

RED DETACHMENT OF WOMEN
Film show for members & friends
JANUARY 18, 1967 7.30 pm
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JANUARY 1967

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Old Wine from New China

SHAHSING WINE is one of the eight most famous types of wine in China. It has won wide recognition at home and abroad. The name is derived from the place where it is produced—Shaohsing—in Chekiang province, East China. The town is an ancient one, and the wine too is said to date back to very early days. There is the legend that the wine was already famous as far back as 4,000 years ago, when Yu the Great, founder of the Hsia Dynasty and renowned for his flood protection work, insisted on Shaohsing wine when banqueting the officials who had distinguished themselves in flood control. Shaohsing is the birthplace, too, of Lu Hsun, the great Chinese revolutionary writer, who makes several references to the wine in his writings.

The chief ingredient for the making of Shaohsing wine is the glutinous rice of the Yangtse valley. For leaven, a special yeast is used made from barley spiced with the cassia flower. The secret of its extraordinary quality is said to be the pure, limpid water of the Chienhu, or Mirror Lake, which has its source in the group of hills beyond the city.

Because of its golden hue, Shaohsing wine is commonly called Huang Chiu, or Yellow Wine. There are many varieties but they fall chiefly into two categories, dry and sweet, each with its own characteristic flavour. However, they all have a strong bouquet in common—mellow, pleasing and lingering. The best variety is Chia Fan, or 'rice-adding', which requires extra quantities of rice in the making. Shan Niang, or Fine Brew, is another time-honoured variety, with a sweet, full-bodied flavour. The amber-coloured Hsiang Hsueh, or Fragrant Snow, has greater strength and alcoholic content than the other varieties, and at one time was served at the imperial court. Generally, it has a low alcoholic content which produces a gentle, stimulating effect. It is therefore regarded in Chinese traditional medicine as very helpful for certain types of ill-health.

Shaohsing wine is kept in hermetical-

ly sealed earthen jars which serve as both cask and bottle. The beverage improves remarkably in taste, fragrance and mellowness with age. The kind that is kept in the beautifully hand-painted earthen jars, and known as Yuan Nien Hua Tiao or Long Years Decorated Jars, is often served mixed with other unaged varieties. There used to be a custom among some families in Shaohsing that when a daughter was born to the family, newly made jars of wine were stored underground to be kept as part of her dowry. This wine would be offered to the guests at the wedding party, and thus it was called Nu Erh Chiu, or Maiden's Wine. It was said that wine preserved in this way tasted mellow than any other kind.

Owing to outrageous taxation, the production of Shaohsing wine fell into decline in the days of the Kuomintang regime. But the industry has made great strides since China's liberation. It is finding a firm place in the affections of an increasing number of wine-lovers both in China and other countries in the world.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

Barnet: An enthusiastic audience of over 80 people saw 'The East Is Red' on 8 December in the East Finchley Library. This spectacular film depicts the history of the Chinese revolution from 1919 to 1949 in a series of ballet scenes, staged and performed with great artistry, and often very moving.

Birmingham: The first public meeting of the branch, held on 8 December, was attended by some 35 people, despite the very bad weather. Frida Knight's talk about her recent visit to China stimulated a good discussion.

Bristol: Mr David Owen, who recently taught English in Peking for 18 months, gave a series of three talks on 'Aspects of Life in China' at the Folk House, in December, under the joint auspices of SACU and the Extra-mural department of Bristol University.

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Mountains of jars in which Li wine from the Shaohsing winery is kept and matured

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

(continued from page 1)

Cambridge: Two meetings have been held since the inaugural meeting in October. At the first Dr David Adler gave an informative talk on China's Health Service (cf. **SACU NEWS**, August 1966) and later Dr John Kendrew, FRS, spoke to an audience of 80 people about his recent visit.

Camden: On 23 November, 1966, Mr Colin Penn gave a delightful lecture at the Camden Central Library, Swiss Cottage, London, on 'Famous Chinese Gardens'. This was illustrated by a most varied collection of coloured slides, with the help of which the audience of some 35 gained a vivid impression of an enchanting fairyland world of ancient trees, fountains, statuary and pavilions, interspersed with beds and tubs of hibiscus, lotus and pomegranates.

