

Abstract of thesis entitled

**China Under Western Eyes:
Alice Mildred Cable's Depiction of China and Her Peoples in *The Gobi Desert***

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M-A2-6304-1

for the degree of Master of Arts

at

the University of Macau

in March 2008

This thesis examines how Alice Mildred Cable (1878-1952), an English missionary, represents the peoples and cultures she encountered during her years in China in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The study focuses on Mildred Cable's major narrative, *The Gobi Desert* (1942), which is less overtly religious than many of her other works. *The Gobi Desert* is considered with reference to Said's notion of Orientalism, which he both describes and critiques, as well as the genre of travel writing, which is often a representation of the Other for a Western readership. The analysis also draws on ideas advanced by critics who have written about travel writing or other representations of foreign cultures, such as Mary Louise Pratt, Steve Clark, David Spurr, Inderpal Grewal and Sara Mills. As with many Western travellers to the non-Western world in the age of high imperialism, Cable's

representations of the Other show complicity in the dominant discourse of Empire. The thesis also looks at Cable's assimilation into the local cultures through which she travelled, frequently setting her apart from the figure of the memsahib, her role as a woman missionary, and how these various elements influence her writing.