

## Book Reviews

*China and the World Trade Organization: A Legal Perspective.* By KONG QINGJIANG. [Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2002. xiv + 350 pp. ISBN 981-238-039-6.]

China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) has generated an avalanche of books and articles offering a variety of academic, policy and legal perspectives. Kong Qingjiang's contribution is primarily an explanation of the perspectives of the Chinese government on WTO accession, and focuses on three broad themes: the background to China's WTO accession, dispute resolution, and trade compliance.

The background to China's WTO accession is well known to most observers, but Kong helps articulate and explain the Chinese government's perspective on the issues. In discussing dispute resolution, Kong examines the role of China's judiciary, the availability of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism in the WTO to resolve disputes between China and Taiwan, and broader issues of Chinese compliance with WTO dispute settlement procedures. Naturally, these give rise to rather fundamental questions about legal reform in China, cross-strait relations, and China's WTO compliance generally. The availability of judicial dispute resolution in China, primarily under the Administrative Litigation Law (referred to in this book as the "Administrative Procedure Law") will be an important dimension of China's compliance with GATT/WTO rule of law requirements. To this end, Kong provides a descriptive overview of the Chinese system of judicial review, and points to Chinese commitments to resolving problems of judicial corruption and inefficiency.

On cross-strait relations, Kong notes the potential role of WTO dispute settlement processes in resolving disputes between Taiwan and mainland China, although the record is still insufficient to provide substantial data and analysis. This raises broader questions on China's compliance with WTO dispute settlement processes generally. Kong suggests that China's future practices may be understood in light of trade disputes that emerged prior to China's WTO accession, between China and the United States, the European Union, South Korea and Japan. These case studies provide useful insights, although of course they are largely supplanted by the conditions of China's Accession Protocol.

Kong uses a familiar approach to legal argument, identifying issues, articulating specific rules or practices, analysing the interplay between issues and rules, and offering conclusions about the implications for compliance. On such issues as non-discrimination, fiscal policy, tariff and non-tariff measures, and other elements of the WTO regulatory regime, for example, Kong states the regulatory norm embodied in the WTO and China's Accession Protocol, explains China's legal and practice perspectives and goals, explains the extent to which they satisfy WTO rules and norms, and offers conclusions about the prospects for long term performance.

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The discussion of trade compliance addresses in particular issues of government procurement, intellectual property, and telecommunications and Internet regulation. Following a survey of China's foreign investment regime prior to WTO accession, Kong suggests that policies of liberalization toward foreign investment signal a positive approach towards adapting to WTO compliance requirements. Similarly, government procurement practices in China are described in light of existing law and regulation with the suggestion that this will strengthen the prospects for compliance with WTO requirements. In areas of intellectual property, a similar approach is taken. Two of the most interesting chapters involve discussion of regulatory regimes for telecommunications and Internet as these existed prior to WTO accession. In each of these chapters, Kong provides a streamlined review of the legal and regulatory frameworks and suggests that these support prospects for WTO compliance.

Although this volume is subtitled "a legal perspective," in essence it is an effort to explain the perspectives of the Chinese government on the process of WTO accession and the prospects for WTO compliance. Although specific practical and operational examples about compliance are seldom offered, the treatment of China's statutory and regulatory conditions prior to WTO may be helpful as an indicator of future performance. While interpretations vary about the extent to which textual pronouncements Chinese authorities satisfy the expectations of WTO rules and norms, this book provides a service in summarizing Chinese government perspectives. Certainly the book would be greatly strengthened by greater use of specific case reporting, more extensive reference to the rich international literature on China's WTO accession and compliance issues, and a somewhat more distanced perspective on official Chinese government views on the matter, students and scholars interested in understanding the Chinese government's perspective on WTO accession and performance will find this a readily accessible handbook. As we learn more about the practical implications of China's performance of WTO obligations, Kong's volume may become a useful benchmark against which to measure the changing contours of China's WTO policy.

PITMAN B. POTTER

*The People's Liberation Army as Organization, Reference Volume v1.0 (conference proceedings)*. Edited by JAMES C. MULVENON and ANDREW N. D. YANG. [Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002. xx + 635 pp. \$45.00. ISBN 0-8330-3303-4.]

This is an essential reference volume for scholars, students and public officials interested in the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). It is the first highly detailed examination of the Chinese military's organizational structure and takes full advantage of the vast amount of Chinese

language material that has recently become available on the subject. The editors have brought together some of America's top experts on the PLA with the intention of producing a reference work that the rest of the field will see as "a collective, public good." The volume one in the title refers to the fact that this is the first in a planned multi-volume series devoted to Chinese military organizational issues. The current volume is divided into 12 chapters providing a comprehensive analysis of the PLA's institutional structure including the PLA's administrative and operational structure (Ken Allen); two chapters on the Central Military Commission (Nan Li, David Shambaugh); the General Staff Department (David Finkelstein); the General Political Department (Larry Wortzel); the General Logistics Department (Colonel Susan Puska); the General Armaments Department (Harlan Jencks); the PLA ground forces (Dennis Blasko); PLA air force (Ken Allen); PLA navy (Bernard Cole); nuclear forces (James Mulvenon, Bates Gill, Mark Stokes); and the People's Armed Police (Murray Scot Tanner). Together, these chapters provide extensive information on the organizational history, current structure, and ongoing organizational issues within the various branches of the Chinese military. There are over one hundred organizational charts and tables.

Ten or 12 years ago, most of what was known about the PLA's structure and organization could be summarized in a single short chapter and very little was known beyond the basic structure as represented by a few organizational charts. That has now changed. In recent years there has been a flood of information about the PLA in Chinese open sources (publicly available books, journals, newspapers). The contributors have done an impressive job of sifting through this mass of information and have supplemented it with extensive data from interviews. As the book is meant to be a reference volume, the focus is on rich, descriptive detail. That does not mean, however, that this work is lacking in analysis. All the selections provide useful insights into recent reforms and re-organization within the PLA, what was attempted and why, what has been accomplished and what we still don't know. The essays on the Central Military Commission raise important issues concerning organizational change and the relationship between the military, state and Party. The essays on the General Staff Department, logistics and combat arms provide important analyses on the relationship between organization and mission, modernization, and professionalization of the PLA. The authors of the item on nuclear forces use force structure to inform their analysis of Chinese nuclear doctrine. Discussions on the People's Armed Police and political commissars link the PLA to broader issues of political and social change in China.

There is simply no other source that provides anything close to the amount of data in this book and it will benefit others doing research in civil-military and other defence-related issues. There are still, of course, many gaps in our knowledge of the Chinese military's structure and organization, and restructuring and reform will continue as the PLA modernizes. One can only hope that future volumes in this series will be up to the same high standard as this one.

THOMAS BICKFORD

*Defending Taiwan: The Future Vision of Taiwan's Defence Policy and Military Strategy.* Edited by MARTIN EDMONDS and MICHAEL M. TSAI. [London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. xx + 284 pp. ISBN 0-700-1739-0.]

Until recently, the military has dominated the national defence policy-making and military strategy process in Taiwan. Public debate did not occur because defence issues were classified or viewed as too politically sensitive. Therefore, non-government civilian institutions had little political or financial incentive to become involved. However, as Taiwan has moved towards a more open society, the Legislative Yuan, media, universities and non-profit research organizations have become more active in questioning the tenets of Taiwan's defence policy. Their impact has been limited, though, because of the lack of civilian expertise in defence matters. Furthermore, Western authors have not written extensively on Taiwan's internal defence policies because most information published in Taiwan is written in Chinese only.

In January 2001, *Taiwan Defense Affairs* journal organized an international conference in Taipei on the "Future Vision of Taiwan's Defence Policy and Military Strategy," and the ten papers presented by authors from Taiwan, the United States and the United Kingdom were edited and compiled into this volume. The book provides a basic understanding of Taiwan's past and present defence policy and military strategy. One of the most informative articles is the Introduction written by the conference organizer and the book's co-editor, Michael M. Tsai. He addresses Taiwan's security environment, military strategy evolution, military modernization and key ethnic issues that affect civil-military relations.

*Defending Taiwan* has five underlying themes. The first covers the changes in Taiwan's defence policy and military strategy under presidents Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Ching-kuo, Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian. One of the more interesting topics examines the changing role of Kinmen and Matsu, including the disagreement over their defence between the United States and the Republic of China government during the 1950s.

