Emeritus Professor of Educational Psychology at Leeds, Dennis Child OBE (MEd with Distinction 1966), was awarded the 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award from the British Psychological Society. The award recognises people with an outstanding record of achievement and who have made significant contributions to the advancement of psychological knowledge. “My nominee was a student from the past,” said Dennis. “It is always a pleasure to know that students from one’s past appreciate what you have done for them.”

Dennis was awarded an OBE for services to deaf people in 1997 and is also a member of the University of Leeds’ Brotherton Circle having chosen to leave a legacy to Leeds in his Will.

Mary Yap Kam Ching (Masters in Education TESOL 1994) is Deputy Education Minister in Sabah and is a Member of Parliament for Tawau Constituency in Malaysia.

The Telegraph named Daisy Cooper (Law 2002) as a businesswoman who is “One to Watch”. She worked as a political campaigner for the Liberal Democrats before moving on to Voluntary Services Overseas.

The 2013 Pearson Teaching Awards named Julie Allen (Masters in Education 2002) the Headteacher of the Year in a Primary School in the North.

Sukoluhle Matika (MA Human Geography 2009) decided to form her own cab company after a poor taxi experience in Botswana. She runs Rosewell Chauffeurs in Gaborone.

Threadneedle Prize Joint Winner Clare McCormack (International Fine Art 2013) has been awarded £15,000 for her artwork, Dead Labour/Dead Labourer.

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TO READ MORE NEWS ABOUT LEEDS ALUMNI, OR TO ADD YOUR OWN, VISIT WWW.ALUMNI.LEEDS.AC.UK
The start of the academic year in 1963 was a truly momentous one for the University of Leeds for at least two developments. One was the opening of the Department of Chinese Studies, the forerunner to the present School of East Asian Studies. The department came into being as a result of the influential Hayter Report to Parliament which emphasised the need for area studies and called for what in those days was a radical notion – that modern language studies should receive greater emphasis than classical ones. When Hayter recommended that Leeds start teaching modern Chinese, the University brought in contemporary China experts who could teach the language as it was actually spoken by the world’s most populous nation.

The second exceptional event at Leeds was the arrival of the man to head the Chinese Studies department. He was the legendary American scholar, educator, writer and – not least – adventurer and chronicler of many of the key events in China, Mongolia and Central Asia in the first half of the 20th century, Owen Lattimore didn’t have an academic degree. Several academics pointed out this supposed shortcoming, as had academics during his previous tenure at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Moreover, Lattimore had been a key target of the anti-Communist hysteria whipped up at the start of the Cold War by US Senator Joseph McCarthy. Lattimore became a household name in America when McCarthy accused him of being, among many other things, the “top Russian espionage expert in the United States.” Most rightly, Lattimore was accused of having “caused” the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

He was supposed to have done so by sending a memo to President Roosevelt which prompted the US leader to drop talks with Japan, leading to the drift into war. While Lattimore was fully exonerated from the charges laid in the McCarthy witch-hunt, the fallout from that painful episode, as recounted in his book ordeal by slander, hobbled his subsequent academic career in the US. (The slander continues to this day. I recently heard an American academic at the University of Hong Kong accuse Lattimore in no uncertain terms of serving Soviet language masters.)

But the McCarthyite campaign against Lattimore was hardly a problem in Leeds – just the opposite in fact. Many welcomed the arrival of such a remarkable figure as Lattimore precisely because of his defiant stand against a political hysteria.

As one of the small first batch of students in the Chinese Studies department, I had heard about the McCarthy episode and that Lattimore had served as an adviser to the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek in World War Two, but in those pre-internet days, I knew little else. As a 19-year-old I had never come face to face with an American before, let alone a famous American. I also found it impossible to believe that this infinitely wise, knowledgeable and humane man could have been so savagely treated by fellow countrymen.

Lattimore’s renown and prestige were clearly on view on October 21, 1963, when the Rupert Beckett lecture theatre was filled to capacity to hear his inaugural lecture, titled From China, Looking Outward. The event was televised: to this day it is a rare treat for a university lecture. Lattimore excelled at engaging his listeners, never lecturing with notes, but always with cigarette or pipe in hand. Professor Brian Hook, later head of the department, wrote, “he has an almost unique ability to marshal facts quickly and to say what he has to say clearly in beautifully balanced and articulate language free from all professional jargon, spicing the context with relevant anecdotes that drive home the points he wishes to make.”

Ken Davies (Chinese Studies 1964) recalls Lattimore speaking fondly about how Mongolians measured time in a cavalier fashion by not in miles but in “puddles of ice-cold drink”. “He wasn’t actually a leftist, but he was a globalist,” says Don Rimington, one of the able and loyal original team of Chinese Studies lecturers, and later department head and Professor of East Asian Studies. “His heart was in Mongolia… He always relished eating the mutton fat left at the end of a joint. Then, much to the dismay of his wife, he was prone to take the pickled onion jars and drink the vinegar down to attack the fat. He appeared to have the constitution of a camel.”

