

Needham Research Institute Newsletter

李約瑟研究所通訊

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Newsletter edited by Susan Bennett

Dr. Joseph Needham's Intellectual Heritage Workshop



On 4th July 2015, a workshop entitled '*Dr. Joseph Needham's Intellectual Heritage*' was held at the Institute to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the death of Dr. Joseph Needham. The workshop was jointly organized by Professor Roel Sterckx of the University of Cambridge, Professor Angela K. C. Leung of the University of Hong Kong, and the Management Committee of the Needham Research Institute. It was financially supported by the East Asian History of Science Foundation, Hong Kong (EAHSF, HK).

More than 20 scholars from all over the world attended the workshop, including old friends of Dr. Needham and the Institute, such as Bridie Andrews, Gregory Blue, Francesca Bray, Tony Butler, Sally Church, Christopher Cullen, Rose Kerr, Wei-Yao Liang, Liu Dun, Michael Loewe, Georges Métaillé, Tsukahara Togo, Donald Wagner and Robin Yates, as well as scholars who are currently active in the field of East Asian History of Science, such as Arun Bala of the National University of Singapore, Chu Ping-I of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Fung Kam Wing of the University of Hong Kong, Lim Jongtae of Seoul National University, Vivienne Lo of University College London, Dagmar Schäfer of the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Shi Yunli of the University of Science and Technology of China, Sun Xiaochun of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Wang Siming of Nanjing Agricultural University. The Chairman of the EAHSF, HK, Dr. Peter

Lee and NRI Trustees Professors Sir Geoffrey Lloyd and Martin Jones also took part.

Twenty invited short presentations were organized into three sessions entitled 'Working with Dr. Needham and the SCC project: Reflections and Reminiscences', and 'Dr. Needham's intellectual heritage and future directions in the field of the history of science, technology and medicine in East Asia'. The theme of the final session, which took the form of a roundtable discussion, was 'The Needham Research Institute and the Development of Studies of the History of Science, Technology and Medicine in East Asia'. The stimulating and thoughtful presentations were well received, and the final discussion session provided a unique opportunity for all delegates to offer their views and suggestions concerning the future development of the NRI. Following the academic sessions at the Institute, a formal dinner took place at Caius College for all workshop delegates and invited guests.

HONOUR FOR ROSE KERR

We are delighted to announce that Rose Kerr has been awarded Honorary Citizenship of Jingdezhen in recognition of her outstanding contribution to academic research on Jingdezhen ceramics, and the promotion of cultural exchange between the UK and China. She is the first non-Chinese scholar to receive such an award.

Honorary Fellowship for Mrs. Anne Elizabeth Ely

On 13th January 2015, the Institute welcomed Mrs. Anne Elizabeth Ely (*centre, right*), Chairman of the Sino-British Fellowship Trust (SBFT), and Mrs. Debbie Haine, Secretary of the Trust. In recognition of the SBFT's substantial support for the academic exchange program between the NRI and Chinese universities, the NRI Trustees wished to award an Honorary Fellowship of the NRI to Mrs. Ely, which she graciously accepted. A small ceremony took place, at which Mrs Ely was presented with a framed certificate. Some of our Trustees, Lady Youde, Professor Sir Geoffrey Lloyd, Professor Martin Jones, Professor Roel Steckx, as well as scholars and staff were invited to attend the ceremony and the buffet lunch which followed. On behalf of our Trustees, Professor Lloyd made the presentation and gave a short speech noting the valuable contribution of the SBFT over many years.



Obituary: T. H. Tsien (1909-2015)



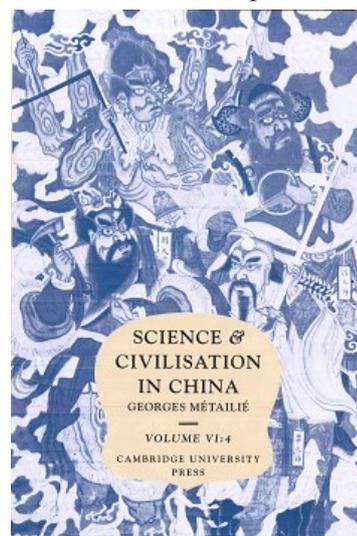
Tsuen-hsuei (T.H.) Tsien, the author of *Science and Civilisation in China (SCC), Vol. V, Pt.1: Paper and Printing*, passed away on April 9, 2015, at the age of 105. Professor Tsien served as Curator (Emeritus) of the East Asian