The authors from Taiwan provide a second underlying theme. They emphasize that US-China relations have negatively impacted on Taiwan since 1972, when the People's Republic of China replaced the Republic of China in the United Nations. They further state that the island has had to provide its own defence since Washington changed its diplomatic recognition to Beijing in 1979. In this context, these authors barely mention the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act and fail to acknowledge its significance for the continuing US support for Taiwan's defence since then.

The third theme covers changes in modern military doctrine for ground, naval and air forces, and what Taiwan must do to reform its military to become a modern force. One excellent chapter specifically

addresses reforming Taiwan's professional military education system to provide a basis for understanding modern warfare.

A fourth theme examines the changing military balance across the Taiwan Strait. As with the majority of literature on this subject, *Defending Taiwan* provides lists of weapon systems and the number of troops in each of Taiwan's and China's three services. What is missing, however, is any mention of how either side is training at the operational and tactical levels of war.

The fifth and final theme involves the underlying dilemma most authors have when writing about Taiwan's political and defence situation today. Specifically, an author's use of the terms Republic of China (ROC), Taiwan, Chinese and Taiwanese has varying political and emotional connotations, depending on who the readers are. In this context, *Defending Taiwan* does not make it clear whether the military is currently defending a de facto independent Taiwan or the Republic of China. Nor does the book make a distinction between ethnic Taiwanese and those who still consider themselves mainlanders. These two issues are significant when trying to define the military in Taiwan today and in the future.

The 2001 conference was intended to lay the foundation for further in-depth public discussions on Taiwan's defence issues. Therefore, *Taiwan Defense Affairs* hosted a follow-on conference in 2002 on seapower and one in 2003 on airpower. The edited books should be available at the end of 2003 and will expand on the important issues raised in *Defending Taiwan*.

KENNETH W. ALLEN

*The Crab and Frog Motion Paradigm Shift: Decoding and Deciphering Taipei and Beijing's Dialectical Politics.* By PETER KIEN-HONG YU. [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002. 358 pp. \$54.00. ISBN 0-7618-2150-3.]

The cultural foundations of Chinese policy-making are a troublesome set of contradictions that many Sinologists regularly refer to but rarely grasp. This shaky bedrock often gives rise to analyses weakened by discrepancies that include passing references to the influence of both "harmonious" Confucianism and violent, realist Legalism. Peter Kien-hong Yu presents an analytical framework which attempts to address this challenge and, in turn, accurately and reliably "decode" and "decipher" Chinese political behaviour and all its contradictions. Yu's approach presupposes that dialectical, or dualistic, thinking, which he describes as a tense struggle between opposing ideas and the subsequent creation of an operational concept that falls between the two extremes – the *zhongdao* (middle road) – is prevalent among contemporary Chinese and can be effectively modelled. Yu defends this presumption by spinning a lengthy, meander-

ing yarn of anecdotes, and is confident enough of his scholarship to make the bumptious declaration that “Sinology and Bicoastal Chinese Studies are dead; long live the Dialectical Study of (Communist) China!”

Though he is possibly correct to say that Chinese political actors frequently display a dialectical approach to domestic and foreign policy questions, Yu’s evidence for this is rather thin and often relies on accounts of senior Chinese leaders simply being contrarians or eccentrics, not dialecticians. Previous political scientists have been poor performers when it comes to inferring an actor’s intentions from an observed behaviour, but Yu is apparently not too timid to give it another try. At one point he asks, “Why did Mao Zedong work at night and sleep during the day?” Strangely, Yu avers that it is because Mao applied dialectics to almost everything, right down to his bedtime.

Such abstruse leaps in logic pepper the book, including Yu’s dialectical framework itself. The framework consists of a split, linear spectrum, the left side of which is ranged by numbers one to six and the right side by the letters A to F. When applying the model to Chinese communist political behaviour, the left and right extremes, one and F, signify contradictory “leftist” (thesis) and “rightist” (anti-thesis) concepts that Chinese leaders are faced with, such as communist and capitalist economic policies. Dialectical players, in this case any Chinese political actor, can be expected to reconcile these contradictions by offering an operational concept situated somewhere in between the two poles. Yu offers several examples in an attempt to show that this is indeed the case, but he ultimately fails as he provides us with no methodology with which to determine how a synthesis is achieved and where it is positioned within his dialectical framework. For instance, according to Yu, “socialism with Chinese characteristics,” one such synthesis of contradictory concepts, is classified as a number six within the “Communism Versus Capitalism” dialectical framework. How this number is determined, however, we are never told.

*The Crab and Frog Motion Paradigm Shift*, beyond its theoretical shortcomings, is also structurally ill-suited to student and more general audiences. Owing to the book’s ambitious analytical goal and the expansiveness of its case studies – from Taiwan’s involvement in the Montevideo Convention, to Deng Xiaoping’s *nanxun* tour, to Japan’s possible remilitarization – Yu has too little space to contextualize his model, discuss the influences or efforts of other dialectical theorists, or consider the innumerable counter-arguments to his approach.

While this volume is based on a valuable premise – that Chinese leaders view the world through a distinctive political and cultural lens – it fails to offer a workable solution to the problem of understanding that worldview and its many contradictions. Perhaps the book’s greatest achievement is its demonstration of just how difficult it is to try to quantify and measure an actor’s decision-making process, particularly when that process is shrouded within China’s opaque political system.

BENJAMIN T. BRAKE

*A County of Culture: Twentieth Century China Seen from the Village Schools of Zouping, Shandong.* By STIG THØGGERSEN. [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. 310 pp. £37.50. ISBN 0-472-11283-X.]

This empirically rich and analytically engaging book draws on archives and oral history in Zouping county, Shandong province, and devotes each chapter to a distinctive period in the building of China's modern educational institutions. The study reveals how macro-level historical shifts interact with educational reforms to impact on the lives of rural individuals, and how their responses shape community-level policy formulation and implementation. Educational reforms therefore form the basis for a wider study of cultural, socio-economic and political processes in 20th-century China.

In an illuminating departure from the standard treatment of education and development, Thøgersen draws our attention to culture in accounting for the popularizing of education. This offers insight beyond conventional explanations of the demands of socio-economic transition and nation-building. He uses the interplay of education and culture to explain motivations for supporting schooling. Ordinary people see schools and written texts as necessary for their children to learn the moral and behavioural requirements of social relationships and of being a person. The state sees education as an instrument for making citizens adhere to cultural ideals of community by, for example, respecting authority and paying taxes.

Thøgersen shows that Zouping has a unique cultural heritage that particularly favours education and shapes a political commitment to it. While he mentions in passing that some other states have had a political impetus to popularize education for non-material reasons, I am left wondering whether we can speak of national and local cultures as sources of political will for education? Additionally, the author's extensive ethnography provides an excellent understanding of local experiences of educational reform, but raises questions about the wider applicability of some observations. For example, I suspect that unlike Zouping inhabitants, villagers elsewhere may feel their educational careers are hindered by their rural backgrounds. Such questions reflect the richness of the research rather than significant omissions.

Thøgersen's attention to culture also produces fascinating insight about the tensions, continuities and changes in pedagogical approaches. An interesting example is the ebb and flow between rigid and more flexible educational methods. Thøgersen explains that the rigid teaching methods of the traditional *sishu* schools were condemned as feudal by 1930s reformers such as Liang Shuming. Later, during the 1950s, the rigid instructional approaches of Soviet pedagogues such as Kairov were extolled as scientific and progressive, and were embraced because people were culturally comfortable with them. The tide turned again in the 1990s with 'quality education' reforms aimed at producing creative citizens able to respond to the challenges of foreign competition. But here, Thøgersen

raises the provocative question about whether aspirations to nurture innovative graduates can be truly realized if political structures remain rigid.

Thøgersen interweaves his cultural analysis with attention to the impact of socio-economic transition on education policy and demand for particular kinds of education. This aspect of his discussion is replete with interesting arguments. For example, he shows that although the Mao era restricted opportunities for spatial mobility, education still enabled access to better jobs within the commune. Yet, a recurring theme in the book is the tension between local expectations about how education may improve life chances and the political objectives of educational reformers. In particular, reformers have always tried to educate children to be better farmers while villagers pursue education to escape farming. In the final chapter, Thøgersen gently speaks up for farmers, arguing that their enthusiasm for education means that, unlike the mainstream view, they cannot be blamed for blocking China's modernization.

