

Reviews

Kazi K. Ashraf, *The Hermit's Hut: Architecture and Asceticism in India*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013, xiii + 222pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3583-5

The title of this book by Kazi Ashraf will be enticing to many architects. There is a rich and complex vein of architectural discourse attached to the idea of minimalism, and an equally rich and complex one relating to origins. To name a book *The Hermit's Hut: Architecture and Asceticism in India* may therefore suggest to the architectural reader that this is a study of the striped-back essence of simple buildings dating back, perhaps, to early forms of shelter constructed for a mixture of functional and spiritual purposes. In spite of the book's merits, however, a reader with such expectations is likely to be disappointed. One must look to another book or books to find a discussion on such matters. This author's preoccupations lie elsewhere.

It is a truism that architecture lies in some ill-defined territory between the arts and the sciences. It partakes of the natures of both, being necessarily grounded in the pragmatics of construction but being also powerfully influenced by aesthetics, the intent to fuse the totality of the work into "an object of desire". The discipline of architecture reaches also into other fields: of business certainly, given the enormous cost of building; of fashion and style, as any architectural magazine will reveal; and also of sociology, for buildings are made for the occupation of people, singly as well as in groups, and their human and social needs must be well-understood if the work of the architect is to fulfill its purpose. Architecture, then, is a broad church, a pantheon, and its many altars can happily enough accommodate adherents of diverse beliefs.

What Kazi Ashraf, a lecturer in architecture at the University of Hawaii, has chosen to engage with here is something on the outer edges of this diversity. The subject of this book is the significance of the idea of the hermit's hut in Indian history, its representation in religious sculpture and image and in the influence the primitive prototype of dwelling might have had on subsequent and more elaborate temple building. The architectural reader will be familiar with other similar prototypes. Of these Laugier's "primitive hut" is the best known: a simple forest shelter whose forms and elements are transformed through time into the marble temples of classical antiquity and countless subsequent representations both spiritual and temporal. As such the point of origin has an almost sacred quality. It sets fundamental principles and defines the essential elements – commonly attachment to the ground, sheltering roof form, aspect and connection with the world beyond and, perhaps, hearth – which all 'authentic' building must follow. In this proposition Laugier, an eighteenth century French priest but also an early architectural theorist, sees architecture as having developed from a natural order which links it to the divine. It is properly stripped down to basic and irreducible elements and even the subsequent inclusion of what is necessary, a weather-skin, for example, detracts from the purity of the essential form.

Ashraf follows in this tradition and at its more extreme limits. “Temples are huts”, he states, and while there might be a discernable line of connection from origin to culmination, developed over ages and through countless manifestations, one might as well say that racing cars are bicycles. Sometimes the process of development transforms things, and if that is not the case then their connectedness needs to be set out with meticulous care through the tracking of common elements and techniques. Not even the most ardent classicist would be likely to say that the Parthenon is a primitive hut. Still, the poetic license which is every author’s right aside, this book does dig into some interesting territory. Ashraf’s argument is developed from a perspective which is embedded in Buddhism. The journey he describes starts with the simple shelter which a Brahmanic hermit might have made if no suitable tree or cave presented itself for him to sleep under. These men, he asserts, were bound in a paradox. They had committed themselves to a path of renunciation of worldly things which necessarily included an acceptance of homelessness. Yet the human frame, even in the case of the most devout, still requires shelter. Thus the hut that might have been formed from rude materials was taken to represent some sort of connection with the divine through reductive simplicity and intimate connection to the realm of nature. Whether this conception was one embraced by the hermits themselves is difficult to say; it seems more likely that it is an aspect of the situation identified at a distance by others as part of a more elaborate proposition such as is set out in this book.

The author develops his theme largely through the presentation of images of these dwellings in temple sculpture. Here the hut of the hermit is transformed at an early date into the house of the Buddah. To at least some extent, this moves the argument from the world of architecture into art history. Ashraf states, plausibly, that the repeated use of such images must have a purpose and a meaning and that nothing else can account for its durability. There is a narrative to be developed here and it is done with considerable assurance and in much detail. To the architectural reader, however, a concentration upon representation and the meaning of decorative objects, rather than upon the tectonics and morphology of an overall structure, is a movement towards the abstract – and in this case the spiritual – and away from the concrete. Such arguments inevitably involve a level of speculation and propositioning. Thus there is a clear transition in the elaboration of the argument from the hut of the hermit to the house of the Buddah. While convincingly presented, this remains based on the fact that simple structures, in whatever place or time, are likely to have formal resemblances. As the author himself states, “...it is unclear whether the hut in the Jetavana relief is an actual representation of the structure the Buddah lived in, a simple adaptation from common dwellings of that time, or a stylized convention for significant buildings.” It was, I think, Wittgenstein who said that whatever is not essential is irrelevant, and what cannot be known may be considered to fall into the category of the inessential. He also said, “Only describe, don’t explain”, which would put him out of sympathy with the approach Ashraf takes in this book which is, to a large extent, first speculative and then explanatory. Nevertheless one does not have to accept Wittgenstein’s rather dogmatic approach: explanation may well elucidate; and in any case it is an established custom for architectural academics to propose possible readings of situations which have architectural content.

In this case the proposition is tested against two alternative representations, that of the space of the Japanese tea ceremony and the modest dwelling which Gandhi had constructed for his own use in Nagpur. Certainly other simple dwellings might have been employed for the same purpose but these are apt enough exemplars. Ashraf portrays the *chashitsu* which houses the tea ceremony as representative of emptiness and Gandhi's dwelling as both an essay in respect for nature – early sustainability – and also as a social experiment in dwelling. Both of these characteristics link them to the hermit's hut and both display aspects of asceticism. These illustrations are of some interest to the architect because they link the argument to a broader frame. They might well have been elaborated and extended.

Much of the rest of the book deals with Buddhist representational art at a level of detail which is impressive but at the same time daunting to the lay reader. Overall the value of this book to architects is limited by the large amount of time the author spends on matters that are, at best, remote from conventional architectural enquiry – Indian history, spirituality and so on. But there remains some value. What this is may well vary from reader to reader but one general value is identified by the author himself. “Why inhabit such questionable spaces in the first place?”, he asks. And he provides an answer: “such sites, always unstable from the perspective of the mainstream..., open up new potentials and possibilities...” It may be that readers with a more spiritual bent than most architects will find here some argument for an ascetic consciousness in the modern world, for a pattern of beliefs and behaviors which will assist them to transcend the mundane banalities of ordinary life. Even for architects, however, a reminder of the spiritual dimension in the arts of construction, a meditation on the deeper significances of the existential question of dwelling, a reminder of the dangers of excess and an awareness that the design and construction of spaces for human occupation have much more than just pragmatic implications may be of some interest.

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Gregory D. Booth and Bradley Shope, eds., *More Than Bollywood: Studies in Indian Popular Music*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0-19-992883-5 (hardback); 978-0-19-992885-9 (paperback). 358pp., figs, refs, index, website.

In recent decades, the Bollywood film industry has made an impact globally not only regarding its dynamic style of cinema, but also regarding its music. As its title suggests, *More Than Bollywood* discusses the impact of Bollywood songs, and also the various strands of popular music in India that are often linked to its cinema. In this volume, the editors have assembled fifteen chapters by leading scholars of Indian music who cover a wide range of topics on Indian popular music. The book divides into three main parts: “Perspectives on Film Song”; “Audio Cultures, Music Videos, and Film Music”; and “Live Music, Performance Cultures, and Re-mediation”. The chapters are preceded by an introduction by the two editors, and an afterword is provided by pop music scholar, Timothy D. Taylor.

The editors' introduction carefully outlines the history and complexity of Indian popular music. India's cultural diversity is emphasized in a context of the national Hindi language. While there are several Indian film industries based on regional language, the main one is represented through Hindi. The production of popular music is closely aligned to the film industries, with many regional film industries modeling film and music on Mumbai's practices.

Chapter 1 is by Gregory D. Booth and provides a historical perspective of Hindi songs from the late 1940s to early 1950s. More specifically, the years 1948 to 1952 offer a period just after Indian independence that witnessed a consolidation of the elements of Bollywood that "coalesced into a set of sonic, stylistic, industrial, and cinematic norms that came to define the music of the Hindi cinema over the subsequent 20 or more years" (p. 22). This historical account is followed by Natalie Sarrazin's discussion of digital identities and aesthetic trajectories in post-liberalization Indian film music (i.e., 1990 and beyond). Sarrazin is particularly interested in the notion of change in Hindi film music aesthetics, especially in connection with technological developments and the popular music creativity that developed within film. The author notes the global importance of Hindi film in relation to digital technology, which subsequently inspired creativity in film and sound. Here, the author shows that such developments helped Hindi film music enter the world stage, "embodying Indian values in musical idioms palatable to an international music market and appealing to interested non-diasporic audiences" (pp. 58-59). The third chapter focuses on Tamil film songs, as well as the processes that have helped transform the genre. Joseph Getter introduces the reader to "Kollywood" in the Kodambakkam part of Chennai. Getter portrays the flows of Kollywood as a significant film/popular music industry: socially, culturally and online. The last chapter in this part of the book is by Kaley Mason, who focuses on "Malluwood" – the Malayalam film industry in Kerala. Focus is on the "generational shifts in the embodiment of musical taste" (p. 76) through two recent film songs.

Five chapters are grouped in the second part of the book. The first of these is by Jayson Beaster-Jones, who explores film song and its "other" in connection with "filmi", a Bollywood film music genre. He looks at how songs sound "filmi" by analyzing three Hindi film songs. The author contends that "each song signals a stylistic/aesthetic transition in film song sound that intersects with emergent genre meanings, even as each points to the ways in which music directors mediate musical material in their film soundtracks" (p. 99). Supported by the iconography of numerous fascinating illustrations, Stephen Putnam Hughes moves the discussion back to "the relationship between Hinduism and the history of music recording in South India" (p. 114), where he argues "that recording businesses articulated the convergence of recording technology and Hinduism as part of a discursive practice that signaled a major transformation in the production of popular music in South India" (p. 140). The music genre known as bhangra is the topic of the next chapter, by Anjali Gera Roy. The author shows this style of music as depicted in Bollywood since the 1950s when it was appropriated into the film industry. By discussing how Hindi song and dance is produced, the author shows how Bollywood is in bhangra, and how bhangra is in Bollywood. A discussion of North Indian popular music is the topic of the next chapter. Peter Kvetko uses the term "rolling echo" (p. 177) to refer to an example of "the complex ways in which mimesis

and authenticity operate in globalized popular culture” (p. 177). The last chapter in this part is by Stefan Fiol, who explores the production of regional music in a Delhi studio. Using ethnographic method, the author focuses on the production of an album as a way of showing “how sound recording is mediated by the diversity of social and musical identities in the studio, and vice versa” (p. 194).

Bradley Shope opens the last part of the book with a chapter on Latin American music in Mumbai from the 1930s to the 1950s. The first section of his chapter traces the dance style known as carioca, which was featured in the 1933 American movie *Flying Down to Rio*, and the second one explores live cabarets in Mumbai and the Latin American elements in Hindi film songs. The theme of global sounds in the Mumbai film industry is extended into Gregory D. Booth’s second chapter in the book, which looks at the incorporation of rock music into the Indian soundscape. Here, Booth examines three rock bands from Mumbai and foregrounds several defining moments in their careers that relate to the political milieu of the time (i.e., 1960s, ’70s, and early ’80s). A further extension to this part of the book is Niko Higgins’ chapter on fusion in contemporary urban India. In this chapter, Higgins “demonstrates the ways that overlapping ideologies of Indian tradition, economic and cultural change, shifting class formations, and cosmopolitanism can all be heard as a sign of the multiply constituted experience of urban Indian” (p. 255). Shalini Ayyagari’s chapter looks at the recording studio (cf. Stefan Fiol’s chapter), and in this case study focus is given to the importance of the home studio amongst musicians from the Manganiya community. The last two chapters in this part of the book look at devotional songs (Anna Schultz) and remixing in music production (Paul D. Greene).

More Than Bollywood is an excellent introduction to some of the styles of music that comprise Indian popular music. The emphasis on Bollywood is explained in detail in many of the chapters, along with examples from other Indian cinema traditions and other music styles that contribute to popular music styles in historical and modern-day India. The contributors do not focus on music analysis, but rather on cultural analysis; exploring the historical, cultural and political manifestations of popular music in India, and on India in popular music. The book introduces popular music and Bollywood, and moves to other spheres of Indian culture. *More Than Bollywood* will make an impact on the study of popular music from a global perspective, and on the study of Indian culture. It should be essential reading for students of ethnomusicology, popular music studies and Indian cultures. The book will appeal widely at university level and beyond.

A particularly useful feature of this collection is its use of an accompanying website: www.oup.com/us/morethanbollywood. A book such as this one is especially dependent on a resource that is able to contextualize the sounds that are the subject matter of the chapters. Ten of the chapters have accompanying website materials in the form of audio and/or video. This an excellent resource for the book in that it offers numerous examples that truly enhance the written text.

Reviewed by HENRY JOHNSON
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Irene De Angelis, *The Japanese Effect in Contemporary Irish Poetry*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, xvi, 193 pp. ISBN: 9780230248953

Most English-language readers will have heard of Japanese influences on the greatest modern Irish poet, W. B. Yeats, and especially of the Noh theatre on his poetic dramas. In a sense, this book continues the story since those “Irish Renaissance” days, looking especially at the attractive new crop of Irish poets that has appeared since the 1960s – the major example being the Nobel laureate, Seamus Heaney. As he himself pointed out in a public talk of 2000: “In the years since these early developments [imagism], the haiku form and the generally Japanese effect have been a constant feature of poetry in English.” In an age of ideological warfare, in which “poets became desperately aware of the dangers of rhetoric and abstraction,” Heaney continued, “the chastity and reticence of Japanese poetry grew more and more attractive. Its closeness to common experience and its acknowledgement of mystery, its sensitivity to *lacrimae rerum*, to the grievous aspects of human experience, have made it a permanent and ever more valuable resource to which other literatures can turn.”

But what caused this latter-day resurgence of “Japonisme” in English-language poetry, not only in Ireland but throughout the English-speaking world? De Angelis points to the “great wave of amazement and delight” that greeted two publications of Japanese poetry in English in the 1960s: the *Penguin Book of Japanese Verse* of 1964 and the translation of Basho’s *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* of 1966 (also published by Penguin). Many of the poets discussed here acknowledge the profound impact of those two works, and also of Harold Henderson’s 1958 *Introduction to Haiku*, considered a “little bible” by those De Angelis calls the “miniaturists” among Irish poets. Further evidence of how widespread this Japanese influence continues to be was provided by the 2007 anthology of Irish poetry, *Our Shared Japan*, co-edited by De Angelis, to which the present volume is a kind of critical companion piece. It “included no fewer than 85 poets who have responded to the rich Japanese literature and culture.”

Heaney’s own haiku poems were published in three different collections over a period of nine years (1987-96), and their concision results, according to De Angelis, from his efforts to write “by subtraction.” As Heaney himself put it: “The excitement of encountering the true note and the clean line, the corroboration that comes from recognising rightness of artistic effect – this is the big fortification I get from Japanese poetry.... A general anti-slovenliness. A sense of inner rule. A reticence and a precision.” More specifically in the context of his own life, haiku offered Heaney a new, more restrained and reticent, way to articulate his suffering, especially during the existential and artistic crisis which followed the loss of his parents. He adopted a Basho-like impersonality, opening himself to the presence of nature. As De Angelis writes, in a haiku such as “1.1.87” he struggles to shun “human-centered emotions” and “thrives on a nature-centered feeling:”

The riverbed, dried-up, half-full of leaves.
Us, listening to a river in the trees.

The desolate landscape reflects Heaney’s own desolation, the plural pronoun refers to father and son, and the dried-up river suggests that, with his father’s death, one

important source of his poetic inspiration has dried up. In other words, the “Japanese effect” on Heaney is not just a matter of form. As he said himself: “The awareness of impermanence makes haiku poetry an example that all other literatures can turn to.”

One of the major “Japanese themes” that has been bravely tackled by a number of recent Irish poets is the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. But not always directly. A significant discovery made by De Angelis here is that the celebrated poem, “The Snow Party,” by Derek Mahon – may actually have a kind of secret Hiroshima subtext. Ostensibly the poem is based on an episode out of Bashō’s *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* but, by applying a “French genetic approach” to her analysis of the poem (that is, by consulting earlier versions or *avant-textes*), she discovers a very close relationship between it and an earlier unpublished and unfinished poem, “Hiroshima,” inspired by John Hersey’s novel of the same title. That Mahon’s unpublished poem “Hiroshima” became “The Snow Party” seems to suggest that the latter is a result of his “refusal” to write a poem about Hiroshima – except only very indirectly, as a horrific “elsewhere” to a contrastive, highly civilised “snow party.” This certainly puts the published poem in an unexpected and illuminating new perspective, and De Angelis is to be congratulated for her discovery.

