

Science Communication in China

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Science Communication in China could be divided into four stages: (1) late Qing Dynasty and Movement of New Culture (late 19th century to the beginning of 20th century); (2) the introduction of science and democracy and initiative involvement of development of popular science in China by organizations of scientists and intellectuals from US and other Western countries (1914-1949); (3) science popularization managed and operated by associations organized by Chinese government (1949-1994), and (4) concerted efforts of the Chinese State Department for the long-term project with advancement of Chinese public scientific literacy as the final objective (1994-2006).

In the 16th century, Western missionaries commenced to spread science to China. The defeat of Qing Dynasty in the Opium War (1840-1842) made Chinese intellectuals realized the importance of science and industry for building China into a powerful one that could defend itself from invaders and getting off poverty. In the late of Qing Dynasty and the Movement of New Culture, Chinese intellectuals introduced the concepts of science and natural rights and democracy developed in Western countries to China, and began communicating ideas of freedom, democracy and knowledge to the Chinese publics by way of publication of journals and opening lectures to the public at large. One of the major events was Mr. Yan Fu's translation *Tian Yan Lun* (Theory on the Natural Evolution, 1898) of "Evolution and Ethics"(1893) by Thomas Henry Huxley. The theory on natural competition and evolution shocked the Chinese and "Natural selection, survival of the fitness" widely talked and even took as a topic for composition in primary and middle schools. In the year of 1915, Chinese oversea students of Cornell University of USA established the Science Society of China for the purpose of rebuild the country with science and took science communication as their principal object. This organization established a number of laboratories and institutes and, issued the journal *Ke Xue* ("Science") until 1960. In 1932, a group of Chinese scientists and governmental officers organized "Association of Socialization of Sciences of China". The association managed a journal *Scientific China* (1932-1937) and communicated science issues relating to scientific culture, science education, astronomy, military, agriculture, science life, the spirit of science and science methods etc by broadcasting, journals and various activities at the major cities throughout the country.

In 1950, the second year of the founding of new China, the government established the professional organization of Science Communication "China National Association for Popularization of Science and Technology" which was parallel with "China National Union of Professional Societies of Natural Sciences".

The Proletariat Cultural Revolution was ended in 1976 (the movement lasted for 10 years from 1966 through 1976) and in 1977, Science Popularization began coming into fast development stage. In 1994, Chinese government issued a document "Suggestions About the Advancement of Science Popularization" and in 2002, the Law of the Peoples Republic of China on Popularization of Science and Technology issued. In 2006, the long-term plan "Project for the Advancement of Scientific Literacy" brought out and became 14 state departments joint-efforts project. The Project proposed an ambitious objective that the scientific literacy of Chinese population will be developed to the level that could be matched with the national economic and cultural development.

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