

Stuart Reynolds Schram, 1924–2012

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I

Stuart Schram, polymath and polyglot, the greatest Western expert on Mao Zedong's life and thought, died peacefully in Brittany early in the morning of 8 July 2012 at the age of 88. During his lifetime he had studied a wide range of subjects and countries before finally settling into what readers of this journal would consider his major field in his thirties.

Stuart was born in Excelsior, Minnesota on 27 February 1924, the son of a dentist and a company financial officer who divorced when their son was quite young. Stuart's anger that they never spoke to each other thereafter persisted well into manhood, indicating the emotional scar the divorce caused him. Though much of his adult life was spent in great cities – New York, Paris, London – he never lost his taste for fishing the lakes of his native state. After he married again in 1972, he and his French wife Marie-Annick (née Lancelot) would spend about three weeks there most summers in a log cabin. Stuart used to fish with his father and later, when their only child Arthur was old enough, he delighted in teaching him the ways of the woods and how to fish.

In his youth, Stuart also developed a passion for music. He studied the piano and always regretted having given it up when he was 17. As a father, he was very involved in Arthur studying the violin, and always took him to his lessons; Harold Kahn, the emeritus Stanford Qing historian, believes that he “put a violin in the baby's hands as an affirmation of his pride and expectations”! David Shambaugh, Stuart's junior colleague at SOAS, recalls Arthur being asked to perform for dinner guests at a young age at the Schram's London residence. Stuart would listen to classical music when working, opera being his particular love and Maria Callas his favourite diva. In his later years in the US, every Saturday afternoon he listened to the live broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera. He also liked listening to recordings of the speeches of Winston Churchill, often with tears in his eyes; if he had a hero it was apparently Churchill, not Mao.

As one might expect, Stuart was a great reader. He was a Jane Austen fan and made a point of reading all Shakespeare's plays each year. But he leavened his diet with detective novels, mostly classics of an older generation: Raymond

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Chandler, le Carré, Ed McBain, Robert Parker, Dorothy Sayers, Simenon, Rex Stout, van Gulik.

Stuart inherited from his parents a love of good food; both were excellent cooks, his father a gourmet, so Stuart started cooking young. His love of wine came later. His mother, with whom he lived, was a strict Christian scientist and he never touched alcohol before going to college.

II

In autumn 1941, Stuart enrolled in the University of Minnesota, first studying chemistry for a year in the Institute of Technology, and then transferring to the School of Liberal Arts, majoring in physics with minors in mathematics and chemistry. He graduated in spring 1944, one of only four students awarded *magna cum laude*. He was drafted into the army and immediately after basic training was assigned, as a uniformed member of the US Army Corps of Engineers, to the University of Chicago branch of the Manhattan Project run by Enrico Fermi and Arthur Compton. Though Stuart was put in the “metallurgical laboratory,” he was not involved in laboratory work as such, but was tasked with collecting data and taking care of the archives, good training perhaps for his later career, but vital certainly for the Project in those pre-computer days. Between 1944 and 1946, he developed the classification system that would be used by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) for its reports. According to Marie-Annick, he preserved as memorabilia of this period of his life his army cap with a nuclear insignia on it and the certificate he received thanking him for his role in the Project.

During the subsequent four years, 1946–50, Stuart acted as a consultant to the New York Operations Office of the AEC, and was associate editor of *Preparation, Properties and Technology of Fluorine and Organic Fluoro Compounds*, published in 1951 by McGraw-Hill as part of a National Nuclear Energy Series. In 1948, he was a consultant to the UN Secretariat for the preparation of an international bibliography of scientific literature on atomic energy. Thus in his early twenties, Stuart was a valued and continuing member of the burgeoning nuclear physics community, but in spirit he had already left it. Why did he not pursue a scientific career? According to Arthur, Stuart always said, “Men are more interesting than atoms.” Harold Kahn believes, however, that Stuart became disillusioned with the profession after the dropping of the bombs.

III

So the physicist turned to political science, entering the PhD programme at Columbia University in 1946. He was particularly interested in political behaviour and he went there to work with social scientists – Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson – who had started studying electoral behaviour. His teachers

included Franz Neumann, John Hazard, Robert MacIver, Philip Mosely and Reinhold Niebuhr. In his files, he kept a 1948 seminar paper on “Communism and the Russian religious mind” on which Niebuhr had written “Very good,” and given an A. During his time at Columbia he took a summer course at Oxford and went to France for doctoral research. He got his doctorate in December 1951 with a thesis on the political influence of French Protestants in contemporary France.

In 1951, Stuart went to Germany where he lectured on American civilization at the School for Interpreters in Germersheim am Rhein. From 1951 until 1954, he was employed by the European Center of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace doing translations and research on European problems. In 1954, he became part of the French academic world. His thesis, *Protestantism and Politics in France*, which he had privately printed in Alençon in 1954, was probably an important factor. According to one of Stuart’s closest French friends, the China scholar Marianne Bastid-Bruguière, herself a Calvinist, “he understood well that French religious minority.”

As a result of his dissertation research, he knew about Protestants involved in *Le Christianisme social* movement; indeed he translated two chapters of his thesis for its journal. His first wife, Anne-Marie Goguel, a member of a prominent Calvinist family, was an activist in the movement, as well as being involved in anti-racist activities. Her brother François Goguel, a leading political scientist then working at the Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, may have been the person who brought Stuart to Sciences-Po. Anne-Marie Goguel, an *agrégée* in philosophy, taught first at a Paris lycée and then at Dijon University, specializing in educational issues. She and Stuart were married from 1957 to 1961. After their divorce, Dr Goguel lived in Madagascar for many years and wrote *Aux origines du mai malgache: Désir d'école et compétition sociale, 1951–1972*, analysing the background to a massive student strike that occurred in May 1972 and altered the political landscape. She died in 1996.

