about eight thousand miles, from the extreme south right up to what used to be called Manchuria" (Cash and Knowles, 1965: 1). Travelling to these varieties of different places meant that they were able to experience the 'real' China, and were able to create a full and accurate picture of the country. Contrastingly, Desmond Donnelly reported that he decided to spend the majority of his month in China in Peking, and justified this by saying that "the last time I was there, I found that I wasted a lot of time travelling between different places and you know, it takes quite a time for you to get to know a city when you get there and I thought – well, far the best thing for me to do was to settle in one place and to try and discover how people lived, how they felt, how they thought and try and get beneath the surface of events" (Donnelly and Newman, 1954: 1). Across the talks, speakers emphasise their first-hand experience in China, along with the length of time they spent there and the number of different things seen, and use these facts to justify their ability to report on, or pass judgement on, the conditions in China.

In addition to reporting on China as they experienced it, during programmes about their travel there, the BBC would often invite people who had been to China to take part in talks on geopolitical issues, such as the situation in Formosa or the debate over China's seat in the UN. These people were used as 'experts', with part of their authority coming from recent, or repeated, travel to the PRC. For example, 1959 saw a period of heightened geopolitical tension between China and India, stemming from several factors, including India sheltering the Dalai Lama following his flight from Tibet in March of that year, and ongoing disputes over the location of the Sino-Indian border. Several talks covering this were broadcast during this period, one of which was aired on the Home Service on October 27th. This programme was chaired by journalist and BBC broadcaster Keith Kyle, with the speakers

being Tibor Mende and Evan Luard. During the opening of the talk, Kyle introduces Mende and Luard as “two close students of Chinese affairs” (Mende and Luard, 1959: 1). Mende was invited to discuss the situation with China because he “was in China earlier this year”, and this recent tour of the country was used to legitimise his authority to talk about China. Evan Luard was a research fellow at St Antony’s College, Oxford, and was included in the discussion because he “was formerly with the British Embassy in Peking” (Mende and Luard, 1959: 1. He had previously worked for the Foreign Service and was posted in Peking from September 1952 to August 1954, and resigned from the diplomatic service in 1956 in protest at Britain's involvement in the Suez Crisis.

5.4 Conducted Travel

The majority of travel to China was as part of conducted tours, and, as discussed in the literature review, conducted travel to communist countries was subjected to much scrutiny and suspicion. The origins for many of China’s methods to manage foreign guests lie in the practices formulated by the Soviet Union and, consequently, there were similar accusations and concerns over deception and scepticism over travellers accounts of tours there. Despite the doubts surrounding conducted tours of communist countries, throughout this period the majority of travellers were restricted to visiting China as part of a delegation, where they were carefully guided through designated sites. If they were permitted to travel ‘alone’ they were still accompanied by translators, local officials, or simply ‘under the surveillance of the masses’. Even their reporting on the life they observed from their bases in Peking was extremely restricted, their main contact with Chinese citizens being restricted to interactions with their various ‘minders’ and translators assigned to them (Brady, 2003). Those who spoke fluent Chinese were no better off, according to Frederick Nossal, a Canadian journalist who worked as a correspondent for the Toronto *Globe and Mail* in Peking from October 1959 to May 1960, foreign reporters who spoke Chinese found that people they spoke to in the street “either smiled politely and say nothing [sic] or would simply walk away” (1962: 27). Even shop assistants kept their distance, so that “most of the time you were confined to taking wordless strolls through Peking, or you could sit in your hotel room reading translations of the Communist Press” (1962: 27).

Throughout the talks, this concern over conducted travel was easily apparent, with speakers repeatedly being asked ‘Ah, but did you only see what you were *intended* to see?’. Jim Biddulph, a distinguished BBC foreign correspondent, visited China in 1972 as part of a “more or less conducted tour” (1972: 1) and, when discussing their experiences, he expresses doubt over the extent to which the sites they were taken to were representative of the whole of China, stating that “[m]uch of what [they] saw was obviously laid on for

visitors" (1972: 2). Whilst he does not believe that things such as the "scrupulous cleanliness" of the areas they toured were put on expressly for a posse of itinerant British journalists, he argues that they are likely to be in place for "the multitude of delegations that are constantly passing through" (1972: 2). However, despite Biddulph's concerns and reservations over the areas selected to feature in their tour, he, like many other speakers, argues that he was able to get an accurate picture of what 'real' China was like, and that all of the positive things seen could not have been arranged for the benefit of touring foreign delegations: "I can't believe that the apparently contented look on the faces of people in the villages we drove through were ordered up for the occasion. Or that the food in the markets was carefully staged for our benefit" (1972: 2). Similarly, many speakers challenged the idea that the tours were rigidly structured, and instead argued that they had been able to decide upon their itineraries and make spontaneous decisions about what they wanted to do. Morgan Phillips, who travelled to China as part of the Labour party delegation led by Clement Attlee, is unequivocal about this: "let me say that quite definitely, and I fear no contradiction on this point whatsoever, we were free to go wherever we wanted; to see what we wanted" (1954: 4). This was echoed by J. Allan Cash (1965: 2), who stated that the Chinese officials sought the delegates' input on what things were to be included in the tour, and "were very eager for me to choose what I wanted to see".

Whilst Britain did not have the same degree of ferocious anti-communist feeling as the United States, there were people who were apprehensive about travelling to the PRC. This was clearly evident in the attitudes of some of the members of the various British delegations that travelled to China in 1954 (see Appendix 2). The Korean War was suspended by then but, even with the thaw produced earlier in the year by the Geneva conference on Indo-China, it was still a challenging time for Britons invited to go behind the 'Bamboo Curtain', and people would often encounter raised eyebrows, pursed lips, and facetious witticisms when they told friends, colleagues, and their bank managers where they were going. When Stanley Spencer, a member of the Cultural Delegation, went to collect his passport, the lady who served him remarked, 'You're rather sticking your neck out aren't you?' Storms of outrage had broken over returning fellow travellers in recent years, and the first Labour party delegation, led by Clement Attlee, was seen off by a barrage of adverse comment in the British as well as American press, and was branded as "one of the most controversial incidents of the summer" (Bullock in Wheare et al., 1954: 1). It was widely argued that China was still being branded as an aggressor in Korea before the United Nations, and that sending a delegation suggested that China's actions were supported and condoned. Additionally, there was concern that the visit was exploited to the full for Chinese propaganda. In the broadcasts and articles disseminated by Peking, with their great

influence in South-East Asia, the line was that the Labour delegates were there as the spokesmen of the British masses to marvel at the progress of China under Communism. Furthermore, people argued that the visit drove a wedge between Britain and its ally, the US, who had not recognised the PRC and still supported the Kuomintang. The Labour party was aware of the divisive nature of the delegation, yet at the annual Labour Party Conference in 1953, a resolution was passed calling for 'a mission of goodwill be sent to the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China, by the Labour Party as a step forward to more friendly relations between East and West'. Those such as Aneurin Bevan, on the left of the Party, were interested in applied socialism and relished the opportunity to encounter Chinese Communism. More widely, it was argued that it was important to try and establish communication between Britain and the PRC, and work towards fostering peace. In their statements on the delegation, Attlee and the other members acknowledged its contentious nature, and in a talk he gave on the trip after their return, Party Secretary Morgan Phillips, admitted that there was a "mass of distrust and suspicion that exists in the world" and that many people were against the delegation. However, he argued that "we cannot ignore a nation of six hundred million people" (Phillips, 1954:3), and that travel to China was an important way to bridge the gap between Britain and China, and to sweep aside the Cold War 'Bamboo Curtain'. It was a way to improve communication, prevent misunderstandings, and improve international relationships.

Not everyone agreed that travel to China would help bridge the gap between Britain and China. Hugh Casson was one of the members of the 1954 'cultural delegation', and during his trip he questioned "whether the mirage-filled distance between Britain and China could really be closed by so laborious an act as flying to the far side of the world" (Wright, 2010: 185). The length of time it took for travellers to reach China and the often arduous journey could work to emphasise the distance between the two countries, and accentuate the sense of separation. Many travellers found the process of reaching China disorientating, bouncing between different time zones, with breakfast, lunch, and dinner being served in almost no apparent order. This disorientation is rarely included in the radio talks, however, as the majority of them were short programmes, and the speakers therefore focused on their experiences in China, not their journeys. Casson also reflects on the fact that, in the twentieth century, "for a Westerner to reach China was a matter not just of travelling many thousands of miles but also of forcing a passage through many centuries' worth of accumulated legend, romance, and insult" (Wright, 2010: 195). Consequently, bridging the gap between Britain and China is more complicated than a need for more people to travel there.

Not everyone was apprehensive about travelling to China. For some people, the prospect was met with a sense of excitement. Denis Mathews was one of four 'cultural delegates' which were hastily added to the second Labour delegation after it had to be downgraded to a 'cultural delegation'. He gave several talks about all he saw during his travels, and in them he explains "how [he] was lucky enough to be in Peking". He describes how he was invited to join the delegation, and was overjoyed with the opportunity: "I got this wonderful phone call asking whether I would like to visit China. I might as well have been asked 'Would I like a magic carpet?'" (Mathews, 1955: 1). Similarly, Miranda Mayne displayed the same excitement at having had the opportunity to visit China. In the introduction to her talk, the Compère describes how Mayne had long been wanting to have the chance to go to China:

> "Miranda Mayne, our next speaker, is the wife of a cargo ship captain. On a recent voyage to the East she accompanied him and at one point in the journey their ship anchored for a few days at Hsingkang, the port of Tientsin in North China. Mrs. Mayne had always wanted to visit the Chinese mainland and here was her opportunity." (Compère in Mayne, 1960: 1)

Mayne then goes on to describe the day she and her husband had spent driving to Tientsin, and how she had "gazed out avidly at everything within range" (Mayne, 1960: 1).

5.5 Conclusion

Between 1949 and 1976 the number of foreigners that visited China was small and the ease with which an individual could get access depended on a range of factors, including their nationality, occupation, as well as the status of international geopolitical relations. It was similarly rare for foreigners to be able to live and work in China during this period, with a slight increase in the early to mid-1960s owing to China's break with the Soviet Union. Travel within China was carefully controlled, and the majority of people were restricted to tours where they were carefully guided through selected sites, and accompanied by a plethora of officials, translators, and guides. Despite the restricted nature of travel to China, and in part because of it, first-hand experience was argued to be the best way to understand Chinese society. Travellers used their time there, along with the number and variety of places seen, to justify their authority to pronounce upon conditions in China. During programmes on geopolitical issues, such as the Tibetan Uprising, recent or repeated travel to China was often used by the BBC as the basis for speakers' qualifications as an 'expert'. By the mid-twentieth century, there was widespread concern and suspicion over conducted travel in communist countries, and this extended to China, with the belief that visitors will be deceived and duped from exclusively being shown carefully selected and prepared sites. However, despite these widespread concerns, speakers often argued that they had been

able to influence what they saw, and that they experienced the ‘real’ China during their travels, and they were often broadly positive in their reports. The chance to travel to China, for some speakers, was a cause for excitement, but for many travellers there was still a feeling of apprehension, with the risk of being branded a ‘fellow-traveller’. Travel was also viewed as a way to bridge the gap between Britain and China, working to improve communication, prevent misunderstandings, and improve international relationships. However, some people doubted whether the distance between Britain and China, filled with centuries’ worth of accumulated legend, romance, and insult, could be bridged by a process so arduous as flying to the opposite side of the world.

