

Reviews

Sandra Buckley, ed., *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Japanese Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 2009, 634pp. ISBN 10 0-415-48152-x (pbk.)

This encyclopedia is a paperback edition of the book first published in 2002 and reviewed by Roy Starrs in *NZJAS* 4, 2 (2002). I refer readers to this review for a good summary of a number of English language encyclopedias on Japan and pertinent comments on the original edition. The edition under review here contains a new preface by Sandra Buckley, but has not otherwise been updated. While this decision is understandable given the scale of the work and the number of contributors, it is a pity that the opportunity was not taken to correct at least the many errors in typography and Romanisation of Japanese that mar the text. One must also question how long a work which is nearly ten years old can continue to claim to be 'contemporary'?

In her new preface, Buckley provides a brief overview of Japanese political events between 2002 and 2009, and some reflections on developments in Japanese culture from the immediate postwar years to the present, as seen through a number of Japanese and American films. While these reflections are not uninteresting, the focus on film gives the preface a rather narrow view, considering the broad range of material on offer within the work itself. This eclectic approach is reflective of the work as a whole; although the work contains interesting and useful information here and there, it suffers from editorial weakness and inconsistency.

According to the introduction, the encyclopedia is designed to appeal to general readers as well as to provide an accessible reference tool for teachers and specialists. It contains an alphabetical list of entries, a thematic list of entries, and an index. Due to the obscurity of some of the headings, however, (for example "Hair Debate", or "Against Police Duties Bill") readers in search of specific information are advised to turn to the index first.

The concept of 'culture' itself is not interrogated within the work. There is an emphasis on film, music, and the "lived experience of everyday Japanese life" (xiii), rather than on 'high culture', and an attempt to include topics which lie beyond the mainstream. There is also a significant emphasis on Western understandings of Japanese culture. There are entries, for example, on love hotels, toilets, toys, whale meat, and "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles", but (rather surprisingly) no separate entries for 'geisha,' or *bunraku*. In the attempt to cater for the general reader, some of the entries are excessively shallow. In the entry on "Sushi" for example, we learn that foreigners should know that sushi should be turned rice side up and only the fish dipped

into the soy sauce to avoid the embarrassment of it all falling apart, but nothing of the history of sushi or how it came to be “Japan’s most notable cultural export” (p. 488).

Specialists will no doubt be frustrated by the inaccuracies in this work. Those who are patient enough to look beyond these errors, however, will also be rewarded by some excellent entries. Anthropologist Margaret Lock, for example, writes a number of entries concerning Japan’s medical culture (for example on “Organ Transplants” and “Traditional Medicine”) which would be very useful in the classroom. Andrew Gordon writes a succinct summary of trends in historical scholarship since the end of the war in his entry entitled “History”. An index by contributor would have been a useful addition to the encyclopedia as a whole.

This is an interesting book to browse, and, used judiciously, it could also be used as a resource for teaching. In view of its inconsistent quality, however, it cannot be recommended as a first port of call for information on contemporary Japan.

Reviewed by ELLEN NAKAMURA
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John DeFrancis and Zhang Yanyin, eds., *ABC English-Chinese Chinese-English Dictionary*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2010, 1240pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3485-2 (pbk.)

The *ABC English-Chinese, Chinese English Dictionary (ECCE)* is the latest offering in the University of Hawai’i’s *ABC* dictionary series, and the final work of the late John DeFrancis (1911-2009). This dictionary, co-edited with University of Canberra-based specialist of second-language acquisition Zhang Yanyin, is a pocket-style abridgement of the previous *ABC Chinese-English Dictionary*, which now also contains an English-Chinese section. The *ABC* series is acclaimed as the first dictionaries to employ the “strict alphabetical” *pinyin* ordering system, seeking to overcome the inconveniences of traditional “graphically oriented indices to assist in finding characters whose pronunciation is not known”.

The *ABC* system is certainly innovative, and depending upon what one wants to do, can be very helpful. David Moser has proposed that it has “filled a longstanding gap in Sinology, providing readers with lexical items arranged completely alphabetically by *pinyin*, thus avoiding the problem of ‘Which Graph is it, anyway’ when confronted with a new term in a spoken context”.¹ Because the *pinyin* for terms comprised of more than one character-syllable are treated as one alphabetical entity, it is possible, for anybody with a rudimentary knowledge of *pinyin*, quickly to locate compound words directly upon hearing these words spoken. The system allows users to avoid that annoying trial-and-error process of thumbing through swathes of homophonous characters before finding the desired term: a problem common to all traditionally-ordered dictionaries.

1 ‘Remembering John DeFrancis,’ in *The China Beat*, January 21, 2009. [Web address <http://www.thechinabeat.org/?s=John+DeFrancis>]. Accessed June 1, 2011.

For the overwhelmed student—this is a “student-oriented bilingual dictionary”—in the classroom or on the Chinese street, these dictionaries could mean the difference between finding a definition for a term just heard and forgetting it altogether.

But as Moser perhaps tacitly implies, the system only really shines *in a spoken context*. “Which Graph is it, anyway” is still a reality for anybody endeavouring to do more than acquire conversational Chinese from the spoken sounds they hear—i.e., students aiming to *understand* characters and their diversity. If one chooses to accept (and today it seems ill-advised not to) that characters will continue to be the staple of written communication in the Sinophone world, then understanding them and their fascinating shades of meaning will (thankfully) continue to be a necessity. It is ironic that revolutionary thinkers such as Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936) and Shen Yanbing 沈雁冰 (1896-1981) (to whom, among other prominent advocates of language reform, this dictionary is dedicated) now seem so irrelevant.

If one accepts the continuing need for a robust understanding of Chinese characters, then conventional by-character ordering still seems the best approach. Only dictionaries with character-based ordering give us the chance (and surely, this is one of the unique joys of studying Chinese) to glean over different terms that contain a common character in a single swoop. This learning-by-osmosis is a clumsy and haphazard process of gradual exposure, but it is still the best way to achieve a well-rounded understanding of written Chinese. Definitions ordered “strictly alphabetically”, as DeFrancis and Zhang offer here, is useful for listeners who need to locate a definition quickly, but will disappoint those hoping to garner a deeper understanding of characters as visual ideographs:

mìngtí 命题 ① assign a topic; set a question. ② <math./log/> proposition; statement; thesis

míngtiān 明天 n. ① tomorrow ② the near future

Míngguó 民国 [-國] N. Republic of China (1912-)

míngwàng 名望 N. fame; renown | *Lǎo jiàoshòu zài zhègè lǐngyù lǐ yǒu*
老教授在这个领域里有~。The professor has great fame in this field.

Míngwángxīng 冥王星. N. <astr.> Pluto

Here, five compound words, each beginning with a different character, are listed as they appear on p. 799 of the dictionary. A student, for example, with no understanding of the term *min* 民, would learn nothing by comparing it to its adjacent terms here. In a conventional dictionary, while *minguo* 民国 may have taken longer to find if a student knew only its sound, they would nonetheless learn the definition of *minguo* and *min*, and be free to dabble with the other usages of *min* in neighbouring proximity. And because the *ABC* approach fails to differentiate between syllables, it is even conceivable that entry-level beginners could be confused about where one syllable ends and the next begins: does 民 represent just *min*, or *ming*; is 国 pronounced *guo*, or just *uo*? There is neither syllable differentiation, nor other examples containing *min* immediately at hand to help make such a distinction.

While DeFrancis’ and Zhang’s new *ABC* title is a useful aid for quick location of terms based on their *pinyin* sound, it seems these days that this can be achieved, for

those with access, using now standard *pinyin*-input computer typing, online dictionary resources, and (undoubtedly, by now) a staggering array of iPhone apps. The strength of the traditional Chinese dictionary has always been its ability to furnish readers with proximate examples of the meaning and context of characters.

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Arndt Graf, Susanne Schröter and Edwin Wieringa, eds., *Aceh: History, Politics and Culture*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010, xvii + 386pp. ISBN: 978-981-4279-12-3 (pbk.); 978-981-4279-13-0 (pdf)

The editors of this volume say in the preface that it is difficult to find a comprehensive account of Aceh's history, politics and culture and that this book is an attempt to fill that gap. The editors note that a volume is needed that might benefit "expatriate aid workers", of which there have been a great many traversing the province since the twin devastations of the 2004 tsunami and the separatist conflict.

This volume is organised into seventeen substantive chapters that cover a wide range of themes. It should be noted at the outset that all these chapters are, perhaps unusually so for an edited volume, of uniformly high standard. There is little question that this book represents a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on Aceh.

