IN MEMORIAM

Tracey Lie-dan Lu
(20 September 1959 – 21 March 2016)

AN APPRECIATION

Professor Tracey Lie-dan Lu died in Melbourne on 21 March 2016 after a distinguished career at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, teaching and researching Chinese archaeology, museum studies, and cultural heritage. Tracey was born in Guangzhou. She commenced her archaeological career with a bachelor’s degree from Zhongshan University in 1983. In 1987, she obtained her M.Phil. in Archaeology from Beijing University. Between 1985 and 1989, she joined a large archaeological team in Guangzhou excavating the Western Han dynasty tomb of the Nanyue king Zhao Mo (d. 122 B.C.); wrote a popular book on this discovery, Nanyuewangmu yu nanyuewangguo (1990); and contributed several chapters to the two-volume Chinese report, Xihan Nanyuewangmu (1991).

My first contact with Tracey was a letter from her dated 17 November 1988, sent from Hong Kong, where she was then living. Tracey had applied to the Australian
National University (ANU) that year to undertake a Ph.D. on the early historical period of southern Chinese archaeology represented by the Nanyue king, but was not successful in obtaining a scholarship. Since I make no claim to expertise in Chinese Han dynasty archaeology, I was reluctant to supervise such a topic, and in the following years before she commenced her Ph.D. research, I managed successfully to wean her away from the Han dynasty and to interest her in the Chinese Neolithic.

In 1990, Tracey moved from Hong Kong to Melbourne with her mother and younger brother, found a temporary job as a bank clerk, and worked hard to improve her English. She kept in frequent contact with me during these intervening years and finally enrolled for a Ph.D. degree at the ANU in August 1994, supporting herself initially from other temporary employment, including a stint in the ANU library. She became an Australian citizen in 1995 after earlier being granted permanent residency, and finally received her long-awaited ANU Ph.D. scholarship in 1996. Tracey was one of my most driven students when it came to archaeology, absolutely determined to succeed at all costs. I have quite a massive file of correspondence with her, mostly dating between 1988 and 2000. Her determination to succeed is obvious in every letter.

Tracey’s very successful doctoral thesis was published as a British Archaeological Reports (BAR) monograph entitled *The Transition from Foraging to Farming and the Origin of Agriculture in China* in 1999. During her enrollment, she was able to travel extensively in China to examine archaeological collections. She used funds obtained through ANU to visit Beijing for two months in 1995, as well as many Neolithic sites in the Yellow and Yangzi River regions of China in 1996. Tracey also participated in the excavation of the Daikan Neolithic site in Hong Kong in 1996. One aspect of her research was the examination of the habitats and growth cycles of the wild rice and millets that sustained the Neolithic transition in China, which she did through observation of the ripening trajectory of wild foxtail millet in Shandong. Her findings were published in 1998 and 2002 (see bibliography below). Meanwhile, she began teaching herself to analyze starch grains and phytoliths from archaeological deposits and artifacts, an aspect of research that is evident very clearly in her publications.

At this time, the Chinese government took away Tracey’s Chinese passport in retaliation for her adoption of Australian citizenship. I remember this circumstance as being rather unpleasant for her, yet it must have been a major reason for her decision to undertake her academic career in Hong Kong rather than mainland China.

After receiving her Ph.D. from the ANU in 1998, Tracey held a temporary lecture-ship in the Anthropology Department in the New Asia College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) for five months in early 1999. She then won a Fyssen Award to visit the French Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) laboratory of archaeobotanist Patricia Anderson in Nice (1999–2000), where she conducted more research on rice and millet domestication. Her opportunity to join the permanent staff of the Anthropology Department at CUHK arrived in August 2000, and here she remained for the rest of her academic career, being promoted to the professoriate in August 2010.

During her tenure at CUHK between 2000 and 2014 (after which she returned to Melbourne), Tracey published two more major books, *Daozuo yu shiqian wenhua yanbian* (The Origin and Development of Rice Farming and Prehistoric Cultural Development) in 2012, and *Museums in China: Power, Politics and Identities* in 2014,
and has two further book manuscripts in press. She published over 60 articles in edited books and journals, contributed to the supervision of 22 M.Phil. and 4 Ph.D. students, and taught an undergraduate load which in 2013 included courses on museums and anthropology, China’s cultural heritage, human evolution, and a field project. Tracey was responsible for the design of a number of new anthropology courses in Museology and Heritage Studies.

