

## REVIEWS

### THE ANCIENT WORLD

DAVID BROWN: *Mesopotamian planetary astronomy-astrology*. (Cuneiform Monographs, no. 18). xii, 322 pp. Groningen: Styx Publications, 2000. HFL. 180.

The work under review aims to delineate the nature of celestial divination production and to outline the connection between the astrological material and the astronomical texts which appeared towards the end of the first half of the first millennium B.C. The author explains in his introduction that it was necessary to adopt the approach and methodology of centring the analysis around the sources from 750–612 B.C.

The book is divided up into an introduction, five chapters and three appendixes. In the introduction, the author explains the methodology and terminology adopted and describes the sources by typologies and in their spatial-temporal context. The world of the astronomer-astrologers is exhaustively analysed in chapter i: their careers, their families and ancestors, their relationships with the king and with other scholars. In chapter ii Brown proposes a new approach to solving the problems connected with the ancient scribes employing different names for the same planet and, conversely, the use of the same term to identify different planets. While previous studies, often connected with the publication of texts, analysed the problem diachronically, Brown's analysis is synchronic, limited to the period 750–612 B.C. Using this method the author singles out several types of name-planet relations.

In chapter iii the author argues that astrological omens are 'a literal creation' (3.1.1). This creation proceeds through precise co-ordinates, defined by Brown as the EAE (Enuma Anu Enlil) Paradigm, rules, codes and categorizations, and the use of ideal periods (year, month, day) for practical astrological purposes; consequently the ideal period = propitious, otherwise it is unpropitious. To these co-ordinates we may add the use of word plays (*notarikon*), acc. *šātu*, and number plays (*gematria*), acc. *arū*. By listing these means of literal creation Brown can trace the relationships between different kinds of omens.

Brown's ideas are innovative (chapter ii) and present a very logical and comprehensive view (chapter iii), as well as taking a new light on the sophistication level of these literal productions. Some conclusions may appear to be flawed by the limitations of the textual sources; limitations which are, on the other hand, necessary for the type of methodology and analysis Brown proposes, pp. 53ff. These conclusions are sometimes based on data *e silentio* for the preceding periods, and should be considered in the light of the unpublished material.

The astrologer-astronomers focused on the observation of phenomena surrounding

particular planets, said to be ominous for several reasons, and created 'a large data-base' for the Prediction of Celestial Phenomena (PCP) (chapter iv). The schemes and periodization resulting from the listing of data led to a 'mathematisation of astronomical prediction'. The same scholars who produced the Non Mathematical Astronomical-Astrological Texts (NMAAT) went on to create the Mathematical Astronomical-Astrological Texts (MAAT). The consciousness of phenomena periods and cycles and the gradual and derived passage of the MAAT texts from NMAAT texts constitutes what Brown calls 'a revolution of wisdom'.

In chapter v the author puts forward some internal (the evolution in the material elaboration), external (the sources and their authors) and philosophical considerations, concluding with an explanation of the reasons why this revolution took place in this period.

Three appendixes (A chronological bibliography of Cuneiform astronomical-astrological texts, Comments on the dating of the letters and reports, and an Analysis of the published EAE planetary omens) complete this wide-ranging work which is intended not only for the Assyriological world, but also for scholars of other subjects such as the history of science and astronomy.

The bibliography, despite the author's assertion that 'Abbreviations should be clear, but a list is provided with the bibliography' (p. 7), is problematic because of a system of knotty abbreviations, i.e. 8,000 and x000 for the texts of State Archives of Assyria 8 and 10 (for instance 8153 = text 153 of SAA 8; x153 = text 153 of SAA 10), but the author writes SAA 8 when he cites from the book. Many abbreviations are not included in the list, but there are references in parentheses to the books listed in the bibliography, so if one does not know the name or the series of the book, there is no other way to find the abbreviation than to read the entire bibliography. Moreover the bibliographic references do not list the cities of publication.

In conclusion, the merit of this book, beyond the correctness or otherwise of his thesis, is to have carried out a wide analysis of the different sources focusing on a limited period (750–612 B.C.). This analysis, supported by an accurate study of the astrological-astronomical material, a background in physics and special attention to the anthropological studies, constitutes a new vision of the nature of the astrological Mesopotamian material and of its relationship with coeval astronomical texts.

LORENZO VERDERAME

A. G. MCDOWELL: *Village life in Ancient Egypt: laundry lists and love songs*. xvii, 279 pp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Pharaonic Egypt, with its stunning monuments and mysterious hieroglyphs, has given rise to

countless fantasies for generations. With the script's deciphering in the nineteenth century (see R. Parkinson, *Cracking codes*, London, 1999), the real voices of the pyramid builders began to be heard, and Egypt's thought world finally became accessible. But major problems in understanding this complex society persist. A large proportion of the evidence used to reconstruct Egypt's world is gleaned from its impressive stone temples, pyramids and the finely constructed and beautifully decorated mastaba and rock-cut tombs of kings and officials. A vanishingly small amount has been recovered from the settlements located in the Nile Valley, which, given the scarcity of arable land, has been built and ploughed over time and again and thus effectively destroyed the evidence. Understanding of Egypt's socio-economic structures prior to the Graeco-Roman period is thus limited.

However, the site of Deir el-Medina, on the western, desert, edge of Thebes—the subject of this book, is an exception to this. It was inhabited for most of the New Kingdom (1550–1069 B.C.) by the craftsmen, who built and decorated the royal tombs in the adjoining 'Valley of the Kings' (and 'Queens'). Here a substantial body of material and textual remains has survived, providing a wealth of information on virtually all aspects of day-to-day existence within a *living* community. The growth of the settlement to 5,600 m<sup>2</sup> and comprising sixty-eight houses can be plotted; the house plans, layout of family tombs and the community's small shrines recovered. The texts, on papyri and ostraca, numbered in thousands, are enormously diverse and many still await publication. They include letters, private memoranda, short-term records, notes and lists, as well as collections of literary, religious, medical and magical documents assembled by individuals, and school texts. Most come from the last century of the community's existence and, at times, allow one to follow events day-by-day. They thus provide a welcome counterweight to the idealized image of Egyptian life presented by elite tombs.

Deir el-Medina became known in the early decades of the twentieth century through excavation and philological studies (most notably, Černy and Posener). It has stimulated a mass of valuable studies on central aspects of Egyptian society, such as schooling and literacy, economic practices (Janssen's work is especially noteworthy), labour organization, personal piety, marriage, adultery, relations between women (see the interesting no. 11, which may suggest that women withdrew to a special place during menstruation) and law. The latter presents particular problems in the Egyptian context, as no law-codes comparable to the Near Eastern legal collections are known. Andrea McDowell has studied this issue in detail (*Jurisdiction in the workmen's community of Deir el-Medina*, Leiden, 1990), and her section on law here (ch. v) is most valuable in making some of the fruits of her work available to the general reader. It draws out the many problematical aspects (note particularly nos. 144–9 on criminal procedures), and deftly sketches the lacunae in the material created by the fact that only certain types of cases were

subject to arbitration within the community itself, either by boards of 'magistrates' or through consultation with the local patron-god's oracle. Other, particularly criminal, matters came under the jurisdiction of the Theban city officials.

Problems with using this material abound, however. Deir el-Medina is usually called a 'village' (as in the title of the book), which is true only so far as concerns its size. But, as McDowell points out repeatedly, it was 'a purpose-built company town' (p. 4), inhabited by people engaged in highly specialized state-sponsored work. Most of their everyday needs (water, laundry, housework) were met by workers assigned to supply the essentials of life; their houses were state property; their food, tools and other equipment came from the state granary, treasury and temples. They received medical treatment (from doctors and magicians); they seem not to have worked more than two days in three; they were let off work when ill or their wives gave birth; and they received 'bounty-payments' on special occasions. Literacy rates are estimated to have been 40 per cent, with most boys receiving basic schooling. Some individuals were highly educated, able to read the classics of Egyptian literature, written in a language that had not been spoken for 6–700 years. They could, and did, own private plots of land outside the village, had sufficient resources to employ their colleagues to build and decorate their family vaults and sometimes built house extensions, which remained their private property (see, e.g., no. 17, where a father promises his daughter that, if her husband divorces her, she may live in the portico of his storehouse, which does not belong to pharaoh). In all respects, they represent a privileged and rather well-off section of society. As McDowell says, 'the community of Deir el-Medina does not represent a radically different stratum of Egyptian society from that documented by the great majority of surviving monuments...' (p. 7).

It does, however, allow insights into the dynamics of a vital segment of Egypt's society by dint of the sheer randomness of the textual record. This treasure-trove is beautifully illustrated by the almost 200 texts selected and translated here, each with an introduction that lays out the many associated difficulties with enviable clarity. Particularly useful is the discussion of the organization of work on the royal tombs, the occasional 'strikes' about hold-ups of pay, i.e. rations, and the break-up of the community late in the twentieth dynasty, when Egypt was effectively divided, with the royal burial ground moved to the northern centre of Tanis. The categories, according to which texts are arranged, inevitably overlap: 'Daily life' documents could as easily appear in 'Law'; separating 'Religion' from 'Literature' is not always easy. The author herself is aware of this and it does not in the least diminish the value of this delightful book. It is the most lucid introduction to this incomparable material currently available. It is a pleasure to read and a vivid guide to some of the most intimate and tricky aspects of Egyptian society.

AMÉLIE KUHRT

## THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

G. R. HAWTING: *The idea of idolatry and the emergence of Islam: from polemic to history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. xvii, 168 pp. £35.00.

For over one hundred years Christian and Jewish scholars, driven by scholarly rather than polemical concerns, have been subjecting the history of the emergence of Islam, as widely accepted by Muslims themselves, to rigorous examination. Over the past thirty years some of the most important and challenging work in this field has come from scholars at London's School of Oriental and African Studies and from those sympathetic to its intellectual milieu. In 1977 Patricia Crone and Michael Cook produced *Hagarism: the making of the Islamic World*, which sought to demonstrate the intimate links between the earliest forms of Islam and Jewish messianism. In the same year, John Wansbrough, applying to the Quran the ideas and methods of modern biblical scholarship, argued in his *Quranic studies* that the establishment of the text and its acceptance as scripture were part of the slow emergence of Islam itself rather than an achievement which has been expressed in the life of the Prophet. Patricia Crone in *Meccan trade and the rise of Islam* (1987) undermined the old sub-Marxist argument about the relationship between trade, changes in trade, and the rise of Islam; she demonstrated the considerable difficulties of accounting for the origins of Islam in seventh-century central and western Arabia. Already, in the previous year, in work with Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph*, she had pushed back in time the likely development of Sunni Islam by indicating the crucial importance of the struggle between the caliphs and the 'ulama in the second quarter of the third Islamic century for establishing the latter as religious authorities. This was an understanding which Norman Calder was able to help consolidate in his *Early Muslim jurisprudence* (1993).

This book lobs another weighty shell into the traditional understanding of the emergence of Islam. Hawting argues that it is unlikely that Islam arose in a rather remote part of Arabia which was, at the beginning of the seventh century A.D., beyond the boundaries of the monotheistic world. Such an explanation is not supported by a thoughtful analysis of the Quran, by much recent scholarship, and by current understandings of how monotheistic traditions emerge; moreover, it is an interpretation which sets Islam apart, which suggests that the Quran is in all likelihood a miracle, a work of revelation. The emergence of Islam, he argues, was the outcome of debates amongst monotheists rather than arguments with idolaters and polytheists. The 'associators' (*mushrikūn*), who are attacked in the Quran, were monotheists whose standards fell below those of true monotheism and hence in polemic were branded idolaters. Subsequent commentators on the Quran and the authors of associated literature, however, interpreted the language of

this polemic literally and came to identify the 'associators' with the idolatrous and polytheistic Arabs of Muhammad's world. Hawting finds some support for his position from a most interesting source within the Islamic tradition. It was the position of the great eighteenth-century reformer Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1206/1796) that the quranic attacks on 'associators' and idolaters were directed at people who regarded themselves as monotheists.