This is a fascinating and inspiring book, very much in the “global” spirit of our age, and De Angelis is the ideal person to have written it. An Italian scholar of Irish poetry with a lively interest in Japanese culture, she effortlessly brings to the subject the transnational, comparative-literary perspective it requires. Her interpretations of the poems are deft and suggestive rather than heavy-handed. Also, she’s familiar enough with each poet’s total opus to make mutually illuminating comparisons between one poem and another. For readers unfamiliar with the richness of Irish poetry over the past few decades, this book will provide a very interesting and readable introduction to the “heirs of Yeats,” contemporary poets who are well worth knowing.

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Hugh de Ferranti and Alison Tokita, eds., *Music, Modernity and Locality in Prewar Japan: Osaka and Beyond*, Farnham/Burlington: Ashgate, 2013. ISBN 9781409411116 (hbk), 9781472409881 (ebk – PDF), 9781472409898 (ebk – ePDF). 307 pp. Maps, figures, tables, music examples, index.

The title of this edited collection of essays evokes several immediate questions: Why modernity in Japan? Why Osaka (and beyond)? Why music? One wonders why a book on modernity in prewar Japan does not focus on Tokyo, the biggest urban centre in Japan and the nation’s capital, and an answer to the question about Osaka is offered in the “Preface” and in Chapter 1. The editors note that Osaka has had much written about it in some scholarly fields, but many key figures in Osaka’s prewar modernist music scenes are noticeably absent in representative literature on music. As such, this collection of papers offers insight into some aspects of Osaka’s musical life in prewar Japan (from the nineteenth century to the Second World War), and especially at the time

of the rise of modernism in the decades before the war, which was a time of immense political upheaval in Japan that included ultranationalism and war.

Osaka city is Japan's second largest urban centre, and its built-up areas extend into the massive Keihanshin metropolitan area that embraces the cities of Osaka, Kyoto and Kobe. The names Osaka and Kyoto are used for both cities and prefectures, and while there is sometimes confusion when the two names are not differentiated, this book focuses on the urban areas of this part of Japan. More specifically, the geographic focus of this book is on the Hanshin region, which includes the cities of Osaka and Kobe, and the urbanized areas between them. Music is the focus of the book, and the essays include case studies of diverse music genres, ranging from traditional forms that were transformed in the first part of the twentieth century, to hybrid styles that offered a new sense of identity and locality for this part of Japan.

Music, Modernity and Locality in Prewar Japan has 15 chapters and divides into five parts. Part I, "Osakan Modernity: The Context", has two chapters. The first is an introduction by the editors that clarifies the book's rationale and key themes. The editors comment on the vast number of traditional, modern and hybrid styles of music that were prevalent in Osaka and the Hanshin region during the prewar years, and at the same time introduce the book's chapters and their diverse subject matter in the context of Japanese modernity. The 15 chapters of this book offer a vast amount of historical information on musical activities in Osaka, and while each chapter provides detailed knowledge on diverse music styles, one is left thinking positively that there are possibly many other historical music topics that could be further explored. While offering some detailed information on Japanese music history of this period, more discussion of Japanese modernity in theoretical perspective would have helped expand the book's scholarly contribution. That said, the book offers invaluable sources on Japanese music history, and in this field of enquiry the book has authority and contributes new knowledge to music research more broadly. The second chapter in this opening part of the book is a wide reflection of the Osaka soundscape. Drawing on the scholarly work of Murray Schafer, Jeffery E. Hanes provides insight into the tapestry of urban sounds that were included as part of Osaka's rapid urbanization and industrial development in the prewar years. As well as such new urban sounds, the author also considers music as part of the soundscape, offering examples of the many new musical sounds that contributed to the city's modernist era. One Osaka neighbourhood in particular, Dōtonbori, is introduced in terms of jazz, which helped define its cultural identity at the time.

There are three chapters in Part II, "Creation of a Modern Musical Culture". The first of these is by Gerald Groemer, who provides a discussion of marketing the performing arts in Osaka before the twentieth century, and focuses on *kabuki* theatre, puppet theatre, amateur performances and the national market of variety hall entertainment. Much of the information provided in this chapter is from the nineteenth century and includes an abundance of fascinating historical references. The next chapter looks at the growth of Western art music appreciation during the 1920s. In this chapter, Ueno Masaaki notes Japan's adoption of Western music in the late nineteenth century and discusses its prominence in the 1920s and its dissemination from larger urban centres such as Osaka and its surroundings to other regions. Several different

terms are used such as “Western art music”, “Western classical music” and “Western music”, each of which might have been considered through a more critical lens. The last chapter in this part of the book is by co-editor Alison Tokita, who looks at the piano as a symbol of modernity in prewar Osaka. Tokita skilfully blends historical research with interview data to provide a convincing discussion rich with historical knowledge and an abundance of new information on the importance of the piano in this influential period of Japanese music history. At this time, the piano in Japan was “emblematic of modern bourgeois culture” (p. 93), but until now very little has been written on it in the context of the rise of Hanshin modernity.

Part III, “Making and Remaking Music Traditions”, consists of four chapters, each of which looks at continuing traditions of Japanese music making: *naniwa-bushi* (Manabe Masayoshi), *koto* (Philip Flavin), *biwa* (Silvain Guignard) and *gagaku* (Terauchi Naoko). These traditions, narrative music with *shamisen* (long lute), zither, lute (short) and court music, respectively, are discussed in terms of how they continued and were transformed in some spheres of music making in prewar Osaka. Modernity, or at least developing modernity, for these traditions was about mass entertainment (*naniwa-bushi*), expanding musical techniques (*koto*), the national (re)construction of tradition (*biwa*) and regeneration and diffusion (*gagaku*).

The fourth part of *Music, Modernity and Locality in Prewar Japan*, “Hybridity in Kansai Musical Culture”, has just two chapters. The first, by Watanabe Hiroshi, looks at the theatrical form known as Takarazuka, and the second, by Hosokawa Shūhei, at Shōchiku girls’ opera and jazz. These two chapters are especially important for showing examples of the new hybrid genres that emerged as a result of modernism in prewar Japan. Other similar case studies would have helped expand knowledge on how new forms emerged that were neither traditional nor imported.

The theme of the book takes a slightly different route in Part V, “Osaka and Beyond: Ethnic Minorities and Metropolitan East Asia”. The four chapters in this part of the book cover topics on Koreans in Osaka, Okinawans in Osaka, Okinawan and Korean influences on “traditional” Japanese dance, and music in Japanese-occupied Shanghai and its links to Osaka. Each of these chapters offers insight into the many dimensions of Japanese music modernism in prewar Osaka, and they show collectively how aspects of Japanese music culture were constructed at this time. At this point in reading these fascinating essays on music modernism in Japan, the reader would welcome a conclusion bringing the threads of a variety of subjects together. The editors provide an excellent introduction to the book, and a reminder of why the book’s topics were included and how they link together would have provided a stronger close to what is a worthy contribution to this field of historical music knowledge.

The book includes several black and white pictures, musical examples, tables, and an index. Two maps are offered to help show the region under study. More detailed and clearer maps would have helped, especially in terms of the detail of wards and distance (a map of wards is shown on p. 231). Map 1, which shows the broader grouping of prefectures, the Kansai region, misspells Wakayama, omits Kyoto city (discussed in several parts of the book), and does not name Awaji island (part of Hyogo prefecture). The book covers many genres of music, and a reader not acquainted with some of the

music styles could find some recordings on the internet. While difficult to produce, a recording or website dedicated to the book providing some audio or video recordings would have been most welcome. As well as writing his own chapter for inclusion, four of the essays in this book were translated by Philip Flavin, who deserves special mention for contributing in this way to this excellent collection.

Reviewed by HENRY JOHNSON
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Glen Dudbridge, *A Portrait of Five Dynasties China: From the Memoirs of Wang Renyu (880-956)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 288pp, ISBN: 978-0-19-967068-0 (hbk)

Official documents and mainstream historical records, in the words of Professor Glen Dudbridge, have created a historical account portraying only “a bureaucratic civilization” (p. 1) while personal experiences and voices are largely neglected. Dudbridge adopts a different approach to the study of Five Dynasties China, aiming to inform modern readers of “the experience and judgment of people who lived through that period, who adjusted and conducted their lives within the turbulent conditions of their time, but above all who witnessed and responded to its main events as they were happening” (p. 3). To this purpose Dudbridge unearths scattered excerpts of the two sets of Wang Renyu’s memoirs, the *Yu tang xian hua* 玉堂閒話 [Anecdotes from the Hanlin Academy] and *Wang shi jian wen lu* 王氏見聞錄 [Things seen and heard by Wang], from the early Song encyclopedic compendium *Taiping guang ji* 太平廣記. By exploring this material and Wang’s epitaph he produces a historical narration of the eventful and chaotic years of Five Dynasties China in a way that differs markedly from the mainstream view.

The book is structured thematically and the titles of each chapter are effective in informing the reader of the topic. Chapter One outlines Wang’s life and career in the historical context of the Five Dynasties period, along with a narration of the sources used for this study. Chapter Two narrates Wang Renyu’s experience serving in various courts throughout the Five Dynasties period and his contact with many officials in his lifetime. The title “Oral History” for this chapter is revealing as it is Wang’s personal narration of what he heard and what he lived through. Chapter Three describes “a World of signs and symbols” as recorded by Wang Renyu who, unlike the proceeding generations of well-known scholars who questioned the divination and its relevance to human society, believed in its natural significance. Through Wang’s records of these signs and symbols which had general appeal in his time, we may see the effect of the chaos on people who lived in such turbulent times and who tried to make sense of “the rise and fall of kingdoms, the fortunes of war, and the movement of peoples” (p. 69). Chapter Four, entitled “In the background of war,” provides an account of “the texture of life” and the complexity of “the mix of social values” during the war. It contains rich information that “standard historical sources fail to show” (p. 95). Chapter Five focuses on “Personalities of Shu”, “a rich set of impressions and responses in Wang Renyu’s memoirs” (p. 105) recording his years in Shu between 916 and 926.

Chapter Six, entitled “The fall of Former Shu in 925,” offers “first-hand testimony” to “the fall of a kingdom, as seen by one directly involved in it” (p. 124). Chapter Seven presents an account of the regime of “the Khitan” Liao Dynasty to which Wang Renyu served while Chapter Eight focuses on “Music and Musicians.” Chapter Nine explores Wang’s experience in the natural world and his surprisingly modern views on wildlife. The Epilogue of the book concludes that Wang’s memoirs can be read as a social portrait as his eye is “always looking outwards at the environment and society which surround him” (p. 189); as a self-portrait which shows a well rounded character; and also as a daily-life portrait or the portrait of the period, as the multitude of background information on great events provides us with the details of the everyday life during the period. There are four appendices on the source material used in this book.

Above all, this is a very original, well researched and clearly presented scholarly work on Five Dynasties China. As a result of diligent research into original historical records and exploring dispersed information on the subject, this book contains many invaluable voices of personalities otherwise unrecorded, and rare historical documents which have been largely neglected by the work of official historians. The historical portrait presented to the reader through a particular individual’s eye and with the quality of first-hand testimony, makes this book a sublime contribution to the study of Chinese history. It also demonstrates the value of research using original historical documents and the master craft inherent in the author’s ability to create a book that would appeal not only to historians of pre-modern China, but also to all readers with an interest in China.

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Angus J. Francis and Rowena Maguire, eds., *Protection of Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Asia Pacific Region*. Law, Ethics and Governance Series, Farnham, Ashgate, 2013, ix +252 pp. ISBN: 9781409455400

This is a welcome contribution to the growing literature on refugee protection issues in the Asia Pacific region. Angus Francis and Rowena Maguire remind us in the introduction to *Protection of refugees and displaced persons in the Asia Pacific region* that 35% of the world’s refugees live in the Asia Pacific region; providing a challenge to both states and civil society. The volume, written mainly from a legal perspective by a diverse range of authors, provides an overview of the major regional and international developments in refugee protection and explores the historical and political environment for the contemporary norms in the Asia Pacific region.

At the outset, the editors note that ‘Asia Pacific’ is a loose geographic term without political or geographical boundaries, but nonetheless linked in many ways; particularly through the movement of people. The introductory chapter sets out the international law and regional agreements governing refugee flows. Most salient of these are the 1951 UN Refugee convention (and the 1967 Protocol which extended its geographical coverage beyond Europe) and the Bali Process, which was largely engineered by Australia to prevent irregular movement of people in the region and provides a framework for

regional discussions on people smuggling and border control. Regional processes appear to have become increasingly important in balancing state interests and the rights of individual refugees and while there is no legal obligation for states to share the responsibility for the protection and care of refugees, the desirability of this is set out in the Preamble of the UNHCR Convention. However, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, all key countries in the region, are not part of the UNHCR Convention or other human rights treaties; testing the international community's response. This leads the author of Chapter Two to comment on the tensions between regionalism and a problem with global dimensions; asking are refugee problems regional or international? Chapter Two focusses on lessons Australia can learn from regional agreements in other parts of the world. However recent developments in refugee processing in industrial countries have seen more restrictive asylum policies based on border security concerns. Australia has perhaps been the greatest exemplar of these.

Refugee issues give us insights into the blurred lines between domestic and international politics. In Chapter Three we are reminded that in a highly globalised world, civil society has a role in interstate governance processes in the region. Although there is a strong focus on legal protection, Chapter Four also highlights the way in which refugees and asylum seekers are active agents in their own search for protection in a rapidly changing environment. Where in the region they seek protection is determined by a number of factors. Choices are made based on issues such as where they can receive medical care or where children can go to school, or even based on rumours of increased access to resettlement opportunities. In this they can be vulnerable to the manipulation of unscrupulous people smugglers out to profit from fear. The chapter outlines the complexities involved in securing safe passage, highlighting the role of lawyers and the need for international cooperation to provide protection rather than deflecting asylum seekers elsewhere or deterring them.

The following chapters cover the particular situation in a number of Asian states; the issue of citizenship for Indo Chinese refugees who arrived in China in the late 1970s, the legal rights of refugees in Hong Kong, the impact of the refugee regime in Malaysia on a regional solution, the challenges and opportunities in respecting refugee law in Indonesia, the protracted refugee situation on the Thai-Myanmar border and internally displaced people in Northern Thailand. Read together, these chapters provide an overview of the differential access to socioeconomic rights across the region. Each chapter provides insights into not only the legal situation in each country, but key issues common in the debates surrounding asylum and refugeehood; the dire reality of detention, the rapidly changing situation and the narrowing protection space at policy level, the ways in which colonisation facilitated labour market migration which over time has morphed into forced migration flows, and the protected refugee situations in the region which have attracted less media coverage than the flows of boat people in the late 1970s.

But not all forced migrants cross international borders. Those moving within a country's border are referred to as internally displaced people (IDPs). Their situation is not governed by any international law; however the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* are based on international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law.

Chapter 11 analyses the situation of IDPs in Northern Thailand. The last two chapters focus on the relatively new phenomena of climate induced migration producing IDPs and those who cross international borders. Illustrated with examples from Bangladesh, the last chapter highlights how increasingly states will need to come to grips with the multiple effects of climate change. Policies will be needed to respond to the different types of environmental conditions that lead to displacement.

There is no law covering resettlement to countries such as New Zealand, nor do all refugees and asylum seekers want to be resettled in an industrialised country. Several of the authors remind us that poor countries in the region and those bordering countries with internal instability carry a disproportionately large refugee burden with most asylum seekers remain in the country in which they first seek asylum and these are usually the countries closest to home. Read together the book reminds us that despite a degree of state generosity, most refugees in our region lack effective protection; heightening the role of civil society organisations to act as advocates and providers of services across the region.

The volume assumes readers will have a certain amount of previous knowledge of the refugee regime. The most likely readership will be those seeking to place refugee protection and the protection of other forced migrants in a regional perspective. Although it was only published in 2013, it is already a historical text as Australian policies have moved at a fast pace towards extreme means of deterrence.

