

# NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF ASIAN STUDIES

VOL. 15, NO. 2

December 2013

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## SPECIAL ISSUE

### Diplomats, Allies and Migrants: Contours of New Zealand-South Korean Relations

Guest Editor: Kenneth Wells

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## Reviews

Shih-Wen Chen, *Representations of China in British Children's Fiction, 1851-1911*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013, xiv+203pp. ISBN: 978-1-4094-4735-1 (hbk)

This important and engaging book examines in detail the representations of China and Chinese characters in nineteenth century British children's fiction, challenging assumptions that children were given negative, racist stereotypes of the Chinese in order to inculcate imperial attitudes and "a distancing from the undesirable 'other'" (p. 12). Rather, fictional representations of China for children, based on the considerable number of reports and non-fictional accounts of Chinese culture, geography and society published in England from the late eighteenth century onwards, most often sought to evoke a sense of "wonder" and the appreciation of knowledge for its own sake. Both the English and the Chinese characters in stories such as Ann Bowman's *Boy Voyagers* and *Travels of Rolando* and William Dalton's *The Wolf Boy of China* model this love of learning themselves – Ki-Chan in *Travels of Rolando* being distinguished by his "ardent desire for knowledge – and William Dalton's *The Wolf Boy of China* opens with a Chinese proverb on the title page: "Something is learned every time a book is opened." What these books aimed above all to give the child reader was the "peep into that land of wonders" that one of the boy characters yearns for in Bowman's *Boy Voyagers* (p. 26).

Of course, children's writers had a range of purposes for writing about China and one of the important points that this book makes very persuasively is that representations of China were far from uniform. Paradoxically, some of the most informed and historically accurate narratives are also the most negative in their portrayals of the Chinese, particularly the novels of the early twentieth century which drew on the Boxer rebellion as the basis for their dramatic plots. The title of a Bessie Marchant novel, *Among Hostile Hordes*, gives a good indication of the way such fictions do, as Chen states, reflect "the imperial anxieties of the *fin-de-siecle*" (p. 125). While these novels do convey historical facts to their child readers, they also promote stereotypes of the Chinese "as cruel, greedy, dirty and superstitious" and use the dramatic situations of conflict in order to allow their British heroes to show qualities of bravery, self-sacrifice, honour and fortitude in fighting often caricatured enemies. Even so, there are complexities worth noting even in the most formulaic of imperial adventure stories, and Chen teases out the implications of them in detail.

Bessie Marchant's *Among Hostile Hordes* for instance presents a range of British characters, some considerably more sympathetic than others, and contrasts economic motives driving imperialism with what are presented as more honourable motives such as the motives of the missionaries to improve other people's lives and learn to

understand other cultures. The different positions of women and men are questioned, both in China and in England, and the friendships between the heroine and the Chinese girl characters are sympathetically evoked. G. A. Henty's novel of the Boxer Rebellion, *With the Allies to Peking*, presents an even more dramatically black and white account of the conflict, with the British soldiers likened to Christian soldiers from the Middle Ages and the Chinese rebels described as hordes, fanatics, barbarians, murderers, caught up in a "shrieking madness" that seems to render them barely human. Even so, this black-and-white struggle between good and evil is only part of the more complex story Henty tells, with a distinction made, for instance, between the Boxer rebels and other Chinese, with a key role played in the novel by interpreter Ah-Lo, and some consideration given to the politics and more troubling aspects of the Western struggle for influence in China (albeit mainly directed against Russian and Germany as rival powers). Moreover, Chen questions the common reading of adventure stories as romanticising imperial conflict and presenting it as a game, in which the good guys will always win, pointing to the descriptions of war scenes that take realism to the point of trauma.

In contrast, the much more historically inaccurate and indeed largely fanciful representation of China in E. Harcourt Burrage's *Daring Ching-Ching*, first published in 1886, builds on the earlier eighteenth and nineteenth century portrayals of China as a place of "wonder" and is responsible for the invention of the most-loved Chinese boy hero, later to turn detective, "the immortal Ching-Ching." Ching-Ching's trajectory from comic side-character in a serialised story about "Handsome Harry" to the star of his own series of novels, his own magazine (*Ching-Ching's Own*), a marionette show and even a film *Ching-Ching's Revenge* testifies to his enormous popularity as a character whose importance transcends even his literary representations as he becomes an important part of late Victorian boyhood popular culture. Burrage's son, A Harcourt Burrage, recalls that his father based the character on an actual Chinese man who was self-employed distributing bills for London businesses and had a regular presence in and around Fleet Street. But he clearly owed much too to what had become a stock pantomime figure, with the tremendous amount of scholarly information about China having generated by the late nineteenth century certain tropes and character types that had taken on a life of their own. Interestingly, while the pidgin-English Burrage invents for Ching-Ching is a most implausible dialect or accent that closely resembles the African-American speech invented for another of his characters, Samson, boys themselves according to one account popularised a way of speaking as "Ching-Ching" that was much closer to the speech patterns of Chinese immigrants. Certainly Ching-Ching is a caricature, and his good qualities of bravery, inventiveness, loyalty, good fun and resourcefulness are mixed with qualities unsuited to a British hero: he lies, steals and manipulates with his "oily tongue." But as Chen points out, the assumption that negative representations of the Chinese in fiction would lead children to look "with fear and suspicion on Chinese encountered within the boundaries of their own country" is clearly disproved by Ching-Ching's tremendous popularity (Ching-Ching club members and fans were known as "Chingyites" and displayed their allegiance by wearing Chingy's colours and appending the letters C.C.O.G.O.C. after their names, standing for Cheerful Chum of Grand Old Chingy) (p. 76).

