

Modern China

<http://mcx.sagepub.com>

Pearl Buck-Popular Expert on China, 1931-1949

Michael H. Hunt

Modern China 1977; 3; 33

DOI: 10.1177/009770047700300102

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://mcx.sagepub.com>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

Additional services and information for *Modern China* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://mcx.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://mcx.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

Citations <http://mcx.sagepub.com/cgi/content/refs/3/1/33>

*Pearl Buck—
Popular Expert on China,
1931-1949*

MICHAEL H. HUNT
Yale University

For two decades Pearl Buck was the most prolific and popular American interpreter of China. Her commentary appeared in such widely read journals as *The New Republic*, *New York Times Magazine*, *Life*, and *Reader's Digest*. Her influence over the popular imagination, measured by such crude indices as polls, interviews, and book sales, was enormous. Her unique insight on China and her commitment and effectiveness as a publicist enabled her to transform the personal vision of an unchanging, earthbound China which she had shaped in the 1920s into a national vision during the following two decades.

Buck's influence rested essentially on the success of *The Good Earth*, which, more than any other single contemporary work, shaped an American image of China. During Buck's heyday it sold more than a million and a half copies, a very impressive figure in those days before the economical paperback book. Translated into more than 30 foreign languages, it was known worldwide. By 1972 total sales had mounted to well over four

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *I owe thanks to several critics whose thoughtful comments have helped me clarify and elaborate portions of this essay.*

MODERN CHINA, Vol. 3 No. 1, January 1977
© 1977 Sage Publications, Inc.

[33]

million.¹ *The Good Earth* reached the public in other versions—as a Broadway play in 1933 and as a movie in 1937 which, according to studio estimates (Jones, 1955: 47), was seen by approximately 23 million Americans. A safe guess would place the number of Americans exposed to Buck's creation in one form or another at no less than 40 million. Moreover, its impression stayed with them. Isaacs (1958: 155) conducted a series of interviews in the 1950s, well after the peak of her popularity, among a rough sampling of influential Americans and found that 69 of the 181 questioned spontaneously mentioned *The Good Earth* as "a major source of their own impressions of the Chinese and these were almost uniformly impressions of a wonderfully attractive people." A Gallup (1972: 135) poll in October 1938 showed Americans rated *The Good Earth* the sixth most interesting book they had ever read. Even today the vision of China that Buck elaborated in her fiction and her commentary retains a remarkable residual appeal.

Although millions regarded Buck as an authority on China during a dramatic period of war and revolution, she has yet to receive the serious, coherent treatment she deserves.² We need to know the sources and follow the development of her views on China. The first half of this article attempts to meet this need. It deals with the making of a China expert and allows Buck to speak to us in her own voice. The balance of this essay seeks to evaluate Buck's views and performance, first through the eyes of her Chinese contemporaries who troubled to examine her vision of China, and then from the present perspective with its attendant advantage of 25 years and more of hindsight.

ROOTS IN CHINA

Pearl Buck liked to describe her life as a movement between two distinct cultural worlds. She recalled (Buck, 1954: 10) a childhood in China divided between "the small white clean Presbyterian American world of my parents and the big loving merry not-too-clean Chinese world, and there was no communi-

cation between them. When I was in the Chinese world I was Chinese, I spoke Chinese and behaved as a Chinese and ate as the Chinese did, and I shared their thoughts and feelings. When I was in the American world, I shut the door between." Deeply concerned with the barriers to international understanding, Buck devoted two decades of her adult life to trying to bring together her two childhood worlds.

Buck's early years in China not only gave her the impetus to become an expert, but they also supplied the raw experience from which she would later spin her stories and draw her conclusions. Her exposure began only a few months after her birth in 1892 when her missionary parents returned from home leave, and it continued for nearly 40 years, broken by only an occasional return home. She grew up in Zhenjiang [Chinkiang], a city on the Yangzi [Yangtze] River, in an inbred missionary community regarded by its inhabitants as a protected island of civilization in a sea of heathen disease and vice. But the community could not seal itself off from the Chinese, and so by degrees Pearl Buck made the acquaintance of another culture, beginning with family servants, a Chinese tutor, and neighborhood children.

These early experiences laid the foundation for what was to become a painful appreciation of the tensions and misunderstandings which subsisted on the jagged cultural edge between China and the West. From the vantage point of her Chinese world, Buck looked with dismay on the Westerners' aloofness from China. The missionaries, physically cut off from China by the walls of their mission compounds, were also isolated emotionally and intellectually. They were, Buck (1932c: 8) recalled, "so lacking in sympathy for the people they were supposed to be saving, so scornful of any civilization except their own, so harsh in their judgments upon one another, so coarse and insensitive among a sensitive and cultivated people that my heart has fairly bled with shame." Buck may have had her father in mind when she penned this indictment. She remembered him as a man under pigtail and gown who stumped the countryside to preach the gospel but never understood the people around him.

But when Buck looked at the Chinese world with Western eyes, she was also dismayed. Her father returned from trips with tales of his encounters with rude and sometimes physically abusive crowds. She could recall the anxiety which swept the missionary community in 1900, the year of the Boxers, when she had had to flee with her mother and sisters to safety in Shanghai. Later, as an adult, she would perceive in the Chinese nationalism of the 1920s a partial revival of that hatred of the foreigner she had known earlier. In 1927 she would have to flee to Shanghai as soldiers on the rampage sacked her Nanjing [Nanking].

After attending high school in Shanghai, Buck left China for the first time in 1910, to attend Randolph-Macon Women's College. After graduation she returned to China. Now as a young adult Buck began to see more of China and to cut her missionary ties. In 1917 she impetuously decided to marry John Lossing Buck, an agricultural specialist. The couple settled in Nanxuzhou [Nanhsuchow] in northern Anhui, and for the following half-dozen years Pearl Buck accompanied her husband on field research trips into the north China countryside. There she encountered the peasant and began to study his psychology, methods, and environment. When in the early twenties the Bucks moved to Nanjing to teach, she broadened the range of her acquaintances to include the Chinese intellectual. Along with the peasant he was to assume considerable importance in Buck's later interpretations of China.

During her Nanjing years Buck began to digest and to write about her Chinese experience. The result was an interpretive perspective on China which foreshadowed *The Good Earth* and her later views as a China expert. The peasant, "the soul of China," occupied the foreground in her early and generally overlooked writings. She was charmed by his simplicity, graciousness, and dignity and sympathetic to his sufferings at the hands of nature, warlords, and an indifferent government. She admired his community. It was self-contained, socially fluid, democratic, and beyond the effective control of outside political authority. Above all, it was essentially unchanging, earthbound (Buck, 1925: 325-326; see also 1925: 330; and 1930).

Restful and unstirred this countryside, whose inhabitants knew and cared nothing beyond what their forefathers had known and loved and lived by. . . . Otherwise the steady length of days with the leisurely tilling of rich fields and the receiving again of generous harvests. Occasionally there was a flood of swirling, muddy water from that old sorrow, the Yellow River, and then there was a year of bitterness, stoically borne, and they buried their dead.

Life ran very deep and still in this hidden corner of the world. Death and birth, misfortune and prosperity, were known and shared by all in utter simplicity and with no display beyond the fixed stateliness of ancient customs.

Already in the 1920s Buck had concluded that the peasant was the backbone of China. He gave meaning and stability to Chinese life. But she was troubled that neither Westerners nor foreign-educated Chinese properly appreciated him. She chided Westerners (Buck, 1926: 269; and 1924: 361) for being blinded by their stereotyped picture of the Chinese as "the impassive, unemotional, yellow Oriental, with a stealthy step, an impenetrable face, and a swinging queue." Chinese intellectuals, for their part, were so preoccupied with abstract theory and grandiose schemes for changing China and so enchanted by the big city that they had lost touch with peasant life at the very time that they, in their insecurity and drift, most needed its stabilizing influence (Buck, 1924).

