A Century of Science Publishing
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Chapter 5

Science Press
(Longman's Book Co., Ltd.)

Wang Jixiang
Science Press, Beijing, China

1. Initial period (1930–1938)

Longman's Book Co., Ltd., was founded in 1930 by Yan Youzhi. As a teacher who often experienced difficulty in acquiring high-quality, competitively priced books for teaching, he realised that there was a gap in the market and established his own publishing house. Business rose sharply, with orders from major universities as well as individual subscribers, and in 1932 the company started a small printing house. In 1934, in order to introduce advanced technology from foreign countries, Yan Youzhi decided to go abroad to study. Before leaving the country, he organised it so that Longman's printing, publishing and distributing business would operate as normal. Yan Youzhi studied for more than three years in England and Germany, first studying maths, physics and metallurgy at Manchester Science and Technology College and Manchester University, and in 1936 attending Leipzig Printing College, Germany, and studying printing technology there. In the spring of 1937, he predicted that the Japanese were preparing to declare war against China. In May of that year, he returned to China. On 13 August the Japanese bombed Shanghai, destroying Longman's Printing House. When Shanghai was occupied by the Japanese, Longman's cleared up, invited the workers who had been evacuated to the countryside to come back, bought some broken printing machines and had them repaired, leased a temporary factory, and thus restored production. In its first seven years, Longman's published almost 1,000 titles for schools and universities.

2. Combined development period (1938–1945)

After 13 August 1937, the people in Shanghai were nervous; the publishing industry was moribund, competition was intense, and profits had dropped sharply. In order to regain profits, Yan Youzhi had the idea that eight publishing houses should combine their resources and operate together. Longman's issued shares, of

which the original Longman's Book Co. held 32%. A board of directors was appointed, and Yan Youzhi was appointed the general manager. At first, marketing was contracted out to a Shanghai journal publisher, but in 1938 it was taken back and carried out by Longman's. Longman's also built a printing house and set up a distribution centre and bookstores; sub-branches for distribution were also established in Peking and Tianjin. From then on, Longman's integrated its publishing, printing and distributing operations. This new combined company used a simpler administration; it cut costs and increased its efficiency levels.

At that time, Longman's consisted of only about 16 people, fulfilling the roles of secretary, accountant, publishing, general affairs, stockroom and wholesale departments. Although Longman's was not big in size, it published a wide variety of books; but it suffered a permanent cash-flow problem. As time passed, money management became the most outstanding characteristic in Longman's operation and management, which set high standards for the turnover time of raw materials and the storage time of finished products and semi-finished products. Therefore, learning by their experience, Longman's published books in accordance with supply and demand, and fixed production quantities based on sales. Most of the manuscripts were provided or recommended by the universities and colleges that planned to use them. Longman's set up several warehouses for storing semi-finished best-sellers and large or thick books. This meant that Longman's did not have to pay immediately to have books bound; they could bind them when needed. The quantity of books to be bound could be changed according to selling status, so this was very flexible. Most of the board of directors of Longman's Combined Book Co. came from education. They knew that their staff were the key to success or failure of their undertaking, so they took good care of them. Many were young people; probationers accounted for one-third of the staff. In this way, the company saved money and trained new recruits from the ground up. The development of Longman's business was often restricted by a shortage of funds. In order to save money, from 1942 on, the Company cut down on its stock dividends (to 0.8%) and bonuses.

Longman's understood the importance of distribution: only when books had sold out could they make profits and reprint where necessary. The company was careful never to let best-sellers go out of print, and equally they were careful not to overstock slow-selling books. At that time, the direct cost of publishing books was about one third of the list price of the book (not including administrative expenses and taxation). Trade discount was 40%; sometimes a greater discount was given in retail sales for purchasing a large quantity of books. Longman's advertised in newspapers and journals, distributed book catalogues, etc., all of which obtained

good results. The company tried its best to supply books as long as the titles of those books were listed on the catalogue. No matter whether readers came to buy books, bought books by mail or purchased books by telephone, a catalogue would be sent to them together with the books they had purchased, to encourage them to buy again from Longman's. Longman's invested heavily in distribution, and the company set up a number of distribution centres in a short time. When the Japanese invaded China, the Nationalist Party government was passive, and was defeated again and again. It moved its capital to Chongqing, Sichuan Province. Many universities followed its suit. From 1939, Longman's had to transport large numbers of books to Sichuan Province to sell them there, thus alleviating to some extent the urgent demand for science and technology books.