This review has only touched on a few of the important examples and arguments put forward in this richly researched book. While all scholars writing about imperialism and children's literature will find this an essential text, which will do much to counter simplistic readings and previously uncontested assumptions, I hope it will find a wider readership as well amongst anyone wishing for "a peep into the wonders" of how the Victorians imagined China.

*Reviewed by ANNA JACKSON  
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David Kenley, *Modern Chinese History* published in the series *Key Issues in Asian Studies, No. 11: AAS Resource for Teaching about Asia*: Ann Arbor: Association of Asian studies, 2012, 110pp. ISBN: 978-0-924304-70-5

Writing an introductory history of modern China in ninety pages was never going to be easy, but David Kenley's attempt, although worthy in some respects, has too many problems to allow me to recommend it wholeheartedly. Some of the problems relate to the restrictions of a short book, as for example an unfulfillable promise from page 2 to focus on two themes, cross-cultural contacts and domestic actors, male and female, across all classes. Although both themes are given comment for the Qing, the information across classes and about women drops away very sharply for the post-Qing period and even cultural contact is reduced to war and a little trade. Other problems are at the level of terminology, consistency and fact, which should have been controlled by more effective refereeing of the book.

The key historical decision in the book is to set contemporary China in a context that stretches back into the successes as well as the failures of the Qing Dynasty and this is the main strength of the book. We are introduced to China as a successful polity in the early modern period, shown above all by sympathetic potted biographies of the Kangxi and Qianlong Emperors, although no reader would realise how much China expanded territorially under the Qing. The decline of China in the nineteenth century is thus revealed as a change from a period of high achievement and explored in both internal terms through the Taiping and other rebellions and in terms of the relative decline against an industrialising and imperialistic West. The twentieth century becomes a search for the regeneration of China, epitomised for the author by the holding of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, and particularly its opening pageant.

This book in its present form will never be translated into Chinese, for it has negligible understanding of the political importance of the multi-ethnic nature of the contemporary Chinese state. On page 2, the Manchus are non-Chinese, while on page 3, there is a distinction between the Chinese emperor and Manchu rulers. On page 4, Tibetans, Uighurs and Mongols are non-Chinese, to be grouped with Portuguese and Russians, while on page 76, we have the ethnic Chinese. The book needed a very clear, early statement on how to name those who practise the cultural ways of the majority of the population of China, usually called the Han Chinese. Then the Manchu become indeed non-Han, but are, in their contemporary presentation, almost

indistinguishable from the Han, while the Tibetans and Uighurs, certainly not Han in their cultural habits, are to be described as non-Chinese only by those keen to anger the Chinese state. The case of the Mongols with their population straddling an international border is even more difficult. Such sensitivities escaped the author, or perhaps he intended to be provocative.

If one starts one's history of China in the Qing, one must not give the impression that what one is describing began in, or was endorsed by, the Qing. There is an extensive section of footbinding (p. 24), but nowhere a comment that this was a pre-Qing custom which the Qing tried vainly to eradicate. The tribute system, as practised by the Qing with its Asian neighbours (p. 7), was much older than the Qing and the Qing did their best to apply other rules to those who were not traditionally inside this tribute network, as shown by Kangxi's open port policy from 1685 and the treaty of Nerchinsk 1689. Moreover one needs to decide how to name emperors, either as the Guangxu Emperor (p. 35), the usually preferred option, or the Emperor Daoguang (p. 13), but not both forms randomly.

Nevertheless it is at the level of factual precision that this book will fail. 19 September 1931 (p. 49) is not an anniversary to remember (18 September is); the Communists did not pursue a policy of land reform during the Anti-Japanese War (p. 54), at least officially; China's first elections were held in 1912, not 1913 (p. 40), with the then Guomindang not led by Sun Yatsen; intermarriage between Manchu and Han was banned across all levels, not just for the elite (p. 4). I could cite several more, but above all be wary of Kenley when he gets into numbers. His population figures for the Qing are suspect, as are his calculations on subjects per civil servant (p. 21), while 9 to 10% p.a. growth since Deng Xiaoping's death in 1997 cannot mathematically produce a 10-fold increase in the economy by 2012 (p. 74).