Although Thøgersen's socio-economic analysis is incisive, there are nevertheless occasional places where it would have been valuable to discuss the impact of educational change on socio-economic transition. For example, Thøgersen notes that smaller families allow for an increase in per capita investment in education, but what about the role of mass education in reducing parental demand for children?

Thøgersen's political analysis is most gripping. It considers how the state increased its influence over society by shifting vocational skills training from the informal to the formal domain despite no popular demand for this; centralizing educational provisioning in administrative centres; and professionalizing the teaching profession. It considers also how from the late Qing to 1949, political activists used schools in realizing programmes for national salvation, and often opposed the state. Most absorbing is the account of how Mao, on finding the Party-state apparatus closed to him, returned to the early communist revolutionary strategy of political mobilization through schools.

Thøgersen's exploration of the intertwining of cultural, socio-economic and political themes across the 20th century is made all the more compelling through his use of lively biographies and vignettes. These remind the reader that inspired individuals can powerfully influence educational policies, and that these shape the lives of real human beings, affecting their ideas about who they are long after they leave school.

This is an original, detailed and lucid book. Undergraduates will welcome its inclusion on reading lists while researchers will relish the stimulating ideas and information.

RACHEL MURPHY

*Theorising Chinese Masculinity: Society and Gender in China.* By KAM LOUIE. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 239 pp. ISBN 0-521-80621-6.]

In his introduction to *Theorising Chinese Masculinity*, Kam Louie rightly



points out that while a great deal has been written on the topic of femininity in China, the study of masculinity remains remarkably untouched. A few historical and literary studies have started to appear, but next to nothing has been done to “systematically conceptualize the theoretical underpinning of Chinese masculinities in general terms” (p. 3). In this book, Louie undertakes the ambitious task of redressing this neglect. By examining depictions of iconic figures of masculinity from the classics of antiquity to contemporary PRC and transnational Hong Kong filmic and fictional texts, he identifies the central dyad of *wen-wu* (cultural attainment–martial valour) as the crux to conceptualizing a theory on Chinese masculinity throughout time. He contends that norms of masculinity in China have fallen under either the *wen* category, or *wu*, and often the ideal man embodies both attributes, though in most cases *wen* has been privileged over *wu*. He also proposes that common to both the *wu* and *wen* ideal is the virtue of self-control and restraint, which is demonstrated especially in the true male’s ability to suppress sexual desire for women.

In the first half of the book, Louie identifies Guanyu, the God of War, as the paradigmatic figure of *wu* and Confucius as the exemplary icon of *wen* through the centuries. Moving from pre-modern representations to contemporary ones, he argues that throughout Chinese history true martial heroes, or *yingxiong*, are characterized by their exemplary ability to resist feminine wiles in the name of pursuing higher forms of justice and upholding what he suggests are sexualized homo-social bonds of brotherly solidarity. The Confucian icon, which transforms from the traditional scholar and sage ideal to the modern manifestations of teacher and businessman, is similarly characterized by self-restraint, although overall, amorous relations between the *wen*-male and women seem more acceptable. The second half of the book examines in more depth the manifestation of Chinese masculinity in 20th-century texts. Here, Louie addresses how fiction written by women manipulated the *wen-wu* dyad to meet the demands of new sexual politics in a period when women gained an unprecedented public voice. The final two chapters look at how Chinese masculinity is reshaped in the process of globalization both in the early 20th century with an examination of Lao She’s *Two Mas* and in the postmodern contemporary world through an examination of male actors in Hong Kong film.

Kam Louie is best when he is discussing the contemporary period, particularly in his treatment of the intersection of globalization, masculinity and race in transnational Hong Kong films. His treatment of masculinity in the pre-modern period, however, is less successful and risks falling into the modernist trap of assuming that during the imperial period masculinity was relatively inert. Part of the problem lies with the task of conceptualizing grand theories. By definition, such an approach requires thinking in broad terms and, when done well, can gracefully distil from the nitty-gritty particularities and inconsistencies of history an overarching principle that can not only accommodate historical specificity, but

illuminate it. When done less successfully, the broad strokes of theory only compromise history.

Louie's theory may strike some as compromising pre-20th-century history. For example, his claim that we see fundamental shifts in conceptualizing masculinity only with the globalization of the 20th century is a rather big claim to make. While globalization in the 20th century has been unprecedented in many ways, the implication that the Chinese *wen-wu* dyad was relatively unchanged and barely informed by other forms of masculinity during the imperial period is rather untenable. Although not yet researched in great detail by contemporary scholars, it is more than likely that the imperial *wen-wu* dyad was subtly shaped by cosmopolitan Buddhist ideals of masculinity during the multi-cultural empire of the Tang dynasty, by the martial Mongol ideal embodied by Khublai Khan during the Yuan, and the nomadic, martial archers and horseback riders of the Manchu conquest dynasty.

Louie's attempt to promote the theoretical proposal that self-constraint is always at the heart of *wen* masculinity also may appear untenable to some. For instance, Louie acknowledges that the late imperial rise of the *caizi* ideal, the young prodigy or scholar-to-be who indulges in both *wen* pursuits and women, appears to confound his model. To resolve this seeming contradiction, Louie argues that it is precisely because the *caizi* is technically still a scholar-in-the-making that he can still enjoy his desires for the opposite sex. With little textual or historical evidence to prove this rather elaborate explanation, such an example risks appearing as an attempt to fit the square peg of an historical example into the round hole of an over-arching theory.

I applaud Louie's admirable intentions of adding much-needed theorization to the field of Chinese masculinity, and this book is certainly a start. In the end, however, one wonders how useful a theoretical argument is if it fails to show enough respect for the actual history of masculinity it seeks to illuminate.

EUGENIA LEAN

*Chinese Women Organizing: Cadres, Feminists, Muslims, Queers.* Edited by PING-CHUN HSIUNG, MARIA JASCHOK and CECILIA MILWERTZ. [Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001. xxvi + 332pp. Hard cover £42.99, \$68.00, ISBN 185973-536-3; paperback £14.99, \$23.50, ISBN 185973-541-X.]

The most striking feature of this important project is the excitement that the book is able to stimulate about the theoretical issues involved, about what has been achieved and about what remains to be done. Whether it is possible to describe a women's movement in China is almost beside the point for the ongoing project is so impressive.

"Organizing," which is sharply distinguished from organization, refers to a feminist analytical approach to "how women organize themselves to

address gender and other inequalities in society and to improve their own and/or other people's lives." The editors also recommend the term popular rather than NGO to draw attention to new forms of organizing, in particular grassroots, non-Party-state initiatives and activities. "Popular organizing" thereby provides a dynamic and a message of social and political change in progress.

The structure of the book is complex. The contributions are drawn from a workshop held in Oxford in 1999. Eleven papers are grouped, sometimes awkwardly, into five parts. Ten of the authors are Chinese activists and scholars, three are Chinese academics located in the USA and two are British. The abstracts of a further 15 workshop papers are included in a sixth part. In addition there are extracts from the discussions and debates that took place as well as post-workshop reflections. The extracts and discussions form an integral part of the project and should not be ignored in favour of the contributions. No matter how valuable the conceptualizing of popular organizing is, the All China Women's Federation (hereafter ACWF) constitutes the core of the project. Essays by Jin Yihong, the director of the Women's Studies Centre at the Jiangsu Academy of Social Sciences, Liu Bohong of the Women's Studies Institute of China, and Naihua Zang, a sociologist at Florida Atlantic University, address this. More particularly, they examine the relationships between the ACWF and other NGOs.

Naihua Zhang questions the utility of the NGO model and calls for a shift in focus from institutions to processes. Jin Yihong points out that there is no other women's organization comparable in respect to power and influence, nor is its dominance threatened. This raises the issue of the costs and benefits of organizing inside or outside of the state. Moreover, the presence at the end of the 20th century of 6,386 women's associations or recreational clubs under the banner of the ACWF provoked a similar question of organizing in or outside the ACWF. This does not mean that the ACWF goes unchallenged. Liu Bohong identifies challenges in the styles developed by new NGOs, in their pooling of resources and in the constraints they impose on the ACWF's power. What is changing, according to Jin Yihong, is the development of networks in which the ACWF will be the most important knot. A re-positioning of the ACWF could follow, even leading to a separation and divorce from the Party-state. In short, there are grounds for speculation on the eventual transformation from a pillar organization to a popular one.

