

Reviews

Timothy Amos, *Embodying Difference: The Making of Burakumin in Modern Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011, 302pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3579-8

Hiroshi Masuda, *MacArthur in Asia: The General and His Staff in the Philippines, Japan, and Korea*, translated from the Japanese by Reiko Yamamoto, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012, 320pp. (In small print). ISBN-13: 978-0-8014-4939-0

The first of the books under review here is a very informative one that addresses the somewhat sensitive issue of the burakumin (outcast/es) from a variety of perspectives and bases, such as diachronic and synchronic, ideation, master narrative, conceptualisation, empiricism, and so forth. The main thrust is to demonstrate the variety in the burakumin through history, establishing that the modern-day burakumin are not simply a monolithic historical relic from the past. The author has spent many years researching on the burakumin and knows his topic thoroughly. He also uses new primary material. With its focus on diversity and heterogeneity his book might be called postmodernist.

On the negative side the structure is repetitive on occasion, which can and does lead to (minor) inconsistency. I personally also found the style repetitive and long-winded in places. In my view a good editor could reduce the book considerably, though the main text is not particularly long at 225 pages. There are 48 pages of notes and 29 pages of references, an indication of the depth of research. I would recommend it for any scholar of Japanese society or history.

The second book listed above is also an informative one, though, understandably, there are quite a few books in existence already on MacArthur, as one of the world's most influential figures of the twentieth century. The best-known is probably William Manchester's *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880-1964*. The value of the book under review is that it presents a Japanese perspective. Japanese perspectives of MacArthur are usually narrowed to the period of the Pacific War and Occupation, but this book provides information about him before and after, if rather brief. One matter highlighted is the 'Bataan Boys', fifteen officers serving under MacArthur having escaped from Bataan, and becoming his aides. Few books on the Pacific War mention this group. Another interesting point made in the book is that while the great majority of scholars believe that MacArthur was dismissed by Truman over the Korean War, Masuda notes that it may have been over—or at least partly over—Formosa (Taiwan), which involved a policy clash between MacArthur and the U.S. Government.

On a critical note, there are omissions such as the hasty and unprofessional trial of General Yamashita in the Philippines, which was pushed through by MacArthur, with

some historians feeling that it was retribution for the atrocities committed by Japanese troops in the Philippines, MacArthur's second home, and grossly unfair. Another matter that could have been developed in more detail is the dislike of MacArthur by many troops, particularly Australians but also fellow Americans. He was nicknamed 'Dugout Doug', implying cowardice, and there was widespread dislike—even hatred—of him. His arrogance and readiness to claim credit did not help the situation. There is only one sentence on this nick-name. On another omission, at the very beginning of the Occupation, MacArthur was instructed by his government to destroy Japan's nuclear particle accelerators (cyclotrons), for the Japanese too had been working on developing an atomic bomb. MacArthur did so, saying he was obeying orders, but that it was a blow for science. This is clearly evident in MacArthur's memoirs, *Reminiscences*, 1964, and is of great importance. Moreover, photographic evidence exists, though many Japanese do not believe it. Another important matter that is omitted is that MacArthur almost always followed orders from the State Department, particularly from Hugh Borton and George Blakeslee. These two powerful and important—and self-effacing—figures are missing from this book. (Hugh Borton is probably the 'unknown' person who proposed the famous Article Nine—the antiwar clause—for the new constitution.)

Having pointed out a few omissions that I personally consider important, I do not wish to be too critical, for the Pacific War and subsequent Occupation are vast topics, and omissions are inevitable. This book is a very worthwhile acquisition not only for academics but for general readers.

Reviewed by KEN HENSHALL
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Andrew Edmund Goble, *Confluences of Medicine in Medieval Japan: Buddhist Healing, Chinese Knowledge, Islamic Formula, and Wounds of War*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011, xx + 202pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3500-2 (hbk.)

The large-scale and intimate interactions between and among different cultures and civilizations constitute one of the most salient features of our age. This, nevertheless, does not mean that multiculturalism is a unique phenomenon of the modern and contemporary world. For centuries, the cross-cultural exchanges of ideas and goods, along with the cross-cultural immigrations of people as individuals and groups, have been far more extensive and intensive than is commonly recognised today. Just as is the case nowadays, medicine has been an essential part in a great variety of cross-cultural contacts and exchanges in the past. Asia is and was certainly not an exception in this respect.

This wonderfully-researched historical book by Andrew Goble presents a convincing account of the multicultural character of medicine in medieval Japan. It is based on an in-depth study of two historic medical writings by the Buddhist priest and physician Kajiwara Shōzen 梶原性全 (1265-1337): the *Ton'isho* (Book of the Simple Physician) written in Japanese for a wider audience and the *Man'anpō* (Myriad Relief Prescriptions) compiled in Chinese for his medical peers. Through investigating

Zhōzen's medical works from the perspective of the transcultural contacts and interactions in Asia, especially between China, Japan and to certain degrees India and the Islamic world, Goble demonstrates that multiculturalism is and has long been an essential feature of East-Asian cultures and societies.

The book explores a number of key areas of transcultural exchange related to medicine, from the spread of medical knowledge via printed texts, the social networks of Buddhist priests and the medical facilities of Buddhist institutions, to the flow of *materia medica*. In the first chapter, Goble not only provides us with an understanding of the historical background in which Zhōzen practised medicine and wrote his medical works but also offers an alternative picture to the conventional view which sees this period of Japanese history as being largely closed to the outside world. Shifting attention away from the political centre of Kyoto and the state policies to foreigners, he highlights some other historical features, including long-term Buddhist religious networks across the East China Sea, the highly educated Chinese community in Kamakura, and the outward-looking attitudes of people as well as ruling elites of warriors and officials in the region. In Goble's words, "Shōzen's Kamakura was a vibrant, cosmopolitan city in an era when Japan had launched a new wave of human, cultural, and commercial interaction with China." (p. 24)

It is therefore not surprising that Zhōzen had access to and actively engaged with a wide range of printed Chinese medical texts, especially Song dynasty (960-1279) medical knowledge. As is well documented in Chapter Two and also thoughtfully discussed in the Epilogue, traditional Chinese medicine was theoretically and practically founded in Eastern Zhou, Qin and Han Dynasties (770BC-220AD). A series of advances was achieved under the Song Dynasty, especially the Northern Song (962-1127), developments such as the compilation of the imperially-commissioned authoritative volumes of medical formulae. In his medical works, Zhōzen mentions nearly three hundred Chinese medical texts. As for medical formulas, Zhōzen relied extensively upon a couple of major Song medical texts. Being familiar with new medical achievements from the Song, Zhōzen was able to identify some deficiencies of Japanese medicine and physicians. It is possible that Zhōzen's medical writings might have preserved some materials of Song medicine which were lost in China, just as another earlier well-known Japanese medical work, *Ishinpō*, had done for Tang medicine.

In Chapter Three, Goble explores what he calls "the Pharmaceutical Silk Road" and how the increasing availability of overseas *materia medica* in Japan from China as well as the Arabic or Islamic world had benefited Zhōzen and Japanese pharmacopoeia. In fact, traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacopoeia up to the fourteenth century had been greatly influenced by Arab (Islamic) medicine. In the process of the technical translation involved in adopting overseas *materia medica* in Japan, Zhōzen made innovative contributions such as clarifying and regularizing difference measurement and dosages and discovering domestic substitutes for overseas items.