Stuart found a natural habitat at Sciences-Po, where he became a research associate (*chargé de recherches*) in the international relations section. In 1955–56, he obtained a diploma from the Sorbonne law faculty for studying political economy and economics. In 1958, he added a lectureship (*chargé de conférences*) at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. In 1960, he became joint director of the Soviet and Chinese studies section of Sciences-Po with Professor Hélène Carrère-d’Encausse, whose distinguished academic career has culminated in her becoming Secrétaire perpétuelle de l’Académie française. Together they published *Le Marxisme et l’Asie* in 1965, with a revised and expanded English version appearing in 1969. Stuart also engaged in occasional journalism, writing a long article on the 1954 US elections for *Le Monde*. But five articles on East and West Berlin in the late summer of 1952 by S. R. Schram “*Sociologue américain*” in *La Tribune des Nations* landed him in trouble with the State Department. On 26 February 1953, the eve of his 29th birthday, he was

summoned to the US Embassy in Paris and told to hand over his passport. He could only travel back to the US.

Readers of this journal will know that the early 1950s were the heyday of McCarthyism, when some State Department China specialists – including John Paton Davies, John Stewart Service and John Carter Vincent – were sacked or eased out for their contributions to the “loss” of China, and some academics, John King Fairbank among them, were excoriated in front of a Congressional committee. Fairbank used to joke that they forgot the fifth “John” who lost China: John Kai-shek! In early spring 1953, Senator McCarthy sent two aides on his Senate Permanent Investigations Subcommittee, Roy Cohn and G. David Schine, on a whirlwind European tour: seven nations, nine cities, 18 days; their longest stopover was 60 hours in Munich. They were dubbed “junke-teering gumshoes,” by a senior official in the US High Commission in Germany – whose career was cut short as a result – but they caused widespread alarm in the State Department, and thousands of books whose authors were identified by them as disloyal – including Herman Melville! – were withdrawn from US-sponsored libraries in Europe.

In this atmosphere, even a young academic and freelance journalist like Stuart was not too small a target, especially writing for *La Tribune des Nations*. Stuart described this weekly as “neutralist,” but possibly the State Department was aware that its editor was an NKVD [KGB] recruit and that its circulation was assisted by a healthy Soviet subsidy. But even without that knowledge, his articles, based on five months in Berlin, contrasting economic conditions in the Western sectors unfavourably with those in East Berlin would have aroused official US alarm in those McCarthyite days. In an affidavit he filed with the embassy in response, he explained why he considered it unjust to withdraw his passport; he admitted to protesting “very vigorously against the renaissance of militarism and fascism in Germany. I permit myself to hope that the State Department does not consider anti-fascism to be the same thing as anti-Americanism.”

In the face of embassy stone-walling as to why his passport was being withdrawn, Stuart appealed to one of the Minnesota senators, Hubert Humphrey (who would later serve as the 38th Vice President and challenge Richard Nixon for the presidency in 1968). In Stuart’s files are copies of long letters to the senator. In one letter, he stated that he had never offended the State Department regulations against “knowingly and willfully” acting so as to favour “world communism.” In a later letter, he again revealed his views on Germany:

It is true that I have been very critical indeed of plans for German rearmament, and in particular of the tendency of the Germans themselves to use it as a pretext for falling back into all their bad habits. But I did not know that we had identified our cause so totally with that of our German ‘allies’ that an attack against the revival of Nazism and militarism would be construed as an attack against the United States.

While the senator signed sympathetic letters in return, though never commenting on Stuart’s views, it is not clear that his inquiries of the State Department, or those of Stuart’s own attorney, had any effect.

In the end, the mood in America changed. On 2 December 1954, the Senate censured McCarthy because he had “acted contrary to senatorial ethics and tended to bring the Senate into dishonour and disrepute, to obstruct the constitutional processes of the Senate, and to impair its dignity.” Internationally, the death of Stalin in March 1953 opened the way for the signing of an armistice in Korea. In mid-1954, at a conference in Geneva of relevant Western and Soviet bloc nations, the French war in Vietnam was brought to a close with a division of the country. In mid-1955, again in Geneva, the “big Four,” the US, the USSR, Britain and France, met to reduce East–West tensions. In August 1955, Stuart filed yet another, shorter affidavit with the embassy suggesting that in the spirit of coexistence, the State Department might give his passport back. On 4 October, it did just that, with the one handicap that it was only valid for one, not two years.

By this time, Stuart was multi-lingual. Because of the Schram family origins, he had studied German in high school. At the University of Minnesota he had studied Russian and French, and his fluency in the latter improved as he researched his thesis and worked for the Carnegie Endowment. He also learned Italian, according to Marie-Annick, because of his love of opera, Italian food, Italian women and Capri, where he often went on holiday. He learned Japanese later, first to go to Japan in the late 1960s, and then at SOAS where he attended the full four-year language course, getting up every morning at 5 am to do his homework. During a year in Japan in 1978, he taught at Keio University and gave a lecture about Mao in Japanese. And of course, he started on Chinese.

IV

It is not clear to us why Stuart transferred his affections from Soviet to Chinese studies while at Sciences-Po. Tony Saich (a SOAS MSc student under Stuart, now a professor at Harvard’s Kennedy School) believes he started thinking about Mao as an alternative to Soviet communist thought and found him refreshing. At any rate, Stuart began studying Chinese in Paris with a spell in Taiwan, initially setting himself the task of memorizing the Tang poet Bai Juyi’s lament for the imperial concubine Yang Guifei, “The song of everlasting sorrow.” He was taking on Chinese at an age when many Western students today could have had a decade and a half of language work, enhanced by regular stays in country. But master the written language he did, though he started too late to become truly adept in conversation. Those who have heard him fluently berating sloppy French and Italian waiters in their own languages, may be amused to learn that once when he criticized the food in a Chinese restaurant, the impassive waiter replied, “I’m sorry, I don’t understand your dialect”! Yet when Stuart was eventually able to go to China and knew he would have to give a lecture, he took enormous pains to prepare it in Chinese. There have been a few such polyglot scholars in the China field: Franz Schurmann and Benjamin Schwartz come to

mind, and doubtless there may be others. But Stuart's talent for language learning was extraordinary, and he demonstrated it with his first two works, translations from Chinese into French: Mao Zedong, *Une étude de l'éducation physique* (1962) and *Documents sur la théorie de la "révolution permanente"* (1963).

