



NEW DIRECTOR FOR THE INSTITUTE

In October 2003 Dr. Christopher Cullen took office as the first full-time salaried Director of the Needham Research Institute (see page 2). We mark this anniversary by the inauguration of a new series of annual Newsletters. To save printing and mailing costs the printed version will be limited to four pages, but more information will be available through the version of the Newsletter on the Institute's website (www.nri.org.uk/newsletter).

NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE TRUSTEES: LADY YOUDE

Since the last Newsletter of the old series was published, Professor Sir Geoffrey Lloyd has retired as chairman of the

Trustees. We are most grateful for his tireless work on behalf of the Institute, and are happy to say that he continues as a Trustee, as well as maintaining a close academic association with us through his status as a scholar in residence.

The new Chairman, Lady Youde, has been a Trustee since 1998. She has long experience of China, gained through her independent work with several organisations as well as through her experience as the wife of the former Ambassador to Beijing and Governor of Hong Kong, the late Sir Edward Youde. We are extremely fortunate to have such an influential figure in Sino-British cultural and educational relations as our Chairman.

Since Lady Youde became Chairman, the name of the charitable trust that is responsible for the Institute's affairs has been changed from 'East Asian History of Science Trust' to 'The Needham Research Institute'. We continue to be a registered charity (no. 311459) under UK law.



The Director (left) and the Chairman (right) discuss an exhibition of the Institute's publications with Professor Alison Richard, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, during her visit to the NRI in June 2004.

REPORT FROM THE NEW DIRECTOR

It is now a year since I left my post at the School of Oriental and African studies in London and began full-time work as Director of the NRI. Of course I am no new-comer to Cambridge: I already have a long association with the Institute from the time I spent as part-time Deputy Director while Professor Ho Peng Yoke so generously served as non-stipendiary Director. The success of the Dragon's Ascent project led by Dr. Q.W. Lee in Hong Kong finally made it possible for the NRI to create the full-time salaried post that I now hold.

I have a clear three point programme in mind for my tenure as Director. First we must develop the role of the Institute as the international scholarly centre in our field. Secondly we must work to increase the attention paid to the technical and scientific traditions of China and East Asia generally in the academic world and beyond, and to push forward our programme of academic publication. Thirdly, to underpin these efforts, we must increase our endowment to provide a permanently secure base to guarantee our independence and security in the long term.

Developing our international role means that we must continue to enhance the excellent library resources that make the NRI unique, first by an active acquisitions policy and secondly by making our existing holdings more accessible. Thanks to the energy and enterprise of our Librarian, John Moffett, we are doing very well in this aspect of our work (see page 3). In addition, our fellowship programme draws young scholars to the Institute from many countries of East and West. Both John and I have travelled widely in China and elsewhere to build academic links with relevant centres of research. So far as our second goal mentioned above is concerned, we are extremely fortunate in Cambridge to be able to work closely with the Department of History and Philosophy of Science, one of the world's most active centres in its field. I shall be contributing to both Master's and undergraduate teaching there in the coming year, and I have also agreed to teach in the new Master's programme in Chinese Studies at the Faculty of Oriental Studies. Our very active publications programme is described separately.

But as I have said, the question of funding is basic to our continued success. We have been successful at obtaining funds from major foundations for short to medium term projects (see page 4), but the independence and vigour of our future activities depends on our core endowment. At present that is a substantial amount short of what we need. Together with the Trustees I am dedicated to raising this money, which will ensure that here in Cambridge we can continue to change the way the world looks at China, and at the development of science, technology and medicine. Joseph Needham left us immense intellectual riches through his work – but he has also left us an immense task, which it

is our duty to fulfil to the utmost of our ability. We are confident that our friends worldwide will help us achieve our goals.

Christopher Cullen

FELLOWSHIPS

The Institute currently offers three fellowship programmes for scholars who wish to work at the NRI for extended periods. In order of establishment, these are the Li Foundation of New York Lu Gwei-djen memorial fellowship for a Chinese scholar, the Andrew W. Mellon fellowships for US and PRC based scholars, and the Sino-British Fellowship Trust exchange programme. We also have an exchange programme with the University of Shanxi, Taiyuan. In Europe we have an exchange agreement with the REHSEIS unit of the CNRS, which is an active centre in our field based in Paris. Thanks to the generous support of the scientific service of the French Embassy, a REHSEIS researcher (Dr. Catherine Jami) has been elected to a French Government Overseas Fellowship at Churchill College for 2004-5. For full details of all fellowship opportunities, see our website.