The book has a short glossary, not always helpful, e.g. the Cultural Revolution was not 'enforcing communism' (p. 83), since even by the most ultra-leftist view China was only socialist. It does however feature small, but mostly high quality, illustrations throughout the text, many drawn from Wikipedia, but more than a dozen from private photographs. I began the book with high hopes, especially given the endorsements on the back cover, but sadly became disillusioned as I read more carefully.

*Reviewed by* RICHARD PHILLIPS  
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Francis Khek Gee Lim ed., *Christianity in Contemporary China: Socio-cultural Perspectives*, New York: Routledge, 2013, xii+266pp. ISBN: 978-0415-528-467 (hbk)

This volume of fifteen essays by Chinese and Western scholars attempts to provide a much needed socio-cultural analysis of the impact of contemporary Christianity on the People's Republic of China. Although Christianity is clearly growing quickly in China, there has been little analysis of the highly diverse new forms and directions which the Christian faith is taking and how these interact with modern Chinese society and cultural life.

This volume is notable in that all the contributors hold positions in university faculties rather than in theological seminaries. While the authors may or may not be committed Christians, the departure point for analysis in this book flows more out of a sociological and cultural framework than from a historical or Christian missiological approach. This makes the title “socio-cultural perspectives” a little misleading. The discussion throughout the collection inevitably identifies and focuses on the fundamental, political dilemma facing the Chinese party state, which seeks to maintain tight control over social cultural movements while allowing sufficient freedom for personal, social and economic development within the population. The most interesting and revealing aspects of this volume document and describe the often delicate negotiations that take place between the officially atheist state and various Christian movements in Chinese society today.

A popular perception among some outside China is that the official church bodies which are recognised by the Government, namely the Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and the China Christian Council (CCC) are simply Communist fronts. The so-called “underground church” on the other hand is often thought to be the “real Church” which “true and persecuted believers” attend in secret. In reality, this perception is far too simplistic and is becoming increasingly inaccurate. In Chapter 14 (“Making Sense of China’s State-Society Relations: Unregistered Protestant Churches in the Reformed Era”), for example, Teresa Zimmerman-Liu and Teresa White analyse examples of the nuances of the complex, personal relationships (*guanxi*) between the members of the “registered” churches, the “unregistered” churches, other Christian “meeting places” and groups and the Government officials who are required to implement national policy. This is a fascinating study of the way *guanxi* are used to negotiate and arrive at an acceptable means of implementing religious policy in a large coastal Chinese city. The perceived needs of all local sides are discussed and agreed on to ensure that all sides are satisfied, on a live and let live basis, within the limited parameters allowed by the state. The authors conclude that the CCP should seek to professionalise and standardise cadre behaviour in the relationships with Christian groups, and should encourage “soothing ties” (p. 230) between the party-state and members of such social groups. However, tensions arise as the CCP has, as history shows, ultimately relatively little ability to harness the loyalty of faith communities, which, when necessary, follow the demands of faith rather than the demands of the Party.

The book is divided into four parts. Part One, “Enchantment”, develops the concept of a Chinese “enchanted landscape”. While Chinese intellectuals often claim “that the Chinese people have never been religious” and China is today atheist (i.e. not-enchanted), the vast number of temples and shrines with a wide variety of gods throughout China express a sense of a world of “signs and wonders” (enchanted). This hybrid enchanted/not-enchanted social setting provides fertile ground for Christianity. Modernity of course brings personal, social and cultural pressures. The Christian interpretation of the “enchanted in the not-enchanted world” offers hope and makes sense of the world of fast changing contemporary society. Later chapters discuss how both Christian cults and much of “orthodox” Christian life have broken with their missionary beginnings in order to reinterpret the Christian faith for this new setting.

The robust Chinese enchanted religious world, and Christianity in particular, has not only survived the enmity and policies of the CCP, “Christianity in China” has also become “Chinese Christianity” and has transformed the Western Gospel framework, which has inherited western Fundamentalism and Pentecostalism, into its own image.

Part Two, “Nation and History”, provides some fascinating case studies of the huge variety of ways in which Church state relations have blossomed. The survival of Seventh Day Adventism since 1949, (Chapter 3) which refused to participate in the state organised TSPM, is remarkable. The Adventists in Southern Zhejiang managed to cultivate relationships not only with overseas organisations, but also with officials and influential urban professionals in order to protect and empower themselves.

Unlike many other studies of Christianity in China, this volume stands out by providing a variety of insights and reasons as to why the CCP resists and “represses” Christianity. Two interesting but lesser known reasons are explored here. Firstly, an increasing number of domestic dissidents and democracy activists have become Christians while abroad. While the impact of Christianity as a tool of colonialism has faded into history, conversions to Christianity of dissidents again reinforce the view in the minds of CCP leaders that Christianity is essentially anti-PRC. Secondly, this perception was and remains heightened by the role of Churches played in the fall of Communist states in Eastern Europe.

