

Taken together, the five sources not only provide many fascinating details about the early Mongols and north China under their rule, but also highlight the collision and coexistence between the Chinese and Mongol ways of life on the eve of the Mongol conquest of the whole of China. The translation is lucid, accompanied by many (but not too many) informative notes, and a full array of aids such as a chronology, maps, tables of dynastic genealogies, reign titles, and even weights and measures, as well as a glossary of Chinese and non-Chinese names and terms, and notes about the texts consulted. All these help the reader contextualize the sources, while the various images scattered across the pages make the reading more appealing. My only reservation is that sometimes Atwood uses translations that are different from the usual conventions—although this is always explained in the notes and/or the introduction. Thus he translates *Huihu* 回鶻 and *Huihui* 回回, usually rendered as Uighurs or Muslims respectively, as Turkestani and Westerns. While the logic is clear, describing the Uighur script as the Western script (107), may be a bit misleading. A Chinese–English edition would have also been desirable. Such quibbles notwithstanding, Atwood has done a tremendous service to scholars and students of the Mongol Empire by making these important sources accessible in such a superb way. The book convinced me to offer a primary-sources based course on Chinggis Khan for next year, and I’m sure that it will be constantly used for both teaching and research for many years to come.

Fusion of East and West: Children, Education, and a New China, 1902–1915

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Reviewed by Margaret Mih Tillman*

Purdue University, USA

*Corresponding author. Email: mmtillman@purdue.edu

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As the title suggests, in *Fusion of East and West: Children, Education, and a New China, 1902–1915*, Limin Bai argues that children’s primers in the new republic combined elements from both East and West during a pivotal period of political change in modern China. Bai recovers the importance and influence of Chinese Christian educators, and she suggests that secular leaders like Liang Qichao may have been influenced by Christians even when they denied such influences themselves or sought equivalents in the Chinese tradition. Such instances “indicate the influence of missionary education which not only shaped a generation of young Christians like Wang Hengtong, but also contributed to the birth of a modern Chinese education system” (168). Bai shows that Protestants and Catholics, as well as Christian and non-Christian Chinese, shared ideas about modernizing childhood education and the importance of Western scientific knowledge (208). In general, there was widespread agreement across religious and political differences regarding the importance of childhood education, even when ideological aims of those groups differed.

As her major focus, Bai contextualizes the opus of Wang Hengtong, a Christian convert and educator at the turn of the century. She draws upon her extensive knowledge to show general trends among textbooks as well as the details that made Christian textbooks, and Wang's in particular, distinctive. She especially highlights a matrix of five sets of Chinese literacy primers also published between 1898 and 1903 (9). Bai applies what she terms a "multifaceted perspective" and analysis of the texts, in which she examines the overall structure of the primers, lessons, individual word choice, and tone from multiple angles. Charts help to explain the overall content of Wang's primers, and extensive juxtaposed quotations aid in her comparisons.

Bai speaks to a rich international field of scholarship on Chinese textbooks, one often engaged in questions of scientific transfer and modernization. A leader in that field, Peter Zarrow, who contributed a preface to the volume, has analyzed textbooks mainly from the perspective of an intellectual history of the textbook authors. In contrast, Bai methodically compares, line by line, Wang's works with others of the same genre. The result is that Bai depicts a broad landscape of editorial possibilities in which to locate Wang's authorial choices. Furthermore, this landscape also charts Eastern and Western traditions and demonstrates the ways in which the combination of different elements made "fusion" possible. Bai also carefully uses the paratextual elements of prefaces and introductions to point to a broad social network of educators, both Western and Chinese, and examines the critical reception of textbooks, such as among missionaries writing in the pages of *The Chinese Recorder* and *Westminster Review* (e.g., 109).

The compatibility of East and West, Bai demonstrates, rested on four major factors. One was the contribution of missionaries to new forms of knowledge and educational curricula in China. Second was a common textbook market, fueled by new technologies from the West. Third, educators across the political and religious spectrum recognized the need to follow the developmental progress of children. Fourth, by the late nineteenth century, writers enjoyed the legacy of an ideological compatibility between Ming-Qing Confucianism and Christianity, as well as emerging doctrines of liberal Christianity that allowed a certain degree of creativity.

While Western scholars have long noted the general importance of missionaries in introducing new scientific knowledge to China (and thereby inspiring secularization and Chinese nationalism), Bai draws connections between specific types of knowledge introduced in mission classes and the foci of later educational reformers (246). For example, Chapter One, "Wang Hengtong, the Christian Community in Shanghai and the Textbook Market," details Wang's education in a young mission school as a major influence on his later textbooks. Clues from Wang's books provide an overview of his intellectual life and education in mission schools. Bai especially stresses the influence of particular types of knowledge, such as mathematics, and specific texts such as Mateer's *Arithmetic*. Chinese Christian ties to the Commercial Press magnified this influence; Wang, for instance, worked for the Press after his retirement from writing textbooks and teaching.