NRI STUDIES SERIES AND NRI WORKING PAPERS

Two volumes in our specialist monograph series published by RoutledgeCurzon are about to appear as this Newsletter is printed. One of them *Medieval Chinese Medicine: the Dunhuang medical manuscripts* is edited by Vivienne Lo and Christopher Cullen. It sums up the results of an international research project sponsored by the Institute into the important material from the hidden cave library of Dunhuang. It is the first western language book to deal at length with the broad sweep of medicine in China 1000 years ago. The other book, *Medicine of Revolution: Chinese Medicine in Early Communist China (1945-1963)* by Kim Taylor, is a ground-breaking study by a former Research Fellow of the NRI, which throws new light on the post-1949 origins of what is called 'Traditional Chinese Medicine' in the West, but simply *Zhong yi* 中醫 'Chinese medicine' in China.

Our new series under the title *Needham Research Institute Working Papers* is designed to enable rapid publication of scholarship that requires more space than a journal can provide, but might take a long time to appear in final form in hard covers. The first of this series has now appeared as *The Suan shu shu* 算數書 'Writings on reckoning' a draft translation of a Chinese mathematical collection of the second century BC, with explanatory commentary, by Christopher Cullen. This gives a text, translation and study of an important manuscript from a tomb of the Western Han dynasty, which embodies the earliest known Chinese writing on mathematics. See our website for details of how to obtain this work.

THE LIBRARY

The Library collection continues to expand, keeping up, so far as possible within our tight budget, with relevant recent publications in Chinese and Western languages. We are also actively expanding our collection on the history of science, technology and medicine in Korea and Japan, aided by a generous donation for this purpose from a Korean donor, as well as from the Korea Foundation and Professor Sakade Yoshinobu. The resources of the Library have also been greatly enhanced by the donation by the Mellon Foundation of funds to secure access to the online journals database JSTOR. These and the many other smaller donations (see our website for further details) are greatly appreciated, and help to maintain this collection as a unique resource in our field. Interest in it can be gauged from the growing number of visiting scholars, both short and long term, from all over the world.

On a more technical matter, Cambridge University Library has moved over to a new Online Public Access Catalogue system, called Newton. Our acquisitions since 1992 are catalogued at <http://newton.lib.cam.ac.uk:7003/>. Details about searching and access to other catalogues can be found on our Library webpage. At present only part of our collection is available online, but we are pleased to announce that the Mellon Foundation has generously agreed to fund a project to carry out retrospective cataloguing.

I have also had the opportunity to make several trips to China to attend conferences and buy books. Places visited include Beijing, Shanghai, Hefei, Hangzhou, Taiyuan, Yongji, Hohhot, and Harbin. I am very grateful to the Sino-British Fellowship Trust for supporting some of these visits, and to all the Chinese scholars who have made me feel so welcome on each occasion. I have also recently visited Korea to attend a workshop, and would like to thank Professor Kim Dongwon for his support.

SIKU QUANSHU MOVED TO K. P. TIN HALL

Sharp-eyed readers may have noticed from the photograph of the visit of the Vice-Chancellor on the front page that the 1500 volume *Siku Quanshu* 四庫全書 was recently moved from the Library to the appropriately elegant surroundings of the K. P. Tin Hall. This has liberated much needed space upstairs and further enhanced the appearance of the Hall. The *Siku Quanshu* "Complete Texts of the Four Repositories." was compiled by imperial command between 1773 and 1782 under the editorship of Ji Yun 紀昀 and Lu Xixiong 陸錫熊. It contains 3,461 texts and was intended to contain all books of major significance. It is a magnificent resource for our researchers – though of course we should love to be able to afford the new electronic version that has recently become available.

ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION

During the past year we have received two generous grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation of New York. The first grant, of \$173,139, was to support a three-year project to archive the massive research files created by Joseph Needham for the *SCC* project. This project is already under way – details will be on our webpage in due course. The second grant, of \$86,527, will support the retrospective electronic cataloguing of our entire library holdings. We are most grateful for this timely and munificent support.

RETIREMENT OF HU ZESHENG

I should like to finish by expressing my deepest thanks to someone whom many readers may not know. For the past 12 years, Mr. Hu Zesheng 胡泽生, who works in the library of the Institute for the History of Natural Science 自然科学史研究所 in Beijing, has worked tirelessly helping to acquire books and journals for us in China. His efforts behind the scenes enabled the great expansion of the Library during this time, his dedication and persistence adding many very rare items to the collection. He is finally retiring, though I am delighted to say that our collaboration with the IHNS will continue.

