

## **The inspiration of Rewi's pioneering work in vocational education in China: Rewi Alley, Joseph Bailie and the power of two**

Dr Miles Barker, Faculty of Education, University of Waikato,  
Hamilton, New Zealand

### **Abstract:**

An initial meeting between New Zealander Rewi Alley (1897-1987) and Irish-American Joseph Bailie (1860-1936) in Shanghai one evening in the late 1920s was to prove mutually inspiring for both men: it provided Alley with a mentor on a road towards an educational philosophy of 'heads/hands' integration which he could successfully apply to the vocational institutions (the 'Bailie Schools') he was later to set up; conversely, Alley's practical skills and very evident identity with China's fortunes encouraged Bailie to pursue his own work further. Bailie's 'heads/hands' philosophy was influenced by American educator and philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952), both because of Dewey's influential lengthy visit to China in 1919-1921, but also by Dewey's general notion of 'learning by doing', which combined being practical with taking full account of the importance of theory. Alley's astute design of courses and his innovative ways of implementing them at the Shandan Bailie School in 1945-1953, and the resulting legacy down to the present, were to be inspiring examples of the application of Bailie's principles.

Worldwide, and in a historical perspective, Vocational Education has needed such nourishment. Earlier, elitist attitudes in Europe had tended to view Vocational Education as a less prestigious enterprise than 'academic' pursuits, and even Dewey's work, with its relentless espousal of democratic principles and curriculum integration ("the more interactions we ascertain, the more we know the object in question"), can be interpreted as a caveat against Vocational Education being separately defined and administered. Again, the power of *three*, 'heads, hands and hearts' has recently become a widely accepted rubric in many areas, e.g. Education for Sustainability. Nevertheless, inspired by the very evident needs, and taking an admirably pragmatic approach, Vocational Education in China is blooming in such key indicators as teacher training, the proportion of students who pursue it, and developments in the rural areas of China. The inspiration of the Alley/Bailie collaboration, celebrated appropriately at Shandan, is one of the many treasures that merits China's travelling the Belt and Road Initiative.

### **Introduction – A Life-Changing Meeting in Shanghai**

The two men who met in Shanghai, in an attic room with only a bed and a small desk with a typewriter, one evening in the late 1920s (Alley, 1997, p.182), were an extraordinary contrast. The bespectacled Joseph Bailie, in his late sixties, six feet tall, with a solid frame and a walking stick always at hand (Stross, 1986, p.91) spoke intensely in a muted American accent with a trace of an Irish lilt. Having been in China, on and off, for nearly forty years, perpetually setting up projects intended to better the lot of rural Chinese people, and forever acting as a

link between peasants, funders, academics and the media, Bailie amply fitted the description of an 'Old China Hand'.

The New Zealander Rewi Alley, in his early thirties, did most of the listening. Of medium height but with tremendous rugged arms and legs (Airey, 1970, p.12), his head topped by a shock of sandy hair, Alley had arrived relatively recently in China, in April 1927, but he had already seen enough of Shanghai's restless urban chaos and had sensed the potential in the surrounding Chinese rural communities to know that Bailie spoke with the wisdom of hard-won experience. To set up the meeting, Alley had followed up a newspaper article by Bailie about the need for technical training in the countryside and he had noted that Bailie was briefly in Shanghai. Alley's hazardous search to locate Bailie – in 1927 Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) had recently wrested control of the Nationalist party through a bloody coup against the Communists in Shanghai (Dong, 2005, p.72) – was amply rewarded.

When they parted, both men felt some considerable sense of inspiration. Bailie was able to see past Alley's as yet relatively limited experience of China's problems and was able to sense in Alley's sturdy New Zealand farming background "... the vision of a distant horizon which some people claim they see in his sky-blue eyes" (Airey, 1970, p.12). Here was a man who might be able to promulgate his philosophy and effect real change in China. Alley, in turn, could forgive Bailie his lack of detailed agricultural expertise, his constant shifting of focus over the years, and his perpetually turbulent nature, and realize that there was much he could learn from this man. In particular, what captivated Alley was Bailie's notion that, in education, theory and practice should be inseparable – it came through in Bailie's Dewey-resonant dictum that 'heads' and 'hands' needed always to be harnessed together.