In 1965, Lattimore put our tiny department firmly on the global sinology map when about 130 scholars gathered at Bodington Hall for the annual International Congress on Chinese Studies. For us students it was a marvellous opportunity to meet some of the people who had written books on our reading lists. I recall Stuart Sutherland, a leading sinologist whose book on the political thought of Mao Zedong I had, casually dropping by one evening to chat with us. The department that Lattimore devoted his energies to create took a multidisciplinary approach which over the years has proven astonishingly successful. In addition to Chinese language and literature, students studied under specialists of the Middle Kingdom’s contemporary politics, economics, geography and history.

Lattimore took particular pride in creating the graduate programme of the East Asian Studies. He taught along his colleague and close friend and former guard to a Mongolian princess, the charming Yphantis, to help. It was a unique programme in the English-speaking world. Eight Mongolian students from Ulaanbaatar came to Leeds to learn English. John Pride, a Leeds English lecturer, meanwhile trekked to Mongolia State University to help develop its English language training. “He was shocked to find that only English language reading materials were available to the students of the speeches of the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev,” wrote judith Nordby (PhD East Asian Studies 1988), who sustained the study of Mongolia at Leeds in more recent years.

Lattimore firmly believed that modern states and societies should not be studied in isolation but in their regional context, wrote Nordby, thus an ‘area studies’ approach to China included relations with Mongolia. Lattimore was one of a handful of Western scholars who could speak Mongolian and he had a real passion for the country. He and his wife Eleanor were evidently fond of Leeds as well. Biographer Robert Newman wrote in his book Owen Lattimore and the

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**Conclusion**

Owen Lattimore was a truly momentous one for the University of Leeds for at least two developments. One was the opening of the Department of Chinese Studies, the forerunner to the present School of East Asian Studies. The department came into being as a result of the influential Hayter Report to Parliament which emphasised the need for area studies and called for what in those days was a radical notion – that modern language studies should receive greater emphasis than classical ones. When Hayter recommended that Leeds start teaching modern Chinese, the University brought in contemporary China experts who could teach the language as it was actually spoken by the world’s most populous nation.

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“loss” of China that the Lattimores
were warmly received into the social and intellectual circles of Yorkshire.
In a letter to a friend, Lattimore wrote about his happiness in Leeds: “so many interesting things going on, so many interesting people. It’s as if, in a weird way, Baltimore were the sleepy English village where nothing ever happened, and Leeds the driving, creative American city, with people thinking and doing all the time.”

A REMARKABLE LIFE
For someone whose renown stems from his profound knowledge of events in the 20th century, Owen Lattimore was born appropriately in the first year of that century, the year of the Boxer Rebellion in China.

After a childhood spent in China, Lattimore was educated in Switzerland and at St. Bees School in Cumbria. Unable to afford a university education, Lattimore returned to China, working firstly as a journalist and then with British firm Arnhold and Company. “I made myself into the firm’s principal Chinese-speaking troubleshooter, and I managed to get sent up into the interior on all kinds of missions,” recalled Lattimore in his book China Memoirs. Thus began his extensive travels throughout the region during which he gained the vast storehouse of knowledge that made him such a pre-eminent authority on China, Mongolia and Central Asia.

No account of Owen Lattimore’s life is complete without a tribute to his wife Eleanor. Speaking no Russian, Eleanor Lattimore on a six-month honeymoon through Central Asia were rare, an invitation came from Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai to visit Beijing. Lattimore had first met Zhou and other leaders, including Mao Zedong, in 1937 in the then Communist headquarters in Yanan.

At their six-month honeymoon in 1937, the Lattimores visited Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in Yanan. The then Communist leader hosted an “idyllic journey” according to Lattimore biographer Newman. He replied that this was a controversial period and we had to face these controversies.”

From 1935 to 1963 Lattimore taught at Johns Hopkins University, regularly punctuating his work with diplomatic missions.

From 1942 to 1944, Lattimore was in charge of Pacific operations with the US Office of War Information, then continued with government work when he returned to the academic world.

On a United Nations mission to Afghanistan in 1950, Lattimore learned that he’d been accused of being a Russian spy by Senator Joseph McCarthy. “Pure moonshine,” cabled Lattimore before flying home to face years of congressional hearings, then eventually moving to Leeds. At Leeds, Eleanor was a devoted companion and organiser of Lattimore’s busy life. The couple welcomed all to their home, Old Rose Cottage at Linton near Wetherby, and they in turn were welcomed by Leeds. “Owen hasn’t been so happy in years,” she wrote in a letter.

In March 1970, on a flight to the US to inspect their new retirement home, Eleanor died suddenly. As a preliminary to the credentials ceremony, Lattimore met the ambassador for dinner in Harrogate. The ambassador wanted to know what he should say in the expected small talk with Her Majesty. Lattimore advised: “Yes, one sure thing. All the royal family are crazy about horses. So say something about horses.”

Another account of Owen Lattimore’s life is complete without a tribute to his wife Eleanor. They met on a camping trip outside Beijing in 1925 and married the next year. Early honeymoon plans for a journey through Central Asia were frustrated by, not least, anti-foreign sentiment, a civil war and a warlord who commanded their camels.

Owen Lattimore died on May 31, 1989. Born in the year of one tumultuous event in China’s history, the Boxer Rebellion, he died less than a week before another, the deadly suppression of pro-democracy activists in Tianamen Square.