

fine library and his research community, will survive him and eventually give birth to the great Institut de la Chine Contemporaine that he wanted so much.

Memorial to Benjamin I. Schwartz (1916–1999)

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During a span of almost four decades, from the early 1950s until the late 1990s, Benjamin Schwartz, through his teaching in the Harvard Government and History departments and in his books and articles, was a towering figure in the field of Chinese studies. He set standards – above all at the intersection of intellectual history and politics – that were a guide and source of inspiration to students and scholars worldwide. His influence extended well beyond the China field; it also cut across conventional disciplinary boundaries, touching political science, religion, philosophy, culture and literature, as well as history.

Ben's learning was vast, ranging far beyond even the cultures of the ten languages he spoke or read. In the classroom he refused to be confined to the topic at hand, and to co-teach with him was to participate in a lively but always collegial dialogue. He conveyed his learning not as a fixed set of truths or simple accretion of information, but with a distinctive approach to the posing of problems. Central to this approach was a healthy scepticism toward received wisdom, predictive models of explanation (such as political and economic systems), the clichés of everyday academic discourse, and any and all forms of reductionism. Again and again, Ben insisted on defining what was taken for granted and unveiling the complexity that lay hidden behind simple labels. In his essay "On arenas of social choice," for example, he asserted that our difficulty in grappling with contemporary social thought came not so much from the neologisms as from "the older established vocabulary which we simply take for granted. Words such as 'social,' 'society,' 'system' and 'choice' seem transparent, and yet buried in them are all the problems and dilemmas of the contemporary human sciences."

A man of paradoxes and odd juxtapositions, Ben is not easily categorized as a scholar-thinker. He wrote seminal books and articles on the history of Chinese Communism. *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (1951) is still a pioneering work not only in the field of comparative communism, but also in political and intellectual history. It analysed the ideological and intellectual debates of the early decades of the 20th century within their extraordinarily complicated political, personal and

international contexts. With copious documentation, he was the first scholar to provide evidence showing that the Chinese Communists were not simply puppets of Stalin and the Soviet Union but had their own agendas. A leader such as Mao Zedong was willing to disobey Moscow when its orders clashed with what he perceived as China's realities. His second book, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (1964), focused on a major late Qing thinker whose translations of Western social and political thought were enormously influential among contemporaries. Ben's analysis of Yan Fu shed light on the struggles of a whole generation of Chinese intellectuals who sought to come to grips with the tensions evoked by China's political and intellectual encounter with the West. His third path breaking work, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (1985), presented a wide-ranging discussion of ancient Chinese thought and views of political power, illuminated by frequent comparisons with the foundational ideas of other civilizations, in particular the early West.

Temperamentally, Ben was unwilling to be confined by his professional involvement as a "China specialist." He often engaged in the broader intellectual issues of the day, as evidenced by his public response to Allan Bloom's best-selling assault on American higher education and his searching critique of Hannah Arendt's treatment of Jews and Judaism in her "religion of politics." Although a frequent and vigorous defender of the "area-studies" approach with its implicit emphasis on the defining importance of culture, both popular and elite, he consistently displayed faith in the existence of a world of common humanity transcending cultural boundaries. Most striking, the wielding of power, the search for its sources, the concern for its moral ramifications and other issues pertaining to its proper use were for him subjects of intense and abiding intellectual fascination. Yet, it would be hard to find someone less interested than Benjamin Schwartz in the trappings of personal power.

Schwartz's former students presented him in 1990 with a festschrift entitled *Ideas across Cultures*. Among his many other honours, he served as President of the Association for Asian Studies in 1979–80 and Director of the Fairbank Center at Harvard in 1983–84. His book on ancient Chinese thought was awarded the Ralph Waldo Emerson Prize of Phi Beta Kappa in 1986 and also won the American Historical Association's 1986 James Henry Breasted Prize. In 1998, he received the American Historical Association's Award for Scholarly Distinction.

Though becoming increasingly frail in his last year, Ben never lost the sparkle in his eyes or any of his intellectual capacities. Up to his final days, his presence raised the level of any discussion from the petty and mundane to profoundly intellectual and moral. Though thoroughly engaged in his own religion of Judaism, he had a deep appreciation and intellectual understanding of all ways of thought – Buddhism as well as Confucianism, Chinese popular religion as well as philosophical Daoism, and Islam as well as Christianity. He had an uncanny ability to get to the heart of a question or academic argument, no matter how confused and obscure it might be. Just a few weeks before his death, in

a discussion at the Fairbank Center about whether or not the Chinese revolution had been necessary, Ben characteristically illuminated the issue by questioning the very premise of the question. He asserted that “the question should not be whether *the* revolution was necessary, but whether *a* revolution was necessary.” In that one statement, he invited us to consider a deeper reality and so transformed the debate.

Ben’s death has left not only a profound intellectual void but also a personal one. As Richard Baum has written elsewhere, he was “a true gentle-man (with equal emphasis on each syllable).” He treated everyone – young and old, student or statesman, the Fairbank Center kitchen staff with whom he spoke Portuguese or eminent visiting scholars – with equal respect as individuals with whom one could engage in intellectual discourse and from whom one could learn. He was a man of rare personal as well as intellectual character, whose likes we are not apt to encounter again.

Gerry Segal (1953–1999)

David S. G. Goodman

Gerry Segal died on 2 November 1999 at the age of 46 after a six-month struggle with cancer. He was an articulate, provocative and courageous commentator on a wide range of international politics, best known for his work on Pacific Asia and particularly China. For almost two decades, he repeatedly focused on matters of the utmost topicality by challenging current orthodoxies, and in the 1990s became a leading public intellectual in the English-speaking world. In the process, he not only set agendas for academics and policy-makers, but provided both intellectual and organizational frameworks for them to interact with.

After graduating from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, with Ellis Joffe, and the London School of Economics, with Michael Yahuda, Gerry Segal started his academic career as a lecturer in international politics. He held university lectureships first in Aberystwyth, then in Leicester and later in Bristol. At the end of the 1980s, he headed a project on comparative foreign policy reform in communist party states at the Royal Institute of International Affairs for three years. In 1991, he moved to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, first as senior fellow responsible for Asian security, and later for two years as Director of Studies.

Gerry Segal’s written legacy is impressive both for its quantity and its constant intellectual stimulus. He wrote or co-authored 13 books, edited or co-edited another 18, and published more than 120 articles and essays in academic publications. Even more impressive was the challenge of his relentless intellect. His Ph.D. thesis on the ‘Great power triangle’ – between Washington, Moscow and Beijing – established a style which