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Place Really Does Matter: Marion Greenwood's 1947 "China" Exhibition

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Producing Women
Ces femmes qui produisent ...

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Résumé de l'article

En décembre 1947, l'Associated American Artists Gallery de New York exposait les tableaux et les oeuvres sur papier de Marion Greenwood, revenue d'un « séjour de presque deux ans en Chine du Sud ». La plupart des textes de l'exposition insistaient sur le séjour en Chine de l'artiste, séjour qui s'était en fait limité à une période d'un an dans la colonie britannique nouvellement reconquise de Hong Kong et à une visite de seulement quatre jours dans ce que l'artiste avait elle-même identifié comme la « vraie Chine ». Cet article tente de comprendre pourquoi Greenwood choisit de replacer sa production dans un plus large contexte chinois, et il analyse surtout les conséquences de ce glissement géo-politique; les notions bien établies d'une Chine nécessiteuse revenaient constamment dans les comptes-rendus, réduisant souvent la portée des images de Greenwood à des rapports sur les conditions « misérables » et « lamentables » des Chinois. Une telle orientation de son travail avec la vision d'une nation infirme composée de « petites » gens à moitié morts de faim, faisait de ses images des témoins crédibles dans une campagne bien orchestrée pour persuader le gouvernement américain de soutenir les forces assiégées de Tchang Kaï-Chek. Dans les décades qui suivirent leur réception initiale, les peintures et les gravures de Greenwood continuèrent de susciter des commentaires qui les rendaient sujettes à des interprétations changeantes, mais toujours hautement politisées.

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Place Really Does Matter:[1] Marion Greenwood's 1947 "China" Exhibition

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Résumé

En décembre 1947, l'Associated American Artists Gallery de New York exposait les tableaux et les oeuvres sur papier de Marion Greenwood, revenue d'un « séjour de presque deux ans en Chine du Sud ». La plupart des textes de l'exposition insistaient sur le séjour en Chine de l'artiste, séjour qui s'était en fait limité à une période d'un an dans la colonie britannique nouvellement reconquise de Hong Kong et à une visite de seulement quatre jours dans ce que l'artiste avait elle-même identifié comme la « vraie Chine ». Cet article tente de comprendre pourquoi Greenwood choisit de replacer sa production dans un plus large contexte chinois, et il analyse surtout les conséquences de ce glissement géo-politique; les notions bien établies d'une Chine nécessiteuse revenaient constamment dans les comptes-rendus, réduisant souvent la portée des images de Greenwood à des rapports sur les conditions « misérables » et « lamentables » des Chinois. Une telle orientation de son travail avec la vision d'une nation infirme composée de « petites » gens à moitié morts de faim, faisait de ses images des témoins crédibles dans une campagne bien orchestrée pour persuader le gouvernement américain de soutenir les forces assiégées de Tchang Kaï-Chek. Dans les décades qui suivirent leur réception initiale, les peintures et les gravures de Greenwood continuèrent de susciter des commentaires qui les rendaient sujettes à des interprétations changeantes, mais toujours hautement politisées.

The Hong Kong that Great Britain rushed to retrieve for its Empire in the late summer of 1945 was a mess. Some eighty percent of the people who had survived the Japanese occupation were malnourished; public education had broken down; the fishing fleet had been decimated; within the principal harbour lurked over seventy sunken vessels; and most of the trees crucial for the prevention of soil erosion and the provision of run-off for water reservoirs had been burned for firewood.[2] As British officials worked to reconstruct the colony, their self-appointed tasks were complicated by the influx of many thousands of mainland Chinese fleeing one side or another in a civil war which had begun to regain full steam from the moment of the surrender of Japan.[3]

Marion Greenwood, an American painter of some renown in the 1930s and early 1940s,[4] lived in Hong Kong from the summer of 1946, arriving just after the restoration of civilian government, until the following June. She was ideally situated as a self-declared representational artist to bear witness to the challenges facing the colony in the immediate post-war period. Yet, when her sketches and paintings were presented to the public in the United States, they were identified with China. Her December 1947 Associated American Artists (AAA) exhibition in New York was entitled *Marion Greenwood: Paintings. Gouaches. Drawings: China.* Interviews prefacing the show, as well as the small catalogue accompanying it, all at least partially controlled by the artist, focused on – often completely exaggerated – her familiarity with China. From what I have been able to ascertain from letters sent to family members during her twelve months in Hong Kong,[5] Greenwood left British colonial territory for a four-day trip to Canton and environs and spent a weekend in the Portuguese colony of Macao, a far cry from the "nearly two years in south China" mentioned in the exhibition catalogue.

While suggesting some of the reasons why Greenwood neglected the specificity of her residence, my article is concerned primarily with the ramifications of this shift in the place of production. I will argue that it opened up possibilities for her contemporaries, her viewers/reviewers, to situate Greenwood's work in a context having little if anything to do with her stated politics. Paintings like *The Rice Line* (fig. 1) and *The Toilers* (fig. 2) were able to slip all too easily into a stream of imagery which constructed the then-Republic of China as a disabled dragon in need of assistance, a stream at the time carrying very particular pollutants. The year 1947 may have seen Anna May Wong advertising Lentheric's "Shanghai" line of perfume, designed "to tell you of the orient, its delicate beauty, ... its fantasy,"[6] but it was also an important year of decision in Sino-American relations.[7] Stakes were high for representations of "China" and "the Chinese," and the reception of Greenwood's work indicates that "the China question" was territory into which amateurs could stray only at their peril.

Of considerable interest, as well, is the way the work produced by Greenwood during her year in Hong Kong has been attended to since the "fall/loss" of China. More than fifty years have passed since her exhibition was first reviewed, but interpretative strategies have changed little. Hong Kong has continued to be shunted aside, this willingness to overlook geopolitical fact perhaps telling us of an on-going need to talk about China even when it is but a mirage. As Hong Kong moves into its new position within the People's Republic of China (PRC), and as

Figure 1. Marion Greenwood, *The Rice Line*, 1947. Oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Private Collection, Ireland (Photo: Woodstock Artists' Association).

Figure 2. Marion Greenwood, *The Toilers*, 1947. Oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Location unknown (Photo: Woodstock Artists' Association).

American business steps up its romance with the PRC, it may be useful to probe one story of how "China" has been written in the United States.

In "China"

Often cited for her adventurous spirit, Marion Greenwood (1909–1970) was no stranger to travel when she set out for Hong Kong in the spring of 1946. At the age of eighteen she had travelled to France to study, shortly thereafter went to New Mexico to make art, and then in 1932, in the company of the left-wing writers, Josephine Herbst and John Herrmann, entered Mexico for the first of two lengthy and highly productive periods.[8] In 1939, along with her new British-born husband, Charles Fenn, she took a two-month wedding trip to London, southern Italy and Tunisia, including a visit to the desert headquarters of General LeClerc of France. By the spring of 1943, Greenwood was again thinking of travel, agitating for overseas duties as a war artist: Fenn, metamorphosed from a textile salesperson to a roving freelance photographer, had just been recruited by Buckminster Fuller to serve in the Office of Special Services (OSS) in unoccupied China.[9]

War artist Greenwood was to be, although her assignment from the Abbott Laboratories War Art Project was state-side, documenting the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers in the England General Hospital, Atlantic City.[10] Ironically enough, by the time it became possible for her to travel with Fenn, the Abbott commission, along with a number of other successes including the Second Prize in the Carnegie Annual of 1944,[11] had garnered her a place in the American art world that she was all too soon afraid of losing.[12]

Be that as it may, Greenwood set out with Fenn on the long, arduous voyage to Hong Kong, stopping off in London to renew their acquaintanceship with Julian Huxley, the noted zoologist who would later sign a catalogue statement for the artist's

"China" exhibition. Over a month was spent in India waiting for armed services' transportation, a layover not much to the artist's liking: she found the "filth and poverty here ... unspeakable – except of course for the rich Indian merchants and the feudal lords." By the time she embarked on the final leg of the journey, Greenwood, fed up with the heat and predicting violence among religious sects once freedom was obtained from the British, was writing that the United States was "the only place to live for health."[13]

Fenn was returning to what had been his home and place of business since the end of World War II. Hence, his partner entered Hong Kong as something other than a tourist, indeed at a fairly privileged level. Because of his wartime activities, Fenn knew many of those working to revive the colony. He counted among his friends David McDougall, who escaped from the Japanese in the Battle of Hong Kong and had returned as the first post-war Colonial Secretary,[14] and the extraordinary Dr Percy Selwyn-Clarke. Medical Director prior to the Japanese invasion, Selwyn-Clarke managed to retain the function through part of the occupation, slipping foods and medicines into the camps, but was eventually incarcerated. After a brief leave to overcome the effects of ten months of torture, he had returned to Hong Kong to direct public health activities.[15] Such highly placed acquaintances undoubtedly eased Greenwood's introduction into the British community; as early as November 1946, she is recorded as lecturing on "The Indelible and Fatal Brushwork of Chinese Art" to the Sino-British Club.[16]

Also accessible to Greenwood were the people – Caucasian and Asian – who gathered at one of Fenn's enterprises, the Cosmos Club. There, amidst dining and dancing, she witnessed the lively, sometimes unruly, encounters between supporters of the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party.[17] If language barriers prevented her from actively engaging in these debates, one nevertheless suspects that they were of real interest to her; Fenn, in his capacity as an OSS officer, had been responsible for the recruiting and handling of Ho Chi Minh in the final months of World War II,[18] and the political significance of personal exposure to such an individual and such a situation cannot have escaped the artist.