But a query must remain around the usefulness of this volume to the uninformed aid worker who shows up in Aceh seeking to understand the complexities of the situation. It is for this audience that we might confront the problems that edited volumes can bring. Newcomers to Aceh might wonder why the name Iskandar Muda is prevalent in the province, including the name of the main airport that they will travel through. Instead of starting Aceh's story with the legendary 17th Century Sultan who presided over Aceh's "golden age", this book actually begins with the later rule of the four successive sultanahs who reigned over Aceh from 1641-99. Sher Banu A.L. Khan's discussion of this period is an interesting reconceptualisation of the period of successive "queens"—seen as a period of instability by some commentators, including in Aceh itself, but seen by Khan as a period of strength via a "softer, more flexible hand" (p. 22). Antje Missbach's account of the Aceh War, when the Dutch invaded in 1873 to face the most serious resistance ever encountered in their territorial expansion in the region, devotes a lot of attention to the work of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, who, in modern parlance, might be regarded as a 'human terrain' specialist. Snouck Hurgronje is an important figure in the Dutch colonial conquest of Aceh, but one might think that the number and extent of references to him in this chapter and several others are of greater interest to historians than laypeople. Again, newcomers to Aceh will be curious to know much more about anti-Dutch resistance figures, and modern cult heroes with a lot in the province named after them, like Teungku Cik di Tiro, Tenku Umar and Cut Nyak Dien (Tenku Umar's widow who continued the struggle)—the latter's role in the Aceh War not being elaborated on in any significant way. The cause will not be helped by the fact that Cut Nyak Dien's name is rendered differently in this volume. Wolfgang

Marschall's interesting chapter on the Nias and Simeulue islands, incorporates a literature review—again of questionable use outside the specialist community.

One might imagine that our uninformed but eager aid worker would want to zero in on some of the chapters here, to include Patrick Ziegenhain's overview of the separatist conflict in Aceh, Damien Kingsbury's first-hand account of the Aceh Peace Process, Susanne Schröter on Acehese culture, Arndt Graf's examination of letters to the editor of Aceh's main newspaper (*Serambi Indonesia*) and Edwin Wieringa's chapter on poetry entitled "God Speaks through Natural Disasters, but What Does He Say?". Chapters by both Graf and Wieringa deserve some attention here, because these contributions rest on some important research, and the findings need to be absorbed by anyone hoping to understand Aceh. Noting the problem of theodicy seemingly inherent in the destruction of the 2004 tsunami (which took the lives of some 180,000 Acehese and devastated the province), these chapters reveal what many Acehese concluded from that disaster. A poem by Ida N. Charazanah incorporates the common belief that Allah had miraculously spared the province's mosques, said to be a sign of the Almighty. There were various 'reasons' assumed to lie behind this disaster, including a supposed lack of piety in the province or even the fact that the Aceh conflict had involved intra-Muslim violence, and Graf's examination of letters shows that many accepted the tsunami as collective punishment for sins (p. 291). Wieringa argues that the tsunami actually strengthened the hand of the religious hardliners, including the Wilayatul Hisbah (modelled on Saudi Arabia's religious police, the *Mutaween*)—one sign put up read "Disaster has happened, so women cover yourselves up" (p. 328). (Interestingly enough it is also pointed out that a "folk theory", and one contrary to the common assumption in Aceh, has emerged in central Java that natural disasters have been occurring in "arabized" areas; a warning from Ratu Kidul, the Queen of the South Seas, to those who convert to another ethnicity—p. 329.) Wieringa argues convincingly that this belief in Divine Intent in Aceh is "a mainstream political reality" (p. 328). The volume is to be lauded for taking seriously these folk beliefs, because as important as they often are, they are usually overlooked, or mocked when they are not overlooked, by secular Western commentators.

A few of the chapters here are not written by disinterested participants. Kingsbury's chapter on the peace process ought to be required reading, yet as this contributor was a member of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) negotiating team at Helsinki, the story is told from this point of view. In noting, for example, that the Indonesian military budget was exhausted, we are not told that GAM was likewise exhausted. Both sides had reasons to want to reach settlement. There are two chapters here from Hasan Basri, a specialist in Quranic exegesis at the Aceh branch of the Islamic State Institute (IAIN). Like Graf and Wieringa, Hasan Basri's contributions might count as explaining beliefs to an outside audience that needs to understand them, but here the book feels more like a 'reader' volume: Hasan Basri is a committed believer and expounds an idealised type of Islamic belief in Aceh. We are told, for example, that it was "unfortunate" that the Jakarta Charter had to be eliminated; a reference to an unsuccessful attempt to insert reference to the application of *Syari'at* to Muslims into the 1945 Constitution (p. 270). It is also claimed that "the mosque generates the inspiration and the motivation for *jihad*" (p. 197); and Western neophytes to the topic might easily assume this is a reference to 'holy war' (I gather, however, that it is not).

In summary, this edited volume is a very strong contribution to the Aceh discussion. There is not a single weak chapter in this book, which remains a great accomplishment and a credit to the editors. But with the book seemingly pulling in different directions, and with numerous gaps (notably there is no description of the province's important political developments since the Helsinki Accords, whereby local GAM elements have taken control of provincial government) and the tendency for some chapters to dive down rabbit holes, this probably does not count as the single volume introduction to Aceh for the uninformed that the editors intended. That task is probably better achieved outside this particular format.

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Edward McDonald, *Learning Chinese, Turning Chinese: Challenges to becoming sinophone in a globalised world*, London and New York: Routledge, 2011, xxi + 241pp., illustrations. ISBN: 978-0-55942-3 (pbk.)

This book, by Edward McDonald, until recently a member of the staff of the School of Asian Studies of the University of Auckland, addresses itself explicitly to the “*potential sinophone*: that is, the university student who is currently studying Chinese or intending to do so” (p. 4; emphasis in the original). Sadly, as McDonald himself recognises, I suspect that his book is more likely to be read by those responsible for the language and studies programs that such students may (or may not) enrol in rather than the students themselves. A pity. I would have much benefited from a book such as this when, more than three decades ago now, I myself embarked on the lengthy process McDonald discusses here: that of becoming a “sinophone”, defined by the author as referring to “a person who speaks one or more of the Sinitic languages ... by *adoption*” (p. 6; again emphasis in the original).

Nonetheless, I believe it to be an unusual and timely contribution to the field of Chinese Studies (or Sinology) and one that raises issues that will become increasingly critical as the reach of the “soft power” of the People’s Republic of China seeks to stretch to correspond with that nation’s burgeoning economic and political power. McDonald asks a series of deceptively simple questions: “Why learn Chinese? What is the point of training university students in the language and culture of the Chinese sphere? What sorts of skills and knowledge do they acquire in the process to inform their future careers and contribute to their respective societies? And how is Chinese studies as a field facing up to the challenges of its role in an inextricably globalised world?” (p. 1). His answer to the last of these questions, in particular, is bound to prove as controversial as it is paradoxical: “...although university Chinese teaching as currently constituted aims to give students access to Chinese language and culture, too often its effective outcome is to *prevent* foreigners from learning to use the language properly” (again p. 1; again, emphasis in the original!).

McDonald’s proposed solution to this failure is that the aim of university education in the field must be “to turn students into linguistic and cultural *hybrids*: in other words,

that *learning Chinese* should inevitably involve, to a greater or lesser degree, a process of *turning Chinese*” (p. 2; note to authors and/or editors, avoid excessive use of *emphasis*, a textual feature that quickly becomes irritating and which is surely the typographical equivalent of raising one’s voice). McDonald’s book is divided into three parts (“The Great Wall of Chinese language teaching”, “Drawing battlelines over language”, and “Getting over the Walls of Discourse”) and its nine substantive and closely argued chapters (three per part) approach this claim from a variety of perspectives.

McDonald begins his argument where so many of the re-engagements with Chinese realities on the part of those who teach or research China but who live elsewhere begin—a conversation with a Peking taxi-driver, during course of which he uses that ghostly but ubiquitous evaluative locution *suzhi* 素質 [quality].² This is a neat device for, as he presents a close reading of a variety of texts that span the entire range of Chinese linguistic possibility range, from the Confucian classics to contemporary men’s fashion magazines, it allows McDonald to introduce immediately both the method of his book and his theoretical concerns. With respect to this latter aspect, McDonald’s engagement is explicitly with the ideas developed by Geremie Barmé at the Australian National University concerning what he has labelled “New Sinology” in English and “Hou Hanxue” 後漢學 in Chinese.³ This complex of ideas argues for a re-commitment to the philological basis of the discipline, and as summarised by McDonald (p. 33), requires that our work in the field is characterised by, minimally, mastery of both the classical and the vernacular Chinese languages, an explicitly multidisciplinary approach, a concerted attempt to draw connections between the Chinese past and its present, and “an unrelenting attentiveness to sinophone ways of speaking, writing, and seeing”.⁴

McDonald’s following chapters deal successively with an analysis of the ideological underpinnings of both Chinese language textbooks (the example used is Philip Lee’s *You Can Speak Mandarin*) and usual Chinese language teaching programs, a case study of one particular learner of Chinese (Lee Kuan Yew), the extent to which the field of Chinese Studies has been characterised by an orientalist “fetishisation” of the Chinese character (“...an inordinate status given to Chinese characters in the interpretation of Chinese language, thought and culture”, p. 186) that has now gained strong endorsement from Chinese cultural nationalists (with particular reference to the work of the “cultural linguist” Shen Xiaolong 申小龍), and tracing how the concept of

2 Published too late for McDonald’s purpose here, it seems, a recent issue of the journal *positions: east asia cultures critique* (Vol. 17, No. 3, Winter 2009) includes a number of articles on this concept by Australian-based scholars.