In spite of important similarities and commonalities, the different healing arts in different cultural traditions always have different theories and belief systems on health and illness. In the fourth chapter, Goble examines how Zhōzen responded to

different theories and belief systems in medicine through focusing upon his changed understandings of a particular sickness, *rai* (leprosy). Medically and socially as well, *rai* was one of most vexing problems in Japan as leprosy has been in many other societies. According to medieval Japanese Buddhism, this was a sort of karmic illness because the human body, healthy or ill, reflected one's accumulated karma. But, according to Song medical knowledge, the disease was explained in a naturalistic way, that is, by reference to the Chinese theories of *qi* and the five phases or elements. As a Buddhist priest, Zhōzen initially subscribed to the Buddhist understanding of *rai*. After many decades of clinical experience, as a physician however he was converted to the Song medical doctrine which for him offered a mode of better explaining the illness, offering more effective treatments, and somewhat freeing the patients from the attached social stigma. A quintessential speciality in later medieval Japanese medicine was concerned with injuries and wounds resulted from battles due to the outbreak of endemic warfare. But the medical works by Zhōzen were very much the intellectual products in the time of peace. Still, in Chapter Five Goble has documented and argued that Song medicine played a crucial role in the development of wound medicine in Japan. Japanese physicians had used *materi medica* adopted and domesticated from the Kamakura period in the treatment of wounds and employed the theoretical frameworks and tools of Song medical knowledge in conceptualizing wounds and healing interventions.

This book claims to be the first book-length study in the English language of Zhōzen's historic medical works. As such, it is a valuable contribution to the history of medicine in East Asia, Japan and China in particular. More significantly, because the author had approached the two medieval Japanese medical writings explicitly from the angle of transcultural interaction in East Asia, the book is also a valuable contribution to the cultural history in Asia and Asian studies in general.

As a work in the history of transcultural exchanges and multiculturalism in Asia, the book would be even richer if the author had further contextualized the medical writings and practice of Zhōzen from an even broader perspective on how different medical systems in Asia have been translated and transferred in different Asian societies. Also, the book would be even more insightful, historically and theoretically, if the author had offered a conceptual framework in characterizing the transcultural exchanges and multiculturalism as such phenomena occurred in medieval Japan and were reflected in Zhōzen's medical works. Yet, these are not so much criticisms as suggestions for future studies. By all means, more historical explorations and conceptual inquiries are certainly needed in order to more adequately comprehend the complicated and fascinating exchanges in medicine between Asian cultures and societies and the history of Asian multiculturalism in general. Doubtlessly, Goble's *Confluence of Medicine in Medieval Japan* should and will be an essential reference for any of the future undertakings in these related academic areas.

Reviewed by JING-BAO NIE
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Haomin Gong, *Uneven Modernity: Literature, Film, and Intellectual Discourse in Postsocialist China*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012, 200pp.
ISBN: 978-0-8248-3531-6

Haomin Gong's *Uneven Modernity* offers many insights on literature, film, intellectual discourse, and the nature of modernity in postsocialist China. Its central thesis is that modernity is based fundamentally on "unevenness"—on inequalities and structural contradictions that exist both within countries and between them. Within countries, Gong focuses on rich classes and poor ones, favoured provinces and neglected ones, expanding cities and declining rural areas, rising market forces and socialist legacies, state controls and individual freedom, high culture and popular culture, and tradition and change. At the international level, he deals with tensions and inequalities between East and West, between developed countries and less developed ones, and between the local and the global. All of this unevenness is linked to modernity, and its constituent parts are in constant and complicated interaction. Nowhere is this more obvious than in China, a country where modernization has been occurring at an extraordinary pace and where unevenness has been promoted by deliberate government policy linked to slogans like "Let some get rich first" and "To get rich is glorious."

Gong is well versed in the international literatures on both unevenness and modernity and relates both literatures to China. His own approach, however, is distinctive because it is based on an unusually wide concept of unevenness. Whereas most analysts focus just on uneven relations between geographical regions, between countries, or between more and less developed sectors of the economy, Gong extends the concept to include uneven relations between classes, between the state sector and the private sector, between the state and intellectuals, between the forces of tradition and the forces of change, between high culture and popular culture, and between the local and the global. This extended application of the term "unevenness" has enough coherence to support a consistent overall argument, and it adds flexibility and breadth of reference to Gong's account. His analysis benefits, too, from a nicely judged theoretical eclecticism that allows him to draw insights from both neo-Marxist and non-Marxist forms of structural explanation, as well as from postmodern perspectives.

The heart of Gong's book consists of four carefully chosen case studies—two on literary figures and two on filmmakers. Gong locates these in the context of China's changed economic and political context after 1989, linking them to the growth of the capitalist market, the rise of materialist values, the loss of faith in socialist solutions, a turn away from the search for political alternatives, and a sharp decline in the status of intellectuals. All of these factors influenced the subject of his first case study, the scholar and writer Yu Qiuyu, who became a public figure and intellectual celebrity in an era when other scholars were ignored. Yu's success, Gong argues, was based on his skill in negotiating the uneven terrain that faced writers in the 1990s. He bridged the gap between the traditional and the modern by adapting established literary forms so that they appealed to a wider audience; he crossed the boundary between the academic and commercial worlds by promoting himself and his work through modern marketing methods and media appearances; and he showed great skill in touching on sensitive issues while not falling foul of the state.

Yu owed his success to his ability to straddle the fissures in Chinese society, but the neorealist writer Chi Li won fame by identifying herself squarely with a single class—the “petty urbanites” who have proliferated as part of China’s modernization. Her stories chronicle the mundane lives of ordinary people in the city of Wuhan, which stagnated while government policy singled out other cities for growth. Embracing a reality that had been written off by both the socialist realists of the Mao era and the reform-minded intellectuals of the 1980s, Chi Li constructs an ‘unheroic world’ that defies “all grand causes and discourses” and has lost all faith in “transcendent values” (pp. 57-58). Gong suggests that in the market-dominated 1990s Chi Li’s neorealism, like the political withdrawal and cynicism of China’s petty urbanites, was “a timely stance for survival.”

The rise of the market and a post-ideological audience also conditions the work of the commercial filmmaker Feng Xiaogang, who blends comedy with social commentary in movies that are “not intended for film festivals or scholars, but for his audiences” (p.86). Like Yu, Feng finds profitable trade-offs between the disparate elements of China’s uneven socio-political and ideological terrain. He makes films with a mix of state-sponsored, private and international companies, he uses humour to exploit the emergence of more liberal trends in Chinese society, and he draws on “vestigial socialist ideology” in his critiques of “rampant capitalist consumerism” and moral failure. Commercial film-making in China, Gong concludes, is “a survival strategy in the prevailing uneven social conditions,” a strategy that “combines both aesthetic exploration and critical agency” (p. 88).

Some of the same elements are present in the work of Sixth Generation director Wang Xiaoxuai, whose “art films” are the subject of the book’s final case study. Directors of art films, says Gong, “negotiate between the domestic and international film markets because their marginality in China is a kind of guarantee of their popularity in the West, which in turn brings them success among critics, and, paradoxically, an audience back in China” (p. 111). They strike a careful balance between ‘anti-establishment political stands’, the expectations of foreign art film audiences, the state-controlled filmmaking system, and ‘the increasing allure of the domestic market itself’ (p. 109). They are therefore not as different from commercial filmmakers as is sometimes claimed, in part because they are presented with many of the same pressures and opportunities by China’s uneven domestic and international terrain.

All of this is perceptive and well argued, but it in no way prepares the reader for the book’s conclusion. Gong started out by asserting that unevenness is not an “accidental feature” of modernity but is both “intrinsic” and “necessary” to it, and while his case studies do not require this proposition they in no way rule it out. In the book’s conclusion, however, he reverses his position completely, suggesting that China may be able to develop a new form of modernity based on the value of “evenness.” This can be achieved, he says, by reasserting ‘evenness’ as a universal human value—a value manifested in the traditions of the Enlightenment and revolutionary socialism, and a value that even (in his view) “exhibits its due place” in Confucianism (p. 136). Whether or not he is right about Confucianism, his position here involves an emphasis on the independent power of ideas that is at odds with the emphasis on structural determination in the rest of the book.