Hawting carries forward his argument in closely argued prose which is throughout fully alert to scholarship in Arabic and in European languages that relates to his case. He embraces, too, the insights which philology, epigraphy, archaeology and modern biblical scholarship can bring to the matter. He begins by setting the context of current scholarship and examines the problems of seeing the Quran, and the tradition which elaborated it, as evidence for the nature of religion in the *jāhiliyya*. He goes on to examine the accusations of associationism and idolatry in the Quran finding them directed at backsliding monotheists. Then, turning to monotheistic polemic in general, he demonstrates how the quranic polemic echoes its practice. In his last three chapters he examines both the nature of the Islamic literary tradition about the idolatrous religion of the pre-Islamic Arabs and what can be learned from evidence from outside the Islamic tradition.

Hawting concludes by asking the question, if his argument about the unsatisfactory nature of the Islamic tradition's description of the *jāhiliyya* is right, and if the Quran itself is much more likely to be the outcome of internal debates amongst monotheists, how is it that the traditional understanding of the rise of Islam came about? He is sceptical of the idea that scholars were misled into understanding the quranic attacks on the 'associators' and idolaters literally. He prefers to suggest that 'one possible reason for the emphasis on the *jāhiliyya*, as it was conceived in the Muslim tradition, as the background to the Koran would be to associate the revelation with the career of Muhammad who was remembered to have been active in Arabia...' This conclusion is put tentatively, and with modesty; its implications are immense.

FRANCIS ROBINSON

FRANKLIN D. LEWIS: *Rumi: past and present, East and West: the life, teaching and poetry of Jalāl al-Dīn Rumi*. 3 maps, 1 fig., 686 pp. Oxford: Oneworld, 2000. £26.99.

The author states clearly in the introduction to this long overdue volume that his is not 'the

final and definitive biography of Rumi' but if not the final, this biography will surely more than satisfy the needs of both scholars and the growing number of Rumi fans while that definitive biography is being composed. In addition to providing a very thorough biography of the Sufi-poet Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, Lewis has compiled an invaluable cross-referenced source book for the study of not only the work and teachings of Rūmī and the Mevlevi order, but also of the proliferating Rūmī 'industry', both past and present. This is a truly comprehensive book, labelled a 'Rumi bible' by the author, that has led Julie Scott Meisami so succinctly to opine of Lewis in her foreword that 'he appears to have read everything, in every relevant language, both by and about Rumi' (p. xii).

Lewis's biography of Rūmī incorporates not only the life and work of the poet's father, Bahā' al-Dīn Valad, and of his son and successor, Sulṭān Valad, but also of Burhān al-Dīn Muḥaqqiq Tirmidhī, Rūmī's early spiritual mentor (d.1241), and of the highly controversial figure, Shams al-Dīn Tabrīzī, whose unaccounted disappearance is still the subject of much debate.

The three main sources for Rūmī's life and times, which were written between twenty and seventy years after the 'Maulānā's' death, come under close critical scrutiny. His son, Sulṭān Valad (d.1312), a disciple, Ferīdūn Sepahsālār (d.1295/1340?), and the Mevlevi sufi, Aḥmad Aflākī (d.1260), all wrote hagiographies concentrating more on Maulānā's spiritual influence and the fantastical than on the historically accurate details of his life. Lewis studiously compares and contrasts the work of each of these three intimates along with a wealth of other diverse source material to unravel the mythical and legendary from the plausible and verifiably authentic accounts of Rūmī's life. The discrepancies, the differing versions of events, and the relative weaknesses and strengths of the various sources are all laid out for the reader's benefit while concurrently, Lewis's own conclusions and solutions to this maze of material are also clearly expounded and justified. This pattern of presentation is repeated in all sections of this book and the result is extremely satisfactory. It leaves both the casual and scholarly reader with a clear and conclusive view of what is often a confusing picture of events, and at the same time it gives an account and an analysis of the background and alternatives to this view for the benefit of the scholarly reader.

The contextual details concerning the milieu in which Rūmī lived are a very welcome addition to this study. Lewis provides the fruits of his own research into the work of the mysterious Shams al-Dīn Tabrīzī, with his own translations of this hitherto often inaccessible material, from which he gleans a great deal of information concerning both mentor and man. Tabrīzī has often been portrayed as an unschooled *qalandar* by such early commentators as the Herati poet, Jāmī, and anthologist, Dawlatshāh, and later by European scholars such as E. G. Browne, J. W. Redhouse and R. A. Nicholson. Lewis, basing his conclusions on the descriptions found in Sulṭān Valad, Aflākī, and from Shams al-Dīn Tabrīzī's own

writings, has now dispelled these myths and reveals Tabrīzī to have been 'a man well versed in the philosophical and theological discourse of his day, though something of an iconoclast' (p. 137). Lewis's is the first book in English to make use of the biography, a selection of writings and a critical edition of Tabrīzī's lectures produced and edited in Tehran by Muḥammad 'Alī Muvahhid. Also for the first time in English the work and influence of Rūmī's earlier mentor, Burhān al-Dīn Muḥaqqiq, is examined at length, and from this study Rūmī's traditional Islamic grounding and Sunni background are emphasized. Burhān al-Dīn Muḥaqqiq's work is quoted copiously and his profound influence on Rūmī's development is demonstrated through contextual citations. Rūmī's Islamic schooling was, of course, initiated by his father, Bahā' al-Dīn Valad, himself a cleric and preacher, and Lewis devotes a whole chapter to this often neglected man's teachings, writing, and spiritual life. However, though the three Rūmī hagiographers would paint their saint's father in glowing colours and embellish his career in renown and fame, Lewis debunks these fables and portrays a more modest figure who did eventually find some deserved status and recognition in Konya at the age of 80.

Moving on from the world of Rūmī and his family, Lewis devotes nearly a third of his book to the reception of Rūmī in the East and West, past and present. A chapter of his volume explores the Mevlevi order founded in Konya by Rūmī's son Sulṭān Valad, and which today can boast international following exemplified by the Mevlevi Order of America. However, Rūmī has had a greater impact on the Islamic world than he has on America and Europe, and Lewis has given a valuable overview of this influence on Persian, Turkish and Urdu literature in particular and on the theosophy and thinking of the wider Muslim world in general. Though less profound, Lewis does not dismiss Rūmī's influence in the West and he presents an exhaustive study of the translations and adaptations of Rūmī's work up to the present day even including appearances in cyberspace with a handful of web addresses. In fact, although a tongue-in-cheek attitude can be detected and his own misgivings are not always hidden, Lewis gives a comprehensive survey of the present day 'Rumi industry' in all its aspects, considering the role of Rūmī in the New Age movement and the depiction of Rūmī and Shams Tabrīzī as gay icons as well as Maulānā's entry into popular culture and his enduring presence as the subject of serious scholarly pursuit.

Evident in every page of this welcome volume is the author's deep knowledge and understanding of his subject, demonstrated not least by his own numerous translations of Rūmī's work scattered liberally throughout his text. One whole chapter is reserved for a critical analysis of Rūmī's poetry and includes fifty poems translated and annotated by Lewis.

Franklin Lewis's contribution to his subject is immense and is certainly as yet unparalleled.

GEORGE LANE

NICHOLAS AWDE (ed. and tr.): *Women in Islam: an anthology from the Qur'an and hadiths*. 224 pp. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000. £14.99.

This volume is an anthology of translations of major references to women in the Quran and *hadiths*, using al-Bukhārī—one of the 'Two Sound Collections' of *hadiths*. In his one-page introduction, Awde explains why he opts for al-Bukhārī's collection rather than that of Muslim: 'although both contain more or less the same material, al-Bukhari is acknowledged to be the clearer and more concise of the two ... [and] holds a special place in Islam as the pinnacle of all such collections' (p. 7). Likewise, in the subsequent one-page 'Notes on the selections', we learn that both quranic excerpts and *hadiths* are original translations for the volume, and that the compiler sees no need either to explore their varied interpretations or to provide them with a context. While admitting that 'many hadiths may have several interpretations, often taken together without conflict', Awde maintains that 'one therefore takes each as a flexible unit. Also, there should be no cause for concern over verses of the Qur'an being taken out of context; for the most part these were revealed separately, and only much later was it agreed to arrange them in the order in which they are now found' (p. 8).

Awde arranges his selections of quranic verses and *hadith* narratives into twenty chapters, which constitute the bulk of the book (pp. 11–144), and are as varied and as unconnected as their titles suggest: 'Hygiene', 'Divorce', 'Widowhood and death', 'The day of judgement', 'Heaven and hell', 'Justice and law', 'Modesty and clothing', 'Marriage', 'Prayer', 'Religion', 'Sex, unlawful sex and chastity', 'Status and rights', 'Travel', 'Inheritance', 'Family and care', 'Property, possession and wealth', 'Social conduct', 'Mother and children', 'General', and finally, 'Islamic women'. Within each chapter, the quranic verses appear in bold face, which makes it easy for the reader to distinguish them from al-Bukhārī's *hadith* collection. Some chapters contain a single quranic verse; for instance, that on hygiene, which apparently refers to the case of a woman who has three periods a month. The materials within each chapter are presented with neither commentary nor contextualization.

These chapters are followed by three appendices (pp. 147–75) and Notes (pp. 176–206). Appendix one contains 'Further selections from the Qur'an'; but nowhere does the author explain his decision to relegate these verses to an appendix rather than including them in the chapters to which they correspond. The purpose of this appendix remains obscure. The other two are more straightforward, one listing the names of women who appear in the Quran, and the other providing a glossary of some of the 'significant names that occur in the hadith of this volume'. There is one odd error: Hafsa is listed as the Prophet's daughter who married the second Caliph, 'Umar, whereas she was

actually 'Umar's daughter who married the Prophet.

In the notes which conclude the main text of the book, Awde does provide a context for some of the quranic verses and *hadiths*, but his concern is solely linguistic. Although the notes are useful in clarifying the meaning of some terms, there is no attempt to locate the selections in either historical or sociological context. The fact that they belong to a range of different historical eras, at varying distances from the present, seems of no concern to the compiler, who treats them as texts whose meanings are self-evident. It is perhaps useful to remind ourselves of one of the basic rules of hermeneutics: that texts can have different meanings to different people at different times.

Awde tells us that his compilation 'reinforces the central position of women in the Revelation of Islam to the Prophet Muhammad and its development by his followers' (p. 7). But, by allowing the excerpts to 'stand without comment' and by ignoring their historical and cultural contexts, the book ends up reinforcing common contemporary stereotypes about women in Islam. The book must consequently remain of limited value, and should be used with caution.

ZIBA MIR-HOSSEINI

JOHN RENARD (ed.): *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim sources on spirituality and religious life*. xxii, 431 pp. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998. \$55, \$22 (paper); £40, £15.95 (paper).

*Windows on the House of Islam* is the companion volume to John Renard's own narrative textbook *Seven doors to Islam* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1996), and as such it should be considered with reference to that work as part of a single project. As indicated in its sub-title, it is an anthology of translated passages taken from primary sources on Muslim spirituality and religious life. Renard, as the editor, has collected together the collaborative efforts of over thirty renowned specialists in Islamic studies. Boasting, in addition to the translations, a bright and attractive cover as well as over sixty (black and white) illustrations, this work is bound to prove popular with students of Islam as well as lay readers.

Since the aim of *Windows on the House of Islam* is to provide a more in-depth knowledge of the same topics that are covered in *Seven doors to Islam*, it necessarily follows the same innovative organizational framework as its companion volume, which is based on the following section divisions: (1) Foundations: prophetic revelation; (2) Devotion: ritual and personal prayer; (3) Inspiration: edification and ethics; (4) Aesthetics: from allegory to arabesque; (5) Community: society, institutions and patronage; (6) Pedagogy: fanning spark into flame; (7) Experience: testimony and paradigm.

Renard's approach has the virtue of focusing on some of the more neglected aspects of

Islamic civilization which have become increasingly appealing to a wide readership. However, it presents an incomplete picture, since it omits completely the main scholastic disciplines of jurisprudence and theology, which account for a substantial proportion of the corpus of Islamic literature, and are even acknowledged by Renard himself to represent 'crucial elements in the study of Islamic religion' (*Seven doors*, p. xiv). This would seem to imply that his two volumes are not intended for use as the sole textbooks in a general study of Islam, but rather in combination with the more traditional works that are already available.