THE GOOD EARTH

Sometime in the late 1920s Pearl Buck became intrigued with the idea of writing a novel about Chinese peasant life. She had had time to observe it closely and thought it shamefully neglected, particularly by Chinese writers, who pursued instead Western styles and subjects. She was also influenced by personal problems. Writing offered an emotional escape from her unhappy marriage and might earn the money for the expensive special care required by her mentally retarded daughter. The 1927 Nanjing riot forced the Bucks to flee the city, but when they

returned in the spring of the next year she was ready to write. She arose every morning at dawn, settled into a small room on the third floor of her home, and worked until noon. Within three months she had finished *The Good Earth* (Buck, 1954: 250, 254; Roosevelt Library: Buck to Eleanor Roosevelt, 28 January 1945; Yin, 1971: 130; Hu Zhong-zhi, 1933: 2-3).

The Good Earth was an important departure in the use of a Chinese theme in American fiction. Up to Buck's time virtually all works of this genre had focused on Westerners in an exotic setting, either in China or in a Chinatown, and had featured cardboard Chinese characters (Foster, 1952). By contrast, *The Good Earth* drew heavily on Chinese materials and contained plausible Chinese characters. Buck told her tale in a naturalistic style and in simple prose, an approach she claimed (1932e: 25; and 1939b: 58-59) to have learned from the traditional Chinese novels, "those true mirrors of the people" (Buck, 1928: 98). The protagonists of the story were Wang Lung, a man of the soil, and his devoted and long-suffering wife, O-lan. They were Buck's quintessential Chinese peasants. She put them down in the part of China she knew best, northern Anhui, and constructed for them a timeless rural community governed by the unvarying law that the rich must fall and the poor must rise. Industrious and frugal, the family prospers until famine forces them to flee the countryside for the city. In Nanjing the refugees find food, but they are also enveloped by a dehumanizing urban world of the insecure rich and the discontented poor. (Even in this story of the peasant Buck cannot resist a slap at Westerners and Chinese intellectuals. She has Wang Lung meet in the city a communist agitator, meant to represent the tendency of treaty port intellectuals to embrace foreign ideas uncritically, as well as a Western missionary. But predictably Wang Lung can make sense of neither. Always practical, he uses the printed propaganda each has given him to line the soles of his worn shoes.) When the city explodes into riot, Wang Lung and his wife carry off enough treasure to return to their good earth and assure recovery of their prosperity. But wealth loosens the family's ties to the soil, signalling the onset of its decline.³

The Good Earth, published in March 1931 by the John Day Company, won immediate acclaim. Americans welcomed this passionately written argument for the comprehensibility and goodness of the average Chinese. Critics repeatedly singled out for praise its evocation of the universal themes of rural life (New York Times Book Review, 1931; Time, 1931; and critics cited in Doyle, 1965: 38-47). "As far as the spiritual content of Wang Lung is concerned," observed a critic (Hutchinson, 1931) in *The Christian Century*, "it would not have differed greatly had he toiled on the Nebraska prairie rather than in China." The year of its publication *The Good Earth* received the Pulitzer Prize, and in 1938 the Nobel prize committee on literature honored Buck for her writings set in China, chiefly *The Good Earth* and the biographies of her missionary parents (1936a, 1936b).

In a troubled decade *The Good Earth* did well because it offered a seductive combination of entertainment and insight into a country long fascinating to Americans. The Great Depression at home caused some readers to take up *The Good Earth* as an exotic escape from daily cares, while others read it as a comforting reaffirmation of the virtues of hard work, thrift, and life close to the land. Events in Asia also worked in the novel's favor. Its publication in 1931 coincided with the onset of Sino-Japanese hostilities. Americans, increasingly favorable to China's cause, found in Buck's easily understood and sympathetic account of Chinese life welcome confirmation of their own predispositions.

THE EMERGENCE OF AN EXPERT

In 1932, then age forty, Buck came home to enjoy her triumph and to rearrange her personal life. Within three years she had divorced John Lossing Buck, married Richard Walsh, her publisher, and ended her long residence in China in favor of a Pennsylvania estate and a New York apartment. In public she denied any pretension to expertise on China (Buck, 1933b:

10-11). "I am not a professional interpreter of anything to anybody, and . . . I doubt very much the whole matter of interpretation. . . . I dislike very much ever to have people call me an interpreter of China. I am a novelist, pure and certainly very simple, without the slightest sense of mission or obligation to anyone of any country." Nonetheless, the popularity of *The Good Earth* had already thrust Buck into the role of expert. And she encouraged that view of herself by serving up her opinions in a steady stream of articles and speeches. She did so with almost no open challenge to her credentials.

Indeed the only exception in nearly two decades of public prominence came in 1933 when almost simultaneously she came under fire from both American missionaries and Chinese living in North America. Buck's repeated shots at the missionary movement had bruised the sensibilities of the one while her preoccupation with the peasant as the quintessential Chinese had annoyed the other. She brushed aside her Chinese critics as intellectuals out of touch with their own peasantry (Buck, 1933d: 17; New York Times, 16 January 1933: 14), and she resigned from her own Presbyterian foreign mission board after publicly condemning the missionaries as narrow-minded soul-savers (China Weekly Review, 1933, 1931; Buck, 1932c, 1933c; items in New York Times, 12, 13, 15, 17-19 April and 3, 22, 28 May 1933).⁴ Rather than shaking her position, two challenges seem to have strengthened it.

Although Buck's audience was now considerably wider and her statements more frequent than in the 1920s, her conception of China remained essentially unchanged. The eternal Chinese peasant—"lusty, hardy, quarrelsome, alive" (Buck, 1932b: 547)—remained at the center of her vision. She continued to lash out at China's intellectual elite for neglecting him (Buck, 1931a: 51; see also 1933b: 14; and 1934). "They have seen the most of their country with a sort of dreadful shame—her poverty, her straw huts, her famines, her problems of opium and slavery, her civil wars, the wretchedness in which some of her people live. Some of them are in an agony of impatience to change everything. They cannot. Their impotence turns into a hostility,

a sense of inferiority, and they satisfy themselves by trying to hide what they cannot change." And, as before, she urged Americans (Buck, 1931a: 51) to a more sympathetic understanding of China's problems.

Within this familiar framework Buck interpreted between 1931 and 1944 a China beset by internal division and Japanese aggression. She reduced China's problems and strengths to those of the peasant. Not until China's leaders responded to his voice would national unity and effective resistance be possible. But even if his leaders failed him, the patriotic peasant would hold out against Japan (Buck quoted in Woolf, 1932; see also Buck, 1938d). Even in defeat "the life of China will go on intact." "China is unconquerable. If it does not resist with weapons, then it does with its spirit. It is this resistance which will always continue."

Buck held out less and less hope that the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jie-shi] could win the peasant's loyalty. That government was, in Buck's opinion, made up of just those Western-trained intellectuals whom she had so sharply criticized in the past. Their Western outlook and experience and their nostalgia for a glorious past alienated them from the peasant and China's rural problems. However, in 1935 Buck (1935a: 74) could see no alternative to government by this group. "Whatever their failings, yet they are and must remain the rulers of China. They are, in spite of all, still the most intelligent, the most sensitive and the best equipped of their race to fit China for the place she must now take in the modern world. The government must remain in their hands. But somehow the people must force them to higher achievement, and somehow they must win back the people's loyalty." Their performance over the following decade was to disappoint Buck. Toward Chiang Kai-shek Buck was ambivalent. In the late 1930s she condemned him for attacking the Communists and temporizing with the Japanese rather than bowing to the popular cry for national unity and resistance. She alluded to him as "soft and corrupt" and thought he had finally forfeited his claim to leadership (Buck, 1938d: 127; see also 1954: 341-342; 1938b: 394; 1938a: 534; 1941e: 121,

123-124). But later, as a wartime ally, she treated him more kindly, hoping he might yet provide an effective government by shaking off the baleful influence of his Western-educated associates, especially his wife's relatives (Roosevelt Library: Buck to Eleanor Roosevelt, 22 March 1943; see also Buck, 1943c: 53; Lash, 1971: 678-679). "The Generalissimo commands more respect and affection, for while he is connected with the Soongs, yet he is essentially not as alien as they are to the country."