Will the universal value of evenness triumph over the structural obstacles in its path? Gong draws some hope from recent reforms in China, but he is well aware that they may simply be intended to shore up the rule of the Communist Party and consolidate the political unevenness that is part of the problem. So the question, perhaps understandably, remains unanswered. All we can say with any certainty is that if China does become a more even society it will show that Gong's initial claims about the incompatibility of modernity and equality were too extreme. It will also provide proof that at least some of the unevenness in the modern world is not, after all, an intrinsic feature of modernity.

Despite the unresolved tensions in his argument, Gong has written a very good book. Its greatest strengths derive from the nicely balanced eclecticism of its theoretical approach and the diversity of its subject matter. By integrating neo-Marxist and non-Marxist structural perspectives into his analysis he achieves more depth than writers who have worked more narrowly within the frameworks provided by postmodernism, literary criticism and film studies; and by applying his approach successfully to different genres of both literature and film he has produced a wide ranging study with impressive explanatory scope. His book should be read by all who are interested in modern Chinese literature and film, and by both students and academics in the wider field of contemporary Chinese studies.

Reviewed by FENGYUAN JI
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Larissa N. Heinrich, *The Afterlife of Images: Translating the Pathological Body between China and the West*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008, xiv + 22pp. ISBN: 978-0-8223-4093-5 (hbk.); 978-0-8223-4113-0 (pbk.)

China as the “Sick Man of Asia” or “*Dongya Bingfu*” (The Chinese as the Sick Man of East Asia); modern China can not be understood adequately if one ignores the role of this discriminatory image, originally perpetrated by the West and then absorbed back into China. The metaphorical meanings of the image have gone far beyond the medical connotations and become an essential element of the collective consciousness and identity of modern and even contemporary China. The establishment and development of China's public health system constitute a collective Chinese response to it. “Total anti-traditionalism” and nationalism have been the two most persistent and sweeping social, cultural and political ideologies in China since the early twentieth century because they have proposed a solution to the identity of sickness through, respectively, abandoning the seriously ill tradition represented by Confucianism or strengthening China as a modern nation-state. The well-known statement Mao Zedong made regarding the establishment of the PRC, “The Chinese people have stood up from now on!”, makes better sense if one takes this background image into consideration. Adeptly exploiting the politics of the image, the Communist Party won its power struggle against the Nationalist partly because it had projected itself as the saviour of “sick China” to the populace. Many state and collective Chinese reactions in international affairs are less

puzzling if viewed as the kind of behaviour expected of a humiliated person fighting for his self-esteem and dignity. The extraordinary Chinese enthusiasm in sports like the Olympic Games also becomes much more apprehensible. In the collective Chinese psychology, the image has stimulated shame, anguish, and anger on the one hand, and the drive to reform, to learn from the West, and to self-strengthen on the other. To a certain extent, the history of China since the early twentieth century is a history of overcoming this negative image.

Initially, Larissa Heinrich was planning to “provide a concrete answer to the abstract question of how the stereotype of China as the ‘Sick Man of Asia’ reached maturity over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries” (xii). Over the years, her research project “evolved into a more general philosophical attempt to redeem beauty from its unlikely refuge in representing disease, trauma, prejudice, and imperialistic impulse” (*ibid.*). As the result of her intellectual exploration, *The Afterlife of Images* has investigated how the images of pathological bodies of Chinese, deriving originally from medical texts and contexts, were interpreted and transformed between Chinese and Western cultures from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth.

This is a pioneering and extremely rich book. It does not offer a systematic historical survey. Rather, its main body presents four fascinating case studies in a chronological order. The first case study traces how the stereotype of China as the “cradle of smallpox” was created from the illustrations on the infectious disease in an authoritative Chinese medical anthology and spread to the Western societies. The primary historical text Heinrich has examined in this connection is the essay “De la petite vérole” (On Smallpox) written by French missionary Martial Gibot in the 1770s. The meanings of the concerned images have changed dramatically from representing proactive treatment for smallpox in the context of the Qianlong imperial project to symbolizing the perceived severity of Chinese smallpox and China as the cradle of not only smallpox but many other diseases. In comparing this text with an earlier and much more accurate, but ignored, one on smallpox in China, Heinrich demonstrates that Gibot’s grossly mistaken representation and its wide acceptance in the West says not so much about Chinese realities but rather about deep-rooted Western prejudices. In the late twentieth century and today, the images returned somewhat home at the National Palace Museum in Taiwan to serve the nationalist agenda because the images reflect the Chinese invention and societal practice of inoculation, a significant medical achievement representing the beginning of immunology far before the Western innovation of vaccination.

The other three case studies are as fascinating as the first one. Focusing upon the Western-style realistic oil paintings of medical portraits by the Cantonese artist Lam Qua in collaboration with the American medical missionary Peter Parker, the second case study shows how the popular views on certain Chinese “characteristics” had contributed to the creation and pathology of a Chinese identity. Focusing upon the development of medical photography in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the third case study investigates the transition from a more biological or descriptive mode of representing Chinese patients to a thoroughly colonial and racialized general image of China as the pathological other. The fourth case study traces the historical and cultural

transformation in which the introduction of Western dissection-based anatomy through such medical text in Chinese by Benjamin Hobson produced what the author calls an “aesthetics of anatomic realism” in the Chinese literary works of the eve of Chinese modernity in the hands of such writers as Lu Xun, the father of modern Chinese literature.

Altogether, these insightfully-chosen and marvellously-conducted case studies along with thoughtful introduction and epilogue have opened up an invaluable window into the complicated and intriguing process in which medical images have travelled across space and time and gained a series of secondary socio-cultural meanings, or an “afterlife” as the title of the book suggests, and have impacted on the power of modern Western medicine and culture, sickness and backwardness of China, Chinese identity, Chinese national and cultural characters, modernity, so on and so forth.

Methodologically speaking, Heinrich has taken a genuinely interdisciplinary approach. The author’s home discipline is literature, comparative literature in particular. In this investigation, she has successfully integrated historical inquiry, cross-cultural study, the study of the visual arts, and literary criticism. In return, she has made significant contributions to the history of medicine and science, Asian studies and cross-cultural studies, contributions one can hardly achieve via the single disciplinary approach. For instance, the introduction of Western-style anatomy in China is such a well-researched subject in the history of medicine. Bringing visual arts and literacy criticism into her investigation, Heinrich has cast new light on the far-reaching cultural and political impact of an anatomic and medical way of seeing upon modern Chinese society. In fact, due to her interdisciplinary methodology, she has casted new light on almost every topic she has addressed.

The book is illustrated by forty-six provocative figures and plates including medical illustrations and paintings. Eight colour plates of oil paintings of Parker’s Chinese patients by Lam Qua are visually striking and particularly poignant. Furthermore, as a scholar of literature, Heinrich has written this book in a beautiful and imaginative English prose, a feature that many academic works often lack.

The only thing I feel somewhat disappointed about in respect to this book is that the author had travelled away from her initial question in her intellectual journey. She has not always concentrated on how the prejudiced image of China as the “Sick Man of Asia” was conceived, born, transformed, and absorbed back into China. She has not explored how the image has played an essential role in the political, social and cultural life of China, especially in collective Chinese psychology. Nevertheless, in her book there are a great deal of wonderful materials on and insights into the original question. Her book certainly calls for more in-depth investigations of this important question. More significantly, the author has offered a methodological model for such future research projects. All in all, through this pioneering book Heinrich has explored a vast of uncharted area for the history of medicine and science, cross-cultural studies, visual studies, and Asian Studies.