From the Wall of the Forbidden City we passed to the courtyard of the Chinese writer, Lu Hsun, with its beds of peony and tubs of fig-trees, on to the Summer Palace with 800 acres of well-kept vegetation, and the Garden

of Harmonious Interest, where the covered ways are painted with scenes and flowers; beside a typical hump-backed Chinese bridge grows the sleeping dragon pine. We were then shown the Lingering Garden, divided into four sections, each of different character, its white walls contrasting with the dark roof of the covered ways and with windows designed to look like paintings. Hence to the Garden of Political Incompetence, up to the heights of Kunming, on to Taiyuan (Hall of the Sacred Mother) and so back to Peking's Central Park.

Recent activities of the branch include an evening of slides shown by J. Allan Cash on 'Life in China Today' which drew an interested audience.

Manchester: The branch recently held a very successful social and discussion evening (see report on page 4).

Merseyside and North Wales: A meeting was saved, thanks to intensive use of the telephone by the branch secretary, on 12 November, after another department of the Post Office had failed to deliver films posted four days earlier. Professor D. B. Quinn, of Liverpool University, spoke on the Ming Dynasty and its influence on modern China, and Mr Brunsdon him-

self spoke on the contemporary scene.

Several new members have recently been enrolled, and the committee of ten has elected the following officers: Chairman, Mr Paul Fallon; Vice-Chairman, Dr R. G. Pearson; Secretary, Mr F. R. Brunsdon; Treasurer, Mr R. Nath.

Oxford: An audience of about 60 people heard an interesting talk by the Chairman of Courtauld's, Sir Frank Kearton, at a recent public meeting organised by the branch. The talk, entitled 'A Technologist Looks at China' was based on Sir Frank's diaries of his visits.

Sheffield: At the invitation of SACU members in Sheffield, the general secretary, Mr Derek Bryan, and Mr Roland Berger (member of the Council of Management) visited Sheffield on 28 November and addressed a meeting of people interested in forming a branch. Those present enjoyed talking to four students from China at present studying in Sheffield.

A preparatory committee of five was elected and is now planning a programme of activities. Members and others interested are asked to get in touch with the secretary, Rev John Roebuck, The Vicarage, Wales, Sheffield.

From a grass heap . . .

Li-Min is a Chinese boy working in the countryside near Kaifeng, Honan Province. He does not often write in English but was moved to write about his everyday life to his American grandmother who does not read Chinese. His letter is printed here as he wrote it.

Dear Grandmother and Mother,

How are you? Now I am—well in a hole of a grass heap and writing to you. There have many interesting stories in the countryside and I want to tell them to you. Do you want to know?

When I come back at National Night, on the way any village I went by, they were many boys and girls were singing songs of Chairman Mao's thought or reading **Quotations from Chairman Mao** under the silver light of the moon with a glad voice. They listened who sung good and they visited whose reminiscence too. Far by the village you could feel they were spending a very merry National Night.

When night comes you can hear a lot of children are reading in our village. If you come near them, you may know they are reading Chairman Mao's works. Really they are reading for villagers. They are Red Guards. So all the

villagers can study Chairman Mao's works, the Red Guard have this good idea: when night comes, they standing at street, everyone one hundred foot a guard. The leader read a sentence. The second guard read it again, then the third read again . . . and so on. They just like radio station. After peasants labour all day long they can listen Chairman Mao's works for their rest.

When peasants rest in the field after their labour they will take **Quotations from Chairman Mao** and ask a man to read it. If he don't want to read, they will not be glad.

Now no man steal crops. If you harvest crops and can't pull them to home for it's too late, you can let crops in field and don't look at them. No man want to steal them.

If you have losted something, you may tell others at team meeting and if some people picked it up, they will give it to you.

Summer the day is very dry. We get wheat in field. Two months ago some families have no food. Our Motherland gave our team some grain. We wanted give this grain to that families which have no food. But some of other families don't agree to do so. They said that the grain were given to our team and they were belong to our team. So they must have some too. For this problem, our team members had studied Chairman Mao's works: **In Memory of Norman Bethune**. After studied, all of members said: 'We must not think of ourselves, but do everything for others. We must do what Chairman Mao said.' And the grain were given to hungry families.

Now it's too late. If you want, I can write more next time.

Good Night

Li-Min

SACU sends greetings and best wishes for 1967 to all members and friends.

Revolutions Can Perform Miracles

AT A WELL-ATTENDED meeting in Friends House, London, on 12 December, four speakers with varied first-hand knowledge of China contributed to a forum on the subject of the Cultural Revolution.

Colin Penn sketched the political background, emphasising that the movement was a sharp class struggle to create the conditions in which a new cultural superstructure could be built on the socialist economic base, and described the movement as a 'broad exercise in democracy'. Dr Kurt Mendelssohn summarised his own observations as a scientist, remarking that he had always found China a good place for discussion, and particularly so on this occasion. He had come to the conclusion that a primary aim of the movement was to emphasise that, despite growing prosperity, the time for soft living was not at hand, with the enemy in Taiwan and fighting in Vietnam. The revolution was not yet finished.

