

外国人在中国

# FOREIGNERS IN CHINA



China Intercontinental Press

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# FOREIGNERS IN CHINA

Compiled by Jiao Bo  
Translated by Pan Shuangqin

China Intercontinental Press

# Foreword

Lisa Carducci

## Once upon a time...

Once upon a time, China was a mystical country: an exotic dream at the ends of the earth; a magnetic pole. China still has a strong attraction, but for different reasons. Today, people from all around the world come here to study, work, and do research. They come to help China develop, and also to prosper, especially since China joined the WTO in December 2001. It was not so long ago that a person who travelled to China was regarded as some kind of hero, and would be introduced: "This is my friend who has been to China, you know..."

China had closed herself off for centuries, content with herself - the Middle Kingdom - and dismissive of everywhere else. Much, much later, a reverse trend occurred: the West knew best; the West was right, good and great. The Chinese nation lost confidence in itself and started to admire and accept all that came from outside. Chinese people formerly saw the world as consisting simply of "we, the Chinese, and you, the foreigners." In addition to being lumped into one category, all foreigners also shared the blanket term "Westerners," even the Japanese! The wider China opens its doors to the external world and the further Chinese people travel abroad, the more aware they become of facial characteristics, and the greater their ability to identify a spoken language. They also realise that not all foreigners are Christians and nor do they all speak English.

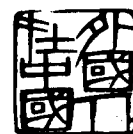
An album of this kind represents a precious bridge between various cultures, civilisations and countries, and helps open readers' eyes to our multifaceted world. It includes people from such places as Switzerland, Canada, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, England, the United States, Sweden, France, Austria, and encompasses men and women, the elderly and the young, all with diverse knowledge, interests and skills. The album is a way of serving up the

world on a tray and demonstrating the richness of humankind and the diversity of life, and provides an image of one small part the world. It also shows diversity in the field of activities taken up by foreigners living in China: teachers, diplomatic staff, investors, barmen, hairdressers, models, musicians, sportsmen, chefs, and translators. Some are involved in theatre, medicine, dance, and charitable activities; some are here studying taiji, Peking opera, and acupuncture.

It is now a common discovery on taking a closer look at a group of children playing, laughing and talking together that they come from all countries but China. Yet they speak Chinese with no accent other than the local one, because they were born in China, or came here as infants, and made their first steps on Chinese soil. Their parents leave them with a Chinese *ayi* when they go to work, and the pale, freckled children with reddish hair and blue eyes from Europe, America and Australia learn Chinese as their mother tongue, as do children with darker skin and hair from Cuba, Sudan, or Bangladesh. The world has no more frontiers, no limits. The Global Village is under construction!

Since Beijing was named host of the 2008 Olympic Games, foreign language learning has become a popular evening, weekend and holiday activity. English is still the favourite, but, to my great pleasure, other languages such as French, Italian, Russian, and Spanish gain popularity. Classes of all kinds are available: intensive, extensive, and even hyper-intensive; standard or brushing-up classes; language for leisure, travel, business or just plain survival.

Among foreigners who that have been here for a long period, even for decades, a large number close themselves off from the Chinese world. They live in their own environment, never make friends with any Chinese, never learn the language, watch only foreign movies, and eat as they do in their own country. In other words, they not only



remain foreigners, but also strangers. Others fall in love not only with China but also with a son or a daughter of this country, and tie the knot. The growing number of so-called "overseas marriages" or "international marriages" is a rational consequence of China's opening-up, and indicates a broadening of minds. These couples are accepted in their community, and no longer looked down upon or criticised. For every nine foreign men that marry Chinese women (of an average age 31), one foreign woman marries a Chinese man. In Shanghai, for instance, there were 400 overseas marriages in 1980, but by 2002 this figure had rocketed to 2,705. Between 1996 and 2002, there were 21,015 mixed marriages registered in Shanghai: 40 per cent to Japanese, and 38 per cent to overseas Chinese and spouses from Taiwan, Macao and Hong Kong. The others were from the United States (6.3 percent), Australia (5.4 percent) and European countries (3.9 percent).

