

Obituaries

In memory of Bill Brugger (1941–1999)

Andrew Watson

Bill Brugger's death in Adelaide on 23 August came after a number of years of poor health and a short, but intense, fight against cancer. His many friends in Chinese studies and the generations of students he taught were much distressed by this premature departure of a significant contributor to the study of contemporary China. Many of us will recall, with deep pleasure, long discussions of the nature of political change in China and of political theory, in which Bill's engaging manner and concentration on exploring the theoretical meaning of events stimulated us to seek our own new perspectives. Such moments inevitably remain linked in memory with the soft bubbling of his ever-present pipe. Bill will be remembered as an engaged and productive scholar, as a fine teacher, as a generous intellectual who engaged in debate without spite, and as a good friend. Indeed, the warmth of feeling towards him was evident in the last few weeks of his life, when many of his colleagues and former students made journeys from distant parts of the world to say farewell. Bill was philosophical in the face of his illness, and these visits were another opportunity for him to reflect on China and political theory. He will be keenly missed.

Bill's engagement with Chinese Studies began in 1960, when he enrolled in the Modern Chinese degree at SOAS. At that time, few universities in Britain taught Chinese and few students chose the option. The field was open for creative people, and Bill is one of those who left his mark. During his undergraduate days at SOAS, Bill developed the broad sinological foundation that has been a feature of British scholars working on China. He also demonstrated the qualities that became characteristic of his scholarly life and shaped the way he subsequently organized his teaching and research. He was intensely methodical and systematic. I recall how, in 1964, as finals approached, he organized groups of classmates to work as teams, focusing on different periods of Chinese history and sharing the fruits of their work. I suspect a number of us owed what success we had in the final paper to this effort. This approach also underlined the extent to which Bill was committed to working with others, exchanging ideas and enjoying the sparks that could come from discussion and debate. This characteristic was most apparent in the 1970s and 1980s, when he organized and edited a series of books on political change in China that were the product of regular workshops and discussion groups.

Another feature of Bill's early days at SOAS was his commitment to social engagement. He ran for various offices in the student union and, probably not a widely known achievement, starred in a spoof film loosely based on a George Simenon novel. His experience later in China in-

tensified his sense of commitment to the social role of scholarship and, during the 1960s and 1970s, when student activism flared in Britain and Australia, Bill was firmly on the side of an open and participatory structure for academic life. Bill was always conscious of the political significance of events in China and of the political context for Chinese studies.

On graduating from SOAS, Bill became one of the group of young British scholars that was able to spend time in China before and during the Cultural Revolution. China had, at that time, just changed to English as the first foreign language and was seeking English language teachers. This gave him the rare opportunity to engage with a society previously studied at a distance and in the abstract. It was also a society undergoing intense and consciously debated change. In retrospect, this was a key formative period for him. It not only brought the language alive and enabled him to come to grips with China's social reality, but also stimulated an abiding interest in political theory and the relationship between theory and social practice. Bill's commitment to a scholarly life devoted to exploring China's reality through the lens of political theory became a fundamental driving force of the rest of his life.

On returning to Britain in 1966, Bill embarked on a programme of study that resulted in his Ph.D. thesis in 1972 and led to the publication of *Democracy and Organisation in the Chinese Industrial Enterprise 1948–53* (1975). This book remains one of the most solid studies of the period and of the socialist transition in Chinese industry. Its meticulous analysis of a complex and detailed process was based on extensive documentary research and had a clear theoretical focus that demonstrated Bill's lifelong commitment to linking the particular to the theoretical. The book underlined Bill's interest in socialist theory and in studying China as a means to elucidate socialist perspectives on political thought. During this time, Bill also became the Materials Officer at the Contemporary China Institute at SOAS and worked to develop its basic collection of primary materials. Bill thus made a significant contribution to the Institute that served for many years as one of the world's major centres for research on contemporary China.

In 1972, Bill moved to the Flinders University of South Australia as a lecturer in politics. He rose to senior lecturer (1976), reader (1978) and professor (1980). He served as head of department throughout the 1980s and was a senior figure on many university committees. His rapid promotion reflected his scholarly output, his organizational abilities and the trust that he enjoyed among his colleagues. He remained a member of the Politics Department at Flinders until his death.