6 EVERYDAY LIFE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

It was not just the big political and philosophical discussions which made up the radio programmes on China; travellers often focused on the smaller, everyday experiences they had during their time in the PRC. They reported on topics ranging from the clothing people wore, to the types of housing found in the cities and villages, and the experiences they had with ordinary Chinese citizens. Some of the periods in which there was either a significant increase, or decrease, in coverage of everyday life during broadcasts on China are highlighted and discussed first. Following this, the reasons for interest in everyday life are discussed, along with why it was a popular choice of topic for both the BBC and individual speakers. Speakers often commented on the similarities they saw between life in Britain and in China, and the motivations behind these arguments are explored. Next, some of the popular areas of everyday life which feature in the broadcasts are discussed, focusing on the topics of housing, fashion, and children. Travellers' opinions of the Chinese people they met are then explored, and the change these positive reports make from those of the late-eighteenth to early-twentieth century. Following this, the concerns over the travellers' abilities to experience everyday life, and the impacts of the conducted travel visitors were part of, are then discussed, along with similar concerns over the impediment stemming from the privileged status accorded to foreigners in China. Lastly, the counter arguments to these concerns, made by some of the speakers who assert that they were able to experience everyday life, are outlined.

6.2 REPORTING ON EVERYDAY LIFE

The topic of everyday life received sustained interest and discussion from travellers and, as figure 5 shows, it featured in broadcasts in every year, though its prominence was higher in some periods than others. A significant increase in the number of talks in which it featured was seen in 1954, jumping from one broadcast the year before, to ten. China will have been a politically sensitive topic in the early years of the 1950s due to the Korean War, and consequently fewer talks on it will have been broadcast. In addition to this, China was extremely hostile towards foreign visitors and was, in effect, a closed country between 1949 and 1953. Consequently, travellers were not going there, and you can't report on what you can't see. The easing of geopolitical tensions, beginning in 1953, combined with the invitation offered at the Geneva Conference for delegations to visit China, saw a great increase in the number of people travelling to the PRC, and consequently there was an increase in the number of talks on the topic broadcast, and thus an increase in the number of talks on everyday life.

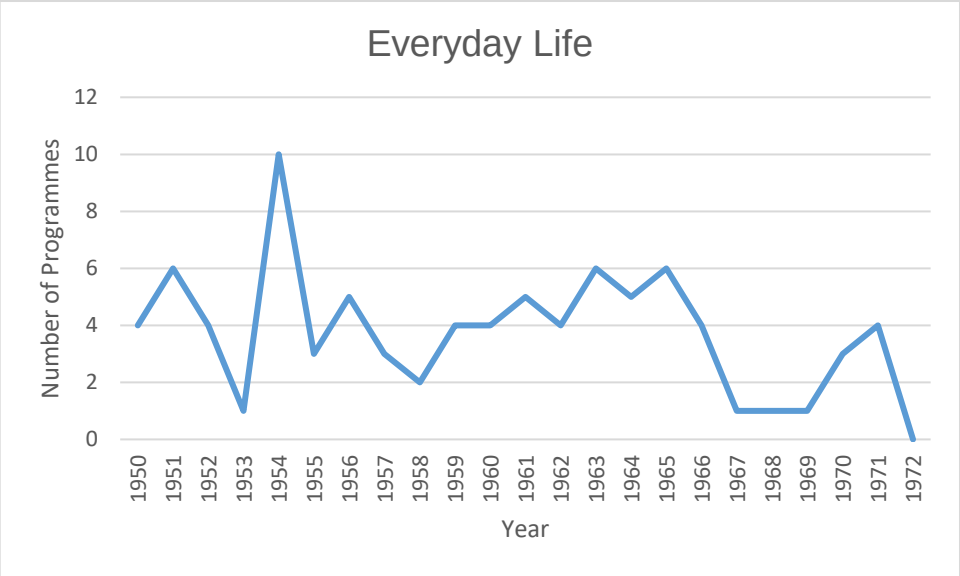


Figure 5 Number of talks on everyday life broadcast per year, 1950-1972.

As figure 5 shows, there was a marked decrease in the number of programmes in which everyday life is discussed between 1966-1970. This coincides with the period of time when the Cultural Revolution was at its strongest. The number of people who were able, and willing, to travel to China during this period was significantly reduced and restricted. Consequently, the number of people who were able to give talks about everyday life in China was much lower. This is not to say that there was as substantial a decrease in the number of talks focused on China, but these will have been more politically focused debates and discussions.

Commentary on the political system and organisation in the PRC would have been a sensitive topic during the 1950s to 1970s, for both the BBC and the individual speakers, and focusing on more mundane, everyday aspects of life witnessed would have often been less controversial. The BBC had a reputation for objective and impartial broadcasting, and it was one they worked to maintain (Briggs, 1995a). It was also viewed by many as the official voice of the British government, despite being an independent organisation. How they reported on China would therefore have required a degree of delicacy and consideration, and they would likely have wished to steer clear of either strong praise or critique to avoid causing international offense. During the introduction of talks, the BBC would often include a statement which emphasised that the opinions expressed during the programme were the speakers' own views, and not those of the Corporation. This type of disclaimer was broadcast at the beginning of a discussion on the 1954 Labour Party delegation to China, with the Chair of the conversation, Professor Kenneth Wheare, starting with the statement that "my first duty is to point out that the speakers are independent and that the discussion is free from the atmosphere of party political controversy" (Wheare et al., 1954: 1).

Discussions of questions of broad political organisation in China were a delicate issue for the individual speakers, as well as the BBC. Travellers often encountered raised eyebrows and suspicious glances when they told friends and colleagues where they were going, and it was not uncommon for returning travellers to be met with waves of criticism, in both British and American press. Therefore, speakers were in a potentially precarious position when reporting on their time in China. If they were too strong in their praise of the communist system, they would be branded a fellow traveller and ideological renegade, who had been duped by the Chinese officials. However, if they were too strong in their criticism, they would destroy any possibility of being able to travel to China in the future. Discussion of mundane, everyday aspects of life seen during their travels will have been less controversial and provocative than commenting on broader political issues.

Another reason for speakers' focus on everyday life came from the lack of information about what life in China was like, which created a heightened curiosity in the British public. This argument can be found in travellers' reports throughout the 1950s to 1970s. In 1956, the Countess of Limerick (Angela Pery, 1897-1981) argued, at the beginning of her talk, that "so little is known first-hand of life today in Communist China that special interest attaches to reports from responsible eye-witnesses" (1956: 1). Lady Limerick had led a delegation from the British Red Cross on a tour of China, during which they viewed the various new developments in the cities along their route. Nearly a decade later, Mary Adams led a delegation from the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding on a tour of China and during the introductory description of her talk on their experiences, the Compère begins by stating that "few people in the West have the opportunity of visiting China and it is hard to get a picture of what life there is really like" (Adams, 1965: 1). A similar introduction was given to Lewis McLeod's discussion of his time in China in 1971. The lack of information and access to China had meant that very few people knew what life was like there, and so travellers' impressions were of particular interest:

> "All last week China was in the news. Rumours. Counter rumours. Mao was dead. Mao was still alive – but working up to a confrontation with the Russians. One thing at least the rumours proved is that very few people have much idea of what is going on inside China. For many years now it has been virtually a closed country, but recently Lewis McLeod, who is a cameraman, managed to get himself attached to a delegation that was visiting China. He was allowed to film there and he told Lyn Macdonald of some of his impressions of the China of Mao Tse Tung." (Compère in McLeod and Macdonald, 1971a: 1)

6.3 COMPARING THE EVERYDAY

Many travellers describe the similarities they witnessed between everyday life in China and of that in Britain, finding points of familiarity between the two different countries. In the 1960s, there was a series of talks in which these similarities were continually emphasised, given by Gladys Yang, a British translator who lived in China from 1940 with her husband, Yang Xianyi, and three children. Beginning in the early 1960s, Yang gave a series of broadcasts on her life in China, titled *Air Mail Letter from Peking*. She would record the talk in Peking, then send the tapes to the BBC in London, for them to broadcast on the radio. Yang spent the majority of her talks discussing her day-to-day life, from attending her children's parents' evenings, to shopping for groceries, to moving house. She describes her life in a way which makes it seem familiar and, likely, relatable to the lives of the people listening. For example, Sunday afternoons are spent with her family, having a meal and playing games, and during the summer they will go to the seaside for a holiday. She describes how people in China also complain about the weather and buses running late: "[l]ast winter city transport was far from satisfactory. Sometimes you had to wait ¾ of an hour to get a bus, no joke in the piercing wind" (Yang, 1963: 1). During her talks, Yang concedes that, in many ways, life in the PRC was different to that in Britain, but commonalities could be found in the small, day-to-day experiences of those who lived there, which could help to lessen the sense of distance between the two countries. As the Compère says in the introduction to one of Yang's talks:

> "Now to a letter from far, far away. In a million ways, life in present-day Communist China is vastly different from everything over here – but, as you'll hear in Gladys Yang's latest letter from Peking, the weather and the tricks it can play – that's a familiar story." (Yang, 1963: 1)

Conversely, other speakers argue that it is these differences in everyday life which makes travel to China more familiar. All societies and countries have differences that set them apart from each other, and these can be clearly seen when one visits a foreign country. Therefore, whether a Briton travelled to Southern Italy, or Southern China, variations in everyday life will be apparent. This difference in life in China seen by travellers, paradoxically, makes it similar to all other countries. During one of the series of talks, *China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation*, hosted by Richard Harris in 1973, the differences in everyday life are discussed, ranging from the clothing people wear, to the food eaten. One of the speakers in this programme was Professor John King Fairbank, the prominent American historian of China, and considered the doyen of post-war China studies (Cohen and Goldman, 1992). He taught at Harvard University, and his students include people such as Albert Feuerwerker, Rhoads Murphey, and Roderick

MacFarquhar. Harris and Fairbank argue that all societies have differences, and that these are often most apparent when one travels through a foreign country.

> "Most people interested in China are ready to acknowledge differences between our own civilisation and China's. Where they relate to language, physiognomy, mythology, food, clothing, the arts and other qualities that present themselves in foreign countries" (Harris in Harris et al., 1973b: 1)

However, Harris and Fairbank both concede that life in China is "much more distinctively different" from that in Britain than many other countries (Fairbank in Harris et al., 1973b: 1).

6.4 Aspects of Everyday China

It was rarely what they experienced at official, scheduled events and activities, such as tours of the Ming Tombs and industrial plants, or during official banquets, that travellers used to reflect on everyday life. Instead there was a focus on the parts of China the travellers felt they had witnessed naturally, including their impressions of the towns and villages they had seen through their car windows as they drove through. Artist Denis Mathews states that one of his preferred ways to spend his time during his stay in China in 1961 was to stroll through the streets, "doing scenes of the people working – the natural everyday life of the Chinese people" (Denis in Mathews and Mathews, 1961: 11). Speakers' focus on the 'natural', everyday aspects of China reflects travellers' concern over conducted travel, discussed earlier, and their desire to see the 'real China'. There were several areas of everyday life in China which were frequently focused on by speakers in their reports on their travels in the PRC, the most common of which were housing, fashion, and children. In terms of housing, earlier talks often discuss the reconstruction efforts going on and the new housing being built. After visiting China with the 1954 Labour delegation, journalist George Gale described the work they witnessed during their tour, and says that he was greatly impressed by the scale and rate of construction occurring, with new blocks of flats 'flying up' wherever one looked. Throughout the talks, speakers often express approval for the improvements being made to housing and the development of a better quality of living accommodation. Denis and Anna Mathews also express approval for the new modern housing being built, but they, like others, also remark upon the mixture of styles of accommodation – both new and traditional – and state that this combination is a "source of great pride" for Chinese people (Anna in Mathews and Mathews, 1961: 5).