In the late Qing, Westerners contributed to innovations in the production and manufacture of printing machinery, which allowed economical production of illustrations in children's primers. Chinese Christians helped to establish the Commercial Press in Shanghai. Their employment of a well-known secular educator as editor of the press indicates their secular commitments despite their connections with mission schools. The Chinese Christian alliance with the Press created more extensive social networks in the educational realm. Educators worked within the parameters of the competitive and lucrative market that followed the expansion of new formal schooling environments

for children (173). The political and commercial concerns of authors were linked when the state endorsed some textbooks for curricular programs.

Among the interesting ramifications of Bai's work are missionary contributions to the epistemological organization of new genres (111). Joseph Levenson famously wrote that the East augmented the vocabulary of the West, but the West fundamentally changed the grammar of the East. In Chapter Two, "An Innovative Approach: Progressive Teaching Method," Bai indicates that such a new grammar may literally refer to its meaning in terms of education—the progressive method of education, which demanded children be taught and retaught lessons in stages according to their development (49–78). This educational paradigm emerged in seventeenth-century Europe, and Philippe Aries credited it with the discovery of childhood and the advent of the modern era; although his thesis is contested, progressive education had a significant impact on the advent of Enlightenment-style subjectivities and the philosophy of thinkers like John Dewey, whose influence Bai more assiduously studies in her *Shaping the Ideal Child: Children and Their Primers in Late Imperial China*. Progressive instruction restructured curricular programming and primers and thus provided the impetus for new ways of presenting information to young people (such as to begin with visual cues and learning and advance to more text-heavy lessons).

In Chapter Three, on eliciting student interest through illustrations, Bai focuses especially on picture dictionaries that combined different types of text and languages. China had published illustrated books for children since at least the fifteenth century, but it was the progressive method of education and new theories of child development that made this genre of children's primers seem new to educational reformers (88–92). Bai points out that these books could grow with readers by offering them different levels of knowledge as they progressed in understanding, and could thus fulfill a key criterion of progressive education. These encyclopedias also combine and highlight new forms of "useful knowledge," and thus provided a new structure for organizing information and systematically understanding the world.

In Chapter Four, "Literacy Textbooks as Children's Literature: Making Aesop Chinese," Bai examines moral education through the translation of *Aesop's Fables* into Chinese. Although (as Bai notes) there was a long tradition of finding similar fables in cross-cultural environments dating back to eighth-century tales crossing the Silk Road (133–36), what was new was the application of the progressive method of education to these morality tales, especially in teaching idiomatic expressions. Here, Chinese translators sometimes introduced cultural associations or scientific knowledge regarding animals in the stories. Bai carefully compares different versions of the text, line by line, in order to discern Wang's choices. She concludes that the production of these translations mattered to Wang because they exemplify the fusion of a Christian religious ethos and longstanding cultural accommodation of Christian values to Confucian morality. Bai explains, "For Wang Hengtong, both the doctrine and language of Confucianism could be borrowed to create a bridge" (194) as he "traversed the ideologies of Confucianism and Christianity, the traditional and the modern" (247).

If the first part of the book is a latitudinal study of epistemological genres, the second part applies that method to a longitudinal understanding of philosophical and political traditions. In the latter part of the book, Bai reads across lessons to connect the content of the books to major issues and debates of the day regarding the place of Christianity in China and its need of political reform or revolution. In this section, chapters focus on Christian scriptural knowledge, Confucian filial duty, and girls' education as vehicles for

national revitalization. This section traces the particular contours of the East–West “fusion” and its intellectual and political ramifications.

Chapter Five, “Textbooks as a Bridge to the World of Knowledge,” provides an intellectual history background to the fusion between East and West. Bai draws especially on the work of Benjamin Elman to argue that the Chinese concept of *gewu zhizhi* (investigating things and extending knowledge) provided a basis for scientific inquiry, especially after the Song dynasty philosopher Zhu Xi (1130–1200) had articulated the meanings of principle and material forces (150). As Ryan Dunch has shown, in the Ming period Jesuit missionaries developed a “natural theology position” that succeeded in facilitating Chinese acceptance of a metaphysical Christian spirituality in combination with a set of Chinese value to investigate the physical world, especially with the aid of Western science. Bai argues, “From the early Jesuits to the Protestant missionaries in nineteenth-century China, the cultural accommodation approaches in their evangelistic practice were intended to harmonize Christian doctrines with Confucian sensibilities, and at the same time to discredit Taoism and Buddhism” (151). Because of this “cultural accommodation” stance, traditional Confucians were more attuned to Christianity than to secular, scientific atheism, which would condemn all such traditions as superstition (153). Cultural accommodationists advanced reasoning based on common experiences and natural phenomena (as opposed to scriptural or miraculous revelation) because natural theology was more accessible to those outside the Judeo-Christian tradition, and could draw upon resources outside that tradition. Natural theology undergirded both Wang’s education at the Hangchow Yuying High School and the Presbyterian College of Hangchow, and the philosophical relationship between science education and his pedagogical mission as a Christian educator. His textbook lessons sometimes concluded with “a natural theological expression,” organized around Western categories of scientific knowledge. Cultural accommodation also allowed a synthesis between *gezhi* and what contemporaries often termed “useful knowledge” of science (166).