The combination of strong empirical foundations in documentary sources and a guiding focus on socialist theoretical issues became the hallmark of the series of political studies of contemporary China which Bill wrote and edited in the years after completing his thesis. A number of these publications also involved work with his growing list of successful postgraduate students (he supervised 14 theses in total), and it was characteristic of the man to generate opportunities for his students to

publish their work. It is not surprising, therefore, that they have always shown him great loyalty. His corpus of work included five individual books, four jointly written books, three edited volumes and numerous chapters and journal articles. His students have become lecturers and professors in a number of universities in Australia and in Hong Kong.

As time passed, Bill became increasingly engaged with the broad range of political theory. His intellectual interests took him well beyond China. Indeed, in recent years, as the reassessment of political change and of the Cultural Revolution in China proceeded, Bill not only contributed to that discussion but also developed a growing interest in the impact of post-modern thought. He published on an extensive variety of issues including classic British and European liberalism, socialist theory, technocracy and Australian politics. His last book, *Republican Theory in Political Thought*, engaged with the issue of the moment in Australia. He was also a frequent contributor to radio and newspaper commentary. His capacity to sustain this breadth to his scholarship was a testimony to the strength of his intellect.

For those who knew him, his sense of intellectual engagement, the breadth of his work and his capacity to retain a focus on the theoretical heart of scholarship will remain at the core of our memories. As will his warmth, generosity and kindness.

Jacques Guillerma (1911–1998)

Claude Aubert

On 2 February 1998, Jacques Guillerma died at 87 after a long and dignified fight against illness. He was not only the founder of French studies on Contemporary China, but one of the last first hand witnesses of more than fifty years of recent Chinese history.

“The most beautiful journey is not worth a modest come back.” This quotation, from a poem by Gao Qi, found in his autobiography *Une Vie pour la Chine, Mémoires, 1937–1989* (1989), may summarize the feelings of a man who personally paid a heavy price for having travelled so deeply into the turmoil of China’s recent past: he gave that country the best part of his youth. Indeed, the last twenty years of his life, after he had retired to a small village in the Savoie near Grenoble, may have been the happiest of his life. The love and care of his third wife, as well as the peace of the countryside, gave him the serenity to look back at the hopes and the disillusionment he experienced in the face of so many lost opportunities, to wish the best for a country he admired more for its civilization and its people than for its politics.

But what a journey! Born the same year the Manchu dynasty collapsed, Guillerma arrived in Beijing in May 1937, two months before the city

was invaded by Japanese troops. In the days following the Marco Polo Bridge incident, he was on the spot, counting the dead. In Nanjing, on a hot Sunday morning in July 1949, he was on the streets to watch the arrival of the Communist troops. In October 1966, when he left Beijing for the last time, the Red Guards were rampaging the streets and brutalizing its inhabitants.

Jacques Guillerma was a military man. After graduating from Saint-Cyr, the best military academy in France, he first served in Madagascar before being ordered to Beijing as aide to the military attaché there. Being a soldier, he obeyed and learned Chinese. As military attaché of the French Embassy, he followed the Nationalist government first to Chongqing, where he stayed from 1941 to 1943, then on to Nanjing, from 1946 to 1949. After the fall of Nanjing, he stayed on in the city until 1951. He was then posted to Thailand from where he participated in the Geneva Conference on Indochina, and in the activities of SEATO. In 1964, after having begun a new career as a China scholar in Paris, he was called back to Beijing, again as military attaché with the provisory grade of *général de brigade*, to the newly installed French Embassy. Just before taking this position, he had the unpleasant task, together with another diplomat, of visiting and announcing to Chiang Kai-shek the French decision to recognize Beijing.

Each of his long stays in China ended in abrupt departures, which were ruptures of a kind. In 1944, after so many years in China and with his first marriage at an end, he was dispatched to Algiers and to France where he fought in the last battles of the war. His forced departure from China in 1951, and his return to Europe in the late 1950s, resulted in a separation from his second wife – the poetess Hu Ping, whom he had married in Nanjing – who preferred to go to Taiwan. Again, in late 1957, he served as colonel in Algeria.

Guillerma failed to achieve the military career he had hoped for. This failure, along with China's own failures, however, were a sort of blessing. His experience in China led Guillerma to question the limited knowledge of local politics then available in the West and to enter Chinese studies where he acquired an international reputation. In this process, he introduced to the closed community of French classical sinology a new approach to the country and its people.