Much of the commentary on 'fashion' revolves around a popular idea, held by many in the West, of the imposed sartorial conformity in China, that people exclusively wore a 'uniform' of blue cotton. This was discussed by Miranda Mayne in 1960, when she described her trip to Tientsin. Her husband was the captain of a cargo ship, and when they docked at

Hsingkang she asked to be able to go ashore and visit the nearby town. She says that she had

> "listened to all those stories about the dreary, drab crowds, the sameness, the regimented clothes. It is perfectly true that most people seem to wear the same sort of clothes. Men and women alike were dressed in blue jackets, black trousers, white socks, and black flat slippers. But the jackets, were every brilliant shade from turquoise to sapphire; and the overall impression is that they were shiningly clean and immaculately ironed" (Mayne, 1960: 2).

Chinese fashion is also one of the topics Gladys Yang discusses in her broadcasts, and she praises the clothes as being "cheap, warm, and comfortable" (Yang, 1963: 2). However, in contrast to Mayne, Yang admits that she finds "the predominance of dark blue cotton is monotonous" (Yang, 1963: 2).

Another topic which comes up several times in the talks is the children the travellers encountered whilst in China. Some speakers discuss them in the context of the general health and well-being of the country, stating that the children they saw were "reasonably well-fed and reasonably healthy" (Winterton in Ray et al., 1954: 4). However, most of the comments by travellers were expressions of delight over the children they met on their trips. This can, again, be seen in Mayne's description of her visit to Tientsin, where she says that "in all directions we met streams of little creatures, tramping along with their books, and quite often singing as they went" (Mayne, 1960: 3). She declares that she and her husband were completely charmed by them, and reiterates later in the talk that the children "were simply enchanting" (Mayne, 1960: 3).

Travellers' impressions of the Chinese people they met during their journeys is another area which featured frequently in their broadcasts. Speakers were primarily positive in their comments, and the picture created in their reports was of a polite, courteous people, with this praise for Chinese character and conduct becoming increasingly common from the mid-1950s onwards. Travellers' praise often ran along similar lines to these comments:

> "they were so courteous and had such respect" (Grier in Grier and Yorke, 1960: 8)
> "Everyone is familiar with Chinese courtesy and good manners" (White, 1961: 2)
> "I think that the Chinese are perhaps one of the most courteous people I have ever met" (Grey in Grey and McGonagle, 1965: 1)
> "the Chinese are always very attentive" (McLeod in McLeod and Macdonald, 1971: 1)

British photographer J Allan Cash was extremely complimentary in his report of the Chinese people he met during his time in China. In 1965, Cash was invited to visit China as the photographer attached to a capitalist business delegation, and this invitation was issued by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade. Cash discussed his experiences with BBC broadcaster Wyn Knowles and was effusive in his admiration of the Chinese people. Knowles picked up on this and asked Cash about his feelings towards them:

> KNOWLES: "You seem to have a good impression of the Chinese people generally."
>
> CASH: "I thought the Chinese people themselves were absolutely delightful, I really think they are the most polite people in the world er – you never get anybody bumping you or barging into you in the street, if they did by any chance just touch you as they pass, they'd almost bow to the ground in apologies. But they're so basically polite, however humble they may be, there's some deep-rooted culture behind them which makes them real gentlemen." (1965: 4)

Like Cash, many travellers linked the aspects of the Chinese 'character' they admired – courtesy, politeness, attentiveness – with China's ancient civilisation and culture. Gladys Yang was one of these people who made the association, stating that "there's a long tradition in China of respect" (Yang, 1962c: 1). During her broadcasts on life in China, Gladys Yang was often complimentary of the Chinese people, and their politeness and respect were major parts of this. In her 'letter' broadcast in January 1963, she describes the shopping trip she had been on the day before: "Yesterday in a small shop I was asked: 'Are you thirsty? Won't you step inside for some tea?' This is a relic of old Chinese politeness" (1963: 2). Writing in 1961, Hugh Honor argues that in the twentieth century many British people still had visions of "the legendary 'Cathay' piled up in their minds" and that this mystical land was one of "poetry and graciousness" (1961: 225). In addition to this, foreigners' interactions with both ordinary Chinese and CCP officials were carefully scripted and controlled, designed to show China in as advantageous a light as possible, and to make the visitors feel especially important and valued (Brady, 2003). Official scripting combined with the cultural perception meant that there was a very strong idea of Chinese people as courteous.

Robert Bickers, writing in the twenty-first century, however, argues that from the late nineteenth century through to 1949, the picture most widely associated with Chinese people was not of courtesy and ancient civility; instead the Chinese were portrayed as "unmanly,

docile, mendacious, idle, intolerant" (2017: 28). Bickers has examined many different types of commentary on China which were published and consumed by people in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century, ranging from popular novels like Sax Rohmer's *Fu Manchu* series, news coverage of the Chinese population in Limehouse, and sources written by travellers to China, including missionaries, journalists, businessmen, and so on. During this period of 1900-49, the dominant representation of Chinese people was extremely negative: "Factual reporting and popular culture's fictions identified difference, taught distance and encouraged distrust. China and the Chinese were denigrated, their politics and society ridiculed." (2017: 23). The majority of the radio broadcasts looked at in this study display a positive attitude towards Chinese people; this is a significant change from these popular negative representations of the first half of the century.

6.5 Connecting to the Everyday

Whether the visitor was able to experience 'real life' during their travels was an issue which was discussed repeatedly throughout. There was widespread concern over the privileged treatment people on official delegations received, in addition to wider concerns over the conducted nature of travel in China meaning that what visitors saw was in fact 'theatre', or a façade, created by the CCP. Travellers were guided through a carefully constructed route, and were treated with a style of hospitality which quickly "became a standard of the CCP repertoire…designed to make the visitor feel especially important and valued" (Brady, 2003: 45). During one of the discussions of the 1954 Labour delegation to China, George Gale and Derek Winterton, two of the journalists attached to the delegation, talk about their experiences with fellow journalists Cyril Ray, Malcom Muggeridge, and Arthur Mathens. Mathens and Muggeridge discuss the fact delegations only see a small part of China, and only select parts of that, and question whether this allows travellers to judge "the situation in China as a whole" (Muggeridge in Ray et al., 1954: 1). Muggeridge goes on to state that "one obviously always feels that a delegation going to a country sees certain things" (1954: 1). Muggeridge was a journalist and commentator, and from 1950 onwards he became a household name from his exposure on radio, and later television. He was a forceful anti-communist, which stemmed from his time in the early 1930's living in the Soviet Union. Having been previously attracted to Communism, he and his wife had moved to the USSR in 1932 and worked as a reporter for the Manchester Guardian; during this time, he became increasingly disillusioned by his close-up observation of communism in practice (Ingrams, 2004). This dislike of communism may have influenced his attitude towards the PRC and people's reports on it. However, it was not just Muggeridge that expressed distrust over the treatment the delegation received. Gale claimed that "I think the warmth of the Chinese

reception of the British delegation again, was designed for straight-forward propaganda purposes" (1954: 8).

Even if the visitor was not part of an influential delegation, they would still have been accorded a privileged status, which would interfere with their ability to experience 'everyday life'. All foreigners in China were treated well, and in a manner which aimed to make the visitor feel important as well as positively inclined towards the PRC. Gladys Yang states that "foreigners in China are very privileged groups" and that, even though she is married to a Chinese citizen and is living in China, she still experiences this privileged status accorded to foreign individuals in China (Yang and Yorke, 1961: 7).

Being able to understand the language greatly impacts a traveller's ability to experience, or get a true picture of 'normal' everyday life. This is, in part, due to the fact that reliance on a translator restricts the visitor to understanding only the specific exchanges they are involved in. People may be more careful in what they say when they are aware that they are talking to a foreign, Western visitor. In one of her 'letters', Gladys Yang talks about the way in which Chinese people do not expect a Western person to speak, and understand, Chinese, and consequently there had been numerous occasions when she had caught people discussing her on the street. These people "who don't realise that I speak Chinese exchange comments like: 'Heavens! Do you see what I see!'" (Yang, 1962a: 1). However, Frederick Nossal, a Canadian journalist who worked as a correspondent for the Toronto *Globe and Mail* in Peking from October 1959 to May 1960, argued that foreigners' main contact with Chinese citizens was restricted to interactions with their various 'minders' assigned to them, and those who spoke fluent Chinese were no better off. People they spoke to in the street "either smiled politely and say nothing [sic] or would simply walk away" (1962: 27).

Despite this, many speakers argued that they were able to experience 'everyday life'. Desmond Donnelly was a Labour M.P. and journalist who was outspokenly anti-communist, especially anti-Soviet Union, a position which increased following trips to the Soviet bloc and China. Despite his critical stance, Donnelly travelled to China in 1952 as part of the Britain-China Friendship Association delegation, and was fairly positive in his reports on what he saw whilst in China; however, he detested touring with British communists. Two years after this trip, Donnelly returned to China, and this time he went as an individual. This was "fairly unusual" and his interviewer, American broadcaster and foreign correspondent, Ed Newman, commented on it. Donnelly claims that he chose to travel alone as it gave him greater flexibility in deciding his schedule, and that he decided to spend one month in Peking, rather than visiting several different places, as this enabled him to get a better understanding of everyday life:

> "the last time I was there, I found that I wasted a lot of time travelling between different places and you know, it takes quite a time for you to get to know a city when you get there and I thought – well, far the best thing for me to do was to settle in one place and to try and discover how people lived, how they felt, how they thought and try and get beneath the surface of events." (Donnelly and Newman, 1954: 2)

Rather than basing their claim to access to 'real life' on the length of time they spent in China, Denis and Anna Mathews argue special, personal connections gave them unusual, privileged access. Denis Mathews was a British painter, and Anna a writer, and in 1961 they took an exhibition of British paintings to China, starting with work from the early twentieth century, such as John Sargent and Wilson Steer, and going through to contemporary abstract painters. Denis had visited China previously, as part of one of the 'cultural delegations' in 1954 (Wright, 2010). In the broadcast the couple gave, they discuss how they had Chinese friends, who had previously visited Britain, and who had helped organise and facilitate the exhibition. During their time in China, they were able to spend time in the private homes of these Chinese artists, which is extremely unusual.

D. MATHEWS: "we visited artists' homes and this was particularly fascinating. Actually had the privilege to get behind the scenes."
ANDERSON: "Is this not usually done?"
D. MATHEWS: "Well most people going to China are entertained at hotels"
ANDERSON: "Did you really get to know them, or was it all very ceremonious?"
A. MATHEWS: "No. I think where we did go to visit people in their homes we did see people leading their normal lives."

(Mathews and Mathews, 1961: 2, 3)

They state that they were able to see the Chinese families interact in a casual setting, enjoying family dinners, and playing games, speaking to the different generations – from grandparents to young children – that all lived together in the same home.

Jean Zimon also reports that she feels she was able to experience everyday life; however, her experience was down to chance. In 1965, she was accompanying her journalist husband on a tour of China when she became ill. Zimon states that "it is difficult on a tour of this kind to come into contact with life as it is being lived", but this gave the "unexpected opportunity" to experience it, as she required medical attention (1965: 1). In Peking, the only medical person assigned to Western residents or visitors was a Queen Alexandra's

Nursing Sister retained by the British Charge d'Affaires, and when the abscess on Zimon's eardrum burst, she had to be taken to a hospital in another part of the city. There was a hospital exactly opposite the hotel, but non-Chinese were not admitted to it unless they came from other Communist countries. During her following four visits to the hospital, she waited in the corridor with the other Chinese patients, and began to recognise some of them by sight. For the rest of their trip she had appointments at local doctors and hospitals, and therefore saw part of China not normally available to foreign visitors.