3. The Turning Period

In the autumn of 1945, after the war had ended, publishing became more competitive. Longman's decided to set up a scientific and technical book division with Mr. Cheng Keyou as Director, to meet China's needs. Selected topics were recommended; after preliminary approval, the commissioning editor would exchange views with professors at several universities or experts in the subject to determine potential demand and readership. Then authors (or translators) had to be selected. They would sign a contribution contract which stated the royalty rate to be paid (generally 10–12% of the list price, the royalty would be paid each season based on copies sold). Printruns and list prices were decided by General Manager Yan Youzhi and Director Cheng Keyou. Longman's employed few general editors, preferring part-time editors with specialised knowledge.

At this time, editing and proofreading were combined, so that editors and staff jointly designed and proofread a book, thus all gaining wide experience of different skills. Longman's also persuaded 23 university professors, each experts in their own field, to form an advisory committee for the publication of engineering titles. Within two years of establishing the scientific and technical books editorial division, nearly 200 titles had been published, many of which became textbooks or reference books for universities and schools, being reprinted many times and used for many years. At that time, printruns were generally about 3000 copies, with seldom more than 10,000 copies being printed. To begin with, Longman commissioned, typeset, printed and bound the books it sold, but with the increasing volume of scientific and technical books being published, it began to outsource typesetting, printing and binding. Before long, Longman's had signed long-term contracts with many other companies to have these tasks done out of house.

4. New Historical Period (1949–1954)

After Shanghai was liberated in May 1949, Longman sent employees to Shenyang Xi'an, etc., and set up bookstore branches, thus expanding its distribution service. From 1950 on, in order to increase its sales, and facilitate libraries, scientific research institutions and the general public to purchase scientific and technical books, bookstore branches in Beijing and Hankou, among others, also sold scientific books published by other publishing houses besides Longman's. This was welcomed by readers. According to statistics, in Beijing branch, the percentage of books sold in one month which had been published by other publishers was as high as 70% of the total volume of sales during that period. In 1953, Longman's strengthened its editorial and proofreading departments and improved their working environments. Before this, Longman's publications were sold basically through its own distribution network, so the publishers and the readers interacted directly with each other. After the liberation of China, Longman's publications were given to Xinhua Bookstore and China Book Distribution Corporation for sale and distribution. In order to further expand distribution, in August 1951, Longman's, together with China Scientific Books and Instruments Corporation, Lixin Accountant Books and Utilities Company and Xinya Bookstore, organised a combined distributing institution called the China Combined Scientific and Technical Books Distribution Agency (CCSTBDA). Yan Youzhi was appointed the Director of this organisation. Longman's sales outlets and those of the other members of this organisation all became CCSTBDA sales outlets, and bookshops were set up in many other cities. In the Movement Against the Five Evils (1951–1952), public opinion was against CCSTBDA; it was thought that it was in rivalry with the state-owned Xinhua Bookstore and China Book Distribution Corporation. Therefore, after this movement, CCSTBDA was disbanded and, except for the bookshops in Shanghai and Beijing, branches of Longman's in other parts of China were all closed and its distribution business was handed over to the Xinhua Bookstore for operation. Thereafter, Longman's made contact with Ministry of Higher Education, and accepted the task of compiling, translating and publishing scientific and technical textbooks from the USSR. At that time, few Longman's editors understood Russian, so they had to learn quickly. Because Longman's had previously combined editing and proofreading, this work was split between the staff, to undertake the three stages of proofreading. It was required that the proofreader check the translation manuscript carefully against the original. There were only a few members of staff, the task was a time-consuming and onerous one, and funds were low; the manuscripts of a book had to be sent for typesetting and proofreading in several batches in a streamlined process, so the work was very intense. Longman's also placed