The dialogue that follows the essays on the ACWF extends the analysis. The ACWF could be seen to have its own but different version of the 'three represents.' There are fundamental conflicts for the ACWF between the interests of the Party-state, its popular audiences and its own organizational priorities. This dilemma is exacerbated in that the ACWF is not a monolith, nor does it speak with one voice. The main casualties are women themselves. As Irene Tong of Hong Kong University argues, the messages delivered tend towards the conventional while the need, according to Harriet Evans, is for the presentation of serious alternatives and understanding of their own positions. Change is not disputed but, as

Evans also argues, there is a need to know how women's organizations are perceived by those they claim to represent. Maria Jaschok raises the question of whether ordinary members have an input to the process of change.

Activist/academic He Xiaopei poses an alternative approach when she asks "if other organizations want to help women and would it be possible to motivate those women so they could organize themselves instead?" She has in fact already answered this question in an earlier chapter through a history of her involvement in the Queer Women Group and East Meets West feminist translation group.

This book is the text for women organizing in China and the source for the present state and future direction of the women's movement and the ongoing research into it.

ROBERT BENEWICK

*Appetites: Food and Sex in Post-Socialist China.* By JUDITH FARQUHAR. [Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2002. xii + 341 pp. £14.50. ISBN 0-8223-2921-2.]

The author is an anthropologist with a heavy list towards Chinese medicine, and it is from a medico-anthropological stance that she views aspects of food and sex in China. The works of neither Chang Kwang-chih nor Robert van Gulik will be made redundant by this book, for it is eating rather than food, and relationships between the sexes rather than the mechanics of sexual practice which are focused on, and a whole battery of lenses, from philosophy to literary criticism and from ethnographic fieldwork to lexicography, is employed.

The state-promoted popular hero Lei Feng is the subject of the Preamble and also of the opening to the Conclusion, and Professor Farquhar uses him as a concrete illustration of her thesis that in the period from the late 1950s to the turn of the century emphasis had shifted from the public weal to private advantage, from selflessness to selfishness, from subjugation of personal desires to the cultivation of individual appetites. She is able to use Lei Feng in this way because of her chance discovery in Beijing in 2000 of a hoarding which resuscitated his image and played on a well-remembered contemporary government slogan to advertize a drug company's website. The sighting may have been fortuitous, but the thesis, while not startlingly fresh, is convincingly argued, and as the book goes on one feels that the author is deeply troubled by the change. It is not that she makes a case for the excesses of socialist fervour which characterized the Great Leap Forward or the early years of the Cultural Revolution, on the contrary, it is rather that she cannot live with excess of whatever kind. Her analogies come back again and again to Chinese medicine and its fundamental concern with balance, and she wants to see society and the individual not as two extreme poles but as interconnected and interdependent, as equally vital aspects of the same whole.

The title is the earthiest part of this book, for this is a work of philosophy and not a salacious romp through a culture of carnality. But there is a great deal of enlightenment to be gained from the author's idiosyncratic viewpoint. She holds that Chinese medicine in its concern with the totality of the body and its balanced optimality is able to skirt round the consideration and treatment of specific analysed conditions in order to match and balance symptoms which are less obviously relevant. The cynical may ascribe this to an inability to understand the necessity for analysis, a cavalier disregard for hard facts, but that is not what Farquhar or Chinese medicine is claiming, and if the meticulous arguments employed throughout the book were not enough, the brilliant description given on pages 149–151 of her very subjective experience at a banquet would convince the most doubting of the validity of that which can be sensed but not dissected. Similarly, her description on pages 208–209 of a superficially innocent but deeply significant supervisor–student relationship is much more than a flight of romantic nostalgia. Professor Farquhar contrives to get under the skin of people whose life experience differs greatly from her own and she has the rare ability to communicate her insights to her readers on a number of different planes.

HUGH D.R. BAKER

*The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database.* Edited and compiled by the EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CHINESE CULTURAL REVOLUTION DATABASE, editor-in-chief SONG YONGYI. CD-ROM with hard copy indexes in Chinese and English. [Hong Kong: Universities' Service Centre for China Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2002. 80 MB + index 384 pp. \$1,000.00. ISBN 962-996-071-0.]

What will not be lost on students of revolutionary chromatography is the fact that the hard cover index accompanying this CD-ROM is a huge *black* book. In the professional jargon of Cultural Revolutionary historians everywhere, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database* is already being referred to, tongue-in-cheek, as the *hei cailiao* – “black materials” – of editor-in-chief, Song Yongyi. Readable on most MS Windows platforms capable of displaying Chinese characters, it comes with a built-in search-engine and comprises nearly 30 million words. Suddenly, it is as if Eric Hobsbawm already had China's Cultural Revolution – and not merely the former Soviet Union – in mind when he observed, after the fall of the wall, that “Inadequacy of sources is the last thing we can complain about” (*On History*, p. 239).

The black materials are divided into seven sections, of which the first (CCP documents and directives) and fourth (central Party leaders' speeches) are likely to provide most users with the greatest amount of new information. By comparison to what has been in the public domain since the late 1960s in the form of microfilms and photocopies from the Centre for Chinese Research Materials and reprints of dubious prove-

nance in ROC yearbooks on *Chicom* affairs, the quality and sheer quantity of what Song *et al.* have been able to pull together here is truly remarkable: for once, references to the possibility of quantum leaps in scholarship or to a groundwork having been laid for previously impossible text-based projects are not at all out of place.

Section two is devoted to texts by Mao Zedong: a fair number of the pre-1968 ones are already available elsewhere in collections like the widely reprinted *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui* (*Long Live Mao Zedong Thought*); many of the texts from 1969 and Mao's later years, however, may well be new to even the most avid readers of the great helmsman's works. The black materials are an excellent complement to the 12th and 13th volumes of the official *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* (*Mao Zedong's Post-1949 Manuscripts*) and contain much that the Beijing-based editors of that collection were unable to include because of the political constraints under which they had to work. Section three is made up of a hundred or so speeches, directives and writings by Lin Biao, and includes the famous letter of 13 December 1967 in which Mao's closest comrade-in-arms cautions against publishing his own selected writings lest these should distract people from the all-important study of Mao's. Section five contains roughly 600 newspaper editorials and signed articles including the November 1965 polemic "On the new historical play *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*," the October 1976 joint editorial celebrating the purge of the "Gang of Four," and just about everything significant in between. The final sections are devoted to the Red Guards: section six documents the history of their determined attempt to "rebel against all reactionaries" while section seven concerns their "heterodox thoughts" (for translations of some of the most important texts in section seven, see *Contemporary Chinese Thought*, Vols. 32:4 and 33:1, 2001).

All research libraries should seriously consider purchasing a copy of *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*. Not merely is it certain to remain an invaluable resource for PRC historians and political scientists for years to come, thanks to its scope combined with the inclusion of a search-engine capable of performing "keyword" searches, it has the potential of becoming an important research tool for scholars and students from other disciplines as well. Linguists will be able to use it to perform quantitative studies of terminological change in political speeches and documents over time. Economists will be able to locate easily priceless statistical nuggets in speeches and Party documents, as well as commentary allowing them to understand how and why today's official historical statistics have since been massaged into shape. Sociologists (of whom it has been said that they rarely make good historians because they "don't want to take the time to find out") will obviously appreciate not having to read every single one of public security chief Xie Fuzhi's speeches from beginning to end when all they really want to know is whether or not he had anything to say on the subject of suicides. (He did, on five occasions, if the search results are to be trusted.) Journalists digging for Cultural Revolutionary dirt on today's PRC leadership? It will take them

less than a minute of staring at the virtual hourglass on their screens to become disappointed.

A review, no matter how positive, would not be a review if it did not include a complaint or two. First, the editors ought really to have allowed themselves to be guided in their work by an established standard of documentary editing – such as that of the Association for Documentary Editing. As it is, one often looks in vain for crucial informational annotation about source texts, authentication, transcription standards, alternative readings and more. The novice user may not be overly concerned with these things, but serious historians of the period are and should be. There are, for example, differences of immense significance between the two alternative transcripts of Lin Biao's speech of 20 March 1967 circulated by the central authorities, the first one on 7 April, the second one on 24 April. The editors have used the second, inferior text as their source text, but do not indicate this. Crucial differences also distinguish early and later official transcripts of Lin Biao's speech of 9 August 1967: here the editors have used a fine early one as their source text, but without drawing the user's attention to this. Secondly, of the altogether 38 numbered CCP Central Documents from May–September 1966 reproduced in section one, no less than 11 carry the *wrong Zhongfa* number. How this could have happened is something of a mystery, assuming that the editor would in fact have copied his numbers from actual original documents, or reliable first or second-tier reprints, and not simply computed what they "ought to have been" and then added them himself. Once again, more informational annotation would have very been helpful in clarifying this and further occasional problems involving document dates and variant titles.