New Zealand and three Pacific Island states (Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Nauru) have acceded to the Refugee Convention. Interestingly, neither the role of Pacific Island states, nor New Zealand is explicitly included in the book, however it is still relevant to New Zealand readers as increasingly our refugee laws and policies are reliant on and reflective of regional responses. For example, New Zealand is an active member of the Bali Process. The Refugee Quota, whereby New Zealand accepts 750 refugees a year mandated by UNHCR, now preserves 150 places for refugees from the Asia Pacific region. Chapter Two is particularly relevant to New Zealand as our policies and legislation in recent years have been influenced by Australia; the Immigration Amendment Act (2013) focussing on so called *Mass Arrivals* (if an unscheduled vessel carrying more than 30 people arrived), was developed to act as a deterrent to asylum seekers and indicates mandatory detention and restricts rights to family reunification. These are all hallmarks of the contemporary Australian policies. (Of note, no boat has ever arrived in such circumstance since Captain Cook). The New Zealand government has also been ambiguous in whether or not it would support off-shore processing, or accept refugees from Australia's offshore processing centres on Manus Island or Nauru. In this New Zealand is no different than other countries in the region where "traditional norms of state sovereignty and non-interference, are overlaid by pervasive regional and global trends towards border security."

As elsewhere in the region, New Zealand nongovernmental organisations such as Red Cross, Refugees as Survivors, and the National Refugee Network, and global civil society organisations such as Amnesty International which also have branches here, provide essential advocacy for refugees and asylum seekers, which is strengthened when part of an international network.

The need to address those displaced by climate change in our region is also pertinent to New Zealand. In May, the Court of Appeal's decision declining refugee status to a Kiribati family concluded that the family met the "sociological definition," but not the legal definition of a refugee. The decision will result in the family being deported to Kiribati, an island state known to be heavily impacted by climate change. The case drew international media attention as the region and the rest of the world grapple with solutions to this new form of forced displacement.

Australia, our nearest neighbour in the region has not been directly tested by climate change refugees, but it can be clearly seen to be promoting its own interests ahead of refugee rights. New Zealand has been shielded by their approaches, leaving the wider region to act as a buffer to both Australia and New Zealand. This should be a concern to all who are interested in the region and its people.

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Hank Glassman, *The Face of Jizō: Image and Cult in Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2012, xii + 292 pp. ISBN 978-0-8248-3443-2 (hdbk.); ISBN 978-0-8248-3581-1 (pbk.)

The bodhisattva Jizō occupies a central place amongst Buddhist deities in Japan, overseeing the zones of transitions, interstices and peripheries. Minimalist stone Jizō figures, adorned with distinctive red bibs and caps, are often encountered in small clusters or shrines on roadsides, near cemeteries, or in shaded groves. As Hank Glassman emphasises from the outset however, Jizō images appear in a wider range of media, in *kakemono* hanging scrolls, *emakimono* narrative handscrolls, *mandara* spiritual or cosmological diagrams, wood and metal sculptures, *inbutsu* woodblock prints and *fuda* amulets, *kyōgen* masks, anthropomorphic stones, and *itabutsu* painted slats. These, and locational sites of Jizō, are extensively illustrated in colour plates and monochrome figures throughout this volume. Glassman emphasises the ambivalent status of Jizō in Japanese settings: these diverse images facilitated effective mediation between banal everyday existence and elevated spiritual experience. It is this culturally significant function, rather than any immediate aesthetic moment, that still informs their status today.

Glassman draws on Aby Warburg's iconological approach to understanding the meaningful impacts of images and art objects through the diverse interacting forces of their own socio-historical contexts. A Warburgian perspective recognises the numinous dimensions of otherwise utilitarian objects in terms of their special significance within the "doctrinal, political, economic, and social" worlds in which they were conceived, crafted and used. For Glassman, the development of a Jizō cult in medieval Japan provides a medium for the construction of close appreciations of the religious culture of these times, and the role of religious imagery as a medium for religious belief and understandings of the world. Today this approach provides a window on that past, a medium through

which contemporary readers can develop some useful construction of the ways Japanese viewers between the later twelfth and the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries could employ images to mediate their own constructions of their changing worlds. Within these contexts, Jizō images acted as guides for the *muen*, unconnected dead, and intermediaries in the liminal spaces between everyday social experience and the elevated realms of the gods, and the inexplicable forces of life and death, childbirth and infant death, fertility, loss and regeneration, and this world and the next.

Glassman looks to sources in both visual imagery and contemporary texts to inform a fulsome, balanced, account of the particular appeal of Jizō in Japan. He situates the emergence of Jizō within the broader development of Buddhism and associated beliefs through the Heian and Kamakura periods to the establishment of a pervasive Jizō cult in the thirteenth century. He explains this singular attraction of Jizō over other deities through the “emotional proximity” of his friendly, compassionate nature, especially evident in the benign disposition of Jizō portraits. He acknowledges also the ease with which Jizō could be accommodated into existing pantheons of Buddhist and Shintō belief and tradition, the scope of his functional presence in medieval Japanese social institutions, his adaptability into practices of dance or ritual performance, and his effectiveness in mediating between everyday experience and the less explicable forces of nature and beyond. Most importantly, he explains the subtle difference between apprehensions of powerful “living images” of the moving, living “voice” of Jizō, mediated through these diverse objects, rather than as detached pictorial representations.

These explanations, the explication of the theoretical foundations of Glassman’s construction, and a summary of the remaining scope of this volume, occupy its introductory chapter “The Iconology of Jizō.” The second chapter, “Monastic Devotion to Jizō,” examines the historical and geographic spread of the Jizō cult, from later Heian court circles through its diffusion into the devotional and pedagogic monastic engagements of the Kamakura period. The images selected to illustrate this expansion clearly demonstrate the conventional attributes associated with Jizō (benign visage, *shakujō* staff, *nyoi hōju* wish-granting jewel, twin lotus pads, and suggestions of mobility) and the delicate, engaging expressions of love and caring associated with him within these monastic settings. As Glassman notes, even the inflexions of twentieth century and Western critiques of these images seem imbued with these qualities of affection and care. The analysis of contemporary documents, including inscriptions and contents of sculptures, reinforces the persistence, and conviction, of these sentiments.

Here Glassman’s construction of a narrative development of the spread of religious engagements, connections, beliefs and practices from the Kasuga Jizō cult through the lives, teachings, practices and influential presence of monastic figures like Jōkei (1155-1213CE), Kaikei (fl. 1183-1236CE), or Ryōhen (fl. c. 1250CE), establishes a convincingly detailed reconstruction of the historical, doctrinal, devotional, and cognitive fabric of these times. The scope of Glassman’s account embraces the spread of Jizō worship right across to the Kantō, but it also acknowledges the limits of Jizō appeal, and the tensional territory between Jizō worship and competing frameworks of belief and practice of what he calls the “most ‘fundamentalist’ of the Pure Land thinkers” of the time.

Glassman's account isn't confined to visual imagery of Jizō. In his third chapter, "The Dance of Jizō: Ecstasy, Possession, and Performance," he explores the central importance of ritual performance, Jizō *asobi*, or play, and *odori nenbutsu*, ecstatic dancing, for Jizō worship in Nara and Kyoto. The close webs of clerical practice, art manufacture, and influence, monastic patrons and followers explored previously are drawn together here with the study of the roles and practices of religious performers in the development of the Jizō cult in Nara and Kyoto. The scope of their performances includes shamanistic ritual theatre, trance and dreams, oracular engagements, female spirit possession, grand celebratory spectacles, *yamabushi* and *taue* dances, and ecstatic religious dances. Grassman explains how sacred shrine dances, including the performances of female dancers whose own marginalised social status occupied precisely the same liminal territories as those who came under Jizō's careful guidance, occupied a central place in religious life and practice. Their various classifications of *miko*, *shirabyōshi*, *imayō*, *kugutsu*, and *yūjo*, (and *kagura*'o male shrine dancers), find later parallels in similar specialisations of the *yūjo* "women for play" of the Yoshiwara licensed brothel quarters of Edo; women who again occupied – whatever elevated contrivance was celebrated around their identities – a marginalised status in Edo society that placed them on those same peripheries. Grassman's account of these figures and performances is again supported by his detailed analytical accounts of the settings in which they performed, of *kyōgen* theatre narratives and legends, of contemporary *nikki* (diaries) and other documentary media, and in his fulsome descriptions of the lavish, frenzied extravagance of the Jizō *mōde*, and Jizō *no hayashimono*, or Jizō *odori*, the "Jizō dance" itself, and the wider social, economic and religious institutions that surrounded them.

Perhaps the most familiar associations of Jizō are as the caring protector of children and childbirth, and in particular, loving guide of the souls of stillborn or dead children. The fourth chapter of this volume, "Stones, Fertility, and the Unconnected Dead," explores these themes, situating them in the associations of Jizō worship with *muensho*, "unconnected places," marginal or transitional territories like graveyards, riverbeds, or crossroads introduced previously. Here Grassman explains the significance of the distinctive red bibs that frequently adorn Jizō figures and stupas. His description of images of the souls of dead children suspended in *sai no kawara* – "children's limbo" – and endlessly stacking small stone stupas, explains the recurrent presence of stone in Jizō worship, as stone figures and stupa, piled up gravestones, monuments to the unconnected dead, and the complementary phenomena of stone phallic forms as "guarantors of fertility" and safe childbirth. Again, his arguments are interwoven with the visual evidence of Jizō imagery, together with a diverse range of legends, contemporary documents, and apocryphal accounts.

Glassman's development of his narrative through each of these chapters is purposeful and informative. His accounts provide sufficient contemporary evidence to facilitate detailed reconstructions of the social, doctrinal, geographic and architectural settings for Jizō worship, and critically informed appreciations of the mediating force of Jizō art, literature and performance. Glassman's contextualising narrative is well supported. It interweaves contemporary visual, documentary, and anecdotal evidence,

with perspectives from recent Jizō scholarship. Beside its extensive illustrative matter, key terms are glossed within the text, and complemented in an Asian script glossary. The depth of research is evident both within the text and in the extensive endnotes, bibliographies and index that follow it.

Though the specific focus of this study is on the hybrid utilitarian and numinous functions of Jizō within the religious culture of medieval Japan, it serves also to propose a lens for exploring the functions and meanings of visual images transferable to other figures and other cultural settings. The diversity of Glassman's attentions informs – as Warburg might have commended – the construction of holistic appreciations of religious and visual phenomena, practices and rituals, appreciations and sensibilities of distant cultural contexts. The diverse scope of this volume will provide engaging reading for students of art history and visual culture, Buddhism, and Japanese cultural studies in general.

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Linda Cooke Johnson, *Women of the Conquest Dynasties: Gender and Ideology in Liao and Jin China*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011, xxxiii + 251pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3404-3 (hbk)

From the 10th century until the 13th, present-day Inner Mongolia, Jilin, Heilongjiang and Liaoning Provinces were ruled by the non-Chinese “conquest dynasties”, the (Kitan) Liao and the (Jurchen) Jin. The Jin supplanted the Liao and also took control of much of present-day North China and the predominantly ethnic Han populations there who had previously been ruled by the Song dynasty. The Liao and Jin peoples were the precursors of the Mongols and the Manchus who subsequently conquered and ruled these northern lands, the land to the south that we now think of as the heartland of southern China and much more besides. Linda Cooke Johnson has given us a rich account of the lives and achievements of Liao and Jin women and shown how their societies afforded them dramatically different challenges and opportunities from those available to women in the more highly literate, more settled agricultural societies to the south. Liao and Jin women were skilled at riding horses, hunting wild animals including bears and tigers, and herding domesticated animals. Elite women fought alongside and on behalf of their husbands, fathers and sons as leaders of militia and armies and defenders of cities. In the challenging pastoral, forest and urban landscapes they inhabited, the Han Chinese norm of the sequestration of women and the separation of the sexes did not apply. Women's work required a high level of strength, skill and mobility. They were free to walk about in cities and towns, and to eat, drink, converse, sing, play musical instruments and dance with men in social situations inside and outside their homes.

Johnson shows that Liao and Jin sexual relationships were framed differently from those governed by Han Chinese norms. Sexual relationships were often a key element of high level political and military alliances, with or without marriage. She recounts

numerous instances where women were abducted, raped and married by force in both elite and sub-elite social contexts. Regardless of how the marriage was accomplished, for most Liao and Jin women, marriage was the central event of their lives. As soon as she married, a woman's children and her property belonged to her husband's family, to whom she owed her labour and her loyalty. Though some women retained ties with their own natal families, they could never return to them. If widowed, their usual choices in both Liao and Jin societies were to "follow their husbands in death" or to enter a levirate marriage with one of their husband's younger kinsmen, preserving their property and, if they lived, their labour, within the family. Subsequently, and partly as the result of contact with Han Chinese culture, chaste widowhood, sometimes accompanied by self-mutilation, and Buddhist withdrawal from society became possible alternatives.

According to Johnson, it was the custom of both Jurchen and Kitan families to give betrothal gifts (bride price) to the families who gave the brides. As a consequence, the birth of daughters was welcomed in anticipation of the riches they would bring their families when they married. The bride's parents received gifts including clothing and livestock and the groom was also obliged to work for the bride's father for three years after the marriage. Johnson believes that when Kitan and Jurchen families began to replace bride price with dowry, the status of women declined (p. 105). She implies that the costs imposed on a bride's parents by the need to provide her with a dowry led families to value their daughters less than when bride price was the norm. Nevertheless, she is also aware that the dowries bestowed on Han Chinese women by their families in Song China were a form of inherited property settled on the women themselves. This property could include money, jewellery, clothing and land. The woman had some discretion over its use during her marriage and it could also be taken into a new marriage. In Han Chinese settings, depending on economic circumstances, dowry and bride price could operate either as alternatives or in tandem, in a complex web of exchanges of goods and services between families.

Both the physical territory and the cultural worlds inhabited by Kitan and Jurchen people constituted a "shifting landscape" and identities were "malleable" (p. xxiv), as a result of the dynamic interplay over centuries between pastoral and forest cultural values and those of Han China. Despite efforts to create writing systems for them and to foster their use, the Altaic Kitan and Jurchen languages gradually fell out of use under the influence of the Chinese language, with its rich traditions in literature, history, philosophy and administration. Education for men and women came to be dominated by Han traditions and both the Liao and Jin adopted Han clothing styles, silk and tea. Their legal and administrative institutions came to be modelled on those of a Chinese-style imperial state. Johnson demonstrates that belief systems displayed a much more eclectic range of ideas and influences, with Buddhism, Daoism, animism, shamanism, the symbols of the zodiac and Zoroastrian iconography all represented. This is a timely reminder that Confucian dominance of the official discourse of governance and of history need not blind us to the multiplicity of opportunities for the individual choices and actions that drove cultural change, both for the north and for Song dynasty China.

Since the late 20th century, discussions of culture in academic disciplines including anthropology, sociology, history and linguistics have often located the concepts of

individual identity and agency at the centre of understandings of what cultures are, how individuals position themselves within them and how the actions of individual people transform cultures. Johnson is no exception. For her, agency is “constructing one’s own identity, acting on one’s own initiative” (p. 22). Women in Liao and Jin society demonstrated agency, she argues, when they chose their own first marriage partners and when they resisted the expectation that widows would either follow their husbands in death or marry their dead husbands’ junior kin through the levirate. Imperial women participated in the politics of the court as wives, mothers and regents, in ways often similar to the roles of Han Chinese imperial women. Johnson’s account of Liao and Jin history highlights the family, local or centrally organised militias and armies and the state as the collective political, social and economic structures through which both individuals and groups sought to survive and to flourish. This was the demanding context in which agency and identity for individuals were wrought. Johnson has used a satisfyingly eclectic mix of sources. The Liao and Jin dynastic histories, compiled under the Yuan, provide biographies of imperial women and of exemplary women, *lienü*, whose words and deeds were deemed worthy of note by the historians.

The chapters of Johnson’s book are thematically organised and she presents aspects of the narratives of the lives of the same women in different chapters of the book in a way that is sometimes unsettling and repetitive. But her use of epitaphs inscribed on stone stele, tomb murals, paintings and objects excavated from Liao tombs greatly enhances the picture of Liao and Jin culture that emerges from consideration of the textual evidence. Details of what people wore, ate and drank and of the dwellings in which they lived all emerge from the material record. A magnificent painting dated between 1200 and 1209 in the collection of the Jilin Provincial Museum adorns the cover of this book and Johnson ably mines its riches for evidence of Jurchen culture. Painted by a Jin court painter, it depicts Lady Wenji, a Han dynasty figure, who in the second century A.D. was captured by the Xiongnu, married by force to a Xiongnu chieftain and only after twelve years ransomed and returned to the Han court, though forced to leave her husband and her two sons behind. Her story was depicted by artists over many centuries and in this painting, the Jin artist has portrayed the scene with contemporary Jin details. Dressed in animal skins, rough Jurchen attendants lead Wenji’s spirited warhorse across the steppe on the way back to the court. Wenji herself, dressed in riding boots, trousers and silk robes denoting her high rank, sits astride her horse, confidently facing whatever the future may bring. Johnson’s book would have been even more pleasurable to read if the publisher’s budget had allowed the reproduction of more images in similar high quality full colour.