In addition to the themes on which Renard chooses to focus, his organizational framework also reveals the 'phenomenological' approach that he follows. He describes this as 'a hybrid method... whose ultimate purpose is to show the thread of Islamic spirituality discernible across the length and breadth of the Islamic world' (ibid.). Despite the allure and accessibility of such an approach, in common with other works which pursue the same kind of ultimate goal, Renard's project can be criticized for being relatively weak in its presentation of historical development as well as for a tendency towards essentialization. Renard gives priority to accommodating sources originating from a wide selection of locations and in a diversity of forms; they include translations from several languages, including Swahili, Gayo and Pashto, and in unusual forms, such as the transcript of a radio *mawlid* ceremony (pp. 107–16) and a set of orally-transmitted stories collected by an anthropologist (p. 159). He also highlights long neglected subjects, such as the biographies of devout Muslim women (pp. 130–8). The extensive appendix serves to facilitate the location of texts translated from a particular language, as well as by author and genre.

*Windows on the House of Islam* joins a growing list of anthologies, indicating that translated texts are increasingly regarded as indispensable for the study of Islam beyond the introductory level. This volume serves best as a means of expanding an introduction to Islam by offering 'real specimens' which illustrate the main themes covered. However, its value for developing critical reading skills in advanced students is limited. Whilst this is due largely to the omission of the more technical and scholastic texts, those translated texts that are included in *Windows* may have served the same purpose if their original structure was highlighted in the translation. This would have required a consistent method of translation and the demarcation of structural divisions within each text, which would perhaps have proven impossible in a collaborative project on this scale. It could also have been facilitated by the inclusion of texts that represent the historical development of key genres. However, the virtues of this rich and diverse collection outweigh the drawbacks in the editor's chosen method, although there is still evidently room for further anthologies that are designed specifically for the requirements of advanced students, and take into account the aforementioned issues.

JAWID A. MOJADDEDI

FARĪDU'DĪN 'ATTĀR; translated by PETER AVERY: *The speech of the birds, concerning migration to the real: the Mantıqu't-tair*. xxii, 560 pp. Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1998. £45.00, £19.95 (paper).

WHEELER M. THACKSTON (ed. and tr.): *The Jahangirnāma: memoirs of Jahangir, emperor of India*. xxv, 502 pp., frontispiece. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press (in association with the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery), 1999. \$65.00, £50.00.

As the cultural language for many centuries of the royal and religious institutions of much of Islamic Asia, Persian is the vehicle for one of the world's indisputably great literatures. The fact that its status is still not as properly recognized in the English-speaking world as it deserves to be is partly a consequence of the relatively small number of English translations which are both reliable and readable. While reliability has been the guiding principle of most scholarly translations, public taste has not unreasonably preferred versions which can be read with enjoyment. So it is that the popularity attained by Fitzgerald's notoriously free reworkings of 'Umar Khayyām is currently being matched in the reception being accorded on both sides of the Atlantic by a contemporary readership hungry for spirituality to the still more creative refashionings of Rūmī by Coleman Barks, who works at third hand from English prose translations of Gölpınarlı's Turkish versions.

In addressing the market for translations of Sufi literature, there are of course formidable intrinsic obstacles in the well-known difficulties of converting the highly stylized rhetorical conventions of the Persian *ghazal* into recognizable English without excessive dilution of the original in the process. But since the looser style of the narrative *mathnawī* is less problematic in this regard, it is perhaps surprising that a major poem in quite straightforward style, which is also conveniently the size of modern book, like 'Attār's *Mantiq al-tayr*, has not attracted more translators. Fitzgerald himself was unsatisfied with the attempted verse abridgement which he called *The bird-parliament*, and for many years English readers had to resort to C. S. Nott's cut-down prose version of Garcin de Tassy's mid-nineteenth century French rendering. This situation was happily ended with the publication in 1984 of *The conference of the birds*, the Penguin Classics translation by Darbandi and Davis, whose brave choice of heroic couplets is triumphantly vindicated by the success with which the discipline engendered by the rhymes is deployed to help reproduce the spirit as well as the letter of 'Attār's poetic masterpiece.

Avery's handsomely produced translation is based on the same modern standard edition of the text by Goharin, and includes both the

extensive prologue and shorter epilogue omitted from the Penguin version. It also provides a generous 120 pages of endnotes, including much useful material from Goharin as well as explanations of quranic references, etc. Students of Sufism will greatly welcome as an additional bonus the inclusion in an appendix of a translation of a short but wonderful cognate text, the *Risālat al-tuyūr* by Aḥmad Ghazālī.

Although Avery invokes the sufficiency of *cor ad cor loquitur* to justify the brevity of his introduction, it has however to be said that, for all its greater literal fidelity, his version is unlikely to take over the place which the Darbandi-Davis translation has won in the affections of many readers. The compressed spriteliness of their couplets is well caught in one of the taunting speeches addressed to Shaykh Ṣamʿān (aka Ṣanʿān) by his lovely Christian tormentress (verses 1337–40).

She laughed: 'You shameless fool, take my advice—

Prepare yourself for death and paradise!  
Forget flirtatious games, your breath is cold;  
Stop chasing love, remember you are old.  
It is a shroud you need, not me! How could  
You hope for wealth when you must beg  
for food?'

Contrast the determinedly literal accuracy of Avery's rendering:

The girl upbraided him, 'O dotard of the day,  
Prepare camphor and a shroud. Have shame!  
Since your breath is cold, cease begging  
for intimacy:

You've grown old. Stop dicing with the heart.  
Now to be bent on preparing the winding  
sheet is for you;

It strikes me as preferable to your being bent  
on me.

How can you be capable of exercising  
sovereign mastery,  
When you will not find bread enough to  
fill you?'

Here each of 'Aṭṭār's hemistichs is certainly carefully reproduced, but Avery's strategy of keeping the original word order so as to retain 'echoes of the original's cadences'—exemplified in the syntax of his fifth line, exactly mirroring that of *in zamān 'azm-i kafan kardan turā*—is rather at odds with most modern expectations, and often makes his translation seem decidedly more old-fashioned than its predecessor.

As at home in seventeenth-century India as it was in twelfth-century Khurasan, Persian was also the language of the prose memoirs composed by the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr. These are entitled the *Tūzuk-i Jahāngīrī* both in the pioneering *editio princeps* by the great reformer Sayyid Ahmad Khān (1863) and in the standard English translation by Rogers, edited by Beveridge, which was first published in two volumes by the Royal Asiatic Society in 1909–14, and which remains conveniently available through Indian reprints. But as Thackston explains in the highly informative preface to his new version of this important and fascinating text, the emperor himself preferred the name *Jahāngīrnāma*, which is consequently also the main title of the standard modern Tehran edition by Muhammad Hashim (1980).

While paying tribute to the exceptional precision and accuracy of the old Rogers-Beveridge version, Thackston also rightly remarks on its often stilted awkwardness, a stylistic quality which may be illustrated in the passage (vol. I, p. 72) frequently cited by Sikh historians which mentions the fifth Sikh Guru Arjan:

In Gobindwāl, which is on the river Bīyāh (Beas), there was a Hindu named Arjun, in the garments of sainthood and sanctity, so much so that he had captured many of the simple-hearted of the Hindus, and even of the ignorant and foolish followers of Islam, by his ways and manners, and they had loudly sounded the drum of his holiness. They called him *Gūrū*, and from all sides stupid people crowded to worship and manifest complete faith in him. For three or four generations (of spiritual successors) they had kept his shop warm.

Thackston's version of the same passage (p. 59) replaces the awkwardly literal renderings of expressions linked by the Persian *idāfa* (*libās-i pīrī u shaykhī, kūś-i pīrī u wilāyat*, etc.) and of Persian idioms (*in dukān-rā garm mīdāshand*) by more natural equivalents, while also making tacit adjustments to Jahāngīr's sloppy syntax—a feature doubtless to be associated with the emperor's famously unashamed appetite for alcohol and other mood-altering substances:

There was a Hindu named Arjan in Gobindwal on the banks of the Beas River. Pretending to be a spiritual guide, he had won over as devotees many simple-minded Indians and even some ignorant, stupid Muslims by broadcasting his claims to be a saint. They called him guru. Many fools from all around had recourse to him and believed in him implicitly. For three or four generations they had been peddling this same stuff.

So, unlike Avery's rendering of the *Mantiq al-tayr*, Thackston's translation of the *Jahāngīrnāma* really is a new one, and should appeal to many readers put off by the archaism of the old Rogers-Beveridge version. Its attraction is greatly enhanced by the magnificent format in which it has been produced, including many lavish colour illustrations of Mughal paintings and other *objets d'art*. Users of Thackston's recent *Bāburnāma* will find that a similarly helpful level of scholarship has been deployed in the carefully compiled preface, notes, glossary, appendices and index accompanying this freshly rendered *Jahāngīrnāma*, whose only drawback is that it weighs in at some 5lb., making it much better suited to the desk or the coffee-table than to the lap.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE

PIERRE BONTE, ANNE-MARIE BRISEBARRE and ALTAN GOKALP (ed.): *Sacrifices en Islam. Espaces et temps d'un rituel*. 465 pp. Paris: CNRS Editions, 1999. FF 190, \$35.

This book is the fruitful result of long collaborative research that fills an important gap in the

study of sacrificial practices in Islam. The editors rightly point out that the lack of attention to sacrifice in Islam is striking, given the vast amount of anthropological literature on the subject. Sacrifice is not among the 'five pillars' of Islamic faith (declaration of faith, daily devotions, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage to Mecca), but anthropologists are familiar with the idea that terms like 'sacrifice' do not easily delimit a distinct type of ritual activity. To assume this would almost amount to thinking that every case is a variant of a fundamental and original sacrifice. The authors of this book stress the great variety of 'sacrifice' that exists among the various examples they provide. Focusing on practice rather than on formal doctrine (with the exception of ch. ii), they are able to locate sacrifice at the heart of a wide range of practices, many of which have been previously studied without specific attention to their sacrificial aspects.

The volume is organized into five sections consisting of three chapters each, including an instructive foreword on anthropological approaches to sacrifice. Pierre Bonte leads the first, introductory, section with an overview of various aspects of Islamic sacrifice in order to demonstrate the underlying structural logic. He examines the model represented by Abraham's great act of sacrifice in relation to the sacrifice of sheep during pilgrimage to Mecca and following the birth of a male child, both of which are recommended in the traditions associated with the deeds and words of the Prophet (*sunna*). The general methodological and theoretical reference adopted here is the sacrificial model of Hubert and Mauss (1968 [1899]), according to which, sacrifice establishes communication between the sacred and profane by the intermediary of a 'victim'. Bonte modifies the model, preferring L. de Heusch's notions of 'conjunction' and 'disjunction' to 'sacred' and 'profane'. He states:

les logiques symboliques en œuvre dans les rituels sacrificiels musulmans sont ainsi fondées sur la distinction, conjonction et la reséparation de principes qu'on peut réduire ultiment à une opposition du masculin et du féminin et qui se développent de manière classificatoire au fondement symbolique de ces rituels (p. 34).

The author argues that, despite the ideological effects of the Abrahamic model, which privileges the masculine and the male relations with the divine, the feminine dimension is indispensable to an understanding of the logic of sacrifice.

In the next chapter, Hocine Benkheira looks at Islamic law (*fiqh*) with regard to animal slaughter and meat consumption. His aim is to invoke Islamic tenets, without regard to the way these may or may not be reflected and interpreted in practice. Anne-Marie Brisebarre then provides ethnographic details of domestic animal slaughter in urban centres, including among Muslim immigrants in Western Europe.

Sacrifice and life course rituals are the theme of the second section of this volume. Françoise Aubaile-Sallenave's comparative study (ch. iv) focuses on the diversities and similarities of birth rites across a wide range of

Muslim societies in different historical periods; this is followed by Hayat Zirari's ch. v, which compares male and female birth rites in Morocco, with specific attention to the role of women. Marie Virolle (ch. vi) looks at traditional Kabyle sacrificial rituals as an integral system encompassing calendrical, natural and life course rituals of death and concludes by asking whether a link may be established between the dying traditional rituals and the political killings in contemporary Algeria. In the third section, the authors consider more closely the social links. Aida Kanafani-Zahar's chapter (vii), which is based on fieldwork during 1994–98 in a Lebanese village, considers the dynamics between Christians and Muslims who participate in each other's festive sacrificial meals. In the context of the transhumance mode of livelihood of the Atlas mountains in southern Morocco, Mohamad Mahdi (ch. viii) considers also non-bloody sacrificial rites based on cereal and dairy produce and reflects on male and female roles. Pierre Bonte (ch. ix) concludes this section with a symbolic and social analysis of the *t'argiba*, a protective sacrificial rite in Western Sahara.