*Reviewed by JING-BAO NIE
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Henry Johnson, *The Shamisen: Tradition and Diversity*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, xix + 145pp. ISBN: 978-9-0041-8137-3

Henry Johnson's *The Shamisen: Tradition and Diversity* presents an extremely valuable body of knowledge on the *shamisen* and is a book that fills a significant gap in extant English language discourse on the instrument. Drawing on a diverse range of primary and secondary sources, Johnson has clearly conducted a great deal of research on practically all aspects of the *shamisen*. He meticulously documents the manufacturing process and component parts, accessories, grades, scales and tuning, playing techniques, and notation systems of the *shamisen* while also including discussion on the organology and ethnography of the instrument. Primary sources include interviews with numerous performers, scholars and instrument makers, observation of instrument manufacture, *shamisen* lessons with established teachers and examination of numerous *shamisen* collections. Johnson also consults an extensive number of secondary sources by both Japanese and non-Japanese scholars. These sources are documented in the bibliography and provide a valuable platform for current and future scholars or enthusiasts to conduct further research on the *shamisen* and its context in Japanese music. Throughout the book Johnson supplements written detail with exquisite images, including several that were taken during his own ethnographic field research.

In Chapter One ("History and Cultural Flows") Johnson presents a basic history of the *shamisen*, outlining its transmission from China to Japan around the fifteenth century. The second half of the chapter describes the social, geographic, cultural and global flows of the instrument. Chapter Two ("Instrument Types") provides readers with comprehensive information on the classification and morphology of the *shamisen* and related instruments (such as the *sanshin*) that successfully transitions, in Chapter Three ("Manufacture and Components"), to the meticulous provision of information on the manufacture and components of the instrument. Johnson documents the materials, shape, size and cultural significance of each of the *shamisen*'s component parts as well as outlining how the instruments are graded according to the quality of materials used and craftsmanship. This detailed information is supplemented with visual diagrams and colour images demonstrating the components of the instrument. In Chapter Four ("Performers") Johnson examines three significant social spheres of *shamisen* performance: blind performers, gender associations and performing organisations. This investigation provides insight into the internal dynamics of the *shamisen*'s learning contexts and identifies aspects of the society and culture of the players and performers during its four hundred year recognised history in Japan. Throughout Chapter Five ("Performance Traditions and Music Genres") Johnson attempts to unravel the complex network of traditions, sub-traditions, music genres and performers that use the *shamisen* as a means of musical expression. Unlike most discourse on the *shamisen*, Johnson provides definitions and descriptions of not only key lyrical styles (*utaimono*) and narrative styles (*katarimono*) but also *geza* music (off-stage *kabuki* music), new genres that have developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, folk music and folk performing arts, and neo-traditional popular music. Chapter Six ("Performance") is a particularly noteworthy section in the book for practitioners of the *shamisen*. The first half of the chapter provides valuable descriptions on the plethora of playing

techniques for the left hand and right hand plectrum supplemented with images visually documenting key techniques. The second half of the chapter documents the different notation systems (*kuchi jamisen* notations, vertical notations, and horizontal notations) used by practitioners of the *shamisen* over the past four hundred years. Johnson accompanies his written descriptions with illustrations of the notation systems accompanied by the Western staff transnotations. He also reminds readers “while some notations are written in a very descriptive way in order to include as much information about the music as possible, others are written in a prescriptive way and often only show an outline of the music” (p. 92). The final chapter of the book (“Conclusion”) summarises the development of the *shamisen* and highlights the paradoxical nature of the instrument as both a traditional and modern object. Johnson shows how the *shamisen*, rooted in the pre-Meiji era (pre-Westernisation and modernisation) retains its place in Japanese culture as a traditional instrument while continuing to see the invention of new music styles and performance traditions.

In compiling *The Shamisen: Tradition and Diversity*, Johnson has clearly executed his purpose “to bring together a body of knowledge [that] contribute[s] to a better understanding of a musical instrument that today is firmly established as an object of traditional Japanese culture in a diverse number of styles across the nation and internationally” (xix). The depth and tremendous detail in the information, images and diagrams presented ensures that *The Shamisen: Tradition and Diversity* is a fundamental contribution to the literature on the *shamisen* in English. I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the *shamisen* or more broadly, in Japanese music and culture.

Reviewed by CATHERINE HALLETT
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John Craig Keating, *A Protestant Church in Communist China: Moore Memorial Church 1949-1989*, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Lehigh University Press, 2012, 306pp. ISBN: 978-1-6114-6090-2

This book relates the history of one “officially registered” Christian Congregation in China in the turbulent years under Communism from 1949 to 1989. The book was first published in 2012 and the last chapter of 26 pages adds a summary of developments in the period since 1989. It is a pity that the history and themes that have emerged over the last 23 years in China generally have not been as fully developed as those of the earlier period.

Shortly after I received this book for review, I had the opportunity to attend the evening service at Moore Memorial Church. The Church is in easy walking distance away from Shanghai’s famous *Bund* and looks like any traditional European style, central city Church anywhere in the world. The church was full with what seemed like 900 to perhaps a 1000 people, including many in their 20s and 30s, although I did not notice any children. The immediately visible paradox was that, although the Church of

Christ in China claims to be a truly Chinese church, the service itself was conducted in a very western, Reformed, Protestant style and format. The minister wore a “dog collar” and the hymns were straight from traditional nineteenth century British hymnals. Yet, as Keating notes, there were no prayers of confession or assurance of forgiveness and no “passing of the peace” to each other that are standard aspects of Protestant Churches. Everyone appeared to leave straight away and the ministers did not shake hands or attempt to speak with anyone afterwards.

Reading this book after that visit made considerable sense of the historical context of what I had experience in that service.

Keating breaks new ground in looking in detail at the history and experiences of one “officially recognised” congregation in the People’s Republic of China. While many books on the history of the Church in China rely only on missionary records, and indeed these have also been considered here, Keating makes extensive use of Chinese sources, such as Government and Church archive documents. Interviews with members of the Church who have lived through this period are thorough. As a result, Keating provides interesting answers as to whether the people at the church were happy to see the missionaries leave, what happened to Church members during the Cultural Revolution and how the Church has related to the Communist Party over the years.

A weakness of the book is perhaps that in his interviews, Keating does not explore what people actually believed or their personal faith. There is little “theology” in the work. He focuses on what people remembered of events. Keating locates the history of MMC effectively and efficiently in the wider context of the ebbs and flows of social and political movements in the PRC. The major contribution of this book lies in its historical analysis of the never-simple, shifting relationships between the Church, the PRC Government, the Church of Christ in China Three Self Movement and the swirls of events in China since 1949. Keating is clearly committed to MMC, but his book remains scholarly and does not “take sides”, between the official and the “underground church.”

Keating writes his book as a case study of the history of one Church in the PRC. It is however more than that. He gives an overview of Church State relations in this period. On page 240, he notes: “This is not a study of the rules and regulations governing religious practice in China, but rather a study of how the relationship between Church and state has been played out.” Chapter One “1887 to 1949 The Pre-Communist Era” achieves this; as well as providing a summary of the early period of the Church, it serves as a useful summary of the politics of the period, of the American missionaries in Shanghai, their relationship to the Republican KMT party and the situation during the Japanese invasion. Later chapters of book are a useful resource for summaries of the Government’s policies on religious belief. Keating discusses the experiences and rationale of Christians who opposed the Government, such as Watchman Nee and Wang Ming Tao as well as the lives of Christians who chose to participate in the “open” or “official” Church.

Freedom of religion is guaranteed under the constitution of the People’s Republic of China, but the degrees to which religion has been allowed to be practiced has been hotly debated. So too has the question about the Christian nature of the “official church”.

The discussion of the Church in the 1960s is particularly insightful. The exposure of the Li Chuwen, who was Secretary of the YMCA and minister of the Community Church in Shanghai, as a secret member of the Communist Party is an embarrassment to the Church of Christ in China. In contrast, Bishop Ding Guangxun of the officially-recognised National “Three Self Patriotic Church” (self governing, self supporting, self propagating) never signed the Christian Manifesto and was never seriously accused of being a CCP member, although he moved in Party circles. Keating notes that Ding at first supported the students in Tiananmen Square in 1989 and then had to affirm the Government crackdown. The relationship has been tense and complex.