Johnson acknowledges the difficulty of evaluating the values and biases that must be embedded in the textual sources she relies on (p. 132), but nevertheless sometimes cannot resist taking sides. For example, we learn that the Liao Empress Rende is said to have been humane, kind and a devout Buddhist, “but the reality was less flattering” (p. 130). In another case, the Liao Empress Yide was accused of adultery with a court musician to whom she was said to have given rich gifts and written letters. Johnson comments, “Of course we know that the letters were forged” (p. 144). At this distance in time and space from the events of the narrative and with only the texts and the material

evidence to go on, it would be the safer course to consider the sequence in which the texts were produced, their likely authorship and who stood to benefit from one or the other narrative. Johnson achieves this admirably in her discussion of the likelihood that the Liao Empress Dowager Chengtian had a love affair, resulting in the birth of a child, with her Grand Counsellor Han Derang (pp. 154-162). Overall, she has done an admirable job of opening up to an English-speaking audience many aspects of the lives, the social positions and the cultural contributions of the women of the Liao and Jin dynasties.

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Peter Wynn Kirby, *Troubled Natures: Waste, Environment, Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011. xii + 250 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3428-9

Environment, waste, pollution and sustainability are the key notions of Peter Wynn Kirby's *Troubled Natures*. The author discusses the "troubled natures" of Japan through the lens of a cultural anthropologist, and analyses Japan's environment within a sociocultural context. He narrates personal stories of Japanese people by describing their relations with nature and their responses to many of the environmental hazards that exist in the industrial, highly technologically developed and urbanised Japan. In Kirby's words, this book "interprets the social and environmental challenges of a complex, non-Western society via a penetrating cultural analysis of waste that unearths unexpectedly troubled natures at the heart of Japanese life" (pp.2-3).

Eight chapters cover a broad range of issues from physiological responses of the Japanese public to toxins, media involvement in coverage of dioxin pollution, discourse on the nature in Japan (although primarily from a Western point of view), crow eradication campaigns in Tokyo, pollution, both social and environmental and the links between the two, declining fertility and constructing sustainability "Japanese-style." Other themes include garbage collections schemes, the notion of purity, whaling, golf courses on landfill sites and a growing environmental activism in Japan. The chapters are organised thematically around the environment, waste and pollution. However, the book lacks the main argument that guarantees a logical flow between the chapters. The loosely connected chapters provide the reader with the opportunity to read separate chapters as a series of essays without necessarily following a certain order.

During 1998-99, Kirby conducted a participant observation research project in the "Izawa" community located in the "Azuma" ward of western Tokyo.¹ In Chapter Two the author discusses protests against a large garbage-compacting plant located in Izawa. In particular, he analyses the conflict that emerged between a number of antipollution activists, who were mainly elderly women whose health was affected by dangerously harmful toxins released from the plant, and those whose health seemed to be unaffected

1 Author uses pseudonyms for naming the ward and the community.

by pollution and who preferred to ignore the issue completely. The activists wanted the garbage-compacting plant to be closed or at least modified. However, for those who were unaffected by the pollution, the protection of the 'safe' image of the community was more important than closing the plant. They were afraid that the activists could damage this safe image and that this would affect high property values in Izawa. Over time those suffering from "Azuma Disease", as it came to be quickly known, managed to win some compensation from the government by producing 'scientific evidence' of increased toxicity in the area.

Kirby returns to the story of the Izawa community and their antipollution struggle in Chapters 6 and 8. In 2009 he revisited Izawa again after Tokyo and the Azuma Ward government finally decided to cease operating the plant (p.190). This decision was not a result of the environmental protest that some Azuma residents continued over the years, but was due to a change of policy based on the idea that burning plastics safely at high temperatures prevents production of dioxins and other dangerous chemicals.

In Chapter Three Kirby focuses on another ethnographic site, "Horiuchi", a community located in the same Azuma ward.² In 1999, the Japanese public was smitten by a pollution scare caused by toxic pollution coming from a cluster of small incinerators beyond the city's borders in the Saitama prefecture. The waste was coming from Tokyo. Although the source of the pollution could be localised, the spread of it affected the whole nation as the contaminated area included Saitama's famed spinach fields that distributed spinach all around Japan. TV-Asahi's "News Station", which was the most popular news programme at the time, announced the news about dioxin pollution in the Saitama vegetable fields. This immediately resulted in a boycotting of Saitama Prefecture vegetables by supermarket chains. Kirby shows the power of media in manipulating the degree of anxiety about the environment among the Japanese public.

In response to the "News Station" announcement, Saitama farmers were able to present 'scientific evidence' showing that vegetables from Saitama fields have relatively safe dioxin concentrations. Further investigation lifted the ban and Japanese consumer and supermarkets returned to buying Saitama's vegetables. The important point that Kirby makes in this chapter is that dioxin pollution cannot be simply localised to its source; it spreads beyond regional geographic borders and affects everyone in Japan. Mediascape and community gossips constructed a cobweb of anxiety expressed by his interviewers. Based on the author's interviews with his informants, Kirby connects anxieties about pollution and illness with ever growing worries about the Japanese economic recession that started to spread in 1990s after the 1980s economic bubble burst. Kirby develops this link further in Chapter Seven showing that the Japanese government in 1990s and 2000s made an effort to stimulate both economic growth and population growth, as a response to public anxiety caused by the economic recession and population decline.

The initial chapters, specifically-focused on Izawa and Horiuchi are followed by three chapters that discuss more general matters, such that in Chapter Four Kirby

2 "Horiuchi" is another pseudonym.

discusses the Japanese understanding of love of nature that “revolves partly around nostalgia for what are considered traditional relations with nature (that is, village life in an agrarian community)” (p.69). With more than three-quarters of Japan’s population living now in an urban environment, the notion of nostalgia for the lost village community started in Japan with promotion by the government in 1970s of the *furusato zukuri* ‘project’. *Furusato-zukuri* can be loosely translated as the creating of a native place. Many authors referred to *furusato-zukuri* and the feeling of nostalgia associated with this process. Kirby starts with a literature review on the topic. In the second part Kirby shares his own observations of utilising nostalgia through ‘consuming’ nature for constructing the image of native place by the Japanese people. He uses the well-known symbols of *hanami* (cherry blossom viewing), *ikebana*, *matsuri* (local festival) food stalls, seasonal cuisine etc. to suggest that the more highly prized nature (or culture) is “the more aggressively it is consumed” (p.84) in Japan. Although the chapters have interesting new data, the author’s link between nature and nostalgia does not develop this argument beyond already familiar territory.

In Chapter Five Kirby uses the case of “scavenging crows (*karasu*)” to discuss the attempts of Tokyo municipal government to enforce sustainability. In this chapter, as in the rest of the book, Kirby suggests that there is something very specific about Japan and the Japanese way of dealing with the environment and environmental concerns. In broader terms, the Japanese attitude towards nature is different to other countries and cultures (p.85), and this serves to demonstrate that the Japanese unique attitude towards nature requires some comparison with other cultures and countries. Without such a comparative analysis Kirby’s argument remains an interesting possibility in need for further evidence.

Pollution, outcasts, and exclusion are at the centre of Chapter Six. Kirby connects environmental pollution with the social pollution that results in ostracising victims of environmental pollution. The notion of purity and how it is constructed and challenged over time in Japan makes up the main theme of this chapter. Here Kirby again repeats his argument that the Japanese case is unique to “the extent to which environmental pollution can convert to social pollution” (p.121). However, without comparison with other countries and cases of how pollution and impurity is understood and treated in other places, this argument, again, requires further development.

Everyone who is interested in Japan knows that the issue of national fertility, and especially low fertility rates in post-war Japan, always preoccupies media, government and public attention. In Chapter Seven Kirby discusses economic growth, pollution and anxieties about fertility. The analysis of secondary resources provides a useful historical and cultural context for Kirby’s field work. Personal narratives full of anxiety about the potential effect of toxic waste on fertility, childbirth defects combined with concerns about prolonged economic decline, and worries about a national future, make for a very interesting chapter.

The problematic notion of sustainability, and more accurately of sustainable development, is discussed in Chapter Eight. Explaining the contradiction of the notion “sustainable development” Kirby traces the response of the Japanese government to

the growing world-wide obsession with sustainability.³ In this chapter Kirby again provides historical background on sustainable life since early modern Japan through the era of fast economic growth of 1950-1970s and finishes with personal narratives on nature and sustainable development collected during his field work. He concludes by suggesting that Japan is no longer “behind” in terms of sustainable development. However, the second part of his conclusion refers to Japanese uniqueness again where he suggests that Japan emphasises “the *developmental* half of phrase” (p.192). The problem with such an argument that emphasises a unique Japanese way of dealing with nature, and particularly with ‘troubled natures’, is that it is often left unsupported as no comparisons are made with other countries, Western or non-Western. Although a comparative analysis remains beyond the scope of this book, its absence prevents the development of an argument about uniquely Japanese ways of dealing with nature. Hence, the last part of the argument that emphasises “the *developmental* half of phrase” can be easily challenged, as it is hard to find a post-industrial society, or any other developed country, which maintains the right balance between industrial or economic development and sustainability. What makes Japan so different? For scholars of Japan sometimes it may be hard not to fall into trap of viewing some attributes of Japanese culture and society as unique, especially as the Japanese uniqueness is so widely promoted by the Japanese public, Japanese media and some scholars of Japan.

The book was completed before March 11, 2011, when the earthquake and tsunami resulted in the Fukushima nuclear plant accident. These natural disasters and the nuclear accident that followed forced the people of Japan, together with the rest of the world, to rethink human relations with nature. March 11 in Japan became a reminder about human vulnerability in the face of nature as a result of the deadly tsunami. At the same time, it is also a reminder about human responsibility for engagement with nature after the explosion of one of the Fukushima nuclear reactors. In the context of these tragic events Kirby’s book provides a particularly important reading that discusses many issues related to nature in Japan, the treatment of nature by Japanese people and their understanding of nature. It also provides a lesson in broader terms, how members of post-industrial society contextualise their lives within the natural environment that became badly damaged as a result of their economic success and prosperity. Anyone with an interest in Japanese nature, environment and sustainability will find Kirby’s book extremely interesting. Finally, the last comment is on the language of the book, and the narrative flow, as the book is beautifully written in a way that makes reading very enjoyable.

Reviewed by ELENA KOLESOVA
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3 The notion of ‘sustainable development’ brings together two confronting forces. One includes environmentalists who are trying to protect nature from intervention of industrialists. Another represents industrialists whose interests focus on development.

Erich Kolig, *Conservative Islam, A Cultural Anthropology*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2012, ix + 381 pp. ISBN 9780739174241 (cloth); 9780739174258 (electronic)

Erich Kolig's exploration of the nature of conservative Islam is a useful guide to understanding the religious and other pressures which have created the extreme forms of Islam that have received the most attention in the West in recent years. Kolig makes it clear that those engaged on the violent fringe of Islam are an absolute minority, but they have absorbed the attentions of western politicians and media through carefully calculated acts of violence, stirred up mass hysteria that is often distinctly racist and caused consternation among western intellectuals who had declared that because they and their friends were atheists, religion no longer mattered.

Is the resurgence of conservative Islamic forms such as Wahabism and Salafism an attempt to purify the faith, a stand against globalisation, a response to the failure of some second generation diasporic Muslims to find a place in western societies, an attempt to re-establish the caliphate or an armed revolt against American military adventurism? Kolig's book provides no single answer, but seeks to explore the theological underpinnings of conservative beliefs and behaviour by looking at what the Qu'ran says and how this is interpreted by conservative scholars. It is worth repeating the obvious here, that for pious Muslims, Islam is a faith that is lived 24 hours a day, not just something that happens at the mosque on Friday. Kolig also attempts to put the matter under discussion into a wider anthropological setting by drawing on the author's knowledge of traditional cultures in South East Asia and the Pacific.

In seeking to understanding the nature and theological sources of conservative Islam, Kolig's book raises a number of issues, including the status of women, the Danish cartoon controversy, the nature of suicide bombers and the question of whether Islam is capable of adapting itself to, or at last finding an accommodation with what is vaguely understood as the west. Kolig is especially sceptical about the last issue and raises the often repeated question of what Islam would have been like if it had experienced a Reformation such as that which sundered Christianity.

It seems to me, however, more pertinent to ask what would have happened if Islamic scholars had applied higher criticism to the Qur'an as it was to the Bible in the 18th and 19th centuries. In any case either option seems unlikely. Unlike the Gospels, with their mixture of history, prophecy, teachings, parables and sayings, the Qur'an contains only what is believed to be the Word of God. Anything concerning the Prophet himself is confined separately to the hadith, which are graded according to veracity and reliability. For all Muslims, the Qur'an is the word of Allah transmitted to Prophet Mohammed by Angel Gibral. It is immutable, irrefutable and eternal.

For conservative Muslims, there is no possibility of questioning any aspect of the Qu'ran and hadith are interpreted in the most conservative way. Thus, intellectual accommodation of any kind by conservative Muslims seems unlikely. Kolig expresses profound scepticism about any writer who seeks to find accommodation with Islam or who he suspects of downplaying what he sees as its worst attributes. He is unkind to feminist writers on Islam and seems especially dismissive of Karen Armstrong.

One might argue, however, that it is only by engaging with the text of the Qu'ran and pointing out that there are alternative and more optimistic interpretations, that western audiences will be drawn into trying to understand how and why conservative – and often radically conservative – Muslims believe what they do.

It is undeniable that to modern, western readers, many of the injunctions of the Qu'ran and certain verses in the hadith are unpalatable. Ideas that women be submissive to their husbands and male relatives are repellent. However, there are female Muslim scholars trying to find an accommodation between their faith and feminism. In dismissing feminist writers as apologists, as Kolig does, seems to me to equally unpalatable.

Conservative Islam is an excellent work for those seeking to understand the contextual and theological underpinnings of what is regarded by many as a confusing and hostile expression of Islam. It is well researched and written, even if it is sometimes less sympathetic than it might be on those with different views. This is not to say that it does not have problems. In dealing with homosexuality, Kolig is somewhat narrow in his approach. In a society in which young men and women are strictly segregated, limited opportunities may mean that early sexual urges may well be expressed with members of the same sex. Kolig refers to homosexuality only among men, but one needs to remember that 'homo' in this case means 'same,' not 'male,' and sexual relations between women certainly also exist.

Conservative Islam assumes that the reader has some prior knowledge of the topic and is comfortable with its terminology. It would probably also help to have a broad understanding of Arabic history and to have an understanding of the other Abrahamic faiths, the People of the Book (أهل الكتاب / Ahl al-Kitāb) as Prophet Mohammed called them. This would greatly help in placing the emergence of conservative groups like the Wahabis and Salafis in a broader context.

The spelling in this book is somewhat eccentric. The author seems to have decided to replace 's' with 'z' at every opportunity, which leads to such peculiarities as 'unrealzitic.' One oddity which does stand out is on page 238 where Shi'ism is spelled as Schi'ism. While the Sunni regard the Shi'ites as schismatic I am not sure that the word is the origin of their name.

Reviewed by PHILIP CASS
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Ching-wah Lam, *The Idea of Chinese Music in Europe up to the Year 1800*, Beijing: Central Conservatory of Music Press, 2013, vi +142pp, 6 musical examples, bibliography, appendix, index, ISBN: 978-7-81096-589-7

The musical encounters between China and Europe from the late sixteenth century onwards form one of the most intriguing chapters in the history of Sino-Western cultural relations. Yet the Western literature on the subject is remarkably lacking. Ching-wah Lam, who teaches Chinese music history at Hong Kong Baptist University, is one of few pioneer scholars who have been working diligently in the field since the

1980s. His book, *The Idea of Chinese Music in Europe Up to the Year 1800*, is the first volume of a projected series of foreign language publications on Chinese music by the newly-established Central Conservatory of Music Press in Beijing. It is a useful addition to the procession of “image” studies following Raymond Dawson’s *The Chinese Chameleon: An analysis of European Conceptions of Chinese Civilization* and Colin Mackerras’ *Western Images of China* albeit with a much narrower, thematic, temporal and spatial coverage.