While at CUHK, Tracey obtained substantial research grants from the Hong Kong Research Grant Council for both Neolithic research and the management of archaeological sites in southern China and Hong Kong. In her later career, she moved decisively into the field of heritage management, becoming involved in projects in the Mogau early Buddhist caves at Dunhuang in Gansu Province, as well as in Hong Kong. In 2014, the Research Committee of CUHK presented her with its annual Research Excellence Award 2013–2014. Her last published research article, sent to me by my ANU colleague Laurajane Smith, is entitled “Empowerment, transformation and the construction of urban heritage’ in post-colonial Hong Kong” (2016). In Laurajane Smith’s words (pers. comm.): “Tracey’s interests in heritage and museums did not simply rest with the management of archaeological sites, but she also demonstrated a keen and scholarly interest in the way that the past is used in the present. Her last paper offers an ethnographic account of local community engagement with contemporary urban heritage and its importance to community identity and lived experiences.”

Since I do not read Chinese, there are many aspects of Tracey’s life that are closed to me, including the all-Chinese text of her book Daozuo yu shiqian wenhua yanbian (2012). In 2013, Tracey sent a copy of this book to me, together with a precis of its contents in English as follows:

In the book, based on published archaeological data, my cultivation experiments on wild and domesticated rice, and data from palaeoethnobotany, ethnography, history and other disciplines, I have divided the prehistoric era of rice farming in China into four phases and argued the following:

a) The initial phase was from 12,000 to approximately 10,000 years ago, represented by the sites of Xianrendong and Diaotonghuan (Jiangsu). The inhabitants of these archaeological sites were wild rice collectors and probably occasionally wild rice cultivators. They were mobile and lived on foraging, and began to produce pottery and stone and bone tools for daily use.

b) The earliest farmers lived between 9000–7000 years ago and are represented at the Middle and Lower Yangzi sites of Pengtoushan, Bashidang and Kuahuqiao, and the more northerly site of Jiahu. They began to utilize natural ponds to cultivate wild rice and to build timber houses, but rice farming alone was not sufficient to support them and they still lived mainly by foraging. The Pengtoushan and Bashidang settlements were abandoned from time to time, indicating that the rice farmers might have needed to move periodically. However, the occurrence of built houses provided not only protective shelter but also a private space for human beings, and facilitated the accumulation of private property, as around 8000 years ago at Jiahu where in-house storage has been discovered. Pottery, carpentry, textiles, and boat making were major crafts during this period.

c) The developing phase of rice farming between 7000 and 6000 years ago is represented by the Hemudu and Tangjiagang assemblages, when intensive farming was facilitated by the invention of flooded rice fields which functioned to control the amount of water, an important technique in the eventual domestication of rice. Based on current archaeological data, rice paddy fields occurred around 7000 years ago at Tianluoshan. Rice was almost completely domesticated, and the output of rice farming increased.
However, the rice farmers still needed to hunt and gather, and the large quantity of acorns and remains of wild animals and other plants found in Tianluoshan and Hemudu indicates that rice farming alone still was not sufficient for people to survive. In addition, more stable sedentism and increased farming output caused increased population, which in turn resulted in increased needs for food and consequently decreased wild plant and animal resources near the prehistoric settlements. In phases II and III of the Hemudu culture such a decrease of wild resources was already apparent. In terms of social structure, labor divisions and professionalization began in this period. It is interesting to see that the rice paddy field at Chengtoushan was enclosed inside the settlement wall around 6500 years ago, so rice fields by that time were important assets that needed protection. The existence of wet rice fields further increased sedentism, as this important type of property could not be easily abandoned. The construction of fortified towns indicates group conflict and the existence of collective identity.

d) Rice farming entered prehistoric maturity around 6000–4000 years ago. Population continued to increase, more settlements were established, and the natural resources declined further. The catchment area of each settlement became smaller, and in some late Neolithic sites like Liangzhu (Zhejiang), the population density became unsustainable. Consequently, more group conflict occurred, and more fortified towns were built. The farming society became complex with inter- and intra-group professionalization, standardization of production and labor division, as well as social inequality. Jade and other goods for the social elites were produced, and earthen platforms for rituals were constructed. It was at the end of this period that the division between urban and rural truly began in the Chinese landscape. In summary, the early farming societies of China were at the entrance into Chinese civilization.

It is indeed tragic that Tracey was taken by cancer at the young age of 56. I am sure she would have had far more to contribute had she lived longer. Her cancer was diagnosed in 2012, but Tracey suffered the consequences in a very private and dignified way. She charmed everyone with her quiet demeanor. Chinese archaeology has lost a major contributor with her passing.