Buck's estimate of the Chinese Communists was, over this same period, increasingly favorable. When "bolshevism" in China first came to her attention in the twenties, Buck (1928: 98) had dismissed it as a passing fad among urban intellectuals and "but a recrudescence of an old form of revolt" in the countryside. However, by the late 1930s, Buck had become warm in her praise of the movement. The Communists' discovery of the peasant was the one gleam of light in the otherwise unrelieved gloom enveloping China (Buck, 1938c: 202). "Modern Chinese communism has accomplished something which nothing else has done—it has awakened, in so far as it has gone, the common people." She praised the Communists for creating from popular forces an effective guerrilla-style resistance and gave the "warlord army" of Mao Ze-dong [Mao Tse-tung] and Zhu De [Chu Teh] credit as China's "chief mainstay" against Japan (Buck, 1938a: 534; 1938f: 107). She was also enthusiastic over the popular literary styles that intellectuals aligned with the Communists had begun to champion (Buck, 1935b: 55-56). Buck concluded that the political future of the movement was bright—provided it continued to heed the demand for rural reform and to eschew the principles of communism. Since communism was "absurdly impractical" in China, she predicted the "purely popular and agrarian" elements in the party would have to shed their ideological baggage and join with other moderates to form a broad-based, democratic third force in Chinese politics (Buck, 1938a: 534; 1943d: 208; circa 1942-1945: 191-192; Roosevelt Library: Buck to Eleanor Roosevelt, 22 March 1943).

ASIAN POLICY
AT THE CROSSROADS

During her first decade as a China expert Buck limited her role to that of an interpreter. But beginning in 1941, on the eve of Pearl Harbor and a new era of intense American involvement in Chinese affairs, she broadened her efforts as she sought to influence events as well as to explain them. In her campaign to influence American foreign policy Buck hoped to capitalize on her now solidly grounded popular reputation. She continued to use public forums—talks and journal articles—to push her suggestions. The main outlet for her views during the war years and immediately after was *Asia*, a magazine taken over in 1941 by her husband, Richard Walsh. But she also spoke out through her fiction. In one propagandistic novel (1942c) she glorified the Chinese guerrilla resistance while in another (1943g) she condemned British imperial ambitions. Buck supplemented her public efforts with attempts through private channels to get the ear of Franklin D. Roosevelt and later Harry S. Truman (Roosevelt Library: Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers, Presidential Personal File 7339; and Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Boxes 1330, 1591, 1633, 1674, 1754, 1817; Lash, 1971: 669, 670, 678-679; Truman Library: Official File 220). However, she was unable to wield any perceptible influence over either man.

Buck had long been convinced that Americans knew little about Asia and cared even less about Asians. Ignorance, indifference, and contempt, she feared, might prove dangerous at a time when the world war had brought the United States into an unprecedentedly intimate relationship with Asia (Buck, 1942a). "We go into a war in which we cannot do without China and India, and we go in with long established race prejudices, with exclusion laws against our allies, with complete ignorance of their language, their culture, their history, of their life as human beings. We go in with the arrogance which is born of such ignorance." Buck feared that American racial prejudice, always on display at home and now carried to China and India by American troops, would alienate Asians. The public was ill-

informed on Asia and consequently could not check the influence of American and British "reactionaries." Buck saw them working behind the scenes to keep China weak by limiting wartime aid to her, to deny India independence, and to conclude an Anglo-American alliance as a major step toward a common imperial policy (Buck, 1941b; 1943a: 615; 1943e: 222, 228-229; 1943f: 218). Unless Americans struck at racism at home and opposed British imperialism overseas, they would antagonize all Asia and eventually become involved in colonial conflicts there. A few days after American entry into the war, she wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt (Roosevelt Library: 12 December 1941), "A deep secret colored solidarity is growing in the world as these politically awakening Asiatic peoples come to a knowledge of themselves, and unless we are exceedingly wise and careful, the result of this awakening is going to be disastrous to us."⁵ The ultimate result of a misguided American foreign policy might be a new "yellow peril," in which Asian masses would overwhelm the white world.

Buck saw only one way for the United States to safeguard the peace it was fighting for. American policy makers and the public had to become more responsive to conditions throughout Asia. In the short term this meant generous wartime aid for China—to encourage the valiant resistance of her people and to strengthen the liberal and democratic elements in the Nationalist government. It also meant strong and immediate American endorsement of India's struggle for independence and substantial postwar American assistance in improving the depressed Asian standard of living. Buck had no doubts that by the end of the war the United States would possess an unrivaled power to shape a just and lasting peace. She urged Americans to use the power wisely in support of anticolonialism and humanitarian aid. Only such a policy would forestall new conflicts and hasten the arrival of a new day for the common man of Asia (Buck, 1938b; 1941a; 1941c; 1941d; 1942b; 1943b; 1943c: 56; 1954: 371).

In the immediate postwar period, Buck saw her worst fears about the tendency of American policy realized. She charged that the Truman administration defied Asia by adopting an imperialistic policy (Truman Library: Buck to Truman, 3 June,

17 June, 5 August 1946; and Truman to Buck, 13 June 1946). It showed itself but a tepid advocate of self-determination. It retained strategic bases in the Pacific. And it aligned the United States with Britain against Russia. Buck warned Truman personally that "diplomats and militarists" were isolating him from the popular cry for peace. And she chided the American people for turning their back on a world ravaged by war (Buck, 1946: 11; see also 1945a: 549). "We are in the unhappy position of a rich man living in a mansion in the middle of a slum, and determined to keep on living well. Charity on a mild scale he will undertake, provided it does not lessen the pleasure of his own life. We have come out of the war richer and more callous than when we went into it." In pain, Buck watched popular attitudes and official policy turn Asians against the United States.⁶

By 1947 Buck's hopes for an enlightened American foreign policy were dead. At the same time, she was becoming alarmed by what she perceived as Russian subversion in the United States and bellicosity abroad. She feared Asians would look to Russia as an opponent of colonialism and as a model for the modernization of a peasant society. Buck (1947: 28) began to brood over the increasing American isolation from a troubled Asia. "We fear that a vast seething movement is taking place among the peoples of the world. We feel the heave of multitudes, as a ship upon the sea feels the swell of coming storm and hears the roar of winds bleak upon the horizon. The still light that shines down upon us is not the light of a common sun, but the strange light of a sky on the edge of a hurricane." Buck's two worlds were drifting apart.

Pearl Buck reached her twilight years as a China expert in 1948 and 1949. She had tried to save the peace but had made no evident impact on policy. She now concentrated her attention on the Chinese civil war. Settling back into a largely familiar interpretive refrain, she extolled the good, unchanging peasant and blamed the failure of the Nationalists' experiment in democracy on the isolation of China's modern intellectuals from the people. Chiang and his followers had lost their chance (Buck,

1948d: 6; 1948c; 1948a: 6). But even for the Communists, to whom the mandate to rule had now passed, Buck (1948b: 68; see also 1948c) predicted a cloudy future. Already she detected a split in their ranks between moderates and extremists. The former, indigenous faction, close to the peasant and headed by Zhou En-lai [Chou En-lai], was sure to clash with the ideologues, aligned with Moscow and led by Mao Ze-dong. "If Mao wins, China will muddle along, independent of the West and without much real help from a Russia still economically weak from the war, until opposition gathers force enough to form a new revolution. If the moderates win, China will want trade and capital wherever she can get it." She was confident that if the Communist regime did not change to suit the peasant, the peasant would ultimately change the regime (Buck, 1949b: ix; 1949a).