The next three chapters (section 4) look at propitiatory and thaumaturgical rites in Turkey (Altan Gokalp ch. x), among Pakistani Sufi pilgrims in Manchester (Pnina Werbner, ch. xi, a translation of an English publication) and among North African Muslims in Paris (Liliane Kuczynski, ch. xii). Werbner inverts the economist's model of self-interest as the basis of sacrifice, arguing that pilgrims use commercial idioms with an aim of fostering moral unity. The fifth and final section focuses on sacrificial 'possession' rites that are marginal or transgressive and contain African-Muslim elements, but the authors avoid the problems of history and social change raised in syncretistic analyses, which often assume the blending of two holistic traditions. Those described are the Sufi *rab* rituals practised by the Lébu in Senegal (A. Moustapha Diop, ch. xiii), *zâr* rituals of Wad Madani in the Gezira region of Sudan (Sadok Abdelsalam, ch. xiv), and finally the Moroccan Gnawa Sufi rituals called *sirr* (secret, mystery of initiation), where blood plays a key role (Bertrand Hell, ch. xv).

What emerges in this volume is that sacrifice is a complex symbolic practice, different aspects of which may be elaborated in different social settings, due in part to an absence of canonical elaboration. Indeed, the word 'sacrifice' has served quite rightly merely as a convenient pointer to a cluster of phenomena contained within a wider family of ritual practices. The similarities and minimum structure, which Bonte suggests (ch. i) are present in the range of sacrificial examples provided, seem therefore rather more vague than helpful. Moreover, the authors take a generally benevolent view, focusing mostly on ways in which sacrificial practices further social cohesion. Less attention is given to the asymmetrical relations between those who are able to act as magnanimous sacrificers and those who cannot, or between those who call for sacrifice and those who bear the costs. Even so, this scholarly book adds substantially to our knowledge of sacrificial practices, allowing for variation as well as a more general comparative framework without



essentializing 'Islam' nor overlying privileging local knowledge and practices.

AZAM TORAB

RICHARD TAPPER: *Frontier nomads of Iran: a political and social history of the Shahsevan*. xvii, 429 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. £45.

This authoritative account of the Shahsevan of Azerbaijan, written as far as possible from the point of view of the people themselves as well as the states with which they came in contact, draws on fieldwork carried out in the 1960s and subsequent visits in the 1990s, as well as a range of Iranian, Russian and British primary and secondary sources. Supported by much description and analysis of the wider political context and comparative discussion, it is a major contribution by a leading social anthropologist to the study of pastoral nomadic tribes in Iran, and to the debate on 'tribe-state relations' in the Middle East.

Professor Tapper begins by raising a number of general issues. He draws attention, for example, to the difficulty of defining the term 'tribe', and suggests that there never was a uniform or archetypal tribal structure in Iran. He also emphasizes the need for care in trying to reconstruct the tribal past by extrapolating from modern ethnographies, illustrating the point with reference to one or two not entirely successful efforts.

In Parts 1 and 2 he focuses on the origins of the Shahsevan tribes and tribal confederacy. Shahsevan comes from *shahisevan*, 'friends of the Shah'; John Malcolm, whose *History of Persia* was first published in 1815, was principally responsible for the widely-held view that Shah Abbas I (1587–1629) created the confederacy to help him control unruly Qizilbash tribes. Tapper's meticulous examination of the primary sources reveals no evidence for this. Not until the later seventeenth century, it appears, comes mention of nomadic groups referred to as Shahsevan living in the Ardabil-Moghan region. By the early eighteenth century we hear of the presence of six or seven named groups there, some of which (or their chiefs) are also described as Shahsevan. These were, Tapper suggests, mixed and shifting groupings, 'tribal clusters', comprising several *taifeh* (tribes), which had gathered around a chief who could offer protection and security. However, the Shahsevan tribal confederacy itself was not formed until the 1730s when Nader Shah Afshar moved some of the groups to Khurasan and united the remainder under a paramount chief. In keeping with this, Tapper points out, a second version of Shashevan origins developed, according to which the ancestor of the ruling élite had been granted authority over the tribes and rights over the pastures by a former Shah.

Part 3 explores the impact of Russian imperialism and the Iranian government's response. The most serious development was the loss of much of the best winter pasture in Moghan in 1883, when the Russians, who had

acquired these in 1828, refused to allow them access any longer. Tapper explains that the confederacy, which had already divided in two in the later eighteenth century, began to break down as the Iranian government responded to Russian pressure by declining to recognize a paramount chief, pursuing instead a policy of divide and rule among the tribes. As a result competing tribal clusters again became prominent in the later nineteenth century, some led by members of a new chiefly élite.

In Part 4 Tapper takes the story to the mid-1990s. He gives us an absorbing account of the way in which the Shahsevan chiefs resorted to banditry in the early twentieth century, explaining that this was not the result of 'an addiction, a cultural phenomenon or a principle of social organisation' (p. 323), but a pastoral people's response to difficult economic and political conditions. Since then, however, they have been increasingly brought under the government's control, and though an attempt to settle them forcibly in the 1930s failed, settlement remains the ultimate objective.

Nevertheless, so far the Shahsevan have survived as a distinct group, although Tapper points out that by the 1960s the bases of their identity had changed. Earlier in the century the most important criterion was membership of a recognized *taifa*, and all the tribespeople gave their allegiance to a chief. However, the chiefs were in theory at least abolished in 1960, and the label Shahsevan has become a more inclusive one, encompassing groups of diverse origin and signifying tribally organized pastoral nomads as opposed to settled peasants. In keeping with this, Tapper points out, a third account of Shahsevan origins has emerged, one which reflects the perspective of the people rather than that of the state or the chiefs, according to which they are and always have been thirty-two tribes.

Tapper's picture of distinct and relatively permanent tribes coalescing under various largely external pressures into more unstable tribal clusters, and being formed by the state into a confederacy with an overall chief, which after a time began to devolve into a decentralized but still distinct tribal grouping, is a convincing one, and invites comparison with developments in other parts of Iran. Indeed the Shahsevan evidence leads Tapper to suggest that throughout the country as a whole tribal confederacies and chiefs were largely creations of the state. In fact, he argues, not only did the state assemble tribal groups and appoint chiefs, but it also indirectly created the whole tribal system 'by controlling its terms of existence through print and propaganda' (p. 345).

There are points on which one would like Tapper to have developed his ideas further. For example, given that among the Kurds living across the border in Ottoman territory, religious leaders played an important role during the nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries, more discussion of the reasons for the absence of such leadership (and millennial movements) among the Shahsevan at this time would have been welcome.

However, *Frontier nomads* is an impressive work of scholarship, demonstrating the breadth of Tapper's knowledge and his historical as well as ethnographic skills, and his ability to

combine them to good effect. The most wide-ranging historical study of any Iranian tribal group so far published, it is definitely required reading for anyone interested in the history and society of Iran and the relationship between tribe and state in general. There are appendices with notes on the Kharagan and Khamseh Shahsevan, lists and histories of the Shahsevan tribes of Azerbaijan itself, and accounts by the tribesmen themselves recorded in the 1960s, and the book is illustrated with photos, maps and charts.

HUGH BEATTIE

ABDULAZIZ A. AL-SUDAIRI: *A vision of the Middle East: an intellectual biography of Albert Hourani*. xiii, 221 pp. Oxford: The Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I. B. Tauris, 1999. £25.

Albert Hourani inspired generations of students of the Middle East through his writings. For those who were fortunate enough to know him personally, that inspiration was redoubled, fired not simply by his ideas, but also by the warmth and care he displayed in encouraging and guiding the research of others. His books capture something of that spirit. They are clear and accessible. At the same time, they introduce the reader to the works of other scholars in a fair and reasoned way. Hourani's voice is never absent, but it is neither hectoring nor dogmatic and makes itself heard as much through the presentation of the argument, as through argument itself.

This gentle and scholarly approach developed during Hourani's long career at Oxford which epitomized for many the pleasures of *la vita contemplativa*. However, as was the case for many scholars of his generation who resumed university careers in the late 1940s, it had been preceded by a very different, more active, life in the world of war and political struggle. Specifically, through wartime service, Hourani had first been drawn into the British efforts to defend their imperial interests in the Middle East. Once that danger was past, he involved himself in the attempts by some of the Arab states to deal with the consequences of Great Britain's post-war withdrawal from Palestine.

As al-Sudairi's book makes clear, these experiences had a profound effect not only on Hourani's life and ideas, but also marked his scholarly output in significant ways. In the first place, it provided the basis for the research that underpinned his books on minorities and on Syria and Lebanon. Secondly, it gave him a first-hand experience, disillusioning and bitter as it proved to be, of one of the great failures of Arab nationalism. Hourani's involvement in the work of the Arab Office during the years 1946–48 propelled him from the position of scholar and analyst into that of advocate and propagandist on behalf of the Arab cause in Palestine. However, as has been too obviously the case subsequently, there was not simply one Arab cause. Like all the other institutions set up by the mutually suspicious governments

of the Arab states at the time, ostensibly to present a united front against the possibility of the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, the Arab Office was riven by the competition of rival networks, responding to antagonistic patrons among the Arab leaders.

These experiences and the disaster that befell Arab Palestine partly as a result led not only to Hourani's return to Oxford. They also appear to have led him to write his renowned study of Arab thought during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is there, in describing the emergence of an elegant and romantic idea of Arab nationalism, developed by intellectuals for intellectuals, that Hourani seemed to find his vocation. The study—which ended in 1939—could focus on the articulation of these powerful and seductive ideas. It did not have to engage with what became of them in the compromised and disillusioning world of state and factional politics.

Indeed, Hourani's lack of engagement with politics became a notable feature of his life and works thereafter. His experiences in the Middle East had made him wary of active political involvement. He had also become convinced that scholarship aimed at informing policy making was likely to be either deeply compromised or risibly superficial. The same fears underpinned his reluctance to be held up as a commentator or pundit on current events in the Middle East, deeply as he might have felt about these events as a private individual. However, these understandable and in many senses commendable reservations also seemed to extend to the avoidance in much of his work of the study of politics in all its variety. The turbulence and passion of politics, as well as its more sordid and violent sides, whether in the Middle East or elsewhere, are largely missing from Hourani's accounts of history. Perhaps because of his caution regarding the political world that he knew, he tended to take a perspective that rose above the strangely intimate struggles which move history forward—and shape the ways in which it is narrated.

Al-Sudairi gives an accurate, if rather abbreviated, account of the life which formed the backdrop to these themes in Hourani's works. His main intention is to focus on the published works themselves. These form the bases of chapters which read more or less like summaries of the works themselves. Occasionally, these précis are supplemented by points raised in interviews between Hourani and the author. However, it was rather disappointing to find that al-Sudairi relied so heavily on summary, rather than on critique or on detailed exploration of the themes characterizing Hourani's work. Intellectual biography is not an easy art to practise. At the very least, it would seem to demand engagement with the ideational world of the subject, not simply on the subject's own terms, but through a well-developed theory of knowledge which would provide the reader with a distinctive framework in which to understand the multiple influences that shape the ideas of any individual. The absence of such features here is to be regretted, but the book does remind us of the importance of Hourani as a scholar of the Middle East—

and is to be commended for providing a very detailed bibliography of all his published works.

CHARLES TRIPP

KLAUS SCHWARZ (aus dem Nachlass herausgegeben von Claudia Römer): *Osmanische Sultansurkunden: Untersuchungen zur Einstellung und Besoldung osmanischer Militärs in der Zeit Murads III.* (Freiburger Islamstudien. Band XVII.) 483 pp. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997. DM 198.

This work, which was to have formed the Habilitationsschrift of the late—and much missed—Klaus Schwarz, is a close study of 202 documents relating to the appointment and payment of Ottoman troops during the reign of Murad III (1574–95). The documents themselves are all from the Başbakanlık Archive in Istanbul, and represent various genres: there are letters of appointment (*berat*), orders to pay salaries from specified revenue sources (*havale*), petitions (*arz*), orders to provincial governors for the initial grants of fiefs, orders to grant increases in salaries and fief-holdings, and other miscellaneous documents. The work provides us with all of the documents in facsimile, including endorsements where these exist, a full *catalogue raisonné* summarizing their contents, with the complete text in transliteration and translation of a representative document of each type. The work also has a full introduction which describes the characteristics of each document type, and draws conclusions from their contents about the process of administration in appointing and paying soldiers, whether they were fief-holding cavalrymen or garrison troops. In addition, it has a full bibliography, index, and maps locating the places mentioned in the text.