The Cosmos Club provided contact with creative circles, as well, the facility sometimes being used by the Renjian Huahui, made up of mainland scholars, writers and artists who found in Hong Kong, from the fall of 1946 to 1949, a safe haven from which to propagate a mix of anti-Nationalist and communist ideas.[19] Her description of this group – "communist Chinese, mediocre artists & writers who are nice, childish & flighty like the Mexicans were, but most can't speak English"– indicates, however, that she did not consider this contact a substitute for the New York art scene.[20] Hers was the loss. Not only could some of the members have instructed Greenwood in the precarious position artists occupied in war-torn China, but they also might have persuaded her of the substance of their artistic endeavours. The elder statesman of the group, founded by the painter Fu Luofei and the wood engraver Huang Xinbo, was Xia Yan, one of China's leading playwrights, who had shifted from historical drama to contemporary realist material with the outbreak of the war. Four of China's most popular cartoonists – Ding Cong, Liao Bingxiaong, Te Wei and Zhang Guangyu – were also members, each with an artistic background that included efforts to "sinify" Western influences considered useful in making the cartoon an effective mass propaganda tool.[21]

Greenwood, at times enjoying the world of having servants and receiving invitations to fifty-course dinners, had difficulties adjusting to "this opposite world." Nevertheless, she set out to resume her art-making. She made a portrait of the Chinese cryptographer who had worked with Fenn during the war and sketched a Japanese soldier being tried for war crimes, who, according to her notes, was executed the next day.[22] As well, she made portraits of an associate of the Renjian Huahui, Pauline Chen (fig. 3),[23] and the group's founder, Fu Luofei. A great deal of her effort seems to have gone into picturing the outdoor life of the Central District and the surrounding areas, "the Ration lines of the poor, Rock crushers, rice field stuff ... and the wonderful waterfront life in sampans and junks."[24] She wrote frequently about the rice fields, "a beautiful unbelievable green," and the "bending figures of peasants" who worked in them.

Busy with his various enterprises and writing plays, Fenn was unavailable as a companion for trips much beyond the city, other than a weekend in Macao.[25] Greenwood, who had wanted to travel to Peking or at least to get into "real China," was finally able to find company for a four-day trip to Canton in April 1947, affording her "just a glimpse of China." "Not [in] a 'colony' atmosphere for a change," she soaked in as much as possible of the "big seething city," and visited what was then the nearby village of Fatshan. There she saw "a little sampan boat rowed by strong young Chinese girls as thick and as strong as truck drivers," a scene she later worked into a painting of "women pushing burdens along the river." This hamlet, where everyone was doing handicrafts, "making lanterns, weaving, welding in front of their little homes," also confronted her with the limits of her own tolerance: "I should spend a couple of weeks in such a little village, but I wouldn't be able to take the primitive life & filth that goes with it."[26]

Managing an American "Comeback"

Greenwood, returning unaccompanied to New York in June 1947, carried back hundreds of sketches that she had already humorously suggested her parents might sell from "behind a stand in Washington Square,"[27] and within days was busy plan-

Figure 3. Marion Greenwood, *Hong Kong Girl*, 1947. Oil on canvas, 29.5 x 20.5 inches. Collection of Allen Neville (Photo: Woodstock Artists' Association).

ning for a solo exhibition for the Associated American Artists Galleries. Seeking to stage a "comeback" in the New York art world, she lamented the absence of anyone "who understood and took an interest," a manager who could obtain for her "the prestige and publicity which is my due." Adverse attention, she assumed, would be her lot: "I'll just be called an illustrator or reporter by this stupid fad-conscious art world – being representational is just old fashioned."[28]

Although Greenwood fretted through the fall of 1947, some substantial publicity did come her way, most notably a large interview-based article, "An Artist Views the Smiling Poor of China," in the *New York Post* of July 25. Written by Wambly Bald, it described, if not exaggerated, her adventures so as to convey her "green-eyed, bang-haired, bold-souled" approach to life. Whereas her letters from Hong Kong often implied isolation or boredom, the article had Greenwood accompanying police on their raids of "opium dens and other dives" and being tipped out of a sedan chair onto the street by "an agitated coolie driver." She was happiest "with the peasants, who often gathered around her to watch her work, their faces sunny with smiles" and took for her primary subjects "the coolies, fishermen, beggars, hungry people lining up for food rations."[29]

Bald also introduced a context for her work which, if not created by the artist herself, certainly received her encouragement. Emphasized was her time in China: "I lived in Hong Kong and travelled considerably through southern China ... Everywhere I saw evidence of tragic chaos, although there is a strong movement for democracy." Her residency in Hong Kong was not ignored, but the reader was left with nary a comment on the differences between a re-established British colony and the Republic of China, a distinction Greenwood clearly made in her private letters. Instead, a somewhat false impression of the breadth of the artist's contact with China and its peoples was given, generalizations about Chinese "character" being readily profferred by or on behalf of Greenwood: "The artist sharply discounted the popular notion that the Chinese are a passive people. She found them emotional, easily aroused to anger, although loyal and affectionate to persons they count as friends." With "some vehemence," she reported that the Chinese were "a wonderful people," to be approached as human beings rather than "as Fu Manchus created in Hollywood."

These observations about locale might hardly be worth making were they not applicable to other public-relations activities at least partly under the control of Greenwood. Following up on a promise she had made to Pauline Chen, she secured a small notice in *PM*'s "Picture News" of 31 August, explaining why members of the Renjian Huahui had fled mainland China: "One nonsmiling group Miss Greenwood met is The Human Studio, made up of Chinese artists, writers and scholars who've escaped from the Kuomintang by fleeing to Hong Kong. They asked her to take home the message that although they've become anti-American government (for its support of Chiang Kai-shek), they still have a great respect for the American people." This text, probably a sarcastic rejoinder to the *Post*'s reference to the "smiling" Chinese, finished off a page dominated by a reproduction of a "street urchin awaiting his turn in a Hong Kong rice line," one of the several hundred sketches made by Greenwood "during a year's stay in China."[30] Hong Kong was virtually eliminated rather than glossed over in a typed note which appeared in a Christmas fundraising pamphlet written by Mary Osborne for the China Aid Council. Greenwood had supplied for the cover a sketch of a beggar mother and child, described as a "gouache ... by ... a leading American artist recently returned from a year and a half in South China. It is included in her one-man exhibition."[31] Finally and most decisively, the catalogue produced for the New York showing of her work gave Hong Kong no more than a passing mention: the name was in the title of one work, but neither Huxley's preface nor gallery director Pegeen Sullivan's comments made any reference to her primary place of residence. China and "the Chinese" were underscored again and again.