John Moffett



John Moffett with Hu Zesheng and Li Xiaojuan 李小娟 (IHNS librarian).

SCIENCE AND CIVILISATION IN CHINA

This year two parts of this monumental series have passed through the Press and are now on sale. The first of these is Volume 7 Part 2, edited by Kenneth Robinson, which contains Joseph Needham's final conclusions and reflections on the SCC project and its implications. Joseph Needham continued to work on this material up to his death, and we owe a great debt to Kenneth for the work he has put into editing these writings for publication. As many friends of the NRI will know, Kenneth was one of the core group of Joseph Needham's long-term collaborators, and was the first to have a contribution to the SCC series independently credited to him, in the section on acoustics in Volume 4 Part 1. These documents will be a major resource for the study of one of the 20th century's most striking intellectual adventures. In January 2005 an international symposium at the NRI will centre on a discussion of Needham's work as represented in this volume. This symposium is organised collaboratively with our colleagues at REHSEIS (Paris), and is supported by a generous grant from the European Science Foundation (see our website for further details).

The second part to appear is Volume 5 Part 12 on Ceramics, edited by Rose Kerr. At nearly 1000 pages this is one of the largest SCC volumes ever published, and it is illustrated in full colour throughout thanks to a generous grant from the Lu Gwei-djen Memorial Charitable Trust. This book gives an authoritative and detailed account of the development of ceramics in China in its art historical, social, economic, political and technical aspects. No such book has ever appeared in a western language, and we are confident it will remain a landmark for years to come. The first formal public appearance of this volume took place in the distinguished surroundings of the Asia Society in New York on October 7 2004, where our Director introduced a lecture by Rose Kerr, and later in the month a copy was presented to the mayor of the great porcelain city of Jingdezhen 景德镇 as part of their millennial celebrations. We are happy that Alistair Michie, an Honorary Associate of the NRI, was able to represent us at this occasion.

For more details of both books, see our website; SCC volumes are all available through Cambridge University Press at <http://uk.cambridge.org/>

RETIREMENT OF THE BURSAR

In September of this year, Mr. Hugh Price retired from his position as Bursar. Hugh joined the NRI in June 1996, and his steady hand and wise advice helped guide us through a period of transition and expansion. In his place we are delighted to welcome Brigadier Tim Thompson, formerly Bursar at Clare College.

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

Nearly 40 scholars have spent an extended period pursuing research here in the last year. But a vital part of our work lies in the organisation of specially convened international workshops and small conferences on a wide variety of topics relevant to our work. Space allows us to do no more than give brief notices of three we have organised over the last two years. Forthcoming workshops include a session on the historiography of science in Asia (January 2005) and on the comparative historiography of medicine (March 2005). See our website for more details of workshops past and yet to come.

Language and logic in ancient China: the case of the Gongsun Long Zi 公孫龍子 (June 19-21, 2003)

This gathering centred on important recent work on the writings of Gongsun Long and other writers on logic and argument from the late Warring States period. A monograph on this topic is now being prepared for publication in the NRI Studies series.

Issues in the history of the Great Compendium of Materia Medica (Bencao gangmu 本草綱目) 1596: a pilot study of the culmination of traditional Chinese pharmacology (December 5-6, 2003)

This covered aspects of the work of the great naturalist and pharmacologist Li Shizhen 李時珍. Contributions ranged from biographical and pharmacological topics to actual recreations of culinary dishes of medicinal value mentioned in his work. Much of the work of organising this conference was done by Kim Taylor, who has recently completed a 3 year Wellcome research fellowship at the NRI. Her recent book *Medicine of Revolution* is mentioned on page 3.

Life, disease and death in western and eastern history of ideas and medicine (11 June 2004)

This event was organised jointly with Tohoku University, Japan. It brought together Japanese and western contributors in a very interesting effort at cross-cultural comparison.

FRIDAY TEXT-READINGS

The Institute has also continued its regular series of Friday text-reading seminars throughout University terms. With topics ranging from early Chinese maps to political struggles in science policy in 1950's China, mathematics to ship-building, and with speakers from East Asia, Europe and America, this series (which has run unbroken for 12 years now) continues to enrich the academic life of the Institute and the wider Cambridge community. Full details of the current term's seminar programme are available on our website.