In 1957, he went back to school to obtain a degree in Chinese studies. The following year, he retired from the army and began to teach at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Sixième Section, which later became the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, EHESS). There he established and headed the Centre de Recherche et de Documentation sur la Chine Contemporaine, better known afterwards as the Centre Chine. Then, over a period of some twenty years, as Directeur d'Etudes at the EHESS and Director of the Centre Chine (excluding an interlude in Beijing during 1964–1966), he shaped the French school of contemporary China studies.

The Centre Chine was of modest proportions, even after it was transferred to the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, at the heart of the

EHESS. It was, however, open to all, and many who would have been discouraged by the world of traditional sinology attended Guillermaz's lessons and the informal seminars he organized on current events in China, and used the facilities of the specialized library that he built up from nothing. Eventually, these students, trained under his direction, went on to engage in either research or professional activities related to China. This circle became an active network whose influence went beyond the formal structures of the EHESS.

Jacques Guillermaz's in-depth books on the recent history of China filled a critical void in the literature in France at the time. As early as 1959, when only the first studies of Fairbank, Schwartz and other American scholars were available but difficult to access in France, he wrote *La Chine Populaire*, in the very popular series of *Que sais-je?*. This was followed in 1969 and 1972 by his well-known *Histoire du Parti Communiste Chinois (1921–1949)* and *Histoire du Parti Communiste Chinois au Pouvoir (1949–1972)*, published by Editions Payot. These books were to be re-edited and translated into numerous languages and still remain basic tools for students, with their detailed accounts of events, biographical data on all the main historical actors and realistic assessments.

In his books, as well as in his teaching, Jacques Guillermaz showed shrewd judgment formed in the field, when history had the savour of war and death. Who, other than a military man, could have best explained a period mainly shaped by force, ruse and chance? In those uncertain times, individuals had more than disproportionate roles and Jacques Guillermaz had the rare advantage of having known most of them personally. At the same time, he was attentive to information from all walks of life, diplomats of course, but also journalists, missionaries, merchants and technicians as well as historians, political scientists, economists, lawyers and geographers among others. This multi-disciplinary approach was to become the landmark of the Centre Chine.

A good observer of human nature, he knew enough of the ordinary Chinese not to be carried away by ideology when Maoist propaganda was making so many converts in the West. Conservative in politics, with first hand experience of communism, he had no illusions about the real issues in the political struggles he witnessed. He had great admiration and compassion for the Chinese people – hard working, so resilient in the worst of times, so patient and naïve (*lao shi*) in front of their rulers.

By duty an analyst of China's misfortunes, Jacques Guillermaz was at heart an admirer and a connoisseur of China's grand past, familiar with its great historical characters, and particularly fond of its poetry. He will be remembered by all as a gentleman, attentive to everyone and particularly considerate towards staff of the Centre Chine. He was respectfully addressed as *Mon Général* by colleagues as well as students. This title – which he secretly resented – was a mark of genuine respect for a man so different from the ordinary scholar. The legacy he left to all of us in France working on contemporary China is not small. One may hope that what was to be the achievement of his whole life, the Centre Chine, his

fine library and his research community, will survive him and eventually give birth to the great Institut de la Chine Contemporaine that he wanted so much.

Memorial to Benjamin I. Schwartz (1916–1999)

**Paul A. Cohen, Merle Goldman and Roderick
MacFarquhar**

During a span of almost four decades, from the early 1950s until the late 1990s, Benjamin Schwartz, through his teaching in the Harvard Government and History departments and in his books and articles, was a towering figure in the field of Chinese studies. He set standards – above all at the intersection of intellectual history and politics – that were a guide and source of inspiration to students and scholars worldwide. His influence extended well beyond the China field; it also cut across conventional disciplinary boundaries, touching political science, religion, philosophy, culture and literature, as well as history.