It is fair to ask how typical of Churches in China MMC actually is. MMC is exceptional in that it is in downtown Shanghai, the most cosmopolitan of Chinese cities. It was the first Church in Shanghai to reopen in 1979. Keating argues in Chapter Nine that it is fairly typical and he (rightly) hopes that his book will be the first of many such in-depth studies of individual congregations. However, any comparison with other Churches is problematic and clearly, the treatment of Christians during the Cultural Revolution varied greatly from place to place. That in itself is a point worthy of further research. While acknowledging the lack of resources, Keating makes the best use of what can be known to show that the ministers at MMC were treated harshly, more so than the congregation during the Cultural Revolution. MMC was closed for 13 years at this time and the church did not dare to meet in underground house churches as happened elsewhere, although there were some small scale prayer meetings. In contrast, some churches in other Provinces took a lot longer to reopen, or were never reopened. Keating shows as successfully as can be expected that sermons at MMC were never actually vetted during its open periods. Depending on the seriousness with which local cadres took their supervision of churches, this may well have been not the case in many parts of China.

Equally it could be argued, and Keating does not deal comprehensively with the possibility, that MMC has become, at least at certain points of its history, a “show-piece” congregation, similar to some operating churches in Moscow during the Soviet period, and claims today made about Bongsoo Church in Pyongyang, North Korea. There is some evidence that this is the case. On page 175, MMC is not only “the pre-eminent Protestant Church in China” but “was being used as a show piece for international guests”, including visits by Billy Graham in 1988, the Australian Council of Churches in 1982 and the British Council of Churches (including the Archbishop of Canterbury) in 1983. Further research might throw up interesting perspectives on the extent to which the CCP promoted such a policy.

This is a very well researched work, richly documented with an extensive and well selected bibliography, timelines and biographies of people associated with MMC. It is a welcome addition to the literature on the Church in China.

*Reviewed by STUART VOGEL
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Mineke Schipper, Ye Shuxian and Yin Hubin, eds., *China's Creation and Origin Myths: Cross-cultural Explorations in Oral and Written Traditions*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011, xxv + 354pp. ISBN: 978-90-04-19485-4 (hbk.)

According to the editors' preface, all but three of the fourteen essays in this pathbreaking and absorbing book are based on papers presented at an international symposium on creation and origin myths held in Beijing in 2008. The essays are by leading specialists in China, Taiwan, South Korea, the Netherlands and the United States, among them An Deming, Liu Yahu and Ye Shuxian from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Yang Lihui from Beijing Normal University and Mineke Schipper from the University of Leiden.

While the essays draw freely on data relating to creation and origin myths in other parts of world, most of the contributors are concerned with the creation and origin myths of Han Chinese and other ethnic groups living in China. The essays are divided into three sections, on comparative perspectives, reassessments of early written texts, and oral traditions. A fourth, valuable section serves as an appendix with "modest samples" (p. 279) of oral creation and origin myths of the Han Chinese and fifteen Chinese minorities, including Koreans, Manchus, Mongolians, Uyghurs, Bai and Dai. The preamble to this section actually mentions twenty minorities, but myths from Kazakhs, Kirgiz (Kyrgyz) and three other named ethnic groups are not in fact included.

One of the editors' intentions is to lay to rest the view that China is rare or unique among ancient civilizations in lacking creation myths. This view is attributed mainly to the American scholar Derk Bodde, but also to the Chinese writer Mao Dun and the German philosopher Georg Hegel (pp. ix, 192-193). Various contributors seek to debunk this view, in part at least by highlighting and documenting the extraordinarily rich diversity of creation and origin myths to be found among oral traditions, particularly the oral traditions of China's minority peoples.

In an informative essay Wu Bing'an tabulates sixty-seven such creation myths identified and documented in recent years. According to Wu these myths have been found among the oral cultures of thirty-eight of China's fifty-five officially recognised minorities. A further ten involve Pangu, the hero of many Han Chinese and non-Han creation stories. Wu describes all these materials as constituting "a dazzling wealth of... full-length creation epic texts... mostly transmitted in the style of long narrative sung poems" (pp. 182-192). He adds that the oral myths and legends of both ethnic minorities and Han Chinese were ignored for much of the twentieth century because "the Chinese research community... erroneously concentrated on Han culture as the sole orthodox culture" while focusing entirely on ancient books and records, excluding oral traditions and also "denying the convergence and overlapping of marginalized minority cultures and Han culture" (p. 193).

Wu also draws attention to some of the oral creation myths now being documented among Han Chinese (pp 184, 193-194), notably *Heian zhuan* (variously translated as *Biography of Darkness* and—less inaccurately—*Legend of Darkness*), the set of elaborate sung creation myths from Hubei province put into book form in 1983, as well

as various oral myths and legends being brought to light among communities on the central plains of north China.

When Derk Bodde described China as lacking creation myths he was referring to the absence of substantial early written—as opposed to oral—evidence of creation myths of the kind found in, say, early Greek writings. In the end the contributors to this book do not have a great deal to add to Bodde's views in this respect—though there is some discussion of hitherto-underrated aspects of myth in texts like *Dao de jing*, and an implicit sense that the wealth of new discoveries, including textual materials, currently being unearthed in China may soon bring about further reappraisals of early written resources. In the meantime fresh interpretations are offered of some of the myths and legends available in long-established textual sources, notably those relating to gods and godlike entities such as Hundun, Fuxi, Nüwa (also known as Nügua), Pangu and San Huang (the Three Sovereigns). One contributor, Kao Lifeng, reconsiders the fourth century BC silk manuscript from the southern state of Chu discovered some seventy years ago and now in the Sackler Gallery in Washington DC, arguing that there are references to three creation myths in it—though without shedding light on the important question of whether or not these myths were peculiar to Chu.

In her initial survey of the world's creation and origin myths Mineke Schipper notes (pp. 17-19) that the study of such myths often results in questions rather than answers. The same can be said of this book, which leaves unanswered a fair number of important questions, some of them alluded to but only a few dealt with in any detail. Such questions include the following. To what extent are particular creation and origin myths in China *sui generis* rather than being drawn from a larger body of shared beliefs, either within the geographical region of China or more broadly? Are there even shared Eurasian myths of national origin of the kind boldly suggested by Christopher Beckwith in his *Empires of the Silk Road* (not mentioned in the book under review)? How far if at all can one go in conflating the oral myths now being documented in various parts of China—and reconstructed for tourist purposes—with early textual references to such myths? What approach should be taken to the study of the myths of ethnic groups that straddle contemporary international borders? Does it make sense to investigate the creation and origin myths of Chinese ethnic minorities whose cultural origins go beyond the frontiers of the People's Republic—the myths of Kazakhs, Kirgiz, Koreans and Mongolians, to take the most obvious cases—without investigating those of their ethnic cousins elsewhere?

There are also questions to be explored more fully relating to definitions of ethnic identity, particularly in the Chinese context. Is the identity of Chinese national minorities as constructed and reified from the 1950s onwards a reasonable basis on which to consider creation and origin myths found among their communities? How much consideration needs to be given to the “convergence and overlapping” of Han and non-Han cultures that Wu Bing'an thoughtfully refers to? Then there are broader questions of language and context. What, for example, is the contemporary Han Chinese understanding of the term myth or *shen hua* 神話? At the outset Mineke Schipper briefly defines and discusses the English word ‘myth’ (pp. 3-4), but not its Chinese equivalent, with its distinct overtones.