If Sciences-Po was an appropriate intellectual home, Paris was the ideal place for Stuart's love of good food and wine to blossom. As a bachelor, he would cook for guests in his top-floor flat overlooking the Luxembourg gardens, always carefully selecting wines that would complement the meal. Harold Kahn, then at SOAS, remembers Stuart coming over to London to cook Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners for him and his wife. "He would march me up to the Chapel Street market, buy a wild duck and a goose, and march me back again, where we spent what seemed like hours plucking the damned birds and filling the house with pin feathers. The meals were memorable."

When he was a guest, Stuart tended to dominate the conversation. Marianne Bastid-Bruguère recalls that he astonished her husband and daughters, because whoever the other guests, Stuart would hold forth continuously. As Kahn puts it, Stuart had "a towering ego and sense of command-of-subject – whatever the subject – which made conversation more often monologue than dialogue. I learned to listen better." In the Bastid-Bruguère household, "Schram's chair" was the one he broke in the heat of discourse. But years later, when he came to lunch one day with his seven-year-old son, it was Arthur who held forth non-stop, astonishing his hosts with his unique ability to completely silence his father.

V

Stuart worked at Sciences-Po from 1954 until 1967. He was in many ways culturally European, but he never hid his heritage. In his dress, he was unmistakably American and he resented deeply the anti-American prejudice he encountered among intellectuals. But the real problem for him in Paris was that in those days foreigners could not become professors and thus oversee PhD dissertations, and this irked him. Fortunately while still in Paris he began publishing in English, the path-breaking *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* in 1963, a translation of Mao's *Basic Tactics* in 1966, and then in the same year his brilliant Penguin biography *Mao Tse-tung*, which was later translated into ten languages. These works propelled him like a comet across the skies of the Anglo-American China studies community which no longer felt it vital to know French as it did in the days of Chavannes, Maspero and Pelliot.

Though Stuart went twice to Harvard in the early 1960s for research on China, Fairbank's patronage did not result in any feelers from US institutions. But in due course, Stuart was offered a chair in the politics department at SOAS "with reference to China." Coincidentally, the Ford Foundation was just then seeking to balance what it saw as the blinkered view of China in the United States by helping to create centres of Chinese studies at universities in Europe.

In Britain, the chosen institution was SOAS and when the Contemporary China Institute (CCI) was set up in 1968, Stuart, newly arrived, was appointed its first head. In this role, he oversaw the transfer to the CCI of *The China Quarterly* (*CQ*), which had been seeking an academic home, and agreed to the appointment of David Wilson (a former diplomat, later Governor of Hong Kong) as the new editor.

Stuart was fond of quoting a sentence from his translation of Mao's speech on Stalin's 60th birthday: "If we did not have a Stalin, who would give the orders?" Some suspected there was a reason why he liked this dictum, but in Wilson's experience Stuart did not seek to interfere in his running of the *CQ*. As a member of the journal's executive committee he was never short of advice and often had trenchant views on possible authors and book reviewers. Brian Hook, one of Wilson's successors as *CQ* editor, similarly recalls, "Stuart made major contributions to the content and the quality of the *CQ*... He was a willing and effective referee of papers in his field and occasionally a willing referee of papers as a general reader in other fields. He delivered within schedule and his written reports were meticulously presented, balanced, precise, and concise."

Stuart's voluminous memory and fixation on detail were legendary. Another SOAS colleague, Hugh Baker, remembers an occasion when Stuart quoted "the date of a meeting and Minute number of something which had been discussed years before and which he could not have known would recur in discussion that day." But despite his stunning memory for detail, Stuart was non-bureaucratic and Wilson had complete freedom to act independently. When Hugh Baker became head of the CCI, Stuart was a member of its executive committee, but though "of course he had started the CCI ... he played fair and never deliberately trod on my toes or used undue weight to pressure me." Robert Ash, who was among the first batch of young scholars to be awarded research fellowships by the CCI, comments that Stuart left him and the others to get on with their work, and that his relationship with them was primarily social.

Ash remembers the parties for CCI fellows at the Schram residence nestled in a cul de sac adjacent to Regent's Park, appropriately named Regal Lane, as great occasions: good food and "plenty of *very* good wine." When the SOAS faculty dining club had blind wine tastings, "Stuart won them hands down." On one convivial evening chez Schram, Stuart and Ash followed up the Bordeaux with most of a bottle of malt whisky and as Wanda Ladowska played the harpsichord on the record player, Stuart proclaimed loudly: "Bach had balls!" David Wilson (now Lord Wilson of Tillyorn) also testifies to the excellence of Stuart's cooking when he and Natasha went to dinner: "The meal might be a bit late, with expletive noises off in the kitchen, but, when it came, it was superb." Problems arose, however, when eating out with Stuart. A trip with Wilson to a London pub for lunch could prove long because Stuart rejected the first three pubs for not selling the right brand of beer. Deciding on the right sashimi restaurant in Kyoto with Ash took as long as the meal itself.

But of course the CCI was not all beer and skittles. Stuart took his responsibilities seriously and made the CCI a European intellectual entrepreneur, helped by two successive grants from the Volkswagen Foundation on top of the original Ford grant. His declared aims for the CCI were to strengthen the foundation for the future growth of studies on contemporary China in the UK; to carry out research in the field of contemporary China studies and to publish the results of such research; and to serve as a link between British China specialists and those elsewhere. Under Stuart's headship of the CCI (1968–72), the institution was launched and accomplished much.

The appointment of doctoral candidates to three-year research fellowships was a key policy designed to increase the pitiful number of European scholars working on contemporary China. Robert Ash, one of Stuart's successors as head of the CCI, compiled a list of its research fellows and their subsequent careers, and comments that many "were instrumental in shaping contemporary China studies in the UK, continental Europe, and Australia."