Originally written as an M. Litt (in Musicology) thesis at the University of Oxford in 1981 under the supervision of the late musicologist Dennis Arnold (1926-86), this broad-brushed and engagingly narrated book “is concerned....with European ideas of Chinese art, and in particular with ideas of the art of music in China, and the effect of these ideas, however marginal, on Western music” (p. 2). It consists of a brief three-page introduction, 10 short chapters (varying from 5 to 23 pages) and a conclusion of about three pages. It is not new research as almost all of the chapters have been published in academic journals such as the Taiwan-based *Chinese Culture*, the Leiden-based *CHIME* and the Beijing-based *Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music*. The bibliography is reasonably substantial (15 pages), indicating a wide perusal of standard and more obscure Western primary and secondary sources. Eight plates of Chinese instruments from Filippo Bonanni’s *Gabinetto Armonico* (Rome, 1723) are reproduced. However, a cursory look reveals that only two Chinese titles (essentially two versions of the same book) are listed. Obvious omissions include the works of Fang Hao, Qian Renkang, Frank Harrison, François Picard, and David Clarke. Two of Joyce Lindoff’s papers on “Missionaries, Keyboards and Musical Exchange in the Ming and Qing Courts” are listed but her publication on the role of music in the 1793 British embassy to China, the focus of Chapter 9 of Lam’s book, is not. Her collaborator Peter Allsop’s papers on Sino-Western musical exchange during the reign of the Kangxi Emperor are not listed either.

Arranged chronologically apart from the last chapter, the book begins with a brief account of Medieval travellers (Marco Polo, Benedict Goes, Ibn Battuta, and Odoric of Pordenone) and their rare sightings of Chinese (and Mongolian) music. This is followed by a short description of the incidental remarks on Chinese music by the sixteenth-century Portuguese adventurer Fernand Mendez Pinto, the Portuguese Dominican friar Gaspar da Cruz, and the Spanish clergyman Mendoza. Being the first European to remark upon Chinese music favourably and to take the trouble to understand some of the various musical instruments and singing styles, da Cruz has been an object of discussion by a number of Western scholars including Colin Mackerras and Jonathan Spence. However, Lam does not seem to be aware of the existence of their work. Nor does he seem to know that it was Kenneth Robinson, not Joseph Needham, who made a tentative identification of the Chinese musical instruments.

In Chapter Three, the shortest chapter of the book (just over four pages), Lam gives the title “The Establishment of the Jesuit Mission to China”. Yet instead of drawing the reader’s attention to the writings of the first Jesuits missionaries in China as one would expect, he simply retells the story of Matteo Ricci’s ingenious use of a Western keyboard instrument to intrigue the Wanli Emperor and his composition of

eight religious songs. Ricci's story, beguiling as it is, has been better told by a number of master storytellers, including Jonathan Spence. To be sure, in a survey of the vicissitudes of Western attitudes towards Chinese music Ricci's disparaging remarks on Chinese ritual instruments and ritual music practice are worth representing. But rather than simply rehashing the story, an analysis of its effect on the subsequent formation of a negative Western idea of Chinese music would have been more illuminating.

In Chapter Four the focus moves to the seventeenth century covering the accounts of Chinese band instruments, theatrical music and dance by the Englishman Peter Mundy during his short stay in Macao in 1637 and the "technical information on the history, theory and practice of the art in China" by the Portuguese Jesuit Alvarez Semedo in his *The History of that Great and Renowned Monarchy of China*. This chapter is well written and presents material that has not been previously noticed by other scholars. I find myself puzzled by the title of Chapter Five, "The Later Seventeenth Century: A Dutch Account". Contrary to what the title suggests, the content of the chapter covers not only the observations made by Dutch writers such as Johannes Nieuhoff, Isaac Voss and Olfert Dapper, but also those by other Europeans, such as the Spanish Dominican Friar Domingo Navarrete, the Austrian Jesuit missionary and astronomer Johannes Grueber, and the German Jesuit scholar and polymath Athanasius Kircher.

Chapter Six discusses Catholic missionary activities (mostly of Jesuits and the Italian Lazarist Pedrini) at the court of the Kangxi Emperor. This subject has been adequately investigated. The pioneer studies of Chinese scholars such as Wu Xiangxiang, Xi Zhenguan, Wang Rou, Wang Zhenya and Tang Kaijian aside, Peter Allsop and Joyce Lindoff's work, "Teodorico Pedrini: The Music and Letters of an 18th-century Missionary in China" (*Vincentian Heritage Journal* 27.2 [2007]), Gerlinde Gild-Bohne's *Das Lülü zhengyi xubian: Ein Jesuitentraktat über die europäische Notation in China von 1713* (Göttingen: Edition Re, 1991), Wai Yee Lulu Chiu's PhD dissertation "The Functions of Western Music in the Eighteenth-Century Chinese Court" (Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2007), are but three of a series of notable contributions to this subject. Yet Lam fails to draw on their findings and perspectives, indicating a lack of engagement with current scholarship.

Chapter Seven discusses writings of the "Sinologists of the Eighteenth Century". Once again I find myself baffled by the title of the chapter. It turns out that the "sinologists" Lam discusses are strictly speaking not sinologists. It would be hard-pressed to regard John Brown, Charles Burney, Jean-Philippe Rameau, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, François Arnaud, Pierre-Joseph Roussier, and Jean-Benjamin La Borde as sinologists.

Chapter Eight focuses on the work of the last French Jesuit J. J. M. Amiot with particular reference to his *Mémoire sur la musique des Chinois, tant anciens que modernes*. Despite his effort to build on Ysia Tchen's *La Musique chinoise en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Publications Orientalistes de France, 1975), Lam's narrative suffers from a lack of engagement with current scholarship. Not only does he fail to take notice of the new evidence presented in Yves Lenoir and Nicolas Standaert's edited volume *Les Danses rituelles chinoises d'après Joseph-Marie Amiot: Aux sources de l'ethnochorégraphie* (Namur: Presses Universitaires de Namur, 2005), he is also

oblivious to the research findings of Jim Levy, Kii-Ming Lo, and Nii Yoko. As a study that professes to be concerned with the effect of the ideas of Chinese music on Western music (p. 2) and “the later scholarship in this field” (p. 3), this is particularly disappointing.

Failing to take into consideration current scholarship also features prominently in the next two chapters of the book, which discuss the Macartney Mission of 1792-93 and the “Musical Elements of *Chinoiserie*” of the eighteenth century. As mentioned above, this book owes its origin to Lam’s M. Lit thesis completed at Oxford in 1981 and the bulk of the data for this book was gathered in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It is obvious that Lam has not kept up with developments thereafter.

There are quite a few mistakes, both factual and stylistic, throughout the book, betraying a degree of academic sloppiness and lack of careful editing. For example, the Nestorian monument was found outside of Changan (modern day Xian), not “outside Peking” (p. 1); it was the London-based German composer Karl Kambra who published the melody *Mou-lee-wha* (Molihua) “in Mendelssohnian form”, not Johann Christian Hüttner (p. 109); the missionary Domingo Navarrete was Spanish not Portuguese (p. 42). What precisely is the meaning of “English dilettanti, even among the factors resident in Canton, tried to study the Chinese language”? (p. 104). Lam is also not always careful with documenting his sources and on numerous occasions he uses direct quotations but fails to acknowledge their sources. As pointed out by Chiu elsewhere, Lam states that Kangxi had written a preface to *Lülü zhengyi*, but provides no source information for Kangxi’s preface. In the next sentence he quotes the Emperor as saying “that he knew well their (Chinese) musick would not please an European ear; but that every nation liked their own best” (pp. 52-53), providing John Bell’s *Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to Diverse Parts in Asia* (1763), Vol. 2, p. 62 as his source of information. But that reference is found on page 63.

In sum, this book, as a contribution to the study of European ideas of Chinese music, is not unsurpassed in the sweep of its coverage, depth of its knowledge, but is distinguished in its use of European sources, including original and translated texts. While Lam’s effort to retrieve bits and pieces of Western writings on Chinese music is commendable, his failure to offer an overarching order to these multifarious perspectives is disappointing. Moreover, Lam’s book lacks the breadth and consistency expected of a survey and fails to lead the reader to the wealth of scholarship that exists in the field.

Reviewed by HONG-YU GONG

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Phoebe H. Li, *A Virtual Chinatown. The Diasporic Mediasphere of Chinese Migrants in New Zealand*, Leiden: Brill, 2013, xvi + 198 pp. ISBN 9789004258631

This book has emerged as a result of a new generation of Asian scholars who have recently completed their PhDs at New Zealand universities – this one is from the University of Auckland – and who are contributing significantly to scholarship and knowledge about Asian communities in New Zealand. As the title makes clear, it is

concerned with Chinese migrants, both the earlier arrivals (in the 1990s) from Taiwan and Hong Kong but primarily with immigrants from the People's Republic of China who have arrived in considerable numbers since 2000. As always, there is a concern that a PhD does not translate easily into book form and there are remnants of the tone and approach of a PhD which is a little off-putting. But overall, it is an important and interesting contribution that does work as a book, helped by a very clear writing style.

Li provides a context to contemporary Chinese immigration, including a history of Chinese migration to New Zealand. This material is relatively orthodox and covers well-rehearsed territory. In some respects, it would have been more interesting to have had less of this material and more focus on the empirical data and analysis concerning the Chinese media. And this is where the book does add to our understanding, although some of the material now concerns what happened almost a decade ago. For example, it focuses on the 2005 General Election. A lot has happened in the Chinese community in New Zealand since then, including the growing activism of younger community members, the maturation of the community (more extensive community organisations, services and networks) and significant growth in the size of the community, especially in Auckland. The fastest growth occurred in the 2001-06 inter-censal period (40%) but there was still considerable growth in 2006-13 (28%), especially when it is considered that four of those years involved the Global Financial Crises when immigrant arrivals to New Zealand dipped substantially.

The book explores the way in which the Chinese media have contributed to – and reflected – the growth of the Chinese community. She asks (p.91) how the media sustain Chinese solidarity and play a role in “new Chinese migrants’ acculturation.” I would argue that there are problems with the notion of acculturation, especially given the current policy approach which is to see immigrant settlement as involving both adjustments and understanding by host communities and the retention of cultural and linguistic practices by the immigrant community. Acculturation suggests that it is the immigrant who must inevitably change although it is clear from other parts of the book that this is not what Li means. This aside, what she does provide is an interesting analysis of the Chinese media. She lists 23 print publications (Sing Tao Weekly began in 1989), 8 radio stations and 4 television stations, plus some interesting web sites. What role does this media play? And the question is asked in relation to the 2005 election.

The answer, as you might imagine, is very significant, especially in providing culturally and linguistically relevant spaces for the community to discuss matters of importance to them. Some of the most interesting material concerns the election of 2005 and how policies and politics were explained to the community – and how the community participated and responded to these politics. Li concludes that the community had three major concerns: law and order, tax cuts and the welfare state. She notes the conservatism of many of the comments from the community on these issues – that New Zealand and especially the Labour-led government of the time were too soft on criminals, that taxes were too high (she offers some interesting comments on the tax regimes that Chinese immigrants are used to, which involve little or no tax in China) and that the welfare state contributes to dependency and demotivates people, especially – according to some Chinese commentators – Maori and Pasifika communities. There

are some disconcerting elements to some of this material although it is not clear how much this reflects early stage immigrants and their views, and whether those views change over time. The other dimension which comes in for particular attention is the immigrant's consciousness of their Chinese nationality, which was strongly promoted through the 1990s in China and which is often apparent in media commentary in the New Zealand Chinese media. These are very much diasporic Chinese who are connected in new ways, especially online, with China and who reflect a new sense of Chineseness.

Li provides an interesting insight into recent Chinese immigrants and the way in which the Chinese media contribute to the maintenance of their identity, including as a transnational community with links to a homeland. That is not to say that the New Zealand Chinese community is homogeneous or cohesive – Li demonstrates that it is far from holding a single view about any of these matters. But the media play an important role in providing space for the community to talk amongst itself on a range of issues, including local politics. She describes these community networks as a form of Chinatown, a description that does not quite work for me. But the book adds new information to our understanding of a significant immigrant and minority ethnic community in New Zealand and is well worth recommending.

Reviewed by PAUL SPOONLEY
Massey University

Yves-Heng Lim, *China's Naval Power: An Offensive Realist Approach*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014, xviii + 191pp. ISBN: 978-1-4094-5184-6 (hbk)

How can we understand the regional security implications of China's military and naval modernization? Yves-Heng Lim takes Mearsheimer's seminal text on offensive realism, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (2003), as the starting point to answering this important question. Through this lens, Lim argues "the rapid and ongoing modernization of Chinese naval forces stems primarily from China's need and ambition to secure a hegemonic position in the East Asian region" (p. 6). This is the central argument that *China's Naval Power* brings to the study of China's rise and the implications for security in the Asia-Pacific region.

The offensive realist position argues, as all realists do, that the international system is anarchic but distinguishes itself from classical or defensive realism by positing that security in the international system is rare, that "structural modifiers" (international institutions etc.) do little to ameliorate a state's security dilemma (considered always unsolvable) and finally, that under these conditions states are pushed to power-maximising strategies and the quest for hegemony. In short, great powers are aggressive and strive for more power to maximise their odds of survival.

Lim's own work distinguishes itself from existing offensive realist arguments by focusing on the regional system in East Asia and by arguing that "a crucial part of the struggle [for regional hegemony in East Asia] will be played at sea" (p. 9). To do this, Lim applies "regional security complex theory" (Buzan and Waever 2003) and

introduces the concept of offshore balancers or distant great powers geographically outside the region that can prevent a regional power from achieving regional hegemony through their projection of power across the sea. According to the theory, a regional power has an interest in “insulating its own region from external influence” in order to prevent a distant great power from thwarting its hegemonic ambitions. Hence, naval power and an ability to exclude or limit US forces from the region becomes a most significant aspect for any push for regional hegemony in East Asia.

The argument of the book therefore rests on two important pillars, establishing that China’s naval forces are undergoing an unprecedented modernization and expansion *relative* to existing naval forces in East Asia, and secondly, that the motivation for this expansion can be explained as China’s quest for regional hegemony.

The first of these is well documented in absolute terms in chapter 4, “The Modernization of China’s Naval Forces”. This is a blow-by-blow historical account of what naval forces have been added to China’s naval capacity over the last few decades and a detailed discussion of naval modernization since the turn of the century. Anyone wishing to know more about the historical trajectory and current state of China’s naval forces should begin here.

However, this chapter left the reader struggling to understand how significant these changes are in the regional context. An offensive realist argument is primarily concerned with relative power in any potential quest for hegemony. The analysis of China’s naval forces should therefore be placed vis-à-vis existing naval forces in East Asia. As this is not done, it becomes difficult to understand the true impact of, for example, China adding its first aircraft carrier to its naval fleet.

Chapter 3 presents the second pillar of the argument and arguably the most interesting analysis in the book. Lim provides an alternative interpretation of China’s naval strategy and doctrine by arguing it has undergone an “offensive turn” to meet the requirements of a grand strategy of seeking regional hegemony. Lim does this by reinterpreting a long-standing “active defence, near-seas operations” posture from the PLA and PLA Navy as an offensive posture. References to new strategies, tactics and operational capacity requirements developed in China in recent years and gathered from select Chinese military strategy articles in leading military journals are used as evidence to support this claim.

Again, however, the presentation of this most central of arguments is less than convincing due to the offensive realist approach that drives the analysis. Here pre-emptive defence strategies are interpreted as offensive postures in China’s bid for regional hegemony with little acknowledgement of the difficulty of distinguishing between a defensive or an offensive strategy. Instead, defensive explanations are rejected in line with offensive realist assumptions about the nature of the international system and the behaviour of states seeking security in their region.

Chapters 3 and 4 make up the core argument of the book and provide a ready and accessible introduction to an offensive realist interpretation of China’s naval modernization. These chapters are followed by case studies of Taiwan and the surrounding seas where the author links activities in the Taiwan Strait and East China

Sea and South China Sea to the claim that China is bidding for regional hegemony. The final chapter, “The Great Naval Chessboard”, then brings in other naval actors to sum up the likelihood of China’s quest for regional hegemony being successful.

This final chapter is the first time consideration of relative naval power in East Asia is put forward. Lim begins by overviewing the US presence in East Asia, namely, its alliances and naval power, and by arguing US naval forces are key to preventing Chinese naval control of East Asian waters. Lim focuses his analysis on whether China could succeed with anti-access or area-denial strategies to keep US forces out of the region and concludes “China is paving the way for a successful regional hegemonic bid” (p. 160). Lim’s argument boils down to asserting China’s naval power is taking an offensive posture and challenging US naval primacy in Asia. This chapter could have been greatly strengthened with a clearer and more direct comparison of naval forces in the region.

Lim has therefore positioned his analysis at the sharp end of international relations theory under an offensive realist paradigm. This has both positive and negative implications for the work. On the positive side, Lim presents not only a clear argument about how to interpret existing naval capacity and actions in the surrounding Chinese seas but also extrapolates from these empirics the assertion that China is seeking hegemony in the East Asian region. On the negative side, Lim’s omission of existing constraints on Chinese action, such as, economic interdependency, a developmental requirement for regional stability, socialization and adoption of international norms and values, and integration into the international community, as well as the development of regional security forums, leads to a narrow state-centric analysis. Moreover, such an analysis is arguably not fully supported by empirical evidence of China’s actions in its surrounding waters to date.