One other issue that contributors to the book could have addressed is the role that Han Chinese creation and origin myths have played in the reimagining of the Chinese nation—that is, the citizens of the People’s Republic of China—that has taken place during the past two decades, as nationalist, Confucianist and other notions have gradually eclipsed Communist ideology. More generally the conceptual frameworks that contributors bring to bear tend to be underdeveloped, so that (despite passing references to the ideas of Karl Marx, Bronislaw Malinowski, Mary Douglas and Anne Birrell—the latter only mentioned twice despite the importance of her work), there is a risk of their discussions of myths becoming little more than loose-limbed narratives or catalogues, without the creative anthropological, linguistic, cultural, political and historical analysis needed to give them substance.

This is a book of ambitious breadth of scope, and clearly reflects the energy and enthusiasm of a discipline only now really re-establishing itself in the Chinese context. This being so we will all hope that the editors and contributors will address some or all of these questions more fully in their subsequent work. At a more trivial level, there are a few minor omissions and editorial shortcomings. Some relevant early texts (*Lie zi* and *Lun heng* for example) are conspicuous by their absence, as are some obvious cases for considered treatment—frog deities are discussed at length, for instance, but dragons hardly merit a mention. Sourcing is patchy, with a number of the sources cited left out of the bibliography, or else cited with incorrect dates or without page numbers or dates. Finally the absence of Chinese characters in all but a few instances is a drawback. Otherwise the book is attractively presented and is a significant addition to the Brill ‘Religion in Chinese Societies’ series.

Reviewed by PETER HARRIS

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Timon Screech, *Obtaining Images: Art, Production and Display in Edo Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2012, 384pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3613-9 (hbk.)

As Timon Screech acknowledges in his introductory comments to this volume, pictorial art objects can find significance beyond their existence as objects of visual attention and contemplation. They assume roles in, or inform culturally significant functions in, wider socio-cultural worlds. For this reason, Screech focuses on what he describes as the “extra-visual aspects of images.” His title assumes a dual engagement with appreciations of “obtaining” either as acquisition and ownership, or as “obtaining to,”—as he describes it, “conveying senses that are accepted and understood.” As such his investigation promises to shed light on Edo period arts beyond, or around, appreciations based solely on the attractions of the visual engagements offered by its pictorial images. That said, Screech does take, as the objects of his attention, the visually appealing pictorial media of Edo period paintings and prints. In examining the practices of image making, Screech acknowledges the complex forces of art world interests as they emerged during this period. In focusing on practices of display, consumption, ownership, and engagement he addresses the complex relational factors of audiences,

agendas, institutional arrangements and taste that emerged in Edo. Most importantly, he recognises how the city's diverse participants engaged with, and valued, the art works of their time, and situates his study of those engagements securely within the social and institutional arrangements of that time and place, recognising the diverse social, cultural, gender, class, ethical, administrative or governmental forces that impacted on and conditioned art engagements. These complexities encourage departures from the nationalist, essentialist or mono-dimensional constructs of some earlier Edo studies. The result is a generous agenda, one that recognises, and embraces, temporal, social and aesthetic diversity. Thus Screech's purvey embraces the engagements of the Kanô, Tosa (and in Edo Sumiyoshi), the more recent Rinpa school painters, and the Sinophile, intellectual *nanga* painters into his account of Edo arts, in balance with the plebeian *ukiyo-e* arts that dominate popular views of Japanese pictorial arts of this era. This in turn recognises audiences and patronage beyond the mercantile or *chônin* townsman, to embrace the refined tastes of Edo authorities and literati.

The first four chapters of this study address issues around the themes of the relations of artistic "production and display" in Edo. In the first instance, Screech establishes an Edo period view on the proper occupation of artists and contemporary expectations of pictures and pictorial production. He recognises how older East Asian principles for pictorial engagement informed the inventive, creative intersections of imaginative impetus, media fluency and representational facility of Edo. He juxtaposes these facilities against expectations of pictorial likeness, representation, or in Chinese precedence "Correspondence to the Object," as phenomena of "comparison" or "matching" that can explain the coincidence of mimetic, allusive, or playful *mitate* agendas alike. Screech acknowledges motivations of aesthetic pleasure and personal status, but, adopting the term "auspicious pictures" (*kisshô-ga*) to describe the underpinning pictorial ethos of the age, posits notions of enhancing a sense of "well-being" or felicitous experience as an umbrella motive for the pictorial engagements of Edo audiences. The potentials of images for enhancing the experiences of "just" or "auspicious" life gave painting, and its enduring themes of seasonal and natural world subjects, a degree of significance and power beyond the mundane or everyday. This exceptional cultural significance can explain also the adoptions of poetically evocative subjects and refined engagements in literary association—or "correspondences" (*yoriai*)—as sophisticated and playful engagements of taste.

Screech documents here both the pragmatics of Edo period relations of production and consumption of pictures, and the culturally significant power of pictures as objects of spiritual teaching, worship, ritual and belief. In explaining the former, he juxtaposes the practical aspects of media and format against the expectations, agendas and tastes of their different groups of consumers. In a similar way, his detailed explanations of the financial niceties of the Edo art market provide useful enlightenment on the ways the productions of different schools, and of different art forms, related both to the tastes, and to the purchasing power, of Edo's different class-specific audiences. Screech's descriptions of Edo art recognise the complexities of diverse operations and negotiations between art world participants of the time. He also recognises the themes of loss of art works and of art world knowledge, to the ravages of time and material failure, falls from grace, fire, theft, shady dealing or fakery, that have inevitably

compromised our appreciations of these arts and their worlds today. On the other hand, his acknowledgement of temples as sites of production, and of the sacral functions of images that generated and employed a diverse range of art objects recognises the pervasive breadth of Edo pictorial experiences still accessible today.

In the second section of this book Screech explores the broad diversity of Edo pictorial engagements, as demonstrated through the differing agendas, practices and sensibilities of Kanô, Tosa, Rinpa, *nanga* or *ukiyo-e* arts. His explanations for the activities of each school build through profiles of complementary interests in matters of taste and of pictorial function between audiences and artist-studios. As he explains, the substantial force of the Kanô School painters dominated the privileged cultural landscape through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries especially. This is hardly surprising. They served a sustained and profitable market for the decoration of castles and temples alike, and developed specialised secular painting modes consistent with the sympathies of governmental authorities of the Aduchi-Momoyama period and into the Edo era. Screech describes how the Kanô School studio-workshop networks generated the prolific production and maintained the art learning that informed and sustained the School's popularity through this period. He acknowledges the importance of maintaining their own house style to this end, melding the distinct but complementary forms of *gakuga* "Learned Pictures," *shitsuga* "Personality Pictures," and *honga* "Real Pictures" developed through *waga* (alternatively *Yamato-e*, "Japanese—and implicitly politically sympathetic—Pictures") and *kanga* (or *kara-e*) 'Chinese Picture' conventional modes. This broad theoretical compass explains how the Kanô painters established a positive cultural presence, generating vast quantities of art objects with politically charged subjects and themes and distinctive pictorial tropes that complemented the interests of both court and Tokugawa patrons.

While acknowledging the broader lexicon of pictorial subjects, Screech makes a specific case study here of portraiture. He negotiates the delicate relationships between sitter, artist and viewer, and the dimensions of gender, class and authority as they impacted on the formation of concepts of what a portrait image should be. In doing so he is able to explain how the development of a range of pictorial functions—veneration, memorial, status, familial, private and public agendas—developed through the collusive resolution of these diverse interests. Portrait painting was no easy business. Screech details the circumlocutions around names, likenesses and identities in Edo that reflected oblique references to figures of the Fujiwara court or the characters of *Genji monogatari*. As he details, portrait (and ostensive self-portrait) representations traversed complex territories, through prohibitions and concealments, face-saving falsehoods, vanities and agendas, history and temporal contrivance (often either side of death), or codified message. Once again, in addressing the primacy of expression of character or aesthetic ideals over fidelity to appearance, Screech reveals much of the conventional language of painters. However contrived, formal, and even impromptu, private portraits breathed a sense of *makoto*, sincerity; Screech juxtaposes this sobriety against the thinly veiled fictions of floating world brothel and theatre quarter portraits.