Opening-up brings cross-cultural communication. Whether or not a foreigner can be happy in China, or a Chinese in another country, depends on their capacity to adapt. Those who resist their new environment and cherish, defend, and protect their own cultural values in the belief none approaches will suffer and - sooner or later - surrender and die. As an 'expatriate' in China, why not take this marvellous opportunity to make a general spiritual clear-out? Set down all the values, morals, rules, customs, habits of your own country; examine them one by one; compare them with their local equivalents; sort, select and put them back in order in your life. Experience has taught me that this is the only way to happiness.

Finally, I would like to mention the contribution foreigners make to China's economy. I am not talking of investment through official channels, but of more modest, almost imperceptible contributions. Foreigners who live in

China for a certain time not only travel across the country (and spend money) but invite their relatives and friends to see with their own eyes this wonderful country they read about in letters and e-mails from their love ones. Attracting foreigners to China achieves more than just economic contributions: it is a cultural contribution that builds a bridge of mutual understanding and friendship between individuals and nations.

When I came to China for the first time in 1985, I could not buy things, eat, or take notes without being surrounded by dozens of Chinese, curious to see what a foreigner would choose at the market, and how much she would be charged according to the length of her nose. They were fascinated as to whether she could use chopsticks, and by the strange 'characters' written on her map of China. They would touch my brown hair, try to guess how old I was, and how many dollars I had in my bag. Today, who, at least in large cities, has not yet seen a foreigner in the flesh? Curiosity is disappearing. Now is the time to learn to live together and cooperate towards building a better world. This is the reason of this book about foreigners in China.

*Lise Cohen*



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# A Long Life of Affection

Photos by Dai Shulin



↑ Hucang villagers attending the funeral procession in the rain.

✎ In 1935, the Austrian girl Gertrude Wagner and Du Chengrong at their wedding ceremony in Hangzhou (file photo).



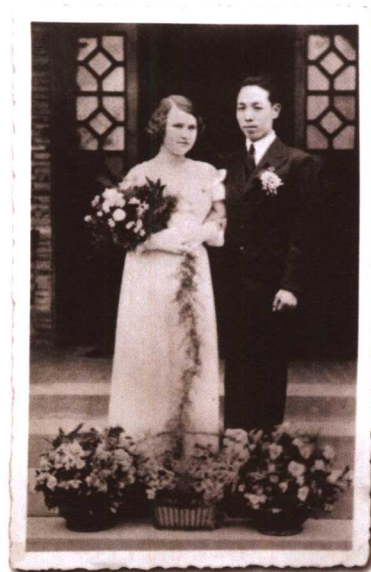


On February 24, 1935, an Austrian girl Gertrude Wagner and a Chinese police officer Du Chengrong held their wedding ceremony in the Hangzhou Xinxin Hotel. At the ceremony, Du Chengrong gave his wife a Chinese name—Hua Zhiping, which means a person met by chance who becomes a bosom friend for life.

Gertrude Wagner and Du Chengrong met and got to know each other in Austria, where the Chinese police officer was undergoing training from 1931 until 1933. At that time, Gertrude's father was Du's instructor. She used to accompany her father to work every day and so got to know the handsome young man. When Du had completed his training course, the 17-year-old Gertrude told her friends: "I will marry a Chinese". Her parents were opposed, but were finally won over by the teenage girl's persistence as she kept insisting: "This is my happiness." In 1935, Gertrude Wagner came to China and became the wife of Du Chengrong.

Between 1935 and 1949, the couple experienced China's War of Resistance Against Japan and the Civil War. During that period, Gertrude gave a birth to four children. In August 1949, Du demobilized and returned to his hometown of Hucang Village in Zhejiang Province with his wife. In the countryside, Gertrude, like other village women, learnt how to raise chickens, ducks and rabbits. She also learnt to cook the local meals, such as baking corn cakes, and to make cotton shoes and other household tasks. In a letter to her younger brother, she wrote: "Here, enjoyment is non-existent and ballet, skiing and ice-skating makes no sense." Life was very hard for her, but Gertrude tried every means to let her children receive good education. In 1952, when her elder son went to senior high school, she sold her gold bracelets that had been left by her mother, and divided the money into three parts—one for her son's tuition fee, another for chemical fertilizers and the other for seeds.