Ben's learning was vast, ranging far beyond even the cultures of the ten languages he spoke or read. In the classroom he refused to be confined to the topic at hand, and to co-teach with him was to participate in a lively but always collegial dialogue. He conveyed his learning not as a fixed set of truths or simple accretion of information, but with a distinctive approach to the posing of problems. Central to this approach was a healthy scepticism toward received wisdom, predictive models of explanation (such as political and economic systems), the clichés of everyday academic discourse, and any and all forms of reductionism. Again and again, Ben insisted on defining what was taken for granted and unveiling the complexity that lay hidden behind simple labels. In his essay "On arenas of social choice," for example, he asserted that our difficulty in grappling with contemporary social thought came not so much from the neologisms as from "the older established vocabulary which we simply take for granted. Words such as 'social,' 'society,' 'system' and 'choice' seem transparent, and yet buried in them are all the problems and dilemmas of the contemporary human sciences."

A man of paradoxes and odd juxtapositions, Ben is not easily categorized as a scholar-thinker. He wrote seminal books and articles on the history of Chinese Communism. *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (1951) is still a pioneering work not only in the field of comparative communism, but also in political and intellectual history. It analysed the ideological and intellectual debates of the early decades of the 20th century within their extraordinarily complicated political, personal and

international contexts. With copious documentation, he was the first scholar to provide evidence showing that the Chinese Communists were not simply puppets of Stalin and the Soviet Union but had their own agendas. A leader such as Mao Zedong was willing to disobey Moscow when its orders clashed with what he perceived as China's realities. His second book, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (1964), focused on a major late Qing thinker whose translations of Western social and political thought were enormously influential among contemporaries. Ben's analysis of Yan Fu shed light on the struggles of a whole generation of Chinese intellectuals who sought to come to grips with the tensions evoked by China's political and intellectual encounter with the West. His third path breaking work, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (1985), presented a wide-ranging discussion of ancient Chinese thought and views of political power, illuminated by frequent comparisons with the foundational ideas of other civilizations, in particular the early West.

Temperamentally, Ben was unwilling to be confined by his professional involvement as a "China specialist." He often engaged in the broader intellectual issues of the day, as evidenced by his public response to Allan Bloom's best-selling assault on American higher education and his searching critique of Hannah Arendt's treatment of Jews and Judaism in her "religion of politics." Although a frequent and vigorous defender of the "area-studies" approach with its implicit emphasis on the defining importance of culture, both popular and elite, he consistently displayed faith in the existence of a world of common humanity transcending cultural boundaries. Most striking, the wielding of power, the search for its sources, the concern for its moral ramifications and other issues pertaining to its proper use were for him subjects of intense and abiding intellectual fascination. Yet, it would be hard to find someone less interested than Benjamin Schwartz in the trappings of personal power.

Schwartz's former students presented him in 1990 with a festschrift entitled *Ideas across Cultures*. Among his many other honours, he served as President of the Association for Asian Studies in 1979–80 and Director of the Fairbank Center at Harvard in 1983–84. His book on ancient Chinese thought was awarded the Ralph Waldo Emerson Prize of Phi Beta Kappa in 1986 and also won the American Historical Association's 1986 James Henry Breasted Prize. In 1998, he received the American Historical Association's Award for Scholarly Distinction.

Though becoming increasingly frail in his last year, Ben never lost the sparkle in his eyes or any of his intellectual capacities. Up to his final days, his presence raised the level of any discussion from the petty and mundane to profoundly intellectual and moral. Though thoroughly engaged in his own religion of Judaism, he had a deep appreciation and intellectual understanding of all ways of thought – Buddhism as well as Confucianism, Chinese popular religion as well as philosophical Daoism, and Islam as well as Christianity. He had an uncanny ability to get to the heart of a question or academic argument, no matter how confused and obscure it might be. Just a few weeks before his death, in

a discussion at the Fairbank Center about whether or not the Chinese revolution had been necessary, Ben characteristically illuminated the issue by questioning the very premise of the question. He asserted that “the question should not be whether *the* revolution was necessary, but whether *a* revolution was necessary.” In that one statement, he invited us to consider a deeper reality and so transformed the debate.

Ben’s death has left not only a profound intellectual void but also a personal one. As Richard Baum has written elsewhere, he was “a true gentle-man (with equal emphasis on each syllable).” He treated everyone – young and old, student or statesman, the Fairbank Center kitchen staff with whom he spoke Portuguese or eminent visiting scholars – with equal respect as individuals with whom one could engage in intellectual discourse and from whom one could learn. He was a man of rare personal as well as intellectual character, whose likes we are not apt to encounter again.