The threads of *waga* and *kanga* ebb and flow contrapuntally through the history of Japanese painting, including that of Edo. As Screech explains, the Kanô could be adept in

both domains. Others, by aesthetic inclination or market allegiance, sustained the Japanese tropes. Constructs of “Japanese picture” could be variously defined. Screech traces the course of the Tosa court painters whose “Japan” was construed through memories of the affective sensibilities and idealised world views of Heian court circles. If those themes seemed remote, it should be remembered that the Tosa painters were sustaining threads of poetic association from the past that in Edo were also to find purchase in the form of highly allusive *mitate* and *surimono ukiyo-e* popular prints. Elegant classical themes and motifs of social engagements, remote misty mountains, or the ubiquitous sweet flag and Eight-plank Bridge, were nurtured also in other of “Japanese painting” projects. Screech traces their intersections and departures through the Sumiyoshi painters to the decorative detail of Tawaraya Sôtatsu and the fluid calligraphies of Hon’ami Kôetsu, through the rhythmic designs of Ogata Kôrin and his Rinpa successors, to distinctly Edo realisations in paintings by Sakai Hôitsu and his contemporaries. He juxtaposes these complex trajectories against the amateur achievements of Chinese-style *nanga* painters once so derided by Ernest Fenollosa. Consistent with recent scholarship on artists like the husband and wife Ike Taiga and Ike Gyokuran, Screech adopts a positive view of *nanga* painting. He develops a nuanced explanation of the intimate interface between hand and brush and the apparent spontaneity of expression favoured in the delicate calligraphies of their monochrome compositions. He explains the synthesis between finely modulated ink density and elegant, intuitive, mark making that revealed their expressions of the honesty of heart-mind, of “the character within the brushwork.”

Screech chooses to discuss the phenomenon of *ukiyo-e*, “floating world pictures” within the aegis of genre representations of scenes from daily life—one of the early appreciations of the field. This may seem slightly anachronistic, but it does suit the larger argument here. It avoids a close focus on the more sensational worlds of Kabuki or the brothel quarters, and allows Screech to consider the broader scope of the popular art of Edo, and its preoccupations with the diverse engagements of life and leisure of the “common people” who were an important audience. His account captures the ambiguities between the balance of work, responsibility, leisure and play of real life, and the dimensions of fantasy, dream, artifice or imaginary construction of the “floating worlds.” This view also situates *ukiyo-e* firmly within the traditions of *waga* and *Yamato-e* on which it draws so deeply.

The account of artistic, diplomatic and commercial intercourse between Europe and Japan during the first two centuries of the Edo period neatly rounds out the comprehensive scope of the volume. Screech describes the impact of *nanban* ‘Southern Ban’ European presence and the roles of pictorial media as vehicles for provoking interest, amongst artists and public alike, in European knowledge and ideas, and in European artistic techniques, conventions and principles of opticality that continued to interest artists as late as Hokusai. This final section provides a useful case study for evaluating the central roles of art works and of processes of art production, exchange and display of art works and art ideas, in incidents of intercultural engagement during the first centuries of Tokugawa rule.

Three reservations arise. First, the text ends abruptly. Given its catholic scope, it might have been useful to include an afterword to draw its diverse threads together

around its twin thematic appreciations of “obtaining.” Second, the text teems with examples of intriguing connections. The links are engaging, but why might Edo viewers have made them? Screech introduces an apparently plausible connection in a Harunobu print of a woman passing a temple with the thirteenth century poet Fujiwara no Teika. Edo audiences might in fact have connected her with a *waka* by the poet Ki no Tsurayuki (872-945) included in Teika’s later anthology *Hyakunin isshu*. Either way, what is it, precisely, about the picture itself that might have made an Edo viewer read it in either of these ways? Knowing *why* they made the connections might have illustrated the second appreciation of “obtaining” introduced earlier. Third, there are some errors, of spelling—‘been send abroad’ (p. 333); “*canban*” (p. 346)—or account—on woodblock process (p. 328) for example—that closer proofing might have avoided.

The volume’s exemplary profusion is also one of its attractions. Its sprawling, inclusive compass and numerous illustrations, both pictorial (245 images, mainly in colour) and documentary, support its diverse pathways with ample evidence. Every aspect of this survey is supported by exemplary or explanatory material drawn from mythical, historical, literary, anecdotal, philosophical, poetic, liturgical, or folklore sources in, and extensively beyond, Edo itself. The textual examples and illustration annotations are supplemented by extensive end-matter inclusions of glossary, chronology, detailed endnotes, bibliography, acknowledgements and index. Within the broad scope of this volume, Screech reveals his own polymath curiosities and talent for linking and connection making, between images and communities, ideas and practices, contexts and tastes, domestic and transcultural interests. In doing so he seeks to develop holistic explanations of the circumstances, institutional relations and pictorial arts of a specific time and place. No single lens can do this, but Screech’s multi-dimensional approach certainly does introduce and embrace the diverse provocations and scope of themes and ideas that occupied artists, dealers, and audiences for images in Edo’s flourishing art world. One outcome is to situate the *ukiyo-e* “floating world pictures” so closely associated with Edo within a broader range of art projects. Perhaps more subtly, in developing his investigation around the ways images could “obtain,” as in “conveying senses that are accepted and understood,” he illuminates the complex, changing, and nuanced appreciations of just what pictorial images should be as they were negotiated and shared by artists and their publics throughout the years of Tokugawa rule.

Reviewed by DAVID BELL
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Deborah Shamon, *Passionate Friendship: The Aesthetics of Girls’ Culture in Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2012, ix + 179pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3542-2 (hbk.); ISBN 978-0-8248-3638-2 (pbk.)

This volume examines the development of narrative and pictorial conventions for representations of idealised constructions of ‘girls’ culture’ (*shōjo bunka*) and relationships between girls that today inform the pervasive contemporary Japanese phenomenon of *shōjo manga*. It situates the media forms and themes familiar to

today's audiences within the context of histories of girls' novels and magazines, through well over a century from the decades of social, technological and commercial change following the Meiji restoration. More specifically, it develops a carefully moderated examination of the phenomenon of close, generally chaste, friendship between girls within the broader contexts of the development of *shōjo bunka* and the development of a media culture targeting, and responsive to, the engagements of girls throughout this period. Deborah Shamoan arranges her chapters in an historical sequence, tracing a thematic development through the Meiji period emergence of the *shōjo*, the development of *shōjo bunka* between 1910 and 1937, the emergence of the pre-war girls' magazine, into the proliferation of *shōjo manga* during the post-war decades and the major innovations in the form from the 1970s. This approach, and the way she fashions the concluding construction of each chapter to establish a smooth segue into the next, makes for a nicely scaffolded structure and the smooth passage of her discussions.

Shamoan draws on diverse themes to inform comprehensive explanations of *shōjo* phenomena. In her opening chapter for example she finds the emergence of the *shōjo* in changes in practice and policy in education during the Meiji period that underpinned constructs of 'the girl', 'schoolgirl' or teenage girl as a new and distinct social entity, and melds these together with literary innovations and the appearance of *shōjo* in fictional narratives, and as the objects of male attentions, in Meiji period novels. A central feature in these constructs was their location against new and idealised notions of 'spiritual' love. New understandings of *ren'ai*, chaste, romantic, platonic love, social engagement and intellectual companionship underpinned the patterns of fashion, deportment, manners and marriage in modern Japan promoted in women's magazines from the Meiji, through Taishō and early Shōwa periods, to the Second World War. Shamoan examines the emergence of these *ren'ai* engagements through a close examination of representations of girls, and conflicting ideals on intimate relations, through idealised constructions of the tentional relationships between girls and men and in Meiji period novels.