Frida Knight talked briefly of her visit, when she saw the Red Guards in action, illustrating from her own observations how the movement had penetrated the countryside. She felt that the whole of China had been built into a fellowship around the 'Little Red Book' of quotations from Mao Tse-tung.

Liao Hung-Ying proceeded to read some of the quotations, and said that this was a mass movement on an unprecedented scale. Revolution was not necessarily chopping off heads; when people made a revolution in their own minds they could perform miracles.

A lively discussion ensued, and although some members of the audience felt that there had not been enough criticism, the consensus was that the meeting had been a good one. The discussion could have gone on for hours had time permitted, and it would seem that many more meetings on the subject are needed.

SACU DIARY

January

- 9 **Intermediate Chinese class** resumes: 24 Warren Street, 7.15 pm.
- 13 **Branch Liaison Committee:** 24 Warren Street, 6 pm.
- 17 **London Discussion Group:** A Traveller in China, by George Glover (illustrated with slides), 24 Warren Street, 8 pm.
- 18 **Film Show:** 'Red Detachment of Women,' University College (Botany Theatre), Gower Street. WC1, 7.30 pm.
- 24 **Manchester Branch:** Illustrated lecture on Chinese Art, by Mary Tregear. City Art Gallery, Manchester, 7.30 pm.
- 26 **Council of Management**
- 27 **Oxford Branch:** Symposium on the Cultural Revolution, by recent visitors to China.
- 31 **Camden Branch:** Meeting on China and Vietnam. Speaker, Denys Noel. Holborn Central Library, 8 pm.

February

- 2 **Barnet Branch:** Annual General Meeting.
- 18 **'China Today':** One-day School, under joint auspices of Merseyside Branch SACU and Chester Branch WEA. Tutor, William Jenner. Chester College, 2.30 pm.

Pressing for a Press Officer

THE FOLLOWING letter, dated 8 November, was discussed by the Council of Management at its meeting on 17 November:

'In the October **SACU NEWS** it is stated that the "Council of Management . . . agreed that at the present time the Society could not afford to employ a Press or Public Relations Officer." As the initiators of the resolution which was, as amended, passed by the AGM in May this year, we feel that some comment is required, since it would seem that the clearly expressed resolution is not to be implemented.

The word "employ" (a Press Officer) does not appear in the resolution; therefore, to say that the Society "cannot afford to employ" a Press Officer misses the point. The resolution stated that a Press Officer should be appointed. At that time it was clearly understood that someone qualified to do the work was willing to give his services free. If this person is no longer available, to carry out the spirit of the resolution it would surely be necessary to search for a substitute? Is **SACU** doing this? The report in **SACU NEWS** implies that they are not even looking for an honorary Press Officer.

We feel obliged to press this matter as it seems to us that, in addition

to the question of a Press Officer, there is another matter at stake here: the confidence of members in the democratic running of the Society. Surely there can be no question that, if a resolution is passed by the AGM, every effort should be made to implement it.

We would be grateful if you could raise this matter at the next meeting of the Council of Management.'

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LLOYD P. G. WARLAND

After discussing the whole question of a Press Officer and the letter above, the Council agreed that the Secretary should be asked to draw together a number of members to monitor press, radio and television, and consult with him as to what items should be answered, the nature of the appropriate replies, and by whom they should be signed. It was to be emphasised that members should continue wherever possible to write as individuals when they felt it appropriate.

A number of members have undertaken to assist in implementing the decisions of the Annual Meeting and of the Council. The number and variety of references to China is, however, so great that to monitor them adequately would require more than part-time coverage by volunteers. Moreover many

POSTER PARADE

THE VISUAL AIDS working group is preparing an exhibition of Chinese posters. Members who have posters they no longer need are asked to give them to the Society so that they can be used for the collective good.

misleading or inaccurate statements are made in such a way that they can be effectively answered only by much longer statements which have no chance of publication. As soon as a suitably qualified person, ready to give his services, can be found, the Council are ready to appoint a Press Officer responsible to the Secretary, in accordance with the terms of the resolution passed by the Annual General Meeting. Meanwhile, the Secretary would be grateful for further assistance from members willing to monitor newspapers, periodicals, radio and television, draw attention to items which they consider need a reply and, if possible, suggest the form which replies might take.