As we shall see, it would be wrong to characterize the meeting in Shanghai as simply one between an artisan and a theoretician. Alley had been raised in a household enlivened by grand ideas; and Bailie had spent large blocks of time over his decades in China visiting dusty farmlands and hillside forestry projects in rural China. But as they parted that night, Bailie knew that he could encourage and direct this avid learner, and Alley knew that he had possibly found a hugely significant mentor. The importance of this intersection of the two men's lives will now be placed in the context of what had come before that meeting and what was to follow.

### **Joseph Bailie (1860-1936) – Missionary, Project Initiator, Mentor**

Joseph Bailie was something of an enigma. The man who influenced Rewi Alley so strongly that night in Shanghai by virtue of his very apparent love of China (he sought repeatedly to be naturalized as a Chinese citizen) always manifested a certain ambiguity towards China that became more evident with the passing years. Again, although Bailie had great power to co-opt others into grand agricultural projects in China, he himself was not – by any conventional standards – qualified in agriculture at all. Rather, Bailie's power to co-opt and persuade others was derived from the fact that, in the words of a major biographer, "... he was energetic and impatient, farsighted and grandiosely ambitious, a man who gloried in strenuous effort" (Stross, 1986, p.66-67).

Bailie had agriculture in his blood. Born in Ireland in 1860 and having spent his boyhood on the family farm, he had migrated to the United States as

soon as he could to study at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He went to China as a protestant missionary in 1890 but resigned within the year, disillusioned by his helplessness in the face of the suffering experienced by the waves of famine refugees evident in the big cities. After twenty years of unremarkable employment in the treaty ports he unexpectedly (given his lack of qualifications) gained a position as a teacher of mathematics in the University of Nanjing, an institution being set up by American missionaries.

Again, Bailie's desire to do something to alleviate the suffering all around came to the fore. Facilitated by the university's indulgence in continuing his salary, Bailie devoted himself with extraordinary energy to setting up aid projects in the countryside. Taking advantage of unused land on Purple Mountain, near Nanjing, and with a view to settling destitute migrants from the cities, he created and sustained the 'Bailie's Colonization Scheme' in 1911. The project met with mixed results – agricultural initiatives suggested that the soil was too infertile for cropping – so he turned his attention to afforestation of the hillsides. He applied successfully for funding to Sun Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen), to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and to many other organizations; he set up another colonization scheme down in Lai'an, Anhui, in 1913; he attended to roading. In 1914, in the face of Nanjing University's now increasing demands for accountability, he audaciously and energetically opened a small department of agriculture on the campus, giving himself the title of 'Dean, Field Work' (Spurling, 2010). Revealingly, he once confessed in a letter, "I'm not qualified to lecture on Agriculture except in a place like this where the very rudiments are a mystery" (quoted in Stross, 1986, p.84) but his personal philosophy was clear: he insisted that all students must harmonize their knowledge of agronomy with "the use of the pick and shovel, the plow, the seeder and mower" (Stross, 1986, p.85).

In 1915 Bailie's university department was renamed the School for Agriculture and Forestry, but he was finding that sharing power with other foreigners on campus was becoming irritating. Forever restless, he now diverted much of his energy towards fundraising, making frequent trips back to the United States and taking his pitch to the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service in Washington and to the professional community of American foresters, and writing advocacy papers for their journal, *American Forestry*.