3 Barmé’s first published statement of his ideas, “On New Sinology”, was commissioned for No. 31 (May 2005) of the *Chinese Studies Association of Australia Newsletter* by the then editor John Fitzgerald; Fitzgerald published a critical response to the article (“The New Sinology and the end of History”) in the following issue of the newsletter (No. 32), both of which are available on the association’s website. Barmé has subsequently published an extended version of his initial article in the e-journal he edits, *China Heritage Quarterly*, along with further and continuing iterations of the concept by both himself and others.

4 Oddly, McDonald seems to rather ignore one further aspect of New Sinology as I understand it—its explicitly Australasian perspective on the sinophone world.

the “metrosexual” has been adapted in Chinese men’s fashion magazines. McDonald’s penultimate chapter returns to the theoretical concerns signalled earlier in his book and develops a productive way of thinking about how to bridge the great divide that characterises most Chinese language programs, that between the language and the “studies” courses (and, frequently, those that teach these courses), and the extent to which, in keeping with the *kaozheng* 考證 (evidential analysis) traditions of the late Ming and early Qing dynasties upon which it is distantly founded, New Sinology seeks equally to attend to both the social and the semiotic. “There is no sense in trying to separate the two”, McDonald argues, for: “they are two sides of the same coin” (p. 192).

In his final chapter and in keeping with his desire to speak directly to the needs of individual learners of the Chinese language, McDonald introduces us to another and in this case autobiographical case study of an aspiring sinophone, concluding: “But just like my great-great-grandfather reinventing himself in a new country, or my grandfather taking a parodic Scottish identity in order to playfully berate an old clan foe, or myself accepting the moniker of ‘Old Horse’ and all the possibilities that opened up as well as the restrictions it imposed, you always retain the ability to *choose* as you make your own unique journey into the sinophone sphere” (p. 217).

Much of this is both provocative and engaging, useful I believe for both learners and teachers of Chinese. The chapter entitled “Keeping Chinese for the Chinese: The paradox of nativised orientalism in Chinese linguistics” where he discusses the arguments of Shen Xiaolong and others, concluding that “Shen’s ideologically driven need to *prove* (!) that Chinese is ‘different’ only ends up trapping him in a superficial and *reactive* (!!) type of relativism that cannot deal with the actual similarities and differences between languages” (p. 146), I found particularly stimulating and susceptible to wider application. At the same time, two aspects of this book troubled me somewhat. The first concerned the overall coherence of the book. Read on its own, each chapter worked well enough and held one’s interest. I finished the book unconvinced however that each of these nine chapters was altogether necessary to make the general points that McDonald was advancing, and I think the repeated injunctions throughout the book that such and such a topic will be referred to again in such and a such a section, another rather annoying feature of a book when overused, reveal an author too who was a little uncertain about the specific relevance of parts of his book. The other is that there is a certain carelessness in the manner in which McDonald conducts the close reading that he presents in Chapter One as an exemplar of his method (“Arguing semantics with a Beijing taxi-driver: relating text and context in a university Chinese language program”). In the case of the line from the *Analects* of Confucius that the editor *Menbox* (*Shishang junzi* 時尚君子) cites and which McDonald proceeds to analyse, nowhere does McDonald point out that the editor (consciously or not and as given here in Chinese by McDonald)⁵ appears to have reversed the meaning of the original line, although both here (“Confucius said: ‘I haven’t seen anyone who loves virtue as much

5 On pp. 26 and 27 of his book, McDonald cites the line of the editorial as reading: 孔子曰：吾未見有好色如好德者。 Standard versions of this section of the *Analects* (9.18) read: 子曰：吾未見好德如好色者也。

as he loves appearance””, p. 27) and, differently, when McDonald returns to the line on p. 171 (“I have never met anyone who was more interested in virtue than in looks”), McDonald’s translation serves to disguise this fact. Further, in the original context, both McDonald’s “appearance” and his “looks” as a translation of the Chinese “se” 色 is surely inadequate: Simon Leys, for instance, with his characteristic uncluttered precision renders the line: “The Master said: ‘I have never seen anyone who loved virtue as much as sex’”.⁶ In similar vein, nowhere in his discussion of the text “written” by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664) also cited by the *Menbox* editor, taken from the *Heart Sutra*, does McDonald mention the fact that these lines form part of a translation from Sanskrit (or perhaps, as suggested by recent scholarship, a re-translation of an earlier Chinese translation) and that the attribution to Xuanzang remains problematical. Again, issues that one would think were germane to a close reading of the text in question. In this connection and with relevance to both the examples I have raised here, McDonald could well have made reference to the best published model of precisely the method he advocates here, Pauline Yu, Peter Bol, Stephen Owen, and Willard Peterson, eds., *Ways with Words: Writing about Reading Texts from Early China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2000).

This having been said, however, and in a context in which the “Rise of China” looks bound to continue well on into this present century, then I believe that those labouring in the Sinological field need to think deeply about the extent to which the programs that we offer are such that they will best equip our students with the skills and understandings that will allow their engagement with both Chinese traditions and contemporary Chinese realities to be informed, critical, and productive. In this respect, McDonald’s book raises (and in part seeks to answer) a number of vital questions. Somewhere between McDonald’s present book and the remarkable final word of the Chinese historian, Frederick W. Mote, *China and the Vocation of History in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010), published posthumously, we will find many clues as to the appropriate directions for the discipline in the twenty-first century.⁷

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Stephen McDowall. *Qian Qianyi’s Reflections on Yellow Mountain; Traces of a Late-Ming Hatchet and Chisel*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009, x + 226pp. ISBN 978-962-209-084-2 (hbk.)

Stephen McDowall’s study of Qian Qianyi’s 錢謙益 (1582-1664) travel essay of his trip to Yellow Mountain (Huangshan 黃山) during the late Ming dynasty asks us to rethink what it is to look and interpret scenes and objects. Upon picking up a copy, the first thing that one notices is the quality of the book. Hong Kong University Press

6 Simon Leys, trans., *The Analects of Confucius* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1997), p. 41.

7 In the No. 25 (March 2011) issue of *China Heritage Quarterly*, Geremie Barmé reprints an appendix to Mote’s book, “East Asian Studies at Princeton—View From the Beginnings”, in which he outlines what he believed to be the desiderata of a serious program in the field.

has done an amazing job producing a very attractive volume, with full-page, full-colour reproductions of painted scenes of Yellow Mountain. The study consists of two parts: a brief examination of both Qian and late Ming society (with emphasis on travel writing), and McDowall's full translation of Qian's essay "You Huangshan ji" 遊黃山記 [Account of My Travels at Yellow Mountain].

A viewer's appreciation of an object, such as McDowall's book, is entangled with that viewer's culture. That is to say the viewer's education, individual history and societal influences all direct which aspects of an object the viewer distinguishes. This conviction served as vindication for the late Ming dynasty intellectual elitism. The beleaguered literati, experienced their centuries old monopoly on high-culture challenged by the *nouveau riche* of the merchant class. They sought to define their own collecting and connoisseurship as different to that of wealthy merchants by emphasizing their capacities to fully understand and appreciate luxuries and antiques. Qian highlights this point in a colophon of a bound collection of letters concerning a scroll-painting of Yellow Mountain done by the Tang poet Wang Wei 王維 (701-61), McDowall's translation of the colophon ends, "...this scroll was purchased by a wealthy man from Xin'an, an immortal example of brush and ink became buried under a mountain of copper cash, there languishing for over thirty years. Only when I travelled to Yellow Mountain was I able to recover it, bringing it out from its prison like the divine objects of Fengcheng" (p. 19). This emotive passage underlines the first premise in McDowall's thesis: that Qian was a member of the elite class of the late Ming and sought to differentiate himself from those whose position in society was based on their finances. This desire to differentiate themselves spread to many facets of literati life, including travel.

A journey cannot be owned, as a piece of art can; the experiential dimension to travel is limited to the traveller unless that traveller can effectively convey the experience to others through artistic representation. This artistic component allowed travel writing to become an outlet for elite literati to define themselves as something other than simple tourists, and by extension allow their readers to show their discernment in appreciating the piece. McDowall, in Part One of his book, extends the assumption that the viewer of an object is influenced by his or her culture to argue that viewing landscapes is a culturally influenced activity. In this way, the travel essay is not simply a topographical record, but an intentional demonstration of the authors' culture, highlighting aspects that are important to his society. In the late Ming this also meant that the travel essay was about displaying the author's abilities to understand and appreciate (on a higher-level than any tourist) the sites and sights that they write about. Most importantly to the late Ming *literatus* was the understanding of history and allusion within their writings. In travel writing this meant engaging with those authors who have previously taken the same journey and/or written about it. A typical display of elite travel writing employs a substantial quantity of historical literary allusion—even, as McDowall illustrates with Qian's essay, at the expense of an honest account of the trip itself.