Stuart also launched an ambitious publications programme. In addition to the *CQ*, there was a distinguished book series with Cambridge University Press (that included Stuart's *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, his edited *Authority, Participation, and Cultural Change in China*, as well as his contribution to *Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History*); an annual newsletter (which lasted from 1970 till 1981) to list research on contemporary China worldwide; and, from 1976, publication of an in-house series of short monographs. In 1984, Stuart himself made a noteworthy contribution to the latter series, *Ideology and Policy in China since the Third Plenum, 1978–84*, for him a rare foray into current Chinese politics, based on documentary analysis and interviews during a research visit to China in 1983.

VI

Whatever hopes Stuart had for mentoring as a result of his move to London, he had few PhD students. Perhaps this relative dearth had something to do with Stuart's intimidating intellect and sometimes gruff personality. David Shambaugh recalls travelling from the US to the UK in 1978 to visit SOAS and speak to Stuart about the prospects of pursuing a PhD there. After his transatlantic trip, he turned up at Stuart's office at the appointed time to find the esteemed professor hunched at this desk behind a mountain of papers (so high he could hardly be seen when one was seated). The office was unlit. Stuart was deep in concentration and clearly did not wish to be disturbed. As Shambaugh meekly entered the room, he recalls Stuart peering over the mountain of papers and barking: "What do you want?" After reminding him of the appointment and the distance he had travelled for a conversation about possibly becoming his student, Stuart queried: "Which period of Mao's thought are you most interested in?" Shambaugh (stupidly) offered that his interests in Chinese politics were broader than Mao, but it was probably the period 1949–56 that intrigued him

most. Stuart curtly retorted: “Chinese politics is *all about Mao* and, besides, that was his Stalinist period!” The interview ended after no more than 15 minutes and Shambaugh returned to the US to pursue his doctorate at the University of Michigan. Ironically, during a summer visit to Ann Arbor en route to his cherished Minnesota cabin in the summer of 1986, Stuart solicited Shambaugh’s application for a newly created lectureship which Stuart had persuaded the School to create with an eye on his looming retirement. After being hired and becoming Stuart’s junior colleague, Shambaugh recalls Stuart as a mentor, helping him to understand and navigate the arcane ways of British academe, introducing him to leading continental Sinologists, and giving general encouragement to him as a young scholar.

Among Stuart’s PhD students, the closest to him in intellectual interests was Nick Knight, later a professor at Griffith University, Brisbane, and doubtless one of those Ash was thinking of as shaping contemporary China studies in Australia. But anybody who spent much time with Stuart soon became aware that he was considerably exercised by Knight’s failure to see Mao as he did. Among the acknowledgements in his 2007 study *Rethinking Mao: Explorations in Mao Zedong’s Thought*, Knight wrote of being supervised by Stuart, “without doubt the foremost Mao scholar in the West. While Professor Schram and I disagreed, and continue to disagree on many issues of interpretation, he communicated to me a very important lesson: the importance of grounding the interpretation of Mao and his thought on detailed analysis of the Mao texts. His own interpretations of Mao’s thought never strayed far from the Mao texts, and this represented a salutary lesson in a field of study into which ideology unavoidably intrudes. Schram also communicated to me the importance of making the Mao texts available in scholarly English editions...”

This focus on texts rather than political practice is confirmed by Tony Saich as a result of studying with Stuart in the SOAS MSc programme. But in contrast to Knight, Saich found Stuart more stimulating when he left the texts behind:

One interesting thing with Stuart was how wide-ranging his knowledge was (not just of Chinese politics) and in fact the further we strayed from Mao, the more interesting conversations would be. With discussion of Mao, we often got trapped in the minutiae of detail, but Stuart could be riveting when thinking out of the Mao box. His training in the sciences was very clear in the methodical way in which he approached his subject ... The breadth of his knowledge was staggering and the connections he could make between seemingly disparate events was illuminating. You felt that you had to be really prepared when you went into class. He would enjoy a good argument as long as you had done your homework and could back up your assessments.

Melanie Manion, now a professor at the University of Wisconsin, remembers Stuart fondly from her year getting an MA at SOAS in 1981–82: “Stuart was so supportive [of me] at SOAS, he treated me like a real scholar, not a student in the great man’s seminar. In no small part because of this, I became a real scholar. I will always be grateful to him ... Whenever I write anything, Stuart is my ‘ghost reader,’ for better or for worse.”

VII

Stuart's colleagues at SOAS seem to have regarded him with awe tinged with amusement at his foibles and exasperation at his volatility. David Wilson describes him as "an intellectual giant coming to London where such giants were in short supply," giving the new CCI credibility in the US where nearly all the significant work on China was being done. Hugh Baker, who modestly remarks that Stuart "intellectually easily outgunned me," agrees that Stuart "did SOAS a great deal of good and enhanced its reputation in modern China studies enormously."

But Baker also recalls ruefully the occasion when he unwisely persuaded Stuart to take part in a briefing session for high-level oil executives at Shell House. His remit was to talk for 15 minutes and answer questions for another 15. But the first 15 minutes was taken up almost entirely by his protesting that he could not possibly cover the topic in so short a time, so that just as he actually launched on the topic, the tough American chairwoman rang the bell and said he had had his time and must sit down, upon which he flew into a rage. One SOAS colleague observed that "Stuart's temperament wasn't always easy ... he sometimes walked a tightrope and if he fell off the explosion that followed could be truly volcanic. But he was such an interesting and brilliant man that one readily put up with that ... It was, as it were, a price worth paying."