By 1917, however, Bailie was developing a level of paranoia in his life on the Nanjing University campus (Stross, 1986, p.88). He resigned and soon left for Jilin, north China, where he tried with little success to start another colony. Famine relief in Shandong followed, as did flood relief in Hubei. In 1920, disillusioned with agriculture and now obsessed with the need to hasten China's industrialization, he embarked on a project that engaged him for the rest of his days: working to place Chinese students in American factory apprenticeships. This entailed frequent ferrying between the United States and China and moving constantly around the large centres of Chinese population.

It was on such a mission to Shanghai that Bailie and Rewi Alley had their historic meeting. That night, able to cast aside his disappointments, Bailie's "enthusiasm, courage and love for the people amongst whom his work took him marked him out as a true pioneer" was very evident (Alley, 1997, p.56). Indeed, as one of his many pieces of practical advice, Bailie was able to suggest to Alley that he use his annual leave to go to Inner Mongolia and help the China International Famine Relief Commission with the canal they were trying to build.

Bailie's passing away in 1936 is described by Alley (1997, p.184) with great poignancy. Finding that his prostate cancer had recurred, and not wanting to be a burden on his family because hospitalization in America was very costly, he took a gun and shot himself out in the backyard. However, as Alley's autobiography (Alley, 1997) shows, over the years after Bailie's death Rewi's debt to Bailie was to grow further. Alley's contacts in China with numerous 'Bailie boys' (former students and apprentices), and the awareness of China's needs that Bailie had stimulated in the United States – "He made a bridge between the good ordinary Americans and the good ordinary people of China" (Alley, 1997, p. 184) – were to prove exceptionally fruitful.

### **Rewi Alley (1897-1987) – Handyman, Learner, Practical Visionary**

There had been no lack of grand theorizing in Rewi's New Zealand upbringing. The Alley household, in the rural village of **Waverley**, Canterbury, was drenched with the grand utopian ideas espoused by his school-teacher parents: school curriculum reform, Unitarianism, the irresistible power of democracy (Chapple, 1982, p.13-15). Nevertheless, Rewi was to be a practical and capable person all his life. Since his boyhood he was always using his hands – doing chores at home and all kinds of farm work, then soldiering on the Western Front, living an isolated life of a Whanganui hill-country farmer, and later in China turning his hand to all kinds of technical and industrial tasks that came his way. The outcome was that, as his niece and biographer puts it, "... he knew from experience that a theory is really only understood when it is put into practice" (Reynolds, 1997, p.40).

From Alley's early work in coastal China with Edgar Snow, Helen Snow and others in the late 1930s emerged the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives, ICCIC, also known by its nickname - the 'Gung Ho International Committee'. 'Gung Ho', literally "work together", aimed to organize unemployed workers and refugees into co-operatives and hence increase production to support the Chinese people's war of resistance against Japanese aggression. However, finding his own way were always characteristics of Alley's – indeed, the first biography of Alley was titled 'A Learner in China' (Airey, 1970). Thus, around 1942 Alley "... turned his main attention to schools which were training youth in the skills needed in the co-operatives" (Newnham & Bangzhen, 1988, p.4). Determined to apply the Bailie's teaching principles that had so inspired him, Alley named all the Gung Ho training schools he set up after Bailie, an idea had even more appeal when people noticed that the Chinese transliteration, Pei Li, fortuitously means 'train for the dawn' (Lu, Sun, Zhou & Li, 1988, p. 61).

Alley formed an immensely fruitful partnership in this enterprise with a likeminded young Englishman George Hogg (1916-1945) who had had a similarly radical and wide-ranging upbringing. Hogg's schooling had been unusual for an upper-middle-class English boy: although he was an Oxford graduate, his parents had sent him to a secondary school that combined book learning with practical knowledge (Brady, 2002, p.39-40). Hogg's aunt was the Quaker pacifist Muriel Lester, and it was she who had encouraged him, in 1937, during a round-the-world trip together to work in China (Alley, 1997, p.179). What was needed, the two men agreed was "... an education that placed equal

emphasis on academic knowledge (of the head) and on technical skills (of the hand)” (Reynolds, 1997, p.40).

