to foreign powers, which included the New Territories of Hong Kong and a few areas in other parts of China, and on relations between Taiwan and the USA, it will certainly be necessary for students to consult the books recommended for further reading and some other ones as well.

It is unfortunate that the cover of the book bears a photograph of policemen of the communist People’s Republic of China marching under a portrait of Sun Yat-sen. Perhaps this is intended to demonstrate the communists’ continuing respect for Sun as founder of the Republic of China, or perhaps it is merely a mistake, though presumably one for which the publisher rather than the author is responsible. In either case it is a misleading feature which should preferably be rectified in any future edition.

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It is 1936. A young Englishman, recently graduated from King’s College, Cambridge, comes to Wuhan University to teach English literature. There he is well received by the Dean of his Department, an acclaimed writer and editor in the new modernist movement and his wife, also an aspiring writer and painter. He is popular with his Chinese students and colleagues, and promptly forms a close relationship with the feminist wife of the Dean, who is keen to learn English and new ideas current in English literature and art. They fall in love and have an affair, which ends in his resignation and departure from China after barely a year. The repercussions are profound and extensive, not only for themselves and their families, but also for a coterie of literary and artistic figures in China and England.

The English teacher was Julian Bell, the son of Vanessa and nephew of Virginia Woolf, the heart of the Bloomsbury Group of writers and artists. The Chinese woman was Ling Shuhua, daughter of a traditional Chinese scholar-official who had held a high position at the Imperial Court and then with the new Republican government. As her grand-niece, Sasha Welland, describes in the first of the books under review, this powerful and wealthy “mandarin” gentleman had a number of wives (reminiscent of the patriarch and his concubines in the film, *Raise the Red Lantern* by the famous director Zhang Yimou), one of whom was the mother of Ling Shuhua and her sister Shuhao. These and other memories are described by Ling Shuhua in her *Ancient Melodies*, published in English by Hogarth Press, owned by Leonard Woolf, in London in 1953.

Sasha Welland, who “grew up a child of the American Midwest, at a time when Chinese meant chop suey on the sign of a gas station converted into a take-out shop”, has researched and recorded the lives of the two sisters. Her grandmother, Shuhao, changed her name to Amy when she settled in Indiana as a medical student and
married a distinguished Chinese physician who had migrated in the same period, the
early 1920s, also to study medicine. The sisters’ stories unfold from their Beijing child-
hood home and their Cantonese ancestral town, through the modern Western-style
Beijing school, where the girls both studied new practical subjects after their traditional
classical literary education at home. It is a vivid personal account of the new opportu-
nities opening for wealthy urban women. It also reveals China’s transition from feudal
life and culture in the last throes of Empire to the tumultuous changes and upheavals
in the early Republican period and after the First World War.

The sisters went different ways when Amy left for America and Shuhua married
Chen Yuan (pen-name Xiying). In Beijing, and later in Tianjin and Wuhan, he became
a prominent writer and literary figure within an elite circle of Western-influenced aca-
demics and writers, often known as the Chinese Bloomsbury writers. When the Japanese
invaded the north, the universities were forced to leave Beijing and relocate in the south.
So Chen Yuan took up a post at Wuhan University and Shuhua (now with a daughter) tried
to pursue her literary ambitions as well as domestic duties on the new campus.

The author of A Thousand Miles of Dreams intersperses the accounts of the two
sisters’ lives in alternate chapters, thus providing a fascinating comparison of experi-
ences in these distant countries and contrasting cultures as the Second World War
loomed. After the war, in their later years, their lives and attitudes diverged as they
led separate lives, Amy in America and Shuhua in England. Their versions of their
experiences conflicted in many ways, and the author has taken great care to sort out
“fact” from “fiction” in the narratives told to her, thus displaying academic objectivity
in the process of writing family history.

The second work under review is a booklet based on the author’s research on the life
and writing of Virginia Woolf and her family and literary circle. This particular account
focuses on Woolf’s nephew, Julian Bell, his early life and education, which included his
years at Cambridge University where he studied English literature in the early 1930s, his
experiences in Paris and Wuhan and finally his early death fighting for the partisans in the
Spanish Civil War. Growing up within the Bloomsbury set and his privileged education
brought him into contact with eminent academics and literary and artistic figures. Patricia
Laurence highlights Bell’s stay in China, which was also the starting point of her work on
the interaction of Chinese and English literature and art during the first half of the 20th
century: Lily Briscoe’s Chinese Eyes: Bloomsbury, Modernism and China (South
Carolina, 2003). Laurence also refers to another work, a colourful novel, K, the Art of
Love by Hong Ying (London, 2002), which is itself based on the love affair of Julian
Bell and Ling Shuhua and caused quite a scandal when it was published.

The comings and goings of the Chinese and English modern literati in the early 20th
century produced a fruitful and energetic tide of creative thought and activity which has
left its mark on the cultural history of both East and West. These two biographical presen-
tations contribute to our knowledge of the intellectual history and artistic communication
between the two literary communities. Both authors have applied rigorous academic
research and analysis, which is reflected in their copious notes, references and bibliogra-
phies. In a more popular style, however, ample photographs illustrate both books. They
can be recommended to the general reader, starting perhaps with the booklet on Julian Bell.