Stuart's temper could be directed at inanimate objects – like telephones, which might be pulled from the wall and thrown across the room or out the window – or birds, whatever disrupted his routine. Another SOAS colleague, Robert Taylor (a Burma specialist), recalls an instance which became legendary: "To wit, he always brought his lunch to the office and placed his sandwiches on the window ledge of his room. One day pigeons unwrapped the sandwiches. On this discovery, he began to swear at the top of his voice, slammed shut and kicked a filing cabinet, banged the door of his office shut, locked it, still swearing and proceeded down the corridor cursing like a Minnesota truck driver. He had both the words and the music, and even Mark Twain would have been impressed." Shambaugh, whose office was adjacent to Stuart's but separated by a two-foot thick concrete wall, could nonetheless hear Stuart's rants filtering out under his closed door and windows. More seriously, one senior colleague delighted in provoking Stuart, to the extent that they once nearly came to blows over a student. As Wilson remembers, "Stuart had a short fuse."

Swearing aside, Stuart's oral performances did not match up to his written words. One former colleague observes: "One couldn't but be impressed by the brilliance of Stuart's intellect and the quickness of his thought. It seemed to me that his speech was always trying desperately to keep pace with his mind. Hence perhaps those wonderful extended sentences of his, as qualifying phrase followed qualifying phrase. If you were to have written down his speech, you would have found each sentence littered with brackets within brackets within brackets, and he was sometimes unable to stop himself dotting the final 'i' and crossing the last 't' in his effort to tie everything up." This was illustrated by

Stuart's remark to a recently arrived Japanese visiting scholar at the end of a SOAS reception: "I must go home now. You, on the other hand, will not be going home, because you do not have a home to go to."

Stuart also had the capacity for quick retorts and put-downs. This was evidenced at a SOAS seminar in the early 1970s when Stuart was introduced by the chair as "unique." "Quick as a flash," another colleague present recalls, "Stuart felt bound to intervene and put the record straight by reminding the chair and audience, "We are all unique."

Despite Stuart's volatile temperament, many SOAS colleagues recall Stuart with fondness. Shambaugh reflects that "Stuart's sometimes gruff exterior actually hid a warm and sensitive man underneath." Robert Ash agrees: "When I think of Stuart, I think of a warm and generous man, with a big personality and a brilliant mind ... There aren't many of whom we can truly say that knowing him or her has enriched our lives. But Stuart *was* one such person." SOAS colleagues also recall Stuart's significant contributions to the institution. One reflected: "He did SOAS a great deal of good and enhanced its reputation in modern China studies enormously." Another concluded: "Stuart was a unique scholar. SOAS was never the same after he retired."

VIII

Two events at SOAS hurt Stuart deeply. While his colleagues had to get used to dramas with him, the SOAS authorities eventually decided that they did not have to put up with them any longer and in 1972, Stuart had to step down as head of the CCI. Two years later some colleagues took a similar decision. SOAS was to send a group of scholars to China. The Chinese embassy rejected Stuart because he was American whereas they had invited a British group. Stuart felt that his colleagues should have collectively decided to refuse to go, but they did not. They felt it might be difficult to cope with him on such a trip. But six years later he finally went to China with what for him must have been a congenial group of scholars, more closely aligned with his intellectual interests.

The 1980 "Mao Delegation" – officially the "North American Delegation to Investigate Problems of the Chinese Revolution" – was set up by University of Wisconsin political scientist Edward Friedman. In addition to Stuart, it included Jerome Ch'en, Angus McDonald, Maurice Meisner, Ross Terrill and Tsou Tang. According to Terrill (like Stuart and Ch'en, a Mao biographer), Stuart was "a demanding visitor, to the group's benefit." At every stop, he would pin down noted experts on Party history like Li Rui and Hu Hua. Friedman remembers the meeting with Li Rui, who walked into the room asking, "Which one is Schram?" Li said he had read Stuart's review of his book on the young Mao and did Stuart really think that Li did not know the truth on the things Stuart insisted were "errors." Li then asked Stuart how he thought he, Stuart, would do writing a biography of Mao while living in Mao's China. But Stuart was mollified because, as he says in his own account, Li Rui had brought him a copy of

the second edition of his book with a nice dedication to Stuart, and he dated their friendship from this time.

Stuart also got a robust response when he complained at Nanjing University about blocked access to materials: “You foreigners have to put up with it just for thirty days, we have to put up with it 365 days a year, then the next year, and the year after that.” When he heard praise of Mao’s theoretical works like “On practice,” he interrupted to say “Most of Mao’s philosophic writings are largely plagiarized from a Soviet encyclopaedia!” When the group reached Mao’s birthplace in Shaoshan, its escorts were dumbfounded when Stuart was able to tell them what had been removed because of the Cultural Revolution, for example Mao’s mother’s paper couplets to the kitchen god asking for wealth. Terrill comments that “most of us felt that Stuart’s sharp criticisms only made his occasional words of approval more valuable.” Subsequently, some of the Party historians he met became friends and some tributes are appended to this essay. They may be pleased to know that Stuart kept detailed notes of all that they told him on this and subsequent trips, particularly the one in 1991. These are now available at the Fairbank Center Library.

IX

One thing all Stuart’s SOAS colleagues seem to agree on is that marriage and fatherhood mellowed him, though some might add, somewhat. Marie-Annick Lancelot met Stuart first in 1964. She was about to go to China to study and teach French and her brother, a colleague of Stuart’s at Sciences-Po, suggested she consult Stuart before leaving. They met again briefly after her return from China in 1966 and she went on to teach the geography of China. Later she applied successfully for a Volkswagen Fellowship to pursue her research on Nanjing at the CCI, and during her year in London, 1971–72, romance blossomed. She and Stuart were married in June 1972. He was 48 and she was 35 and some wondered if she would be able to manage him, but with love, patience and resilient good humour, she did. And the birth of Arthur in 1978 certainly helped.

Perhaps it also helped that Marie-Annick decided that she would give up on China, which meant that in no sense could he treat her as if she were his student. She felt that she was not cut out for research, hated reading microfilm and didn’t know when the Cultural Revolution would end and she might be able to visit China again. So she went back to teaching French, first at a comprehensive school in Swiss Cottage and then at a girls grammar school in Finchley.