In repeatedly encouraging an association of her work and exhibition with China rather than Hong Kong, Greenwood may have sought to affiliate herself with the representation of "a people" rather than a locale which, in her own words, was "after all ... just an island, a British colony *off* the coast of China."[32] From her early exposure to the ideas and art of Winold Reiss [33] through her 1944 commission for an illustration of an "Irish" type for an article on "racial types,"[34] Greenwood had been very comfortable with prevailing notions of a world made up of discernible races and peoples. In fact, she seemed to have difficulties with situations in which the supposed integrity of those groups had been breached: in letters written from India, it appears she had little use for the upper-class Anglo-Indians, noting that the "younger generation of these mixed marriages are smart alecky ..., talking English instead of their native language and awful snobs to their own race." [35] In Hong Kong, she developed similar sentiments towards its "people of two worlds,"[36] noting that "[a]ll the awful ones talk English & are very modern – the women talk of nothing but nylons, cosmetics & money – so I *don't* like them."[37]

On a more specific level, Greenwood may have chosen to diminish the role of Hong Kong as a way of making the colony disappear, of securing its oblivion. To have argued, no matter how obliquely, for the return of Hong Kong to China would have been to take a recognizable and credible position in the United States at the time.[38] I believe, however, that a case should also be made for Greenwood having promoted her familiarity with the mainland so as to enter, both as intermediary and participant, the contemporary debate on the role the United States should play in what had become a fully declared civil war in China. The *New York Post* interview reported that "she spoke of talented Chinese artists so desperately poor that sometimes 10 of them would have to use the same brush in turns. All felt exploited by the merchant class, and hoped unanimously that the U.S. would stay out of their country's struggle and let them settle their own affairs."[39] As loyalty oaths were being hotly debated in the press[40] and the House Committee on Un-American Activities was renewing its scrutiny of Hollywood, Greenwood's willingness, both in the *Post* and again in *PM*, to represent those who she understood to hold pro-communist beliefs was unlikely to have been a thoughtless gesture. This is especially so for a woman who had but four years earlier worried about being "cleared" for service as a war-artist,[41] and whose one-time friend, the writer Josephine Herbst, had been padlocked and marched out of her job at the Washington-based Office of the Coordinator of Information in May 1942, for her political convictions.[42]

The artist's provision of a sketch for the aforementioned China Aid Council pamphlet may be read within a non-interventionist context, as well. By late 1947, when this pamphlet was being circulated, the Osborne name carried much more than a reputation for charitable works. Mary Osborne had returned in July from China with her husband, Professor Ernest Osborne of Columbia University, where the two had worked, respectively, for the United Service to China and the China Aid Council.[43] Within days of his arrival back in the United States, Ernest publicly declared that he saw no evidence for communist involvement in student demonstrations in Nanking. Shortly thereafter he became embroiled in the question of whether American support for the Guomindang should be expanded to include military aid. In an October letter to the *New York Times* he challenged the perception that China might become a "Balkan state" if the corrupt and unpopular Nationalists were to lose power, concluding: "It would be most gratifying if the moderate elements in China could assume direction of the nation. Few see how this is possible under present circumstances. It would seem, from our point of view, that the situation is one of a choice of the lesser evil."[44] Dr Osborne was rebuked in very short order, accused of ignoring the dangers of Communism, by none other than Arthur Kohlberg, Vice-President of the American China Policy Association, Inc., chief spokesperson for the so-called "China Lobby" and future backer of Senator Joseph McCarthy.[45]

Whatever finally motivated Greenwood's desire to have her "comeback" linked to China, it is clear that she worked hard to attract for her exhibition an audience whose interests encompassed contemporary events as well as art. The presence of a text in the exhibition pamphlet by Julian Huxley, by then firmly in place as Director General of UNESCO, points in this direction. When Greenwood decided in late August to get "some well known name ... to write a paragraph or so for my catalogue," she did not approach Diego Rivera or any other prestigious art friends. She turned instead to Huxley, who had never seen "the Chinese things," but was the most important political figure she appears to have known. The measure of their friendship can be sensed when she informs Fenn of her intention to ask Huxley to revise his "terrible" draft. She persuaded him to delete passages like "... She has helped us to understand the negroes in Harlem, the U.S. army at war, the lives of the little people who make up the big American cities. In the paintings in the present exhibition she is helping the U.S. to understand China, its people and its cultures ..."[46] His initial effort was transformed into a statement emphasizing Greenwood's "capacity to expand in expressive power under the stimulus of new experience," and concluding as follows: "A universal human sympathy underlies all her work and has enabled her to return from China equipped with new techniques to give us this vital and poignant record of Chinese life."[47]

Revisions to the Huxley text are of great interest in contemplating what kind of art viewing experience Greenwood wanted to construct for her audience. If, as I think we must at least entertain, she wished to open up an association between her work and an autonomous future for China, this was not going to give rise to what she considered to be didactic pictures. Her great fear was to enter the annals of art history as an illustrator. The revised Huxley text, evidently more to her liking, presented an artist whose accomplishments lay in what is now considered even more suspect territory, that of the transcendent humanist whose gaze runs the risk of eliminating or collapsing the very identities it seeks to embrace.

Exhibiting "that wretched land and its humble people"

The AAA show, which opened in New York on 1 December 1947 and later moved on to Chicago in April 1948, consisted of ten oil paintings and sixteen works on paper. The theme of the rice line appeared twice, in a painting and also in a gouache and ink rendition, while the quarry worker, male and female, and the street vendor were other repeated subjects. Though weighted towards what would come to be called "peasant life," the exhibited work included portraits of a student, an artist, a calligrapher and a Buddhist priest, as well as *Kuan Yin*, a crayon rendering of the immensely popular Buddhist "Goddess of Compassion." *Hong Kong Girl* (fig. 3) was the only reproduction in the four-page catalogue and appeared on its cover: in many respects an odd choice for the only image viewers took home with them, this picture may owe some of its pride of place to the fact that it had been sold in October for the healthy sum of $850 to the collector Marc Sandler.[48]

Pegeen Sullivan's short catalogue statement stressed the artist's ability to absorb "the essential aspects of each country and its people without sacrificing her own identity and personal vision," cross-cultural work allegedly appreciated in China: "With her strong Celtic sensitivity, she seized upon the salient features of Chinese life and evolved a group of pictures that won immediate recognition from the Chinese themselves for their penetrating insight and sympathy." In recording that the "Chinese critics were at once impressed by the subtle manner in which the Western artist had intuitively captured the basic and varied qualities of the Chinese people," Sullivan modified a rather monolithic notion of "the Chinese" and acknowledged the diversity of Greenwood's subject-matter.[49]

As the works were being selected and hung, *The Villager* published an announcement of the forthcoming exhibition by "one of America's best-known women painters ... recently returned from a prolonged stay in China." The work was applauded, the "realistic street scenes, pictures of the rice lines, character sketches and mother-and-child studies" seen as imaginative and challenging evocations of the "historic ... struggle for life in post-war China."[50] This text gave some sense of the breadth of imagery in the exhibition but, in focusing on the element of struggle, would not have prepared a viewer for "character studies" of a calligrapher, an ink grinder, a student or the like. It would not be alone.

Not the slightest indication of the range of Greenwood's material was given in a brief exhibition review which appeared in the *New York Times* of 7 December, 1947: "Marion Greenwood has returned from a year in China with a stirring report of that wretched land and its humble people. Her sad mothers and children and laboring little people in their misery are depicted with sympathy and flashing indignation." The reviewer went on to observe that "she has not beheld with an objective vision but has entered into the lives with insight, profound sympathy and conviction," an assessment which, in repeating the word "sympathy," focused attention on one and only one component of the artist's production.[51] Aesthetic diversity was acknowledged in a *New York Herald Tribune* report of the same day, as Greenwood was praised for the "feeling for humanity ... in her sometimes fully documented, sometimes sketchy figure pieces which make a varied exhibition." Nevertheless, featured in the short review were the "poignant documents of fine sympathy and strength" of "patiently suffering humanity, toiling coolies and slow-footed half starved mothers-and-child," all the products of a "realist" with "extreme competence in characterization," and "with major consideration projected in everyday and humble types of people."[52]

Some escape from the litany of woes in China seemed to be offered by a review in the *New York Sun* two weeks later. The writer took on the issue of "expatriated art, if that is the word," concluding that "Miss Greenwood draws the Chinese the way they look to Americans but plunged no deeper than that." The artist was not faulted for being unable to "tap the hidden springs[:] How could she? She is not native ... The Chinese, who are a polite people, were astonished that she came so near them as she did, but they must have been equally astonished at what she left out." Fascinating for its juxtaposition of a common stereotype of "the Chinese" with a questioning of the expatriate gaze, the review may have been a rejoinder to Pegeen Sullivan's insistence on the artist's favourable reception in China. Finally, though, the reviewer joined what had become the mainstream, foregrounding her drawings of "peasants in action," including a study of "a group of weary people pushing a cartload of their belongings that is especially good." A reproduction of *The Toilers* was provided.[53]

