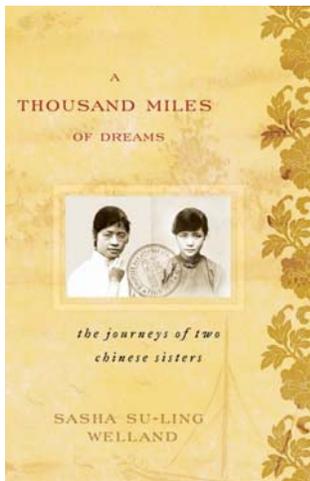


# A THOUSAND MILES OF DREAMS

*The Journeys of Two Chinese Sisters*

SASHA SU-LING WELLAND

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## ABOUT THE BOOK

A 2006 *Booklist* Editors' Choice, *A Thousand Miles of Dreams* is an evocative and intimate biography of two Chinese sisters who took very different paths in their quest to be independent women. Ling Shuhao arrived in Cleveland in 1925 to study medicine in the middle of a U.S. crackdown on Chinese immigrant communities, and her effort to assimilate began. She became an American named Amy, while her sister Ling Shuhua burst onto the Beijing literary scene as a writer of short fiction. Shuhua's tumultuous affair with Virginia Woolf's nephew during his years in China eventually drew her into the orbit of the Bloomsbury group. The sisters were Chinese "modern girls" who sought to forge their own way in an era of social revolution that unsettled relations between men and women, and among nations. Daughters of an imperial scholar-official and a concubine, the two sisters followed professional trajectories unimaginable to their parents' generation.

Biographer Sasha Su-Ling Welland stumbled across their remarkable stories while recording her grandmother's oral history. She discovered the secret Amy had jealously hidden from family in the U.S.—her sister's fame as a Chinese woman writer—as well as intriguing discrepancies in the sisters' versions of the past. Shaped by the social history of their day, the journeys of these extraordinary women spanned the twentieth century and three continents in a saga of East-West cultural exchange and personal struggle.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sasha Su-Ling Welland grew up in St. Louis, Missouri. As an undergraduate at Stanford University, she began recording her grandmother's oral history and investigating her great-aunt's career as a writer. She received a PhD in anthropology from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and is currently assistant professor of anthropology and women studies at the University of Washington in Seattle. The Artist Trust, Blue Mountain Center, Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Hedgebrook Retreat for Women Writers, and Millay Colony for the Arts have supported her work.

## PRAISE FOR *A THOUSAND MILES OF DREAMS*

"Reading Sasha Su-Ling Welland's book about her remarkable forbears is like unearthing a long-hidden treasure. . . . This is a book that enlightens as much as it delights and remains with you long after the reading." —David Takami, *The Seattle Times*

“Welland skillfully navigates the murky waters of memory, exaggeration, cultural misunderstanding and transformed identity, with both a scholar’s critical eye and a granddaughter’s desire to believe.” —**Lavonne Leong, *The Honolulu Advertiser***

“Welland is an anthropologist with a novelist’s eye for the art of both making lives and making books. She weaves biography, memoir, genealogy, social history, literary criticism, and theoretical reflection coherently, accessibly, and, indeed, beautifully.” —**Steven Schroeder, *Booklist* (starred review)**

“Filled with fascinating glimpses of 20th-century Chinese women’s intellectual history and insights into the Chinese-American and Anglo-Chinese experience.” —***Publishers Weekly***

“Sasha Su-Ling Welland is Heartland-born, with deep China roots. In *A Thousand Miles of Dreams*, she reaches back through family documents and her own scholarly reading of the historical record to create a portrait of a family’s personal journey that is moving, passionate, and fully accessible.” —**Clark Blaise, author of *I Had a Father* and former director of the International Writers Program, University of Iowa**

“With magnificently fluid erudition and a compassionately wry eye, Sasha Su-Ling Welland forges the story of two remarkable women whose lives expand our knowledge of twentieth-century feminism in China, the U.S., and Britain. Weaving her own autobiographical accounts into the mix, Welland deftly depicts how the absurdities of racial and sexual constructs persist over time and place, while arguing for the resolute power of following one’s heart.” —**Anna Maria Hong, editor of *Growing Up Asian American: An Anthology***

“This is a wonderfully written account of two Chinese modern girls whose lives traversed the entire twentieth century from China to England and the United States. Their artistic and professional accomplishments through decades of war and exile may be legendary, but their personal lives were also filled with many human frailties. Intermixed with Welland’s reminiscences of growing up in the United States as an Eurasian whose mother was partly raised by an African American housekeeper, the tales of these women weave an intricate tapestry of literary pursuit, transnational migration, an interracial affair, and middle-class domesticity. The author wields the pen of a historian, an ethnographer, and a poet, but ultimately it is the writer as a granddaughter and a grandniece that gives the story its most intimate human touch.” —**Shu-mei Shih, University of California, Los Angeles**

“Sasha Welland’s deft and gripping biography of her grandmother and great-aunt is elegiac but never sentimental. It is compelling, lucid, historically nuanced, and an absorbing read.” —**Gail Hershatter, University of California, Santa Cruz**

## **A THOUSAND MILES OF DREAMS**

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By Sasha Su-Ling Welland

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**Rowman & Littlefield media contact:**

Kim Lyons, Marketing Manager, [klyons@rowmanlittlefield.com](mailto:klyons@rowmanlittlefield.com), 301-459-3366 x5602