MICHAEL SCHOENHALS

*Place and Spirit in Taiwan: Tudi Gong in the Stories, Strategies and Memories of Everyday Life.* By ALLESSANDRO DELL'ORTO. [London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002. xix + 300 pp. \$55.00. ISBN 0-7007-1568-1.]

In this ground-breaking study of the cult of Tudi Gong (generally referred to in English as the Earth God or the God of the Soil), Alessandro Dell'Orto sheds new light on the significance of one of the most popular deities in the Chinese pantheon, while also making an important contribution to the ongoing discussion of methodological issues in the field of anthropology.

Dell'Orto's goals in studying the cult of Tudi Gong are twofold: first, to engage in and also critique the writing of an anthropology of place; and secondly, to examine social and cultural change in post-war Taiwan. Dell'Orto achieves the first goal by exploring how a sense of place is both reflected and created in the worship of Tudi Gong and the stories about him. He also attempts to surpass previous scholarship on conceptualiza-

tions of place by focusing on the concepts of territory and locality, as well as the relationship between community and identity (see pp. 9–10). At the same time, Dell’Orto endeavours to reassess the processes by which anthropologists construct place in their writings, as well as the methodological problems that shape these processes (pp. 15, 222). Dell’Orto attains his second goal by researching the ways in which rapid socio-economic changes in post-war Taiwan have influenced the relative continuity of cultural traditions (p. 22). Specifically, he analyses how urbanization and migration have affected people’s sense of community and identity (p. 239), and also addresses the ongoing debate about religion’s contribution to a sense of Taiwanese or mainlander identity (p. 243).

Following the introduction and a brief account of Taiwan’s history, the book’s first chapter focuses on Tudi Gong temples in the Datong district of the capital city of Taipei, and particularly how these temples and their cults have been affected by urban development. Chapter two focuses on Tudi Gong temples in the small village of Yongxing in Nantou county (central Taiwan), the emphasis here being on the role of temples in the creation of community and identity. In chapter three, Dell’Orto shifts to a reflexive discussion of the methodological issues that shaped the ethnographic account presented in the book’s first two chapters. Chapter four provides a more general overview of the cult of Tudi Gong, particularly its links to ideas of territory. Chapter five focuses on stories and other representations of Tudi Gong. Chapter six, the book’s conclusion, returns to the themes presented in the introduction, especially how the cult of Tudi Gong contributes in different ways to the formation of “place.”

*Place and Spirit in Taiwan* is particularly noteworthy for its pioneering yet sophisticated methodology. As Stephan Feuchtwang points out in the book’s Forward, Dell’Orto’s work represents an experiment in writing in which the author adopts the stance of a listener while also telling readers about how he did his fieldwork (p. xiii; see also pp. 248–251). Dell’Orto also sheds new light on the fieldwork process by considering the potential influence of place on writing, arguing that “the question of whether places and cultures we study ... may shape and dictate our ethnographic writing does not seem to have been coherently addressed in anthropological literature” (p. 112; see also p. 14). Dell’Orto proves keenly aware of gaps between theory, fieldwork, and writing (p. xiv), as well as the difficulties of trying to capture in writing all the stories and representations of Tudi Gong that he encountered in the field (p. 13).

In addition to its methodological breakthroughs, this book also sheds new light on religion’s role in local communities. For example, Dell’Orto demonstrates that temples contribute to both unity and diversity at the local level by serving as “a fixed reference point and a symbol of stability and permanence for the community” (p. 103; see also p. 213), while also allowing the expression of a wide range of sentiments and interests (p. 72). Perhaps most importantly, he convincingly demonstrates that



temples are sites where people recall and reconstruct their past, thus creating or recreating a sense of identity (pp. 140, 213).

As in any effort of this scope and depth, there are a few problems. Some concepts are not clearly explained, including duos such as “multilocation” and “multilocution” (pp. xvii, 1) as well as “siting” and “sighting” (p. 119). Moreover, key terms such as locale and territory are briefly mentioned throughout the book but not systematically discussed until the concluding chapters (see for example pp. 7, 10, 117, 222–229). The book’s structure is at times haphazard, and the reader has to wait until chapters four and five before learning basic information about Tudi Gong’s *yin* and *yang* features, the fact that he has a wife, children, and even a concubine, and the nature of those rituals dedicated to him.

Perhaps most inexplicable is the poor quality of the maps. Despite his emphasis on producing an anthropology of place, many of Dell’Orto’s own maps of modern Taipei and Yongxing are highly impressionistic, lacking scales of miles and topographic features. Furthermore, the historical maps that Dell’Orto reproduces are almost unreadable.

Finally, there are a few minor errors. For example, Xinzhuang’s Dizang An is located at number 84 Zhongzheng Road, not number 80 (p. 159). Dell’Orto also uses a rather odd romanization system for capitalizing Chinese names (for example, “Chiang Kai-Shek” instead of Chiang Kai-shek). Some names are also misspelled, including “Liu Ming-Quan” for Liu Mingchuan (p. 19), “Liu Hai-Yue” for Liu Huanyue (p. 289), and “Zai Wen-Feng” for Dai Wenfeng (p. 293).

Despite these problems, the importance of Dell’Orto’s scholarship remains unchallenged. His book brings us much closer to understanding Chinese religion at the local level, while his conceptual and methodological discussions have the potential to set a new agenda for research on modern Taiwanese society. This book should prove useful for courses on Chinese religions.

PAUL R. KATZ

*Les Mandariniers de la Rivière Huai: Le Réveil Religieux de la Chine.* By BENOÎT VERMANDER. [Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2002. 257 pp. €22.00. ISBN 2-220-05080-7.]

“The fruit of the mandarin trees growing south of the river Huai is sweet,” goes the Chinese parable, “but turns bitter when transplanted to other side.” In his latest book, the editor of *Le Christ chinois* is again focusing on the cultural parameters determining the development of Christianity in China. As alluded to in the title, *space* is in the focus, and its relevance in the formation of human tradition, in particular religion, underlined from the beginning.

Vermander’s self-assigned task was to trace the reasons and consequences of the current religious awakening in China. Registered religious worship already outperforms the organized structure of the Chinese

Communist Party, without even taking into account proscribed teachings or expressions of Chinese spirituality such as *qigong*. In no unclear terms, the author makes the future dependent upon this phenomenon: freely flowing spirituality enabling China's people and elites to look beyond outmoded notions such as tradition and modernity, or the late imperial dichotomy of essence and use (*ti-yong*). Throughout, Vermander points to modern Taiwan as a model of diversity, encouraged by its deep-rooted popular religiosity.

As a proselytizing Jesuit in Taiwan, Sichuan and Tibet during the 1980s and 1990s, the author clearly identifies with his subject matter. The personal nature of his study is further emphasized by the subjective, at times emotive, style. Thus, we learn of Vermander's love for all things Chinese as well as for Japanese spirituality (p. 21), and of the parallels between calligraphy and Loyola's Spiritual Exercise (pp. 29–31). His analysis of contemporary religiosity in China therefore hinges on experiences gathered first-hand in the small isolated Christian communities of the Chinese countryside. Based on his assessment of the paradoxical strength of the latter ("la force du petit nombre," chapter two), the author proceeds with a parallel analysis of the *falun gong* phenomenon – numerically and politically by far the most important development in China's religious landscape since late imperial times. Had the author limited his ambitions to a thorough analysis of these two aspects, we would have been rewarded with some interesting insight into contemporary Chinese religion. Perplexingly, however, Vermander allocated no less than half of his book to themes such as globalization and the prospects for democracy in China, inculturation and inter-religious exchange, Liangshan society and spirituality – as well as Chinese watercolour painting, the topic perhaps closest to the author's heart.