Collection of the Joseph Regenstein Library and Professor (Emeritus) of Far Eastern Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago for many decades. In 1967, responding to an invitation from Joseph Needham, he made, in view of Needham's status as *persona non grata* in the USA, the brave decision to contribute a chapter on paper and printing to *SCC*. What was initially intended to be a 100 page chapter developed over 15 years into a 300,000 word monograph, a classic in the field of Chinese studies that from its publication in 1985 became the best-selling volume of the entire *SCC* series. He also played a key role in Needham's reacceptance into the U.S. academic and wider community, facilitating the bestowal of an Honorary Doctoral Degree by the University of Chicago on Needham in 1976. Thus, he is remembered with great affection and gratitude here in Cambridge, and the Trustees and Staff of the Needham Research Institute would like to take this opportunity to express their deepest condolences to his family, as well as their admiration and respect for a remarkable life, so well lived.

Launch of new *SCC* volume

On Thursday 29th October, Trustees, staff and visitors to the NRI gathered at the Cambridge University Press bookshop with CUP editors, and the author

Professor Georges Métailié, to celebrate the publication of the latest volume in the *Science and Civilisation in China* Series. Several decades in the making, *Volume VI, Part 4: Traditional Botany, an Ethnographic Approach* is an in-depth exploration of the perception and use of a wealth of plants in China before the introduction of modern botany. Drawing from a wide range of original Chinese texts,



Prof. Métailié provides new insights into a variety of aspects of plant knowledge in ancient China and the transmission of this knowledge to Japan and the West. At the reception, Sir John Boyd, Chairman of the NRI Trust, warmly thanked Prof. Métailié, *SCC* Series Editor and the NRI's Director Emeritus Professor Christopher Cullen, and all those involved at CUP for their efforts in seeing this magnificent 750 page volume through to publication. Copies of the volume can be ordered from CUP:

<http://www.cambridge.org/gb/academic/subjects/history/cross-discipline-history-general-interest/science-and-civilisation-china-volume-6-part-4>

Award for Professor Angela K. C. Leung

We are delighted to announce that Professor Angela Leung, Joseph Needham-Philip Mao Professor in Chinese History, Science & Civilization at the University of Hong Kong, has been awarded the *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques* by the French government. The ceremony took place on 1st April 2015 in Hong Kong.

Director's Visit to Singapore, March 2015

At the invitation of Professor Gregory Clancey, Master of Tembusu College, National University of Singapore, Professor Mei visited Singapore during 2nd-8th March 2015 to take part in academic activities and exchange.

Whilst in Singapore, Professor Mei paid a visit to Ms. Chew Gek Khim, Deputy Chairman of the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation at her home on Tuesday, 3rd March. Ms. Chew is the granddaughter of Tan Sri Tan Chin Tuan, who made a major donation to the Institute in the 1980s. Ms. Chew kindly agreed to introduce Professor Mei to a number of academic institutions in Singapore who have benefitted from the generous financial support of the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation.



Professor Mei with Ms Chew Gek Khim

Professor Mei also had the pleasure of meeting the Institute's long-term benefactor, Dr. S. T. Lee, at his office on Thursday, 5th March. He took the opportunity to express the Institute's appreciation of Dr. Lee's generous support for its library over many years. Dr. Lee talked about his experiences in Singapore during the period of Japanese occupation in the 1940s as well as his long-standing efforts in enhancing the international standing of Chinese people. Following Professor Mei's visit, Dr. Lee wrote to him acknowledging that there had been increasing interest in the collection of materials from the anti-Japanese war period and the history of Chinese science and technology held by the library. The NRI still has a wealth of interesting and valuable materials which remain to be fully catalogued, preserved and digitized, to enable them to be widely accessed by researchers and general public, and initiatives will be reported as they occur.

Twentieth Annual Hans Rausing Lecture

On 21st May 2015, at the invitation of the Department of History and Philosophy of Science (HPS), Professor Mei delivered the Twentieth Annual Hans Rausing Lecture at the McCrum Lecture Theatre under the title: *Metallurgy and Chinese Civilization: An Historical Overview*.



New Appointment in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science

We are delighted to report the appointment of Dr. Mary Brazelton, who took up the new lectureship in Global Studies of Science, Technology and Medicine in the University of Cambridge Department of History and Philosophy of Science from 1st September 2015. Mary has a PhD from Yale, and is an expert on medicine and science in China in the 20th Century.

Public Outreach at home and abroad

On 5th February 2015, Professor Mei was invited to present a lecture on 'Joseph Needham and his Intellectual Heritage' to a group of local residents who belong to the University of the Third Age in Cambridge (U3AC). This outreach activity attracted an audience of about 20 people and proved to be most rewarding, as some in the audience had known Dr. Joseph Needham personally and had some interesting stories to tell of their encounters with him.