X

Though some of his SOAS colleagues found him uninterested in anything outside the China community and not much of an administrator, in fact at the European level he achieved a notable success. It illustrated Stuart’s talent for and

commitment to sustained scholarly enterprise once undertaken, an ability which would be borne out in spades in his final mega-project on the revolutionary works of Mao. In 1976, the European Association of Chinese Studies resurrected itself and sought to launch pan-European joint research projects. In the debates that ensued, Stuart suggested studying the state in China, a proposal which won strong approval from his continental colleagues.

At this time, studying the state was out of intellectual fashion. The Annales School in France had consigned the state to the dustbin of 19th-century history, according to Bastid-Bruguière who became an enthusiastic participant in the project. In the US, Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* did not appear until 1979 and her co-edited book *Bringing the State Back In* not till 1985. But Stuart and his European colleagues had not noticed that their state had disappeared, and there began a busy ten years, especially for Stuart who acted as the executive secretary of the small committee that ran the project. Three conferences were organized setting a new standard for European Sinology. Russian, Chinese and American scholars participated. Stuart persuaded the Rockefeller Foundation to fund the final one, "Stuart's jewel," at its villa in Bellagio. Bastid-Bruguière describes it as "an enthralling and exhilarating gathering, where Stuart found himself as an Italian Renaissance prince, a real Lorenzo di Magnifico"! But Lorenzo still had work to do: his French and German colleagues were unwilling to help edit, Stuart would not let his Italian colleague anywhere near it, personality clashes again. In reply to Stuart's offer of co-editorship, Bastid-Bruguière offered menial and scholarly help, rightly judging that Stuart as originator and mainstay of the project would prefer that his name alone should appear on the product of their labours. Stuart was pleased and in due course two volumes appeared: *The Scope of State Power in China* (1985) and *Foundations and Limits of State Power in China* (1987). Little did he realise that soon after the second volume appeared he would be embarking upon an even lengthier and more challenging project.

XI

Stuart was sitting on the dock (of a lake, not a bay) in Minnesota, fishing, when the phone call came from Harvard. If funding could be found, would he be interested in preparing a translation of all Mao's pre-1949 revolutionary writings, under the auspices of the Fairbank Center? A publisher was already lined up. Stuart was cautious but intrigued; thereafter he sometimes referred to the strangeness of getting such an offer at such a place, so he may for once have been non-plussed. But according to British academic rules he would have to retire at 65 in 1989. This offer would enable him to carry on working on a subject for which he was uniquely qualified. And so he accepted, departing the UK to undertake a major project in his native land for the first time since he developed the AEC's classification system 45 years earlier.

At Harvard, funding was found, principally from the National Endowment for the Humanities, but also from loyal Harvard alumni whom Stuart carefully

thanked in his “Acknowledgments.” In 1989, the Schram family ensconced itself in Cambridge and found a nice house in a secluded lane not too far from the campus. In due course, Marie-Annick found a satisfying berth at a private school, Milton Academy, teaching French.

Stuart knew Harvard well. John Fairbank, who had been the leader in creating the modern China field in the US, had invited him to visit Harvard early on in his China career. The other giant among local China scholars, Benjamin Schwartz, was a good friend and an early researcher on Mao whom Stuart had brought to the Bellagio conference. Both Fairbank and Schwartz were retired but still very much around. Indeed Fairbank would hand in the manuscript for his final book only shortly before he died in September 1991; Schwartz would provide “stimulating and thoughtful comments” on Stuart’s introductions for the new project.

The Fairbank Center, which occupied two thirds of a floor of a refurbished hotel (later torn down and replaced), was full to bursting. But a two-room office was found for the project in what the student newspaper, *The Crimson*, once called “Harvard’s craziest building.” In Britain, Vanserg “Hall” might be called a multi-storey Nissen Hut, in Cambridge, MA, it should have been called a facility, nothing so grand as a hall. Vanserg was built quickly in 1943 by the federal government as a radar laboratory. It was about a five-minute walk from the Fairbank Center. By the time Stuart arrived, it served, according to *The Crimson*, as a “sort of refugee camp for misfit classes ... a rag-bag of offerings from all corners of the faculty.” The offices located in Vanserg were “uniquely responsible for the hall’s bizarre character.” The bottom floor belonged to the Harvard Day Care Center; hence such signs as “Smacking the windows is not allowed. Sand stays *in* the sandbox and *off* the slide...” On the second and third floors were the offices of the university piano tuner, the Project for Kibbutz Studies, the Institute for Conservation Archaeology, and the Harvard Hillel Children’s School which displayed a poster saying “Have you hugged your Hebrew book today?” Some departments, including East Asian languages and civilizations, had offices there, as did the Fairbank Center.

For Stuart and his new colleagues the arrangement was ideal. He had plenty of space to install his working library and papers and get on with the job. There is no evidence that he kicked any filing cabinets or threw any telephones, but if he had, the only person he would have disturbed would have been himself. The late Bill Wycoff who was the principal translator for the first two years worked at home. The other translators, mostly newly arrived PhD students from China, did the same. Stuart’s main contacts with Fairbank Center scholars were at meal times, especially if there were a speaker at a brown bag lunch.

Bill Wycoff and Stuart were not a perfect fit, and in 1991 Nancy Hodes (now a professor of Chinese at Soka University in California) joined the project as a research assistant. She turned out to be an ideal collaborator and by Volume II, she had become associate editor and received an effusive acknowledgement of her contributions to the project by Stuart. Hodes was born in the US, but

attended Beijing schools when her father was teaching physiology at the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences in the 1950s. She took a BA in Far Eastern languages at Radcliffe College (then sort of, now formally, absorbed by Harvard) and wrote for *The Crimson*. After graduation, she edited the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, taught Chinese and worked as a freelance translator, before returning to Beijing in the 1970s, where she taught English and worked at the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute on *A Chinese–English Dictionary*. On returning to America, she continued to teach and translate and earned a PhD in Chinese literature at Harvard. She writes warmly about her time on the Mao project:

Having been selected by Professor Schram (as I addressed him for the first few years we worked together) from among a dozen or so other candidates, all of whom had taken a rigorous day-long written exam as part of the application process for the job as assistant on the Mao project, I was more than a little intimidated by his stern, almost gruff manner when I first reported for work. But it soon became apparent to me that I was one lucky woman to be working with and learning from such a brilliant, knowledgeable, intellectually focused mentor and boss.