6.6 CONCLUSION

Whilst everyday life was not the exclusive focus in talks, it was a popular topic throughout the 1950s to 1970s. This interest stemmed from both the lack of information about life in China, and providing a less sensitive area of discussion than commentary on more overtly political areas. In their talks, travellers frequently emphasised the similarities between everyday life in China and Britain, and focusing on the small, mundane aspects of life – blocks of apartment buildings, unreliable bus services – created a sense of familiarity, which made China seem less alien, and worked to lessen the distance between Britain and China. In their descriptions of the everyday life they witnessed in China, speakers were normally fairly positive, and this included their reports on the people they met there. Travellers routinely described Chinese people as courteous, attentive, and well mannered, and associated these traits with China's ancient culture. This representation was dramatically different from popular ones found in Britain from the late-eighteenth century, through to the start of the twentieth, where the Chinese were often denigrated and ridiculed. Travellers' ability to experience everyday life during their tours of China was widely debated, and despite widespread, and arguably justified, concerns over conducted travel, and the authenticity (or lack thereof) of what visitors saw, many speakers claimed they were able to experience 'real', everyday life.

7 THREE VOICES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Across the years, the listeners of BBC radio will have heard many different voices discuss China, ranging from famous ballerinas to members of parliament, and everything in between. This chapter focuses on three of the speakers featured in this thesis: Mary Adams, Richard Harris, and Gladys Yang. Focusing on three people in greater detail allows one to get to know these voices more intimately, and appreciate not only their words, but also their histories and life interests, and how these informed and influenced their talks and views on China. Mary Adams was an influential BBC television producer, and following retirement, one of the founding members of the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU). She was a feminist, passionate socialist, and a romantic communist. Richard Harris was an experienced foreign correspondent who worked as the China specialist for *The Times*, as well as being regularly employed by the BBC to give individual talks and chair discussions on China and East Asia. Gladys Yang was a British translator who lived in China from 1940 with her husband, Yang Xianyi, and three children, and was employed by the Chinese government in the Foreign Languages Press.

These three were selected as they are very different voices on China, helping to demonstrate the range of people who spoke on it across the years. All three are British voices, presumably middle-class. Adams' is a professional, educated, female voice. Harris is a (male) authority on China and East Asia, appearing frequently on BBC radio, with personal experience of both 'old' and 'modern' China, as well as knowledge of the wider geopolitical situation in the 'Far East'. In contrast, Yang is a female, domestic voice, who discusses her life and family in the PRC. All three also have different interests in, or relationships with, China: Adams as part of the left-wing SACU, Harris's professional interest as journalist and 'Asian expert', and Yang as married to a Chinese citizen with China being her adopted home country. Full lists of the talks given by these three individuals can be found in Appendix 3.

7.2 MARY ADAMS



Figure 6 Mary Adams (1898-1984)

Mary Grace Agnes Adams (1898-1984) was an influential BBC television producer and programme director. She joined the BBC in 1930, and was appointed to the newly established television service in 1936, becoming the first woman television producer. The service was shut down at the outbreak of the Second World War, and Adams was the director of home intelligence in the Ministry of Information from 1939 to 1941, and worked in North American service broadcasting between 1942 and 1945. She returned to BBC television in 1946, becoming head of television talks (1948-1954) and assistant to the controller of television programmes (1954-1958). Adams' entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, written by her daughter Sally Adams, states that, following her retirement in 1958, Adams became involved in a range of organisations, including the Consumers' Association, the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding, organisations concerned with the unmarried mother and her child, British railway design, British Medical Association planning, mental health, women's groups, telephone users, and eugenics (Adams, 2004). This range of interests reveals an interest in communication, health, and women's issues, and in her talk Adams discusses these in relation to China.

Mary Adams was one of the founding members of the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding, serving as its Vice-Chairman for many years. SACU was founded in 1965 to promote understanding and friendship between British and Chinese people, and for many years was the only organisation through which British people could travel to China. Immediately after its creation, SACU sent a delegation to the PRC, led by Adams, and upon their return, she appeared on BBC radio to discuss their experiences, and gives a vivid description of the variety of things they saw:

> "I saw women of my own age with bound feet – tottering as they walked, side by side with young women tractor drivers, pilots, surgeons. I saw woman with guns, and nuns with veils. There was drabness and brilliant colour – factory workers, hurrying to work in identical dark-coloured boiler suits, and then vast enthusiastic processions, singing and dancing with silk banners and coloured paper flowers – magenta, yellow, purple. There were people living in caves in the hillside. And

> nearby huge blocks of modern flats. In the streets of Peking you could see great shining foreign cars and lots of taxis, and at the same time men stripped to the waist, burnt black with the sun, pulling immense concrete pillars on rickety wooden carts. We went to Shanghai, fifth largest city in the world, with its marble office buildings, looking like any great capitalist city. And not far away agricultural communes uniquely communist." (1965: 1-2)

Adams is clearly impressed by the "astonishing contrasts" offered by modern China, and in this section she makes several comparisons between the lingering backwardness and progress visible there. Whilst China still has some 'backwards' aspects, such as older women with bound feet, progress and development is being achieved by the CCP, with young women now being educated and employed. However, not all of the contrasts she makes are between past 'backwardness' and 'progress'; her comments on modern Shanghai and agricultural communes compare capitalism and communism, without suggesting that one is better than the other, just that they are inherently different.

Throughout the talk, Adams is broadly positive about what they saw in China, from the "completely adorable children", to the full employment, to all the different things one can find in the stores there (1965: 5). She also uses the broadcast as an opportunity to stress the importance of improving communication and understanding between Britain and China, concluding her talk with the statement that: "Somehow more people must go to China and see for themselves, and if we can get more Chinese to come here I wonder what would strike them!" (1965: 8).

As part of her report on China, Mary Adams also discusses broadcasting in China, and the way in which it is being used for education. Adams' interest in broadcasting is unsurprising, as she worked for BBC for nearly three decades and was a passionate believer in the educational potential of both radio and television broadcasting. She joined the BBC in 1930, having previously been a research scholar and Bathurst student at Newnham College, Cambridge (1921–5), and held tutorial and lectureship posts at Cambridge for extramural and board of civil service studies between 1925 and 1930. In 1927, Adams gave a series of programmes – *Talks on Heredity* – and this proved to be a transformational moment, with Adams becoming gripped by the educational possibilities of the BBC. She soon left Cambridge to join the BBC in 1930 as adult education officer (Murphy, 2016). During her talk on her delegation's visit to China, Adams states that "it was satisfying to find TV used to such good purpose" (1965: 8), with educational programmes available to everyone. She goes into greater detail in her article in the December (1965) edition of *SACU News*, explaining the structure of Chinese broadcasting, with its two alternative programmes, one

entertainment and the other educational – which was called the University of the Air. Adams states that "anyone may participate in this sort of education-by-broadcast", and goes on to assert that "this method is obviously an expedient form of supplementary education for the Chinese at this stage of their development. Practically everyone has a radio…but television sets are mainly found in club houses, halls, schools, hotels, and such places of gathering" (SACU News, 1965: 1).

Adams spends time in both her radio talk and *SACU* article discussing the consumer goods available in China. When she retired from the BBC in 1958, Adams began a new career in the Consumers' Association, which had been established in 1957. She was its deputy chairman from 1958 to 1970, and was instrumental in convincing a nervous *Which?* magazine to produce the first comparative tests of contraceptives (1963) and a reluctant BBC to produce the first consumer programmes giving brand ratings (Adams, 2004). Adams describes the products the delegation saw during their tour, saying that "as a consumer I was surprised at the variety of things in the shops and in the big departmental stores – luxuries as well as necessities, cosmetics, wonderful shoes, well-cut blouses, pot plants. Everything that we regard as 'civilized'" (1965: 5). She echoes this point in her *SACU News* article, stating that "the great variety and high quality of ordinary consumer goods to be had at remarkably cheap prices was a great surprise" (1965: 2). Many travellers spend time discussing the Western notion that life in the PRC is predominantly a utilitarian and spartan lifestyle, the opposite of the capitalist lifestyle revolving around 'frivolous' consumerism. Many speakers argue that, after spending time in China, when they return to Britain, they felt that they were surrounded by useless, unnecessary items. However, the different products they saw in the shops was also a popular topic of discussion, and like Adams, many travellers state that, whilst China is less frivolous and consumerist than the West, there was still a variety of items available in the shops.

Another area which received attention from Adams was the advancements in equality for women in China; Mackerras (1999) argues that the CCP received praise from many Western feminists for ushering in what was viewed as a period of 'liberated womanhood'. In her talk, Adams praises the PRC for improvements which have been achieved:

> "Being a neo-feminist I was delighted to find complete equality for women – the basis of any well-ordered society! Equal pay, equal marriage laws, equality under the law, and general equality of opportunity. Not that these things necessarily make women happier, but I thought women worked in China with less strain than here." (1965: 7)

Adams continues on to discuss China's population control policy, and the modern birth control methods, particularly inter-uterine devices, being practised, and lauds their policy for family limitation, which was based on the health and welfare of women: "Too much child bearing, says Chairman Mao, depresses both the health and status of women and so modern methods of birth control are being taught, practised, and urged." (1965: 7)

Whilst Adams is supportive in her report on the PRC, and praises much of what they saw, she is not entirely uncritical. This is likely to have been a deliberate decision in order to avoid appearing as a blind, duped supporter of the CCP. In her radio broadcast, she states that, for all the delegates, the overwhelming, relentless amount of propaganda "took a lot of swallowing" and could be difficult to bear (1965: 4). However, Adams does argue that one must appreciate that the Chinese have a consistent philosophy, and that they are anxious to express it, and that the buoyancy and satisfaction of the Chinese people they met made it easier to accept. This critique of pervasive propaganda was reiterated in her *SACU News* article. During that article, Adams was more critical of the PRC than she was in her radio talk. She states that she was "irritated by the self-righteousness of the Chinese as were other members of the party", and that cultural exchange and improved understanding and relations between Britain and China will be difficult as they found that the Chinese were "not interested in Britain, not curious about our habits or thoughts or culture" (SACU News, 1965: 2). The sharper criticism in the newsletter is likely to result from the differences in audiences; the audience of *SACU News* would have been significantly different to that of the audience for the radio broadcast on the BBC Light Programme. Members of the SACU are likely to have been more informed about China, and therefore able to position the report within a wider understanding of contemporary issues and developments in the PRC. It is possible to see that Adams did originally intend on commenting on the lack of Chinese curiosity in her radio talk, however her criticism was significantly milder, merely saying that it was understandable that they spent the majority of their time discussing China, though they were disappointed that there was no interest in life in Britain and they did not spend time exchanging information about life here. However, even this mild reflection was removed and not included in the talk, being scored out of the transcript. In the *SACU News* article, it is not specified whether Adams' critique of 'self-righteousness' is directed towards the CCP officials, or at the Chinese people in general. However, the transcript of her radio talk suggests it may have been the latter, as she discusses that the delegation talked to "all kinds of people", from factory workers to teachers, and all praised 'Chairman Mao's Thinking' and wanted to discuss the improvements that had occurred in China (1965: 3). This is then followed by the scored out section of the transcript, in which she says she is disappointed with the lack of curiosity about Britain.

Adams will have been very familiar with broadcasting and the BBC, and will have been the natural choice to give the report on the delegation's visit. Her long term interests in issues around population, health, and socialism influenced the aspects of the tour she focused on.

7.3 RICHARD HARRIS

Richard Harris was born in China, the son of missionary parents, and lived there until the age of fourteen. He then returned to China in 1945 and served in the British Embassy from 1947 to 1950, during the period of transition from Nationalist to Communist rule. He was later employed by *The Times* as their Asian or Far Eastern specialist, based variously in Hong Kong and Singapore (Harris, 1970).