It may seem paradoxical then that Protestants in China, both in the registered, or official, and unregistered Churches, have embraced “patriotism”. Chapter 4, “Protestant Reactions to the Nationalism Agenda in China” by Carsten T. Vala, is a valuable study of this conundrum. The CCP leadership worries about the growth of Christianity and its historic and contemporary association with Western and capitalist countries. Vala analyses *The Protestant Patriotic Curriculum* which was published in 2006 by the TSPM and is now a required textbook in all official Protestant seminaries. The *Curriculum* argues that Patriotism, (love-country-ism), is both “fundamental” and “sacred” (see pages 62-64) for Protestants. China, the people, the Church and the Party are bound together in an inseparable bond. Protestant theology needs to express and articulate this bond and integrate the Church and its faith within traditional and contemporary Chinese culture. Clearly this fits awkwardly with traditional and modern Christian thought. This is perhaps especially so for those Western Christians who have absorbed much from the lessons of the German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer who opposed the Nazis precisely because faith demanded it. Christians in China deal with this tension in their own ways: A teacher in a TSPM seminary, who had been jailed for helping foreign Christians, wrote: “The party says if you don’t love the party, you don’t love the ‘country’ ... But I teach students that ... we love the people [which] means [to] love ‘the country’.” (p. 71) Other Christian leaders craft strategies to avoid confronting the issue of Church-state relations. One leader commented: “Jesus didn’t teach ‘oppose the Government’, he said ‘be as cunning as serpents and as innocents as doves. Party statements ‘are just routine sayings, a stand ... [that] don’t really have any meaning.’” (p. 66). Others again will seek to demonstrate patriotism through “model citizenship” by following God’s standards of behaviour “which are far less demanding than the standards required by God”. (p. 67)



These strategies not only allow the Churches to survive but also for Protestant-state *guanxi* to function. Nevertheless, there is frank admission that an inevitable tension underlies this: when there is a conflict or choice, obedience to faith must come first. Christians often demonstrate an unconditional commitment to the Chinese people, but this does not necessarily extend to the Party or to its vision for a socialist society under the leadership of the Party.

Part Three deals with “Civil Society”. Chapter 8, “Civil Society and the role of the Catholic Church in Contemporary China” by Shun Hing Chan, is perhaps the most important. Chan raises the question as to what roles three different dioceses of the Catholic Church in Cangzhou, Mindong and Wenzhou have played in constructing modern Chinese society. He concludes that while the Church has to some extent successfully made moves to protect its rights and interests, it has done little to safeguard the rights of others generally. However, the pro-government leadership of the Church in these three dioceses is isolated and finds it difficult to direct their members. Most of the priests in both the official and the underground Catholic churches attempt to seek religious freedom and resist the Government. As throughout the whole Catholic Church in China, there are multiple levels of cooperation, communication, conflict and isolation. Catholics debate and argue with each other over the right strategies for promoting religious freedom, how to relate to the Party, each other and to the Vatican. By doing so however they contribute to the creation of a “civil society” in which there is such negotiation and debate. This chapter begs for analysis of the response of the Religious Affairs Bureau, but space no doubt prevented this.

Some chapters in the volume demonstrate the strength and weakness of such essay collections. Fedrik Fällman’s chapter on “Calvin, culture and Christ? Developments of faith among Chinese intellectuals” is a discussion of the surprising emergence of an intellectual Christian movement which is reinterpreting Calvin in a Chinese context. While this is currently a very small and uninfluential group, it may well grow as a voice in public discourse. That is interesting and needs to be recorded, but the movement remains very small and socially insignificant. It has made no lasting impact on the Church in China as yet. Similarly, the chapters on new sectarian and Pentecostal movements certainly add to our knowledge of such movements. There are, however, other excellent longer studies of larger and more influential groups, such as the True Jesus Church. Jo Kooi-Chin Tong’s chapter describes the roles and dilemmas of a small number of Chinese Christian entrepreneurs who have arisen during China’s economic transition. She shows how personal faith forms Christian business ethics and how Christian business people are less accepting of bribes and unethical behaviour. She no doubt claims too much for the influence of such entrepreneurs, but her case studies are fascinating.

This is an essential volume in our understanding of the Church in contemporary China. It is an appetiser which awaits and demands the appearance of further and fuller studies. It seems surprising that none of the essays deal with and analyse the “Urban Church Movement” in large Chinese cities. These churches are reportedly largely made up of educated professionals and are no longer strictly “underground” but increasingly visible and active. Recent conferences have spoken of the transition

of such unregistered independent churches to networks and then to more structured organisations. There have even been suggestions that they will send out missionaries overseas as the Chinese Church increasingly joins the global Christian community. All this analysis awaits research study however and this volume is very timely and provides some very valuable, essential tools with which to undertake the journey.