Six Bailie Schools were set up. The first was in the south-east of China at Ganxian, Jiangxi province, in 1940; the second was in the north-west at Baoji, Shaanxi province, but it lasted only six months. Two further schools, at Guilin, Guangxi province, and Laohekou, Hubei province, were soon disbanded by local Kuomintang officials. They were followed by three further schools, in the north-west, at Shuangshipu (Fengxian), Shaanxi province; Luoyang, Henan province; and Lanzhou, Gansu province. Another, in the south-west near Chengdu, Sichuan province, suffered a lot of interference. (Alley, 1997, p.178-9; Reynolds, 1997, p.39). Gradually, Rewi and George came to see that a successful Bailie school was the one where new skills were learned and applied, “... where the older boys helped to teach the younger ones, and where, by living, working and training together, they would all learn the spirit of co-operation that would be the base of the new society” (Reynolds, 1997, p.40).

The most renowned Bailie School is at Shandan, Gansu province. Its founding in 1945 was the outcome of the need to abandon the Shuangshipu School because of increasing harassment by Nationalist forces. Beginning in November 1944, Hogg, Alley and sixty students made an epic 1200km journey north-west, carrying all their tools and carefully dis-assembled machines with them.

The story of the Shandan Bailie School’s operations from 1945 until it was transferred in 1952 to Lanzhou to become the Bailie Oil School is eloquently told in ‘Hands and Minds Together: Rewi Alley’s Gung Ho School’ (Newnham & Bangzhen, 1988). This book, which is illustrated with reproductions of the murals at Bailie Square, Lanzhou, relates the enormous range of visionary Alley-inspired training that was offered over its eight years: leather-making, glass-making, pottery, irrigation, vegetable growing, vehicle repair, foundry work, woodworking, and many others. Throughout, Alley’s pedagogy was faithful to his Bailie-inspired philosophy: during the mornings, half of the students worked in the production units while the other half were in classrooms then, after the mid-day break, the two groups changed over. With this method Alley also hoped to apply what he had earlier learned in setting up the co-operatives, namely the need “to eliminate the gap between administrators without understanding of production and workers without understanding of administration” (Chapple, 1982, p. 170). In keeping with all this, the Shandan Bailie School’s motto was ‘Create and Analyze’.

For the next thirty-four years, from autumn 1953, Alley was to reside in Beijing working principally as a writer and a poet but his two greatest satisfactions in his later years were undoubtedly “...the successful reorganization of the Association of Chinese Industrial Co-operatives in 1983, and the resumed activities of the Shandan Bailie School in 1987” (Zhang, 2012, p.160). Similarly, the inauguration of what is now the Bailie University (formerly the Bailie Vocational Institute) in Beijing in May 1983 was another immensely satisfying celebration of “the power of two”. The Bailie University’s fulltime professional training currently includes computing, law, accounting, international business and hospitality.

## **Joseph Bailie's Precepts – A Dewey-drenched Context**

The precepts by which Bailie was able to inspire Rewi Alley can clearly be traced to the influence of John Dewey (1859-1952) who "... is generally recognized as the most renowned American educator of the twentieth century" (Palmer, 2001, p.177). Not only did Bailie make frequent trips from China back to the United States over the 25 years following his appointment at Nanjing University in 1910 – the period when Dewey's ideas became prominent in America – but, also, Dewey himself made a prolonged and much publicized visit to China in 1919-1921. Dewey's arrival in Shanghai just a few days before the May Fourth Movement broke out ensured that his lectures, especially those on the philosophy of education and political philosophy (including the nature of democracy and its nurturing), created avid interest all over China (Hoyt, 2006, p.19).