orders for processing, and at that time the production volume was increasing rapidly. Take the case of the paper used for printing books, for example: if the paper use amount in 1949 was 100, in 1950 it was 385, in 1951 it was 1073 (in 1952 it was 599, because the Movement Against the Three Evils and the Five Evils occurred during this time), and in 1953 it was 1679. In the meantime, Longman's book distribution also increased. If the distribution amount of 530,037,769 yuan (old RMB) was 100 in 1949, by 1953 it had reached 5728. As sales of books increased, expenses grew relatively smaller: in 1949 expenses accounted for 27.24% of the distribution cost, and in 1953 this had decreased to 14.23%.

5. The founding of Science Press

In view of the importance of publishing work to scientific research, on the day it was founded (November 1, 1949), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) set up the Compiling, Translating and Publishing Bureau (later changed to the Compiling and Translating Bureau) in the headquarters of the CAS, hosting publishing work. This was the first science and technology compiling, translating and publishing organisation of its kind established after the founding of New China. At that time, the Bureau's tasks were to publish the journals edited by various CAS societies, science and technology monographs by Chinese scholars, to translate and publish scientific works from foreign countries, and organise the compilation, examination and approval of natural science terms. In the meantime, it was to accept the entrustment from the State General Administration of Publication, and undertake the tasks of examining science and technology book manuscripts offered by Commercial Press and Longman's. Moreover, the Bureau collected selected topics and book manuscripts from various universities and scientific research institutions, and in turn recommended them to Commercial Press and Longman's. In February 1954 the CAS thought it necessary to enhance their publishing work, and they established the Compiling, Translating and Publishing Committee, to lead and plan the publishing work of the whole Academy, and decided that the Compiling and Translating Bureau should be the working body of this Committee. Since the Compiling and Translating Bureau was not an independent publishing unit, it was restricted in its manuscript-organising activities. The only way to solve this problem was to enhance its editing and publishing departments and establish its own publishing house, thus freeing the Compiling and Translating Bureau. At that time, the socialist reform of private industries and commerce by the state was in full swing. In accordance with this, the CAS proposed a plan of public–private joint operation with private publishing enterprises, so as to cover the manpower shortage of the CAS. In this way, under the hosting of the General Administration

of Publication, talks began with Longman's on public-private joint operation. After two very successful talks, "A Transcript of Talks" was published. On 26 May 1954 the General Administration of Publication formally gave a written reply to Longman's, saying: "Your company originally has some government shares and has already undertaken the task of placing orders for processing for the state. At present, conditions are ripe for overall public-private joint operation, and our Administration agrees that your company can adopt public-private joint operation, and has decided to regroup it into Science Press". From April 1950, Longman's had submitted several applications for public-private joint operation; it was one of the first private publishing companies to adopt public-private joint operation.

In 1954, the CAS appointed Yang Zhongjian, a famous paleontologist, former Director of the Compiling and Translating Bureau, as President of Science Press, and Longman's recommended Shen Suming, the original President of Longman's, to be Vice President. On 27 July Science Press held the first meeting of its Board of Directors. Zhou Taixuan and Yan Youzhi both made reports on the process of preparatory work for the founding of Science Press. Finally, it was agreed that the formal founding date of Science Press would be 1 August, and the inaugural meeting would be held in advance on 29 July. The guiding principles and tasks of Science Press approved by the Culture and Education Committee of the Government Administration Council on 28 July, 1954 are as follows:

The guiding principles and tasks: In accordance with the general tasks of the State in the transitional period, to organise, compile and translate Chinese and foreign scientific works, to promote scientific research work, so as to serve the socialist construction of China. Its concrete tasks are:

1. Publish sorted data collected by and monographs on the investigation and research achievements obtained by researchers in the research institutes of the CAS and other research institutions;
2. Publish scientific journals and bulletins of various specialised scientific societies and research institutions;
3. Edit and publish materials and treatises of China's history of science, serial journals of scientific treatises of modern times, scientific abstracts and translation journals;
4. Compile, translate and publish world-leading scientific treatises and classical works, mainly from the USSR;
5. Compile, translate and publish theoretical natural science titles;
6. Edit and publish other related scientific books and journals within the publishing plan approved by the Compilation, Translation and Publication Committee of the CAS.