Reviewed by *STUART VOGEL*  
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Yat Ming Loo, *Architecture and Urban Form in Kuala Lumpur: Race and Chinese Spaces in a Postcolonial City*, Farnham Surrey, Ashgate, 2013, xi + 221pp. ISBN: 978-1-4094-4597-5 (hbk); 978-1-4094-4598-2 (ebook-PDF.); 1-4094-7299-5 (ebook-ePUB.).

There has been much written about colonialism and post-colonialism. Doubtless there will be much more written in the future. One of the foundational texts, still relevant to these discussions, is *Orientalism* written by Edward Said and published in 1978. Said explores the development of conceptions of ‘the other’, in his case what Europeans have for centuries called ‘the East’ encompassing an area from Turkey through the Levant and east Asia to Japan and including pretty well everything in between. He sets out the ways in which the idea of the Orient has been appropriated by the West and used, most frequently to its own advantage, as a form of understanding, domination, restructuring and control. But Said’s approach, while characterized by exemplary scholarship and a remarkably broad canvas, is distinguished by what is essentially a neutral stance. He is more interested in the traffic of ideas between the East and the West than in taking sides in a struggle between them.

Said is, however, far from unaware of the impacts of cultural, political and economic appropriation. In his subsequent *Culture and Imperialism*, published in 1993 he makes this clear by expressly refuting the view that culture is divorced from the affairs of the everyday world. He stresses its “complicity with imperial conquest.” This is as true of the architectural component of culture as it is of culture as a whole and there is hardly any doubt that, for example, the language of (largely) classical architecture, or of hybrids of classical and vernacular architecture, were employed in the colonial era to express the spirit of empire. But in his critique of empire as set out in *Orientalism*, published 15 years earlier, Said suggests that the main intellectual issue posed by the imposition of one culture on to another or the appropriation of aspects of another culture is that the creation of such distinctions purports to “divide human reality... into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races”. He questions whether we can, “survive the(se) consequences humanely?” He expressly doubts that one can divide people into different groups without the hostility expressed by such a division: for the divisions are never value-free.

To argue the undoubted fact of the appropriation of the idea of the Orient as an anti-Western position, however, is, Said suggests, entirely beside the point. No aspect of culture, not least architecture (even when it embraces urban planning), can be said

to be representative of the whole of any culture. Nor is presenting an argument that one culture is somehow 'at fault' in its relation to another an argument for any kind of superiority in the case of the marginalized culture. Rather, he suggests, one needs to be resolutely anti-essentialist and sceptical of all categorical designations.

These introductory remarks serve as a background to *Architecture and Urban Form in Kuala Lumpur: Race and Chinese Spaces in a Postcolonial City* by Yat Ming Loo published by Ashgate. The book is essentially concerned with how the politics of colonialism and the subsequent postcolonial project of nation building have shaped and been shaped by architecture and urban design and the social impact of these on society in Malaysia in general and Kuala Lumpur in particular. As the author points out the case of the multi-ethnic, multi-racial globalized city is an almost universal one and the example of Kuala Lumpur may well illuminate a set of issues and problems that are of general importance. In this sense the book is a worthy project. The origins of what is described as the subjection of the Chinese part of Malaysian (formerly Malay) society has, he writes, its origins in the colonial period when a tri-partite power relation arose between the British colonial authorities, who were in control, the indigenous Malays and the Chinese who had arrived over the previous centuries as part of the general Chinese diaspora. Yat Ming Loo asserts that the creation of this division was deliberate policy to facilitate the processes of colonial government. This is almost certainly correct although it is not the same as asserting that the British, who it is conceded managed their empire in an associative rather than an imperialist fashion, could have constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries an ethnically integrated Malay State with which to deal. As the author, himself highly critical of the colonial authorities, states, the British High Commissioner immediately before independence "saw the building of a multi-cultural and multi-racial nation under British guidance as the requirement for independence." This may be as much as one could have expected in the 1950s. The fact the intention was not achieved and that on independence the reins of power were passed to the indigenous Malay governing class (which has not yet relinquished them) is the fundamental cause of the author's complaint: that, and the associated fact that both the colonial authorities and the post-independence Malay government believed that the architecture of the native Malays (an architecture which the author states did not exist) was the appropriate vehicle for the expression of a local way of building.

