

made between “economic resources” and the existence of mass-based movements (rather than their institutionalized, NGOized forms) and social struggles in both North and South. Let us remember that state repression, criminalization and surveillance of many activists and movements also exists in Japan (Shigematsu, forthcoming 2012), Europe and North America, as the crackdown against 2010’s G20 protests and ongoing repression of Indigenous sovereignty struggles shows in Canada.

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Paul T.K. Lin with Eileen Chen Lin, *In the Eye Of the China Storm: A Life Between East & West*, McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal & Kingston, 2011.

This review will be less a standard book review than reminiscences about a precious friend and colleague who I knew at McGill University for fourteen years.

I first encountered Paul and Eileen Lin outside the Stephen Leacock Building looking deeply sad. They had just returned from the cemetery on the anniversary of their son Christopher’s death. He died in a car crash in the U.S. just south of the Canadian border while driving back to the University of British Columbia where he was a student. To this day a cloud of uncertainty hangs over his death as the U.S. investigating authorities failed to provide a forensic report. Six months earlier a journalist of Chinese origin, sympathetic to the Chinese government, had been murdered in the San Francisco area with a strong but unproven suspicion it was a hit arranged by

the government of Chiang Kai-shek. It was not unusual for right wing governments in Asia to warn someone who they considered an adversary by victimizing a family member or close friend, rarely going after the person individually unless they consider the warning was not heeded. I can personally attest to this based on my own experience while active on the Korean issue. After harassing my wife, I had the muffler of my car bent against the fuel tank just before a trip to Québec City, and if I did not have a passenger who had to relieve his bladder on the road side every twenty minutes my car would have likely exploded with no evidence of wrongdoing.

I recall having gone with Paul to the RCMP Headquarters in Montréal to retrieve a stereo cabinet which they claimed had entered Canada without payment of duty. It was reasonably clear at the time that the cabinet had been examined for “secret” transmission equipment and likely planted with a listening device. A minor illustration of the harassment he endured.

Paul Lin was a complex person, a dedicated and articulate spokesperson for a China re-appropriating its dignity after a century of humiliation at the hands of Imperialism, a profound humanist within the Marxist tradition, and a person who continuously sought a bridge between his dual heritage as a Canadian of Chinese origin. He returned to Canada from China where he lived from soon after the revolution until 1964. He was joined by his wife and two sons in 1965. His outspoken commitment to a voice of empathy for Chinese society placed him in the sights of the ultra-right within Canada. He was portrayed as an enemy within, where there was no enemy. He was vindicated in 1998 when he was awarded the Order of Canada for his contribution to cross-cultural understanding.

Eileen Chen Lin, who completed this manuscript after Paul’s death came from a privileged family, but to paraphrase Zhou Enlai, she had no choice into which class she was born, but could choose her politics. And she did, standing with Paul through the faint praise and occasional abuse he faced throughout the turbulent years.

Paul drew great sustenance from Zho Enlai’s *Report on Intellectuals* delivered at the 8<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, as he himself was accused during the anti-rightest campaign in China of being a rightest for refusing to criticize everything in the west. He saw strength in many features of western society while recognizing its weakness. I recall numerous discussions about the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Chinese thinker Kang Yu-wei, who had argued for a synthesis of Chinese values with

western science. It is clear to me now that Paul carried an echo of this in his approach, while recognizing that values are a product of the existing mode of production.

With many of the complexities and opportunism of the Great Leap Forward and the accompanying *xia fang* (intellectuals going down to the countryside) there were some positive features. Once, Paul reminisced that during that period many of his co-workers would borrow the unit car to obtain their groceries. This was done on the assumption that their work was for the people, and that time would be wasted by going by bicycle and waiting on line with ordinary people. He saw this as creeping elitism which required remedy. I recall, however, encountering a group of men who pulled carts who saw the Great Leap in positive terms as it introduced ball bearings into the shafts of the carts they had to pull. And yet, the revolutionary enthusiasm, if combined with science would have led to success, but the stifling of the intellectuals aborted the process and resulted in failure.

Paul brought all his experience to bear on a generation of students at McGill. His passion and commitment to his students is legendary within the History Department. He became an exemplar of heroic dedication as one who sought universal values as the key to development in his classes, in his public speeches and in his work as Founding Director of the Centre For East Asian Studies. He came to mirror the qualities he most admired in Song Ching Ling, widow of Sun Yat Sen, founder of the Chinese Republic and herself Vice-President of the People's Republic; a person who was militant, compassionate, strong and tender.