In pushing the heavily burdened peasant to the exclusion of anything else in Greenwood's portfolio, the daily press was more focused than the periodic art press, but it too had similar predilections. A small review in the December issue of *Art News* gave preference to the sketches, "her little unpretentious reports on how a coolie squats, ... [how] children break rocks," all of which had a "certain vivid, documentary quality that make them more valuable than photographs,"[54] her paintings being dismissed as "stiff ... merely [giving] an emotional report on picturesque or lamentable conditions."[55] Margaret Breuning, writing in *The Art Digest* of 15 December, was a good deal more positive about the exhibition, praising both the paintings and the works on paper, and noting the inclusion of "outstanding examples of distinctive calligraphic patterns in which as much is suggested as recorded." Greenwood was further applauded for depicting the peasants and labourers "with discernment of their character and with warmth of sympathetic understanding that makes them not so much types, as human beings," and for refusing to rely "on appeal to picturesqueness of setting" in her "sketches of water carriers, rock breakers, or street vendors." Accompanied by a reproduction of *From the Hills* (fig. 4), this review made reference to "disparate instances of the artist's perceptiveness," taking a small detour around the peasant material by mentioning *The Ink Grinder* and *Portrait of Chinese Artist*.[56]

Of the published responses to the AAA exhibition I have located, only Harry Salpeter's article in the January 1948 issue of *American Artist* placed the work in any specific political context. Greenwood's "profound sympathy with the poor and the oppressed of all lands, her natural democratic feeling, her disregard of all difficulties and class barriers, [and] her curiosity about ordinary human beings of all lands," were displayed by what Salpeter called an "American to the core in her optimism, humor and gaiety, in her hopeful looking and striving forward." The themes of her earlier work in Mexico appealed "to her own democratic feelings – outcasts and peasants, workers and farmers united against imperialism."[57] No more is the reader left with a verbal description of victims, individuals approached with sympathy but, none the less, mired down in their lamentable circumstances. Agency is attributed to those she pictures, a notion very much in keeping with what Greenwood had once told Fenn: "You've repeated several times how these nice Chinese are ready to risk their lives because you asked them to – Don't forget they are risking their lives for China, not for Charles Fenn. For god's sake don't get the traditional colonial English feeling of superiority and delusions of grandeur."[58] In discussing the work from "the Canton-Hong Kong area of China," Salpeter also noticed that her exhibition incorporated something other than the ubiquitous peasant scenes; *Hong Kong Girl* was offered as an example of her "marked gift for portraiture," as a work which "began as the presentation of an individual and ended by being the individual and then something more and beyond."

Figure 4. Marion Greenwood, *From the Hills*, 1947. Oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Location unknown (Photo: *Art Digest*, 15 December 1947).

"China"/ Hong Kong

Reviewers of the AAA exhibition are to be forgiven for not framing their discussions of Greenwood's art around contemporary developments in Sino-American relations. The pictures and exhibition texts did not call for a reading which directly assumed China's right to determine its own destiny. There was, in fact, a member of the New York press who might well have provided such an inflection, but his was not the "art beat." I am referring to Wambly Bald, author of the "Smiling Poor" interview. Ironically, during the opening week of the exhibition, his profile piece for the *New York Post* was on General Feng Yu-hsiang, an important ex-warlord who had been a supporter of Chiang Kai-shek but now toured the United States arguing, as Greenwood had on behalf of the Renjian Huahui, for non-intervention, or more directly put, for the cessation of assistance to the Nationalist government.[59]

Both the exhibited works and the catalogue can be said, none the less, to occupy a discernible position, akin I would argue to appeals for the recognition of the diversity of the Chinese population issued by such writers as Herrymon Maurer. In the May 1941 issue of *Asia*, he had observed that "when we think of the people of China, we picture usually the people who find their way into books ... long-sleeved calligraphers ... and perhaps a few landed gentry mellow with wisdom." For him, China was "a country of farmers, of carriers, of pullers, of artisans, of small merchants" who should not all be lumped together indiscriminately under the title of "coolie," but should be acknowledged in relation to their specific occupations.[60]

Maurer also criticized the condescending attitude to be found in many descriptions of the people of China, a critique with some real resonance in the face of the pathos – perhaps better put, bathos – with which reviewers in the daily press had showered Greenwood's paintings and works on paper. Neither Huxley's nor Sullivan's contributions to the small catalogue constructed life in China as one of sorrowful struggle, unmitigated or otherwise. True, one of the gouaches was entitled *Suffering Child* and several other works showed men, women and children labouring – showed them hard at work– or waiting in line for food, but the degree to which reviewers forged quite dramatic "China" narratives becomes clearer if we imagine what might have been written had Hong Kong been stipulated as the site of production. Would it have been as easy for her reviewers to describe a British crown colony as a "wretched land" filled with "humble people" living in "lamentable conditions?" Might not, for example, *The Rice Line* have been said to reflect the orderly fashion with which food was being rationed in a crowded, recovering part of the world?[61] While it is unlikely that the painting (fig. 1) would have been directly linked to the activities of a Selwyn-Clarke, Medical Director of Hong Kong, an individual of whom the artist was extremely fond[62] – in other words, to the very local elements which must have helped shape the work – the placing of this scene within colonial territory would more than likely have acquired for it a different reading.

Turning to *The Toilers* (fig. 2), a work foregrounded in at least one exhibition review, one imagines it parting company from sentiments like those which had accompanied a comparable photograph in the 7 April 1947 issue of *Life*: "In an ancient cart, a weary Yenan family, laden with all its possessions, heads off towards a new home ... Such Chinese families, who ... may have no real idea what the fighting is about, are the saddest victims of the Chinese civil war."[63] Located in Hong Kong, might not the subject of *The Toilers* have been taken as a register of agency, as a record of people taking their destinies, however precarious, into their own hands? These days Greenwood's painting strikes one as an interesting metaphor for the very nature of Hong Kong from the 1840s until at least the summer of 1998, a site of perpetual arrival and departure,[64] but that or any other contextualization was subsumed by the deployment of a prominent discourse on poor, needy China.

The Politics of Sorrow

The tendency in some quarters to reduce Greenwood's imagery to a single theme – the deprivation and suffering of the Chinese – was certainly aided and abetted by her abandonment of Hong Kong, but the construct of China which reviewers brought with them also contributed to the final shape of the texts they wrote. Students, calligraphers, girls in cheongsams, and Buddhist priests were not so easily placed within a world of sorrow and so were rendered invisible, silent.

The needs of China, whether spiritual or physical, have a long history in the American imagination and were of very special concern following the 1937 invasion by Japan and the later declaration of war between the United States and Japan. Moviegoers who thrilled to the exploits of John Wayne in the 1942 *Flying Tigers* could not fail to notice the clearly marked boxes of United China Relief (UCR) which created a stage setting for the opening shots of the film.[65] Hungry children often figured in posters designed to assist aid organizations in their fund-raising activities,[66] while thousands upon thousands of Americans participated in the Rice Bowl parties organized in Chinatowns across the United States (fig. 5), festivities lasting several days which made what must have been compelling associations between the war effort and the need to provide China with basic sustenance.[67]

The equation of China with need still held in 1947, even as activities culminating in the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe often focused attention elsewhere. Surveys conducted by the United Service to China (USC, the renamed UCR) late in the previous year had found China to be at the head of the list of countries Americans felt responsible for assisting.[68] As the civil war in China escalated, magazines like *Time* and *Life* fought to keep their readership alive to aid-related problems, whether through bizarre accounts of how 60-lb. loaves of bread dropped into the besieged city of Yungnien had knocked holes in roofs and killed people,[69] or through more detailed economic analyses indicating, for example, that citizens in Chi-

Figure 5. Elizabeth Colman, *In the Neighbour's Language*, ca. 1946. Photograph, dimensions unknown. Location unknown (Photo: Elizabeth Colman, *Chinatown U.S.A.* New York, John Day. Co., 1946).

na's cities would face starvation if unable to buy American cotton on credit and trade trousers for rice with farmers.[70]

In many respects, Greenwood's reviewers wrote copy appropriate for the pages of these newsmagazines, or better yet, campaign literature for aid organizations. *Time* and *Life*, of course, were anything but unmotivated in their coverage of matters Chinese. Their publisher, the China-born son of missionary parents, was Henry Luce, whose concern for a Christianized, democratic China caused him to throw the full weight of his publishing empire behind Chiang Kai-shek.[71] Luce was also an important, if not the seminal figure in the USC, and it was thus no accident that many of the principal officers of the aid organization were openly associated with and much appreciated by the Nationalist government. Increasingly, the mouth in the bottom of the rice bowls charitable Americans were being asked to fill was that of Chiang.