"Account of My Travels at Yellow Mountain" was written after Qian had returned home, to supplement a series of poems he wrote during his trip. McDowall's study does not include these poems however, nor does there seem to have been a need to include them; McDowall's argument is clear and precise and any additional material might have

confused the points he seeks to make. Further, there is already an English-language study on Qian's travel poems done by Jonathan Chaves, "The Yellow Mountain Poems of Ch'ien Ch'ien-i (1562-1644): Poetry as Yu-Chi", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 48.2 (1988).

"Account of My Travels at Yellow Mountain" is a skilful translation of Qian's "You Huangshan ji". McDowall accomplishes his stated goal: providing a translation that is fluent and engaging for the non-specialist while providing substantial depth (in the numerous footnotes) for the scholarly reader. The sheer number of footnotes is testament to both the level of scholarship involved in McDowall's study and the complexity of the allusions used by Qian. Qian's intended audience would have been his fellow literary men who, sharing the same education as Qian, would have recognised the allusions. It is a pleasure to read McDowall's account through twice, once ignoring the footnotes and the second time paying them close attention, thus providing the nearest approximation to what Qian would have intended for his reader. The numerous allusions strengthen McDowall's argument further, illustrating the amount that Qian had 'borrowed' from earlier writers, and giving us a better idea of what was drawn from his own observations.

McDowall does point out that during the late Ming, Yellow Mountain was still a relatively new attraction, and yet already, through the numerous allusions, we can see clear literary tropes in Qian's writings. During his second chapter McDowall charts the evolution of late Ming to early Qing travel writing around Yellow Mountain, beginning with route books and traders' and merchants' notes, through to the later travel poems and essays. McDowall also notes the prescriptions that this body of literature has on the later traveller; earlier travellers were free to wander about the mountain, taking in sights where they wanted to whereas later travellers followed something akin to a set path, ensuring they took in all of the 'important' sights. The travellers who had gone before him, and written about the sites, influenced Qian's route up the mountain. As-yet unnamed sites are not mentioned precisely for the reason that they are not part of the conventions of travelling to Yellow Mountain. The spaces in between the sites are also not mentioned, giving the final essay the feel of a catalogue of views rather than a coherent travelogue. Qian goes as far as quoting from earlier authors who had not even been to the mountain instead of relying on his own observations. This testifies to the importance of such allusions within late Ming travel writings.

McDowall states that it was not his intention to produce a biography of Qian Qianyi, however his examination of the man still seemed a little too brief. I found myself consulting other sources for more information, having had my appetite whetted by seemingly off hand comments with no further information such as, "In the spring of 1638, *while still in prison*, he [Qian] had re-read the *Shiji* 史記 and the two *Hanshu* 漢書" (p. 29, my italics). McDowall does however provide his readers with an introduction to Qian's literary theories; drawing from the Yuan brothers' *Gongan* School, Qian recognised the importance of a sound historical-literary knowledge while embracing the naturalistic and emotive production of literature. This dual-natured theory of composition is evident in McDowall's literary and scholarly translation.

Qian Qianyi's reputation as a great literary figure who advocated original observation mixed with historical allusion has made him ideal for such a study. McDowall has convincingly argued that there is more to imperial Chinese travel essays than simply

topographical information; the travel essay is a complicated composition, designed to show off the authors knowledge and literary skills as well as his ability to understand landscapes on many levels, defining himself as an elite. In this way “Qian Qianyi’s essay is as much an engagement with an entire tradition of landscape representation as it is with the mountain itself” (p. 62). *Qian Qianyi’s Reflection on Yellow Mountain* is not simply an attractive volume but a significant contribution to the study of travel literature, encouraging those who study early Chinese travel writing to reassess the motivations behind these compositions and possibly encouraging more to work in this field.

Reviewed by TOM GRIFFITHS
The Australia National University

Herman Ooms, *Imperial Politics and Symbolics in Ancient Japan: The Tenmu Dynasty, 650-800*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 2009, xxi + 353pp., 11 figures, 2 tables, and 5 colour plates. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3235-3.

Herman Ooms’s fourth book (following *Charismatic Bureaucrat, Tokugawa Ideology, and Tokugawa Village Practice*) breaks new ground as he shifts his analysis from ideas and events in early modern Tokugawa period to those detected in the ancient Asuka and Nara periods a millennium earlier. Ooms posits the existence of a “Tenmu Dynasty” in sixth- and seventh-century Japan, which was eventually eclipsed by a return to the Tenji line with the accession of Kōnin (r. 770-781) and the elimination of his consort, Inoue, and their son, Osabe, in 775 (p. 3). Over the course of ten chapters, Ooms presents a sophisticated and multifaceted analysis of the important developments of this period, when the rulers engaged in defining for the first time the Japanese realm and their positions within that realm.

Imperial Politics and Symbolics, covers a great deal of ground, including such issues as the multiple political reasons behind the compilation of two separate but overlapping histories, the *Kojiki* (712) and the *Nihon shoki* (720) (Chapter Two), the use of multiple religious authorities (including, but not limited to Buddhist and Daoist ideologies) to provide legitimacy for new structures of power (Chapters Six and Seven), and the role of “allochthons”, or political refugees and other migrants in service to successive rulers, in the development of organs of state and the legal and other official texts that supported those organs (Chapter 4). All of these issues and more combine to provide a convincing and highly nuanced narrative of the conscious use of symbols (“symbolics”, xvi) in order to further the interests of all those engaged in attaining and maintaining power and authority over the seventh and eighth centuries.

One of many fascinating discussions found in the book relates to the transmission of Daoism from China to Korea, and then to Japan (pp. 151-53). We learn here that Daoist ideas and practices entered the Korean states “rather late” (p. 152), and that they often entered Korea in conjunction with practices otherwise identified as “Buddhist”, in turn finding their way into Japan. “The abundant use of visual imagery in Daoist texts [...] lent itself easily to the enchanting manipulation of language in poetry and belles letters and the celebration, in the modality of the marvelous, of remarkable

accomplishments by a pair of rulers in the last quarter of the seventh century” (p. 152), referring to Tenmu and his consort and successor, Jitō. It is refreshing to be reminded once again that Japanese rulers in the period leading up to, and then including, the founding of the Nara regime, were highly conscious of their place within the broader international sphere, while at the same time they made efforts to solidify their position among other powerful rivals for power at home. *Imperial Politics and Symbolics in Ancient Japan* will provide rich rewards for anyone interested in this period in East Asian history, and in the use of symbolics in the creation of a lasting power structure.

Reviewed by LAWRENCE E MARCEAU
The University of Auckland

Claire Roberts, *Friendship in Art: Fou Lei and Huang Binhong*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010, xv + 232 pp. ISBN: 978-988-8028-40-5 (hbk).

This well-researched and wonderfully crafted book by Claire Roberts maps the friendship of two cultural giants of twentieth-century China—the prolific translator of Western literary works, Fou (Fu) Lei (1908-66), and the equally productive Chinese ink painter, Huang Binhong (1865-1955). The two are presented in the book partly by means of standard chronological narrative, combined with analytical observation; and partly through the medium that cemented their friendship—letters they exchanged between 1943 and Huang’s death in 1955. Though more than 40 years separated them in age, Huang and Fou shared an abiding interest in art history, philosophy and connoisseurship, and, at a time of deep political and social crisis in China, a sincere concern for their country’s future cultural direction. Huang, the quintessential Chinese scholar-painter, sought creative inspiration and nourishment from China’s rich painting tradition, dynamically transforming it in the process into his own personal idiom; Fou, noted translator of fifteen novels by Honor de Balzac and eighteen other works of foreign literature (including Romain Rolland’s *Jean Christophe*, still widely read by Chinese intellectuals and university students well into the 1980s), was a Shanghai sophisticate who had intensively studied French literature and art theory in Paris during the 1920s. An early admirer of modernists like Cezanne, Monet and Matisse, Fou subsequently also came to deeply respect the living Chinese tradition with which Huang Binhong worked. He became an avid collector of Huang’s paintings and, in his letters, offered enthusiastic and candid comments on the elderly painter’s work. Fou’s observations on the affinities he perceived between traditional Chinese and modern Western art, and, indeed, between Huang’s painting and that of Western Impressionists, were warmly received by Huang as a fresh perspective from which to assess his own work and that of his illustrious predecessors.

Roberts provides a well-grounded commentary on the concerns and orientations of the cultural syncretist, Fou, while her background as “a former practitioner, historian and curator of Asian art” (p. 5) constitutes a solid platform for her insightful readings of Huang Binhong’s artistic oeuvre (accompanied by many wonderful illustrations of Huang’s masterful brushwork). The text is a pleasure to read, with its wealth of

bibliographical detail on the two men. Refreshingly, for serious contemporary scholarship, Roberts does not attempt to conceal her deep sense of respect for and empathy towards her two subjects, who, despite their substantial contributions to the literary and ink painting fields, were in no way immune to the social and political turmoil that plagued China in the twentieth century. With sensitivity, Roberts delineates for example the harrowing scenarios—Huang Binhong eking out a meager living in Japanese- then Nationalist-occupied Beiping, maintaining in the face of great financial hardship an unwillingness to part with his paintings, unless to someone with a genuine appreciation of them; and, even more poignantly, Fou Lei enduring under the new Communist regime years of political harassment, which badly affected his physical and mental health, and culminated in his (and his wife, Zhu Meifu's) suicide at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76).