—Peter Bellwood

REMINISCENCES FROM COLLEAGUES AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Tracey was completely enamoured with the panda Yuan and her baby panda in the Taipei Zoo. Several times I walked into her office she was watching videos of Yuan and the baby panda, and she would tell me how she was so happy watching them. And, of course you know that she was an incredible teacher, beloved by students. I believe she might have initiated the whole internship program in the Dept. of Anthropology at CUHK, building on the respect and connections she commanded in local Hong Kong museums.

—Cheng Sea Ling

I remember one detail about Tracey that exemplifies her teaching. She insisted on not putting her teaching materials on Blackboard, the electronic learning system at CUHK, because she believed that immersion in the library was a critical learning aspect of college education. She said that by actually walking into the library to find a book, a student would then have the chance to browse the shelves and be inspired by how the topic was categorized and linked to other topics. The spirit of staying curious and working hard, to me, exemplified Tracey as a scholar and must be what she wished her students to learn.

When I helped with the collection of cards for Tracey from other alumni before she left Hong Kong, many of them told me that they enjoyed Tracey’s classes the most because she was always so well organized. They were a bit awed by her but were grateful that they always got a lot from her classes.
At the end of her stay in our department, I once walked into her office when she was obviously not well. She told me that she had not been able to eat for a while. I asked her to take some rest and take care of herself. She looked into my eyes and replied firmly: “How could I rest? I have no time to rest. I still have much more that I need to write up and share with others.” I will never forget that look and that strength in her voice. I assume that she still lived with that strength towards the end.

— Chen Ju-chen

I think that Tracey’s key to being a good teacher and popular with students was not that she was “nice” or super friendly, but her very clear thinking and well organized lectures. She was actually quite cutting when students made careless mistakes. One of her favorite mistakes, that made her laugh every time, was when a student converted simplified characters to traditional characters using MS Word and the program converted 下面 (“below”) to 下麵 (“to drop noodles [in water]”). Her point was that students could just use simplified characters, but if they wished to convert them, they had to proofread.

In her Bachelor studies at Zhongshan University, Tracey was of the “class of 1979,” referring to the starting year of students who entered university after the end of the Cultural Revolution. With a backlog of many talented candidates, those who got into university in those years, when the universities had just reopened, had to be brilliant, and Tracey was. Her ability to finish three books after she was diagnosed with cancer shows a determination and drive few of us can muster.

— Joseph Bosco

CUHK Anthropology Obituary

It is our sad duty to announce that Dr. Tracey Lie-dan Lu passed away on 21 March 2016 in Melbourne, Australia. Tracey, as a member of the Department of Anthropology at CUHK for more than fifteen years, was a wonderful colleague, scholar and teacher, playing a preeminent role through her scholarship in the archeology of Hong Kong and of China; she wrote dozens of pivotal articles and a number of important books on archeology and on museum studies. She was a prominent member of the archeological community in Hong Kong and in China. She was also a deeply beloved teacher, winning exemplary teaching awards, and was revered by generations of students, especially the undergraduate students she taught and the postgraduate students she mentored. She is very sorely missed by all of us. Go in peace, Tracey!

NOTES

2. Chinese-language entries translated by Sharon Wai Yee Wong. All items with pinyin transliteration are in Chinese.

TRACEY LIE-DAN LU

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS 1984–2016

Compiled by Peter Bellwood and Sharon Wai Yee Wong

In Press or Preparation

Yongheng de wenming [The eternity of human civilization], completed and to be published by the SDX Joint Publishing Company. During her career, Tracey traveled to some 50 countries and 180 cities, visiting Iran and India as late as last September 2015. In this book, Tracey presents 50 world heritage sites and discusses the concept of archaeology and the conservation and management of cultural heritage.

Xianggang shiqian wenhua yanjiu [The study of the prehistoric culture of Hong Kong]. This book is co-authored with Fu Xiangguo, from the Institute of Archaeology in Beijing, Tracey’s classmate from her undergraduate years in Zhongshan University. The book is approaching completion, but publisher details are not yet available.
Books: Sole Author

2012 *Daozuo yu shiqian wenhua yanbian* [The origin and development of rice farming and prehistoric cultural development]. Beijing: Science Press. In 2014, this book received a Top 10 National Cultural Heritage Book Award from *Zhongguo wenwu bao* [China Cultural Relics News].
1990 *Nanyuewangmu yu nanyuewangguo* [The mausoleum of the Nanyue King and the Nanyue Kingdom]. Guangzhou: Guangzhou Culture Press.