As Communist control spread, Buck (1948a: 7; 1954: 378-381) urged Washington to make one last effort to preserve American influence in China. She felt that nothing more could be done for the Nationalists. Further aid to them would be wasted, and an American military intervention in their behalf would only serve to embroil the United States with the Chinese people as well as with Soviet-backed forces. Instead, Buck recommended that the American government forget ideology for the moment and attempt to serve the interests of the Chinese people. By feeding the people, improving the production and distribution of goods and food, and in general helping the new government, the United States might strengthen the hand of the moderates. American largesse and expertise might yet win China back from Russia.

Finally, in 1950, Pearl Buck surrendered her mantle as an authority on China and lapsed into an unwonted silence.⁷ New developments in China no longer fit into the picture of the country she had begun to construct some thirty years earlier. The People's Republic, established in October of the previous year, showed no sign of fragmenting from within or being overthrown by peasant discontent. Moreover, Washington remained the patron of Taibei [Taipei]. Beijing [Peking] first allied with Moscow and then directly intervened in the Korean war against American forces. At home the political climate was not con-

ductive to free thinking about China and China policy. Congressional committees ferreted out other Americans who, like Buck, had suggested the Chinese Communists were agrarian reformers or had questioned Truman's hard-line policy toward the Soviet Union. A prudent silence and a residual popularity may have saved Buck from an inquisition. Americans turned now less often to *The Good Earth* and sales fell sharply.⁸ Wang Lung by "going communist" had forfeited his humanity in American eyes. He had also deprived Buck of her bearings and credibility as a China expert.

CHINESE CRITICS

In *The Good Earth* Pearl Buck addressed herself to an American audience, but some Chinese also listened carefully. Did they recognize their country and themselves? The Chinese response offers one gauge of Buck's accuracy and insight as an observer of China. In general, her Chinese readers gave her high marks. They paid tribute to the importance and perceptiveness of her vision by quickly taking to *The Good Earth* and in such numbers as to make it a best-selling translation. The Chinese version first appeared in 1932, less than a year after the original book was published in the United States, as a serial in the popular periodical *Dongfang zazhi* (*Eastern miscellany*). Within four years of publication in the United States it was available to the Chinese reading public in at least four different editions.⁹

The Chinese critics who scrutinized Buck's study of Chinese peasant life were the very same urban intellectuals whom she had criticized for neglecting the peasant.¹⁰ Most of them praised the novel as a contribution toward China's discovery of her own peasantry. Although they noted minor flaws in detail, they considered the novel a perceptive and favorable picture of rural China. The work was all the more impressive because it came from the pen of a foreigner and all the more welcome because it projected abroad a new and more attractive image of their country. One representative review (Yeh, 1931: 448-449; see also

Hoe, 1931; Hu Zhong-zhi, 1933: 3-4; Yi Xian, 1932: 75; Ching, 1933) congratulated Buck for having "faithfully portrayed" the lives of the people against their own background and in full possession of their own feelings and ideas. "For once a foreign novelist has not indulged in phantasy with us, but has delved into the depths of sombre reality."¹¹ Chinese could recognize Wang Lung as one of them, a claim they did not care to make for Fu Manchu, Charlie Chan, or any of the other Western stereotypes with which they were acquainted.

A minority of Chinese critics dissented. In literary judgments strongly influenced by their politics, they argued that *The Good Earth* failed to correspond to what they considered their own more accurate picture of China. From the right came the charge that the novel's treatment of China was unbalanced because it focused on the peasant and uncouth because it emphasized the seamy side of country life. This criticism was first raised by Chinese in the United States. Kiang Kang-hu, a Chinese intellectual well known in his later years as an advocate of traditional values (Boorman, 1967: 338-344), charged in the *New York Times* (reprinted in Kiang, 1934) that Buck's picture of peasant life was flawed. She had sensationalized those aspects likely to appeal to her American audience. Further, her eye for the details of peasant life was poor. And in any case the peasant, however well or ill described, was not the essential Chinese (Kiang, 1934: 267). "Their idea of life is inevitably strange and their common knowledge is indeed very limited. They may form the majority of the Chinese population but they are certainly not representative of the Chinese people. Even could Mrs. Buck without bias sketch their life in a most general way, it would not show a fair picture of China." Kiang placed the blame for Buck's bias on her contacts with amahs and coolies whose influence over her in childhood had never been offset by later contacts with more representative Chinese of a better class.¹²

The Nationalist government took a similarly critical attitude toward *The Good Earth*. Buck's treatment of peasant life and her equation of the peasant with China was both bad politics and bad public relations, for it emphasized to audiences at home

and overseas deplorable facets of Chinese life which the government was not prepared to admit. Although there is no evidence that the Nationalist government interfered with the circulation of the book in China, it did demonstrate its discontent by exercising a restraining hand over the movie version. When approached in 1933 by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for permission to film *The Good Earth*, the Chinese government committed the company to "present a truthful and pleasant picture of China and her people," to accept suggestions from a Chinese government representative on location, and to submit for immediate censorship all film footage taken in China. Finally, in January 1937, the Central Censorship Board in Nanjing approved the finished film for release in the United States. In April the film was approved for distribution in China but only after objectionable scenes—of begging, poverty, looting, and the affair between Wang Lung's second wife and his son—had been cut. In one stroke the Chinese government managed to sanitize the film for home consumption while ensuring a good international propaganda vehicle (Jones, 1955: 43-47; Leyda, 1972: 110-112; Whang, 1934; Buck, 1954: 393-394).

Leftist literary circles were also critical of Buck's writing, particularly her failure to recognize the importance of class conflict and the disruptive impact of imperialist aggression in the countryside. At least this is the perspective suggested in a review by Hu Feng (1935), an influential and independent Marxist literary critic and disciple of Lu Xun (Klein and Clark, 1971: 377-379; Boorman, 1968: 155-158). Hu conceded that *The Good Earth* was an important step forward in foreign understanding of China and a generally accurate portrayal of many of the details of rural life. Buck had brought the peasant to life emotionally without giving in to the temptation to emphasize the sensational. She had instead wisely concentrated on the hardship of the people and their valiant struggle for survival. She had, for example, conveyed a sense of the peasant's love of the soil and the downtrodden position of women in rural China. But overall the novel had serious shortcomings because Buck, although "a relatively enlightened Christian," suffered from a

"subjective viewpoint," the lingering influence of the missionary mentality (Hu Feng, 1935: 310). As a result, she overlooked the revolutionary forces for change in the countryside. And she was insensitive to the importance of class exploitation and the oppressive character of rural life. Wang Lung's success story was not typical of the harsh fate suffered by most peasants. How many, Hu asked rhetorically, could—like Wang Lung, the refugee—make their fortune in urban riot? And how many landlords treated their hired hands with the same kindness Wang Lung showed his? In sum, life in rural China was neither as good nor as static as Buck's romantic and sentimental novel indicated.

The twists of international politics and the passage of time have mellowed the Nationalist estimate of Buck while they have made more rigid and unalloyed the condemnation of the left. On Taiwan, Buck's description of China's suffering and poverty and her public criticisms of the Nationalist government no longer raise hackles. Today *The Good Earth* circulates freely and its author is remembered—and honored in a small way—for her humanitarian spirit and her latter-day anticommunism.¹³ In the People's Republic, both author and novel have long been out of official favor. In 1950 the Chinese press made use of a Soviet article (Sergeyeva, 1950: 28) to criticize her for attempting "to ignore the tremendous political and social changes taking place in modern China" and for looking at China "through the spectacles of U.S. aggressive imperialism." More recently, Buck sought without success to visit China. What was purported to be the official reply (quoted in New York Times, 1972) turned her down because of her "attitude of distortion, smear and vilification toward the people of China and their leaders."