Harris, therefore, had personal experience of both the 'old' and 'new' China, having spent time there both before and after the revolution in 1949. This range of experience was often remarked upon, both by Harris himself and other speakers, such as diplomat and Sinologist David Wilson, who commented that "the China which…you know and have lived in spans the period before and after the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949" (Harris et al., 1973l: 1). Harris was born in China, spent his childhood there, and returned in 1945, spending an extended time living there during the civil war. He visited the PRC on various occasions in the years that followed, experiencing China when the CCP was firmly established. As Harris was employed as a foreign correspondent and 'Far Eastern' specialist, it was his responsibility to ensure that he remained fully informed and up-to-date with current affairs in China, and like many Western foreign correspondents, spent a great deal of time based in Hong Kong, as they were not permitted to live in the PRC. In addition to this, Harris had to be able to understand and position current affairs within wider geopolitical context, as well as the global context. Including his time working in the British Embassy, Harris spent more than three decades studying and, in his words, 'obsessing' over China (Harris, 1970).

Harris appeared frequently on BBC radio throughout the period of 1949 to 1976. He gave many talks on his own experience of China, discussing his time during the communist revolution, as well as later visits to the PRC. He also gave several talks on modern Chinese history, often produced as a series of weekly broadcasts, such as the series of eight programmes he gave, focusing on aspects of the evolution of contemporary China, starting with the 'break up of old China in 1840', broadcast in 1966. Talks by Harris were broadcast across the BBC channels, from the Home Service to the Third Programme, and were also included in services for schools. In addition to the talks given by Harris individually, he frequently served as the Chair in programmes on China and wider debates on East Asia. During these talks, he structured and guided the discussion, and often joined in himself.

The BBC also invited Harris to take part in current affairs programmes, as a Far East or Asian expert, when they were focused on geopolitical issues such as the Vietnam War or Sino-Soviet split. The regularity with which Harris appeared on the BBC means he is likely to have been a familiar voice to many in discussions on China and wider issues in East Asia, and this will have not only come from his frequent appearance on the radio, but also from the articles and reports he wrote for *The Times*, the books he published, and his appearances on BBC television programmes discussing China. People will have been accustomed to hearing him discuss China and, consequently, his opinions and reports may have been afforded greater credibility and weight.

Throughout his talks, Harris expresses admiration and respect for China's ancient history, arguing it was an "advanced society", and a "consciously cultured" one (Harris in Harris et al., 1973c: 1). During the 1973 series Harris presented, *China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation*, he and the other speakers discuss the achievements of China's ancient civilisation:

> "[T]heir cultural superiority which was not merely cultural in philosophical or humane terms, but material technology. The fact is we must look back at China as a high centre of civilisation with a superior material technology, long before anything around them had such a technology and even before Europe had many features that the Chinese themselves invented." (Harris et al., 1973c: 2)

Harris argues that there is much continuity to be seen between this ancient civilisation and modern, communist China, and that, far from being unfamiliar, "[Chinese] communism…runs in the grooves made by Confucianism" (1968: 44). Along with admirable aspects of modern China coming from this continuity, Harris, along with other Western commentators, was supportive of the creation of the PRC in part because of the brutality and corruption demonstrated by the Nationalist side during the civil war. Harris was in China during the civil war, and was in Shanghai when it was 'liberated' by the communist forces, and he argued "there were plenty of other reasons to accept the communist term 'liberation'. Secret police brutality against the left was visible on all sides. I had seen men trussed up at street corners waiting to be shot." (Harris, 1969: 2).

Harris also objected to the Western demonization of the PRC, and frequently argued against what he saw as the sheer inadequacy of the classic cold-war interpretations of Chinese communism, and the "absurdities of the 'domino theory'" (Harris, 1968: 42).

> "Faced by the communist victory in 1949, the western world conceived of itself as threatened by a monolithic, expansionist communism; by the Cold War. And it was easy to add China in 1949 to the existing monolithic and expansionist

> block. I thought it mistaken then and certainly with the anger of the Sino-Soviet dispute back in the early Sixties, the monolithic element sank out of sight. By now Chinese expansionism looks a very unfounded doctrine." (Harris in Harris et al., 1973g: 1)

Throughout his talks, Harris also strongly criticises past Western imperialist attitudes and actions in China, rebuking the shameful Opium Wars, and "the final, disgraceful scramble for concessions between European imperialist rivals" (Harris in Harris et al., 1973d: 1). He also argues that this 'invasion' by the West in the nineteenth century was the most significant contributing factor in the breakdown of the Confucian system, and damaged the Chinese social structure.

Throughout Harris's talks, his commentary comes across as well informed, with nuanced analyses, and he is careful to acknowledge his own positionality and the partiality of his experiences and information: "I am putting forward a view that I am bound to say is my own, and therefore liable to the faults of an obsessional view that one comes across in oneself and in others" (1970: 265). He acknowledges the progress and achievements of the PRC but is not entirely uncritical, particularly during the mid-1960s to early-1970s, where he spoke frequently against the Cultural Revolution, expressing dismay and condemnation over the turmoil and "internecine warfare" it had caused (Harris et al., 1973k: 3). An example of the careful, thorough commentary typical of Harris, is his treatment of the discussions on the restrictive nature of the PRC, and the reports of the uniformity people saw there. In the penultimate talk in the 1973 series, he comments that the programmes are likely to have given the impression of China as a country of complete conformity. He outlines the criticism that the PRC is extremely restrictive, and that travellers are predominantly shown specific sites, then proceeds to reflect that it is understandable that the CCP would wish to present a certain image to the world. Additionally, he argues that, whilst it may be easy to view the country as regimented and homogenous, this would not be the entire picture.

> "But are there no exceptions? No pockets of non-conformity? I wouldn't like to leave you with the idea that China doesn't harbour differences, though foreign visitors don't easily come across them. When I was last there in 1960 I went to the small town where I had been born. After wandering round the old house and pointing out trees I had climbed as a small boy, I walked down the road followed by a trail of communist cadres. And there was the church in which my father had officiated for so many years. Probably a storehouse now, I thought; full of cabbages or something. I went in, followed by the officials. But no. There was the pulpit, with the Chinese character ai meaning love engraved in it. I stood still for

a moment. ‘Is this place still used?’ I said to the cadres behind me. There was a long silence. ‘Yes’ said a voice faintly. So one does discover that what may seem uniform in one part of China isn’t quite so in another part.” (Harris et al., 1973k: 10-11)

Harris had a long term interest and involvement with China, both before, during, and after the civil war, and this experience and knowledge comes through in his informed discussions of the country. This historical and geopolitical insight, and his frequent appearance on the BBC will have seen him positioned as an expert.

7.4 GLADYS YANG



Figure 7 Gladys Margaret Yang (1919-1990)

Gladys Yang was a British translator who lived in China from 1940 with her husband and children. She was born in Peking in 1919 to missionary parents, John Bernard Tayler and Selina Sarah Tayler, who were early pioneers of the Chinese producer co-operatives. She and her sister were educated at home, in Peking, until the age of seven, when they were then sent to a boarding school in England. In 1937 Yang was admitted to read French at St Anne's College, Oxford, but switched to the new honours school in Chinese and became the first undergraduate to take a degree in Chinese, graduating in 1940. At Oxford she met her future husband, Yang Xianyi (1915–2009), the only son of a wealthy Tianjin banker and a student at Merton College. The couple sailed for Hong Kong in 1940, flying over Japanese-occupied territory to Chongqing, China's wartime capital, and were married in March 1941. Yang Xianyi and Gladys spent the rest of the war years teaching at refugee universities in south-west China, where she gave birth to a son, Yang Ye, and a daughter, Yang Ying (Davin, 2004). After the Japanese surrender, they moved to Nanjing as professional translators with the nationalist government’s Bureau of Translation and Compilation, where their last child, a daughter, Yang Zhi, was born.

In 1952, the family moved to Peking, to join the Soviet-style Foreign Languages Press, recently established by the new communist government (Jenner, 1999). The achievements of Gladys Yang and her husband made an enormous amount of Chinese literature available in English for the first time. They translated from both classical and modern Chinese; their output included histories, novels, short stories, and poetry.



Figure 8 Gladys Yang and Yang Xianyi, 1941.

In 1961, Yang returned to Britain for the first time in twenty-one years to visit her family, and whilst here she gave a talk on BBC Light Programme on her life in China. Beginning in 1966, the Cultural Revolution stopped all serious translation, and in 1968 Gladys Yang and her husband were arrested. In 1971, Gladys's sister, Hilda Brown, appeared on the BBC, saying that "for three years her family have heard nothing from her" and they are desperate to receive information from the Chinese government (Brown in Brown and Lee, 1971: 1). Gladys was held in solitary confinement without charge until 1972 (Davin, 2004), returning to her work as a translator after her release.

Between 1961 and 1988, Gladys Yang gave twelve talks on her life in Communist China, the majority between 1961 and 1965 as the *Air Mail Letter from Peking* series (see Appendix 3, Table 3). As discussed throughout the previous chapters, during these talks she is supportive of the communist regime and spends time discussing the day-to-day lives of her and her family. In the early to mid-1960s the Chinese authorities asked foreign residents in China to conduct a letter writing campaign, writing letters to friends all over the world to promote China's viewpoint (Brady, 2003), and it is possible that this contributed to Yang's motivation for recording the talks. This campaign was part of a wider policy of 'people's diplomacy', which was more prominent during the early to mid-1960s with the Chinese authorities focusing more strongly on it in their foreign policy. The break with the Soviet Union, which began in 1956, meant that the PRC had a greater need to cultivate support in other countries. However, "since China's relations with both governments of the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies were not amicable, according to this strategy, it would appeal to the citizens of those countries through propaganda and popular-level contacts to influence their societies" (Brady, 2003: 128).

Yang is positive about life in the PRC during her talks, praising the supportive 'collective' attitude of the Chinese people, along with the improvements being made in areas ranging from education to construction. She does not, however, attempt to portray China as a utopia, describing the challenges of life there, with the familiar grumbles over too busy public transport and the difficulties of rationing. Whilst Yang admits to the faults in Chinese society, she also states that she found some aspects of life in Britain to be concerning and subtly criticises Western attitudes, saying that "coming back from China I was rather shocked by what seemed to me the mercenary acquisitive outlook of nice people in England. It's very different from China" (Yang and Yorke, 1961: 13). She returns to this point in a later talk, stating that her daughter, Chih, was similarly startled by the attitudes of people in Britain: "[s]he was shocked, though, by the competitive spirit, the eagerness to come first in exams instead of seeing that the whole form does well as in China" (Yang, 1963c: 2). In her talk in 1965, she discusses the objections people raise over the restrictive attitude to young people's behaviour, and concedes that they may be sheltered too much. However, she argues that it is the better alternative to avoid the more vulgar aspects found in Western culture:

> "By English standards they are very puritanical in dress and behaviour. Influence is considered bourgeois or carefully guarded against. Ballroom dancing and twist, freakish hair-styles and tight trousers are taboo. Virtually no Western films are thought good enough to show, and at present few bourgeois classics are being printed. To my mind this is sheltering young people too much and not giving them enough chance to learn about the rest of the world. On the other hand, I'm glad they're not exposed to some of the trash and pornography available to young English people." (1965: 3)

Throughout her talks, there are a number of ways in which Yang attempts to create the impression that she is a reliable, informed authority on life inside the PRC, and holds a better position to be able to understand and report on changes than visiting travellers. The fact that Yang has lived in China for 20 years is repeatedly stressed; accordingly, she has had greater time to experience, and form judgements on life there, such as "what's been done for the children of this country is one of the finest achievements of the last decade" (Yang, 1962c: 1). Furthermore, as a resident she is able to see parts of China that people visiting would not normally experience, commenting that "foreigners are rare in [the] part of town" her day-to-day routine brings her to (Yang, 1962a: 1). She has been able to gain a more accurate picture of life in China, and therefore has greater authority over pronouncing upon standards and changes.