From this bald description of the contents, it may seem as though the book is for reference only, or of interest solely to those who are working within this specialized field and period. However, like many works which rest securely on the close analysis of texts and the careful study of detail, topics emerge which are of very much wider interest than the title implies. In particular, Schwarz has provided what are perhaps the best descriptions of two essential procedures in the functioning of Ottoman government. The first of these is the process of appointing cavalrymen to fiefs. On the basis of his documents, Schwarz gives a very clear analysis of the steps involved from petition to appointment, at the same time questioning Klaus Röhrborn's conclusion that in the late sixteenth century the Palace came to exercise a closer control of the allocation of fiefs than had been usual in the earlier period. The second important issue is the process whereby the central government made payments directly from local tax-farms. This was a means not only of paying garrison troops, but also of meeting many other items of government expenditure, such as provisions for the army or fleet. Schwarz's useful analysis of the process will be invaluable to many who struggle to comprehend Ottoman financial administration. So too will the names of the *defterdars* and facsimiles of their 'signatures' which Schwarz has tabulated. In the end, however, what makes this work readable, rather than simply a work of reference, is the amount of interesting detail that emerges. For example, those of us who have always imagined the life of an Ottoman garrison soldier to have been utterly miserable, find our suspicions confirmed in the table where Schwarz shows the delays in the government ordering payment and the troops actually receiving the money. In one case in 1593, this was 13 years and 9 months.

Klaus Schwarz died before he could complete the work, and Claudia Römer undertook to edit the *Nachlass*. As expected, she has performed this task impeccably.

COLIN IMBER

## SOUTH ASIA

RICHARD SALOMON: *Indian epigraphy: a guide to the study of inscriptions in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and the other Indo-Aryan languages.* xxi, 378 pp. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. £45.

The importance of inscriptions for the study of pre-colonial South Asian history is well established, with an estimated 90,000+ inscriptions being recovered to date in India alone. In many cases, inscriptions have formed the only reliable historical record that has come down to us. The dynastic chronology and socio-economic history of ancient and medieval India would have been impossible without the now well-established discipline of epigraphy in Indian archaeology. This book is an introduction to

the study of inscriptions in South Asian history, with a focus on the Indo-Aryan languages—that is, omitting inscriptions in Persian and Arabic and the voluminous corpus of inscriptions in Dravidian languages from south India. Despite these drawbacks, the book is the best comprehensive introduction to the subject since D. C. Sircar's landmark work *Indian epigraphy* first published in 1965. The author updates Sircar's work by including new data and reassessing important points in light of recent debates in the last 30 years. The book is scrupulous in its attempt to include a comprehensive review of existing journals, series, monographs, and articles bearing on the study of epigraphy.

After a chapter on the significance of epigraphy in indological studies, the book tackles the problem of the development of writing and scripts in Indian history as reflected

in the spread of epigraphy. The author wisely leaves out the perennially disputed but still undeciphered Indus script from his discussion and focuses on the history of Brāhmī and its many derivatives as well as Kharoṣṭī, and numerical notations. Though it contains the familiar character charts, this chapter is not concerned principally with the palaeography of these scripts, but their development in relation to epigraphy. The author judiciously reviews the sometimes contentious debates about the antiquity and origin of the Brāhmī script in India. He synthesizes the debates admirably, placing due emphasis on the important work of recent scholars, most notably that of Harry Falk and Ahmad Hasan Dani. Salomon then traces the regional evolutions of Brāhmī in north, central and southern India through Gupta times and culminating in the southern forms scripts of Tamil, Grantha and Vaṭṭaeluttu and the forerunner of the north Indian Nāgarī script, Siddhamātrka, in the north.

The third chapter presents a survey of the languages of Indian inscriptions, including Prakrits, mixed or hybrid dialects, Sanskrit, the 'New Indo-Aryan languages', and a short section on the non Indo-Aryan languages. Because of its 'uncontaminated' nature, epigraphy supersedes literary evidence in the reconstruction of the linguistic study of the subcontinent. In this chapter Salomon culls together the evidence relating to the evolution of diverse forms of middle-Indo-Aryan Prakrits, through epigraphical hybrid Sanskrit to the final emergence of Sanskrit as a ubiquitous epigraphical medium by the fifth century. He then reviews the under-studied evidence relating to the emergence of the modern Indo-Aryan 'vernaculars', Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, and others from the eleventh century. The fourth chapter presents typological, material and chronological surveys of inscriptions in Indo-Aryan languages. Here Salomon reviews the major types and forms of epigraphs—donative, memorial, eulogistic, cultic and literary; stone, copper-plate, and inscriptions on other materials. He then presents a general geochronological survey of important inscriptions, beginning with the Mauryan period and continuing through Śuṅga times, the period of the Indo-Greeks and Sakas, as well as the Gupta, the post-Gupta and Islamic 'periods', followed by a study of extra-Indian inscriptions. The account describes the major features of inscriptions from each period, citing specific and typical examples. Published studies and collections of these inscriptions are cited and recent finds mentioned where possible.

Then follows a useful chapter on methods of studying inscriptions. Salomon presents a clear account of the methods and difficulties of copying, editing, presenting, authenticating, translating and dating inscriptions. Following his presentation of the problems of dating inadequately dated or undated inscriptions, the author offers an appendix on eras used in Indic inscriptions. His information here updates Sircar's treatment of the subject nearly 35 years ago. Chapter vi gives a brief overview of the history of epigraphic studies in India, a topic generally treated as a sub-branch of the history of Indian archaeology. Salomon covers the

major early figures such as Wilkins, Colebrooke and Prinsep, explaining exactly how their work was pioneering, and later figures as well, including Hultzsch, Fleet, Chhabra, Mirashi and Sircar. Landmark epigraphical publications are also mentioned. The seventh chapter of the book deals with epigraphy as a source of the study of Indian history and culture. It reviews the use of inscriptions for the study of political and social history, literature, religion, art, linguistics and geography. The final chapter is a bibliographic survey of the range of publications containing both primary sources—published inscriptions—and secondary material regarding the study of epigraphy. The book ends with an appendix containing the texts, translations and illustrations of fifteen important inscriptions.

This book will prove to be an important introductory text for all those embarking on the study of Indian epigraphy, and a valuable reference work for historians and others who wish to know where to look for miscellaneous and recent publications of inscriptions. The book's strengths lie in its judicious and well-documented handling of contentious issues in the interpretation of early Indian epigraphy like the origin of writing, and the Brāhmī script. For later, less uncertain, areas of epigraphic study it remains packed full of valuable information. The only drawback is the brief treatment of south Indian materials. Though the author's disclaimers to some extent absolve him of this omission, the work as a whole at times suffers from the absence of south Indian epigraphy, not so much in its presentation of the variety and forms of inscriptions, but more in its account of how inscriptions be used in the study of Indian history and culture. Many of the pathbreaking methodologies using inscriptions, like the statistical analysis of names in Cola inscriptions by Karashima, Subbarayalu and Matsui or the use of modelling techniques to map the intensity of transactional networks and activity spaces of medieval donors in Cola inscriptions by James Heitzman, are left out of the discussion on the uses of inscriptions in the study of history. Such studies, along with others using the south Indian material, have become so important that it is difficult to imagine the field of epigraphy without them. And given the sheer numbers of inscriptions in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada, it is difficult to see how a book on 'Indian' epigraphy can afford to ignore these studies.

DAUD ALI

WINANT M. CALLEWAERT in collaboration with SWAPNA SHARMA (ed.): *The hagiographies of Anantadas: the bhakti poets of North India*. [iv], 414 pp. Richmond: Curzon Press, 2000. £45.00.

With a uniquely formidable industriousness which has now been sustained for well over two decades, Winant Callewaert has been out in the field scouring the extensive collections of Hindi manuscripts of *nirguṇ bhakti* texts which

had lain largely neglected in the libraries and sectarian repositories of Rajasthan. With a dedication equally unusual in this post-Victorian age, he has throughout this period also been making the results of this primary research generally available through the regular publication of textual editions which have placed all *nirgun* specialists in his debt.

To some extent similar in the character of its material to his valuable earlier edition of *The Hindi biography of Dādū Dayāl* (1988, reviewed in *BSOAS* LIV/2, 1991, 389), Callewaert's latest contribution is an edition of the several Hindi verse hagiographies (*parcāī*) composed by the Rāmānandī ascetic Anantadās (c. 1600) in honour of each of the main *nirgun* bhaktas—Nāmdev, Kabīr, Raidās, Pīpā, etc.—who are also well known as the Bhagats of the Sikh *Adi Granth*. The volume has all the characteristic features of Callewaert's oeuvre, being ample in size and format, as well as rich and varied in content.

Equally characteristically, this edition is also, at least at first sight, sometimes a little confusing in organization (and the user is not greatly helped by its rather skimpy index). In the brief concluding section of his short editorial introduction, Callewaert draws attention to the fundamental problems of editing North Indian *bhakti* texts caused by their oral transmission across linguistically diverse regions, so that 'the morphology of these texts is a complete chaos and it is impossible to even think of a stemmatic relation between the manuscripts' (p. 27). He therefore takes specific issue with the editorial procedure adopted for the *Kabīr parcāī* in Lorenzen's *Kabīr legends and Anantadas's Kabīr parichai* (Albany: SUNY, 1991), which was expressly to opt for a composite text which does not consistently correspond to any given manuscript. He instead suggests three methodologically preferable alternatives: a classical text edition with variants recorded in a critical apparatus; a corrected version based on one MS, but which deviates therefrom to include significant lines from other MSS; and a reprint of one MS with the complete lines found in others printed as indents. One or other of these alternatives is variously selected (although, as Callewaert states, not always in fully worked out form due to constraints of space) for individual hagiographies, the Nāmdev text getting the critical edition, the Kabīr and Pīpā texts appearing as corrected texts, and the others as reprints of a single MS with significant variant lines indented.

The utility of the volume is greatly enhanced by the provision for most of the texts of full line-by-line English translations, in whose preparation the assistance of Swapna Sharma is acknowledged. Given the availability of Lorenzen's version, no translation is provided for the *Kabīr parcāī*, but the existence of Lorenzen's edition stimulates Callewaert to produce the most interesting of his own editorial comments, including a number of usefully detailed criticisms of Lorenzen's translation in the light of MS evidence (pp. 43–54).

In terms of content, as Callewaert points out in his general introduction, the greatest interest attaches to the *Pīpā parcāī*, which is much the longest of these hagiographies, and which best exemplifies Anantadās's

characteristic ascetic concerns, including the marked misogyny which is one of the main markers differentiating this sectarian understanding of the Sants from the mainstream of Sikh devotionalism. The chapter on Pīpā is further extended by an English translation of the relevant section from the eighteenth-century *Bhaktamāl* by Rāghavdās; by Hindi texts (without translation) of the hymns attributed to Pīpā in Dādūpanthī and other sources of hymns, including a Devanagari version of his one *Adi Granth* hymn, uniquely with English translation and notes (from Vaudeville); and the Hindi text of a *Pīpā citāvanī* from a unique MS located in the library of the City Palace, Udaipur. Translations from Rāghavdās and Hindi hymn texts are similarly supplied for Trilochan, Angad and Dhanā (the Sikh Dhannā), although not for Nāmdev and Raidās, for which the reader may tacitly be referred to Callewaert's earlier editions of *The Hindi songs of Nāmdev* (with Mukund Lath, 1989) and *The life and works of Raidās* (with Peter Friedlander, 1992). The archive of Callewaert's published editions continues to grow at such a rate that it will before too long be helpful to have a short published guide as to which text may be found where—and of how many scholars these days can that be said!

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE

DIETER CONRAD: *Zwischen den Traditionen. Probleme des Verfassungsrechts und der Rechtskultur in Indien und Pakistan. Gesammelte Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1970–1990*. Herausgegeben von Jürgen Lütt und Mahendra P. Singh. (Beiträge zur Südasiensforschung, Band 184.) xviii, 499 pp. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999. DM 162.