Dewey, along with fellow Americans William James and Charles Sanders Pierce, are said to subscribe to the notion of 'Pragmatism', namely, "that every idea, value and social institution originates in the practical circumstances of everyday life; each one should be subject to the test of establishing its contribution in the broadest sense to the public and personal good" (Palmer, 2001, p.179). For Dewey, Pragmatism generated a particular view of learning: "we learn by doing and reflecting on what we do" (Dewey, quoted Carin & Sund, 1980, p.76) which had huge philosophical implications: "the truth is that which works" (Dewey, quoted Harwood, 2010, p.125). Dewey was therefore deeply opposed to all dichotomous thinking and to all absolute principles.

All of this had, for Dewey, very clear implications for how schools should be administered, and also for pedagogy, that is, how teaching and learning situations should be conducted. The inescapable conclusion for Dewey was that the then-current common dualism of theory and practice in education was anathema. If Dewey's conclusion seems somewhat self-evident today, it is helpful to remind ourselves of the opposite position. This was 'the factory system' model being adopted by school planners and so-called 'efficiency experts' all over the United States "... which emphasized students as relatively passive raw materials to be moulded by teachers, by repetitious methods of teaching and by subject matter divorced from social content" (Palmer 2001, p.180).

Dewey's thinking about schooling went like this: "In the world outside of the school, community is achieved by sharing the tasks of living. Outside the school, people learn by doing or by living; they either learn or perish. They are in the middle of things, and therefore concerned about the outcome. The school as the ideal community would also exhibit these ways of living and learning" (Broudy & Palmer, 1965, p.144). Dewey's interactive, 'learning by doing' approach to the classroom, grounded in students being perpetually imaginative in both practical and traditional theory work, was therefore designed to promote rich multifaceted investigations because, as he claimed, "The more interactions we ascertain, the more we know the object in question" (quoted in Magee, 1998, p.191).

Why these Dewey-derived precepts, as propounded by Bailie on that night in Shanghai, resonated so strongly with Alley's life experiences to date is now very clear. What Alley found so attractive was the heady prospect of an interactive practical style of teaching and learning, the dissolving of thinking and doing into a single complementary practice, the desirability of reflecting the

purposes and practices of village community life in classroom pedagogy, and the generally democratic flavor of the whole concept.

### **Vocational Education – A Struggle for Recognition**

In 1982, when Rewi Alley was asked to speak at the celebrations for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Shandan Bailie School, he reminded the audience of the environmental devastation that has been wrought in China, for example, how “... China has suffered from millennia of deforestation and erosion, with rivers silting up, posing a constant threat to millions”. Much of his own life had been devoted to addressing these problems through fostering Vocational Education, that is, “... by ever struggling to gain the objective view, training oneself, gathering knowledge and experience, learning how to work in co-operation with others” (Zhang, 2012, p.159). But what *is* ‘Vocational Education’, and how has it fared in China and around the world?

According to Webb, Metha & Jordan (1991, p.303) “ ‘Vocational Education’ is designed to provide an alternative to college” (i.e. university) “preparation and to prepare students for employment in all occupations except those requiring a baccalaureate degree” (i.e. a university entrance qualification). Vocational Education is therefore a feature of certain pathways in many senior secondary school programmes; it is also offered in some tertiary institutions (usually called polytechnics). Most Vocational Education is specific for agriculture, or trade and industry, etc.; it meets the needs of the student as well as the labour market. But inevitably, there are issues of power and class structure involved in the choices of educational pathways. For example, Mjelde & Daly (2006, p.9) claim that “... general education, the ‘Latin’ model, i.e. ‘academic’ education, makes up the training of the ruling and middle classes in society, while vocational education and training involves job-related working knowledge for those who are shut out of power and influence in both politics and society”.

As we have seen, Dewey’s broad views on education, especially the notion that “we learn by doing and reflecting on what we do”, perhaps make it surprising that he was actually very opposed to the notion of Vocational Education. This stance arose from his notions of democracy and social structure – he argued that “... it would create a tracking system that would isolate and stigmatize immigrant and lower class youth (Bailey, Hughes & Moore, 2004, p.11). Rather, to use Dewey’s own phrases, he preferred the concept of “education *through* occupations” rather than “education *for* occupations” (Bailey, Hughes and Moore, 2004, p. 12).