From this foundation, Bai then elucidates Wang’s “liberal theology,” which synthesized a Confucian approach to Christianity with a Christian approach to Confucianism. Bai notes that Wang’s inclusion of biblical and Christian references, while relatively rare, satisfied Western missionaries and earned their approval (175–77). In this liberal theology, Wang adhered to what Lauren F. Pfister calls the “Mengzian Matrix” between Jesus’ welcoming children and Mencius’s “childlike heart” (191). While the emphasis in Cheng-Zhu Confucianism was on children’s relative lack of inappropriate desire (192–93), these similarities later provided Wang with “both the doctrine and language of Confucianism ... to build a bridge between Christianity and Confucianism” (194). Likewise, Wang could draw upon the commentary of Zhang Zai and James Legge (1815–1897) to argue that humanity (or benevolence) was the child of the universe and owed filial duty to the Cosmos, understood specifically as the Christian God. In reality, Bai notes, “The Christian teaching on the child and children actually challenges the prevailing Chinese bond between children and their parents, shifting it to that between children and God” (200). By discrediting the “absolute power of parents over their children and then the absolute power of the Emperor,” Bai argues that Christianity was a “revolutionary message” for a new political era (205).

While Bai sees some revolutionary potential in the Christian message, she also suggests (in my reading of this book) that the Christian message limited Wang’s creativity, in comparison to Du Yaquan’s *Huitu wenxue chujie*. After the abolition of the civil service examinations in 1905, Wang’s textbooks at the Commercial Press dropped

references to and lessons on Confucianism (247). While Wang relied upon a comfortable and convenient blending of Confucianism and Christianity, Du “sought to achieve a new kind of syncretism: approaching new ideas from the West while preserving the essence of traditional Chinese culture” (226). Bai concludes, “Clearly, Du appears to take much more liberty in re-telling stories, and all kinds of source materials in Du’s hands were synthesized with modern elements” (220). Du thus had more flexibility to transcend the past, as “Du’s instruction on moral cultivation went beyond Confucian doctrines, as he embraced new ideas and integrated the new with the old” (223). In other words, the dissociation from Confucianism implicitly removed the basis of successful cultural accommodation that Christians had been building for centuries; Wang and his associates had trouble moving beyond that liberal theology to modernity. Given the longstanding Confucian/Christian framework emerging from the Ming to the late Qing, the Commercial Press had easily adapted to the needs of late Qing reforms, but, after receiving state approval, did not anticipate the downfall of the dynasty (248). Christian educators like Wang were slower than others to respond to the 1911 Revolution (182), and even after Wang revised his textbooks for the Republic of China, they did not reflect or depict socio-political changes in the Republic to the same degree as other textbooks (250).

Bai argues that “the tension [that she observes] was not a schism between Christian and secular approaches” (244), but rather, a scale of difference in a landscape of gradation. Perhaps in order to reinforce this message, Bai focuses on Wang’s politically progressive commitment to girls’ education. Politically, Bai notes that Wang hoped that a reformed, Christian China could fend off colonization, which was widely feared at the time (208–13). For example, Wang’s *Academy Grade Girls’ Reader* promoted girls’ education in the context of China’s need for an educated citizenry. The *Reader* omitted any mention of the bible or Christian messaging (226–28); but also (unusually for Wang) omitted comparison with gender relations elsewhere.

Caught between the well-recorded voices of Western missionaries and secular revolutionaries, Chinese Christians have often gone unheard, their agency overlooked. Often from poor backgrounds but having benefited from subsidized education, Chinese Christians like Wang were the faceless adaptors of Western influences. They helped inform new styles of cultural fusion even when the revolution passed them (and others) by or rejected the Christian elements of shared goals (244). Towering figures like Jimmy Yen, a “follower of Christ” whose pioneering work with literacy training began under the auspices of the YMCA during the First World War, were crucial to the Mass Education Movement and Rural Reconstruction Movements of the 1920s through 1940s, but Bai demonstrates the power and influence of lesser-known intellectual workers who never left China. The constant flux of the Chinese education system at the time, noted by Suzanne Pepper, gave Yen and others latitude to pursue measures outside state channels; but also makes it hard for scholars to understand systematically what functions, if any, Christianity played in civic organizations that, as Margherita Zanasi has observed, employed former missionaries even when aiming to secularize in the post-war era. It is wrong-headed to compartmentalize historical actors into rigid ontological boxes when, as Bai warns, multifaceted analysis reveals complex fusions of cultures and traditions. Bai provides important factual considerations and methodological insights into figuring out how these elements operated just before the dawn of China’s educational revolution.