The Generalissimo needed positive press coverage more than the dollars accrued from an association with the USC.[72] The year had begun badly for his government, when General George Marshall – home from another failed American mission to bring about a reconciliation between the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang – openly criticized both sides for their lack of cooperation.[73] As newly appointed Secretary of State, he also lobbied, in opposition to some of his Cabinet colleagues, against increasing assistance for Chiang, calling instead for reforms to be made before any further commitments were undertaken. The small numbers of remaining American troops were brought home and an embargo on arms sales continued.

On 8 January, the *New York Times* was one of many newspapers to publish General Marshall's parting 2,000 words to China. Whether intended to be ironic or simply a portent of the politics to come, a boxed item designed to break up a full page of the Marshall text was entitled "China, The New Dawn" and contained a photograph showing a donation being "turned over to Edward Stettinius Jr, national chairman of the [United Service to China] fund drive."[74] Twelve days later, the USC held its annual meeting in Junction City, Kansas. In an attempt "to simulate the problems of living in a small Chinese town, ... [housewives] washed their clothes in the near-by Republican River, carried their groceries home on poles and ate with chopsticks."[75] This faintly ludicrous educational programme was accompanied by a more serious set of encounters, attended by V.K. Wellington Koo, Chiang Kai-shek's Ambassador to the United States. The diplomat had flown in with Stettinius, no lightweight himself but rather former Secretary of State and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. It was as if a chess game had been opened, with General Marshall on one side and the forces of "the good," often tutored by Henry Luce, on the other. Without tracking the game move by move, it should be noted that when the next American general sent on a mission to China began to make known his profound disappointment with Chiang's government,[76] the USC quickly stepped into the footlights again. At a press conference, the head of the USC's American activities made it known that Chinese assistance programmes would be unaffected by any change in American policy brought about by recommendations from General Wedemeyer. To counteract accusations of Guomindang corruption, a demeaning defense of the Nationalist government was extended: "A nation where masses of the people are still illiterate cannot be criticized too much for lack of 'inspirational leadership' or 'inefficiency and corruption in local government'."[77]

The very direct connection between charitable giving and the Nationalist government was spelled out for all in the December 5 *New York Times*: "Ten members of the board of directors of United Service to China were decorated yesterday by the government that has benefited by their work."[78] Wellington Koo was once again aligned with the USC, handing out

Grand and Regular Orders of the Auspicious Star to a select group of officers, including Henry R. Luce, John D. Rockefeller III and Thomas Lamont, the latter a rather precious ally since for much of his distinguished career as a financier he had argued for the greater merits of Japan as a place to do business.[79]

Many reading the reviews of the Greenwood exhibition in the New York press thus would have been able to enter into a chain of associations starting with misery and ending up with Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists as the problem-solvers favoured by the most prominent of aid organizations and its highly placed supporters. Certainly there would have been no way of avoiding drawing connections between references to "that wretched land" with its "lamentable conditions" and the battle over what, if any, substantial support should be extended to Chiang. This debate escalated through the autumn as the AAA exhibition moved from the planning phase to a physical reality, and had reached a fever pitch by the time of its opening. The very day of the vernissage, *Time* carried a story on the elections in China, criticizing the Truman administration for its failure to match Chiang's reforms with material support and featuring a map of China entitled "Going, Going ..."[80]

From the point in February when Marshall had brought Marines home, publications controlled by Luce called openly for renewed military assistance. *Life* magazine hired William Bullitt, a former American ambassador to France and the Soviet Union, to assess the situation in China, resulting in a 13 October article entitled "A Report to the American People on China." Advertised in advance under the banner "Can China be Kept out of the Hands of Stalin?," the article responded with a resounding "yes," but only through a combination of government reform and approximately $1.35 billion in American aid "to lift the tired, hungry nation to new heights of self-sacrifice." Aid would not lead to gluttony, however: "whether the struggle for existence in China has been so severe that only the fittest have survived or because of an exceptional inborn racial vitality, the Chinese can live on less and work harder than any other race of man."[81]

The work of the Luce press, in which images of hunger and death stalked a new policy towards China, channelled into the growing commitment of the Republican Party to direct, all-encompassing support for the Nationalist cause. Using as leverage the Truman administration's desire to push forward with the Marshall Plan, attempts were made to ensure funding for China,[82] and by November, Governor Thomas Dewey of New York, already favoured by some to carry the Republican flag again in the 1948 presidential elections, was using every possible speaking engagement to demand assistance for Chiang. Many American newspapers carried all or parts of his 5 November speech to a *Forbes Magazine* dinner in which he criticized the abandonment of "our wartime Chinese allies," as well as his 24 November demand for American involvement in saving China. He saw aid as a way of controlling the Soviet-led communism and echoed Bullitt's curious assurances about the size of stomachs to be filled: "So much of China is mountain and desert that pressure of population on the arable land is intense ... But perhaps because of this only the strongest have survived, and the Chinese can work harder on less food than any other people in the world."[83]

Initially, Secretary of State Marshall would go no further than promising some aid for April of 1948, but by year's end he had been forced to sell ammunition to China, add in some $18 million of winter relief, and contemplate much larger amounts of support for the 1948 fiscal year.[84] The debate which brought about these decisions had some fairly heated, indeed embarrassing moments for both sides. The Truman administration had to suffer through the testimony of Lieutenant General Wedemeyer to the Senate Appropriations Committee; although critical of the Nationalists and acknowledging that Chiang Kai-shek was a benevolent despot, he supported aid for their government and said so publicly.[85] Meanwhile, Chiang lived up to his despotic reputation by seeking to suppress the Democratic League, this against repeated advice offered by American ambassadorial staff in China.[86] Midway through Greenwood's exhibition, the *New York Times* carried a report that "the biggest collection of political refugees in the history of republican China is accumulating in Hong Kong," observing that these politicians had joined "hundreds of students and others without political affiliations, who feel unsafe in Government areas because of anti-Government views [and who] have reached Hong Kong in recent months."[87]

The irony here for Greenwood's exhibition is obvious – the timing of this exodus to the British colony might have generated substantial interest for pictures of Hong Kong made by a woman who was intimate with a slightly earlier wave of those fleeing the government of Chiang Kai-shek. Instead, accounts of her work may very well have struck a chord with the developing Republican picture of Chinese fighters against international Communism, hungry people who with just a little more food could be counted on as lean, effective allies.[88]

"To penetrate any but the most callous mind"

All of this was a very long time ago, and one may question the concern for a little-known exhibition and its reception by a few reviewers. My interest focuses on the way in which Greenwood's "China" work has been discussed in what little literature since the late 1940s has been dedicated to the artist's production. Here is to be found a continuation, even an expansion of the geographic slippage, as well as loud echoes of the earlier emphasis on the imperilled Chinese.

The artist continued working out of her Hong Kong experience for several years after the New York exhibition. In 1951, the Abbott Laboratories' journal, *What's New*, gave over its February cover and a small article to *Eastern Memory*, endowing the image with a nomadic potential which went well beyond the simple passage from Hong Kong to China. Although the author, Emily Genauer, art critic at the time for the *New York Herald Tribune*, described the work as a "Chinese peasant woman mourning Japanese destruction," the painting was placed on the cover of a magazine whose principal headline read "Battle Against Death in Korea." Furthermore, the author interpreted the figure as "a distillation of the grief and misery of all war, a symbol, especially of the age-old burden of women who labor to create and to sustain, and see the fruits of their labor and love ruthlessly destroyed, and yet must go on."[89] The rest of the short article focused on the calligraphic and design aspects of the work, but the indelible association of grief with war, women and a number of countries in Asia was not diminished.

These sentiments, perhaps appropriate to *Eastern Memory*, imprinted themselves heavily on Ralph Pearson's 1954 text dealing with some of the outcomes of what he called Greenwood's "Chinese adventure." *From the Hills* (fig. 4) and *Eastern Memory* were illustrated, along with *The Rice Line* (fig. 1) which he argued was "less masterful in organization, perhaps, but the characterization, the revelation of the poignant suffering of these tragic people, is expressed so eloquently in every look, gesture, line, and movement, and in the grayed colour harmony, that the impact of the scene will penetrate any but the most callous mind."[90] No specific geopolitical context was provided for the artist's work: in the McCarthyesque climate of the mid-1950s, a reader might well have felt justified in thinking of those waiting in line for rice not as victims of a war or its aftermath, but rather as hopelessly trapped by the dark forces of international communism. Certainly there was little to prevent an overlay of this sort.

