

The last three chapters of *Chinese Sculpture* deal with China's most recent statuary. Paludan subtitles the period 'mutation' a strong term in this reviewer's opinion. Her argument is that beginning in the Yuan dynasty, the period of Mongolian rule, the former Chinese conventions of letting the material and subject speak for the sculpture and the sculpture's inner significance were supplanted by the importance of technical virtue (p. 402). Readers may notice more heavily decorated sculpture than those that illustrated earlier chapters (Figs. 276, 320, 324, and 328) and some examples of statues that are particularly smooth and rigid (Figs. 287, 322, 323, and 329), but that mutation is at work is harder to reconcile.

Otherwise, the strength of astute observation and cogent presentation of the development of Chinese sculpture over time continue through the last page of the book. The robust, physically energetic, occasionally even sensuous figures that Paludan describes are indeed found in the Yuan caves Feilafeng in Hangzhou. Statues along Ming imperial spirit roads can be seen as "drawing on heavenly forces" (p. 432), but "more abstract" than those of Tang and Song (pp. 434–435). The reader is directed to see "contrasting materials" as characteristic of Ming–Qing vernacular sculpture and "dramatic display" as a sign of Sino-Tibetan sculpture of the Qing.

The last chapter offers the reader an exemplary choice of twenty images to represent Chinese sculpture since the middle of the twentieth century. As in the five hundred pages that precede it, the author presents the connection between politics and sculpture, and she equally addresses the sculptors' relation with materials and the ties between these statues and those of China's past.

Finally, one is inclined to compare Ann Paludan's book with Angela Howard *et al.*'s, *Chinese Sculpture*, that also was published in 2006. Both include long, informative, descriptive sections, both are beautifully illustrated, and both are intended as serious introductions to the subject. Amazingly, although some of the same illustrations and many from the same sites are found in both books, there is little overlap; reading both brings long overdue attention to a core subject of Chinese art that heretofore has rarely been studied alone. Howard's book has more detailed information, but Paludan's book tells us how to look at and engage with the sculpture.

NANCY SHATZMAN STEINHARDT  
University of Pennsylvania

CHANGING CLOTHES IN CHINA: FASHION, HISTORY, NATION. By ANTONIA FINNANE. pp. xvii, 359. London, Hurst & Company, 2007.  
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Over the last two decades our comprehension of clothing as significant indicators of social and economic change has deepened significantly. Scholars have recorded and analysed clothing mores across a variety of periods and places and, as regards China, the western public's perception of these matters has been heightened by the breathtaking cinematographer's art in such films as Wong Kar-wai's *In The Mood For Love* (2000) and Ang Lee's *Lust, Caution* (2007). This latter film is based on an unsettling short story by Eileen Chang, also known by her Chinese name, Zhang Ailing (1920–1995), a writer well-known to the Chinese Diaspora for her evocation of a feminine insular world. In 1943 she first penned in English, then subsequently revised in Chinese, what was to become a seminal article on fashion. This captured the subject's contradictions and dilemmas and it is these aspects of Chinese dress that Antonia Finnane addresses in her book *Changing Clothes in China: Fashion, History, Nation*. Indeed, her title echoes that of Eileen Chang's revised Chinese article which was called *Gengyi ji* ['A Chronicle of Changing Clothes'].

The opening sentences of Chang's article paint a picture of the traditional annual airing of clothes. She imagines herself walking through a tunnel of silk garments strung up on bamboo poles and she muses that women of the imperial age were not worried by the vagaries of fashion. In this, she was falling in with the idea of China as a static society. Antonia Finnane, challenging this construction of history and refuting the notion that there was no such thing as Chinese fashion, offers up plenty of evidence for nuanced changes of taste even for the early modern period. She cites the phrase *xinqi*, here translated as 'new and strange' but perhaps more pertinently rendered as 'new and original', as a frequent qualifier of clothes in late Ming texts. A type of hat, the Chunyang hat, is given as one instance of such novelty. It is hard to imagine what this hat, named after a Daoist immortal, might have looked like. Its style apparently echoed those of the Han and Tang periods while yet being up-to-the-minute. Young men of seventeenth-century China took it up, presumably until something newer and stranger came along. The desire for variation in dress styles is also chronicled for another era perceived as offering little opportunity for sartorial fluctuations. The dress of the Mao years from 1949 was often unimaginatively utilitarian but Antonia Finnane has consulted a range of sources, both textual and visual, that undermines the supposed uniformity of the period. For the 1950s she recounts the attempts by the artist and designer, Yu Feng (b.1916), to beautify women's clothes while ensuring they remained appropriate for a socialist society. Her design solutions, many making reference to folk and minority culture, sought to emphasise the Chinese aspects of dress though the high collar and the one-piece *qipao* (or *cheongsam*) dress were not styles that lent themselves to the frugal and practical lives that Chinese women were exhorted to lead. Politics, however, in the form of the ill-starred Great Leap Forward (1958–1961), overtook attempts at dress reform. Yu Feng's sensitive designs do not seem to have been taken up. The vestiges of her ideas lingered on in the flower sprays embroidered on the shoulders of silk blouses and pyjamas though these items were mainly produced for export and were not generally available within mainland China. Although dress as a subject in its own right was subsumed in the Maoist doctrine of 'planned behaviour' during the Cultural Revolution period, Antonia Finnane shows us how clothes and the desire for them persisted at this turbulent time now enshrined by the communist state as the ten years between 1966 and 1976. Increasing evidence in the form of a plethora of memoirs, some published with a western audience in mind, give us a glimpse of this highly charged world. Young people especially yearned to wear army chic and to signal to their peers, by the detailing of their garments, that they belonged to a particular gang. Army surplus, which was supposed to go for car-cleaning rags, was siphoned off to satisfy the uniform craze.