Yang spent the majority of her life in China in Peking, and describes her impressions of the Chinese cities she experienced before the communists came to power, arguing that they came as “a terrible shock” to her when she first arrived in 1940, and that “it was like stepping back into the middle-ages” (Yang and Yorke, 1961: 1). Yang praises the improvements in living standards she has witnessed the CCP achieve, and says that they continue to rise each year, attributing this in part to the extensive construction of modern blocks of flats. The quality of the new flats varies and “a critical eye can find plenty of fault with them. But for most people, moving from overcrowded premises, often without running water or sanitary facilities, they represent an enormous change for the better” (1963: 1). Whilst acknowledging that conditions were not perfect, or of the same level as the West, Yang remains supportive of the amount of improvement the PRC had achieved. By qualifying her praise, she also avoids coming across as naïve and duped by the Communist government, or as a propagandist with an agenda. Additionally, early on in her series of talks, Yang describes the traditional-style house she and her family live in, in one of the older neighbourhoods of Peking. In a broadcast a year later, she relates that they have since moved into one of the new blocks of flats she had described to the listeners earlier on. This move had allowed her to experience the quality and standard of the new development for herself, basing her judgements on having lived in it, instead of being limited to relying on second hand accounts or viewing them from the outside, as foreign visitors to China are.

As with Harris, Yang was involved with China for the majority of her life; however, her experiences were on a much more personal level, living there for many decades with her husband and their family. This experience is markedly different to the other speakers who appeared on the BBC, and can be seen in the aspects of life in the PRC she discusses – parents’ evenings, school trips and plays, and community organisation.

7.5 Conclusion

An in-depth study of three speakers provides an opportunity to gain a different type of appreciation of the talks being broadcast, situating them within the context of the speaker’s life experiences and interests. Mary Adams had a long term interest in issues of population, health, and socialism, which both motivated and influenced her engagements with the PRC. She was also a ‘romantic communist’, who wanted to encourage better relationships between British and Chinese people, and the talk she gave on China came from the delegation she led from the SACU. Foreign correspondent Richard Harris had been interested in China for many years, and was employed as the China and Far Eastern specialist for *The Times*; his thorough understanding of the country and frequent appearances discussing it on the BBC saw him positioned as an expert voice on these

issues. He was thorough and balanced in his reporting, praising the achievements of the PRC, whilst also objecting to some of its actions. Gladys Yang's experience of the PRC was very different than either Adams' or Harris's, or the majority of other speakers', living there for many decades, as opposed to visiting for a couple of weeks, or studying it. This is apparent in her talks, describing parents' evenings and school plays, her relationship with her husband's family, and other everyday aspects of life in China. She was positive in her description of life in China, she wanted to communicate the view of the country she lived in, both from appreciation of its achievements, and from political expediency.

All gave very different talks on China: Adams' two broadcasts on the SACU tour, Harris's frequent reporting as foreign correspondent and 'expert', and Yang's series on life in the PRC. They also had a very different presence on the BBC. Adams had worked in the BBC for nearly three decades and had previously given talks on a wide range of other topics, beginning with her popular series on heredity in 1927. Harris appeared regularly across BBC radio in discussions on China and East Asia. Yang, on the other hand, gave a series of eight talks over five years (1961-1965), and then another four between 1977 and 1988, on her experiences living in communist China.

8 CONCLUSION

The narrative that emerges from the accounts of travel to China broadcast on the BBC is not one of the demonization of China. Rather speakers are positive in their reports of their time in the PRC; some stress the similarities between life there and in Britain, whilst others acknowledge the differences in culture but emphasise that different should not be synonymous with bad. The degradation and criticism of China's ancient civilisation, which was so prevalent in earlier periods, does not appear in speakers' reports. Instead of seeing it as the centre of stagnation, many travellers expressed respect for the Chinese culture and its history as a site of ancient wisdom. Likewise, many speakers are positive in their attitudes towards the modern changes in life in China. Strong anti-communist attitudes were strikingly absent throughout the broadcasts in this period. In some cases this could be attributed to the left-wing stance of the speaker, as with Mary Adams, yet positive reports on modern improvements and changes also came from right-wing individuals, such as Conservative M.P. John Hill. It is also possible that a strident anti-communist narrative was more fitting to an American setting. Unlike the US, the British government recognized the PRC soon after its creation and Britons were able to travel to the country throughout the period, whilst the American government banned all travel to China until the early 1970s. Furthermore, Britain did not have the same degree of anti-communist hysteria which permeated the US.

The talks looked at in this project were embedded within the listening culture of the 1950s to 1970s, and within the landscape of domestic BBC broadcasting. The BBC had developed a style of broadcasting which was conversational rather than declamatory and one of its major priorities was to maintain the interest of a diverse audience. Talks would have informal, colloquial introductions by the announcer, such as the description of Myra Roper and Marjorie Anderson's discussion in 1966: "Talking of China, today we're going to hear about a recent book 'China – The Surprising Country'…" None of the talks studied were broadcast in isolation; each came before and after a programme on a completely different topic. For instance, Denis Mathews' (1955) talk *Buying Ink in China* was broadcast at 7.15pm on a Saturday, after the popular weekly music programme *Those Were the Days* and was followed by *In Town Tonight*, an early form of a weekly chat show programme. Some people would have tuned in specifically to listen to the programme, forming an active listenership. However, other people will have just had their radio on in their homes, more general, passive listeners whose attention needed to be grabbed. The BBC employed many techniques to try and hold the interest of a varied audience, including the conversational and colloquial style they had developed for 'writing for the ear', one which retained sufficient informality to sound unscripted.

Along with influencing the style of radio broadcasting in the 1950s to 1970s, the radio culture will also have impacted the content of the talks broadcast, keeping them broadly gentle and uncontroversial. The purpose of the programmes being largely to hold the attention of the listener at home generated programmes that leant towards the reflective and nuanced, rather than the assertive or combative. Listeners will have been unlikely to enjoy being shouted at or preached to in their own homes. Consequently, whilst at times of geopolitical crisis there were more negative reports, for the most part the talks on the PRC were fairly gentle, conversational rather than declamatory.

It is beyond the purview of this project to assess the influence these programmes may have had on public feeling about China. However, it is worth reflecting on the role of the BBC in this period, and that of the radio talk, both of which may have increased the influence of these talks. Throughout this period, radio was a significant part of peoples' lives, with television not gaining in influence until the 1960s (Briggs, 1995b). Many of the programmes were broadcast on the popular channel of the Light Programme, or the Home Service channel, which served the broad, middle section of society (Briggs, 1995c). The talks were broadcast by the BBC, a mainstream, influential media organisation, with a reputation for providing reliable information, who styled itself as having no agenda or opinions of its own, instead reflecting the opinions of the British public. Additionally, several of the speakers were well known figures of the time, such as Harold Wilson and Beryl Grey, as well as the journalists and foreign correspondents who appeared frequently on the BBC and often became public figures themselves (Briggs, 1995a). Compounded by this, as several talks note, there was very little information about China available during this period, and consequently the opinions and experiences of these speakers will have had greater weight.

This research is situated within the wider literature on Western images of China, and many works (see Kitson, 2013; Bickers, 2017) have explored the negative representations of China which were dominant within Britain between 1860 and 1949. This project has focused on the decades following and has shown that there was a significant shift in the representation of China in the mid-twentieth century, with the majority of the speakers being broadly positive in their attitudes. Mackerras's *Western images of China* (1999) does cover the Mao era; however, he largely focused on American representations, rather than British, arguing that the US was the most significant image formulator during the twentieth century. This research also contributes to the literature on the geopolitics of radio broadcasting, a topic on which there has been an absence of detailed consideration (see Power, 2001; Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009). The neglect of radio by existing studies of popular geopolitics is unfortunate but not unsurprising given the preoccupation with visual media and the visual tradition of geopolitics more generally. Whilst radio receives less attention, it is widely

acknowledged that the BBC is an influential and powerful organisation, and as such its broadcasts have been the subject of study. The majority of the literature has, however, focused on the BBC's External Services, such as Pinkerton's (2008a; 2008b) work on the Corporation's broadcasting in India and South Asia, and Streberny and Torfeh's (2008) study of the BBC Persian service in Iran, rather than the material broadcast on the Home Services which has been the subject of this work. Furthermore, this project has also added to the literature on twentieth century Western travel to communist countries. Matless et al. (2008) focused on British geographical travel to the Eastern Bloc during the 1950s to 1970s, and showed the impact the trope of the duped British visitor had on travellers' reports. The same concern over being branded a fellow traveller and duped visitor was evident in many of the talks on peoples' travels to China.

It is not possible to listen to any of the programmes studied in this project and it is worth considering once more the constraints of working with the written transcripts of talks originally broadcast on the radio. These provide a record of the speakers' opinions and narratives, but an important component of the talks has been lost: the voices themselves. Many radio scholars have noted the challenges of working with the medium (see Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009); its ephemeral nature, with official recordings often being absent or in written form conspire against those who would study it. That the BBC has kept such complete records of its broadcasts, not just the titles of programmes or information on what was broadcast when, but the scripts of the programmes themselves, has been invaluable to this research. It is common in studies focused on radio for there to be very few records of what was broadcast, and to have to rely on other sources, such as oral histories and newspaper reports to create a patchwork image of what people will have heard on the radio. This has not been necessary in this project as it is possible to see what programmes were broadcast on the BBC domestic channels during this period, as well as what was actually said during the talks. Whilst textual records are a poor substitute for the experience of listening to the radio broadcasts, the dependence on written scripts is not as significant an issue in radio studies as it would be if one was focusing on television programmes. Through studying the conventions of radio broadcasting during this period, listening to recordings from within the timeframe which do exist, and having some understanding of the basic characteristics of the voice, such as whether it is male or female, it is possible to create a sense of what the talk would have sounded like. This thesis has reclaimed these voices about China and shown that the varied commentators which appeared on the BBC were often supportive of what they witnessed in the PRC.

9 APPENDICES

9.1 APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF ALL TALKS STUDIED DURING THE RESEARCH FOR THIS PROJECT

Date	Title	Speakers	Channel	Pages
29/12/1952	Journey out of China	Diane Shipton	Light Programme	1-3
15/09/1954	"Behind the News" Mr Attlee's visit to China	Kenneth Wheare, Father Martin D'Arcy, Alan Bullock, Jacob Bronowski.	Home Service	1-12
17/09/1954	Back from China	Cyril Ray (int.), George Gale, Derek Winterton, Malcom Muggeridge, Arthur Mathens.	Light Programme	1-12
28/09/1954	The China Visit	Morgan Phillips	Home Service	1-8
19/11/1954	China Visit etc. The Indian Prime Minister – Pandit Nehru's visit to China	Pandit Nehru and Norman Cliff (int.)	Home Service	1-5
10/12/1954	Current Issues in Sino-American Relations	Desmond Donnelly M.P. and Ed Newman	Home Service	1-6
28/05/1955	"Buying Ink in China" the artist member of a delegation sent to China talks about Chinese ink, brushes, and paper	Denis Mathews	Home Service	1-7
04/11/1955	Communist Chinese Policy	Charles Judd	Home Service	2-4
06/01/1956	Red Cross Visit to China	Countess of Limerick	Home Service	1-3
28/09/1956	Rural Life in China	John Hill	Home Service	1-3
02/03/1957	"China and the Soviet Bloc" the speaker's impressions of the	Desmond Donnelly	Third Programme	1-10

	nature of Communist alliances as he has observed them on visits to China and East European countries			
24/08/1957	“Art Realism”	Denis Mathews	Third Programme	1-9
11/03/1958	Sino-British Relations	Rt. Hon. Harold Wilson M.P. and Richard Scott (int.)	Home Service	1-4
05/08/1958	Mr Khrushchev’s Visit to China	Lord Strang and Thomas Barman	Home Service	1-3
23/09/1958	The Situation in Formosa	William Teeling M.P. and Thomas Barman (int.)	Home Service	1-4
23/09/1958	Communist China	Richard Crossman and Thomas Barman (int.)	Home Service	1-4
10/02/1959	Sino-Soviet Relations	Richard Lowenthal and Desmond Donnelly M.P.	Home Service	1-3
01/09/1959	India’s Foreign Policy Problems	Tibor Mende	Home Service	1-2
02/10/1959	Khrushchev in China: Sino-Soviet Relations	Victor Purcell and Victor Zorza	Home Service	1-4
27/10/1959	Motives of Present Chinese Behaviour	Tibor Mende and Evan Luard	Home Service	1-3
05/11/1959	The Day I Met My Waterloo	Wendy Dewar-Durie	Light Programme	1-5
12/04/1960	A Happy Event – Chinese Fashion	Ann Kingsbury	Light Programme	1-5
09/06/1960	The Day We Drove to Tientsin	Miranda Mayne	Light Programme	1-4
16/06/1960	Looking Back	Dr Linda Grier and Joan Yorke (int.)	Light Programme	1-10
07/09/1961	Off the Beaten Track	Gladys Yang and Joan Yorke (int.)	Light Programme	1-14
15/11/1961	In Partnership	Denis Mathews and Anna Mathews	Light Programme	1-11
11/12/1961	My Life in China	Doreen White	Light Programme	1-4