AMERICAN ROOTS

Pearl Buck insisted on seeing herself as the product of two different worlds. However, a perspective of a quarter of a century suggests that, as an interpreter of China, Pearl Buck is almost uniquely American—in her personal background, in her assump-

tions about China, and in her anxieties about American attitudes toward Asia. She owed much to the American missionary impulse. Thanks to her father's religious calling, Buck enjoyed a privileged vantage point for a sustained and close-up view of China. Like the impressive line of missionary interpreters that had preceded her, Buck had become preoccupied with what she had seen, had offered up to her curious and concerned countrymen her impressions and opinions, and eventually had settled into the role of popular expert.

Buck's ties to her missionary world are also evident in her attitude toward the peasant. Her discovery of rural China coincided with the Christian rural movement of the 1920s. She was near the heart of the movement—the Nanjing College of Agriculture and Forestry. There her husband and others worked on the application of technology and social science to the problems of rural poverty. The peasant was for them the key to winning China just as he was to become for Buck the key to interpreting China. "Country folk . . . are the simple dependable stuff of Chinese society," explained one early report. "In China the farm villages are true social units, the very tissue of Chinese civilization." Past experience taught that peasants "are easily reached by the Christian message," whereas the city remained a hotbed of anti-Christian ideas and agitation (quotes from Brown, 1966: 223, 227). In the 1930s, as the Communists began to turn to their advantage increasing unrest in the countryside, the missionaries gave even greater prominence to the peasant in their struggle to save China.

Buck's assumptions about China were shared by many interested Americans. Her views on the contrasting qualities of city and country life coincided—if they did not in fact largely derive from—an American mythology. Buck herself had seen the effects of industrialization and rapid urbanization in both the United States and China. She had concluded that rural life was good, city life bad. Throughout her work she stressed the virtues of an agricultural community, close to the soil and hence to nature, where men understood the fundamentals of life and were content with their simple, stable community. By contrast, city life suf-

fered from extremes of wealth and poverty, demeaning labor, and a confusing intellectual restlessness. As a result, community fragmented, fundamental values dissolved, and men became alienated from nature and from each other. The peasant, sustained by the emotional satisfactions of his fixed life, harbored none of the discontents of the city dweller. He was, to be sure, capable of selective protest. But, because of the inertia of tradition and the fixed cast of his mind, prolonged political activity and radical change were, as Buck saw it, neither necessary nor possible. The peasant would tolerate a bad government as long as it left his world intact, but would resist any government foolhardy enough to attempt to change it.

Like most Americans, Buck was inclined to interpret China's history in terms of Western contacts and values. A theme struck early in her commentary (1923 and 1925) and frequently repeated in later works was that collision with the West had upset China. As she regained her equilibrium, she inevitably would begin to make material progress and in the process gradually absorb the best the West had to offer. Buck consistently favored moderate, gradual solutions to China's problems (e.g., 1925: 329; 1931a: 52; 1938a: 534; Roosevelt Library: Buck to Eleanor Roosevelt, 22 March 1943; 1954: 381-382).¹⁴ And Buck herself gave warm support to privately initiated efforts to improve conditions in the countryside. She backed the Gung Ho industrial cooperatives (Buck, 1939a; Snow, 1973: 29), Jimmy Yen's Mass Educational Movement (Buck, 1945c), and United China Relief. Late in her career as an expert she explicitly rejected the revolutionary alternative with its attendant violence and injustice (Buck, 1950: 75). "I stand steadfastly against the violence of revolutions and liquidations. The desired end to anything never comes if the means be foul." She regarded the innate conservatism of the peasant as the chief bulwark against any effort to force what Buck regarded as the natural and gradual pace of change (Buck, 1945b: 366; see also 1935a: 73; 1938d: 128; 1943d: 208; 1949b: ix; 1949a). "Communism is not congenial to a peasant mind. The peasant is very individualistic. He understands cooperation, but not Communism."

Finally, Buck accepted long-popular generalizations about Chinese-American relations. She believed in the myth of friendship. In her view the basis of that relationship was geographical: the Pacific made the two countries "next-door neighbors." The forces of history also worked to bring the neighbors ever closer together. Buck invoked in her writing the theory that the center of world civilization had over the centuries moved steadily westward. The idea had long been a favorite with Americans, who saw themselves as ultimate beneficiaries of this grand and inevitable historical process. With the passing of the years, Buck pointed out, Americans would look less and less toward a declining Europe and more and more toward East Asia, where the possibilities for the future were bright. The United States and China, the two greatest nations fronting on the Pacific, were destined to play the leading roles. Democratic development, which Buck foresaw as a feature of the coming Pacific era, would further cement the Chinese-American relationship. She imagined the United States setting the example for contemporary Chinese to follow as they sought to complete their own political revolution and to build democratic institutions from a foundation of "practical democracy" at the local level. These ties of geography, history, and political principle bound Chinese and Americans together in a special friendship. Buck was certain that however hostile toward the United States the ruling elite of China might become, the Chinese people would remain friendly (Buck, circa 1942-1945: 191; 1938a: 535; 1933a: 18; 1943e: 223; 1944b: 21). This faith in international friendship flowed logically from Buck's attraction to the honest simplicity of the peasant and her distrust of the Chinese elite, whether Nationalist or Communist.

Buck's preference for reform over revolution and for the people over their leaders ultimately placed her—and her concerned countrymen—in a dilemma. If, as Buck indicated time and again in her commentary, the plight of the people was great and the governing elite indifferent or misguided, to whom could she look to effect the necessary change? Few Americans saw the quandary that Buck faced because they shared her perspective and values. But Buck's Chinese critics spotted the problem at

once and spelled out the disagreeable alternatives. Those on the political left agreed with her that the life of the peasant was harsh and the Nationalist government was at best indifferent. Revolution was the only way out. Those on the right, on the other hand, could embrace Buck's conclusion that rural life was essentially good in order to justify their policy of benign neglect.

But Buck could accept neither an indifferent nor a revolutionary government. She sought two ways out of her dilemma. One was to wish the problem away by minimizing the suffering of the peasant. When in this mood, Buck argued that brief outbursts of local rioting tended to right injustices, while the joy and fullness of good days redeemed the occasional hard times. Sometimes Buck (1938f: 113-114) carried this viewpoint to its logical conclusion, a cavalier dismissal of human suffering. "If a famine strikes one area, the people simply move into another area. A good many may die on the way, but they always have, and the ones that are left are glad it was not they, and the officials accept the situation as a legitimate means of population control. Life goes on, somehow. If the death rate is enormous, so is the birth rate. China is a great sprawling, glorious, merry undisciplined creature, immense in everything, and 'Live and let live' is her motto." But Buck knew better. She had seen insecurity and privation in the countryside; she had described it graphically in *The Good Earth* in her treatment of famine, infanticide, and refugee life in the city; and she had fought it in her humanitarian efforts during the war and after.

Since Buck could not remain indifferent to the plight of the peasant, she sought a second way out of her dilemma—to look for a moderate government willing to take up a gradual program of rural reform. Buck waited through the thirties for the Nationalist government to awaken to China's agrarian problems, but by the mid-forties she had despaired. She refused to embrace the Communist cause; its ideology and commitment to revolution repelled her. In private she described herself (Roosevelt Library: to Eleanor Roosevelt, 22 March 1943) as "an anti-communist of the deepest dye." She then sought a political third force which might steer a course between the inaction of the

Nationalists and the radicalism of the Communists. It proved a phantom. Finally, in the late 1940s, Buck in desperation appealed to the American government to institute an ambitious aid program to bring order out of China's chaos. Washington refused, and Buck was finally caught in her dilemma. The Chinese would not and the American government could not impose American solutions to Chinese problems.