Such texts, encrusted with discursive possibilities, have continued to be produced into this decade. Published in 1991, Roger Henkes' *American Women Painters of the 1930s and 1940s* introduced Greenwood as one of a number of women artists who neglected "major American tragedies," in her case choosing instead to "exploit ... the ravages of war, especially in far-off countries of India and China."[91] Later we are informed of Greenwood's motivation "to record the culture and the people of underdeveloped nations." Thereafter, the text is riddled with such phrases as "her compassion for downtrodden and unfortunate peoples" and "a master of revelation, a recorder of the unfortunate victims of domestic economics, racial discrimination and the destruction of war." *The Toilers* (fig. 2) is described as exhibiting "the strength, the humility and power of the Chinese working class to which she identifies – the immense amount of physical energy expended for bare essentials of life." Once again, Hong Kong disappears: the artist was in China when she created her Chinese works, alleged to reflect "the misery and the desperate struggle for survival in China after World War II" and the "terrifying experiences of war and destruction of the Eastern world."[92] Henkes final observation that "her work with the victims of the environment will continue to foster hope for those in need" may have been quite suggestive to a post-Tiananmen Square reader of certain assumptions about both the economic and human rights performances of China.

Having recently contributed to the scant literature on Greenwood's "China" work, using words like "survival" and "war-torn," as well as the phrase "the Far East,"[93] I may be able to provide some kind of insight into how texts at such variance from the specificities of art production get written. There are, of course, some obvious forces at play, beyond the simple issue of textual reproduction. Although anybody who writes about Greenwood knows that most of her time was spent in Hong Kong, she just was not very concerned about the refinements of place. Not only, as we have seen, did she divert attention from the colonial setting of her work, but she would later channel her "Chinese" memories into drawings like *The Korean Waif.*[94] Such smudged geographical edges, to be sure anything but fuzzy to some, do not encourage critical or scholarly precision. Then, there is the temptation of continuing the association of a woman with sympathy for a section of humankind thought to be in an almost untenable situation. Given the important roles women of European descent are alleged to have played in caring about and caring for mainland China, little invites a reassessment of the intensely empathetic, textually-produced artist named Greenwood.[95]

Another possibility offers itself, based on my own experiences as a writer. My adulthood has taken place a world in which Hong Kong has become increasingly identified with wealth and something bordering on decadent glamour.[96] Reviews of Greenwood's work evoked nothing I could imagine applying to Hong Kong, whereas they did resonate with some of the stereotypes I carry around about the more "obscure" China. China – a place with too many people who have too little land and as a result are almost always hungry, and always, always in a state of chaos – seemed to be the perfect match for what had been and was being said about Greenwood's art. I had not stopped to question the naturalness of my understanding of China, had never exposed myself to the long-available opinions or scholarship of those like Pearl Buck and Andrew March who have challenged the notion of China as an intrinsically impossible geopolitical entity, as a perpetually tragic site. [97] Nor had I processed artifacts like Simon Go's photographs of the "cage people" in Hong Kong, impoverished residents of a nightmare world whose living conditions were described in 1995 by the United Nations Human Rights Commission as "inhumane,"[98] and whose very existence challenge everything I have ever supposed about what is now the former British colony.[99]

My point is hardly original: each of us unearths our preconceived ideas about a place when we encounter its name. These ideas are not unique to any one individual, but tend to follow general patterns which have been constructed for a variety of purposes by many different voices. When Greenwood first played loose with her geography, she named "China." That, in combination with the timing of her exhibition, seems to have unleashed a set of well-established assumptions which at the time were being massaged by some in order to secure support for Chiang Kai-shek and his American backers, comprising, among others, prominent business and media leaders, as well as sections of the Republican Party. Strange company for a woman who would campaign for Henry Wallace, the former "left-leaning" Vice-President under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in the 1948 presidential elections.[100]

The return of Greenwood's visual production to the place in which it was actually made obviously will not have any retroactive effect on how her work circulated in the 1940s. Nor should it be seen as encouraging the development of fixed, "truthful" readings of her work, for a desire to underscore the constructed component of responses should not be mistaken for a desire to shut down the operations, however problematic, of human minds as they interact in society. My insistence on the Hong Kong origins of Greenwood's "China" oeuvre is instead motivated by what I consider to be an ever-present need to remind ourselves of the complex nature of locations at given points in time and as they stumble through time. They are tangles of both material and discursive factors which can never entirely be separated, but nevertheless warrant scrutiny. To leave unquestioned what has settled into a habit of associating Greenwood's work with China rather than with Hong Kong would be akin to reading about the transfer of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China without problematizing, for example, American assertions of a natural obligation to take on a kind of guardianship of the former British colony. As U.S. officials, confronted with some awkward aspects of the "handover," sytematically repeated, the event was to be thought of as "a movie, not a snapshot."[101] Like all astute moviegoers, we should probably watch for references to earlier films, the scripts for which can be identified in writings on just about anything, including long-forgotten exhibitions.

Notes

In addition to those individuals cited in specific footnotes, I should like to express my gratitude to Katharine Hazard (former Archivist, Woodstock Artists' Association) and her successor, Linda Freaney, both of whom were generous beyond all measure, as well as to Dr Janice Helland (Queen's University), an individual whose friendship and steady encouragement has given me the courage to "travel" into new territories.

1 This title was suggested by S. Morgan's *Place Matters: Gendered Geography in Victorian Women's Travel Books about Southeast Asia* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1996).

2 For conditions in Hong Kong in the immediate post-war period, see G. Gleason, *Hong Kong* (New York, 1963); and G. B. Endacott, *Hong Kong Eclipse* (Hong Kong, 1978), 268–97.

3 Estimates have the population tripling between the end of the Japanese occupation and the beginning of 1947: S. Blyth and I. Wotherspoon, eds, *Hong Kong Remembers* (Hong Kong, 1996), 3.

4 No monographic study of Greenwood exists; the most recent and largest-ever consideration of her work is to be found in a sixteen-page chapter in R. Henckes, *American Women Painters of the 1930s and 1940s: The Lives and Work of Ten Artists* (Jefferson, N.C., 1991), 55–71.

5 I am deeply grateful to Charles Fenn, Greenwood's ex-husband, and Robert Plate, her partner for the last fifteen years of the artist's life, for their generosity and trust in allowing me to read through a large number of letters in their possession.

6 A large advertisement from Stern Brothers' Department Store, announcing that Wong would lend her "wide knowledge of Chinese culture and history" to the perfume department on September 16, appeared in the *New York Times*, 14 September 1947, 26.

7 W. Head, *America's China Sojourn: America's Foreign Policy and its Effects on Sino-American Relations, 1942–1948* (Lanham, N.Y., 1983), 225–64, outlines the importance of decisions taken or not taken during the year.

8 For Greenwood's first trip to Mexico, see E. Langer, *Josephine Herbst* (Boston, 1983). The second visit found her working, under the supervision of Diego Rivera, on the massive Mercado L. Rodriguez project in Mexico City: see G. Rivas, "Mexican Murals by Marion Greenwood," *Mexican Life*, XII (January 1936), 24–25.

9 As recounted to me by Fenn during a day-long interview which took place at his home in Ireland in October 1995: he was trained ostensibly as a Marine.

10 Marion Greenwood (M.G.) to Charles Fenn (C.F., who had left the United States in January), 9 May 1944: "Oh and – a war artist correspondent form was sent to me to fill out! But it's only so Reeves can send me to hospitals to paint crippled soldiers – paid for by Abbott – & don't know whether I'll be "cleared" anyway. Wouldn't dare turn that down – after all we did last spring in that direction." Greenwood's paintings and drawings from the Atlantic City hospital, seventeen in all, were published in colour in DeWitt MacKenzie, *Men Without Guns* (Philadelphia, 1945) and several other venues. My thanks to Kenneth Prible, Corporate Records, Abbott Laboratories.

11 In 1944, *Mississippi Girl* won her second prize in the Carnegie Annual and was purchased by the noted collector, Maurice

Wertheim, who, according to her letter to Fenn of 9 May 1944, invited her "and the gallery gal ... for dinner, & I sat and watched my painting hanging between Picasso & Matisse."

12 If Greenwood was not worried about leaving in the spring of 1946, she certainly was by the fall. In a letter from Hong Kong to her mother, Kathryn Boylen Greenwood (K.B.G.), dated 16 November 1946, she wrote: "... I can't believe I'm away off in China – separated from you – my friends – the *gallery* – that keeps worrying me – so afraid – I'll be forgotten after working so hard for a little niche in the art world."