The best part of this book is that devoted to the Republican period (1911–1949) and the years just prior to it (Chapters 4–7). Not only in China but also world-wide, dress at this time was caught up in debates about how to be modern. Issues of gender, economics and imperialism were all reflected in clothing choices. It was the beginning of a process that, by the end of the twentieth century, was to see people in most parts of the world dressed in the same type of clothes. In China, were long gowns for men effeminate or markers of Chinese identity? Would western suits and uniforms appear more progressive? Was the woman's *qipao* a solution to national attire or a controversial garment that overexposed female bodies? How did bobbed hair, brassieres and bound feet coexist? Antonia Finnane expertly relates the multiple conflicting views surrounding these questions and she has hunted down many sources unfamiliar to all but the specialist historian. These help us make sense of the ramifications and one example, particularly well chosen, reminds us of the necessity not to seize upon the first engaging snippet when writing the history of dress. Oei Hui-lan (1899–1992), the daughter of a hugely rich sugar magnate and wife of the Chinese diplomat, Wellington Koo, published two autobiographies. In the first, from 1943, she clearly revelled in the fashion scene of Shanghai in the 1920s and 30s while in the later one, published in 1975, she rather denigrated it.

The book is full of illustrations. There is hardly a page without at least one picture to illuminate the text and each image is aptly and informatively captioned. The words themselves will repay several

readings and it is perhaps a work to return to rather than read at a sitting. *Changing Clothes in China* is about the discourse surrounding clothes rather than the clothes themselves. The author quite correctly dismisses the very many near-identical dragon robes, outnumbering other styles of Chinese dress in museum collections, as having misled us about the existence of fashion in China. Had she been able to engage more fully with the rather more diverse material evidence which does survive, it would have arguably given even more weight to this rigorously argued and impeccably resourced publication.

VERITY WILSON  
Co-Editor of 'Costume'

THE SUBTLE REVOLUTION: POETS OF THE "OLD SCHOOLS" DURING LATE QING AND EARLY REPUBLICAN CHINA. By JON EUGENE VON KOWALLIS. pp. viii, 299. Berkeley, University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, 2006.

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Since the mid-twentieth century, one of the most complex and hotly debated issues in the field of modern Chinese literature has been the collaborative and confrontational relationship between tradition and literary modernity, and between Chinese and 'western' traditions. Influenced by recent scholarship on the 'translated modernity' of modern Chinese culture, many scholars in the field, as Jon Kowallis rightly observes in *The Subtle Revolution*, believe that "only the infusion of new images from abroad [and] ideas of the West . . . served to propel Chinese poetry in the direction of the 'modern'" (p. vii). Interestingly, some Chinese poets themselves readily endorsed this view because their ideological opposition to traditional modes of expression. By emphasising this rupture they were able to lay claim to 'modern' features of new poetry (*xin shi*). Influential late-Qing literary figures such as Liang Qichao (1873–1929) spoke of a revolution in the world of poetics (*shi jie geming*); since 1897, Huang Zunxian (1848–1905) used new-style poems (*xin pai shi*) to describe his own works, a term with a unique fixation upon the newness of the vernacular movement (*baihua yundong*) and new poetry. These tendencies, on the parts of critics and poets, have created a number of blind spots that have led to a misunderstanding of the nature of classical and new forms of poetry. Kowallis challenges these deterministic views and argues, with refreshing perspectives on several poets of this transitional period, that "poetry in the classical language . . . did serve its writers and their intended readership as a vehicle to articulate a complex and sophisticated understanding of, as well as reaction to, the entry of modernity" (p. vii), in a "culturally authentic way in their own, not a translated, language" (p. 245).

Well known for his research on Lu Xun and modern Chinese literature, Kowallis has carved out in this heavily annotated book a new and exciting territory often ignored by students of modern China. The Introduction details the teleological view of previous scholarship (received image of late Qing China as "an effete, corrupt society"), disagrees gracefully, and uses the opportunity to make interesting points (pp. 8–9) rather than falling back into the remedial mode (filling in a gap). Poets such as Wang Kaiyun (1833–1916), Deng Fulun (1828–1893) (Chapter 1), Fan Zengxiang (1846–1931), Yi Shunding (1858–1920) (Chapter 2), Chen Sanli (1852–1937), Zheng Xiaoxu (1860–1938) (Chapter 3), and scholars such as Zhang Zhidong (1837–1909), Chen Yan (1856–1937), Jin Tianyu (1873–1947), Di Baoxian (1873–), Wang Yitang (1878–1946), and Qian Zhonglian (1908–2003) are selected for comparative analysis because, according to Kowallis, they were recognised by most non-partisan literary historians, critics, and commentators of their own day as the central literary figures but were mostly written out of the literary history for political reasons.

Chapter 1 examines Wang Kaiyun, Deng Fulun, and the "Neo-Ancient" school (*niguo pai*), offering a pleasant read that weaves a critical biography of Deng with a close reading of Deng's "Sitting in the