Nevertheless, in the face of the issues that Alley alluded to, China and many other countries have seen a burgeoning of Vocational Education in the second half of the twentieth century. In China’s case – where the education is now generally divided into four categories: basic education, vocational education, higher education and adult education (Landowe, 2008, p. 31) – Vocational Education has benefited as a flow-on from the adoption of the policy of economic reform and opening up to the outside world in 1978 (Landowe, 2008, p.vii). Indeed, “... during the 15 years between 1980 and 2001, the proportion of regular senior high school students among all the students in senior secondary education has decreased from 81% to 54.7%, while the proportion of secondary vocational school students has increased from 19% to 45.3%. From 1980 to 2001, secondary vocational education institutions produced 50 million graduates,

fostering millions of secondary-level and primary-level technical workers, managers, skill workers and other labors (*sic*) with good vocational and technical education” (CHINA.ORG.CN, 2016). Interestingly, by contrast over a similar period “... (American) high school students’ participation in occupationally specific courses dropped 14 percent between 1982 and 1994” (Bailey, Hughes & Moore, 2004, p. 1).

Two aspects of the burgeoning Vocational Education in China – rural education and teacher training - resonate with Rewi Alley’s endeavours. Since the 1980’s, significant progress has been made in Vocational Education in rural areas of China with “its quantity greatly enlarged and quality greatly improved” (CHINA.ORG.CN, 2016). Again, “... since 1989, 250 teacher training bases have been established which comprise a huge nation-wide network” (CHINA.ORG.CN, 2016).

Nevertheless, the early challenges for Vocational Education in China, especially issues of scale and resources, were considerable (Epstein, 1991) and for some students perhaps the old issues of status sometimes remain. One study (Turner & Acker, 2002) documents the views of Chinese students in Beijing in the late 1990s who opted for vocational schools as opposed to main-stream high schools. Whilst the interviewees voiced their initial relief at the differences they encountered in the vocational schools and their enjoyment at learning new subjects (as opposed to the highly governed and prescriptive approach which characterizes high schools), their feelings as graduates were sometimes negative: among the subjects it was “possible to identify an active sense of frustration owing to a strong perception that the lack of a (university) degree places a tangible ceiling on an individual’s ability to progress within the world of work” (Turner and Acker, 2002, p. 98).

### **Bailie’s Educational Philosophy – A Contemporary Assessment**

How does Joseph Bailie’s educational philosophy that he advocated to Rewi Alley that night in Shanghai – namely, notions of the power of two: “heads and hands together” – stack up against the pathway that global thinking about education has subsequently taken? Certainly, Bailie’s then-radical notions of human faculties working together to achieve a better balance have become main-stream thinking over the last eighty years.

In the 1950s, ‘Bloom’s taxonomy’, a three-way catalogue of goals in education – ‘cognitive’, ‘affective’ and ‘psychomotor’ (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956) – provided a comprehensive framework for thinking about the scope of teaching and learning at large. From that point, notions of the integrative power of *three*, that is, the simultaneous involvement of heads (‘cognitive’), hands (‘psychomotor’) and *hearts* (‘affective’) began to take centre stage; this triumvirate started to emerge in the vocabulary of the separate subject disciplines. For example, Donaldson and Donaldson (1958) advocated an ‘in, about and for’ (respectively ‘hearts’, ‘heads’ and ‘hands’) approach to outdoor education. Lucas (1979) co-opted this trio of terms for environmental education. In science education, Fensham (1981) made a plea for a better balance between ‘hands’ (that is, skills), ‘heads’ (that is, big ideas) and ‘hearts’ (that is, attitudes and social experiences).