There are those who may have liked to have seen a stronger note of critical reflection in this book, particularly in relation to Huang Binhong. Roberts does raise the matter of Huang's connections with institutions associated with the Japanese occupation, and his contribution of scholarly articles to Japanese supported periodicals, which raised the ire of some of his Chinese contemporaries, and led to the serious accusation of his being a Japanese collaborator. She then offers a somewhat weak defence of Huang, attributing his actions to the fact that he had a large family to support, and, like many of his contemporaries, he appreciated Japan's respect for art and scholarship. Roberts also sweeps lightly over the matter of Huang's authentication of paintings in the Palace Museum in Beiping between 1935 and 1937. When Yi Peiji, the Director of the Museum, was accused of misappropriating artworks, Huang was appointed by the court to verify the authenticity or otherwise of the works, a process that took a year, and involved the inspection of and written appraisals for almost 5,000 items of painting and calligraphy. The charge has been leveled by Western scholars that Huang's hasty judgements over that period almost certainly resulted in mistakes, no doubt to Yi Peiji's detriment, and with the consequence that important paintings may have been lost to the Palace Museum. Roberts only briefly touches on Huang's involvement in the appraisal work, making no mention of these criticisms. She has elsewhere offered compelling arguments against them, but it would have been good if the controversy could have been discussed in her book, even if just in a lengthy footnote.

Huang Binhong was, at the time of his death, already acknowledged in China as a 'national treasure,' as evidenced by the establishment soon after his passing of the Huang Binhong Museum of Art in Zhejiang. Fou Lei may not have received the official accolades he deserved from his fellow countrymen during his tragically shortened lifetime, though his political rehabilitation in the post-Mao era has since secured his position as one of China's most notable intellectuals of the twentieth century (an impressive exhibition commemorating the centennial of his birth was held in 2008 at the National Library of China in Beijing, the repository of many of Fou's manuscripts since the 1950s). Claire Roberts' book makes an important contribution in extending our understanding of these two cultural figures at a critical juncture in China's modern cultural development, and will be welcomed within academic circles and beyond. In its presentation of social and political contexts, its analysis of cultural and aesthetic debates

and trends, and its attention to meticulous detail, this is undeniably an academic book, while its somewhat unusual focus on the very human theme of friendship, expressed through letter-writing, makes it eminently accessible to a wider readership.

Reviewed by MARIA GALIKOWSKI
The University of Waikato

N. Harry Rothschild, *Wu Zhao: China's Only Woman Emperor*, Various places: Longman Pearson, 2008, 236pp. + xvi. ISBN-13: 978-0-321-39426-2 (pbk.)

Ruthless, tyrannical and maleficent. A murderer no less. Or, a pious and devoted servant to Buddhism? A unifier or a divider? Feared and admired in her lifetime, Wu Zhao (624-705) achieved lasting fame as the only female to serve as 'emperor' in China, even founding, for a time, her own short-lived dynasty. While those facts are incontrovertible, almost everything else about her—from her origins and ascendancy to her political career and legacy—is still subject to heated debate.

In *Wu Zhao: China's Only Woman Emperor*, N. Harry Rothschild's difficult brief is to sift legend from fact, to successfully divine a course through the dark and troubled private and political life of Empress Wu. By and large Rothschild succeeds, drawing from the rich surviving material produced in her own time (much of it by her) and by many others later. The trouble with Empress Wu is, of course, that not only do over 1300 years separate the present biographer's attempts from his subject. In that intervening period the vagaries of time and the impacts of upheavals both natural and human have obviously reduced the number of sources available for the period (still as Rothschild research reveals, there *are* a great many surviving sources). The principal challenge facing her biographer is the polemical nature of surviving writing about her.

An arch propagandist and a skilled manipulator of her own image able to bend the doctrines of Buddhism and Confucianism to her own ends, Empress Wu produced a remarkable collection of material, all deftly cultivating a particular image of her and her rule—the loyal widow, the Confucian model wife, the reincarnated Maitreya. She even had designed a new set of characters to project the values of her new reign upon China forever: perhaps the ultimate move in Confucian rectification of names! Upon her death, her detractors—and there were many—vilified her, pouring vitriol on the woman (they claimed) who murdered her own child and members of her family, whose cruelty was only bounded by the borders of the expanding Tang territory. As well as relying on official and unofficial records produced at and after her time, to inform this study Rothschild also turned to several of the many Chinese biographies of Empress Wu.

Rothschild's biography charts a largely chronological course. Chapters in turn deal with: the importance of Wu's naming (Chapter One); the Steppe culture that facilitated the rise to power of women (Chapter Two); Wu as imperial concubine and her rise to influence over Gaozong and subsequent role of Grand Dowager (Chapters 3-7); her methods of gaining control through skilled use of terror, appeals to Buddhist and Confucian tradition and, finally, the establishment of her own dynasty (as Sage and August Divine Emperor) and subsequent decline (Chapters 8-12).

As a text aimed at students of world history, its largely chronological approach makes sense, but at the expense of becoming, in places, a little dense, as quite detailed material from one section is repeated in another and as the narrative sometimes swings backwards and forwards in time. For some students, it may prove too just a little too detailed. Indeed, the author's brief in the preface (x) is a particularly ambitious one, setting out to answer a host of questions relating to everything from the sincerity of Wu Zhao's belief in Buddhism and how a woman rose to become 'emperor', to her role in the death of Emperor Gaozong. Perhaps the biography could have been usefully structured around one key question: how, as a woman, did Wu Zhao rise to, and maintain, power? This would have given it a clear direction, and narrative focus.

But these are very minor points. Rothschild's book presents a fascinating and, indeed, illuminating biography of Empress Wu. Not least is its value in situating Wu within her time and place, and in introducing students to the treacherous times of political rule in seventh and early eighth century China. Its usefulness extends to the presentation of both interpretations of such an important historical figure at the same time as discussing the difficulty of using sources—an important part of the historian's skill to emphasise, particularly since the text is aimed at first-year students for whom the idea of 'historical fact' still often remains strongly embedded. In short, this is a very good book which adds greatly to increasing the accessibility of English-language sources on and knowledge about this most important of world historical figures.

Reviewed by JAMES BEATTIE
The University of Waikato

Paolo Santangelo, *Materials for an Anatomy of Personality in Late Imperial China*, Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2010, ix + 524pp. ISBN: 9789004177536 (hbk.)

Materials for an Anatomy of Personality in Late Imperial China describes itself as a "cross-cultural attempt to study the perception of personality", and represents a Herculean effort on the part of Paolo Santangelo to collect and annotate the treatment of personality in the literature of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Drawing on philosophical, historical and literary works, Santangelo explores both the conceptual background and the depiction of personality, with particular emphasis on identifying the most prominently featured character traits. These character traits are then analysed and discussed as the composite parts of an 'anatomy' of personality. Ultimately the conceptual sophistication and the originality of the book preserve its utility in the face of certain rudimentary flaws.

In no way is this hardback designed to be light reading. Its five hundred-odd pages are divided into four chapters, arranged thematically. The first addresses the concept of the self, the relationship between self and society, and the concept of the 'body-person', while the second summarises scholarly and philosophical evaluations of personality in only thirty-four pages. These two chapters provide a concise theoretical framework for the subsequent chapters, which discuss stereotypes and individual dispositions respectively.

It must be said that the most fundamental flaw of this book is a matter of language. Santangelo's multidimensional approach to the analysis of personality is admirable, but also requires a refined use of technical terminology to be effective, especially in the case of a subject as complex and subjective as personality. A particularly worrying example is the term 'character', which, understandably, appears frequently throughout the text, but at times it becomes unclear whether the intended meaning is 'character' as in a specific character in the literature, or 'character' as in the nature of a thing. Language is also problematical as the author translates the source material himself, with minimal reference to the work of other translators, and the original Chinese is not consistently included. While a substantial obstruction to the book's readability, however, the erroneous use of English does not detract too much from the semantic import of the text. Of greater concern is the fact that something so fundamental to effective communication, the ultimate goal of a written work, has either escaped the attention of the publisher or been ignored.

In terms of content, this is not the first admirable but ambitious project to be overwhelmed by the enormity of its own undertaking. Presumably, this is the reason for Chapters One and Two: the provision of a theoretical background was necessitated by the immensity and complexity of personality, notwithstanding the explicit parameters of time and place. In response to the title, however, I had expected the entire book to be structured more like the ten pages of the conclusion which are specifically devoted to listing personality traits, followed by an expansion on the frequency and significance of their usage.