As approved by the Culture and Education Committee of the Government Administration Council, Science Press was under the governance of the CAS and the General Administration of Publication, with the CAS as the main factor. The CAS was in charge of the leading principles of editing work, work plan, vocational work and administrative management, etc., while the General Administration of Publication was in charge of publication business, enterprise management, etc. The editorial department, managerial department, and Shanghai branch were set up under the President, Editor-in-Chief and Manager, and within the departments, corresponding sections were set up to deal with day to day work. The Board of Directors of Science Press only held two meetings, the first on 27 July 1954 when Science Press was founded, and the second on 27 December 1955. In the second meeting, Zhao Zhongchi, Vice President, gave a report on "Work from August 1954 to December 1955", manager Yan Youzhi gave a report on "Financial Statement from August to December 1954", and Zhao Zhongchi also gave reports on "Draft Statutes of Science Press" and "Additional Remarks on the Draft Statutes". All these reports were passed. Finally, the meeting decided that no Council Meeting would be held in the future, unless it was necessary. By that time, the Board of Directors of Science Press had accomplished its historical mission.

6. Great development period of Science Press (1954–1966)

After its founding, under the leadership of Guo Moro, the President of the CAS and leaders at various levels of the CAS, Science Press gradually became known for three 'heights' (high grade, high level and high quality), its guiding ideology of 'quality first' and 'preciseness and accurateness', and the working styles 'solemnity, strictness and tightness', and became the largest academic publishing house in China. In accordance with the demands of the CAS, the Compilation and Translation Bureau of the CAS and Science Press proposed, in succession, the "Draft Outline of 15-Year (1953–1967) Long-term Planning", the "Draft Outline of 12-Year (1956–1967) Long-term Planning of Scientific Publication", and formulated the "Ten-year (1963–1972) Publishing Planning of Science Press" for internal circulation. The drawing up of these documents played a positive role in coordinating and reflecting China's scientific research work status and achievements, providing publications for various scientific disciplines, fostering alliances and promoting the development of science and technology. In 1958, in order to meet the needs of its broad readership, with approval from the Publication Administration of the Ministry of Culture, Science Press decided to set up bookshops in China's main cities, to assist local Xinhua bookstores and post offices to sell books and journals for Science Press across the country. Science Press thus set up 19 bookshops in cities

such as Beijing, Shanghai and Nanjing. The establishment of this distribution network led to increased profits. For example, in 1963, the sales of books and journals from the various bookshops accounted for 41% of the total distribution amount in the same year. Over the three difficult years from 1960 to 1962, a total of eight bookshops stopped operation, and eleven other bookshops closed down due to the impact of the 'Cultural Revolution'. In 1961, in accordance with the provisions of Publication Hu No. 66 of the Ministry of Culture, "Notice for Transferring the Tasks of Publishing Books and Journals in Philosophy and Social Sciences Undertaken by Science Press and other Related Publishing Houses", the task of publishing books and journals in philosophy and social sciences that had originally been undertaken by Science Press was handed over to the People's Publishing House, Zhonghua Book Co. Ltd., Commercial Press and Historical Relics Publishing House. During this period, Science Press published more than 5,000 prestigious academic books and over 100 science journals. As well as this, from 1958 onwards, Science Press translated, compiled and published several monographs and proceedings concerning the new atomic and hydrogen bombs and satellite technology. In 1965, it published more than 100 titles related to atomic development and exploitation, thus retaining its original characteristics of publishing 'high grade, high level and high quality' titles. On 27 October 1959, Chairman Mao Zedong visited the Exhibition of Natural Science Leap Forward Achievements of the CAS, where books and journals published by Science Press were displayed.