China’s Naval Power certainly provides food for thought for anyone interested in an interpretation of China’s naval modernization and likely trajectories in the future. This topic deserves sustained and careful analysis and attention and Lim’s impressive book contributes to this endeavour. Such important and timely questions, however, should not be relegated to an offensive realist approach alone.

Reviewed by JASON YOUNG
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Ronald P. Loftus, *Changing Lives: The ‘Postwar’ in Japanese Women’s Autobiographies and Memoirs*, Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies Inc. ‘Asia Past and Present’ series, 2013, 206 pp. ISBN: 978-0-924304-69-9.

Changing Lives provides a very interesting insight into postwar Japan through a number of women’s eyes. The bulk of this book consists of translations of lengthy excerpts of memoirs and autobiographies, primarily those by three women: Yoshitaka Teruko, Kishino Junko and Kanamori Toshie. Uniting the memoirs is what the author, Ronald P. Loftus, argues is a sense of agency and subjectivity that the women assert through the very process of writing about their experiences as women. What enables them to

do this, suggests Loftus, is their ability to reflect and make sense of their experiences within the larger context of patriarchal social structures, which while different and weaker than before the war, remained a powerful force on women's lived realities.

I was a little surprised when I discovered the book contained mainly translations. The author provides minimal analysis within each chapter, and only a ten page analysis as a conclusion. Personally I would have preferred more analysis throughout the book, or at least a clear indication in the introduction that the contents are mostly translations.

The first chapter takes excerpts from memoirs of four women – Okabe Itsuko, Yoshitake Teruko, Shinya Eiko and Sawachi Hisae. These memoirs consider the women's awakenings after the defeat of Japan in WW2. In the wake of the Emperor's defeat radio broadcast (*gyokuon hōsō*) all the women realise how brainwashed they had been as loyal imperial daughters – believing it was Japan's divine right to win the war.

The second chapter *Contextualizing History* explores Yoshitake Teruko's *Onnatachi no Undōshi – Watakushi no Ikita Sengo (A History of Women's Movements – and My Experience of the Postwar Years)*. Yoshitake worked for the film company Tōei and was also a social activist. Rich with anecdotes from someone who actually experienced these transformative years and the early development of Japan's women's movements, this chapter is a vivid recollection of the immediate postwar era. Weaving her personal experiences with descriptions of the development and struggles of Japanese women's campaigns for democracy, the translations of Yoshitake's memoirs provide readers with a fascinating window into history. However, this chapter was very long and the titles of some of the extracted chapters did not match the contents. I wondered if Loftus's selection could have been tighter and more focussed. Once again, I think more analysis between the excerpts rather than just at the end of the chapter would facilitate a better understanding of the work.

I found the third, fourth and fifth chapters the most interesting. These chapters are about women who carved out careers for themselves in an era where this was difficult and unusual for women to do. Chapter Three is a continuation of Yoshitake Teruko's memoir. Chapter Four, *Creating a Feminine Consciousness* consists of excerpts from Kishino Junko's *Onna No Chihei Kara Miete Kita Mono: Josei Kisha No Jibunshi (Things Visible from a Woman's Perspective)*. Chapter 5 examines Kanamori Toshie's *Waratte, Naite, Aruite, Kaite: Josei Jyaanarisuto no Gōjinen*. As educated and professional women, the positions of the women whose memoirs are explored in these later chapters gave them insights into broader social structures and revealed how patriarchy plays out in individual women's lives. Some of their insights were startlingly similar to the situation for women in Japan today. Kishino, for example, reflects that under the banner of 'equal rights' for women and men, she had pursued a career and consequently missed out on having children or a finding a husband. The promise of *danjo dōken* (equal rights among sexes) was in fact a chimera – in pursuing equality with men through her work as a reporter for the *Sankei Shinbun* she sees that she had discarded her femininity; her 'gentleness' (p. 115) and simply become just like a man. Unfortunately, women in contemporary Japan are still forced to choose between career and family – one is coded masculine and the other feminine. Men can have both, but

participate only marginally in family. Women can have peripheral work and family, but are not able to maintain an actual career and family. Only a small number of exceptional women manage to achieve both. And they are most likely run ragged doing so.

For those interested in reading Japanese women's memoirs of the postwar era, *Changing Lives* is a good read. It is quite inspiring to hear the voices of women who were clearly forerunners and who had fascinating and compassionate perspectives on democracy, war and social issues, including gender equality. The translations are good and I wonder if Loftus or anyone else has plans to translate them entirely. Surely this is an important task that should be finished now it has already been started.

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Ma Yuan, *Ballad of the Himalayas: Stories of Tibet*, trans., by Herbert J. Batt,
Portland, ME: MerwinAsia, 2011, xiv + 315 pp. ISBN: 978-1-878282-85-9 (pbk)

This volume is a long-awaited collection of short stories by Chinese writer Ma Yuan 马原 (b. 1953). A native of Liaoning Province, Ma Yuan spent his early years working in factories in Shenyang and Fuxin areas. In 1982, he graduated with a major in Chinese from the University of Liaoning. Ma Yuan has built his career as a writer on his experience in Lhasa between 1982 and 1989 as a journalist and playwright for the PLA. Although he set many of his stories in other regions in China (including Liaoning), Ma Yuan is best known for his fiction on Tibet. *Ballad of the Himalayas* is the first book that brings together Ma Yuan's major Tibetan stories in their English translation.

The collection, introduced by literary critic Yang Xiaobin, includes eight short stories published in Chinese between 1984 and 1989: "Vagabond spirit", "The Black Road", "The Numismatologist", "The Master", "A Fiction", "The Spell of the Gangdise Mountains", "Three Ways to Fold a Paper Hawk" and "Ballad of the Himalayas". All translations had been previously published in journals or as book chapters and have been revised for this publication, except the translation of "The Numismatologist".

Generally speaking, there are two types of opinions about Ma Yuan's work. On the one hand, he is credited as the first Chinese postmodernist writer who opened the path for younger avant-gardists like Yu Hua, Su Tong, Ge Fei or Sun Ganlu. His first story, "The Goddess of the Lhasa River" (*Lasahe de nüshen*) – which unfortunately remains to be translated – set the tone for his other stories and marked a significant innovation in the development of Chinese fiction. The succession of apparently unrelated events, the multiple narrators, the unfinished plot lines and unfulfilled pictures, the frequent intercession of the author in the narrative remain emblematic of Ma Yuan's innovative and provocative style. Through humour and self-derision, Ma Yuan makes sure that the reading, although sometimes disconcerting, remains enjoyable and striking.

His subversion of conventions by blurring the lines between veracity and illusion, autobiography and fiction is remarkable and path breaking in the context of the early post-Mao period of the 1980s. It is not only a reaction against the dictates of socialist

realism but also a creative way to tell other “Chinese” stories. Ma Yuan’s interest in the “legendary” and the “ethnic”, which resembled magical realism, has been compared to the writings of the Spanish-speaking authors Jorge Borges and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. His writing can easily bear comparison with these masters of storytelling. Ma Yuan’s stories certainly deserve to be read for his distinctive style, captivating plot and his clever deployment of “narrative traps” (叙述圈套 *xushu quantao*) in which all readers would most likely fall with delight.

On the other hand, Ma Yuan is regarded as one of the most prominent writers about Tibet who emerged in the 1980s along with Ma Jian, Sebo, Ge Fei and Tashi Dawa. Lhasa was then a frantic, lively place but also the most “foreign” city for the Chinese who didn’t have the opportunity or didn’t want to leave China. From the 1980s onwards, many Chinese artists converged to Lhasa and lived there for months and sometimes years like Ma Yuan. Writers, painters and filmmakers experimented new forms of art and expression but also offered unprecedented accounts of Tibet to wider Chinese audiences. It is from this perspective that I immersed myself in *Ballad of the Himalayas*.

The colonial setting and relations that had developed since the 1950s in Lhasa between Chinese and Tibetans are crucial in the creation of Ma Yuan’s works. Like most of his peers, Ma Yuan presents a surrealist fascination for a primitive, “extra-rational” Tibet where sex and death happen with the same straightforwardness and swiftness. Nonetheless, the reader should not only focus on such eroticizing and mystifying processes, as Ma Yuan’s stories have much more to offer. His insight into Lhasa’s multicultural and rich environment remains most fascinating, and his description of Chinese-Tibetan relationships deserves careful attention.

As Henry Zhao has argued, and Batt reminds us in his introduction to “A Fiction”, Ma Yuan’s stories should be read as his personal engagement with Tibet and Tibetan culture on a symbolic level. His encounter with Tibet is one of repulsion and attraction. The strangeness of this encounter with Tibet is represented by the frightening appearance of some Tibetan characters: the one-eyed wife in “The Master”, the leper woman in “A Fiction” or the crippled beggar of “Vagabond Spirit”. Eventually, in each story, the Chinese characters will overcome their aversion: the Master confesses he really likes his one-eyed wife and would keep her even if her old artist “father” would die; the young writer becomes the leper’s lover; the beggar and the narrator are close friends.

In this sense, Ma Yuan provides us with insightful comments on the Chinese presence in Tibet through these metaphorical interactions. Each Chinese character epitomises a different approach to Tibet and Tibetan people. The old Chinese man living in the Tibetan lepers’ village pretends he is deaf-mute to avoid contact with the villagers. As the story reveals, he is an ex-Guomindang soldier who took refuge in Tibet (reminiscent of the criminal on the run turned into the innkeeper of “Black Road”) and can only see Tibetans around him as invalid and threatening people. He climbs a mountain every morning, possibly a symbolic ascent towards “civilisation”, and also systematically comes down every afternoon. The gun he is hiding up in the mountain can be seen as a metaphor for a decadent civilisation. The old man is doomed to seclusion, sexual relationship with his dog, craziness and eventually suicide. The story of this old man is an indirect but telling critique of the “civilised-barbarian” dichotomy

that prevails in the attitude of many Chinese settlers in Tibet. The old man's alter ego is the young writer who overcomes the differences and becomes a foster husband and father in a Tibetan household, at least for a short time.

Yet, what attracts the writer to the leper village is marked by a morbid voyeurism that also drives Luo Gao and his friends in "The Spell of the Gangdise Mountain", as well as Mr Du and the same Luo in "The Numismatologist", to see a sky burial. This Tibetan funerary practice wherein human corpses are cut into pieces to be snatched by vultures is an object of fascination that epitomises the perverse curiosity that entices foreign tourists and settlers in Tibet. The conflict that such attitude arises between Chinese and Tibetans is equally meaningful in the depiction of a colonised Tibet. This perversity reaches his climax in "The Numismatologist" as Bull finds a human skull and decides to decorate his bookcase with it. He is, however, disconcerted by the brain that remains and rots inside the skull, symbolising the deviance of such objectification and appropriation of the Tibetan body.

Also characteristic of Ma Yuan's stories is the Chinese characters' obsession with collecting (and trading) traditional Tibetan artefacts. They estimate the value of Tibetan cultural objects against their value on Chinese and international markets, whereas the Tibetan characters see them primarily objects carrying personal memory and family history. The beggar in "Vagabond spirit" owns extremely valuable and rare coins that he received to fulfil a prophecy passed down from his ancestors; but he remains a beggar. "The Master", a Han Chinese man, only marries the one-eyed Tibetan woman to inherit from her so-called father's scroll paintings (*thangka*) and to collect other precious objects to sell to foreign collectors. His Tibetan wife, however, paid for these treasures with her body and tears as the old painter was abusing her since her early years. In each story, this value of these objects remains an illusion, as none of the Chinese character is able to retain these objects: the abandoned wife burns the colossal *thangka* collection, the coin collector is sick before he can leave China, the mould of the precious Tibetan-Chinese coin disappears in the river.

Reviewers sometimes depict Tibet as the antithesis of the Chinese self in Ma Yuan's stories, an illustration of the binary oppositions between good and evil, civilization and savagery, intelligence and emotion, self and others, subject and object. I don't think that Ma Yuan is giving us such a Manichean perspective on Tibet. I find his stories much more nuanced. Ma Yuan is clearly concerned about questions of identity: in many stories the narrator is unable to decide whether some of his characters are Tibetan or Chinese, and this uncertainty is experienced as both disconcerting and unsettling. The old man in "The Spell of Gangdise Mountain", a Chinese who has lived in Tibet for three decades, learned Tibetan language and blended into the Tibetan community, recounts the impossibility to be just like "them" or to *be* "them". The dichotomy between the Self and the "Other" prevails, rendering the overwhelming and ultimate "Otherness" of Tibet experienced by the Chinese characters in each story.

The Tibetan characters are just as ambiguous, real and fake, impenetrable and perceptible as their Chinese counterparts. Besides, on more than one occasion, Ma Yuan mocks the naïve arrogance of the Chinese settlers. In "The Master", for instance, as his wife confesses her sexual relations with the old *thangka* painter, the young painter

tells her: “In Chinese it’s called incest. [...] Maybe because you’re Tibetan you think there’s nothing wrong with it. I don’t know... I’m Chinese...” (pp. 126-127). She then reveals to him that he wasn’t her father but a Chinese who had always lived in Tibet and molested her since she was a little girl. This confession powerfully reverses what the painter had perceived as a typical sign of Tibetan “viciousness” and barbarism. In fact, both Tibetan and Chinese characters are portrayed with the same humanness – or rather inhumanness, creating a balanced account of Ma Yuan’s experience of Tibet. Ma Yuan’s contribution is above all its humanistic approach of Tibet.

Overall, each story in the collection is very refreshing and pleasantly mischievous. Batt, who occasionally enlightens the reader with possible interpretations of the stories in short notes, did a great job in translating and gathering them. It is regrettable, however, that the original Chinese titles and the dates of publications of each short story are not provided.

Ma Yuan seemed to have turned the Tibetan page after he went back to Shenyang in 1989 to work as a screenwriter for television and a teacher of creative writing. A professor at Tongji University in Shanghai since 2000, he also published essays on his views of literature and creative writing. Ma Yuan only recently returned to writing fiction with *Ghosts and Monsters* (Niu gui she shen, 2012). The novel of 3 volumes follows the journey of a young boy from Northeast China to Beijing, Lhasa and Hainan. The second volume, entitled “Lhasa”, focuses on the boy’s mystical experience of an exotic and profoundly spiritual Tibet. Ma Yuan’s depiction of Tibet more than twenty years after the stories of *Ballad of the Himalayas* will hopefully attract the attention of the reader and the translator.

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Sverre Molland, *The Perfect Business? Anti-Trafficking and the Sex Trade along the Mekong*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2012, viii + 276 pp. ISBN 9780824836108 (cloth); 9780824836535 (pbk)

Human trafficking, in particular the trafficking of women for prostitution, is a major issue of concern for many international bodies. Much effort is put into combating trafficking and stopping what is seen as a degrading trade in human beings. Framed within a particular legal system and set of definitions, programmes aimed at combatting

trafficking work within very western legal and moral framework. Sverre Molland, an anthropologist with a decade of research in the Mekong region, sets out to show that these frameworks and assumptions are not always correct and that the situation is in fact far more complicated than most people imagine – or that some international agencies want to admit. He sets out evidence gained through extensive field work that in some cases it is sometimes wrong to think of the women who work as prostitutes as victims. Some women choose to work as prostitutes knowing exactly what they are doing because it will help them fulfil traditional obligations of supporting their parents. Others seek to escape the drudgery of village life and a poverty stricken life of marriage, childbearing and backbreaking agricultural labour.

This raises all sorts of questions about the nature of the trafficking. If a woman seeks information on what is involved and makes what is, to all intents and purposes, an informed decision to become a prostitute, then how does that fit in with a legal framework that automatically defines that woman as the victim of trafficking?

If a woman decides to become a prostitute as the best way of responding to or resisting existing economic conditions or the demands of custom, does this mean that instead of focussing on trafficking per se, western and global institutions need to change the economic systems of the region or of eradicating customs that discriminate against women? If she meets somebody from her village who is working as a prostitute and is actively recruiting for her employer and decides to go back with her to work as a waitress, and is gradually socialised – but not physically pressured – into accepting that prostitution is normal and there is nothing wrong with selling herself for sex, has she been trafficked, abused or forced into her new life? How, Molland asks, would one define the Cambodian women who work in the Friendship Bar?

“Nort debuted by selling her virginity when she was below the legal age, but she has no debt to the venue. Would this then be considered trafficking? And Da was in debt, but to her own stepmother, not to the bar owner; would this then qualify as trafficking? And what about Jai? She claimed to have been deceived in order to be brought to the bar, but she had no debt and her claims appear to have been a bogus form of identity posturing to get sympathy (and money) from customers.”