The first two chapters are quite self-contained, and successfully achieve their respective aims of refining personality as a subject and collating the relationship between personality and morality. Chapters Three and Four are more clumsy. Groups and group mentalities, such as "Political and intellectual elite", "Heroes and rebels, healers of bodies and souls, and mean people", are the focus of Chapter Three, and it seems to me that these kinds of social groupings do not do justice to the heading of "Prototypes and stereotypes". Nor does it seem appropriate to fuse the multifarious stereotypes of "Gender and age" under one subheading. Hot on the heels of this comes Chapter Four, which comprises nearly half of the book, but once again, the logic behind the way the chapter is divided is something of a mystery. This is not to suggest that the facets of personality addressed in the chapter are irrelevant or unimportant, simply that their arrangement seems disjointed.

The most effective aspect of *Materials for an Anatomy of Personality in Late Imperial China* is the incorporation of source materials. From the Great Ming novels to the *Shan'ge*, even when the Chinese is omitted the inclusion of extensive quotations is extremely useful. A pinyin index simplifies the process of investigating particular character compounds, and the ready-made comparison of the literary contexts in which they occur will no doubt be welcomed by an academic. Had it been more accessible, the book may have extended its influence: as it stands, it will be of primary interest to scholars of late imperial China and/or Chinese literature.

In sum, while the multidimensional approach to personality causes disparities within the text, *Materials for an Anatomy of Personality in Late Imperial China*

provides an engaging discussion of the dynamic between culture and character traits. The awkward title itself is representative of Santangelo's effort to be both all-encompassing and specific: the amount of content crammed between the covers of this book alone would easily have merited a series on the subject. Whatever the linguistic and structural drawbacks, Santangelo has succeeded in his fundamental aim: with this compendium of the treatment of certain traits in recent literary history, he provides a solid and functional platform for further research into the realms of personality and characterisation in Chinese literature.

Reviewed by ORION LETHBRIDGE
The Australian National University

Anthony R. Walker, ed., *Pika Pika: The Flashing Firefly. Essays for Pauline Walker by her friends in the Arts and Social Sciences*, New Delhi: Hindustan Publishing Corporation, 2009, xv + 489pp. ISBN 8170750873 (hbk.)

An eclectic collection of essays, *Pika Pika* does not fall easily into the usual categories of scholarly literature. It is not constrained by a particular regional focus, or a particular field of study. Instead it includes essays that dart around the globe almost indiscriminately, discussing a wide range of topics from the intricacies of ritual practice, to female circumcision, to jazz, to Indonesian mythology, to the nature of theatre in 17th century London. It is a collection that defies classification, and will be a challenge to any library cataloguing system. *Pika Pika* is a collection compiled by anthropologist Anthony R. Walker to honour and celebrate the life of his late wife, Pauline Walker, who passed away in 2005. It is a touching tribute, and the range of topics and regions thus reflects the breadth of interests that Pauline acquired through her lifetime of expatriate living in Kenya, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Fiji, Brunei, and travel to many more places besides. The contributors wrote essays for Pauline on topics that she took an interest in, issues they thought she would have been fascinated by, ideas that she would have wanted to debate, and places, peoples and objects that she had loved. The contributions are divided into seven parts, grouped around themes of music, song and dance; literature, poetry and the stage; ceramics; traditional craftsmanship; women's issues; healing practices; and finally, religion myth and ritual.

The title, the Japanese onomatopoeic expression for the flashing of fireflies, is an apt metaphor for a collection that is a series of short illuminations on disparate topics. Written by anthropologists, linguists, sociologists, historians, theatre and literature specialists, and geographers the tone and language of each essay is distinct. Not all authors have been adept at writing for a readership outside their own discipline and the quality of the writing varies greatly, some essays are fluid and captivating and would appeal to a wide readership while others are somewhat drier and too embedded in the author's own disciplinary speciality. Peter Hyland's piece on the theatrical culture of the Elizabethan and early Stuart period in England, for example, is a nicely argued piece that would interest anyone with a passing interest in Shakespeare. In contrast James Matisoff's piece on Lahu religious poetry contains some lovely examples of that poetry but the discussion is in a language foreign to anyone without a background in

linguistics. For many authors the volume seems to have provided an excuse to write about pet topics. Some of these might have interested Pauline but perhaps would not have found publication elsewhere. Bill Egan's reflections on the 'one degree of separation' that he formed between Pauline and the famous jazz musician Percy Heath is one example. Alongside these more idiosyncratic essays are works of a more scholarly merit—Paul Cohen's piece on the politics of Buddhist pilgrimage, Kim Myung-hye's essay on Korean sex slaves in World War II; or Mary Howard's discussion of body modification in Africa and America which provides a fascinating account of how female circumcision once played an important role in traditional family planning practices that protected the health of women and children in Tanzania.

Who is the readership for such a broad range of contributions? Aside from those who knew Pauline Walker and who thus have a personal connection to this work in her memory, it is very hard to say. The volume is like an especially large and in-depth issue of *The New York Review of Books*, it is a volume for anyone who shares the diverse fascinations and interests of Pauline Walker: anyone who is educated, interested in the arts, in material culture, in women of the world, in traditional cultures of Africa, Asia, America. There are essays in the volume that I learned a great deal from reading, others I would like to get my students to read, and others that I doubt I will ever read again. It is a book characterised by diversity and suitable then for the reader with diverse interests.

That extreme diversity is the strength and value of the volume as a whole. Unlike edited collections shaped by discipline, or area, or theme, there is no privileging of one issue or one way of seeing the world. In its broad range and sometimes jarring juxtapositions of theme and geography, reading *Pika Pika* made me think of the Musée du Quay Branly, the museum of 'primitive art' that opened in Paris in 2006. The Quay Branly was intended as a showcase for indigenous arts from around the world. The collection, honoured by careful and beautiful presentation within a grand brand new Parisian building, was supposed to counteract past designations of these objects and mere artefacts, pieces of material culture, and instead present them to visitors as true works of fine art. By placing artworks from different cultures alongside one another (the prow of a Maori waka alongside the prow of an Orang Asli dugout canoe for example), the curators aimed to highlight shared motifs and aesthetics that characterised connection and exchange across Africa, Asia, America and Oceania. What the museum succeeded in doing, however, was, as Herman Lebovics aptly described, to create an elevated journey into the *Heart of Darkness*. The gloomy lighting, intended to evoke "the mystery and spirituality, of the worlds of the pieces on display".⁸ I came away from my visit to the Quay Branly disappointed, with the impression that the museum fails to present the merits of the collection as works of art no less sophisticated than the collections housed in the Louvre or the Dorsey. Instead the Quay Branly segregates these pieces, stereotypes them with primitive mystique, and renders them all equivalent by placing like objects with like, as if there were not important depths of artistic and cultural expression and signification to be valued and understood.

8 H. Lebovics, "The Musée Du Quay Branly: Art? Artifact? Spectacle!", *French Politics, Culture & Society*, 24.3 (2006): 97.

If only the editorial logic of *Pika Pika* could somehow be translated into museum curatorship then the Musée du Quay Branly might have a hope of achieving what it set out to do. Unlike the Musée du Quay Branly there is no distinction made in *Pika Pika* between regions or cultures—an essay on jazz sits alongside an essay on the sacred music of the Karen, an essay on Shakespearean theatre sits alongside a discussion of contemporary forms of *Wayang Kulit*. The refusal to classify or categorise in any traditional way beyond the broad themes that group each section of the book have created a volume that is more than interdisciplinary—it creates parity across disciplines, across regions, and across cultures without ever engaging in the kind of patronising equivalences of the Quay Branly.

The key to this achievement is the figure of Pauline Walker as she is remembered and honoured in the pages of this book. The remembered ‘Pauline’ emerges from this volume acting as a kind of avatar through whom we are able to gaze at a world of diversity through a stunning diversity of views. This Pauline, remembered and written for, does not ask for mysterious mood lighting, she does not privilege one view above another (unless it is to privilege a scholarly voice above an indigenous voice, but that is a matter for separate debate), she does not consider the intricacies of an embroidery tradition to be any less worthy of consideration than the political implications of cross border pilgrimage, she makes no distinction between the artistic traditions of the Orient and the Occident, she maintains loving friendships and close working relationships without any remnant of an imperial paternalism. For her the voices of the Lahu poets are no different to the voice of Shakespeare. The remembered Pauline may not be quite the same as the real Pauline who lived and breathed, but she has left a worthwhile legacy in this eclectic collection of illuminations and ruminations.

Reviewed by KATHARINE MCKINNON
Macquarie University

Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs: Understanding Chinese Tombs*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010, 272 pp. ISBN 978-0-8248-3426-5 (hbk.)

Wu Hung's book aims to explain “the fundamental logic of traditional Chinese tombs”, providing “a general explanation of Chinese funeral art” and the creative forces at work in this enormously rich tradition over three millennia. He succeeds remarkably well, despite having only 216 pages of text and illustrations in which to do so. What is more, the book is a pleasure to read: clear, concise, superbly illustrated, well produced, and surprisingly accessible given the complexity of the subject matter and the erudition required to make sense of it. While some of those completely new to the field may find that some bits require concentration, you don't need to be an expert to enjoy this excellent work.