Books Received

A Geography of China, by T. R. Tregear, University of London Press Ltd., 1965. 37s 6d.

THIS EXCELLENTLY illustrated 324-page survey is arranged in four main sections: physical, historical, economic and regional. It gives valuable factual information on the environmental factors underlying China's past and current development.

A Mortal Flower, by Han Suyin. Jonathan Cape, 1966. 35s.

THE SECOND instalment of Han Suyin's great work carries her story, and that of China, forward to 1938. As a girl of 12 in 1928 she is beginning to grow up, in a China torn by civil war. Japanese aggression, Sun Yet-sen, the warlords, Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Tse-tung, and the Kuomintang-Communist alliance are among the principal themes of the book, which, like its predecessor **The Crippled Tree**, is a notable contribution to understanding.

China, by Emil Schulthess. Collins, 1966. £7 7s.

NOT JUST another picture-book, but a living record of China by a master photographer, some of whose work is startlingly beautiful. The text linking the photographs records the two journeys on which the photographs were taken; other essays by several different hands include one by Edgar Snow.

From Emperor to Citizen, by Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi. Translated by W. J. F. Jenner. Foreign Languages Press, Peking, (Vol 1, 1964; Vol 2, 1965). Paperback. 6s 6d.

THE REMARKABLE autobiography of the last Emperor of the Ching (Manchu) dynasty, later puppet of the Japanese, prisoner of the Russians, and now a citizen of socialist China.

Let's Visit China, by Liao Hung-Ying and Derek Bryan. Burke, 1966. 9s 6d.

INTRODUCTION for children in the 8-11 age group, well illustrated.

Mao Tse-tung, by Stuart Schram. Penguin. 7s 6d.

A SCHOLARLY political biography, particularly illuminating for the early history of Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, marred by a concluding chapter (written as the book went to press) containing premature judgments on various matters.

Peking, A Tale of Three Cities, by Nigel Cameron and Brian Brake. Harper & Row (New York), 1965. £6 10s. THE LATEST, and probably the best so far, of a long series of books on the perennially fascinating subject of Peking. Brake's fine photographs and Cameron's perceptive text achieve a fair balance between old and new.

(Inclusion in this list does not preclude review in a future issue.)

LEAFLETS MAKE FRIENDS

THE MANCHESTER branch of SACU held a social and discussion evening on 5 December at the Friends' Meeting House, with the aim of generating a discussion of the Chinese scene and enabling members and non-members to meet in an informal atmosphere. Out of the 37 people present not more than ten were members of the Society, but the wide variety of persons attending was one of its most encouraging features. Many left their names and took away the SACU enrolment form; we hope they will join the Society and support the branch, and the branch committee is most grateful for the generous financial contributions made. Whether or not people join the Society, there has been abundant evidence from this and our previous meeting (when David Crook spoke) of interest in China among a wide range of people. Those present included a Frenchman, an Indian student, at least two housewives, a Nigerian bus conductor, factory workers, and a member of the British-Soviet Friendship Society.

Our Chairman, Sir Geoffrey Haworth, introduced the guest speaker, Mr Philip Leeson, lecturer in Economics at Manchester University, who spoke briefly about economic problems facing underdeveloped countries and in particular China since 1949. During the second half of the evening Mr Leeson answered various questions; this soon

broadened into a discussion to which many of those present contributed.

If a theme developed out of the discussion it was that China's particular experience and present condition necessitate and justify totalitarian measures. There was very little support for the view (expressed by one person) that China's present internal and foreign policies are repressive of individual liberty and a danger to world peace. Indeed, the overall discussion might well have been felt by a Red Guard to be disappointing, since it would have left him very little to correct. There was a noticeable lack of hostile criticism of present happenings in China.

Nearly all those who attended the meeting came after seeing the leaflet which the committee distributed when the Felix Greene film **CHINA!** was on in Manchester. The leaflet was handed out to patrons leaving the cinema and again to people leaving a **Morning Star** rally at the Free Trade Hall. It was also distributed among university students — several of whom attended. The meeting was not advertised in the press. Publicising events by means of leaflets has the advantage of being relatively inexpensive and although giving them out is not a congenial task it does seem to be an effective way of getting people interested.

B. S. Pointon

ABOUT SACU

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Believing that understanding between Britain and China is of the

highest importance, SACU aims to make information about China widely available in order to help every interested person in Britain to make his or her own assessment.

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Membership of SACU is open to all who subscribe to the aims of the Society. Members are entitled to receive **SACU NEWS** monthly free of charge, use the library at central office, call upon the Society for information and participate in all activities of the Society.

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