15/01/1962	Air Mail Letter from Peking	Gladys Yang	Light Programme	1-2
15/03/1962	On Tour	Celia Johnson	Light Programme	1-2
15/03/1962	Miss Lobbins, she say	Antonia Ridge	Light Programme	1-4
21/03/1962	Air Mail Letter from Peking	Gladys Yang	Light Programme	1-2
17/09/1962	Air Mail Letter from China	Gladys Yang	Light Programme	1-2
21/01/1963	Air Mail Letter from China	Gladys Yang	Light Programme	1-2
11/09/1963	Three Months in China	Rolfe Birch and Marjorie Anderson (int.)	Light Programme	1
08/04/1964	They Do It Differently Abroad (Air Letter from Peking)	Gladys Yang	Light Programme	1-2
01/09/1964	One Story, Three Papers	Brian Redhead	Light Programme	1-4
25/01/1965	From Factories to the Temple of Supreme Harmony	J. Allan Cash and Wyn Knowles (int.)	Light Programme	1-7
07/04/1965	Air Letter from Peking	Gladys Yang	Light Programme	1-3
03/05/1965	A Month in China	Eve Bracegirdle and Mollie Lee (int.)	Light Programme	1-8
15/09/1965	Unbilled Extra: Outpatient in Peking	Jean Zimon	Home Service	1-5
04/10/1965	Ballet Dancer in China	Beryl Grey and Teresa McGonagle (int.)	Light Programme	1-7
14/12/1965	A Month in China	Mary Adams	Light Programme	1-8
23/06/1966	A Surprising Country	Myra Roper and Marjorie Anderson (int.)	Light Programme	1-4
01/08/1966	China's Young Pioneers	Patricia Penn	Home Service	1-4
12/09/1966	Nuns in Peking	Sister Luigia and Sister Thomas a Becket, and Patricia Penn (int.)	Home Service	1

28/01/1968	China's Road Ahead	Richard Harris, Frank Davies, and Andrew Watson	Radio 3	1-3/5
05/02/1968	Jean Robb describes an encounter with the Red Guards of China	Jean Robb	Radio 2	1
25/03/1968	Two Years in China	John Harding	Radio 3	1-9
19/08/1968	Science and the Cultural Revolution	Dr CHG Oldham	Radio 3	1-8
10/09/1969	On Being Twice Liberated	Richard Harris	Radio 4	1-8
12/07/1971	Do You Remember Gladys Yang?	Mrs Hilda Brown and Mollie Lee (int.)	Radio 2	1-5
27/09/1971	China	Lewis McLeod and Lyn Macdonald	Radio 2	1-3
04/11/1971	Acupuncture	Lewis McLeod and Lyn Macdonald	Radio 2	1-4
08/11/1972	Speaking for Myself	Jim Buddulph	Radio 4	1-7
02/04/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 1 – The Chinese Outlook	Richard Harris, Ross Terrill, C.F. FitzGerald, D.C. Twitchett, Mark Mancall, Benjamin Schwartz, Michael Sullivan, and Bill Jenner	Radio 3	1-12
09/04/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 2 – Chinese Society and Government	Richard Harris, John Fairbank, D.C. Twitchett, Lucian Pye, and C.P. FitzGerald	Radio 3	1-11
16/04/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 3 – China's Old World	Richard Harris, John Fairbank, C.P. FitzGerald, D.C. Twitchett, Mark Mancall, and William Sleigh	Radio 3	1-11

23/04/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 4 – Confrontation with the West	Richard Harris, C.P. FitzGerald, Frederic Wakeman, Benjamin Schwartz, Rhoads Murphey, and Martin Bernal	Radio 3	1-12
30/04/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 5 – Nation and Nationalism	Richard Harris, C.P. FitzGerald, Martin Bernal, Benjamin Schwartz, Howard Boorman, Rhoads Murphey, and Albert Feurewerker	Radio 3	1-13
07/05/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 6 – The Search for a Political Answer	Richard Harris, John Israel, Howard Boorman, Frederic Wakeman, James Thomson, Don Rimmington, and Cyril Birch	Radio 3	1-13
14/05/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 7 – Mao Tse-Tung and Maoist Society	Richard Harris, Benjamin Schwartz, Stuart Schram, Martin Bernal, Merle Goldman, and Albert Feuerwerker	Radio 3	1-12
21/05/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 8 – Government and People	Richard Harris, Lucian Pye, C.P. FitzGerald, John Fairbank, Michel Oksenberg, A. Doak Barnett, Albert Feuerwerker, Mark Mancall, Endymion Wilkinson, and Andrew Watson	Radio 3	1-12
28/05/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's	Richard Harris, Carl Riskin, Alexander Eckstein, Christopher	Radio 3	1-12

	longest surviving civilisation. 9 – China's Economic Imperatives	Howe, Jack Gray, Endymion Wilkinson, and Andrew Watson		
07/06/1973	Through the Bamboo Curtain	Bernice Harding and Pat Taylor	Radio 2	1-4
18/06/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 12 – China's New World	Richard Harris, John Gittings, David Wilson, Allen Whiting, John Fairbank, Mark Mancall, Benjamin Schwartz, Bill Jenner, Lucian Pye, and C.P. FitzGerald	Radio 3	1-13
25/06/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 13 – The Revolution in Perspective	Richard Harris, Roderick MacFarquhar, Allen Whiting, David Wilson, John Fairbank, C.P. FitzGerald, Rhoads Murphey, Michel Oksenburg, and Benjamin Schwartz	Radio 3	1-12
02/07/1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 14 – Questions for China	David Wilson, Richard Harris, and C.P. FitzGerald	Radio 3	1-26
28/09/1973	The Chinese Exhibition	William Watson	Radio 3	1-7
01/10/1973	Chinese Art Exhibition	William Watson	Radio 3	1-7
03/02/1977	Analysis	Brian Beedham, Prof. Ross Terrill, John Gardener, and Father Landay	Radio 4	1-21
20/12/1978	Analysis	Mary Goldring	Radio 4	1-18

9.2 APPENDIX 2: LIST OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE 1954 DELEGATIONS, WHICH TRAVELLED TO CHINA FROM BRITAIN.

Membership of the Three 1954 Delegations

Delegation of the Labour Party National Executive Committee (August-September)

The Rt. Hon. C.R. Attlee, OM, CH, MP (Leader)

The Rt. Hon. Aneurin Bevan, MP

Wilfred Burke, MP (Chairman of the Labour Party 1953-4)

Harry Earnshaw, OBE (United Textile Factory Workers' Association)

Henry Franklin (National Union of Railwaymen)

Morgan Phillips (Secretary of the Labour Party)

The Rt. Hon. Edith Summerskill, MP (Chairman of the Labour Party 1954-5)

Sam Watson, CBE (National Union of Mineworkers)

The Cultural Delegation (September-October)

Professor Leonard Hawkes, Professor of Geology, Bedford College

Sir Hugh Casson, RDI, FRIBA, Hon. ARCA, Professor of Interior Design, Royal College of Art

Professor A.J. Ayer, Grote Professor of Mind and Logic, University College, London

Rex Warner, classicist and translator

Stanley Spencer, artist

John Chinnery, lecturer in Chinese, London University School of Oriental Studies

The Second Labour Delegation (October-November)

Capt. John Baird, MP

Barbara Castle, MP

Capt. William Griffiths, MP

Arthur William John Lewis, MP

George Samuel Lindgren, MP

Ben Parkin, MP

Charles Royle, MP

Ellis Smith, MP

Ernest Thornton, MP

Cyril Cooper, General Secretary, Society of Technical Civil Servants

George Doughty, General Secretary, Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen

A. Hardy, Council Member, Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers

John Horner, General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union

Mabel Ridealgh, National Secretary, Women's Co-operative Guilds of Great Britain

Bryan Roberts, General Secretary, National Union of Public Employees

J.H. Southall, General Secretary, National Union of Mineworkers, Midlands Area

Cedric Dover, Anthropologist, Author, Biologist, and Lecturer

Dr Derrick James, Lecturer in Anatomy, University College, London

Denis Mathews, Art Critic and Secretary, Contemporary Arts Society of the Tate Gallery

Professor Edwin George Pulleybank, Professor of Chinese Studies, Cambridge University

9.3 APPENDIX 3: TABLES OF TALKS BY THE THREE SPEAKERS DISCUSSED IN CHAPTER 7 'THREE VOICES ON CHINA', MARY ADAMS, RICHARD HARRIS, AND GLADYS YANG.

The tables include all talks given by the speakers, not just ones focused on China or broadcast between 1949 and 1976. Talks marked with ♦ were able to be studied in detail. The other talks were not looked at as they were outside of the time period of interest, or on a different topic, or due to time constraints during the research for this project; consequently, only the titles are known, not the detailed content. Where the talks featured other speakers, these are listed beneath the title of the broadcast, along with any additional information such as the programme being a sound recording of television programme.

Table 1 – Table of all talks given by Mary Adams, 1927 to 1967, broadcast on the BBC.