The realm of the dead is a foreign country about which it is difficult to obtain reliable information concerning climate, customs and conditions. The only certainty is that it must be very different from where we embark to go there. The best we can do is to try to understand it by analogy with the place we know, how we might wish it to be,

and to be open to alternative imaginings. According to Professor Wu, this is more or less how the Chinese tradition tackled the problem. He twice cites a passage from the *Book of Rites* that comes close to articulating the basic point: “In dealing with the dead, if we treat them as if they were completely dead, that would show a want of affection, and should not be done; or, if we treat them as if they were entirely alive, that would show a want of intelligence, and should not be done”. So the fundamental logic of Chinese tombs, both in terms of how the afterlife is conceived and how it was represented architecturally and artistically, was analogical; it also left room for multiple realities. As understanding of death and the hereafter evolved, alternative conceptions did not so much displace each other as take their place in an expanding repertoire that included shifting beliefs and practices from the Confucian mainstream, from Daoism and Buddhism in their various guises, and other traditions as well. Over time the primary forms of burial included not only casket graves, but also chamber graves and multiple chamber graves, and craftsmen become ever more adept at articulating through funerary architecture, fittings and art the varied wishes and beliefs of the deceased and their kin.

The author’s strategy for rendering this massive subject both manageable and intelligible is to focus on the tomb as a complete entity, a spatio-temporal construct with all its structures, fittings and contents in place, underground, its entrance shut for all eternity to hide from the living both the dead and the mysterious transformations that follow death. Only in this way can the constituent elements of a tomb be understood. Yet it is only in the concluding chapter that the discussion focuses on a small number of individual exemplary tombs; the three main chapters provide “the groundwork” for interpreting tombs (forgive me) as wholes, analysing them from the perspective of the three existential dimensions of spatiality, materiality and temporality.

Even these fundamental dimensions are far from simple. Diverse understandings of the nature of the hereafter, and hence the functions of tombs, resulted in a number of different scenarios of eternity being represented and catered for even within a single tomb. Such tombs, Professor Wu argues, provided the deceased and the deceased’s family with a number of distinct conceptualisations of the hereafter, aimed at satisfying the needs and hopes of all those involved. The three main scenarios were: a comfortable ‘happy home’ in the tomb; the earthly paradise of immortals; and the impersonal eternity of the cosmos. (Together, these three conceptions may be seen as paralleling the traditional Chinese tripartite conception of reality as consisting of man, earth and heaven.)

The three hereafters were evoked and provided for by three distinct kinds of objects placed in the tomb. Domestic articles and favourite things once belonging to the deceased helped to create the “happy home”. As the Qing scholar Hao Yixing observed, “Burying such articles is like moving house” (cited by Wu, p.165); it makes the grave more familiar, more homely. The earthly paradise of immortals was evoked by “spirit articles”, of which the philosopher Xun Zi said that they “should resemble [real objects] but not be usable”. This did not necessarily mean, however, that they had no use at all. To a rationalist like Xun Zi mourning rites represented a way for the living to honour the deceased, to show that death had not weakened the bonds of love and respect between them. For those who believed in an afterlife, the nature of spirit articles was just as easily explained: it was not that they were useless, but rather that needs and uses

of the souls of the dead were different from those of the living. Since they did not serve the ‘practical’ purposes of the living, spirit articles could be minaturised versions of the real thing, in much the same way as the tomb itself was a scaled down analogue of a dwelling. Sometimes spirit articles were intentionally misshapen, imperfectly made, made in an archaic form, or left undecorated. The third hereafter—the cosmic vision—was evoked by sacrificial vessels relocated from the family temple, by paintings and decorations in the tomb, and sometimes the garments of the deceased.

However, some burial items transcended such categories. Consider those famous “jade suits” found in a number of tombs, including those of Liu Sheng and his wife Dou Wan, discovered in Mancheng, Hebei Province, in 1968. These outfits, complete with jade helmets, are not to be regarded as favourite costumes transferred from the couple’s wardrobe to their tombs, or anything like that. In fact, they were not ‘suits’ at all. They were jade ‘bodies’, the innermost of numerous layers of entombment, in which the bodies of the deceased were encased until, in a sense, those bodies became what encased them: as imperishable and everlasting as jade itself. In such transformations heaven, earth and man become indistinguishable. However, even immortals—or *especially* immortals—it appears, feel like a change now and then. So in the top of the jade head/helmet a hole was made, enabling the deathless soul to leave its jade body, coming and going on whatever earthly or cosmic rambles took its fancy.

There is a huge amount of fascinating material in this book, all of it analysed skilfully discussed insightfully by one of the most highly regarded scholars in the field. It has a lot to tell us about the dead. And one very good reason for studying the dead, of course, is that they have so much to tell us about the living.

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Cong Ellen Zhang, *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2011, xiv + 301pp., maps. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3399-2 (hbk.)

“Our nature lies in movement”, the French philosopher Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) once argued, “complete repose is death”. For the scholar-gentry elite of imperial China, if movement throughout empire was necessitated by their bureaucratic careers (both the serving in office and the going into exile), their peripatetic lifestyles also, however, increasingly, afforded them both aesthetic and scholarly opportunities. At the same time, once one had acquired something of a literary reputation, such travel imposed upon one particular obligations. Visiting Hermitage Mountain (廬山) for the first time, we are told, the great Song dynasty writer Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) resolved not to write any poems about it, such was the “eccentric beauty of its peaks and valleys” (山谷奇秀). Fortunately for us, he found that he could not resist the importunate requests of the monks of the mountain, upon whom he was dependant both for their hospitality and their local knowledge, thus producing a number of poems, one of which included the immortal lines: “Of Hermitage Mountain I cannot make out the true face,/For I am

myself lost in the heart of the very place". At the same time, and of particular relevance to the book under review, as he toured the mountain he was reading the account of it written by his friend Chen Lingju 陳令舉 that had recently been sent him (且行且讀).⁹

Cong Ellen Zhang's book, *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China*, is an important one, both because she provides the most detailed English-language treatment of the bureaucratic and logistical aspects of travel during the Song dynasty (960-1279) available in the secondary scholarship, but also because, in keeping with both parts of her title, her work illustrates the extent to which travel was a vital and formative aspect of traditional Chinese culture. She cites Su Shi's younger brother Su Che 蘇轍 (1039-1112), for instance, to the following effect:

Although there were hardly any books by the masters I had not read, they were all things of the past, not enough to inspire my ambition. [I was afraid that I] might be forgotten. Therefore, [I] decided to leave [my hometown] to pursue fantastic stories and magnificent views so that [I might] be aware of the magnitude of the land under Heaven. [I] passed by the ancient capitals of the Qin and the Han and admired the heights of [Mounts] Zhongnan, Song, and Hua. Looking north, I saw the Yellow River flowing at great speed and, with deep feeling, [I] wanted to meet the great men of the past. (p. 164)

Or again, the philosopher Lu Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137-1181), on the advantages of his tour of Hermitage Mountain:

Mount Lu is close; when taking a break from my studies, I went into the mountains. With whom did I sightsee? The ancients looked at famous mountains and great rivers to broaden their ambition and complete their virtue. Only this kind of person can be said to be good at sightseeing. (p. 165)

Zhang's argument here in this book is that if for the man-of-letters of the Song lengthy journeys were a routine part of government service, "To Song elites, the journeys they took were rarely about reaching their destinations. Rather, it was the experience of visiting famous sites and socializing with peers that structured their trips. In other words, the social and cultural capital they gained from these activities gave their travel its significance" (p. 9). At the same time, "...just as their activities guaranteed Song visitors immortality in the cultural and historical memory of famous sites, the literary works these men composed, the deep connections they formed with the places, the physical traces they left behind also shaped and enriched local memory and became vital elements of local identity" (p. 11).

By concentrating on two particular aspects of travel in the Song, both the technology and material culture of travel on the one hand and the role that the representations of travel on the part of elite travellers played in connecting the disparate regions and places of empire into a single entity on the other, Zhang's book provides important

9 For this anecdote, see *Donglin zhilin* 東坡志林 [Forest of Jottings] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), p. 4.

insights into the all-important processes of social and cultural integration that are so characteristic of the period she examines. The Song, as in so many other respects, was a critical moment in the traditions of travel and of literary representations of that travel.