This book then, sets out to enquire into the way in which minority groups were excluded from influence and from their due share in recognition by the development of a hybrid 'national' architectural style composed of Islamic, saracenic and indigenous forms grafted onto the ubiquitous of modernism. The core of the author's argument rests in the assertion that "there is no precedent for Malaysian identity and Malaysian architecture". It is on this basis that he argues that architectural form and urban space was (in colonial times) and is (in the current postcolonial era where power in the state is controlled by Malays) being created in Malaysia to define the local society in racial and indeed in racist terms. For the colonial power the local Malaysians were the indigenous people and others, such as the Chinese (with whose case he largely identifies) and the Indians were immigrants with a lesser stake in the country and with less claim to cultural legitimacy. If this was not bad enough the privilege given to the local Malays

by the British was transmitted to the post-colonial government which has persisted with a similar agenda, excluding others, especially the Chinese, from an equal place in society by the establishment of Malay architecture and urban form and frustrating the creation of alternative parallel versions of these practices drawing on other sources, or, possibly, by creating a hybrid of all the groups represented in the new country.

In developing this proposition the book describes the history of settlement in Malaya to emphasize the role played by Chinese, especially in Kuala Lumpur. It continues to explain how the architecture of the colonial period privileged a form of 'indo-saracenic' architectural form to express a sense of the local and how this was translated in the late-colonial period into the adoption of indigenous motifs into essentially modernist buildings. While this was selective enough the picture becomes even more extreme in the postcolonial era and the Petronas Towers and the development of the new capital of Putrajaya are presented, convincingly, as attempts by the state to consolidate a vision of Malaysia as an essentially Malay/Islamic nation through architecture and urban planning. All this, needless to say, has been achieved at the expense of the visibility and influence of the minority groups in the country of whom the Chinese, at about 25% of the total population, are the largest. (Malays are currently about 50%, Indians about 7% and the balance is made up of other ethnic groups).

What, then, is the remedy to this situation? Clearly there is a political and social one which would involve the adoption by the ruling elite of a more open and multi-ethnic approach to what constitutes Malaysia's history and people. There is as yet little evidence that globalization will lead to the disappearance of race and ethnicity but the author's suggestion that the problems he identifies in Malaysia are the result of the exclusion of "ethnic minority cultures from the national culture" may be too simple. Perhaps the very idea of a 'national culture' is hardly possible now and instead the reality of 'national cultures' is what the modern multi-ethnic state needs to incorporate.

The concentration on a sense of exclusion inhibits this book from exploring other issues which might be thought to be implied by the title. There is little analysis of the spatial, programmatic, planning or other aspects of the architectures of the various ethnic groups which make up Malaysia today. Some of the arguments presented, such as, for example, that the traditional Malay house provided no precedent for urban commercial high rise developments are obvious and others, such as that "the Whiteness of the (colonial era) building(s) also informed the superiority of skin and culture of the White people... over the locals" are banal. Equally the statement that the 'overwhelming scale' of the major urban spaces on Putrajaya represent "the authoritarian, patriarchal and masculine" or that all buildings constructed on high ground are panopticons, ignoring the fact that all tall buildings provide (controlling?) views, both require considerable further development to be taken seriously.

These criticisms aside this book opens out a number of important issues which deserve attention and further analysis. The core of the author's thesis, and complaint, is that "There was no public debate or invitation to the non-Malay to voice their opinions of... urban project(s) of national importance." On the evidence it needs to be accepted that this is indeed the case and that contemporary Malaysian society is the poorer for

it. The past, and the motivations which impelled its form, are in many ways as distant from us now as the mythical continent of Atlantis, although the remains, in the form of architecture and urban form, are still around for us to experience. It is these remainders which turn the city into a palimpsest, configured by writings and over-writings and with the constant presence of half-visible erasures to remind us of how things once were and where we come from. The author and the reader will both be concerned to know who holds the pen and the eraser to write the next chapter in the story of Malaysia's development as a genuinely multi-cultural society.

The book would be well-served by a thorough editing and images taken by a professional photographer.

*Reviewed by TONY VAN RAAT  
Unitec Institute of Technology*

Billy K. L. So and Madeleine Zelin eds., *New Narratives of Urban Space in Republican Chinese Cities: Emerging Social, Legal and Governance Orders*, Leiden, Brill, 2013, xii + 284pp. ISBN: 978-90-04-24990-5 (hbk); 978-90-04-24991-2 (e-book).

There is little doubt that the city is an established topic of enquiry in Chinese studies. Since the late 1990s, Shanghai and to a less extent Beijing and Guangzhou have become emblematic of a different experience of modernity than the one defined by Chinese Communism. Republican-era cities were mundane, diverse, and uncertain in their physical environments and socio-cultural contours. Politically contested, life in coastal treaty ports, in particular, was antithetical to the ideological certainty and mobilisational uniformity that were, fairly or otherwise, attributed to the rural-based Maoist revolution. The question typically implied is whether Chinese cities, if only in inchoate ways, pointed to a society that could be more open, inclusive and connected to the outside world than the first three decades of the People's Republic.