Buck's American roots and her familiarity with popular attitudes enabled her to recognize the depth of American prejudice and ignorance concerning Asia. She sought to reshape American attitudes and thereby avert the dangers which they posed. When Buck came on the scene, the American image of Asians was essentially negative. It was the heritage in large measure of a view shaped in the previous century by missionary propagandists, who sought to impress on the home audience the urgency of their work by stressing the deep flaws in Chinese life, and by nativists opposed to Chinese and, later, Japanese immigration.¹⁵ Buck struck out in particular against the picture of China as a backward country, its people sometimes cowardly, sometimes villainous, nearly always inferior and faceless. She stressed instead the charm of their lives, the mettle of their character, and the potential of their nation. She made her sharpest attacks on American attitudes in her postwar commentary on foreign policy, when she warned that any policy influenced by the pervasive American attitude of contempt or indifference would poison relations with Asia and lead to future conflicts.¹⁶

Buck was at her best in these efforts to reshape American attitudes toward Asia. She succeeded in promoting a favorable image of China, more realistic than its antecedents. And her warnings for the future, although generally ignored during and immediately after World War II, were certainly prescient. Even after two and a half decades Buck still speaks to us clearly and sometimes passionately about the difficulties of dealing across the cultural gulf that separates the United States from Asia. Her own passage across it had convinced her how wide it was and how different the perspective was from the other side.

THE LIMITS OF EXPERTISE

By contrast, Buck's general performance as a commentator on China seems less satisfactory. Buck created and reiterated a simple, static, and easily assimilated picture of China. It suggested none of the complexity and change which recent scholarship has led us to associate with rural China. Buck had little if any room in her countryside for lineage and class conflict, economic dislocation, and the political and military struggles of this century. She confined her Chinese within an old and unvarying cycle in which the rich regularly changed places with the poor, the good times alternated with the bad. Buck put the peasant center stage. And since, in her scheme of things, the peasant was apolitical, Buck relegated political organization and ideology to an incidental role in the central drama. As a result, her commentary on Chinese politics was superficial and hazy, and it was especially confused as she sought to relate the Communist revolution to her apolitical peasantry.

It would, of course, be unfair to indict Buck for failing to see what has become clear only in our day. On the other hand, she enjoyed an impressive advantage—the chance, for example, to get to know the countryside at first hand and to study the Nationalist party and government during her years of residence in Nanjing. And, even once she left China, she had available to her contemporary works on rural conditions which were both sophisticated and compelling.¹⁷ While she certainly read at least some of these, they little affected her basic outlook.

Buck's picture of China was far from complex. One might in fairness to her wonder if she did not consciously decide that a less sophisticated approach was essential for reaching a broad audience and for communicating the attractive qualities of the Chinese. Indeed, a complex picture of China might have overburdened her commentary and placed it beyond mass appeal. Edgar Snow's experience is instructive on this point. His more detailed and avowedly partial perspective on China in ferment evoked dramatically less public interest. His *Red Star Over China* sold only about 65,000 copies in the United States down

through the mid-1960s (Steele, 1966: 171-172), roughly 2% of the sales of *The Good Earth* to the same date.

Buck may also have realized that a more complex picture would have suggested differences between Chinese and Americans rather than the common experiences and outlook which she wished to stress. For example, her major statement, *The Good Earth*, made China seem attractive and easily accessible to a large popular audience. But it worked its magic by ignoring the broad cultural context which distinguished Wang Lung's life from that of the Nebraska farmer and thereby suggested to its readers that men of the soil were fundamentally the same the world over.¹⁸ A simple view of China in which complexities did not intrude may have been the only way to reach and convince a wide audience. But Buck paid a price. By neglecting what made China complex and the Chinese different from Americans, she helped sustain an unfortunate ethnocentrism.

Buck's simple approach was not merely a calculated public posture. Even in private when she addressed intelligent and influential individuals she seems to have been no more sophisticated. For example, her personal letters to Eleanor Roosevelt, while sometimes more outspoken and specific, generally reproduce the tone and content of her contemporary public remarks.¹⁹ Buck held her audience not just because she consciously sought to, but because she shared with it a common body of unexamined assumptions that facilitated communication. Both Buck and the public believed in a special friendship between Chinese and Americans and in the American role as a patron of a progressive, democratic China. They both opposed a revolution that seemed to play into the hands of the Soviet Union and that climaxed in public denunciations of American paternalism and interference.

Buck did not shape her views simply to suit the public. From the 1920s she was emotionally committed to a highly personalized vision. It above all else stood in the way of developing nuance in her interpretation or reshaping it to accommodate new developments or perspectives. Over the decades China changed, but Buck did not change with it. During this entire period she

doggedly insisted on reducing the complexity of China to a single and simple interpretation. Her lack of contact with China after she settled in the United States in the early 1930s also helps explain the essentially static quality of her views. An exclusive dependence on secondhand impressions seriously handicapped one who had best responded to personal, not vicarious, exposure to China. Perhaps the wonder of Buck as a China expert is that her assumptions survived as long as they did. And certainly the pity is that her assumptions made it difficult for her and other Americans to understand and accept the Chinese revolution.

Buck's case highlights the limitations on those who wish to wield popular influence. Buck enjoyed popular standing, in part, because she accepted widely held assumptions about the unique American role in the world and relationship to China. Those assumptions in time sanctioned the long American effort to establish and shore up noncommunist and nonrevolutionary governments in Asia. But had Buck in fact challenged these important, deep-seated assumptions of the public and policy makers, who would have listened? The example of the contemporary China hands who, however gingerly, did take up the challenge offers one answer. Criticism of policy assumptions registered through the 1940s by experts as diverse as John Service, John Fairbank, and Owen Lattimore made virtually no impact. Each eventually was hounded into silence. Another answer emerges from Buck's own attack at the end of World War II on American imperialism and racism. It struck no sympathetic chord among the public. The conclusion seems inescapable: Buck could not question fundamental assumptions about the American relationship to Asia and at the same time retain her popularity and influence. Buck's experience remains relevant and sobering to anyone today eager to offset the continuing tendency of Americans to see the world in American terms and to accept their nation's role as "free world" hegemon. The quandary of the popular expert is still with us.

NOTES

1. The John Day Company alone sold over four million copies in the United States between 1931 and 1972. I am indebted to Mr. Richard J. Walsh, Jr., for gathering this information from his firm's files (letters to author, 10 July and 5 September 1972).

2. Her autobiography (1954) is a generally self-concealing and meandering work. Her personal papers are not yet accessible to the public. Adulatory sketches written with Buck's cooperation are Harris (1969, 1971) and Birmingham (1972). The only serious general account of Buck's life and works is Doyle (1965); it is sympathetic and to the point. For biographical detail I owe much to the above works as well as to Yaukey (1944; Buck's sister writing under the pseudonym Cornelia Spencer), Krebs (1973), and Snow (1973).

3. *The Good Earth* was the first of a trilogy known as *The House of Earth*. *Sons* and *A House Divided* carried the epic through the decline of the family fortunes and to the ultimate return to the soil. Neither approached *The Good Earth* in critical or popular acclaim. On her death Buck was reportedly (Time, 1973) at work on a sequel, on Wang Lung's descendants under communism, to be called *The Red Earth*.

4. Buck (Roosevelt Library: to Eleanor Roosevelt, 22 March 1943) remained critical of the missionary effort. "Missionaries are good people and nearly always well-meaning persons, but usually rather ignorant of the real people. They tend to live too much in their own circle of American life and with standards too high above the people."