Zhang's eight chapters deal, successively, with the usages of travel in the life of the Song literati, the infrastructure of travel, the bureaucratic procedures required of one before setting off, the nature of the imperial government's support for the traveller (modes of transport and lodging, porters and post-stations), the rituals of departure, the local reception of travellers, "Sightseeing and Site Making: Visiting and Inscribing Places", before, finally, providing the case study of the impact on Huangzhou 黃州 in Hubei Province of the four years that Su Shi had spent there in exile between the years 1080-1084. These chapters are full of fascinating detail and insightful comment: when Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126-1193) set off to tour Mount Emei 峨眉山 in 1177, "riding alone" (單騎), he was nonetheless accompanied by numerous well-wishes, disciples, family members and porter-soldiers (p. 94); on average a Song dynasty traveller could expect to cover 45-60 *li* in the course of a day's travel (p. 104); the walls of the government offices, temples, inns, and private residences that the traveller chose to stay in tended to be covered in the inscriptions of earlier travellers (p. 109); in 1170, Lu You 陸游 (1125-1210) spent the first fourteen days of his journey from the capital to Kuizhou 夔州 in Sichuan attending farewell banquets (p. 116) and 13% of Ouyang Xiu's 歐陽脩 (1007-1072) poetic corpus comprises farewell poems (p. 122); and, as the dynasty drew on, the costs at the local level of entertaining visiting officials began to spiral out of control (p. 148).

If Zhang's first six chapters are particularly useful for all those interested in the Song dynasty and in travel generally, particularly for her trawling of official sources such as the *Song huiyao* 宋會要 [Compendium of the Important Documents of the Song Dynasty], it is her final two chapters, where she turns to what may be described as the poetics of travel and of place, that may well prove more resonant, especially her discussion of the afterlife of a place once it has been visited (and written about) by some eminent man-of-letters: "Su Shi was physically in Huangzhou for four years, but his spirit lingered there indefinitely. The physical aspect of scholar-official travel may well have ended long ago, but the cultural significance of these men's visits pertains even now as towns and villages strive to reconstruct their history and articulate their place in the history of the country" (p. 206).

Finally, travel in China and its various aspects are beginning to receive the sort of detailed and nuanced treatment that the topic requires, and Zhang's book joins a number of excellent recent treatments of individual travellers, particular destinations (mountains especially have been well served in the recent secondary literature in English), or, in the case of Stephen McDowall's *Qian Qianyi's Reflections on Yellow Mountain: Traces of a Late-Ming Hatchet and Chisel*, also reviewed in this issue of the journal, single journeys. Wonderfully researched and beautifully produced, Zhang's book will both contribute to the increasing sophisticated understanding of the usages of travel in China historically, whilst also serving to stimulate further research.

Reviewed by DUNCAN M CAMPBELL
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Ying Zhu, Michael Webber and John Benson, *The Everyday Impact of Economic Reform in China: Management change, enterprise performance and daily life*, Oxon: Routledge, 2010, xviii + 191pp. ISBN: 0-415-42841-6 (hbk.)

This short, well presented and accessible book links macro-level market-oriented reform of the Chinese economy to changes in management systems, enterprise performance and ultimately the everyday life of Chinese workers and households. Interviews and data from six regions (Beijing, Haerbin, Lanzhou, Hangzhou, Wuhan and Kunming) cover a range of political, social and cultural environments and focus on two sectors (textiles, clothing and footwear and the electronics industry). These detailed surveys provide a series of micro-level measures that draw a rich empirical picture of the everyday impact of economic reform in China.

The first substantial chapter (Chapter Two) overviews the economic reforms of the last three decades and outlines the theoretical link to their industrial and social impact. A review focuses on the stages and important policies of the reform era (the one-child policy, poverty eradication measures, employment relations, education and the move from ‘work-unit persons’ to ‘social/society persons’ through the dismantling of the socialist system of work and welfare) and delves into what is known about the impact of reforms to date. This sets the scene for the structure and overall argument of the book, that to understand the economic reforms of the last thirty years it is necessary to take the analysis down to the microeconomic level to explore how macroeconomic reforms have led to changes in human resource management (HRM) and employee relations that have affected enterprise performance and the quality of work and daily lives of employees and employers.

Chapters Three and Four are designed to provide the context for the latter analysis of enterprise performance (Chapter Five), worker satisfaction (Chapter Six) and household livelihood (Chapter Seven). Chapter Three explores how macro-level change affected the enterprise by focusing on changes in management mechanisms, the recruitment, development and appraisal of workers, and employment relations (wages and working hours). It shows that managers now have more authority in recruitment, provide more training for workers and undertake performance appraisals based on adherence to rules, output and quality. Workers were found to have some say in enterprise decisions, around half felt their chances for promotion were limited, most were found to be on limited-term contracts and most had received a pay rise over the last five years though with significant variation over type of worker. The authors argue that HRM has changed considerably with the macro-economic reforms and remains in a state of transition. They argue legislative change has been significant but still lags behind economic reform.

[E]nterprises are moving towards adopting modern Western practices, albeit at varying speeds and directions. (p. 63)

Chapter Four focuses on worker representation and the emerging role of trade unions. It argues there is “a growing independence and reshaping of the activities and role of trade unions as the relationships between management and trade unions mature

and take on, at least superficially, a more Western character” (p. 64). But through analysis of the history of the structure of trade unions, the current state of worker representation and an exploration of union-management relations, the chapter concludes that due to a lack of an independent ‘self-regulating’ union movement, “trade unions do not appear to be influential, independent representatives of workers but remain a component of the management structure of the enterprise” (p. 81). The authors contend this may be due to the overall reluctance of both workers and managers to embrace new roles for unions in the market-oriented system as part of efforts to create strong and competitive enterprises. They point to the political nature rather than industrial nature of this issue and argue the importance of creating more independent union representation for Chinese workers.

Chapter Five looks at enterprise performance in light of the massive changes in HRM and employment relations. It focuses on the impact of intangible aspects of management (organisational culture, management structures and systems) by examining the interrelationships of three important factors that determine enterprise success: management actions, employee responses and contextual conditions. The findings show a high level of worker satisfaction with responsibilities (intangible management) and majority satisfaction, though to a lesser degree, with benefits (tangible management). The authors argue “enterprises appeared to have been more successful in developing employee satisfaction with the intangible rather than the tangible characteristics of the job” (p. 101) and that overall employee satisfaction through intangible management is having a positive influence on organisational performance. They conclude this demonstrates the performance of Chinese enterprises is related to similar kinds of intangible management variables as Western enterprises but note the lower levels of satisfaction with tangible benefits.

Chapter Six measures the quality of working life under the market-oriented economic reform. It finds however modern management mechanisms in this area have not been widely adopted within the enterprises sampled. Worker empowerment is singled out as an example of the very slow uptake of these management mechanisms. This withstanding, the results of the surveys presented show that workers are generally satisfied with most aspects of their jobs, but again, more satisfied with responsibilities and accountabilities than with tangible benefits. Some interesting findings show that both hours of work and length of employment contract have been decreasing and that most workers agree that job conditions were getting better, though security, workload, promotion opportunities and overtime pay were not. The type of enterprise (state/non-state) was also found to no longer have an impact on job conditions or employee satisfaction, suggesting the formation of a single labour market. The authors conclude that new management measures are being introduced slowly and the quality of working life is changing rapidly.

Chapter Seven looks at the impact of the market-oriented reforms on workers’ lives at home. It argues the everyday impact of economic reform can be seen outside the workplace where reforms have altered the structure of prices and opportunities by introducing user pays systems of health, housing and education and through even broader changes in expectations about consumption and lifestyle. As members of

households workers must meet expenses, spend time with family and have their own hopes and expectations for the future. The findings show that incomes have grown but disparity of income has grown rapidly. Moreover, for most workers, expenditures (especially education, housing and medical care) have risen at least as fast as incomes. Work demand for people's time was found to have decreased slightly (median 48 hrs) as expectations and hopes for the future have risen. The performance of an individual company is acknowledged as a variable but the overall findings are shown to be linked to the macro-reforms. The impact of the reforms on the everyday life of workers is therefore argued to be both positive and negative. The ability to change jobs and to some degree location has given more choice to employees and greater work satisfaction but the commodification of education, housing and medical care has raised costs as job security has decreased.

The overall conclusion is "micro-level reform has been rather slow, uneven and not always positive, either from a worker or manager's perspective", and human resource management and employment relations remain "in a state of transition toward a market-based system with more emphasis on efficiency and performance" (p. 177). The key driving force of these changes is identified as the market, though these forces are mediated by a number of intervening variables and contexts. A most important finding, that employers were generally positive about responsibilities and benefits but workers were more satisfied with their responsibilities than their benefits, is explained by combining the households and livelihoods findings to argue workers do see benefits in enterprise reform but "what is happening outside the enterprise is influencing these perceptions" (p. 178).

"Consumer price rises, and the cost of housing, education and medical services are combining to make the increased benefits that workers receive from their labour negligible and in some cases insufficient to maintain their standard of living" (p. 178).

This book is a welcome addition to the macro-economic studies of China's 30 years of economic reform. It sets out to illustrate how economic reform has driven changes in management systems and employment relations and how such changes have influenced the performance of enterprises, worker satisfaction and workers' households and livelihoods. The detailed survey data and statistical analysis mean the book achieves this goal in great detail. The statistical detail is at times overwhelming however and one cannot help but think illustration of "the everyday impact of economic reform" through a selection of workplace stories could have helped bring these findings more to life. As it stands, the work will largely be of interest to comparative scholars of human resource management and employment relations and to comparative economists interested in a closer appraisal of China's market-oriented economic reforms.

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