Dieter Conrad retired as Head of the Law Section at the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg a few years ago and, for various reasons, was not replaced, leaving a significant gap which may never be filled. With Conrad's unique position went the German academic monitoring of South Asian legal developments. He inspired several young people to retain an abiding interest in South Asian legal cultures and the practicalities of modern South Asian laws and, over the years, a steady trickle of young Heidelberg lawyers had come to SOAS, developing fruitful interaction patterns which are now impossible. Hopefully, some younger scholars inspired by Conrad may as yet support the future development of South Asian legal studies in the Western world.

Conrad's published work illustrates the manifold demands on the South Asian specialist's skills and energies. This volume of his major essays is marked by a deep commitment to interdisciplinarity and interculturality. Thus, one should not read the title as signifying breaks 'between the traditions'. Rather, Conrad shows the links and universal common elements in the legal cultures under examination. The collected essays centre, first of all, on

four major topical areas in Indian constitutional law: emergency, amendment powers, federalism and the future of the 'rule of law'. Thankfully, the major German articles are supplemented by updates and English summaries, making this important collection more accessible to a wider readership. Conrad argues, rightly in my view, that the wide-ranging emergency powers of the Indian state can be, and have been, abused. However, he also notes that the 1975 Emergency instigated by Indira Gandhi had significant cathartic effects so that, despite many concerns over legality, India has not become merely another developing country with a political system marked by dictatorship, but a country with a lively debate on good governance and the various roles of the state. Linked to the federal arrangements, Conrad's main argument, that too great a reliance on centralist powers can give peripheral and marginalized elements of the nation 'a sense of being under foreign domination' (p. 45) is confirmed in the current discontent over the handling of the creation of three new Indian states (*India Today*, 20 November 2000, pp. 28–9).

In a deeply learned analysis of the Indian 'rule of law', Conrad highlights the Indian emphasis on justice (*nyaya*) rather than 'rule of law' (pp. 135–6) and argues convincingly that the major problem in Indian law remains the implementation of justice. This is illustrated, for example, in the emergence of Indian public interest litigation, a topic in which Conrad significantly took an early interest. Such developments show how implementation of real justice need not occur through the state itself, but may rely on *panchayats* and *lok adalats*, in other words, various social self-control mechanisms.

On Pakistan (pp. 151–285), Conrad's much-respected earlier work is now largely out of date, superseded by new constitutional crises. He saw a pattern in the repeated efforts of dictators to force Pakistani judges to swear oaths of allegiance to a man rather than the Constitution and noted that this could not be good for democracy. Two major articles on the genesis of Pakistan and its constitutional re-creation after the divorce from Bangladesh are supplemented by an important discussion of the role of Pakistani courts in situations of crisis (pp. 247–85), a theme further explored more recently in a SOAS Ph.D. thesis by Farogh Naseem (1997), who benefited much from Conrad's earlier insights into Pakistani constitutional law crises. As predicted by both, constitutional history has repeated itself yet again more recently in Pakistan with similar illegalities and the resultant negative fallout for judicial independence.

Apart from his favourite subjects in constitutional law, Conrad covered many topics of wider academic and intellectual interest in South Asian laws, particularly with reference to human rights discourses. The present collection contains Conrad's early seminal work, which is far too little known, partly of course because it was written in German. I read and partly re-read Conrad's essays in this part of the book with growing admiration. He often grapples intensely with some of the key issues for understanding South Asian legal traditions

in the modern world, trying to understand the relationship of such traditions with supposedly global norms. His essay on 'The human right to basic necessities of life' (pp. 289–323), which discusses basic concepts of development and of human rights with which specialists are still centrally concerned today, will be studied with much benefit by readers from several academic disciplines.

Conrad's most impressive scholarship in the interface of South Asian legal tradition and modernity is reflected in several excellent essays about, in the widest sense, *dharma* and law, bringing out concepts like Hindu *Eigengesetzlichkeit* in the context of a careful, deep critique of Max Weber's understanding of *svadharma* and Hindu religion as a whole. Here are rich seams of foundational material for the ongoing debates about the relationship between *dharma* and *artha*, religious tradition and secular modernity, or equality and inequality. One also finds many little hidden gems here, like the link between *canon* and the Muslim *qanun* (p. 342). Reproducing such originally widely scattered material in a collection of this type goes a long way towards ensuring that Conrad's important work 'between the traditions' will continue to be referred to in future discussions of such complex subjects. Conrad was also particularly interested in the ambivalent position of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the Mahatma who was after all also a British-trained lawyer. This is reflected in a number of reprinted essays about Gandhi's thoughts and impact in this rich volume.

The 1996 Delhi lecture on 'Basic structure of the Constitution and constitutional principles' is included as an appendix (pp. 479–93), confirming that there is much to say about public interest litigation in South Asia and its exports to other jurisdictions. I would have liked to have seen included a full bibliography of all of Conrad's writing, and it would certainly have helped to find an index that is more than a list of references to famous names. There is so much of lasting value in this important, well-produced volume of essays, with a German title but much material written in English, which a cursory glance at the table of contents or the brief index may not locate.

WERNER MENSKI

A. JEYARATNAM WILSON: *Sri Lankan Tamil nationalism: its origins and development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. xiv, 203 pp. London: C. Hurst & Co., 1999. £35, £12.95 (paper).

The late A. J. Wilson was a distinguished Canadian-based political scientist whose previous publications concentrated on post-independence Sri Lanka. In this volume, completed about a year before his death, he seeks to 'explain and analyse the rise of Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka' (p. 1). About half of the book is concerned with Sri Lanka under British rule, and the other half with more recent developments. One chapter, 'Eelam Tamil

nationalism: an inside view', is contributed by A. J. V. Chandrakanthan.

This book represents the first attempt to provide a comprehensive historically-based account of Sri Lankan Tamil nationalism. It is based on little new research, but does bring together material from scattered publications, some of which are obscure. Wilson begins with nineteenth-century cultural movements among Jaffna Tamils, which are portrayed as sharpening Tamil ethnic consciousness. He then turns to the élitist politics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially the careers of the brothers Ponnambalam Ramanathan and Ponnambalam Arunachalam. He argues that these men served Tamils well until late in their careers, when the coming of mass politics led to new challenges that they were unable to meet. The narrative then moves on to G. G. Ponnambalam and his All-Ceylon Tamil Congress. Wilson argues that Ponnambalam did great service in mobilizing Tamils in the 1930s and 1940s, but that he too was left behind by events late in his career.

One of Wilson's heroes is his own father-in-law, C. J. V. Chelvanayakam, who split with Ponnambalam and formed the Federal Party in 1959, shortly after independence. Chelvanayakam was the first politician to argue explicitly and consistently that the Sri Lankan Tamils were a nation with their own traditional homeland in the north-east of the island. For a long time, he did not envision an independent Tamil state. However, as Wilson's account shows, after 1956 the political and social position of Sri Lankan Tamils became increasingly difficult within the Sinhalese-dominated polity, and in 1976 Chelvanayakam, as leader of the new Tamil United Liberation Front, came out for independence. According to Wilson, Sri Lankan Tamils were reluctant separatists who were forced into demanding independence by the insensitivity of successive Sinhalese-dominated governments in Colombo. He also points to pressure from young radical Tamil militants as a factor in pushing Tamil politicians to demand independence. Chelvanayakam died in 1977, and at this point, with the escalation of violence between Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan state, Wilson's narrative becomes less measured and more fractured. Some topics, such as the negotiations between the government and Tamil politicians in the late 1970s and early to mid-1980s, receive considerable attention, but there is little attempt to explain divisions among Tamils or any of the distinctive characteristics of recent Sri Lankan Tamil politics. The chapter by Chandrakanthan, which is more passionate in tone than the rest of the book, provides much of the coverage of the 1990s, and gives a sometimes vivid account of events in that decade.

Wilson writes within a worldview of Tamil nationalism. He believes that the Tamils in modern Sri Lanka always require a 'charismatic leader' (p. 22), and that the best Tamil politicians in both the colonial and post-independence eras are those who see their role as representing their own 'community'. His narrative is constructed to show that Sri Lankan Tamils have had no alternative to pursuing the goal of independence. His account of the

beleaguered position of Sri Lankan Tamils in the decades after 1956 is by and large convincing, but his need to frame the narrative so that history supports the present Tamil nationalist struggle will mislead non-specialist readers. In the historical sections, the narrative is teleological, with events progressing relentlessly towards the realization that Tamils really constitute a nation and that the Sinhalese will never allow them their rights within an all-island polity. Wilson does mention caste and regional divisions, but always as factors to be overcome by the Tamil leadership. In the more contemporary sections, Wilson's commitment to the cause leads him to avoid or dismiss many of the contradictions of contemporary Tamil nationalism. The troubled relationship between Tamils and Muslims, the position of the Up-Country Tamils, the remarkable use of children and women in the armed struggle, and the appalling human rights record of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are all pushed aside. As a result, although this book has value for readers already well-acquainted with Sri Lankan politics, it is likely to mislead and confuse non-specialists without the background to understand its assumptions and its oblique references to some of the more troublesome aspects of recent Tamil nationalism.

JOHN D. ROGERS

DARIUS COOPER: *The cinema of Satyajit Ray: between tradition and modernity*. (Cambridge Studies in Film.) xii, 260 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. £14.95.

Satyajit Ray is unquestionably one of the great figures of world cinema. Awarded an 'Oscar' for lifetime achievement, his films have been acclaimed at international film festivals and, until the recent success of Shekhar Kapur, he is probably the only cinema maker from India who could be named by the Euro-Americans who avidly consume India's greatest cultural export, the English novel. Yet in India his films have found only two major audiences, namely the metropolitan festival-goers, and a more socially inclusive Bengali group. Although several books have been published on Ray, there is scope for much more research on the man and his films in terms of biography, cinema and culture. Unfortunately, this book has little to contribute to our understanding of Ray and his cinema.

Cooper is scathing about 'Western' readings of Ray's films (p. 7), in which he finds 'a reckless kind of hyperbolization that fails to give any redeeming insight' (p. 9), as he rakes up some illogical nativist arguments about who can write about Ray and which theories they can use. He falls into the easy lure of *rasa* theory without having any clear conception of what this really is, its complication and intricacies as it evolved over many centuries, and the intellectual problems involved with transmitting these aesthetic theories of courtly medieval India to the modern world of cinema. The simplistic form of *rasa* that he employs here could be applied to any text with an equal

pointlessness. Despite this stab at indigenism, he is quite happy to use random terms from Western literary theory, mostly from Joyce and New Criticism (epiphanies and pathetic fallacies), even calling one chapter an 'Odyssean *yatra*', while also deploying a popular understanding of Freud. Cooper is not well versed in Indian history, using discredited notions of so-called 'Aryan invasions', nor is he a critical reader of published work, all of which he describes as 'excellent'. His glosses of such elementary points as the festival of Diwali show this book assumes no knowledge of Indian culture, and is clearly not aimed at an Indian audience. The book is not intended for students of the broader Indian cinema, as is shown by Cooper's dismissal of Sharmila Tagore's outstanding work in Hindi film as 'an unfortunate immersion in Bombay's Hollywood' (p. 107).

My most serious criticism is that, rather than concerning himself with who is 'Indian' and who is 'Western', he should have looked at Ray's own cultural background as a member of the Bengali *bhadralok*. He may do well to read Ashis Nandy's paper, 'How Indian is Ray?', which explores the complicated and entwined history of the cultural formation of the *bhadralok*. Much of Ray's work is intimately connected with the world of Bengali literature that he uses as the major source for his films' stories, and he was also a very popular author of detective fiction. Not one item of Bengali literature is cited in this book. All works cited are in English and there is no mention of any Bengali discussion of Ray's work. Ray made all his films in Bengali apart from one feature film and one television film, yet there is no mention of his use of language at any point. There is no discussion of the music of Ray's films, much of which he composed himself. Ray's work for children is highly regarded, yet Cooper sees it as a 'retreat' into children's films. There is no mention of the European cinema, in particular that of Jean Renoir, which was so important to Ray's own cinematic thought.

The films are not analysed, but are described in detail, in the manner of summary rather than that of close reading. The summaries are dull and do not illuminate the films. One cannot help but contrast this with the film of Shyam Benegal's interview with Ray that sheds new light on the man and his films in a matter of an hour.

The book has many editorial slips, with numerous inconsistencies (Bibhuti Bhushan and Bibhuti Bhushan are found only three pages apart), many Indian names are misspelled (Dushanta for Duhshanta or Dushyanta) and Sanskrit words are mistranslated (*bhayanaka* is not 'fear' but 'fearful').