In their introduction, Billy So and Madeleine Zelin state, however, that searching for democratic potential in Republican cities is not their primary concern. Instead, the latest contribution to Chinese urban history aims merely to 'present a multi-faceted narrative account of city life emerging amid the early process of urban modernization' (p. 5). At stake is the issue of how new urban administrative apparatuses and regional political realignments informed changes in individual cities' social life and legal environment. This less prescriptive agenda allows contributors to tackle China's urban experiences on different terms. Taken together, the chapters reveal trends that complicate the quest to locate Habermasian public spaces in the volatile urban formations of a politically fragmented and conflict-ridden nation.

To be sure, historical records are still earnestly ploughed through for elements of participatory politics in various urban centres. Yet, the ideal of calm debates among elite bourgeois men in salons and press rooms is obviously not adequate in describing the many ways in which urbanites became engaged in political processes. From a feminist perspective, Harriet Zurndorfer identifies precarious and refugee-infested

Chongqing, Wuhan and Shanghai during the Second Sino-Japanese War as unique and short-lived sites where the struggle for women's rights could be articulated through nationalism. Refugee relief work in the three cities provided ephemeral spaces where women could contribute to the political sphere relatively unencumbered by acrimonious partisan rivalries. While Zurndorfer emphasises physical and social spaces within urban milieus autonomous of organised nationalism, Pierre-Étienne Will reveals a continuum between progressive political culture and left-wing mass mobilisation. Focusing on Xi'an, Will documents how student activism and a plethora of educational institutions, in place since the late Qing and through the first two decades of the Republican era, lend themselves to a left-wing expression of Sun Yat-senism since the May Fourth Movement that prized mass participation. This radicalism, in spite of Xi'an's socioeconomic backwardness, persisted beyond the consolidation of conservative Nationalist rule in the 1930s. Whereas Zurndorfer finds China's total war with Japan to have afforded opportunities for more diverse forms of political organising, Will argues that it put a decisive end to relative openness. Despite their different conclusions, urbanism in the two chapters encapsulated modes of political participation different than an idealised public sphere where rational dialogues reigned.

A bourgeois civil society resisting state excesses was an elusive prospect in China, not the least because many modern cities were intertwined with nation and society-building projects to which much of the elite were committed. Federica Ferlanti argues that the New Life Movement was the Guomindang regime's attempt to politicise public spaces and put them to the service of its anti-Communist cause. Yet, she points out, the state-sponsored movement in Nanchang was also an urban development exercise and an effort to educate citizens in habits worthy of an emerging twentieth-century metropolis. As constellation of distinct spaces and cultural expressions, urbanism was as often contingent on strong states as it is independent of them. In more established cities like Beijing and Shanghai, as Antonio Finanne's contribution on wedding rituals suggests, changes in popular mores did occur more organically, facilitated by the proliferation of new public and commercial spaces like Christian churches, auditoriums, hotels and parks. Modern 'civilised weddings', popular with Westernised intellectuals and politicians, departed from old nuptial rites in their public nature and detachment from family and kin. Inasmuch as the Republican state was invested in the reform of rite and music, it was 'legislating in accordance with, rather than in advance of, particular practices' (p. 43). Such convergence, not conflict, of priorities between the state and the modern urban elite was even more obvious in law enforcement. According to Michael Hoi Kit Ng, social scientists were as much responsible as state agencies in Beijing for defining what constituted crimes, locating them spatially, and attributing them to seemingly innocuous activities like the buying and selling of second-hand goods. Echoing Ng, Jan Kiely goes a step further by claiming that young, well-educated criminologists of various ideological persuasions contributed to a conservative discourse shared by state officials whereby urban life as such – with its decadent consumerism, sexual permissiveness, and highly visible wealth disparity – was seen as a threat to patriarchal social ideal and demanded drastic intervention to restore discipline and order. The enmeshment of elite formation and state objectives was examined most thoroughly in John Fitzgerald's chapter on Guangzhou, in which

a 'top-down democracy' (p. 221) gave rise to a new revolutionary elite trained in the metropolitan centre and from which state authority spread across the entire Nationalist-governed Guangdong province at the expense of county-level local elite.

Furthermore, modes of governance and association outside the state in Republican cities were limited in reach. Robert Bickers shows that the orderly, rule-based urban outposts in Shanghai and Hong Kong were far from the norm among the various British concessions in China. While patron-client and native place networks pervaded over urban society during the late Qing and early Republic period, they did not encompass the underclass or those operating in the margins. Brett Sheehan discovers that many money forgers in late 1920s Beijing were not at all socialised, having no affiliation with native-place networks or even criminal gangs. The connection between urban modernity and a sphere of social, political and cultural life beyond the purview of revolutionary, nationalist and military elites was tenuous at best.