13 M.G. to K.B.G., 1 June 1946.

14 McDougall, whose escape involved swimming for hours after he had been shot, is mentioned in a number of studies of post-war Hong Kong, including Endacott, *Hong Kong Eclipse*.

15 Selwyn-Clarke's contributions to health issues in Hong Kong are outlined in M. Horder, "The hard boiled saint: Selwyn-Clarke in Hong Kong," *British Medical Journal*, 3111, no. 7003 (19 August 1995), 492–95.

16 *South China Morning Post*, 13 November 1946, n.p.: the notice does not indicate whether or not Greenwood concerned herself with contemporary art, but the conjunction of her talk with an exhibition of "very old paintings" suggests not. Whatever familiarity she had with Chinese brushwork may have been initiated through her earlier, very intense friendship with Isamu Noguchi who had spent much of 1930 in Peking, studying with Ch'i Paishih.

17 In a 31 January 1964 interview with Dorothy Seckler, Greenwood refers to "the fascinating Chinese intellectuals she met," noting that they were "all refugees from the Chinese Chiang Kai-shek government" (Archives of American Art Transcript, 25). Fenn, however, says that the club played host to a full spectrum of political positions.

18 The details of Ho Chi Minh's war-time relations with the OSS have been discussed most recently in M. Yu, *OSS in China* (New Haven, 1996). They have not figured prominently in analyses of circumstances leading to the Vietnam War, but this may change, due to a BBC/A&E documentary, "Uncle Ho and Uncle Sam," produced and aired repeatedly in 1995.

19 Starting with only the small *PM* text of August 1947 (see note 30), Wong Siu Yin, a graduate student at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, was able to identify the Human Studio group as the Renjian Huahui, and provided me with a list of members of the group, as well as an account of their activities at the Cosmos Club. I am extremely grateful for her assistance. M. Sullivan's recently published *Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China* (Berkeley, 1996), 116, briefly situates the group in the context of post-war art in Hong Kong.

20 M.G. to Grace Greenwood (G.G.), 1 September 1946. In the 1964 Seckler interview, Greenwood repeated this characterization, indicating that she preferred "the fine traditional Chinese painters" (25). Unfortunately, she does not name any of these artists.

21 Information on these members of the Renjian Huahui has been obtained from C. Hung, *War and Popular Culture: Resistance in Modern China, 1937–1945* (Berkeley, 1994).

22 A photograph of this sketch is in the Archives of American Art, Marion Greenwood Papers, Roll 85.

23 Fenn identified *Hong Kong Girl* as a portrait of Pauline Chen, whom Wong Siu Yin is almost certain was Chen Shi, an important associate of the Renjian Huahui who, among other things, had translated texts by Romain Rolland.

24 M.G. to G.G., 19 November 1946.

25 M.G. to G.G., 19 November 1946: "like a Mediterranean gem – it was fascinating."

26 M.G. to K.B.G., 24 April 1947.

27 M.G. to K.B.G., 28 January 1947.

28 M.G. to C.F., 14 September 1947.

29 W. Bald, "An Artist Views the Smiling Poor of China," *New York Post*, 25 July 1947, 19.

30 "Street Urchin," *PM*, "Picture News," 31 August 1947, n.p.: "'This little fellow smiled for me.' Miss Greenwood said, 'but that doesn't mean that all China is smiling. Far from it.'"

31 Entitled *Help China's Children With A Christmas Gift*, the pamphlet (Archives of American Art, Marion Greenwood Papers, Roll 85) contained a report of Osborne's June 1947 visit to the Canton Children's Center.

32 M.G. to G.G., 1 September 1946.

33 Robert Plate first drew my attention to Greenwood's friendship with Reiss, an artist whose career was structured around making portraits of members of "other" races: J.C. Stewart, *To Color America: Portraits by Winold Reiss* (Washington, D.C., 1989).

34 In a letter to Fenn, dated 14 February 1944, she wrote: "Did I tell you that last night Estelle Mandell brought some magazine people ... who want a portrait of a racial type to illustrate a series of articles by Louis Adamic; different artists will do different types – it sounds interesting ...." In the 1964 Seckler interview mentioned above, the artist noted her special talents with respect to the racial "other:" "As I say, I always sketched people ... When people were of another race I was especially inspired" (20).

35 M.G. to K.B.G., 1 June 1946.

36 G. Marchetti, *Romance and the "Yellow Peril": Race, Sex and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley, 1993), 72–77, offers insight into the treatment of these so-called "flying fish" in Hollywood films.

37 M.G. to G.G., 1 September 1946.

38 See E. Janeway, "The Test Case – Hong Kong," *Asia and the Americas* (March 1944), 99. Remarkably, Greenwood's husband had been involved in something of a Keystone Cops adventure at the end of the war that reflected the tensions between the United States and Great Britain over the future status of the colony. In August 1945, prior to Japanese capitulation, Fenn – now assigned to Air Ground Air Services – was to lead a small number of American and British personnel into the POW camps in Hong Kong in an effort, if nothing else, to raise morale. The highest-ranking British officer to board the aircraft was not enthusiastic about the scheme but, suspicious of the fact that the Americans carried no British flags, none the less joined what became a failed mission undertaken by a team anything but united in its convictions. Bad weather forced a landing in a Japanese-held airport just

outside Canton, and a heated argument between the American and British officers created a level of anxiety among the Japanese sufficient to cause them "to menacingly advance upon us with fixed bayonets." A quick departure ended what Fenn described as a "fiasco." O. Lindsay, *At the Going Down of the Sun: Hong Kong and South-East Asia, 1940–45* (London, 1981), 199–202.

39 *New York Post*, 25 July 1947, 19.

40 I.F. Stone, "Opinion: Twin Measures for a Witch Hunt," *PM*, 24 July 1947, 2.

41 See Note 10. It is not surprising that Greenwood worried about clearance, given her circle of acquaintances, which had included several Mexican artists, "Pablo" O'Higgins and a number of writers associated with *The New Masses*. Greenwood had contributed to the suspect magazine on at least one occasion, providing four illustrations for Ilya Ehrenbourg's "Civil War in Austria," *The New Masses*, XII, no. I (3 July 1934), 17–26.

42 Herbst's account of her difficulties in Washington was published in "Yesterday's Road," *New American Review*, no. 3 (1968), 84–104.

43 As reported in the *New York Times*, 2 July 1947, 20. This and all following references to the Osbornes were located by Ms Allyson Adley, a former graduate student in the Department of Art History at Concordia University. Without her tenacious assistance over three years, this article could not have been written.

44 E. Osborne, "Letter to the Times; Support of Kuomintang Opposed as Against Interests of People," *New York Times* , 26 October 1947, Section IV, 8.

45 A. Kohlberg, "Letter to the Times; Need for Saving Country from Communist Domination Seen," *New York Times*, 2 November 1947, Section IV, 7. For Kohlberg's importance in the "China Lobby" and the impact he could have on the careers of individuals, see Gary May, *China Scapegoat: The Diplomatic Ordeal of John Carter Vincent* (Washington, 1979).

46 M.G. to C.F., 11 October 1947.

47 In the 1964 Seckler interview, Greenwood read from the Huxley text without mentioning the initial difficulties of securing an acceptable text (21).

48 Sandler, a Swedish businessman, is best known for a manuscript account of his friendship with the German artist, George Grosz, both before and after the latter's arrival in the United States; see *Archives of American Art Journal*, XXVI, no.2/3 (1986), 50–51. Sandler also left Europe and in the late 1930s began collecting work by American artists who had broken with European traditions. He placed Marion Greenwood in this category, with artists like Joe Jones and Raphael Soyer. References to Greenwood, from whom he bought a number of paintings and who remained a friend into the 1960s, are to be found scattered throughout Roll D3683 of the *Sandler Papers* in the Archives of American Art.

49 American Artists Association, *Marion Greenwood: Paintings. Gouaches. Drawings: China* (New York, 1947), 3.

50 "Villager Displays Art from China," *The Villager*, 26 November 1947, n.p.

51 "On View," *New York Times*, 7 December 1947, 16X.

52 "In the Art Galleries," *New York Herald Tribune*, 7 December 1947, Section VI, 4.

53 "Attractions in the Galleries," *New York Sun*, 21 December 1947, n.p. Portions of the review suggest that the author may have been familiar with the circumstances of Greenwood's time in Hong Kong: "It is to be hoped that on this last trip Mr. Fenn was the attraction and not the mere lure of travel." The sense of intimacy is, however, at odds with the identification of the artist as "Charlotte Greenwood."

