

# Foreign Devil



What is the significance of the John Donne quote at the beginning of *Foreign Devil*?

During last century, how did the Chinese view foreigners, and why?

Explain the meaning of these sayings:

'Keep your heart in its place.'

'It is time to go to the ancestors.'

'He is a rat falling on a scale and weighing itself.'

'Don't worry over rabbits.'

'You can't strip two skins from one cow.'

'To steal a dragon in exchange from a phoenix.'

'There is no medicine for fate.'

'If the roots are left, grass will grow.'

'He is adding feet to a snake.'

'If under a plum tree, do not adjust your cap.'

Explain the expression 'Blood is thicker than water.' How do the events in *Foreign Devil* support or challenge this?

How was the bridge between Shamian Island and the mainland used:

(a) in a real or literal sense?

(2) as a symbol?

How is blindness used as a metaphor?

How did the relationship develop between Edward and Twenty? Out of the two, who was the stronger, and why?

What are the connections between Tyler and Edward? How are they similar, and different?

What are examples of courage in *Foreign Devil*. How did they change:

(a) the course of events?

(b) the characters?

What qualities do you think are necessary to survive in dangerous circumstances?

Why were male children more valued in China's past? How do you feel about this?

Why did Han Chinese women bind their feet, and how did this affect their roles in society?

What are some responsibilities and joys of being part of a family?

If you lived alone, what would you:

(a) enjoy the most?

(b) miss about home?

How would society be different if we did not live in family groups?

What is time?

Can time be altered? If so, then how?

How does a person's view of time affect his or her life?

How would your life be different if you lived a hundred years ago?

'Times change, but deep down, people don't.' Why do you agree or disagree with this idea?

Interview someone from another ...

(a) time (perhaps an elderly neighbour or relative)

(b) place (someone who was born or lived overseas).

Write an article or short story about an aspect of that person's life.

Show them your story or article. Note their reactions. What have you discovered about writing from the different perspective of other places and times?