5. Buck later warned of an imminent realignment of the wartime partners along racial lines—the United States, Britain, Germany, and white Russia against China, Japan, India, and Asiatic Russia (Roosevelt Library: to Eleanor Roosevelt, 5 August 1942; see also Buck, 1942b; 1944a).

6. Buck's most cogent statement on American postwar policy is "American Imperialism in the Making" (1945b).

7. From 1950 down to her death in 1973, Buck wrote little on China and American policy. However, in what she did write she tended to rewrite or gloss over her earlier, partially favorable opinions on the Chinese Communists (e.g., 1970: 281, 294, 305).

8. The John Day Company sold fewer than .3 million copies from the late 1940s down to 1955, a marked decline from the 1.5 million in previous sales. However, after 1955 a revival in popular interest and the advent of an inexpensive paperback edition resulted in a surprising spurt in sales—roughly 2.4 million down to 1972 (figures in Richard J. Walsh, Jr., to author, 5 September 1972).

9. The serial translation was done by Yi Xian (pseudonym?) and appeared in *Dongfang zazhi* (*Eastern miscellany*) throughout 1932. The first translation to appear in book form was provided by Hu Zhong-zhi in 1933. By 1939 it had gone through five printings. The appearance of other translations, by Zhang Wan-li et al. and by Wu Li-fu (the last according to Ming bao, 1973), brought the total available to the public to at least four.

10. I am indebted to Anthony Marr of the Yale East Asian collection, Sterling Memorial Library, for assisting me in tracking down Chinese reviews of *The Good Earth*.

11. *The China Critic* was an early (Hoe, 1931) and persistent supporter of Buck and *The Good Earth* (*The China Critic*, 1932, 1933).

12. A similar critique appeared under the name of a Korean writer, Younghill Kang (1931). Chinese students in the United States were reportedly (*Dongfang zazhi* [1 November 1932]: 20) also unhappy with Buck's picture of their country.

13. A current illustration of this view appears in an appraisal by Chen Zhi-mai (1974; but see also Lianhe bao, 1973; Yin, 1971; Hui, 1973), a Nationalist diplomat, who repeats criticism made in the 1930s by the right.

14. Peck (1969) and recent monographs by Shirley Garrett and James C. Thomson, Jr., suggest Buck expressed what was a general American preference.

15. Isaacs (1958), Tsou (1962), as well as recent books by Stuart C. Miller, Robert McClellan, and Kenneth Shewmaker are all helpful in placing Buck and her generation in the context of a long-term, evolving American image of China.

16. Buck, opponent of stereotyped thinking about Asia, sometimes indulged in it herself. During the Sino-Japanese war, she crudely caricatured the Japanese militarists (Buck, 1938e)—"murder, blood, savagery, bestiality, insanity." She also expressed alarm over a possible union of the "colored peoples," possessed of Western weapons but devoid of any moral check on their use (Buck, 1937: 673). She thereby evoked that old spectre of the "yellow peril."

17. See, for example, the works published between 1932 and 1950 by R. H. Tawney, Chen Han-sheng, Edgar Snow, Fei Xiao-tong, Theodore White, Jack Belden, and Graham Peck.

18. Others have scored Buck on similar points: Isaacs (1958: 157), Foster (1952: 493-494, 517), and Arapoff (1966: 34).

19. See also Buck's confidential memo to executives of the East and West Association (1943f).

REFERENCES

- ARAPOFF, N. (1966) "Pearl Buck's problem with time in the 'Good Earth' trilogy: its effects on realism and objectivity." *East-West Center Rev.* 2 (February): 34-48.
- BIRMINGHAM, F. A. (1972) "Pearl Buck and the good earth of Vermont." *Saturday Evening Post* 224 (Spring): 70-73.
- BOORMAN, H. (1967, 1968) *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, Vols. 1 and 2. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.
- BROWN, W. A. (1966) "The Protestant rural movement in China (1920-1937)," pp. 217-248 in K. C. Liu (ed.) *American Missionaries in China*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard East Asian Research Center.
- BUCK, P. S. (1970) "China today," pp. 281-305 in Harris (1970).
- (1954) *My Several Worlds*. New York: John Day.
- (1951) "What Asians want." *Christian Century* 68 (27 June): 760-763.
- (1950) "President Truman's point 4." *The Fortnightly* (London) 173 (February): 69-75.
- (1949a) "Uncle Tao in communist China." *Saturday Rev. of Literature* 32 (7 May): 23.
- (1949b) *Preface to The Good Earth*. New York: John Wiley.
- (1948a) "The people will be free." *Asia* 2 (December): 6-7.
- (1948b) "Our dangerous myths about China." *New York Times Magazine* (23 October): 9, 65-68, 70-71.

- (1948c) "A note on the price of rice (and power)." *United Nations World 2* (September): 17.
- (1948d) "The land and the people of China" (speech), pp. 1-9 in Harris (1970).
- (1947) "Americans in distress." *United Nations World 1* (April): 26-29.
- (1946) "We need, most of all, the world view." *New York Times Magazine* (28 April): 11, 55, 57-58.
- (1945a) "Talks with Masha." *Asia 45* (November): 546-549.
- (1945b) "American imperialism in the making." *Asia* (August): 365-368.
- (1945c) "Tell the people." *Asia 45* (January): 49-71.
- (1944a) "'The darkest hour' in China's history." *New York Times Magazine* (17 December): 9, 45-46.
- (1944b) "An appeal to California." *Asia 44* (January): 21-23.
- (1943a) "Postwar China and the United States." *Asia 43* (November): 613-615.
- (1943b) "People, east and west." *Asia 43* (July): 328-329.
- (1943c) "A warning about China." *Life 14* (10 May): 53-54, 56.
- (1943d) "Where the Chinese people stand," pp. 200-215 in Harris (1970).
- (1943e) "Chinese-American relations" (speech), pp. 222-231 in Harris (1970).
- (1943f) "Chinese-American relations" (confidential memo to the executives of the East and West Association), pp. 216-222 in Harris (1970).
- (1943g) *The Promise*. New York: John Day.
- (1942a) "Total victory." *New Republic 106* (1 June): 761-762.
- (1942b) "Tinder for tomorrow." *Asia 42* (March): 153-155.
- (1942c) *Dragon Seed*. New York: John Day.
- (circa 1942-1945) "China" (talk to American soldiers during World War II), pp. 151-199 in Harris (1970).
- (1941a) "The world of tomorrow." *Asia 41* (November): 620.
- (1941b) "No union without China." *Asia* (September): 524.
- (1941c) "The secret of China's victory" (speech in Cleveland, Ohio, 10 July), pp. 129-146 in Harris (1970).
- (1941d) "Warning to free nations." *Asia 41* (March): 161.
- (1941e) "We must stand together" (first published 15 February), pp. 120-128 in Harris (1970).
- (1939a) "Free China gets to work." *Asia 39* (April): 199-202.
- (1939b) *The Chinese Novel*. New York: John Day.
- (1938a) "Arms for China's democracy." *Asia 38* (September): 534-535.
- (1938b) "The world and the victor." *Asia 38* (July): 393-394.
- (1938c) "Asia bookshelf" (review of Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China*). *Asia 38* (March): 202-203.
- (1938d) "An open letter to the Chinese people." *Asia 38* (February): 126-128.
- (1938e) "Mind of the militarist." *Asia 38* (January): 9-10.
- (1938f) "China wins," pp. 100-119 in Harris (1970).
- (1937) "Western weapons in the hands of the reckless east." *Asia 37* (October): 672-673. [Condensed in *Reader's Digest 31* (November 1937): 6-7.]
- (1936a) *The Exile*. New York: John Day.
- (1936b) *Fighting Angel: Portrait of a Soul*. New York: John Day.
- (1935a) "Rulers of China." *Asia 35* (February): 71-75.
- (1935b) "The young Chinese discover China" (speech), pp. 51-56 in Harris (1970).