Today, in many countries, overarching national curriculum frameworks advocate a range of capabilities (or competencies) for all learning that aims to

generate a seamless amalgam of 'heads', 'hands' and 'hearts'. Notions of 'curriculum integration' and 'multidisciplinary approaches' are advocated at all levels of schooling (Fraser, Aitken & Whyte, 2013). In tertiary education, in this internet age of connectivity and super-complexity, where the future is largely unknown, "... what is in question ... is neither knowledge nor skills but *being* ... encouraging forward a form of human being that is not paralyzed into inaction but can act purposefully and judiciously" (Barnett, 2004, p.259). For example, teachers today in the field of Vocational Education in China aim for traditional pragmatic "getting-the-job-done" goals, but they are also encouraged to see issues of the 'heart' – motivation, cultural identity, socialization and a sense of belonging and purpose – as being indispensable to their students' proficient acquisition of knowledge and practical skills.

### **In Conclusion: The Power of Two - A Continuing Way Forward for China**

Notions of two-way co-operation permeate this paper, both in terms of the fruitful collaboration between Alley and Bailie itself, and the educationally powerful, Dewey-derived synergy of 'heads' and 'hands' in learning that emerged from their mutual inspiration. Such seeking for new co-operative dualities, on a vastly magnified scale, dominates China's global perspective today. A case in point is the 'Belt and Road Initiative', a developmental strategy and economic framework, announced in September 2013. The Initiative's two thrusts – the north and west arm, the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), and the south and west arm, the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) – each seek co-operative development with the other participating countries.

It is therefore with stunning symbolism that a forum celebrating 'Rewi Alley Internationalist Spirit' is held in Shandan, Northern Gansu Province. Shandan, the city where a harried but tenacious Alley chose to set up the Shandan Bailie School in 1945, had been a key staging post on the two-millennia-old traditional Silk Road connecting China and the rest of Eurasia. Now that ancient highway up the Hexi Corridor and far, far beyond, is being revived – it strides into the future as a new highway, this time to and from the nations in the Silk Road Economic Belt.

### **A Final Note: Some Personal Connections**

Throughout my professional life I have been involved in matters of teaching and learning in all levels of Education, from Early Childhood through to doctoral supervision in tertiary education. It has therefore been a delight for me in this paper to weave together an aspect of contemporary education in China with the story of New Zealander Rewi Alley.

I never met Alley myself but through the auspices of New Zealand China Friendship Society (NZCFS) delegations I have, since 2007, been able to visit many places in China associated with Alley's life. Nevertheless, I consider it my very good fortune that my wife Elizabeth's parents, Norman and Phyllis Perry, as members of a New Zealand Māori delegation led by Hiwi Tauroa, spent time with Rewi Alley at his Beijing home in 1986. Hiwi Tauroa, who was Race Relations Conciliator for Aotearoa/New Zealand from 1980 to 1986, became involved with The Chinese People's Association with Foreign Countries (YOUXIE) following a visit to China as a member of a NZCFS delegation in 1981. Beginning in 1984, Hiwi Tauroa instigated and conducted China-Māori reciprocal

exchanges. At Rewi Alley's home, Norman Perry, a former member of the New Zealand Māori Council, had valuable and memorable discussions with Rewi comparing the organizational basis of 'Gung Ho' with the structure of Māori co-operatives in isolated communities in New Zealand's Bay of Plenty and East Coast regions. What resonated in the minds of those delegation members during their visit was a very common phrase in Māoridom: 'Mahi Tahī'. It means, literally, "working as one", that is, "working together". As is clear, this sentiment is exactly congruent with that of 'Gung Ho', and with the notions of 'the power of two' expressed throughout the present paper.

### **Acknowledgements**

In writing this paper I have been much indebted to two members of the New Zealand China Friendship Society, namely David Bromwich, who as tour leader and personal friend made possible my visiting places pivotally associated with the life of Rewi Alley, and who encouraged me to write this paper; and Wang Jin (Helena), who has kindly advised me in various aspects of the paper's content. Elizabeth Barker is thanked for her proof-reading and advice.