7. 'Cultural Revolution' period and subsequent restoration period (1966–1978)

After the start of the 'Cultural Revolution', editing and publishing stopped at Science Press. In 1970, after the three scientific organisations (State Science and Technology Commission of China, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the National Science and Technology Association) had been incorporated, China System (1970) No. 1 Document formally dismissed Science Press and Popular Science Press, and preparations were made to establish a new publishing house, to be called China Science Press. Its name was subsequently changed back to Science Press. During this period, publications were mainly the products underway before the Cultural Revolution and a few new books. In 1972, the Atlas of Higher Plants of China was published, and nine new journals were begun or resumed. At that time, the company reorganised itself, took on new staff, and editing and publishing work gradually developed again. Science Press was to take on the publishing of books and journals relating to basic disciplines, frontier disciplines and new technologies. In 1974, the CAS organised a working group with participants from

Science Press to implement the translation and publication of China's Science and Civilisation (by Joseph Needham). In 1975, Science Press published a large character version of the Fossils and Zoology journals to serve as a reference for Chairman Mao and other leaders of the State. In 1978, Science Press formulated the 8-Year (1978–1985) Publication Planning in order to modernise its publishing processes in line with the Party's Central Committee and the State Council decrees. Science and technology publication work was thus resumed. Publication began of the monograph series Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, and the Science and Technology Encyclopedia. In order to increase staff expertise, Science Press began to hold lectures on editorial work and other relevant topics as well as foreign language training courses for personnel.

8. Practice reform and opening up to the outside world to recreate splendour (after 1979)

In order to make up the loss caused by the 'Cultural Revolution', after the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, in accordance with the guiding principles of publication: 'laying emphasis on basic science, laying emphasis on improvement, and concurrently giving consideration to popularisation', Science Press' staff served scientific research by publishing a huge amount of monographs, proceedings, books and journals in high and new technology (500 books and more than 140 journals annually, on average), and at the same time actively promoted the development of science and technology publishing and the cooperation with foreign publishers in co-publication and distribution.

Science Press set up cooperation relationships with Springer Verlag, Germany and forty other publishers, and co-published a large number of excellent books and journals, such as Ligand Field Theory and Method, Physical Geography of China, Engineering Controlling Theory, Value Distribution Theory and Its New Research, and Chinese Soil. Since 1982, more than 200 books published by Science Press have won prizes and critical acclaim, and it has consistently been at the forefront of publishing excellence in its chosen subjects. In 1984 and 1992, in order to develop scientific publications, the CAS and the News and Publication Administration agreed that Science Press could publish audio-visual and electronic publications. After the reopening of Shanghai Branch, Guangzhou, Changchun Shenyang and Chengdu editorial departments and Wuhan Branch were set up in turn. In 1985, National Natural Science Terms Committee was formally established under the leadership of the State Science and Technology Commission and the CAS, and its office was attached to Science Press. In accordance with Decision of

Strengthening Publication Work and the guiding principles of running the CAS, Science Press formulated its guiding principles and tasks and drew up 'Key Points of Three-year Planning of Science Press (1988–1990)' and the 'Outline of the 8th Five-year Planning for the Development of Science Press'. In 1985, Science Press was approved to become an institution (not an enterprise). In 1987, the CAS agreed to the three-year operation goal determined by Science Press. In 1990, in order to support the publication of excellent science and technology books and journals, the CAS decided to set up Science Publication Funds, for which the CAS would appropriate three million yuan (RMB) per year from science operating expenses. The office of the CAS Science Publication Funds Expert Committee was set up in Science Press. All publications receiving support from the publication funds were to be published by Science Press, and the publication of a number of excellent academic monographs resulted from this. The long-term goal was to turn Science Press from a production company to a production-operation company, from a company selling only to China to an international company. At the same time, Science Press proposed the new working strategy 'support books with books, supplement the internal with the external, and supplement the main profession with side lines', in order to enhance its strength and development ability. Science Press then set up C-ESCience Press Ltd. (HK), Science Press New York, Ltd., and the Golden Lion Company (Moscow) respectively in Hong Kong, New York and Moscow in the form of joint ventures or using its own capital. Science Press also put in place a series of measures for optimising selected topics, strengthening its operation and reducing losses. In August 1993, with approval from the State News and Publication Administration, Longman's Book Co., Ltd. resumed trading, mainly publishing books in the fields of culture, education, and popular science. In October of the same year, Science Press, together with 14 other Chinese publishing houses, became the first National Excellent Books Publishing Organisation to be jointly commended by the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the CPC and the State News and Publication Administration. In May 1993, the joint meeting of the Party and the administrative leaders of Science Press passed the General Plan for the Reform of Science Press. On this basis, in January 1995, Implementation Opinion on Transforming the Systems of Science Press and Promoting Structural Adjustment was passed. In July 1995, the 'Science in China' Periodical Press was set up with the approval of the CAS. In 1996, Science Press underwent a review of all company costs, practices and accounts and adopted many new management practices, including target management and implementing a new and comprehensive index check-up system. After several years of trial and error, the development goals of Science Press were clear, and they were as follows: guiding