Employing the base of the Centre for East Asian Studies, Paul's efforts extended into the broader community as he encouraged the business community to seek mutually beneficial opportunity in China and sought out academic programs which bridged academic research with development. One such example was to encourage *People's Daily* to publish an article on the University of Montreal's Centre for Industrial Innovation, which investigated the ideas of small inventors and sought their industrial application. He was pivotal in establishing the Canada-China Trade Council.

What could likely be Paul's greatest accomplishment was his contribution to bringing about the normalization of China's relations with the United States. Cyrus Eaton, the Canadian born financier agreed to sponsor an off-the-record conference at McGill University

in the fall of 1968 that sought to break the deadlock over these relations. This brought together members of the U. S. East Coast China establishment in the political, academic and journalistic fields, plus one American of his choosing, Professor Franz Schurmann of the University of California at Berkeley. On the Canadian side, it included Ambassador Chester Ronning (the last serving Canadian diplomat in China prior to the severing of relations), The Honorable Alvin Hamilton, Minister of Agriculture under the Diefenbaker Prime Ministership and negotiator of the first wheat deal with China, Senator Jacques Hébert close confidant of Prime Minister Trudeau. In the background, there was Pu Zhaomin of the Xinhua News Agency, the sole person from the People's Republic in North America, stationed in Ottawa. Both public and private discussions were cordial and at times sharp. Immediately following the conference Paul, Eileen, my wife, Ambassador Ronning, and myself went for a cathartic dinner in Chinatown, parking in a deserted lot. When we attempted to retrieve our cars, a parked car with no lights shot back from the shadows aiming for us. Chester Ronning pulled the two women back as I smashed my umbrella on the trunk. The car sped off. Next afternoon a phone call came to my house. The voice said "I just want to tell you that last night was no accident". Clearly the, then powerful Montréal Guomindang, had monitored the Conference activities.

A little more than two years passed when a gentleman, Ernst Winter, knocked on Paul's door and represented himself as an emissary from Henry Kissinger asking Paul to communicate to the Chinese leadership Kissinger's desire to meet Chinese leaders in preparation for a visit by President Nixon. Given the existing multiple channels, it is worthy of note that Paul Lin was selected as the vehicle.

In 1982, Paul and Eileen, for multiple reasons, decided to leave Montréal and move back to the British Columbia where he was born, grew up and first whetted his political engagement. Among the reasons was to be closer to their surviving son, Douglas, who was a Professor of Astrophysics in California. When the Tienanmen events unfolded as they did, Paul went into shock. He spoke out publicly against the decision of the Chinese Government to employ the People's Liberation Army. This was a profoundly tragic period. Many of his friends in China pleaded with him to visit and see first hand what had taken place, but he refused for many years. We talked

many times about this decision and I, among others, urged him to go to lend support to like-minded scholars in China. After some time, he chose what he considered to be the right moment and flew to Beijing.

In 1986, Paul was installed as the Rector of The University of East Asia in the, then, Portuguese territory of Macau. It was a private University and he accepted the appointment with a vision drawing on his vast experience to transform that institution into a bastion of self-development for the Macanese as it prepared for reintegration into China as a Special Zone. Among his tasks was to strengthen the University's governing structure and I flew out to Macau to provide a redraft of the University statutes. Within two years Paul resigned from his Rectorship. The Portuguese government had appointed a new Governor of Macau, who, after four centuries of neglect decided to take over the University and make Portuguese the working language. In addition, all authority over academic issues was to be transferred out of the hands of the Rector. The Chinese authorities, far more concerned with the reintegration of Hong Kong, chose not to intervene.

The Lin's returned to Vancouver where Paul continued his relationship with the Institute of Asian Research at the University of British Columbia. It was in this period that Paul began to have some doubts over China's one-sided emphasis on economic growth. Deng Xiaoping had put all emphasis on "de-ideologizing" the society, which in itself implicitly carried an ideological content, requiring a new balance between economic growth and social values. While considering this new reality, Paul Lin died in 2004.

Paul died with his manuscript incomplete. It has only seen the light of day owing to the enormous labour of his wife Eileen who, from soon after his death until publication, completed the book from his notes, inserting in the process her own occasional comments, which themselves were enlightening.

It was a privilege to have known and worked with him. He will be, and is, missed

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