How indeed. Can anti-trafficking agencies deal with these complexities? Molland describes recruitment in the sex industry as “immensely multifaceted” and is critical of researchers and organisations who use what he considers to be simplistic methods to measure. He criticises one method - which appears to rely largely on the extremely unscientific method of asking taxi drivers where the action is – in these terms:

“[It can be]... applied and replicated everywhere. It is difficult not to miss that this method appears to be better suited to the needs of anti-trafficking programs than to the actual social reality they are attempting to address. It is a simple recipe that any organisation can implement and as it promises to be both scientific and replicable, it makes itself particularly fitting for donor funding.”

Molland presents a rich compendium of data, personal impressions and material from interviews and field work to build up a picture of the sex industry in the Mekong region, with women being recruited across several borders to work in the sex industry. The industry itself is multi-tiered, with a variety of outlets ranging from bars to brothels operating near border crossings and women from different countries working in different circumstances and recruitment methods being “deceptive and nondeceptive.”

Molland is critical of the way many western agencies approach the issue and how international laws are framed. He notes the repeated argument that many of the laws enacted to stop human trafficking are, in practise, anti-migration legislation. He also argues that because western agencies tend to look at the issue of trafficking across the borders Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Burma and Vietnam as a legal issue, they try to frame it in often simplistic western legal terms. Some aid agencies tell their workers to look for signs of maltreatment and trafficking among sex workers that are so broad that almost anybody could exhibit the symptoms.

Thus, if trafficking is a crime, then the assumption is that all sex workers must be victims and all recruiters, bar keepers and brothel owners must be criminals. Seen through a strictly legal framework, prostitution must also be seen as wrong, even though it may allow some prostitutes to gain merit by supporting their families.

Molland argues that among South East Asian cultures social relationships are based, more or less, on subtle and unsubtle expressions of power and the status that it brings. Thus, even child prostitutes may themselves attain status and power and thus escape or diminish social disapproval of their activities. Ultimately, Molland argues, anti-trafficking agencies and traffickers become so tied up in their own frames of legal and economic reference that they fail completely to understand or engage with the social realities that produce prostitution and trans-border sex workers. He ends with a dispiriting vision of a group of aid workers sitting in a hotel trying to work out to implement the objectives of paragraph 4.5.1 of yet another plan, while across the road the bar girls wait for customers, unnoticed by the aid workers sent to rescue them.

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Geng Song & Derek Hird, *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary China*, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2014, x+ 296pp, ISBN: 978-90-04-26489-2 (hbk); ISBN: 978-90-04-26491-5(e-book); ISSN: 1877-5772

This book by Song Geng and Derek Hird reflects Song’s continued efforts to explore the alleged uniqueness of Chinese masculinity. In his 2004 book, *The Fragile Scholar: Power and Masculinity in Chinese Culture*, Song suggested that “an alternative concept of masculinity” diverges significantly from Western concepts. In the “fragile scholar” (*caizi*) Song’s discourse seeks to identify desirable masculine qualities which have been evident during the course of Chinese history. In moving its focus on to the post-Mao period, especially on the most recent decade after 2000, this book strives to provide an updated and comprehensive account of issues of masculinity in China, despite the lack

of research on contemporary Chinese masculinity in a global context. The book surveys emerging types of manhood in the contemporary discourses of the crisis in Chinese masculinity, which has arisen in the context of revival of Chinese nationalism since the 1990s, consumerism, and the global men's movement.

In this ambitious project, Song and Hird use multiple media and public spheres to testify to the "increasing multiplicity of men's identities and practices in contemporary China," which both "contest" and "consolidate" traditional values. Of the six chapters, the first three are devoted to media representations of masculinity, including TV, magazines, and cyberspace; the last three deliver an ethnographic account of masculine social practices, including masculinity at work, leisure, and home.

Noteworthy findings from this research include the discovery of new masculine archetypes present in Chinese television programs, which are mainly designed to demonstrate ideological determined features. Song and Hird argue that official ideology must negotiate its way through multiple, even contesting, discourses, with commercial reality as the overwhelmingly major factor: "In many programs, the 'mainstream melody' works hand in hand with the neo-liberal discourses of consumption and modernity" (p. 33). In the face of this complexity, the book pinpoints the relapse to traditional types of masculinity in TV programs, such as "the endurance of pain, attitudes toward women and brothers, and approval of masculinity in a homosocial network," (p. 37). These strategies are conveniently deployed to express nationhood in a global context.

New concepts are raised in the study of cyberspace. *Zhainan*, for example, is used to describe the emergence of young males who are confined to their electronic devices and who have created an indoor lifestyle for their life and work. They never grow up or assume male pride, but rather are just happy to be affiliated with a girlfriend, even alluding to them as a little bunny or a sleeping beauty.

The main focus of this project, however, is the emerging middle-class young business males. They compose the target market for men's magazines which are designed to complement their career success: "The 'DNA' of all men's magazines in China is the same: successful men, good taste, and consumerism." Despite their clear Western origin, these men's magazines bear striking Chinese characteristics: Above all, with the lack of a pro-feminist stance in the Chinese discourse of the new man, these magazines thereby "illustrate a devil-may-care attitude towards one's body and one's health, and towards a kind of masculine subjectivity that is all about the self, taking care of the self, cultivating self-confidence, and enabling the self to impress others—for self-centered purposes of career advancement. It also signifies a masculinity that is aware of and promote itself as sexually desirable" (p. 150). The book argues that this obsessive, self-indulgent male psychology signals an attempt to assure dominance of the "new man" over other male types and women. There is even a return to patriarchal values as a "reaction against Maoist discourse on women's liberation" (p. 70).

The second half of the book is solely focused on businessmen and businesswomen in their twenties and thirties, who are also the targeted consumers of the men's magazines as discussed above. More real-life issues are raised as gender tension surfaces: Equal opportunities for men and women in the workplace are questioned, along with

interviews involving so-called “strong women” and their male business counterparts. Also, an increasingly commodified attitude towards women (in the form of foreign dancing girls) in leisure activities and an ever stronger sense of male pride at home can be detected. Issues of homosexuality also receive special mention; while people claim to be, and are most sincerely willing to be open-minded about homosexuality, and this is deemed to be a Chinese characteristic, they in fact desperately want to hide it from public eyes when their own family members are involved.

Despite these exciting findings, the book does have some flaws, particularly in the second half. First, the target group for the ethnographic study is limited; the study almost entirely relies on a special social group of young businessmen and businesswomen. No first-hand data collected support the research findings, rendering the findings less scientific. Song and Hird in effect admit the limitations of their book in this respect: “Our informants constitute a very small number of men and women from a particular age range, mostly well-educated and financially comfortable, who live in Beijing, although they come from diverse places in China. Our engagement with them has been wholly qualitative, and we did not distribute questionnaires with the aim of collecting statistics” (p. 15).

Second, in comparison to Song’s familiarity with issues of masculinity in pre-modern China and his dedicated efforts to bring a Western analytic framework, the current book reflects a certain indifference to the early republic era when important gender discourses took place. It does touch on the issue of familial masculinity and its ingrained biological discourse, which has continued currency in contemporary China: “[The] New Culture intellectuals rejected the old narrative of the inevitable decline of family and, by extension, national fortunes, and with it the figure of the patriarch, taking up instead the promise of an apparently egalitarian-minded familial masculinity as part of a new narrative that premised national economic development on the progressiveness of companionate marriage” (p. 222). Nevertheless, the book avoids acknowledging the distinct masculine construction in that era, which is suspiciously relevant to contemporary masculinity and cannot be categorised as “Confucian” or “Maoist” (the two major masculine models acknowledged in the book). This lack of historical linkage incorrectly amplifies the abruptness of contemporary gender trends, which makes the book less convincing than it might have been.

The book even asserts a case of inaccurate historical fact in this regard: “In China, although ‘general interest’ magazines can be said to have existed during the Maoist and early post-Mao eras, Western-style magazines that promote a consumerist lifestyle came into being and gained wide-spread popularity only in the past two decades” (p. 56). In fact, modern style magazines flourished in 1930s and 1940s China, with an evident impact on the social and cultural spheres, including gender construction. *Liang You* magazine and *Ling long* women’s magazine, for example, had an enormous influence on modern lifestyles and, thus, have been extensively studied. The lack of recognition of these magazines is consistent with the book’s indifference to the early republic era.

In conclusion, the book demonstrates a determined effort to conduct extensive research on contemporary Chinese masculinity. It contains a vivid account of a variety of masculine issues which spring up from the most recent economic trends

and technological advances. It presents insightful arguments in relation to a few uniquely Chinese contemporary masculine archetypes, which see the pursuit of “men’s privileged position” as an on-going social factor and are hardly ever out of sight. It reveals considerable depth in the theoretical mapping of certain targeted groups, such as the white-collar male: “In this sense, the Chinese white-collar man is a fine example of a neoliberal subject who applies techniques of self-management, formed within the particular regime of neoliberalism in contemporary China” (p. 152). Nevertheless, the book’s focus is very much confined to the younger emerging generation, which is not necessarily representative of contemporary Chinese masculinity as a whole.

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Haruko Wakabayashi, *The Seven Tengu Scrolls: Evil and the Rhetoric of Legitimacy in Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, Honolulu, University of Hawai’i Press, 2012, xx + 203 pp. ISBN 978-0-8248-3416-6 (hbk.).

The term *tengu* (from the Chinese *tian gou*, literally “celestial dog,”) refers to a diverse range of spiritual entities, from mischievous forest spirits through vengeful spirits with supernatural powers. They are widely known in their semi-human form with elongated noses or beaks, and closely identified with the *yamabushi* mountain ascetics and the *shugendō* order. In the two chapters comprising the first section of this volume Haruko Wakabayashi explains how the indigenous phenomenon of *tengu* came to be embraced into Buddhist discourse to occupy its pervasive presence in Buddhist cosmology. Focusing on the early incidence of *tengu* in the late Heian period (897-1185), she explains their diverse associations within Buddhist traditions of Māra and the concept of *ma*, “evil,” originally apprehended as “that which causes death,” and more explicitly as “murder,” or “destruction.” She develops her explanation of *ma* as a religious and social construct manifest in personifications of evil, and the incidence of temptations of desire and passion. *Tengu* demonstrate facilities for possession, constraint of good behaviours, provocations of delusional powers, or feelings of doubt or weakness, causing illness and torment, and generating disruption and chaos in the world. Buddhist monks could be tricked or led astray by *tengu*, falling victim to their powers, worshipping and following their ways and practices. Wakabayashi emphasises their ambiguous ability in Esoteric Buddhism to both create and subdue evil. This equivocal status perhaps underpins the increasing purchase of notions of *tengudō* (the realm of *tengu*), or *madō* (the realm of Māra, which could accommodate both anti-Buddhist *tengu* and those who strive for enlightenment), through the Kamakura period (1185-1333). Monks could be turned into *tengu*, and fall into *tengudō*, as a consequence of ego-attachment (*gashū*) and arrogance (*kyōman*). As signs of the final age of *mappō* became increasingly evident during this troubled era, and as harsh divisions developed between schools of Buddhist teaching, sincere study within the realms of *madō* or *tengudō* could offer an alternative, and privileged, path towards enlightenment for Buddhists who had not otherwise managed to attain *ōjō* – rebirth into the Pure Land.

This opening section successfully situates *tengu* and their place in Buddhist belief into their broader social and cultural contexts, through periods of significant change in Japanese spiritual and institutional frameworks. Wakabayashi situates her research and explanatory frameworks in twelfth century literature (court and historical accounts, folk tales, *monogatari* narratives, or personal diaries) in her close analysis of contemporary literary constructions around *tengu* themes. The broad scope of sources brought into play here reflects the diversity, between thematic occupation and audience focus, formality and informality, of Heian and Kamakura literary engagements. It explains the importance of literary media for the development of Buddhism and the place of *tengu* in Buddhist thought and practice during these eras. The engaging and accessible anecdotal character of selections from sources like the late Heian *Konjaku monogatari*shū (Anthology of Tales from the Past) illustrates the effectiveness of literary text in sustaining patterns of belief and social engagement. Later in the volume Wakabayashi extends her range of contemporary evidence to embrace court petitions, legislature, and a comparative analysis of each of the scrolls themselves, to provide evidence for her arguments. These examples also illustrate the elegant accord between economy and clarity, and the allusive power that characterises so many literary tracts of these eras.

In the second section of this volume Wakabayashi turns her attention to visual constructions on *tengu* themes, and specifically to the *emakimono* painted hand scrolls that provided the distinctive format for narrative illustration from the Heian through the late Kamakura period. She develops a close historical and analytical examination of the set of *Tengu zōshi emaki* (Seven *Tengu* Scrolls) or *Shichi tengu-e* known today as the Kōfukuji, Tōdaiji, Enryakuji, Onjōji, Tōji and Miidera A and B scrolls. She juxtaposes her examinations against complementary accounts of other variant *emaki* (*Ippen shōnin eden* and *Mabutsu ichinyo ekotoba*) to situate the *tengu* works within broader conventional practices for narrative representation.

Wakabayashi situates each of the *Tengu zōshi* scrolls in its own temple setting, providing a synopsis of the monastic significance and narrative content of each work. The scrolls provide both pictorial and textual evidence for Wakabayashi's explanations of the realm of *ma*, its location within Buddhist traditions, the ambiguous distinctions between "good" and "evil" *tengu*, and the apparent contradictions between monks' descent into *tengudō* and their commitment to the achievement of enlightenment and emancipation. She locates her iconographic examinations of each scroll within the contexts of late Kamakura monastic practices and the persistent concept of *ma*. Her spatial and structural analyses provide insights into the ways *emaki* artists could meld constructions of alternating architectural volumes, lakes or mountain locations, and atmospheric layers of mist (*kumogata*) to sustain narrative continuities, while preserving the pictorial sense of each scene. Wakabayashi's account of differential status and disputes between temple communities explains how authorial attitudes and agendas have shaped the pictorial content and thematic narratives of the scrolls. Her discussions around questions of the original authorship of the scrolls challenge views of authorial affiliation to Tenryakuji, aligning her argument with those favouring attributions to associates of Onjōji. Her detailed explanations of the pictorial narratives

of the *Tengu zōshi* and her transliterations of samples of narrative and dialogue in their textual insets (*gachūshi*) recognise the interdependence of text and image that made the story-telling power of *emaki* so appealing for their 12th and 13th century audiences.

Wakabayashi employs the *tengu* scrolls primarily as historical documents (*kaiga shiryōran*) to provide evidence for her critique of the changing fabric of belief, practice and protocols as Buddhism developed through the later Heian and Kamakura periods. She explains how these documents reflected and reinforced monastic identities and rivalries, in times of significant diversity and rivalry in status, attitude and teachings, and how their constructs of *tengu* and *ma* informed Buddhist teachings and thought, and made broader contributions to contemporary thought and belief. Acknowledging the role of the *Tengu zōshi* as historical, didactic and politicised document certainly does inform the socio-historical arguments developed here, though it might have been useful to acknowledge also the further significance within Buddhist practices of their more immediate appeal simply as objects of spiritual and aesthetic contemplation. Their lively surfaces of colour, pattern and linear design, realistic impressions of spatial relations, atmosphere and lightly articulated movements of graceful dancers, milling crowds, or formal processions, or the quiet stillness of their *shinsai* “formal-style” calligraphies would have enhanced their credibility and spiritual significance with contemporary viewers in non-narrative ways consistent with other graphic engagements of that time.

This account is illustrated with almost 30 small monochrome illustrations, supplemented with four polychrome plates of representative scenes from the Enryakuji, Kokufuji, Tōji and Miidera scrolls, that give readers a sense of the ways a sense of place, atmosphere, and movement could enhance the complex didactic and narrative threads of the *Tengu zōshi*. The illustrations and text are supplemented by a selection of categorical, analytical, genealogical and comparative tables, and glossary inclusions in the index. In some instances the small scale of the monochrome illustrations does compromise their clarity, making it difficult to identify key individuals and significant figural interactions in complex figure groups. Enlarged details do help in some instances, and the broader representations of spatial dispositions of architecture and locations provide sufficient information to identify specific temple settings, the ways the scrolls’ artists maintained narrative continuity, and a sense of the movement or direction of complex groups that reflect the hierarchies and diverse occupations of temple life.