Whatever his intention, these excursions are little more than snapshots of the author's life through momentous decades both in personal terms as well as for the people he encountered. The surprisingly intimate style unmasking a methodology based on anecdotal evidence. Yet it would be wrong to dismiss the book as little more than a personal memory train. Vermander is well-read and demonstrates an ability to link discoveries made at village-level, or even at a personal level, with the much larger picture of Chinese life. His parallels between Taiwan's religious life and the rapid democratization during the 1980s (pp. 148–163) are interesting from any perspective. The eclectic methodology explains the paucity of written sources, the few publications contained in the sprinkling of notes mainly being references to contemporary Catholic periodicals. Most of the evidence is clearly drawn from the "Dao of Life," experiences gathered during many hours with earthy converts and patient scholars.

All of the above would make the *Mandariniers* more of a journalistic notebook than an academic monograph – a veritable brainstorm, with few attempts to mould a coherent and disciplined structure. But maybe methodological strictness was not foremost on the author's mind; the book has certainly a pronounced meditative quality, not unlike his spiritual paintings. The fruit from north of the river Huai is neither bitter

nor sweet, but represents the full range in between – a parable of the book itself. If Vermander's challenge was to create interest in the unfolding spiritual landscape of the People's Republic, his subjectively illuminated case studies may have done precisely that.

LARS PETER LAAMANN

*Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932.* By JAMES H. CARTER. [Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2002. xiv + 217 pp. ISBN 0-8014-3966-3.]

In the early 20th century, the cognoscenti put forward a rival to Shanghai as their nominee for the title of “Paris of the East” – the far north-eastern city of Harbin. As they pointed out, although it took weeks for goods or people to make their way by sea to Shanghai, Harbin was accessible from Europe in just a few days via the Trans-Siberian railway. A cosmopolitan, colonial place, Harbin was, like Shanghai, a product of late 19th-century imperialism, but in this case based on railways rather than shipping, and with the Russians, not the British, as the driving force.

*Creating a Chinese Harbin* breaks new ground in telling the story of Harbin as a Chinese city that developed its own sense of nationalism in the context of multinational imperialist modernity. As Carter argues, “nationalism in Harbin grew out of simultaneous opposition to and cooperation with the large foreign presence” (p. 3). Yet his account of nationalism is a complex and sophisticated one, arguing that up to 1922, nationalism was co-operative with the foreign, largely Russian, presence rather than confrontational. From 1922 to around 1927, a more aggressive, younger generation of political activists increased their hostility to the foreign presence, particularly as Russians were no longer protected by extraterritoriality. And finally, in 1927 to 1931, nationalism was dampened as the region's association with the Kuomintang meant that competing ideas of what Chinese identity meant had to be subsumed to the centralizing project of the new government. This led the way for the resigned acceptance of yet another version of nationalism, the variety put forward by the hastily-constructed Japanese client state of Manchukuo.

Yet the attempts to make Harbin a “Chinese” city were numerous and tell us a great deal about the way in which premodern symbols of identity were used as invented traditions to create an indigenous space in what many thought of as a Russian city. So the Paradise Temple was established as part of a nationwide Buddhist revival in the 1920s, and a Confucian temple built shortly afterward, the latter opened on 10 October, the newly-established National Day. These institutions suggested a model of modernity that contrasted strongly with the aggressively secular version that both the Nationalists and the Communists advocated. Nationalism was also stimulated by the establishment of the Donghua Middle School, whose students took part in demonstrations against imperialism, which reflected the politics of the May Fourth era China as

well as local tensions. Carter uses a wide variety of sources, including archival documents in several languages, newspapers, maps and photographs to build up a highly nuanced picture of the era.

The book contributes significantly to Republican Chinese history. First, it is a much-needed study of a city whose Chinese, as opposed to Russian, history has not been much explored in English before, although it should be read alongside Søren Clausen and Stig Thøgersen's fine study, *The Making of a Chinese City* (1995). Although we know now a great deal about the nature of foreign–Chinese interaction in semicolonial Shanghai, studies like Carter's enable us to make necessary comparisons with imperialism elsewhere in China. In addition, the book adds to our growing knowledge of the complex nature of imperialism in Manchuria which led to the eventual establishment of Manchukuo. The detailed account given here of the way in which Chinese local elites dealt with the need to balance their relationship with the Kuomintang government, the foreign imperial powers, and growing levels of nationalism among their peers, could be contextualized further into the wider picture of urban and rural tensions elsewhere in the region. In the meantime, this elegantly-written and meticulously-researched study will repay attention from all those who are interested in urban history, imperialism and nationalism in modern China.

RANA MITTER

*Building a New China in Cinema: The Chinese Left-wing Cinema Movement, 1932–1937.* By LAIKWAN PANG. [Lanham, MD, Boulder, New York and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002. xvi + 279 pp. £22.95. ISBN 0-7425-0946-X.]

As the first monograph on the Chinese left-wing cinema movement published in English, this book makes a significant contribution to the growing literature on pre-1949 Chinese film. Based on extensive research in both primary and secondary sources, Pang traces the historical development of the leftist cinema movement and makes several insightful observations about 1930s film culture in China in general and the leftist cinema movement in particular. She argues that during the 1930s, a group of Chinese filmmakers, despite their individual differences in social and political backgrounds, shared some common understandings about the social mission of the film medium and visions of modernity and nationhood, which resulted in a body of films that was coloured by a leftist orientation. Pang argues that some of the unique features of those films were continuously visible in the 1940s (pp. 231–238).

Mindful of the revisionist scholarship on the subject in recent years and the difficulty involved in clearly articulating the “essential characteristics” of leftist film, Pang opts to take a more inclusive approach and discusses the whole “progressive film culture in the 1930s” under the umbrella of leftist film movement (p. 5). Her argument that the movement

was “a product of multiple social, economic, and political discourses” (p. 11) significantly revises the standard account advanced by Cheng Jihua in *The Development of Chinese Cinema*. For instance, in contrast to Cheng and others who claim that the CCP’s Film Group set the leftist cinema movement in motion, Pang emphasizes the momentum of the progressive film culture that had been in the making long before the CCP Film Group entered the picture (p. 40).

To this reviewer, the most brilliant parts of the book are Pang’s analysis of individual films. Her observation on the mirror image of the intellectual and revolutionary in *Unchanged Heart in Life and Death* (pp. 82–85) and her comparative reading of *The Highway* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* are both refreshing and insightful. The list of films with the longest screening time in Shanghai from 1932 to 1937 in the appendix of the book is indicative of her impressive research and is extremely useful to film scholars.

Like any good book, *Building a New China in Cinema* raises more questions than it answers. One critical issue is exactly what makes a film leftist – a question Pang does not really tackle effectively. Instead, she uses the list of 72 titles identified as leftist films in Chen Bo’s edited volume, *Zhongguo zuoyi dianying yundong (The Chinese Leftist Cinema Movement)*, as her point of departure, but that list is problematic at several levels. First, it includes many titles that were not on the Nationalists’ list of films identified as leftist works in the early 1930s. The list also has titles that Cheng Jihua did not identify as leftist films when he first published *The Development of Chinese Cinema* in the early 1960s. It is interesting to observe that the list of leftist films has been growing in mainland China over the years. For understandable reasons, many Chinese filmmakers from the pre-1949 period want to present themselves as opponents of the Nationalist government and collaborators of the CCP before “liberation.” Obviously, which film is labelled leftist often entails serious political as well as economic implications. The list Pang relies on as the basis of her study is more of a product of contemporary politics in China than a historical reality. Secondly, quite a few titles on the list were actually sanctioned by the Nationalist film censors. For example, *Silkworm*, *Fisherman’s Song*, *Highway*, *Plunder of Peach and Plum* and *The Twin Sisters*, all of which have since been identified as the classics of leftist cinema, were, in fact, selected by the Nationalist Central Film Censorship Committee to represent the Chinese film industry at international film festivals in Moscow and Milan in 1935. This does not necessarily refute the leftist orientation of these films, but it does underline the complexity involved in studying the Chinese leftist cinema movement.