Gerry Segal (1953–1999)

David S. G. Goodman

Gerry Segal died on 2 November 1999 at the age of 46 after a six-month struggle with cancer. He was an articulate, provocative and courageous commentator on a wide range of international politics, best known for his work on Pacific Asia and particularly China. For almost two decades, he repeatedly focused on matters of the utmost topicality by challenging current orthodoxies, and in the 1990s became a leading public intellectual in the English-speaking world. In the process, he not only set agendas for academics and policy-makers, but provided both intellectual and organizational frameworks for them to interact with.

After graduating from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, with Ellis Joffe, and the London School of Economics, with Michael Yahuda, Gerry Segal started his academic career as a lecturer in international politics. He held university lectureships first in Aberystwyth, then in Leicester and later in Bristol. At the end of the 1980s, he headed a project on comparative foreign policy reform in communist party states at the Royal Institute of International Affairs for three years. In 1991, he moved to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, first as senior fellow responsible for Asian security, and later for two years as Director of Studies.

Gerry Segal’s written legacy is impressive both for its quantity and its constant intellectual stimulus. He wrote or co-authored 13 books, edited or co-edited another 18, and published more than 120 articles and essays in academic publications. Even more impressive was the challenge of his relentless intellect. His Ph.D. thesis on the ‘Great power triangle’ – between Washington, Moscow and Beijing – established a style which

both emphasized a healthy scepticism about current fashions in academic analysis and encouraged thinking beyond the square. This basic approach characterized his subsequent work, especially on China, and inevitably led to controversy. In the middle of the 1980s, he was among the first to explore the potential consequences for international politics from China's adoption of economic reform, against the advice of many Westerners who preferred to think they were dealing with an unchanging China. His 1994 Adelphi Paper, *China Changes Shape*, examined the impact of international markets and interactions on the exercise of China's regionalism, and became a subject of complaint by sections of the Party-state in the People's Republic of China who interpreted the argument as advocating political disintegration. Most recently his *Foreign Affairs* article on "Does China matter?" similarly ruffled more than a few feathers in the People's Republic and led to an editorial denunciation in the *China Daily*.

Coupled with his substantial research output was Gerry Segal's impressively high level of activism in other areas. Topical research and scholarship led him quickly and easily into the role of a public intellectual on international politics, particularly commenting on the development of Pacific Asia. He wrote regularly in the international press and was a frequent commentator in the electronic media. These activities fitted well with his strategy of bridging the gap between academic expertise and the work of policy-makers in government and its associated agencies. In 1987, that particular emphasis led him to establish the quarterly journal, *The Pacific Review*, which has developed as a major international forum for the discussion of ideas on Pacific Asia. In a similar vein, he took a leading role in the development of the European Council for Security Co-operation in the Asia-Pacific in 1994, and the Council for Asia-Europe Co-operation in 1996.

Gerry Segal was an inveterate collaborator and organizer of research projects. Among other collaborators, he wrote frequently with Barry Buzan; and together he and I produced seven books. As his work at both the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the International Institute for Strategic Studies indicates, he was an enthusiastic and very effective research manager. He led and participated in a number of research projects at the Royal Institute of International Affairs before moving there as a research fellow to work on a comparative study of the foreign policy of communist party-states, just as those states themselves were undergoing a major transformation. Those circumstances made the project that much more exciting and relevant, though necessarily also the more difficult. With that project, as with others both before and after at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, scholars from around the world were only too willing to be involved and pushed to think beyond the comfortable. Recognizing his experience in research management, when the Economic and Social Research Council decided to establish a Pacific Asia Programme in 1994 to encourage and support related research projects in the United Kingdom, Gerry Segal was invited to be its Director.

Although Gerry Segal was always reluctant to describe himself as a 'China expert,' China Studies, as well as the study of the Asia Pacific more generally in the United Kingdom, has lost a significant influence. Moreover, on the wider stage the presence of someone prepared to prick our consciences by attempting to articulate the difficult – sometimes the unthinkable – will also be sorely missed. Those who worked closely with Gerry Segal will miss his generosity of spirit, his loyalty and his engagement with life. From fairly early on, I rapidly discovered that the two of us approached problems from widely different world views, but it never impeded our relationship. Working with him was always a pleasure, as well as intellectually rewarding.