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Bernard S. Solomon, *On the School of Names in Ancient China* published in the series *Monumenta Serica Monograph Series LXIV*: Sankt Augustin: Steyler Verlag, Institut Monumenta Serica, 2013, 161pp. ISBN: 978-3-8050-0610-1(hbk) , ISSN: 0179-261X

Bernard S. Solomon's *On the School of Names in Ancient China* is a very welcome addition to the literature on the School of Names in general, and on the *Gongsun Longzi* in particular, of which the work includes a complete translation of chapters two through six together with related discussion. These are preceded by a chapter that discusses the list of paradoxical statements appearing in the *Zhuangzi* attributed to Hui Shi. Each chapter of the book begins with a translation, helpfully arrayed with punctuated Chinese text, followed in each case by one or more sections in which the author lays out his interpretation of the key philosophical import of the text. Solomon's interpretation quite reasonably focuses on the way the texts discussed rely upon semantic and syntactic flexibilities and ambiguities in presenting and arguing for seemingly false, contradictory, or paradoxical views.

As noted in the author's acknowledgement and editor's epilogue, parts of Solomon's work were originally prepared some time before publication in the present form, with several chapters being written and published between 1967 and 1983. Although both the author and editor have provided additional bibliographies, there remains some concern that some parts of the book may now be somewhat out of date.

Though in general Solomon's reading of the text is very plausible, in many places his interpretation might have been made more persuasive were it to offer a more explicit account of the reasoning behind its interpretative stance. In the interpretation of the terse transmitted writings of the School of Names with which the book is concerned, often a great deal hangs upon the interpretation of a single term of the Chinese, the precise import

of which may not be obvious from the context. In many cases, key terms appear to be being used in ways that are quite distinct from their use in other early texts, and in some cases might be considered “technical terms” (as is seen quite clearly in, for example, the closely related later Mohist works), and thus cannot be assumed to have (and often due to contextual factors cannot be plausibly read as having) quite the same significance that they do in other early writings. In these cases it is of key importance to explain why one possible interpretation of a term or passage should be favoured over alternative plausible readings. Though in many cases Solomon does provide this type of account, there are important instances in which it does not seem to appear, and worryingly in some cases philosophically significant stances appear to be in effect attributed to the text by virtue of the provided translation in such a way that the underlying question of whether or not the text really is committed to them may be overlooked.

Relatedly, the book does not typically spend a great deal of time discussing alternative interpretations. Instead it concentrates on setting out its own position. Though responding to other interpretations is not the aim of the work, given the specialized nature of the topic it does feel at times as if critical comments that might rule out or weigh against alternative interpretations would have been helpful. Though in many cases the author does cite alternative translations by other translators as footnotes, where he does so this is very often to cite translations that are broadly similar to his own, whereas it might in fact be more helpful to have citations of contrasting or conflicting translations together with critical remarks that could enable a reader to choose between them. Often alternative translations are simply enumerated without further comment, which – though sometimes helpful – in more straightforward cases feels rather unnecessary.

An example of the kind of worry these issues present is the translation for the Chinese text “材，不材，其無以類審矣” given on pages 59 and 73: “[But] whether something is a property or is not a property, it is evident that it is not the means whereby one classifies [such creatures].” In cases like this, the use of a word such as “property” that has particularly strong connotations in Western philosophy in the translation of the text itself risks suggesting on the one hand that we can straightforwardly see even just from this one line alone that the text is literally discussing properties, and on the other that the text might be committed to certain philosophical positions which the translated line of Chinese may or may not actually commit itself to. While the author’s use of such terminology in explaining the thinking behind the text is undoubtedly helpful, allowing the very same terminology to appear in the translation (here using “property” for “材”) without additional comment risks overlooking the key point that we either need some sort of argument that “材” really does equate to “property” here, or alternatively be quite clear that the term “property” should not be read as having the same Platonic connotations that it might quite legitimately have when used in explaining how we can best make sense of the text’s arguments and claims. I am sure that the author himself is quite clear about this distinction, but it remains the case that a reader of the book might easily confuse the two. Other translations of the text have rendered “材” here as “useful” or “[good] instances”; ideally in cases like this one would like to see arguments on the basis of which one could choose between such competing interpretations of the



text. This issue also highlights the value of engaging with other interpretations, even if only to refute them or explain why apparent differences in interpretation suggested by such differing translations are not in fact as significant as they might at first appear.

Despite these minor concerns, the book remains an accessible yet detailed introduction to many of the key issues at work in the *Gongsun Longzi* and paradoxes attributed to Hui Shi. Technical worries such as those raised above apply noticeably less to the later chapters of the book than to the earlier ones, as these appear to take much more care in laying out the proposed interpretation; as the author notes in his introduction, the chapters are presented in the order in which they were originally composed, meaning that these later chapters may well represent more polished material. Particularly in view of the relatively small number of works available in English that discuss the interpretation of the writings of the School of Names in such detail, this volume is a valuable contribution to the ongoing puzzle of how best to make sense of these challenging texts and as such merits careful study.

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