At the invitation of Dr. Peter Lee, Chairman of the EAHSF-HK Board, and Professor Angela K. C. Leung, Director of the Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Hong Kong, Professor Mei visited Hong Kong during 7th-10th December 2014. He delivered a public lecture entitled *Challenge with Curiosity: Joseph Needham and his Intellectual Heritage* to an audience mainly consisting of middle school students at Queens College School.

Open Cambridge Day

On Saturday September 12th, the Institute opened its doors to the general public as part of Open Cambridge Day. Around 70 visitors were given a tour of the Institute and attended a presentation about the work of Dr. Needham in China from 1943-1946 by the Librarian, John Moffett, and Dr. Gordon Barrett of Bristol University. Also on display was a specially prepared exhibition of 10 roller-banners entitled *Chinese Wartime Science Through the Lens of Joseph Needham*, supported by the British Inter-University China Centre, the Cambridge Rivers Project, and the University of Bristol. Mr. Moffett and Dr. Barrett are undertaking a project due to be completed early in 2016 to make available Dr. Needham's wartime photographs and travel diaries through the Cambridge Digital Library.

Honouring our friends Professors Ho Peng Yoke and Nakayama Shigeru



Two scholars especially dear to the NRI were remembered at the 14th International Conference on the History of Science in East Asia, held in Paris in July this year.

Special sessions were held to honour the lives and achievements of Professor Ho Peng Yoke (1926-2014), and Professor Nakayama Shigeru (1928-2014), with speakers reflecting on many aspects of their prolific academic output, and their influential role in

promoting the development of the field of the history of science, technology and medicine in East Asia. Members of Professor Nakayama's family were present.



Technology in Modern East Asia Workshop

Organised by Dr. Aleksandra Kobiljski (CNRS/EHESS-CCJ, France), and designed specifically for the mentoring and development of junior scholars in the field, this workshop was held on June 11th-12th, 2015. Presentations were made by six young scholars, with extensive commentary and critique on each by a senior scholar in the field, followed by general discussion. Senior scholars who participated included Professor Francesca Bray (University of Edinburgh, UK), current President of the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT), Professor John Krige (President-Elect of SHOT), Professor Dagmar Schäfer (Max-Planck Institute, Germany), Professor Tsukahara Togo (University of Kobe, Japan) and others.

Science and Civilization in Korea Series Workshop

On 13th July, 2015, a workshop on the *Science and Civilization in Korea Series (SCK)* was held at the Institute, bringing together scholars involved in the planning and execution of a multi-volume series - *Science and Civilization in Korea* – inspired by Dr. Needham's *Science and Civilisation in China*. Scholars from Korea, Australia and UK attended, including Professors Shin Dong Won (Director, *SCK* project), Kim Yung Sik (Emeritus Professor, SNU), Morris Low (Editor for the Modern Period, *SCK* project), and Christopher Cullen (Editor for the Pre-modern Period, *SCK* project). Five presentations on the history of science and technology in Korea were given.

Fellows and Visiting Scholars



At the time of going to press, we have the following visiting scholars and research fellows at the Institute: *Pictured above with NRI staff, from left:* Dr. LIU Shanshan, Tianjin Chengjian University (Xingzhi Fellow), Dr. GUO Lu, Tsinghua University (Jing Brand Fellow), Prof. LU Yong, Nanjing Agricultural University, Prof. MIN Xiangpeng, Henan University, Dr. SHU Changxue (Jing Brand Fellow), Mujeeb KHAN, PhD student at Cambridge University FAMES, (Soon-Yong Kim Fellow), Dr. FANG Yibing, IHNS, CAS (Jing Brand Fellow), Dr. ZHENG Cheng, IHNS, CAS (Xingzhi Fellow), Dr. ZHANG Maolin, Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, (SBFT Fellow).

Library News

The Library recently received a donation of very interesting books, journals, paintings, and photographs from the family of the late Cambridge Geologist W. B. Harland. Dr. Harland was a long-standing Trustee of the Institute, as well as one of Dr. Needham's Executors, who spent the wartime years working in China as a teacher at the Bailie School in Shandan. We are especially grateful to the family for the additional donation of £5,000 to support the processing of these items. Our thanks go also to all those who have so generously supported the Library with donations of books throughout the year.

Other ongoing projects include the digitisation of Dr. Needham's wartime photos and diaries and the reorganisation of the Library's collection of traditional Chinese thread-bound books.

Continuation of Xingzhi Fellowship

We are delighted to announce that the Beijing Xingzhi Exploring Culture Development Co. Ltd have agreed to extend their sponsorship of the Xingzhi Fellowship Programme for a further year.