- (1935c) *A House Divided*. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock.
- (1934) "The creative spirit in modern China—II." *Asia* 34 (October): 601-605.
- (1933a) "China and the west" (speech before the American Academy of Political Science, Philadelphia, 8 April), pp. 16-50 in Harris (1970).
- (1933b) "Interpretation of China to the west" (talk at Columbia University, 13 March), pp. 10-15 in Harris (1970).
- (1933c) "Is there a case for foreign missions?" *Harper's Magazine* 166 (January): 143-155.
- (1933d) "Mrs. Buck replies to her Chinese critic." *New York Times Book Rev.* (15 January): 2, 17.
- (1932a) "The old Chinese nurse." *Fortnightly Rev.* (London) new series 137 (June): 757-770.
- (1932b) "China and the foreign Chinese." *Yale Review* new series 21 (March): 539-547.
- (1932c) *Is There a Case for Foreign Missions?* New York: John Day.
- (1932d) *Sons*. New York: John Day.
- (1932e) *East and West and the Novel* (no place, no date. 1932?)
- (1931a) "The new nationalism." *International Digest* 1 (September): 50-52.
- (1931b) *The Good Earth*. New York: John Day.
- (1930) "The soul of China." *Living Age* 338 (1 April): 168-176.
- (1928) "Communism in China." *Nation* 127 (25 July): 97-98.
- (1926) "The emotional nature of the Chinese." *Nation* 123 (22 September): 269-270.
- (1925) "China the eternal." *Living Age* 324 (7 February): 324-330.
- (1924) "Chinese student mind." *Nation* 119 (8 October): 358-361.
- (1923) "In China, too." *Atlantic Monthly* 131 (January): 68-72.
- CHEN ZHI-MAI (1974) "Sai Zhen-zhu" [Pearl Buck]. *Zhuanji wenxue* [Biographical literature] (Taipei) 25 (October): 16-20.
- The China Critic [Shanghai] (1932, 1933) articles on Pearl Buck and *The Good Earth*: Vol. 5 (16 June 1932): 591; 5 (20 October 1932): 1107; 5 (10 November 1932): 1190-1191; Vol. 6 (23 February 1933): 201-204; 6 (20 July 1933): 716; 6 (5 October): 973.
- China Weekly Review [Shanghai] (1933) "Pearl Buck and the Presbyterian fundamentalists." Vol. 64 (22 April): 282-283.
- (1931) "The story of Wang Lung, typical farmer." Vol. 57 (6 June): 3.
- CHING FOOK-TAN [CHEN FU-TIAN] (1933) Review of *Sons*. *Chinese Social and Political Sci. Rev.* (Beijing) 16 (January): 693-696.
- DOYLE, P. A. (1965) *Pearl S. Buck*. New York: Twayne.
- FOSTER, J. B. (1952) "China and the Chinese in American literature, 1850-1950." Ph.D. dissertation. Urbana: Univ. of Illinois.
- GALLUP, G. S. (1972) *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971*, Vol. 1. New York: Random House.
- HARRIS, T. (1969, 1971) *Pearl S. Buck: A Biography*. 2 vols. New York: John Day.
- [ed.] (1970) *China As I See It*. New York: John Day.
- HOE YUNG-CHI [HE YONG-JI] (1931) Review of *The Good Earth*. *China Critic* (Shanghai) 4 (2 July): 639.
- HU FENG (1935) "'Dadi' li di Zhongguo" [China in "The Good Earth"], pp. 297-319 in his *Wenyi bitan* [Essays on literature]. Shanghai: Shenghuo, 1937.

- HU ZHONG-ZHI (1933) Introduction to his translation of *The Good Earth* (Dadi). Shanghai: Kaiming.
- HUI AN (1973) "Jianli dongxifang duqiao di Sai Zhen-zhu" [Pearl Buck—builder of a bridge between east and west]. *Dangdai wenyi* [Contemporary literature] (Hongkong) number 89 (April): 16-20.
- HUTCHINSON, P. S. (1931) "Breeder of life." *Christian Century* 48 (20 May): 683.
- JONES, D. B. (1955) *The Portrayal of China and India on the American Screen, 1896-1955*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Center for International Affairs.
- ISAACS, H. (1958) *Scratches on Our Minds: American Images of China and India*. New York: John Day.
- KANG, YOUNGHILL (1931) "China is different." *New Republic* 67 (1 July): 185-186.
- KIANG KANG-HU [JIANG KANG-HU] (1934) *On Chinese Studies*. Shanghai: Commercial Press. (contains his 1933 essays on *The Good Earth*)
- KLEIN, D. W. and A. B. CLARK [eds.] (1971) *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Communism, 1921-1965*, Vol. 1. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press.
- KREBS, A. (1973) Pearl Buck obituary. *New York Times* (7 March): 1, 40.
- LASH, J. P. (1971) *Eleanor and Franklin*. New York: Norton.
- LEYDA, J. (1972) *Dianying, Electric Shadows: An Account of Films and Film Audiences in China*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Lianhe bao [Taipei] (1973) 7 March: 3.
- Ming bao [Hong Kong] (1973) 11 March: 7.
- New York Times* (1972) 29 October: 1, 7.
- (1933) 16 January: 14; 12, 13, 15, 17-19 April; 3, 22, 28 May.
- New York Times Book Review* (1931) Review of *The Good Earth*. 15 March: 6.
- PECK, J. (1969) "The roots of rhetoric: the professional ideology of America's China watchers." *Bull. of Concerned Asian Scholars* 2 (October): 59-69.
- Roosevelt Library. Papers of Eleanor and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Hyde Park, New York.
- SERGEYEVA, N. (1950) "A bankrupt 'expert on China.'" *New Times* (Moscow) 11 (15 March): 27-32. (reprinted in *Renmin ribao* [People's daily] 15 May 1950: 5)
- SNOW, H. F. (1973) Pearl Buck obituary. *New Republic* 168 (24 March): 28-29.
- STEELE, A. T. (1966) *The American People and China*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Time* (1973) "Earth to Earth." 101 (19 March): 81.
- (1931) Review of *The Good Earth*. 17 (16 March): 71.
- Truman Library. Papers of Harry S. Truman. Independence, Missouri.
- TSOU, TANG (1962) "The American political tradition and the American image of Chinese communism." *Pol. Sci. Q.* 76 (December): 570-600.
- WHANG, PAUL K. [WANG ZHONG-FANG] (1934) "Will 'The Good Earth' be filmed in China?" *China Weekly Rev.* (Shanghai) 67 (17 February): 450.
- WOOLF, S. J. (1932) "Pearl Buck talks of her life in China." *New York Times Magazine* (14 August): 7.
- YAUKEY, G. S. (1944) *The Exile's Daughter: A Biography of Pearl S. Buck*. New York: Coward-McCann.
- YEH KUNG-CHAO [YE GONG-ZHAO] (1931) Review of *The Good Earth*. *Chinese Social and Pol. Sci. Rev.* (Beijing) 15 (October): 448-453.
- YI XIAN [pseudonym?] (1932) Introduction to his translation of *The Good Earth*. *Dongfang zazhi* [Eastern miscellany] (Shanghai) 29 (1 January): 75.

YIN YUN-PENG (1971) "Reai Zhongguo di Sai Zhen-zhu nu-shi" [Miss Pearl Buck—warm friend of China], pp. 125-133 in his *Zhongguo ren di guanghui* [The brilliance of the Chinese]. Taipei: Zhiwen.

Michael H. Hunt teaches history at Yale University and specializes in Chinese-American relations. He is the author of Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese-American Relations, 1895-1911 (1973).