Pang’s discussion of the Chinese leftist cinema movement could have also benefited from a more nuanced understanding of the Nationalist government, its intricate relationship with the leftist filmmakers, and how film censorship worked during the Nanjing decade. Pang’s discussion of the Nanjing regime and its censorship apparatus tends to be sketchy and, in some aspects, inaccurate. For instance, the Yihua Incident was not a

government reaction to the rise of leftist cinema, but was in fact engineered by a group of right-wing elements in the KMT in an attempt to bypass the official establishment, which, in their view, was ineffective in dealing with leftist cinema. In many ways, the incident highlights the divide within the Nationalist regime and explains why some of the leftist films could have been made in the first place. Regrettably, Pang fails to go beyond the conventional interpretation of the incident. Similarly, she faults the Nationalist government for not paying attention to the growing number of Hollywood films in the Chinese market (p. 58). Again, evidence from the Nanjing government files, China's Maritime Custom documents, and the internal memos circulating among American film studios executives does not lend support to that argument. To the contrary, those sources point to the persistent efforts of the Nationalist government to curtail Hollywood's dominance in China so as to protect the native film industry.

Despite these minor problems, the book is well researched and informative, and I would recommend it to anyone interested in pre-1949 Chinese cinema.

ZHIWEI XIAO

*How Migrant Labor is Changing Rural China.* By RACHEL MURPHY.  
[Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 306 pp. Hard cover \$70.00, ISBN 0-521-80901-0; paperback \$25.00, ISBN 0-521-00530-2.]

Mass rural–urban labour migration in post-Mao China has received a great deal of attention by scholars of different disciplines. The existing research has largely focused on the causes and processes of migration; the politics of migrant identities and settlements in the cities; changing modes of governance in managing the migrant population; the questions of urban citizenship; and the cultural experiences of migrant wage workers in the reform era. Yet, we know very little about the profound social, economic and cultural impact of migrant labour on Chinese rural life and society. Rachel Murphy's book provides a timely contribution to our understanding of what has happened in rural China as a result of this unprecedented labour migration. Based on extensive, in-depth fieldwork in three counties in Jiangxi province, this is an extraordinarily insightful and fresh account of the everyday socio-economic changes brought by migration in the origin areas. Moving away from the static analysis of migration by modernization and structuralist theories, Murphy emphasizes the critical role of human agency by treating rural migrants as social agents who actively pursue their goals and utilize resources while making sense of the rapidly changing social world in which they live. Her study convincingly shows that migrants are neither passive victims of structural changes nor actors completely free of structural constraints; rather they

constantly adopt strategies to negotiate with and alter the larger social, economic and political environment.

The book consists of an introduction, conclusion and eight substantive chapters. The first three chapters lay out its theoretical approach, fieldwork settings, and the background of rural restructuring and labour migration in China, and offer a survey-based account of emerging patterns of inequality in the countryside due to labour migration. The most informative and ethnographically rich materials are presented in chapters four to eight. The author first takes a closer look at the use of remittances in such domains as education, housing building, marriage, and consumer goods, and its impacts on rural social life. Rather than lamenting or celebrating the use of remittances toward these “nonproductive” goals, Murphy explores why and how villagers acquire resources to attain these goals and analyses their often contradictory effects on social life. The core body of the book investigates the kinds of businesses created by returnees and the role of the local state in promoting such enterprises and building rural market towns. The author argues that the local state is enthusiastic about return migrant entrepreneurship because such businesses help improve local living standards and absorb surplus rural labour, which ultimately enhances the political legitimacy of rural leadership. However, her research indicates that only a small portion of the returnees become successful entrepreneurs and realize their dreams of becoming their own bosses, while the majority of returned migrants end up working for new bosses who are their fellow natives. Surprisingly, there is little account of the emerging class dynamics between these private business owners/managers and the workers. Finally, while the study highlights the strength of human agency and the positive side of the story of how migrant labour improves the lives of the rural population, it does not overlook those who must return home due to illness, injury, loss of work or familial duties. The last chapter reveals the dilemma, disruption, alienation and feelings of liminality facing these migrants.

In short, this book is an impressive, well-researched study of an important, under-explored topic in Chinese Studies. It is clearly written although some places tend to be repetitive. It will appeal to students of sociology, anthropology, development studies and economics. This book should be read by those interested in labour migration, development, rural industrialization and changing state-society relations within and beyond China.

LI ZHANG

*The Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity.*

By URADYN E. BULAG. [Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002. xi + 271 pp. £26.95. ISBN 0-7425-1143-X.]

In this fascinating study, Uradyn E. Bulag argues that the discourse of “unity of nationalities” (*minzu tuanjie*) conceals sharp fissures between

class, national and racial definitions of China. Embracing children's stories, rituals, historiography, political intrigue, poetry and sexuality, he narrates formative episodes of Mongolian identity, demonstrating their critical importance in constructing modern China. He stresses that even when Mongols professed total loyalty to Party ideology, they still put their own twist on it. Insightful if often distracting digressions also show that popular post-colonial theories do not fit China perfectly. Yet the author does not let abstraction seduce him into losing sight of the Mongols' distinctiveness.

Bulag makes Ulanhu [1906–1988] his central figure. Ulanhu's life and his posthumous cult exemplify the contradictions between ethnic difference and socialist unity. Ulanhu, a Tumed Mongol who spoke no Mongol, and a strong promoter of Mongol unity as well as a dedicated communist, ruled Mongolia until 1966, when he came under sharp attack as a "splittist." Surviving the Cultural Revolution, he rose to become a Politburo member, but never returned to live in Mongolia. At first, the Chinese gave him no elaborate funerals, but in 1992 they built a huge mausoleum for him in Hohhot, the capital of the region where he had not lived for over 20 years. Nostalgic Mongols now admire Ulanhu as a strong socialist leader who protected Mongols against the disasters following the Great Leap Forward and even promoted the Mongolian language. Bulag shows that simple ideas of Mongolia as a colony or romantic searches for open resistance miss the nuances of how Mongolians shaped their identity within China.

The two little Mongolian sisters of the grasslands who, in 1964, risked their lives to rescue stray sheep, provided models of socialist dedication and Chinese good will. Ulanhu used their images to promote Mongolian autonomy within the socialist state. In the official story, a selfish Mongol "herdlord" rejected them, but a kindly Chinese worker saved their lives. By endorsing this devotion to Mao's project, Ulanhu also defended Mongolians against the devastating class struggle launched within China. But in 1993, the maligned herdsman, Haschuluu, angrily insisted on his own version of the story: he had in fact rescued the girls, not the Chinese, but as a suspect intellectual in exile since 1958, he could not become a socialist role model. The manipulation of this story shows how both Chinese and Mongolian leaders expressed differing interests under a single simple tale.

Wang Zhaojun, a Chinese princess sent to marry a Xiongnu nomadic chieftain, was another exemplary woman who tied empires and nations together. This story illustrates Chinese use of sexual politics. Many dynasties used marriages to bind Inner Asians to the imperial family and to civilize them with feminine influence. Literati dissenters, however, told Wang Zhaojun's story as a tale of suffering, reflecting their own marginal political position. Nationalists in the 20th century invoked Wang to promote the merging of peoples into a single racial body, but mavericks like Guo Moruo praised her for escaping to the freedom of the steppes. Now Wang Zhaojun "tombs" have proliferated across China, and some Chinese even claim that she was the Ice Maiden of Siberia. These fantastical, even farcical, elaborations of nationalist mythology rely heavily on sexual romance for their effect.



Bulag also traces the history of a ritual held on the shores of Kōkōnuur (Qinghai) Lake. In 1724, the emperor convened an assembly of notables to celebrate the contributions of the lake god to the Qing military victory over the Hoshut Mongols. In the 19th century, Qing officials brought together feuding Manchus, Tibetans and Mongols to celebrate the ritual as an expression of community harmony. In the 20th century, Hui warlords used the ritual to assure the loyalty of all these peoples to the Republic, but also to block Chiang Kai-shek's efforts to undercut their control. In 1950, the last staging of the ritual once again celebrated the unity of nationalities under the leadership of the Communist Party. In this brilliant discussion, Bulag shows the strong continuities from Qing to the present, and the multivalent functions of ritual activity under diverse political forms.