During the first decades of the twentieth century this construct of *ren'ai* became the locus of ideals of close spiritual love between girls, the 'passionate friendship' of this volume's title. Shamoan locates the early development of intimate homo-social relations in single-sex girls' secondary school communities and of its exemplary medium in the girls' magazine. This medium adopted carefully contrived names like *Shōjo no tomo*, 'The Girls' Friend,' and content like the serialised pictorial novel *Otome no minato*, 'The Girls' Harbour' (the latter written, interestingly, by the novelist Kawabata Yasunari), and guiding themes of innocent, 'spiritual' love or companionship that complemented the social and behavioural ideals promoted in girls' secondary schools. The magazines established the precedent for a media format targeted specifically at teenage girls, and for what later became the conventional format inviting active participation and contributions of letters, photographs, art works, poems or essays from its urban, middle and upper class girls' readership. Shamoan describes the development of complementary iconographies, themes and languages that informed the engagements of S (sister) relationships as the medium evolved.

Shamoon's analysis of modes of pictorial representation and narrative discourse in serialised girls' novels (*shōjo shōsetsu*) reveals the crystallisation of a distinctive and recognisable *shōjo* aesthetic that established the idealised typographies of delicately-figured girls that populate popular media today. She describes how these representations evolved from the wistful sentimentality of *jojōga* lyrical pictures, through the development of slim, androgynous figure types, with small mouths and exaggerated eyes, and increasingly cosmopolitan identities and dress that underpinned the emergence of an aesthetic of sameness of appearance and demeanour. These decorative pictorial habits find their counterpart here in Shamoon's explanatory description of the development of a complementary narrative aesthetic, characterised particularly through its distinctive inflexions of lyrical and emotional voice, its close identification with distinctively poetic, 'flowery' or emotional schoolgirl styles of speech in the decorative prose constructions of the serialised novel. These aesthetic conventions established during the pre-war years established a foundation for the conventional modes sustained in *manga* today.

While acknowledging the ways they draw on conventional pictorial, narrative and interactive precedent in the pre-war girls' magazine, Shamoon situates the development of *manga* and *shōjo manga* forms securely in the post-war decades. This avoids the problematic causal associations with Tokugawa print media of some earlier accounts, allowing her to acknowledge the achievements of the key artists she discusses here – Tezuka Osamu and Takahashi Makoto – as discrete and innovative in their own right, rather than as derivations of *ukiyo-e*. Her discussions on both figures are measured, avoiding in particular the tendency to lionisation of Tezuka as the definitive *manga* innovator, and recognising Takahashi's pivotal role in the crystallisation of a *shōjo manga* aesthetic. This also recognises the development of post-war shifts in audiences now embracing a discretely targeted younger pre-teen girl readership, and the generation of more diverse media formats including the powerful culturally conditioning force of cinematic media. She also explains the symbiotic relationship between readers and artists that created a climate of common interest and sensibility and the development of the state of flux through which a recurrent stream of new, and increasingly female, artists was able to emerge from the audiences of *manga* media.

Shamoon's closing sections recognise significant shifts in the pictorial and narrative character of *shōjo manga* following this increased creative participation of women from the 1970s, and their development of more complex psychological narratives that attracted the imaginative engagement of girl readers. She also reaffirms the ways the sustained and pervasive presence of girls' magazines and *manga* through to the present day have maintained a deeply significant force for conditioning the developing patterns of social engagement, market consumption, self-awareness, expectations, image, and identity in young girls, teenage girls and young adults in Japan for over a century. She recognises significant shifts in content—the development of fantasy plots with a distinctly European historical flavour in the wildly popular narrative of *The Rose of Versailles* for example, and the inclusion of social and gender critique and themes of desire and more explicitly sexual, including ambiguous and heterosexual, relationships. She also acknowledges the ways *shōjo manga* have maintained the diverse content and the distinctive aesthetic character of pictorial and narrative engagements established

during the pre-war decades however, and the ways some themes, especially homo-social and more recently homoerotic, motifs and narratives are sustained today.

Shamoon adopts both the literary narratives and the pictorial matter of girls' magazines and *manga* as her primary source material, subjecting them to close analytical and critical scrutiny. The judicious selection of pictures includes five colour plates that illustrate a wide stylistic range from subtle tonal modelling to *ukiyo-e* style decoration. The 24 monochrome illustrations more than adequately represent both the clarity and the linear fluidities of the original printed media of girls' magazines and *manga*, and the sense of *asobi*, or play in the constructions of serial narratives, character types and relationships, that engaged, entertained and provoked the imaginative constructions of their readers. The selections included here are telling. They illustrate the development of hybrid conventions of Western and Japanese device that meld the shallow picture space, colour and pattern of *Yamato-e* painting with the realistic tropes of *yōga* Western-style painting, juxtaposing Japanese and Western fashions in clothing and demeanour in idealised images of the new and modern young woman. Thus the first colour plate (and cover illustration) by Takabatake Kashō exemplifies the legacy of the Meiji and Taishō period adoptions of Western styles of couture and deportment, and a provocative sensuality, together with adoptions of Western means, evident in the soft modulation of watercolour pigments and tonal gradations of European realistic traditions. These are developed through a curious synthesis with Japanese-style shallow space composition, *ukiyo-e* patterned surfaces, Meiji period *shin-hanga* eyes and mouths and poses, together with the poignant image of the chill autumn wind, a melancholic Japanese motif suggesting the inevitable passing of time, youth, beauty and love. Other images juxtapose Japanese *kimono* with European flapper style and pleats, or suggestively sensual figure poses with motifs of coy innocence or delicacy. Takahashi Makoto's later illustration of a starry eyed girl coyly holding a heart shaped bouquet in tiny delicate hands capitalises on the ambiguously suggestive figures of Harunobu and decorative tropes of Momoyama or Edo origin, melding them into the colourful contemporary media styles of *kawaii* fashion, *manga* and *anime*. In similar ways the monochrome illustrations reflect the arts of periods of flux or change, tensions between representational fidelity and cartoon contrivance, modernity and convention, gender identity and androgynous ambiguity, and clichéd associations of femininity and bouquets of flowers, the ambiguous kiss, passion and darkness, delicacy and sensuality, and the adoptions of curiously anachronistic European motifs of princes and princesses, palaces and fancy dress.

Situating the development of girls' magazines and *shōjo manga* within diverse settings of historical, ethical, class, educational, aesthetic, narrative, and gender contexts informs a broadly structured view, avoiding the essentialist perspectives or stereotypical categorisations of some earlier commentaries, and focusing instead on the ways these diverse factors have conditioned the more idealised conceptions of *ren'ai* or S relationships and the social construction of girls' culture. Shamoon's carefully framed distinctions between chaste S relationships and lesbian, or between close friendship and more idealised notions of love or 'spiritual,' passionate friendship, are supported by finely modulated analytical readings of exemplary media, including contemporary

novels, girls' magazines, serialised narratives and *manga*. Her close focus on the aesthetic and narrative character of these phenomena provides a balanced complement to Jennifer Prough's recent ethnographic study of the history, institutional relations of production and consumption, and affective significance of *shōjo manga* (Honolulu, 2011). As Shamoan acknowledges here, these media still constitute a surprisingly significant proportion of the popular market in Japan today, and continue to maintain the themes she examines. Their ubiquitous role as media of fantasy, sexual and identity discovery and self-expression for girls and teenagers is still maintained, and this alone makes discourses like the one she develops here important for understanding the cultural phenomenon of *shōjo bunka* and media of 'social agency' like *shōjo manga*, and for appreciating their place within the wider discourses of Japanese culture today.

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