Books: Editor


Book Chapters

2009 Dianfen canyu fenxi zai shiqian kaoguxue zhong de yingyong wenti [Some issues on the application of starch residue analysis in archaeological studies], in *Majiabin wenhua guojixueshu yantaohui lunwenji* [Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the Majiabang Culture]: 92–102. Institute of Archaeology CASS, Institute of Archaeology of Zhejiang Province, and Cultural Bureau of Jiaxing City. Zhejiang Jiaxing: Jiaxing Cultural Bureau.
2007 Xianggang jiuqu chongjian zhong de wenhuayichang baoyu wenti [Some issues on heritage conservation and urban renewal in Hong Kong], in Hong Kong: Government Logistics Department.


2006 (co-authors Zhao Zhijun and Zheng Zhuo) The prehistoric and historic environments, vegetations and subsistence strategies at Sha Ha, Sai Kung, in The Ancient Culture of Hong Kong: Archaeological Discoveries in Sha Ha, Sai Kung: 57–64, Antiquities and Monuments Office, HK SAR. Hong Kong: Government Logistics Department.


2006 (co-authors Zhao Zhijun and Zheng Zhuo) The prehistoric and historic environments, vegetations and subsistence strategies at Sha Ha, Sai Kung, in The Ancient Culture of Hong Kong: Archaeological Discoveries in Sha Ha, Sai Kung: 57–64, Antiquities and Monuments Office, HK SAR. Hong Kong: Government Logistics Department.


Award of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; 2nd prize 2006 Xia Nai Archaeology Award.

1994 Xichaoshan shiqi yuanliao feixiyan kaicai fanfva de shiyian yanju [Experimental study of the stone-mining techniques at Neolithic Xiqiaoshan, Guangdong Province, China], in 

1991 Several chapters in Xihan Nanyuewangmu [Nanyue King’s tomb of the Western Han Dynasty]. Edited by Guangzhou Antiquity Management Committee, Institute of Archaeology CASS, and Guangdong Provincial Museum. Beijing: Cultural Relics Publishing House. The chapters are Xiceshi [The western chamber] (71–143); Dongceshi [The eastern rear-chamber] (254–272); (first author Huang Xinmei) Nanyuewangmu xunren yi hai de jianding [Remains of human sacrifice found in the Nanyue King’s tomb (458–462); (third author with Wang Jiange and Huang Jieling) Guangzhou xianggang nanyuewangmu chutu dongwu yi hai de jianding [Faunal remains found in the Nanyue King’s tomb] (463–472); (first author Wangxu) Nanyuewangmu chutu sizhiping jianding baogao [Textile remains found in the Nanyue King’s tomb] (476–497). Tracey shared two book awards with her co-authors for Xihan Nanyuewangmu: 2nd prize 1992 Xia Nai Archaeology Award; 2nd prize 1999 National Book Award on Social Science. The translated version appeared in 1999.

Journal Articles and Online Publications


2009 Kaogu yizhi chutu yesheng he zaipeidao de jianding wenti [Some questions in the identification of wild and domesticated rice found in archaeological sites]. Nanfuan Wenwu [Southern Cultural Relics] 3: 72–74.


2007 Xianggang shiqian de zirang ziyuan he jingji xingtai [Natural resources and subsistence strategies in prehistoric Hong Kong]. Kaogu [Archaeology] 6: 36–45.


The management of cultural heritage in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies Occasional Paper No. 137. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong.


From barkcloth beating to silk weaving: The textile industry from prehistory to the Western Han Dynasty in South China. *Textile Museum Journal* 36–37: 61–70.


*Nanyuewangmu faxian de qingtong yinhuaban* [The bronze plates for silk textile printing discovered in the Nanyue King’s tomb]. *Kaogu* [Archaeology] 3: 176–178.

(third author with Wang Jiangke and Huang Jieling) *Nanyuewangmu faxian de dongwu yicun* [Animal remains found in the mausoleum of the Nanyue King]. *Nongye kaogu* [Agricultural Archaeology] 2: 91–97.


*Nanyuewangmu he muzhong chutu de zhenbao* [The mausoleum of the Nanyue King and unearthed treasure]. *Wenwu tiandi* [Antiquity World] 6: 25–27.