Readers wishing to learn more about Ray and his films are well advised to read Ray's own writings, alongside those of Chidananda Das Gupta, Ashis Nandy and Andrew Robinson.

RACHEL DWYER

SUSHIL CHAUDHURY: *The prelude to empire: Plassey revolution of 1757*. 192 pp. New Delhi: Manohar, 2000. Rs. 375.

This book argues that a wealthy, productive and on the whole well-ruled Bengal was

conquered through a conspiracy by the East India Company, and thus ruined. The economic arguments are controversial, based on the author's *From prosperity to decline* (New Delhi, 1995). Bengal, Chaudhury claims, was relatively little affected by Maratha raids or by European trade before the 1750s. Prices actually dropped then for the European staples; but British private trade was in crisis, through French and Armenian competition, and the Company, as all agree, wanted Bengal revenues to replace bullion imports. Victory at Plassey restored British fortunes.

Firstly, Chaudhury claims, contemporary denunciations exaggerated Siraj-ud-daula's faults. He inherited a system dating from about 1713, whereby the Bengal nawabs ruled through personal alliances with surviving Mughal élites (*mansabdars*), other landed magnates, and merchant bankers. Siraj shared the ruthlessness of his predecessors; but those who called him a tyrant were merely British sympathizers—such as Ghulam Husain Salim (quoted p. 32) who, in addition, took too sanguine a view of the Company's honesty. (More interesting is that a model of rule was being offered in such texts: not what the Company achieved but what it pretended to aspire to.)

Siraj had three substantive quarrels with the British, one at least expressed before as well as after his accession: with the Company's fortifications, with its harbouring of fugitives, and with private and Indian traders' misuse of its *dastak* (excusing goods from local tolls). This view, surely standard today, is not easily distinguished from a claim Chaudhury rejects, that Siraj was hostile to the British *ab initio*. Siraj's concern over the *dastak* is also hard to square with the idea that European trade was relatively insignificant.

Siraj did not provoke Plassey, the argument goes on. He attacked the Company, but did not wish to expel it. He was not responsible for sacking Calcutta, and imprisoned and fined Raja Manikchand, who was. Siraj plundered its treasury, and took large 'presents' from the French and the Dutch, but was not avaricious (a matter of some indifference to the main question, given his financial motives). After Clive's arrival he tried to be conciliatory, not least because, as is well-known, he was concerned about the threat in the west from Ahmad Shah Abdali.

Secondly, Chaudhury blames the Company. Its governor, Roger Drake, was arrogant and intransigent, and unwise not to match the conciliatory tone of the French on fortifications—few dispute this. The Europeans were greedy for private trade, which influenced Company policy—as is universally recognized, at least since Peter Marshall's *East Indian fortunes* (Oxford, 1976). Marshall's only qualifications (*ibid.*, pp. 285–9) are that Siraj was apparently more concerned about the Company than about private traders (Chaudhury disagrees), and that the traders' depredations were not especially bad in the 1750s (he does not address this directly).

Several times Chaudhury offers a strong version of his second argument. 'There can be no doubt that ... the initiative was taken by the British' (p. 96). Under Clive, the Company was conspiring to oust Siraj—as it certainly was, with the Begum, with Mir Ja'far, with the Jagat



Seth banking family, with the great merchant Umichand (Omichund), and with anyone else who would listen. Relying here largely on S. C. Hill's three volumes of documents (1905), Chaudhury details how the company used bribes and spies to keep key players on side. Clive went from intrigue, to provocation, and on to Plassey: he was ring-master, though he entered the battle uncertain of Mir Ja'far's support. (Mir Ja'far held aloof from both sides and, despite that, took over as nawab.)

Behind these moves, the book claims, lay not chance and invention but an imperial plan. Yet, although large territorial ambitions were expressed by individuals, including Clive, especially in defiance of the French, it is hard to see how an imperialist *policy* could have been concerted, given the Company's structures and slow communications, or why a good way of advancing it would have been to provoke an attack on poorly defended Calcutta and then try to conquer all Bengal with a relatively small (though fortuitously reinforced) army.

Finally, Chaudhury minimizes the responsibility of the Indian co-conspirators. He is sometimes strangely unwilling to allow them any ambitions or agency; they were all 'passive rather than active' (p. 113). Hence Plassey should not be attributed to Hindu-Muslim antagonism (anyway an anachronistic claim), or to Hindu and Jain merchants, or even to other élites and family rivals. The relative importance of Company trade comes in again here, as proving a lack of economic motivation—though the usual arguments refer to political factions. (Chaudhury gives relatively little attention to the rivalries around Siraj, or to the connections of trade and politics, which have been studied by others.)

More often he provides a less radical version of his argument. There was already conspiracy at court, including the usual dynastic struggles. Moreover (p. 116), 'There can be no doubt that Mir Jafar was bent on overthrowing the nawab within a few months of his accession'. The Jagat Seths played 'the most vital role' among the Indians, and were 'the originators of the revolution' (p. 119, quoting Jean Law in 1763)—'for reasons of their own' (p. 120). By page 130, only Siraj's diwan, Rai Durlabh, allied with Mir Ja'far, played a passive part, unlike the 'active role' of all the others, including Umichand and some opportunists. In the last moments before Plassey, Siraj is seen exerting himself against 'the ruling faction', and endangering their interests in favour of an emergent group (p. 173). By now, Chaudhury is arguing merely that the 'revolution' would have been 'impossible' without active British involvement (p. 174), an entirely unexceptionable view.

PETER ROBB

INDIRA GHOSE (ed.): *Memsahibs abroad: writings by women travellers in nineteenth-century India*. xvii, 298 pp. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998. Rs. 645.

Two decades after historians of South Asia

followed Foucault and Said out of the archives and into the ether of theory, it has become obvious that postmodernism can provide no more understanding of the multi-faceted history of British India than can any other single 'ism'. So complex was the nature of the colonial encounter, with its endless variety of perceptions, personalities, locations and periods, that it is only through studies which fully reflect the fragmented nature of the imperial process that we can approach a proper understanding of the subject.

Ghose's selection of writings by European women travellers in nineteenth-century India is situated somewhat uneasily between two methodological positions. The editor writes with the scarcely-hidden enthusiasm of a writer with the sources to tell a fascinating story, yet is restrained by the compulsive need to critique those sources along postmodernist, or postcolonial, gender analysis lines of enquiry. The result is a certain unevenness, a lack of synthesis between the two objects, which inevitably arises from the editor's decision to select the extracts contained here on the basis of style. Thus, while stating that 'We cannot escape the historical role of women and their collusion in oppressive regimes of power', colourful excerpts are preferred to those supporting that assertion. This may reduce the theoretical value of this work, but the editor succeeds in her aim of showing that the writings of women travellers are a fascinating contribution to the literature of the Raj.

The role of colonial women is one area in which the variety of experiences undergone cannot easily be subsumed under a single heading. Indeed, Indira Ghose concludes that it is not possible to define a 'typical' or archetypal colonial woman traveller in India. If we can make one general observation, it must be that their experiences were extremely varied, but that they rarely, if ever, included meaningful encounters with Indians as social equals. Thus this work contains numerous descriptions of landscape, but few of encounters with the local population—other than servants. Even encounters with Indian women, usually in the form of visits to zenanas/harems, generally confirmed ideologies on both sides, with no real communication possible. Dialogue is conspicuous by its absence.

These are, of course, writings by upper-class women. Poor whites left few records, and in contrast to a popular perception of the mean and narrow-minded Memsahib, this work does emphasize the need to take into account the pleasure that imperialism offered English women—albeit with the underlying apprehension that 'I sometimes wonder they do not cut all our heads off and say nothing more about it'.

Arranged into chapters dealing with 'first impressions', the Mutiny, society, religion, art, cultures, travel, servants, etc., and with both glossary and biographical notes on contributors, this is an enjoyable and interesting addition to the literature, which brings out the complexity of women's contribution to the history of the Raj.

A. C. MCKAY

ANNE BULLEY: *The Bombay country ships, 1790–1833*. xvi, 288 pp. 6 maps, 12 plates. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000. £40.00.

Unlike the East Indiamen, which plied between Europe and the East and were for the most part built in Britain, ships for the country trade, that is to say the trade carried on between Asian ports, were normally built in India. Surat was probably the first port to build ships for this trade, but in the eighteenth century it was Bombay which became the major centre for shipbuilding. The Calcutta shipbuilding industry developed later (and its ships were less good). In this book Anne Bulley, an independent researcher who has previously published a monograph on John Adolphus Pope, a country ship captain, has concentrated on the period which saw the high point of Bombay's predominance in the country trade. Relying principally on East India Company records, supplemented by newspapers, some private papers and a large collection of monographs, she has brought together an immense amount of information about the ships, their builders, the men who sailed them, the merchants whose cargoes they carried and the trade itself. It seems churlish to complain of such riches but, so great is the amount of information and so unremitting its flow, that one occasionally wishes the author would have paused more often to draw breath and summarize the results of her observations. Nevertheless, this is a pioneering and valuable study of an important business activity which is much less well documented than the trade conducted by the East India Company itself.

The book, which is handsomely produced, is divided into five parts. Part 1 includes some account of the Asian vessels employed on the west coast of India. Part 2 deals with links with the East India Company, which exercised some control over registration and hired country vessels for use as transport in support of expeditions in the Indian Ocean region. Jealous protection of the trade to Europe and of the British shipbuilding industry made the East India Company reluctant to build ships in Bombay or to allow country-built vessels to sail to Europe, although it was cheaper to build in Bombay and the teak built Bombay ships were stronger and better adapted to work in Eastern waters. Nevertheless, during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars some ships were built for the Company and the Royal Navy in Bombay and some Bombay vessels allowed to sail to Britain under various regulations. Part 3 deals with the country trade itself, notably the important trade to China, first cotton and later opium. Much has been written about this trade but the Bombay perspective is new. Part 4 describes the owners of the ships, the most notable being the Bombay agency houses. There is much information about individuals, both Europeans and Parsis, who were the great shipbuilders of Bombay and the partners of the Europeans in the Bombay country trade. There is also some neat detective work, including the exposure of what appear to have been the sinister activities of one Muncherjee Jamsetjee. Part 5 describes the

sailors. Readers of the memoirs of Robert Eastwick will have some knowledge of these adventurous men but there is much more in this book, including the surprising discovery that the vast majority of country captains appear to have commanded only one ship and often only for one voyage at that. Information about the crews is more difficult to acquire; the most talented seamen apparently came from Gogo in Gujerat and the great majority were Muslims.

Some slips are inevitable in such a book. One noticed Stocqueler for Stocqueler, Diego Gracia for Diego Garcia (both repeatedly), a reference to Wellington (p. 21) that did not check out and which bears the wrong date, Melinde for Mehdi Ali Khan (p. 135), and the passage about the Navigation Acts on p. 233 must be mistaken. But these are minor points in a fascinating book. Above all one marvels at the endurance of the men and their ships. To take one example, that magnificent 900 ton work horse, *The Lowjee Family*, was built in 1791 and eventually burned in Bombay harbour in 1849. In the meantime the ship had made many voyages to China, at least four to England and had also been employed as a transport on government expeditions including those to Egypt and Mauritius.

M. E. YAPP

TARIQ RAHMAN: *Language, education, and culture*. xvi, 318 pp. Karachi: Oxford University Press (and Sustainable Policy Development Institute, Islamabad), 1999. £10.00.

Given the awkwardness of the match between Islamic self-identifications and South Asian realities which was inherent in the creation of Pakistan, it might have been foreseen that linguistics was not a discipline destined to flourish very easily in the new country. And so indeed it has turned out. In marked contrast to India, where modern linguistics has been grafted with considerable success on to the sophisticated indigenous tradition developed in and for Sanskrit, linguistics in Pakistan largely remains at best the domain of enthusiastic amateurs, at worst an arena for chauvinism to display its ignorance.

This unhappy situation is all the more to be regretted in view of the pressing problems created by the country's intrinsic linguistic diversity, further compounded by the efforts of successive regimes to evolve language policies which will accommodate the rival demands of English and Urdu, the superimposed standard languages inherited from the colonial period. The publication in 1996 of Tariq Rahman's *Language and politics in Pakistan* (reviewed in *BSOAS* 61/2, 1997, 362–4) was therefore particularly significant as the first book in English by a Pakistani linguist which seriously engaged with these issues.