This is a useful and engaging new study. It explains the pervasive presence of *tengu* within the changing contexts of Heian and Kamakura Buddhism. It supports its accounts with comprehensive evidence from contemporary documents, literary history and pictorial engagement. Drawing her analytical eye with careful skill, Wakabayashi provides new insights into a cultural phenomenon whose form has survived, albeit in different media, through to the present day. In doing so she offers interesting insights into the development of concepts of evil, and of good and bad in medieval Japan, and into the force of the conceptual frameworks these beliefs underpinned in social and spiritual engagements of the time. This also illustrates the important role of *emaki* (together with *byōbu* folding screens) in the development of *Yamato-e* “Japanese painting.” The multi-disciplinary character of this volume’s contextual, thematic and media examinations makes for a holistic study that recognises the interacting flux

of diverse forces through which social, spiritual and aesthetic engagements develop. This multi-dimensional resource will inform its appeal to a correspondingly diverse readership of those with an interest in the socio-cultural history of Japan, in religious studies and the development of Buddhism through the Heian and Kamakura eras, and with students of medieval literature and the special place of the narrative and pictorial language of the *emaki* hand scroll throughout this time.

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Isaac Yue and Siufu Tang, eds., *Scribes of Gastronomy: Representations of Food and Drink in Imperial Chinese Literature*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013, 176pp, ISBN: 978-988-8180-96-7

As food writing emerges around the globe as a burgeoning field of critical inquiry from multiple perspectives — culinary, literary, social, and ecological — this edited volume of essays comes as a timely contribution from the Chinese world. As a much-needed survey of food writing in China throughout its long literary tradition, the book does well in lending support to, and indeed reinforcing, the idea that the culture of food and drink performs a central role in the development of Chinese civilisation. While the book acknowledges that “the language of gastronomy has been a vital theme in a range of literary productions”, it chooses to focus on food and drink as represented in a few select, proven genres of Chinese literature — from the *Shijing* 詩經 to pre-Qin prose, from the most recognised names in Chinese poetry (Tao Qian 陶潛, Li Bai 李白, Su Shi 蘇軾) to the greatest of classical novels (*Jinpingmei* 金瓶梅 and *Hongloumeng* 紅樓夢). The only exception is Duncan Campbell’s chapter on Zhang Dai 張岱, as Zhang Dai wrote about food and drink in an assortment of “minor” genres, such as memoir and recipe collections, that allowed a more direct, more personal approach to the subject.

The first two chapters, Tak Kam Chan’s “From Conservatism to Romanticism: Wine and Prose-Writing from Pre-Qin to Jin” and Nicholas Morrow Williams’s “The Morality of Drunkenness in Chinese Literature of the Third Century CE”, cover similar terrain by examining wine as a literary trope in the prose and poetry from the pre-Qin era to the Wei-Jin period. Both authors highlight the tension between moral censure and spiritual elation in early literary representations of wine, associating the former with Confucian restraint and the latter with Daoist abandonment. In “Making Poetry with Alcohol: Wine Consumption in Tao Qian, Li Bai, and Su Shi”, Charles Kwong continues a similar line of inquiry by extending the discussion of wine and poetry to the Tang and Song dynasties. Focusing on individual poets rather than broad historical periods, Kwong’s analysis adds a very welcome personal dimension to the discussion of wine poetry. Slightly departing from the theme of wine, but still forming a part of a coherent historical survey on “drink writing”, Rogan Egan’s “The Interplay of Social and Literary History: Tea in the Poetry of the Middle Historical Period” effectively links the subtle evolution of tea poetry with the larger economic, cultural, and political changes that took place with the Tang-Song transition. Egan’s discussion of the Song

government's tea monopoly and its effect on poetry is particularly illuminating. If one were to compare this book to an eight-course banquet, it would make a fine but somewhat frustrating dining experience. After a couple of speeches by our hosts, there comes toast after toast with wine and tea, and 'real food' does not appear until the sixth course. But what a sumptuous one it is! Duncan Campbell's "The Obsessive Gourmet: Zhang Dai on Food and Drink" enriches the discussion not only by bringing on new nourishment (crabs), but also by introducing fresh genres and modes of food writing, with references to Zhang Dai's no-longer-extant recipe book, the *Old Glutton's Collection* 老饕集, and selections from his memoir, *Dream Memories of Taoan* 陶庵夢憶, poetry and miscellaneous writing. Most of these texts would be considered marginal or non-literary by conventional literary studies, but as Campbell expertly demonstrates, they form a highly moralised literati discourse on food with "implications of the most serious kind about political legitimacy and historical continuity".

The remaining two chapters deal with food and drink in two of the greatest works of classical Chinese fiction: *Jinpingmei* and *Honglouloumeng*. Isaac Yue's chapter on *Jinpingmei*, anchored on the famous sex scene in the grape arbour, offers much insight into the relationship between food and gender politics in late Ming society. However, Yue's analytical rigour that combines close reading of source material with a healthy dose of psychoanalysis is not sustained throughout the essay. The section on "character names and the objectification of the female body" dwells on the kind of word play that is painstaking but ultimately unsatisfying.

Louise Edwards's chapter on *Honglouloumeng* builds on the strengths of her previous research on the boundaries between purity and profanity in the novel, and her discussion of the double-edged function of food as a source of both nourishment and contamination benefits from such a well-defined critical framework. The idea of breast milk as both nourishing and "highly polluting" fits well into this framework, but one wonders whether it might also be productively examined from the perspective of gender politics, given the milk's strong sexual overtones.

The book as a whole makes a considerable contribution to the understanding of the cultural and social significance of food in the Chinese literary tradition, yet, with a title as ambitious as *Scribes of Gastronomy: Representations of Food and Drink in Imperial Chinese Literature*, the reader expects a coverage that is more varied and comprehensive. Perhaps the relatively limited range of Chinese food writing discussed in this collection betrays a view of literature that privileges the more canonical works of classical prose, poetry, and fiction, whereas food writing that is richly present in the so-called minor genres, such as unofficial histories, *biji* 筆記 and *xiaopin* 小品 collections, letters and diaries, and practical guidebooks, is largely overlooked. Even when reading the chapters on Su Shi's famous wine and tea poems, one cannot help but think longingly of Su Shi's equally famous Dongpo pork, the recipe for which is endearingly described in his lesser-known poetry.

Reviewed by LUO HUI
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Ji Zhang, *One and Many: A Comparative Study of Plato's Philosophy and Daoism Represented by Ge Hong*, Monograph No.22, Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2012, 368pp, ISBN: 978-0-8248-3554-5

The subtitle of this book indicates a highly specialist area of study. The work explores, compares and contrasts the philosophical ideas, influences and ontological issues raised by the foundational Western philosopher Plato (428-347 BC) and the lesser known Daoist thinker Ge Hong (284-347 AD). (Ji uses "AD" and "BC" in his work). Part One, "Textual Studies", is an in-depth analysis of Ge Hong's and Plato's philosophical ideas as we have them conveyed to us through their texts. Part Two, "Comparative Ontology", focuses on the notion of being and not-being as developed by the two writers. This incisive, detailed book will interest philosophers of religion, especially those with interests in Daoism, and Christian theologians interested in comparative religion.

For most readers, it is probably best treated as a reference work on where and how lines of convergence between Chinese and Western interpretations of ontology, or the study of being, might be developed. Ji Zhang attempts to create a dialogue by reading Plato through the eyes of Ge Hong, whose Daoist tradition postulates a world in which there is an inward connectedness through the movement of being and becoming together. Zhang strives to construct an intellectual bridge over the historical and cultural distances and differences between the two thinkers and find their common connections. He hopes to illuminate modern minds by opening up ancient wisdom in a new and comparative way.

The uniqueness of this work is that it is essentially autobiographical. Zhang, trained in systematic theology in Boston and Melbourne, was deeply influenced by the leading Christian Theologian Jürgen Moltmann at Tübingen. He is an ordained minister of the Uniting Church of Australia and a Research Associate of the Uniting Church Theological College which forms part of the Melbourne College of Divinity. Zhang first encountered Platonism in the context of the study of Christian systematic theology. Even Ge Hong was opened up to him in the context of a Christian seminar at Harvard University in 1998. His personal journey into Daoism is then described rather movingly in pages 318-319. Zhang's visits to Daoist temples and institutions in China helped him explore, not only Ge Hong, but the ancestral cultural home in which he came to feel accepted and philosophically and spiritually nurtured. "Daoism has provided me with the free space that I was looking for in the formation of my intellectual identity" (p. xiii). The inspiration for a comparison between Plato and Ge Hong, and the title, *One and Many*, come therefore out of an interflow of unique sources, namely Platonic philosophy, Daoist tradition and theory as well as Christian theology. The result is an analysis of both "how the many become one" as well as "the many within the One". The classic Christian expression of the "One and Many" is the Trinity, where "Three become One". Zhang explores connections between the Trinitarian affirmation of unity and plurality on the one hand and the mutuality of Dao and nature on the other. Similarly, he chooses to explore a Daoist "cyclical" basis for exploring creation ex nihilo, rather than the traditional "linear" basis. For those willing to make the effort, the differing, deep and foundational bases of human unity and diversity are opened up.

Ji Zhang begins convincingly with the affirmation that there is a fundamental commonality between the two: “Plato and Ge Hong lived on the same earth under the same heaven and shared concerns about the world. Where they really differ is in their thoughts for framing and articulating what reality is at the most fundamental level, or in Chinese what is the *Dao*” (p. xiv). The question as to whether a useful comparison between Ge Hong and Plato can be constructed remains of course. Zhang acknowledges this: “these traditions can be seen as two rivers that derive from separate sources, travel through different cultural and historical landscapes, and discharge waters into different parts of the earth” (p. xiv). He believes, however, that a comparison can be made, providing that three major hermeneutical barriers, namely, history, language and comparative method, are successfully resolved. It is perhaps in the attempt to overcome these barriers that the book reveals its widest value and faces its greatest challenges.

Firstly, it is not clear that Daoist terms can be adequately translated into either Western languages or in a way that can be rendered intelligible and expressed by Platonic terms. As is well known, even the translation of the word “*Dao*” is problematic. Similarly, Christians will be well aware of the long-standing unresolved issues facing the translation of the Biblical notion of “*God*” into Chinese. Significantly, there are also no standard, accepted translations of Ge Hong’s works, and Ji Zhang provides his own translations. That inevitably leads to the possibility of interpretations and unclear renderings of key texts.

Secondly, history is of course not just facts, but the interpretation of texts and thought over time. Zhang is aware of the almost inevitable danger of reinterpreting texts in the light of modern methods of contextualisation or historical criticism. His comparative method is to create a dialogue, not between Plato and Ge Hong, but between the texts that they have left us. That involves our interpretation of those texts and our understanding of the historical circumstances that led to their production. Readers will need to judge for themselves whether Zhang has succeeded in creating a dialogue that isn’t distorted in interpretative details of those texts.

In the end, wisely, Zhang does not attempt to explain Plato and Ge Hong in each other’s terms or achieve philosophical reconciliation between them. Indeed, the bridge between the two is not designed to carry philosophical traffic between the two. Reflection and insight gained by reflection from both sides eventually lead the reader back to an analysis of oneself and a path of personal transformation and enlightenment. That leads, to use a theological term, to *revelation*, or, in other words, to a personal breakthrough in to new insight in our self-understanding.

One and Many develops some useful discussions on contemporary themes such as unity and plurality and multi-culturalism. The denial of the essential unity of humanity results in chaos. However, the denial of plurality will destroy unity. Sameness leads to degeneration. Zhang promotes the idea of cross-culturalism rather than multi-culturalism. What is needed is the dynamic tension of the dialogue where interaction brings an evolving sense of renewal and change as each tradition listens to the other and changes. This is a complex but ultimately rewarding work.

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Zhiqun Zhu, *China's New Diplomacy: Rational Strategies and Significance*. Second Edition, Farnham: Ashgate, 2013, 276pp. ISBN: 978-1472413680 (hbk)

In this book Zhu Zhiqun, who is Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania, provides a well-researched, comprehensive picture of China's rise in global affairs since the early 1990s. Chapter by chapter, Zhu describes the development of Chinese economic and diplomatic interests in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Central Asia, South Pacific and South East Asia. He concludes with chapters on "International Responses" and "China in the 21st Century". He assembles a vast array of data on China's relationships with each continent and on the bilateral relationships with key countries in those continents. This work is intended for classroom use and has relevant questions for discussion at the end of each chapter.

Zhu argues that as China seeks to expand its global trade and investment, it is pursuing and creating a new identity as a responsible, friendly and peaceful player in world affairs. It is not colonising any part of the world and is not seeking confrontation with the United States. Zhu takes a very sympathetic view of China; while it may make mistakes, it is not intentional as it is feeling its way into a new global role. China needs to create friends and stable relationships to satisfy its rapid expansion and its insatiable needs for energy and raw material. It therefore focusses on "energy diplomacy" and "soft power diplomacy", such as founding Confucius Institutes to establish relationships.

The title of his book gives hope that Zhu will analyse and critique modern Chinese diplomacy and foreign policy. Ultimately however, Zhu's analysis of China's performance as an emerging diplomatic and political force is frustrating and disappointing. Zhu does not analyse China's role and performance in international institutions, especially the United Nations or, for example, in the Global Arms Treaty negotiations or climate change discussions. Surprisingly, there are no separate chapters on "China and Europe" or "China and North America", although there are references, particularly to the United States, throughout the book. While Germany, for example, is China's No. 1 trading partner in the EU and China is the top foreign investment destination for German companies, there are only five brief references to Chinese-German relationships.

There are inconsistencies. The "One China" policy and the isolation of Taiwan is one of the few conditions that China places on recipients of its aid and trade. Throughout the book, Zhu describes China's unrelenting competition with Taiwan and its attempts to win official recognition from countries allied to Taiwan. This is especially so in the chapter "China and the South Pacific". It is a little surprising therefore to read in the last chapter: "Beijing has gone out of its way to let Taiwan keep its existing allies" (p. 239). Zhu concludes that China needs to provide more space for Taiwan to enhance its own claim to be a reasonable, responsive and responsible global citizen. Moreover, the special Free Trade Agreement between China and Taiwan signed in 2010 has made the situation more complex as is seen most recently in the Sunflower Student Movement in Taiwan's opposition to the Cross-Strait Services Trade Agreement.

Similarly, Zhu does not seem consistent in his discussion of China's non-interference policy in the internal affairs of other countries. China does not bind its

trade and aid to improvement in governance and human rights. This policy makes Chinese diplomacy attractive to many countries with dubious human rights records, such as Sudan. Zhu can only write rather lamely: “China’s traditional non-interference policy in Sudan and Syria may have condoned bad governance and human rights abuses and has received strong criticism from many quarters” (p. 15). Zhu does not criticize China’s arms sales to the Sudan, despite acknowledging the serious flaws in its policy: “no matter how it defends its weapon sales policy, when its lethal wares wind up in conflict zones in violation of UN sanctions, one can argue that China is not playing a positive and responsible role” (p. 25).

Again in the last chapter however, Zhu attempts to place China’s role in Sudan in a better light by describing some small scale but not insignificant aid initiatives. He argues that the non-interference policy is now mentioned less and China is more willing to exert pressure on Sudan, providing it does so under a UN mandate. Zhu is possibly correct in saying “China’s often behind-the-scenes diplomacy in Dafur reveals its attempts to strike a balance between the traditional principle of non-interference ‘in others’ internal affairs’ and the needs and wishes of the international community” (p. 221). However, such an assertion needs more discussion. Similarly, Zhu acknowledges but does not discuss the point that turning a blind eye to problems in the region can actually frustrate the attempts of governments to overcome those problems, to consolidate their democracies, and to build a transparent system of governance. China’s demand for security and stability in its diplomacy is paramount, both internally and externally. The chapter on “China and Central Asia” makes the point that stability in Central Asia is essential for stability in China’s western provinces. This raises the possibility of Chinese political “interference” in those countries’ internal governance. Sizable Chinese loans to the Turkmenistan army for example suggest that China is using its trade, aid and military power to influence countries in the region. China’s own internal diplomacy with the Uighurs and Tibet are not discussed in any depth.

Strangely, there is also no specific chapter on “China and North East Asia”. Regarding the tension on the Korean Peninsula, Zhu simply writes in the introduction: “whenever a crisis occurs on the Korean Peninsula, even the United States looks up to China for leadership. China is expected to continue to play the leadership role in the long process of North Korea’s de-nuclearization” (p.8). No discussion of the value of sanctions against North Korea or human rights issues is given. A far more thorough analysis of China’s diplomatic, trade, aid, security needs, and military relationship with North Korea than this is needed.

Zhu aims to show that China has largely succeeded in creating an image of itself as a responsible and responsive member of the global community. However, Zhu’s lack of adequate critique of current Chinese diplomatic practices and policies is the essential failing of the book. He acknowledges the issue: “in foreign policy, Beijing has focused on its own economic and security interests and largely ignored other issues such as human rights, governance and environment. The question is: is such a strategy or the so-called China model sustainable?” (p. 215). However, the question is

wider than this. Is such a model in the end good for the international community and the recipients of Chinese aid and trade? Is it responsible? Nevertheless, despite these failings, there is a wealth of good information and perspectives in this book to make it a worthwhile reference.

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