Hodes describes Stuart's disciplined work style. "He kept to a strict schedule ... having timed the walk from his house at 17 to 18 minutes (depending on the weather), he would arrive at 9 am and head home at 6 pm, five days a week, like clockwork. Except during the lunch hour, it was virtually impossible to distract him from the task at hand." He was thorough, "even exhaustive" when seeking sources, whether consulting leaders like Pang Xianzhi at the Party's Research Institute on Party Literature under the Central Committee in Beijing, his counterparts in Taiwan at the KMT archives, the Japanese compiler of Mao's works, Takeuchi Minoru in Tokyo, or examining minutely obscure items of revolutionary history displayed at various Chinese museums.

The translation procedures at the project worked as follows: native speakers normally did the raw translations; Hodes would then vet them line by line against the original for "accuracy and nuance, tone and register." She would discuss each piece in detail and finally Stuart would work his "magic" on the text until his perfectionist persona was ready to move on. "Stuart's brilliance as a translator is hard to describe, yet so obvious immediately when one delves into his English renderings of Mao's Chinese. I used to say in amazement, 'He makes it seem as if Mao himself had written and spoken in perfectly eloquent English!'" Only with Mao's poetry did Stuart defer to Hodes.

By the time Hodes left the project to join the Soka faculty in September 2000, five volumes had been published and most of the translations for the projected ten volumes had been completed. She felt that her relationship with Stuart had been mutually transformative. The "intimidating task-master I met when I joined the Mao project had turned into a kindly mentor and understanding elder; and a pair of pesky sparring co-workers had become warm, fast friends."

Even before Hodes's departure, Stuart was finding his enormous task wearing. Around the time of the publication of Volume III in 1995, he started having heart problems due to high cholesterol and was warned that he would need a bypass

operation if he did not take serious steps. It was suggested that he follow the Ornish diet which involved eating no meat or fat for a year, a little fish after six months, meat much later. He adhered to the diet with the same discipline that he brought to his work, but he never stopped drinking a little wine. Later he was diagnosed with diabetes.

To ease his load, it was agreed that for some volumes a guest associate editor with special knowledge of a period would be brought in, particularly to draft the introduction but also to help with footnotes and details of the period. Stuart's acknowledgements thanked each precisely. The first guest editor was Stephen C. Averill (a historian at Michigan State before he died in 2004) for Volume IV, which covered the Jiangxi Soviet period (1931–34) and was published in 1997. Stuart had never really liked that period and was very glad of Averill's involvement. The second was Lyman van Slyke (the emeritus Stanford historian) for Volume VII on the "new democracy" period (1939–41), published in 2005. At the time of a Fairbank Center conference honouring Stuart in 2004, he wrote: "Particularly today, when the current fashion is to paint Mao as one-dimensionally and unremittingly evil, through Stuart's meticulously documented, decades-long research and writing, we see a three dimensional Mao evolving through time..." When asked to be a guest editor, van Slyke was "surprised, pleased, and intimidated." Of their work together he remembers, "He was an overseer both generous and rigorous, with a hand on the reins – encouraging, challenging, suggesting, editing."

Timothy Cheek (UBC historian and most recently editor of *A Critical Introduction to Mao*), who signed on to be guest editor for Volume VIII (1942–45, covering the Rectification Campaign and the Party's Seventh Congress), had a more challenging task. In 2008–09, Stuart had a series of mini-strokes. His memory began to fail him, especially with numbers. However, he was diagnosed as having symptoms of vascular dementia rather than Alzheimer's, which meant that his life was more agreeable than it might otherwise have been. He could revel in entertaining and enjoy an evening meal with family or friends. But his failing mental capacities meant that the editing of Volume VIII for the press fell largely on Cheek's shoulders. He remembers a poignant moment in 2001 when he was helping polish a translation: Stuart sighed and wondered out loud, "Why do we bother with this stuff?" Cheek believes that post-Mao critiques of Mao gave him moments of doubt.

XII

The one regret Stuart had about the Mao project was that it prevented him from updating his 1967 biography of the Chairman. He did toy with the idea of abandoning the former in order to do the latter. He may have been persuaded not to do so by the argument that the Mao project would be a massive legacy to the field, whereas the considerable research which would be needed for an updated biography could soon be outdated by the enormous amount of new materials

continually emerging in China. And anyway, as he himself said in a lecture in Hong Kong in 1982, “no verdict on a man who changed either the course of events or accepted patterns of thought (and Mao changed both) can ever be called final. Many such individuals are re-evaluated, and argued about, decades or even centuries after their disappearance.”

Commenting on Stuart’s Mao biography and his *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* as important texts, Saich observes: “I do not think he got Mao wrong but his analysis was very much text-based and this meant that he did not focus so much on the hard politics that Mao engaged in.” But his concept of Mao “was shaken by the realities of the Cultural Revolution and this led him in turn to look more critically at the way Mao’s ideas were used in practice.” In September 1981, in a *CQ* article on the CCP’s 60th anniversary, Stuart commented on the irony that Mao’s two great utopian movements had produced precisely the opposite results to those promised: “The Great Leap which promised abundance, led to hunger, and the attempt to touch and regenerate people’s souls [the Cultural Revolution] led to chaos, arbitrary violence, and bloodshed which largely destroyed the fabric of human relations.”