principle, one goal, two traditions, three services, four characteristics and five measures. One goal: Making Science Press into China's largest international publisher, publishing at the highest academic level and the most comprehensive range of books. Two traditions: 'three heights' characteristics, and 'three strictness' working style. Three services: With the CAS as backing, these 'services' were to serve scientific research bases, serve the development of high-tech and new industry bases, and serve the talent-fostering bases. Four characteristics were as follows: 1. Series of monographs, basic theories and basic materials, all at an international level; 2. Series of high and new technology and applied technology; 3. Series of high-level textbooks for teaching purposes; 4. Series of dictionaries and handbooks. The five measures were: insisting on opening up to the outside world; continually making structural adjustments within the company; further transferring mechanisms; fostering talents; and optimising environments.

Science Press proposed a 'three point strategy': intensifying the highest point, developing the growth point and fostering the profit growth point. In 1996, it overfulfilled its annual plan, achieving a production value of 46 million yuan (RMB) and realising a profit of 4 million yuan. In 1998, Science Press proposed the goal of putting emphasis both on spiritual civilisation and material civilisation. It proposed the guiding principle of development into groupment, 'getting together with those concerned, forming an inner core, transforming mechanisms, introducing and fostering talents, expanding and fission'. In the same year, Science Press achieved a production value of 250 million yuan, a sales income of 120 million yuan, and a profit of 22 million yuan.

After three years' rapid development, in 1999, the management of Science Press stated that they would set out on a journey, being based on the source of knowledge innovation projects, to disseminate and transfer knowledge, and popularise knowledge innovation achievements, thus making Science Press the largest international publishers in China; the highest level academic publishers and the most comprehensive and, on this basis, organising the China Science Publication Group. In 1999, Science Press achieved a production value of 302 million yuan, a sales income of 240 million yuan, and a profit of 25 million yuan.

Over the last 45 years, Science Press has published over 20,000 titles and 300 journals. Currently, it publishes over 2,000 titles (of which over 30 are in foreign languages) each year, with science and technology titles accounting for 12.5% of the total books published in this subject in the whole country. It also published over 150 journals (of which 29 titles are in foreign languages), the academic journals published accounting for 15%of those published in China. In recent years, Science Press has also actively developed audio-visual products and software, CD-ROMs and

other electronic publications, with science and technology as a main subject matter. Since 1982, Science Press has ranked first in seven successive sessions of National Excellent Science and Technology Book Appraisals; over 40 books published by them have won first-class awards or special-class awards, and over 200 books have won book prizes at ministerial level or above. Science Press has set up bookshops or distribution centres in large cities such as Shanghai, Wuhan, Shenyang, Changchun, Chengdu and Shenzhen. In order to open up to the outside world, and strengthen contact with foreign countries, Science Press has set up Science Press New York, Ltd. and C-E Science Press Ltd. (HK) in New York City and Hong Kong respectively, and has also forged cooperation relationships with over 80 publishers from 10 countries.

From the above, it can be seen that Science Press is marching forward in its reform and opening up to the outside world! Earnestly hoping that science and technology experts and colleagues in publishing and marketing circles in China and overseas will cooperate with Science Press, to go forward hand by hand, in order to make a greater contribution to the dissemination of science, the popularisation of science, the promotion of civilisation and the progress of mankind.