54 "Marion Greenwood," *Art News*, December 1947, 25.

55 In a letter written to the artist Leon Kroll, she lashed out in anger at "the irresponsible and nasty review" and defiantly signed herself "Always – Marion Greenwood, a painter." M.G. to L. Kroll, 16 December 1947: Archives of American Art, Leon Kroll Papers, Roll D326.

56 M. Breuning , "Return from China," *The Art Digest*, 15 December 1947, 21.

57 H. Salpeter, "Marion Greenwood: An American Artist of Originality and Power," *American Artist*, XII (January 1948), 14. The six-page article provided four illustrations of work from the "China" exhibition: *The Toilers*, *Hong Kong Girl*, *Coolie*, and *Street Vendor*.

58 M.G. to C.F., 4 May 1945.

59 W. Bald, "I Am a Common People: I like U.S.," *New York Post*, 5 December 1947, 31.

60 H. Maurer, "Coolie Democracy," *Asia*, XLI, no. 5 (May 1941), 238. He was anything but alone in insisting upon a China of many classes/occupations: see P. Conn, *Pearl Buck: A Cultural Biography* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 126–27, for reactions to Buck's assertion of the relevance of "small" lives. Another example, this time pictorial, is the May 1948 article "The Man in the Street, Peking," *Canadian Geographical Journal*, XXVI, no.5 (May 1948), 222–41, which featured the remarkable photographs of Hedda Morrison.

61 Endacott, *Hong Kong Eclipse*, 292, indicates that the rationing of rice continued until August 1954. Greenwood was in Hong Kong at a time when a great deal of effort was required to balance out rations, rice at times being very scarce.

62 M.G. to K.B.G., 8 August 1946: "this wonderful old doctor Selwyn Clarke who lives near us is a fine person though – I like him – he likes me – and we see him occasionally, but he's very busy directing the medical health dept ... "

63 *Life*, 7 April 1947, 43.

64 A rather different way of thinking about Hong Kong – as a site of disappearance – is profferred in A. Abbas, *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance* (Minneapolis, 1997).

65 *Flying Tigers* (Republic Pictures, 1942). The opening three minutes of the film showed at least six shots of food-bearing crates from United China Relief.

66 One such image is to be found in T. C. Jespersen, *American Images of China, 1931–1949* (Stanford, 1996), 44a. Created by Ed Hunter for a UCR campaign, it shows Uncle Sam feeding rice with chopsticks to a hungry Chinese child seated on his lap.

67 J. Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley, 1995), 239–40, provides a brief history of these parties which were held in over 700 cities during the war. Elizabeth Colman's photograph is from her *Chinatown U.S.A.: Text and Photographs* (New York, 1946).

68 Jespersen, *American Images of China,* 143
69 *Time*, 3 February 1947, 30.
70 *Time*, 3 March 1947, 35.
71 P. Neils, *China Images In the Life and Times of Henry Luce* (Savage, Md., 1990); Jesperson, *American Images of China*.
72 Jesperson, *American Images of China,* 153, refers to a significant decline in revenues collected, amounting to only $1.5 million for 1947.
73 "Text of Marshall's Statement on Strife in China," *New York Times*, 8 January 1947, 3.
74 "China, The New Dawn," *New York Times*, 8 January 1947, 3.
75 "Chinese Aid Group to Meet in Kansas," *New York Times*, 19 January 1947, 13.
76 "Wedemeyer Urges Big China Reforms," *New York Times*, 24 August 1947, 1, 49.
77 "Aid for Chinese Defended," *New York Times*, 2 September 1947, 9
78 "Ten Decorated Here for Service to China," *New York Times*, 5 December 1947, 17.
79 W. Cohen, *The Chinese Connection: Roger S. Greene, Thomas V. Lamont, George Sokolsky and American-East Asian Relations* (New York, 1978). Lamont, who had headed fundraising efforts related to the 1920 famine in China, was head of J.P. Morgan and Co., and was treated as a wise man in foreign affairs by a succession of American presidents. Coverage of the award ceremony in the New York press varied from newspaper to newspaper, but invariably the better-known supporters of Chiang Kai-shek were foregrounded.
80 "China: First (and Last?) Election," *Time*, 1 December 1947, 37.
81 W. Bullitt, "A Report to the American People on China," *Life*, 13 October 1947, 35–36, 139, 142, 146, 148, 151–52 and 154. Owen Lattimore, the much maligned "China Hand" who became one of the principal targets of McCarthyism, pounced on Bullitt's human economics in January 1948, publicly heaping scorn on his notion that "cheap coolie labour" ought to be used to fight the "Russians;" see R. Newman, *Owen Lattimore and the "Loss" of China* (Berkeley, 1992), 178.
82 A handy chronology of the ups-and-downs of aid bills during the post-war period is to be found in D. Borg and W. Heinrichs, eds, *Uncertain Years: Chinese-American Relations, 1947–1950* (New York, 1980), 205–317.
83 *New York Times*, 6 November 1947, 1 and 12; 25 November 1947, 18.
84 Borg and Heinrichs, *Uncertain Years*, 309: In the China Aid bill passed by Congress in April 1948, $275 million in economic aid was extended, along with $125 million in unrestricted grants which could be used for military purposes.
85 Indeed, in some newspapers Wedemeyer was quoted as testifying that if he were Chiang Kai-shek he "would be quite impatient with the United States." See "Wedemeyer, Bullitt Oil Up Chiang Aid Steamroller," *PM*, 18 December 1947, 2.
86 "U.S. Envoy Intercedes for China Liberals," *PM*, 29 October 1947, 7.
87 "Chinese Politicians Flee to Hong Kong," *New York Times*, 15 December 1947, 16. Reasons for this exodus were probably known to readers of the paper: an October 26 article, p. 24, entitled "Liberals of China Fear Annihilation" had summarized some of the difficulties being encountered by the Democratic League.
88 Republican Greenwood was not; in a letter to her sister Grace, 11 November 1946, she had written: "America will be heading for another depression now that the republicans are running things again – not only the housing situation but everything is going to get worse not better."
89 E. Genauer, "The Cover Painting," *What's New*, CLIV (February 1951), 31.
90 R. Pearson, *The Modern Renaissance in American Art* (Freeport, N.Y., 1954), 259.
91 R. Henkes, *American Women Painters of the 1930s and 1940s: The Lives and Works of Ten Artists* (Jefferson, N.C., 1991), xi. Letters from India to which I have had access make no reference to the effects of World War II on India, and I am as yet unaware of any Greenwood paintings or drawings addressing such problems.
92 Henkes, *American Women Painters*, 51–71.
93 C. MacKenzie, "Marion Greenwood," *Dictionary of Women Artists*, ed. D. Gaze (London, 1997), I, 616–18.
94 Exhibited in a Mint Museum of Art exhibition held in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1960, but created at an earlier, unspecified time.
95 One thinks, of course, of missionary women, but there were writers (Pearl Buck, Agnes Smedley), wives of diplomats (Sarah Conder), activists (Grace Gallatin Seton) and so on, who belong among these more obvious candidates.
96 A. Cuthbert, "Under the Volcano: Postmodern Space in Hong Kong," *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*, eds S. Watson and K. Gibson (Oxford, 1995), records an average growth of 10% in the GPD between 1960 and 1980, with a 540% increase for the period 1970–95.
97 See Buck's 1949 essay, "Our Dangerous Myths about China," in which she suggested that the legendary famines of China were not the result of "basic food shortages," but were instead caused by natural catastrophes or ineffective transportation systems: reprinted in P.S. Buck, *China As I See It* (New York, 1970), 253–54. See also A. March, *The Idea of China: Myth and Theory in Geographic Thought* (New York, 1974).
98 R. Hobbs, *Hong Kong Now* (Seattle, 1997), 22.
99 Cuthbert, "Under the Volcano," is also extremely instructive along these lines: until recently, 50% of housing in Hong Kong was state funded, while significant amounts of food and clothing, also subsidized, were provided by the Peoples' Republic of China.
100 Membership in the Manhattan Committee of Artists for Wallace earned Greenwood the dubious distinction of being named a Communist by Representative George Dondero in his 1956 speech to Congress; *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 84th. Congress, Second Session* (Washington, 14 June 1956), 1–9.
101 "For Americans, A Broader Role in Asia Affairs," *New York Times*, 2 July 1997, A1, A10. Both Secretary of State M. Albright and S. Berger, National Security Advisor, were reported to have characterized the transfer as a movie.