In 1978, China started to implement the reform and opening-up policies, and rural life improved. Unfortunately,



Du was diagnosed with cancer in 1989. He actively cooperated with doctors to treat the disease, as he wanted to accompany his wife in their old age. Although old, Gertrude personally took care of her husband. In April 1990, she got an Austrian nationality certificate. On April 28, the 84-year-old Du was seriously ill and could not speak to express his feelings. But Gertrude could read his heart and showed him the certificate of Austrian nationality. Seeing it, Du closed his eyes, at ease.

It was raining on February 26, 2003. The 86-year-old Gertrude passed away at her home in Hucang Village. Her sons and grandsons buried her with her husband. The whole village took part in the funeral procession. After first meeting at an ice-skating rink in Vienna 68 years ago, Gertrude and Du Chengrong finished their hard but happy life together. "She loved her husband so much and took good care of him. I will never forget the manner in which they spoke to each other," said the executive vice chairman of the Austria-China Friendship Association.





- With lanterns in hand, inscribed with the Chinese character Du, villagers express their profound condolences over the death of the couple Du Chengrong and Gertrude Wagner.
- Wagner leaves the house that she lived in for so many years for the last time.
- The Austrian Consul to Shanghai, Ms. Weinberger, meets Gertrude's relatives.
- Goodbye Grandma Wagner.









A happy family gathering.  
In 2001, Austrian Parliamentary Head Geister  
meets Gertrude in Zhejiang Province.  
A cheerful and optimistic woman.





# Howard's China Affection

Photos by Gu Yongwei



“War entirely changed my life,” said Howard Adams.

Howard, a native of Dallas in Texas, was in the US Army during World War II and the Korean War. After the fighting ended, he stayed in China.

In September 1954, he came to work in a papermaking factory in Jinan, Shandong Province, and soon became an outstanding technician. Two years later, Howard met a Jinan girl named Xin Lihua and married her several months later. Xin's family members all liked him. Xin took good care of her husband, cooking delicious Chinese food for him and teaching him to speak Chinese. Though Howard's income was enough to support the family, the hard-working wife still often went out to do temporary work.

In September 1963, Howard entered the People's University of China (Renmin Daxue) majoring in international politics. At that time, he had a six-year-old daughter named Huo Lide. Howard moved to Beijing with his wife and daughter. As with other foreign students studying in Beijing, Howard lived in a school dormitory. His wife and daughter lived outside the school, and their home soon became a place often visited by students from various countries. The wife's warmth and hospitality made a deep impression on Howard's friends. They said they would marry a Chinese girl like Xin Lihua. In 1969, Howard's family returned to the papermaking factory in Shandong Province.

In 1979, China and the United States officially established diplomatic relations. The next year, Howard's father died in the United States. Howard was saddened by the news. Missing his mother, he quickly returned to the United States. With the Chinese way to express sorry, he knelt for a long time in front of his mother whom he hadn't seen for more than 30 years. Because of the limited conditions, Howard's mother could not come to China with her son and only kept several photos of her daughter-in-law and granddaughter. Three years later, Howard's mother passed away.