### **References**

- Airey, W. (1970). *A Learner in China: A Life of Rewi Alley*. Christchurch: Caxton Press.
- Alley, R. (1997). *Rewi Alley: An Autobiography* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Beijing: New World Press.
- Bailey, T., Hughes, K., & Moore, D. (2004). *Working Knowledge: Work-Based Learning and Education Reform*. London: Routledge.
- Barnett, R. (2004). Learning for an unknown future. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 23(3), 247-60.
- Bloom, B., Engelhart, M., Furst, E., Hill, W., & Krathwohl, D. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Handbook I: Cognitive Domain*. London: Longmans.
- Brady, A-M. (2003). *Friend of China: The Myth of Rewi Alley*. London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Broudy, H. S. & Palmer, J. R. (1965). *Exemplars of Teaching Method*. Chicago: Rand McNalley.
- Carin, A. & Sund, R. (1980). *Teaching Science Through Discovery* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishing Company.
- Chapple, G. (1982). *Rewi Alley of China* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton.
- CHINA.ORG.CN (2016). *Vocational Education in China*.  
<http://www.china.org.cn/english/LivinginChina/185280.htm>  
(downloaded 05.07.2016)
- Donaldson, G., & Donaldson, L. (1958). Towards a definition of outdoor education. *Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation*, 29(5), pp17, 63.
- Dong, S. (2005). *Shanghai: Gateway to the Celestial Empire 1860-1949*. Hong Kong: FormAsia Books.
- Epstein, I. (1991). *Chinese Education: Problems, Policies and Prospects*. New York: Garland.
- Fensham, P. (1981). Heads, hearts and hands – future alternatives for science education. *The Australian Science Teachers' Journal*, 27(1), 53-60.
- Fraser, D., Aitken, V., & Whyte, B. (2013). *Connecting Curriculum, Linking Learning*. Wellington: NZCER Press.

- Harwood, J. (2010). *Philosophy: A Beginner's Guide to the Ideas of 100 Great Thinkers*. London: Quercus.
- Hoyt, M. W. (2006). John Dewey's legacy to China and the problems in Chinese society. *Transnational Curriculum inquiry*, 3(1).  
<http://nitinat.library.ubc.ca/ojs/index.php/tci> (accessed 07.07.2016)
- Landowe, J. (ed.) (2008). *Education in China*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Lu, W., Sun, Y., Zhou, Y., & Li, J. (1988). *Rewi Alley*. Beijing: Chinese Association for Friendship With Foreign Countries.
- Lucas, A. (1979). *Environment and Environmental Education: Conceptual Issues and Curriculum Implications*. Kew, Victoria: Australia International Press.
- Magee, B. (1998). *The Story of Philosophy*. London: Dorling Kindersley.
- Mjelde, L., & Daly, R. (eds.) (2006). *Working Knowledge in a Globalising World*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Newnham T. & Bangzhen, D. (1988). *Hands and Minds Together: Rewi Alley's Gung Ho School*. Auckland: Graphic Publications.
- Palmer, J. (ed.) (2001). *Fifty Major Thinkers on Education from Confucius to Dewey*. London: Routledge.
- Reynolds, P. (1997). *Rewi Alley – From Canterbury to China*. Christchurch: Christchurch-Gansu Friendly Relations Committee.
- Spurling, H. (2010). *Burying the Bones: Pearl Buck in China*. London: Profile Books.
- Stross, R. E. (1986). *The Stubborn Earth: American Agriculturalists on Chinese Soil, 1898-1937*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Turner, Y. & Acker, A. (2002). *Education in the New China: Shaping Ideas at Work*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.
- Webb, L., Metha, A & Jordan, K.) 1991. *Foundations of American Education*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Zhang, H. (ed.) (2012). *By Honoring the Past We Find the Future*. Beijing: The Chinese People's Association For Friendship with Foreign Countries.

(5569 words)