

particular, but also private merchants) and China that was established at the beginning of the eighteenth century and both remained unbroken and intensified over the course of the century.

There are also a number of surprises in the length and organization of *Merchants of Canton and Macao*. It is 672 pages in total, including preface and acknowledgments (33), unnumbered pages of plates (96), appendices (206), and critical apparatus (notes, bibliography, and index; 112). I was pleasantly surprised, in particular, by the number and quality of the plates, the extensive detail in the appendices, and a very nearly complete bibliography. Both the author and the publisher are to be commended for preparing and permitting the reproduction of such a quantity of pages. It is unlikely that most readers could have imagined that the document trail for this type of study was so rich and detailed!

There are, however, only 225 pages of text and analysis, which seems barely adequate for the quantity and detail of material that the author introduces. It is presented in a straightforward manner and organized into introduction, thirteen chapters, and conclusion. The introduction and first four chapters introduce and frame the study. The subsequent nine chapters provide detailed individual case studies for a number of merchants and their families that span the period from 1716 to 1804; these chapters succeed in elucidating 'the life behind the business of the merchants' (p. 185).

While a major accomplishment, Van Dyke's study has some minor weaknesses. The most glaring is the author's rare occasional failure to provide sufficient data to document adequately or develop a statement or position. China's foreign maritime trade over the eighteenth century, for example, is repeatedly stated and depicted as growing and expanding, seemingly perpetually, unhindered and without demonstrating recessionary behaviour. I am inclined to agree with his characterization of the expansion of the Middle Kingdom's internal and external economies during the first sixty-odd years of a period that has been characterized as the Chinese century (1740–1840). However, the reader probably needed more evidence of the growth of China's maritime trade and its crucial participation in the emerging global economy to be convinced. An analysis and comparison of some of Van Dyke's China trade with De Vries's recent essays (2003 and 2010) concerning European Cape-route trade (1497–1795), which are not in his bibliography, would have been useful.

Another weakness is that, while they are mentioned in notes, there is no glossary summarizing the multitude of weights, measures, monies, and exchange rates that were employed. Its absence complicates the interested reader's comprehension of these terms and details.

Despite my minor quibbles, Paul A. Van Dyke has uniquely brought to life the strategies, dynamics, and mechanics of merchant practices and behaviour in late imperial China in a truly inspiring, intelligible, and profitable way. *Merchants of Canton and Macao* makes a major contribution to the historiography and our comprehension of early modern China's entrepreneurs and the role that maritime activities played in China's economic development.

Religion and the making of modern East Asia

By Thomas David DuBois. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xii+259. 27 b/w illustrations, 7 maps, 5 tables. Hardback £55.00, ISBN 978-1-107-00809-0; paperback £17.99, ISBN 978-1-107-40040-5.

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This is a very enjoyable book telling the parallel stories of religion in the political histories of China and Japan from the fourteenth century to the present. DuBois is a very gifted writer, with a talent for telling the twists and turns of history with wry humour. Hopefully the book will be successful in reaching audiences among those who have no professional stake in better understanding China and Japan, but who would nonetheless much benefit from such understanding. The format is light, with 230 pages of text, few footnotes, and a good number of very useful illustrations; yet the author takes care patiently and pedagogically to remind the reader what such terms as Buddhism or Marxism mean. This is a book to recommend warmly to anyone interested in history in general.

DuBois, who is primarily a historian of twentieth-century China but also knows Japan first-hand, has chosen not to write a regional history (which would have included Korea, and other places) but a comparative history showing the parallels and differences between the two countries. This is a

surprisingly new approach. While there is a whole body of literature on the influences and relations between the two countries, there is relatively little research that compares the two.¹ Here, each chapter deals with a particular moment of historical change, telling the story from the Chinese and then the Japanese side. DuBois uses this ploy to highlight different choices made in China and Japan to confront similar predicaments, such as the arrival of Christianity, the response to Western imperialism, and the diffusion of international norms of religious pluralism and freedom. While he does not elaborate on how or why the two societies or regimes made different choices, the narrative shows clearly different logics at work. For instance, the reaction to the first wave of Christian missionizing and conversions was first and foremost understood in terms of political (and feudal) loyalty in Japan, while in China issues of ritual orthopraxy were prominent, hence the Rites controversy in China that had no real equivalent in Japan. Commendably, no attempt is made to generalize on what the two cultures do or do not have in common: the comparison speaks for itself.

The nine core chapters (not counting the introduction and conclusion) cover key historical moments. The first is the creation of the early modern states in China (Chapter 2, with the first Ming emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang (r. 1368–98)) and Japan (Chapter 3, with the establishment of the shogunate regime in the late sixteenth century), two parallel but not contemporary moments of increased state integration of religious institutions. Chapter 4 considers the arrival of Christianity in both countries (Japan first and then China), notably with Jesuit missionaries, and the eventual backlash that halted its expansion until the late nineteenth century.

Chapter 5 tackles the fate of Buddhism, whose institutions acted as regulated providers of ritual services (especially in Japan) but whose teachings also morphed into less institutionalized forms during the whole period running from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century. In Chapter 6, the focus is on the growth and rapid mutations of millenarian

teachings in China, which had no direct equivalent in Japan. Chapter 7 returns to a study of both countries in assessing the violent religious reactions to modernity, imperialist aggression, and forced sociopolitical changes during the late nineteenth century, including religious revolts (such as the Boxers in China) and invented Shintō traditionalism in Meiji Japan.

Religious nationalism during the first half of the twentieth century is covered in Chapter 8, including the ‘Confucian fascism’ of the KMT (China’s Nationalist Party) and religious-supported militarism in Japan. Finally, Chapter 9 considers the new place for religions in post-war societies, in both Marxist China and secular, pluralist Japan.

The approach is resolutely narrative rather than theoretical. Yet the very choice of focus and narrative lines suggests how the author identifies key dimensions in the histories of the two countries. One such dimension is that the way rulers used religious ideas (collective salvation, the sacral dimension of the nation) to shape the sociopolitical order had a large impact but also unpredictable consequences.

Like any such broad and ambitious synthesis, this book has its strengths and weaknesses. As can be expected from a historian of the twentieth century, I find the latter parts of the book more insightful and innovative than the earlier chapters covering whole swathes of early modern history (with background information going back to much earlier times). Maybe more importantly, DuBois has made a fundamental choice: to assess the impact of religious ideas on politics and *histoire événementielle*, rather than look at the slowly evolving place of religion in Chinese and Japanese societies.² There is no reason to dispute such a choice; choosing otherwise would have resulted in an entirely different book (that hopefully DuBois or someone else will write). My instincts push me to regret that, as a result, religious practices and groups that do not feature much in the grand narrative of history (such as local cults and Daoism, which is not even listed in the index) get rather short shrift. On the other hand, pages on the power of religious ideas, such as millenarian beliefs, are a model of sharp historical writing and should become textbook material way beyond classes on East Asian religion.

1 This reviewer worked with a Japanese-studies colleague to write an essay comparing the history of religious destruction in the two countries: see Vincent Goossaert and Nathalie Kouamé, ‘Un vandalisme d’état en Extrême-Orient? Les destructions de lieux de culte dans l’histoire de la Chine et du Japon’, *Numeri*, 53, 2, 2006, pp. 177–220.

2 For a more social historical approach to the Chinese case, see Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The religious question in modern China*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011.