He focused more specifically on Mao in his *Mao Zedong: A Preliminary Reassessment*, based on three lectures which he gave at United College in Hong Kong in April 1982. At one point, he quoted his earlier assessment of Mao’s behaviour:

It is truly base not merely to cast aside but to accuse of the most monstrous crimes one’s comrades of forty years’ standing, without whose collective support victory in the revolution could never have been won, to assume all their merits for oneself, and to encourage and glory in a cult of one’s own infallibility and supernatural virtue which makes Stalin look like a modest man.

To this condemnation he now added a specific reference to the deaths of Liu Shaoqi and others which he blamed primarily on Mao himself. “Even if he did not explicitly order that they be killed, a word from him would have saved them – and he chose not to utter that word. In this respect, he was indeed a faithful successor to Qin Shihuang ... In Mao’s last years, personal considerations came increasingly to take precedence over broader goals.”

Stuart wrestled with the problem of making any overall assessment of Mao: “I agree with the current Chinese view that Mao’s merits outweighed his faults, but it is not easy to put a figure on the positive and negative aspects. How does one weigh, for example, the good fortune of hundreds of millions of peasants in getting land against the execution, in the course of land reform and the “Campaign against Counter-Revolutionaries,” or in other contexts, of millions, some of whom certainly deserved to die, but others of whom undoubtedly did not? How does one balance the achievements in economic development during the first Five-Year Plan, or during the whole twenty-seven years of Mao’s leadership after 1949, against the starvation which came in the wake of the misguided enthusiasm of the Great Leap Forward, or the bloody shambles of the Cultural Revolution?” But significantly he added, “In the last analysis, however, I am

more interested in the potential future impact of his thought than in sending Mao as an individual to Heaven or to Hell.”

Two decades later in December 2003, after 14 years work on the Mao project, at a conference of Mao specialists held by the Fairbank Center in his honour, Stuart gave what was probably his final public assessment of Mao. The *Harvard Gazette* reported him as agreeing with the current verdict that the Chairman was a great revolutionary leader who made fatal mistakes and committed terrible crimes in his final years. Asked why Mao’s legacy was not viewed in the same way as those of Stalin, Hitler and Pol Pot, Stuart answered: “In many ways his political instincts were sound. He tried to invest in the Chinese people. But in his personal feelings he was emotional, wrong-headed and hysterical, and these qualities increasingly took over in the 1950s. But despite enormous blunders and crimes, he was a great leader who was trying to do the best for China. I think he’ll be remembered for that.”

XIII

During their years in Cambridge, Marie-Annick bought a small house near her old family home in the village of Pénestin in her native Brittany and the Schrams began to go there regularly in the summer. In Pénestin, on 20 June 2012, Stuart had a severe stroke and was transferred to the hospital in neighbouring Vannes. There he died on 8 July, surrounded by his family. A great scholarly career spanning seven decades and many cultures had ended.

APPENDIX A Tributes From Chinese Party Historians

Li Rui (former secretary to Mao Zedong; former deputy head of the Central Committee’s Organization Department)

The sad news of the passing of my American friend Mr. Schram has caused me great pain. We came to know each other through researching Mao Zedong, and we became good friends. In the 1980s, he was the American scholar who frequently came to China for this research. He then invited me to visit America, and we would get straight to the point in discussing things closely, bringing me great delight. In 2005, when I was 88 years old, he wrote me an essay congratulating me on my old age entitled: “Li Rui is my friend.” In it he wrote words of encouragement, “Each time we meet, his straightforwardness and his understanding, which came from his joy at engaging in arguments, always made it so that I understood everything in a new light.” Mao Zedong is one of the most important historical figures of the 20th century. The many pieces written by Mr. Schram on Mao have been translated in China, and his book *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung* has had a great influence. He was the scholar who, in both the West and in China, has clarified the theories and practices of Mao Zedong and whom everyone respects as an authority.

Pang Xianzhi (former librarian to Mao Zedong; former head of the Central Committee's Research Institute on Party Literature)

Professor Schram was a famous scholar of Mao Zedong. In the Chinese academic world, he had a vast influence and he was also renowned internationally. He was a faithful scholar, noted for his meticulous research which was conscientious about each detail. In both his research on Mao Zedong as well as his editorship of Mao's collected works, Professor Schram spared no pains in his diligent striving to overcome every difficulty, and he poured his great heart into the work. We cannot help but admire this sort of spirit. His great academic accomplishments have received positive reviews from his Chinese colleagues. Through his many visits to China he entered academic networks and established true friendships with Chinese scholars, on whom he left a deep impression. In response to Professor Schram's passing we express our sincere grief. We shall never forget him.

Su Shaozhi (Former director of the Institute of Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences)

Professor Schram was one of the most renowned researchers of Mao Zedong's ideology; he was also my good friend. We knew each other and were in contact for over thirty years. I was shocked and I grieve at the news of his passing. When I was a visiting fellow at the Fairbank Center, I was in the same office building as Professor Schram, and our offices were next to one another. We met every day and we discussed many ideas with each other. I was deeply impressed by his endless hard work. From the 1980s on, Professor Schram visited China a number of times. He built deep friendships and collaborated with scholars at many institutions and organizations. Because of this he amassed many materials on Mao that others were unable to access. The aspects of Professor Schram which left the deepest impression on me were his research methods. He had all the necessary attributes of a scholar: independence, objectivity, and a spirit which always sought the truth, endlessly pursuing facts and correcting errors. He especially emphasized that "to do research you must faithfully hold to the primary sources." Due to his insistence on using the aforementioned methods, Professor Schram gradually unravelled the secrets of CCP materials and revealed genuine historical sources. Professor Schram's conclusions were continually revised and renewed. His critique of Mao Zedong developed. In his lecture at the Harvard conference honouring him, he said that "after 1950, Mao's stupidity, mistakes, and crimes unceasingly grew." This shows us that if we follow a correct methodology to do historical research, we will, in the end, inevitably arrive at a more correct understanding. Professor Schram's academic research is more than sufficient to place him in the historical canon where he will remain forever.

APPENDIX B Bibliography of Publications by Stuart R. Schram

On China

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