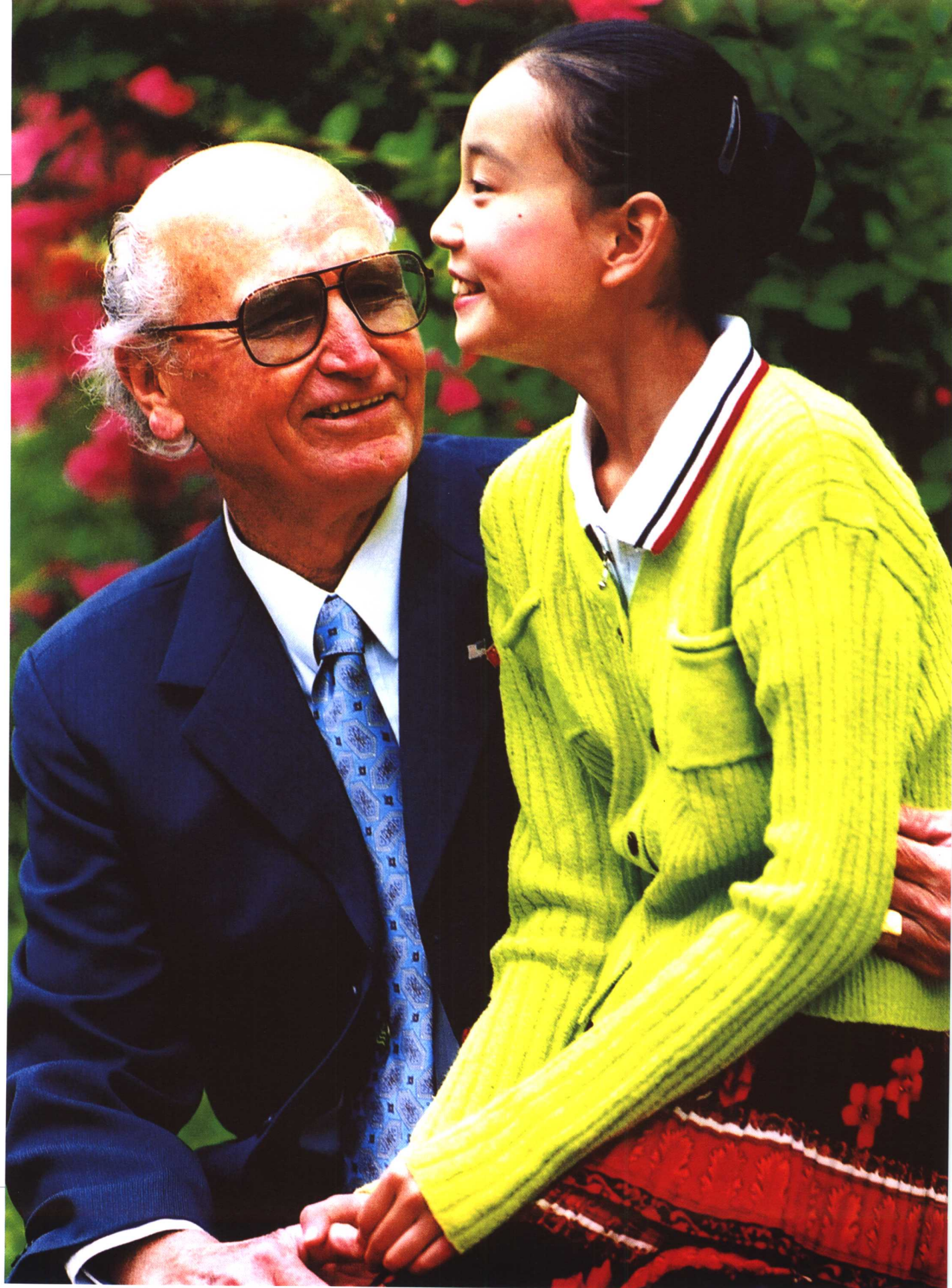
After coming back from the United States, Howard worked as a teacher in Shandong Medical Institute (now known as Shandong Medical University). In 1983, Howard's granddaughter Shasha came into this world and brought great happiness to this family. Howard never spoke Chinese with his granddaughter before the age of four, so that she grew up in an English-speaking environment. At the age of four, she was joined by a younger sister, Shaman. So, looking after the two granddaughters became a main work of the old couple in their later years. Howard loved the two children very much and used to take them out by bike.

But, while Shasha and Shaman were growing up, their grandmother's health was deteriorating. To make his wife happy, Howard took her on a three-month trip to Europe. At the end of 1993, the wife died of lung cancer. Missing her, Howard often rides his bicycle to her grave surrounded by mountains and burns incense in front of the tomb while conversing with her.

Howard marries Xin Lihua in 1956 (selected from the family album).

The happy family—Howard with his granddaughter.









- Every year, Howard's family is selected as a "model family."
- The granddaughter likes to have the breakfast cooked by Howard.
- Happy with friends.