One of the author's most convoluted chapters sketches the ferocious politics of hyphenation. The Daur-Mongol Merse, one of the main leaders of the Mongolian socialist movement and secretary-general of the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, was written out of history as a "traitor" by Ulanhu. In Bulag's view, Ulanhu had to stress the unity of all Mongols in order to fend off Chinese pressure, but one wonders if he does not apologize too much for Ulanhu. Simple lust for power might explain Ulanhu's censorship equally well. In the mid-1980s, Merse returned from historical oblivion, not as a Mongol, but as an unhyphenated Daur. The Daur, however, had an ambiguous identity: the early Qing rulers had called them "new Manchus," the Qianlong emperor had defined them as descendants of the Khitans, while other Daur claimed ancestry from Chinggis Khan. Losing their hyphen put the Daur in a double bind: if they were Mongols, they gained claims to revolutionary leadership, but lost their distinctiveness; if they were not Mongols, they could not claim leadership of the Mongol revolution.

Bulag concludes that elimination of ambiguities, hybrids and change by the rigid ethnic definitions of the PRC has deprived both Daur and Mongols of their own role in China's revolutionary history. In his bleakest and most radical statement, he calls the concept of a "Chinese Nation" emerging in the 1990s an entirely racialized category, eliminating any prospects for flexibility, autonomy or genuine difference.

Bulag's passionate, historically-grounded exposition of the complexities of ethnic reconstruction make this book one of the best recent studies of China's ethnic minorities. Through his ethnic lens, he analyses not just Mongols, but the evolution of China's national identity. Anthropologists, historians and many other scholars should incorporate his powerful critique into their teaching and research.

PETER C. PERDUE

*Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age.* By ANDREW F. JONES. [Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2001. ix + 213 pp. ISBN 0-8223-2694-9.]

*Yellow Music* is one of the rare publications in the field of ethnomusicol-

ogy whose cross-over appeal is immediately apparent. This book will provide new perspectives for students of modern Chinese history, placing music centre stage in the cultural and political debates of the interwar period. It is less a study in musicology than a study of the cultural and political debates surrounding the musical recordings of the time.

In part, this book is also a history of sound recording in China. The subject of music and technology is increasingly part of the mainstream of ethnomusicological studies, but it is a subject which has to date received very little attention from China scholars. The book's originality lies in the way it ties the political discourse on the superiority of Western music and the use of music as a tool for social control and political mobilization to the burgeoning popular music industry of interwar Shanghai, 'jazz mecca' of Asia, combining perspectives on the introduction of technology and popular culture with trends of nation-building and anti-colonial resistance.

The yellow music of the title refers to the hybrid, commercial style espoused by figures like the popular promoter and composer Li Jinhui – hugely popular in urban China but loathed by the literary elites of the May Fourth movement and banned under the People's Republic in the 1950s. The critics' designation of this style as *mimizhiyin* (decadent sounds) is revealing. Borrowing a term from a passage in the Han dynasty *Shiji* in which the cruelty and extravagance of the emperor Zhou brings about the fall of the dynasty, such language is indicative of the combination of Confucianism and nationalism in ideological writings of the period.

The book's theoretical approach is firmly grounded in human detail. This emphasis on the biographical approach makes for great immediacy. Jones unearths several fascinating vignettes, from Buck Clayton, black jazz trumpeter in 1930s Shanghai, to the Frenchman Labansat who played gramophone recordings of "laughing foreigners" on the Shanghai streets in the last years of the 19th century — your money back if you manage not to laugh. Such vignettes serve to enliven and illuminate Jones' perspectives on colonial modernity and the early trans-Pacific circulation of gramophone records and musicians, and he provides a useful corrective to those who approach the subject of globalization and the transnational media purely as a phenomenon of the late 20th century.

When better known figures enter the narrative, such as Nie Er, composer of the Chinese national anthem, their treatment is original. Jones' description of Nie Er's composition as a blend of Hollywood film music, Tin Pan Alley pop, Chinese folksong and Soviet mass music might be controversial in some quarters, but summarizes brilliantly the odd musical cocktail which came to characterize much of the revolutionary opus.

The book is liberally spiced with some superb quotes, from the Gramophone Company recording engineer, F.W. Gaisberg, complaining during his 1903 recording trip that the "din" of Chinese music "paralyzed his wits," to the 1930s classically-trained musician, Ying Shangkeng, reflecting on why "in annals of Chinese music there is no Beethoven or

Schubert.” Why indeed? This is an important addition to the literature on the period, bringing original research and fresh perspectives to the field.

RACHEL HARRIS

*The Plant Life of China: Diversity and Distribution.* By G.P. CHAPMAN and Y.Z. WANG. [Berlin: Springer, 2002. xiii + 257 pp. ISBN 3-540-42257-9.]

This book is not one of those publications filled with colourful photographs or illustrations that delight the eye but numb the mind, but rather a labour of love that distils the knowledge of plants in China of two scholars who have plenty of experience on the subject matter. The study is based largely on published analyses of flora in China, both in English and in Chinese. It has a botanical orientation, and concentrates on the taxonomic aspects of the diversity of plant life in China, despite the inclusion of the word “distribution” in its subtitle. Readers should not anticipate many discussions of the plant-geographical, geobotanical or phytogeographical flavour in the tradition of N. Polunin or R. Good.

The tremendous diversity and spatial heterogeneity of the floristic endowment of China is mind-boggling – the authors estimate there are some 30,000 vascular plant species. Any author attempting to evaluate and present it in a book of this size (169 pages plus appendices and colour plates) has to make difficult decisions as to the choice of suitable materials. The authors have accomplished this colossal task by making an extremely selective treatment of the huge subject matter.

Part one sets the stage for an understanding of the tremendous variety and complexity of flora in China. Chapter one gives a very condensed rendition of several thousand years of plant research and application of plant science in the country. The comparison with studies in Europe and elsewhere highlights the rich body of knowledge in China that has been accumulating since pre-modern times without a notable hiatus. The chapter on landscape and climate provides a discussion of the natural background, both of the geological past and the present, with an emphasis on the present botanical composition and patterns. Chapter three is a general survey of the spatial aspects of plant distribution, illustrated with some systematic and regional examples. Chapter four gives a brief account of the origin of agriculture in China, exemplified by the domestication of rice.

The choice of plant life in the book follows two approaches, namely growth form and floristics. The first, principally based on the structural-physiognomic tradition, covers five chapters in Part Two. Three chapters are devoted to the main growth forms of trees, shrubs and climbers, and herbs. One chapter deals with plants in the special alpine habitat. The last chapter in this part tackles medicinal plants from the viewpoint of the meeting of two traditions (oriental and occidental). Part Three selects and discusses four groups of plants based on taxonomic demarcations.

Part Four, on conservation and environment, is potentially the most interesting section of the book. The last chapter deals with conservation in practice, with the discussion focusing on selected taxa, but with hardly any analysis of the relevant policies and practices that could help to conserve the country's threatened plant species. Some discussion of the conservation measures and the roles played by nature reserves and other protected areas in habitat, species and genetic conservation, would enrich the contents. The contribution of botanical science and scientists in this key national and international issue could also be discussed further.

The long cultural tradition of using and studying plants in China probably deserves a more in-depth treatment, especially with reference to the intimate interactions between plant diversities and spread and human activity and impacts. The human and cultural dimensions should be given more emphasis when discussing the distribution of plants, with themes on plant introduction and post-introduction adjustments in species composition, migration of humans advertently or inadvertently in conjunction with plants, and the vegetation and landscape changes associated with the imposition of agriculture.

Although distribution is one of the two themes of the book, its coverage is not as strong as one would expect. Spatial issues such as endemism and disjunction are mentioned in various parts of the book, but not much is offered with reference to the specific aspects of distribution patterns and to the explanation of the patterns. Related issues of dissemination, dispersal, migration and biogeographical barriers, under a natural-cum-cultural regime, are seldom touched.

For future editions or reprints, the following points should be considered. Only one small map of China is given on the very last page of the book providing the names of provinces and a few neighbouring countries. This is insufficient for a book that deals with distribution in addition to diversity of plant life. More meticulous proofreading, and a consistent use of *hanyu-pinyin* and the simultaneous use of both systems of romanization for classical publications would be a great help. English translations for the titles of Chinese publications, classical or modern, would be very useful. The captions for the colour plates should be printed next to the plates and not separately.

Overall, this is a book with a rather sharp focus, which is suitable for a selected group. It is a somewhat condensed account of a topic that could potentially be vast and encompassing. It incorporates some carefully chosen details on a range of representative growth forms and some plant families, genera and species in common ornamental uses within and without China. It covers a specialized niche and hence it mainly caters to readers with botanical training with a taxonomic bent, and with an interest in the highly divergent flora of a country with a long history of plant study and usage.

C.Y. JIM