

Opening the Gates

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA has been compared to a gigantic dragon snaking across vast grasslands, searing deserts, craggy mountains, and wind-swept plateaus for approximately 4,100 miles. Begun in separate sections in the sixth and seventh centuries, B.C., it was united into a vast structure during the Qin Dynasty (221–206, B.C.). It is an amazing and vast work that has long symbolized the ingenuity, strength, and determination of the Chinese people.

Yet, this structure is also symbolic of the separation that the Chinese have, at times in their history, attempted to maintain between the family of nations and themselves. A wall can protect *and* preserve. But walls are static structures, and things that are enclosed by them tend to become stagnant. Although the Great Wall no longer provides the literal separation that it was originally built for, China has, in the last

sixty years, been a society that has been just a surely walled-off as it was when Qin Shi Huang Di, the first of the Qin emperors, completed the Great Wall more than 2,000 years ago.

Robert Frost once wrote, “Something there is that doesn’t love a wall.” And China has, in recent years, begun to see their self-imposed isolation as more of an obstacle than a shield. Liberalization has included the education arena where the country’s colleges and universities are now looking for opportunities to increase the internationalization of their campuses in hopes of drawing more students from abroad. Their efforts in this area are the subject of Kyna Rubin’s cover story in this issue.

In a related piece, Glenn Shive’s article looks at new visa policies in Hong Kong that could make that Special Administrative Region a superb crossroads for main-

land Chinese students, Hong Kong natives, and western students to benefit from each other’s presence in the university setting.

Also in this Issue

The new Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)—Internet-based Testing (iBT)—launches this fall and is the subject of our “Voices” piece as *IE* interviews Eileen Tyson and Gina Netten of ETS to get the inside scoop on the latest version of this important tool for assessing the language skills of potential international students headed to U.S. universities.

Chris Connell’s article takes a close look at how SEVIS has been impacting international educators in the United States as they struggle to adjust to their new roles that must balance the post September 11, 2001 world of security with the needs of foreign students. **IE**

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