Date of Broadcast	**Title**
6th September 1927	Heredity
28th February 1928	Heredity – 1: Nature and Nurture
6th March 1928	Heredity – 2: How Heredity is Studied
20th March 1928	Heredity – 4: The Inheritance in Man
3rd April 1928	Heredity – 6: The Superman Idea
6th August 1929	Are All Men Equal?
4th March 1930	Pioneers of Health – 1: Hippocrates

11th March 1930	Pioneers of Health – 2: Andreas Vesalius
18th March 1930	Pioneers of Health – 3: William Harvey
25th March 1930	Pioneers of Health – 4: Charles Darwin
1st April 1930	Pioneers of Health – 5: Louis Pasteur
8th April 1930	Pioneers of Health – 6: Socialised Medicine
18th November 1930	AI or C3 – The Future of the Race, 2: What do we owe to our forefathers?
25th November 1930	AI or C3 – The Future of the Race, 3: Has human nature ever changed?
2nd December 1930	AI or C3 – The Future of the Race, 4: Shall the unfit survive?
9th December 1930	AI or C3 – The Future of the Race, 5: Why is the birth rate falling?
16th December 1930	AI or C3 – The Future of the Race, 6: Whither Mankind?
1st July 1932	'Biology in the Service of Man' – 4: Huxley (1825-1895), Knight-errant of Darwinism
5th March 1935	Recent Scientific Research – 2: Heredity
19th December 1962	Portrait of CK Ogden [discussion with David Abercrombie, AJ Ayer, RB Braithwaite, Ian Catford, Jonathan Cohen, William Empson, WHN Hotopf, David Lloyd-James, Kingsley Martin, IA Richards, Bertrand Russell, Solly Zuckerman]
16th March 1963	Portrait of CK Ogden (repeat) [discussion with David Abercrombie, AJ Ayer, RB Braithwaite, Ian Catford, Jonathan Cohen, William Empson, WHN Hotopf, David Lloyd-James, Kingsley Martin, IA Richards, Bertrand Russell, Solly Zuckerman]
19th November 1964	Best Buys in Moscow
14th December 1965	A Month in China ♦
16th December 1965	A Month in China (repeat) ♦
29th January 1966	A Word in Edgeways [discussion with Ludovic Kennedy, David Lytton, Harold Evans]
14th August 1966	The Travellers – 5: Behind the Great Wall [discussion with Robert Bolt, Delia Jenner, Joan Robinson, Leslie Smith]
22nd December 1966	The Travellers – 5: Behind the Great Wall (repeat)

	[discussion with Robert Bolt, Delia Jenner, Joan Robinson, Leslie Smith]
22nd June 1967	Sir Julian Huxley [discussion with Frame Hastings, Baroness Wootton, Lord Adrian, HJ Blackham, Jacob Bronowski, James Fisher, EB Ford, AF Huxley, RM Lockley, Donald McCullough, Henry Moore, Guy Mountfort, Joseph Needham, Max Nicholson, Peter Scott]

Table 2 – Table of all talks given by Richard Harris, 1950 to 1973, broadcast on the BBC.

Date of Broadcast	**Title**
4th November 1950	China's New Evangelists
6th February 1951	China's New Evangelists (repeat)
30th December 1958	The Cold War continued (At Home and Abroad) [discussion with Sir William Hayter]
27th January 1959	The Brains Trust [sound recording of television programme; discussion with Lady Bonham Carter DBE, AJ Ayer, Norman Fisher]
21st July 1959	The Brains Trust [sound recording of television programme; discussion with Lady Bonham Carter DBE, Alec Peterson, Lord Boothby KBE, Sir John Wolfden]
6th December 1959	The Brains Trust [sound recording of television programme; discussion with Lady Bonham Carter DBE, HRH Prince Chula-Chakrabongse of Thailand, Norman Fisher]
20th February 1961	Thinking About China – 7: The Human Climate [discussion with Mrs Hung-Ying Bryan and Nicholas Wollaston]
25th March 1961	Thinking About China – 12: Conclusion [discussion with Roderick MacFarquhar]
7th July 1961	Issues in South-East Asia
4th November 1961	Thinking About China – 7: The Human Climate (repeat) [discussion with Mrs Hung-Ying Bryan, Nicholas Wollaston]
24th November 1961	Old and New in Modern China

2nd September 1962	The Unrecognised Frontier
21st September 1962	China – 1: The end of the old China 1840-1919
28th September 1962	China – 2: Continuing Revolution 1920-49
5th October 1962	China – 3: Mao's China 1 The assertion of nationhood
12th October 1962	China – 4: Mao's China 2 Re-shaping China's society
19th October 1962	China – 5: Mao's China 3 China and the world
26th October 1962	China – 6: China, an historical perspective
15th February 1963	Loyang
29th June 1963	The World of Books – 'China Today'
12th April 1964	Open-End: China and the Modern World [discussion with Howard Boorman and Robert Guillain]
19th May 1964	Study Session – Russia, China, and the West [discussion with John Erickson and Peter Calvocoressi]
3rd November 1964	Study Session – South-East Asia [discussion with Saul Rose, Stuart Simmons]
7th May 1965	Journey to the East [discussion with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, Patrick Keatley]
10th June 1965	Journey to the East (repeat) [discussion with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, Patrick Keatley]
14th September 1965	China Observed [discussion with Robert Guillain, Owen Lattimore, Gerard Mansell]
25th March 1966	China – 1: The Break-up of Old China and the Origins of Revolution: 1840-1912 [a booklet for this series of 8 talks was produced]
8th April 1966	China – 3: China's National Aims (i) China in the World
15th April 1966	China – 4: China's National Aims (ii) Equality with the West
22nd April 1966	China – 5: The Maoist Era (i) The Making of a Revolutionary
29th April 1966	China – 6: The Maoist Era (ii) The Regeneration of China
3rd May 1966	Vietnam: The Twenty-Year War [discussion with Patrick Honey, Brian Crozier, Sir Robert Thompson, Phillippe Devillers, Robert Guillain, Bernard Fall, and others]
6th May 1966	China – 7: The Maoist Era (iii) China as a World Power
13th May 1966	China – 8: China's Future
26th June 1966	What is Asia?

5th July 1966	China – 1: The Break-up of Old China and the Origins of Revolution: 1840-1912 (repeat)
19th July 1966	China – 3: China's National Aims (i) China in the World (repeat)
2nd August 1966	China – 5: The Maoist Era (i) The Making of a Revolutionary (repeat)
9th August 1966	China – 6: The Maoist Era (ii) The Regeneration of China (repeat)
16th August 1966	China – 7: The Maoist Era (iii) China as a World Power (repeat)
23rd August 1966	China – 8: China's Future (repeat)
7th September 1966	Vietnam's Neighbours 1
8th September 1966	Vietnam's Neighbours 2
7th October 1966	Profile of the Month – Lee Kuan Yew
3rd March 1967	Profile of the Month – Mao Tse-tung
3rd August 1967	The Other Side of the By-line [discussion with John Tusa]
31st October 1967	An Age of Conflict, War and Society in the Twentieth Century: 5 – China
17th January 1968	Contemporary History – 1: Mao Tse-tung
28th January 1968	China's Road Ahead ♦ [discussion with Frank Davies, Andrew Watson]
29th August 1968	Spitting from the Ramparts
15th January 1969	Contemporary History – 1: Mao Tse-tung
10th September 1969	On Being Twice Liberated ♦
4th January 1970	Mao Against the Mandarin [discussion with Lucian Pye]
14th January 1970	Contemporary History – 1: Mao Tse-tung (repeat)
19th March 1970	Mao Against the Mandarin (repeat) [discussion with Lucian Pye]
24th April 1970	Analysis The Sino-Soviet Rift [discussion with Jean Chesneaux, John Erickson, John Gittings, Harrison Salisbury, Benjamin Schwartz, David Wilson]
13th January 1971	Contemporary History – 1: Mao Tse-tung (repeat)
22nd May 1971	Righteous Rebellion in China
15th June 1971	Righteous Rebellion in China (repeat)
17th May 1972	The Asian Phoenix – 4: The Japanese Worker

	[discussion with Geoffrey Bownas, Ronald Dore, Martin Collick, Michael Montague]
7th June 1972	The Asian Phoenix – 7: Domestic Politics [discussion with Geoffrey Bownas, Martin Collick, Edwin Reis-Chauer, WG Beasley, Kiyoaki Murata]
14th June 1972	The Asian Phoenix – 8: Japan in the World [discussion with Geoffrey Bownas, Martin Collick, Edwin Reis-Chauer, WG Beasley, Kiyoaki Murata, Gordon Daniels]
2nd April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 1 – The Chinese Outlook ♦ [discussion with Ross Terrill, C.F. FitzGerald, D.C. Twitchett, Mark Mancall, Benjamin Schwartz, Michael Sullivan, Bill Jenner]
5th April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 1 – The Chinese Outlook (repeat) ♦ [discussion with Ross Terrill, C.F. FitzGerald, D.C. Twitchett, Mark Mancall, Benjamin Schwartz, Michael Sullivan, Bill Jenner]
9th April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 2 – Chinese Society and Government ♦ [John Fairbank, D.C. Twitchett, Lucian Pye, C.P. FitzGerald]
16th April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 3 – China's Old World ♦ [discussion with John Fairbank, C.P. FitzGerald, D.C. Twitchett, Mark Mancall, William Sleigh]
19th April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 3 – China's Old World (repeat) ♦ [discussion with John Fairbank, C.P. FitzGerald, D.C. Twitchett, Mark Mancall, William Sleigh]
23th April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 4 – Confrontation with the West ♦ [discussion with C.P. FitzGerald, Frederic Wakeman, Benjamin Schwartz, Rhoads Murphey, Martin Bernal]
26th April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 4 – Confrontation with the West (repeat) ♦ [discussion with C.P. FitzGerald, Frederic Wakeman, Benjamin Schwartz, Rhoads Murphey, Martin Bernal]

30th April 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 5 – Nation and Nationalism ♦ [discussion with C.P. FitzGerald, Martin Bernal, Benjamin Schwartz, Howard Boorman, Rhoads Murphey, Albert Feurewerker]
7th May 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 6 – The Search for a Political Answer ♦ [discussion with John Israel, Howard Boorman, Frederic Wakeman, James Thomson, Don Rimmington, Cyril Birch]
14th May 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 7 – Mao Tse-Tung and Maoist Society ♦ [discussion with Benjamin Schwartz, Stuart Schram, Martin Bernal, Merle Goldman, Albert Feuerwerker]
21st May 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 8 – Government and People ♦ [discussion with Lucian Pye, C.P. FitzGerald, John Fairbank, Michel Oksenberg, A. Doak Barnett, Albert Feuerwerker, Mark Mancall, Endymion Wilkinson, Andrew Watson]
24th May 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 8 – Government and People (repeat) ♦ [discussion with Lucian Pye, C.P. FitzGerald, John Fairbank, Michel Oksenberg, A. Doak Barnett, Albert Feuerwerker, Mark Mancall, Endymion Wilkinson, Andrew Watson]
28th May 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 9 – China's Economic Imperatives ♦ [discussion with , Carl Riskin, Alexander Eckstein, Christopher Howe, Jack Gray, Endymion Wilkinson, Andrew Watson]
7th June 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 10 – Resolution in Theory and Practice [discussion with John Gittings, Endymion Wilkinson, Andrew Watson, Ray Wylie, Rhoads Murphey, Ross Terrill]
14th June 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 11 – Culture and Intellectual Life [discussion with John Gardener, Ross Terrill, Cyril Birch, Merle Goldman, Don Rimmington, Endymion Wilkinson, Jong Gittings, Andrew Watson]

18th June 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 12 – China's New World ♦ [discussion with John Gittings, David Wilson, Allen Whiting, John Fairbank, Mark Mancall, Benjamin Schwartz, Bill Jenner, Lucian Pye, C.P. FitzGerald]
25th June 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 13 – The Revolution in Perspective ♦ [discussion with Roderick MacFarquhar, Allen Whiting, David Wilson, John Fairbank, C.P. FitzGerald, Rhoads Murphey, Michel Oksenburg, Benjamin Schwartz]
2nd July 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 14 – Questions for China ♦ [discussion with David Wilson, C.P. FitzGerald]
5th July 1973	China: Change and continuity in the world's longest surviving civilisation. 14 – Questions for China (repeat) ♦ [discussion with David Wilson, C.P. FitzGerald]

Table 3 – Table of all talks given by Gladys Yang, 1961 to 1988, broadcast on the BBC.

Date of Broadcast	**Title**
7th September 1961	Off the Beaten Track [discussion with Joan Yorke] ♦
15th January 1962	Air Mail Letter from Peking ♦
21st March 1962	Air Mail Letter from Peking ♦
17th September 1962	Air Mail Letter from China ♦
21st January 1963	Air Mail Letter from China ♦
19th November 1963	Air Mail Letter from Peking
8th April 1964	They Do It Differently Abroad ♦
7th April 1965	Air Mail Letter from Peking ♦
28th June 1977	An Englishwoman in China
28th June 1978	Air Letter from China
2nd May 1979	Other People's Children
30th January 1988	Stepchildren of the Dragon

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