The book under review here is a collection of some of the articles produced by Rahman's fluent pen over recent years, several in Pakistani publications unlikely to come to the attention of most Western readers, who should find much to learn from the many insights which they afford

into the cultural organization of Pakistan as well as the varied observations which they offer upon linguistic phenomena and language policies.

The articles are cast as chapters arranged under three headings. The opening chapter on 'Linguistics in Pakistan' provides a useful overview of non-developments and the reasons therefor, concluding with some self-deprecatory remarks and the harshly just conclusion that 'there is no authentic theoretical (or micro) linguist working in Pakistan', while 'those who really are linguists do not live and work in Pakistan'.

The five chapters of the second part deal with a variety of academic issues. Those on language teaching policies retrace ground covered elsewhere by Rahman, but many interesting data are presented in the chapter on 'Language teaching in Pakistani *madrassas*', not least the astonishing survival for traditionalist reasons of Persian in the religious syllabus as a now quite redundant subsidiary to Arabic. The next two chapters switch to a discussion of the dreadful situation of the universities in Pakistan, where the inherited restrictions of colonialism are shown to have been

compounded by a lethal combination of increased political interference and progressive under-funding. A spirited comparison of the ratings on a Tangible Gratifications Index of Pakistani academics with those of their notional counterparts in the army and the bureaucracy is a telling revelation of the relative situation of the three groups.

The third part of the book contains two sociolinguistic items, a brief but interesting discussion of 'Language and feminist issues in Pakistan', mainly with reference to contemporary Urdu usage, and a more methodical account of the impact in office contexts of contemporary Western norms of informal language on the hierarchical courtesies of address normal in both Urdu and South Asian English. The two final chapters on language and politics in Pakistan cover much of the same ground as the author's previous monograph.

The usefulness of the volume is enhanced by the bibliographies which accompany each chapter, although that of the index is limited by the failure to provide major headings with subheadings to distinguish over-numerous page-references.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE

## CENTRAL ASIA

DAVID J. MATTHEWS and RAVIL BUKHARAIEV (ed. and tr.): *Historical anthology of Kazan Tatar verse: voices of eternity*. xix, 209 pp. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000. £35.

RAVIL BUKHARAIEV: *Islam in Russia: the four seasons*. xiv, 334 pp. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000. £40.

These books are in many respects complementary. Their goals are the same; namely to present the cultural and the literary legacy of the Volga, Bashkir, Astrakhan, Ural and Siberian 'Tatars' and their courageous struggle to survive amid the oppression and near-genocide unleashed upon them by the Russian state and Orthodox Church over many centuries, and in many guises, and to determine the role these Muslim communities have played in Islamic history, especially the history of Islam in Eastern Europe. Both books are timely. For far too long a readable and measured book on this cultural legacy has been lacking. Here both authors, who have collaborated closely in the first volume, have offered much unknown source material in a readable and aesthetically pleasing format. A white hot enthusiasm has, at times, gripped their pens.

There are points of contact in abundance in these books (even though there is a risk of some adumbration). Men of letters, poets, *mullas*, mystics, men of military prowess and women of a forceful personality, figure on almost every page. Ravil Bukharaiev is himself a poet. One of his poems, here translated, entitled 'Bee', concludes the *Anthology*

(p. 209). Of particular interest are the earliest poems which have survived and which receive scant mention in available selections of Oriental literature. One might single out Kol Gali (pp. 41–7) and Qul 'Ali of Bilyar (1183–1236). His masterpiece, 'The Book of Yūsuf' completed in 1233, is worthily represented. The influence of Persian literature and evidence of Sufism in the region, at this date, are to be noted. The partnership with Matthews has ensured that the linguistic and literary standards which are required have been observed. Each poem, or selection of poems, is prefaced by biographical details. There are helpful footnotes and a logical system of transcription is strictly adhered to. No index is provided, nor is there a bibliography. The list of contents, however, is so clear and systematic that a reader may with ease find what he seeks.

The authors remark, on p. xviii:

While preparing this *Anthology*, we became acutely aware that little background material on Tatar literature exists elsewhere. The majority of the texts we have chosen exist only in small volumes which are now out of print. A certain amount of excellent research has been conducted by modern Tatar scholars, and such work is now proceeding apace. Translations of some of the works of the best known writers are available in Russian, but the availability of such books is severely limited. Little mention of the poets who flourished in Volga-Bulgaria is made even in the best histories of Turkish literature, whose authors are presumably unaware of their existence. The epic poem of *Edighey* and the *Suhail-Geldersen* romance of Saif-i Sarai, for example, are surely worthy of much deeper study.

By offering this small selection of Tatar

verse in English translation we hope to have done some justice to a largely unknown literature which certainly deserves its rightful place in the world.

On linguistic features of Kol Galī's masterpiece, little has appeared in the West since Carl Brockelmann's 'Alī's Qissai Jūsuf der älteste Vorläufer der osmanischen Literatur aus den Abhandlungen der Königl. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften Jahrgang, 1916, *Phil. Hist Klasse No 5*, Berlin, 1917.

Even less known is the poetry from the time of the Golden Horde. One of these works, 'The severed head', an anonymous poem dating from the fourteenth century, has faint echoes, here and there, of 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight'. The heroic role of 'Alī b. Abī Tālib against the wicked infidel, the monstrous Dev, reminds one of the semi-*Sīra* of Ra's al-Ghūl, one of the most popular and borrowed Arabic pseudo-Maghāzī tales of the same period. Noteworthy events in the history of the Kazan Khānate are brought to life, dating from the sixteenth century, for example, the ruler of Kazan, Muḥammad Amīn (p. 75) echoing the fall of Granada, or Muhammedyar (Mahmūd Khoji) (pp. 78–89, who may have died during the storming of Kazan by Ivan the Terrible, in 1552). Poems of protest against Russian and German tyranny are to the fore in the latter part of the *Anthology*.

The fine plates of Bolgar and Kazan architecture, Tatar attire, jewellery and silks, quranic calligraphy and *shamail* are the best to have been printed in a British publication since *Kazan, the enchanted capital (Zacharovannaya Ctolitza)*, Flint River Press Ltd, London, 1995. It is worth mentioning that Ravil Bukharaev furnished the text and the captions of this latter work.

The second volume, *Islam in Russia*, has a sub-title ('The four seasons') which provides a frame for the content; the blossom and, latterly, the wintry blight which had befallen the Muslim peoples of Russia before, and during, the days of the Soviet Union. This title may mislead those who are primarily interested in the rise of contemporary activist Islamic movements and trends within contemporary Russia and in Central Asia. However, a close study of Islam past and present amongst the 'Tatar' population is timely. The Northern Caucasus for too long has obsessed the media and interest of politicians and the Islamic movements in the West. The Muslims of Tatarstan, Bashkortstan, the Urals, Astrakhan, Siberia, and in the major Russian cities, have been neglected, notwithstanding the by now pioneer studies by Alexandre Bennigsen, Lemerrier-Quelquejay, A. Rorlich, and others. Apart from the Caucasus, the 711 pages of Alexandre Popović and Gilles Veinstein (ed.), *Les voies d'Allah*, Fayard, Paris, 1996 (see my review in *BSOAS* 60/2 (1997) 358–9) have only a passing reference to Russia and then only in relation to important Sufi brotherhoods, such as the *Naqshabandiyya*. This book, and Bukharaev's other works listed in his bibliography, help to make amends. At the outset it should be said that in terms of layout, precision of presentation and style, this book is not in the same league as Allen J. Frank's *Islamic historiography and 'Bulghar' identity among the Tatars and Bashkirs*

*of Russia*, Brill, Leiden, 1998 (reviewed in *BSOAS* 63/1 (2000), 133–4).

This book is an affirmation of Ravil Bukharaev's personal identity and that of his people. His book begins with the mission of Ibn Faḍlān. The Golden Horde and the glory of Bulghar are re-assessed and the Kazan Khānate is described against the background of the history of Eastern Europe in general, and the culture of Western Europe during the time of the Renaissance and later.

The role of the Russian Orthodox church figures prominently. Far from being the uplifting spiritual institution, as is reflected in the Vespers of Rachmaninov or as distorted by the ineffable minimalism of Sir John Tavener or Arvo Pärt, it emerges as a ruthless instrument of state under subsequent Tsars, a foe determined to obliterate Muslim culture wherever it had taken root and approaching the fervour of the Spanish Inquisition in its hatred of heresy.

One merit of this book is the wealth of quotation and citation from Russian Tatar sources, only accessible in their original language, or in Russian. The thesis of Marjānī, and his successors, is explained, judged and criticized in the light of more recent research and expertise amongst the academic specialists in Kazan, including linguists and archaeologists. It is a pleasure to read extracts from the controversial works of the late scholar A. Khalikov. The reviewer recalls a visit to his house in Kazan, a year or two prior to his death. He had prepared a *résumé*, in English, of a major work about the origins of Bulghar and the roots of Tatar civilization in the Volga region. No publisher in the United Kingdom was interested in a field with such a limited market. Bukharaev quite often quotes him, so too others, and hence the volume, filtered through his own artistic style of presentation and projection, is a useful forwarding 'post office service' for academics past and present in Tatarstan. Their work would otherwise be little read and all but inaccessible to students.

Bukharaev participated in the conference which was held at SOAS in June 1992, a conference specifically devoted to the culture and civilization of Tatarstan. Islam in Russia was also discussed. Extracts were subsequently published by the Centre of Near and Middle Eastern Studies. He contributed a short paper 'European cultural relations of the Kazan Khanate: a new hypothesis' (pp. 25–6). In this he set out to prove, if he could, that, in all likelihood, the famous seven storey Suyumbika tower in Kazan had been built according to the design of a Lombardic architect, possibly by Aristotle Fioravanti in about 1486–90. This theme is taken up afresh in these volumes, the *Anthology* (p. 21) and in *Islam in Russia*, 'The Suyumbika tower; Islam beheaded' (pp. 229–50, one of the longest chapters in the book where Suyumbika herself is an imposing lady of character). This is the 'Autumn' in Bukharaev's seasonal timescale; where the decline of Islamic culture in Russia is depicted and lamented. The tower is an example, possibly the best in the book, which reveals the fertile imagination, the intuition and exploratory zeal of the author. It grips the reader from the first page almost to the last.

In sum, then, this book had all the makings

of a really major study which would have broken new ground, complementary in its way to D. Morgan's *The Mongols*, for the English-reading public. I deliberately use 'had'. Regrettably, it falls short of the mark, and regrettably this must be attributed to the editorship rather than to the author himself. There is no index whatsoever to help the reader find his/her sought for name, topic or geographical location in the text. Little distinction is made between primary and secondary sources; furthermore, where sources are quoted or translated, no footnote is furnished to identify the source of the quotation. Indeed, only two or three footnotes are to be found in a work of 334 pages and these are in the chapter concerned with the origins of the Suyumbika tower. No account has been taken of recent studies on Bulgar origins published in Bulgaria, nor recent developments in Khazar studies, nor such publications as Michael Kemper's *Sufis und Gelehrte in Tatarien und Baschkirien, 1789–1889*, Berlin, 1998 (reviewed in *BSOAS* 63/1), nor the contribution of Kemper and Frank in *Muslim culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the early 20th centuries*, Berlin, 1996 (reviewed in *BSOAS* 62/2 (1999), 353–4).

There are several useful maps (although in Map 1, Samarids, should surely read Samanids). Genealogies would have been most useful, as is the case in Professor Morgan's book, since those unfamiliar with the families in the Khānates, during sundry periods are likely to be confused by the plethora of Tatar, Turkic, Kipchak and Central Asian names. This spelling of the Muslim names, and others from the Middle East, does not conform to the transcription rigorously followed in the *Anthology*. On page 84, Yāqūt of Hamāh is spelt Yakut al-Khamawi. Azerbaijan is spelt Azerbajan on page 187. Other inconsistencies are legion. The Glossary could have been more of a help. *Northmen* (*sic.*), it is explained, is 'another name for Vikings or Varangians'. As for Khubilai (Khan), he is described by 'The name of one of the great Mongol rulers of the Genghisid empire with his seat in the city of Karakorum in Inner (*sic.*) Mongolia'.

The book is not 'realized' and Bukharaev would have been better advised to limit his aims to the Volga Tatars whose cause he so sincerely serves. Where the *Anthology* succeeds, *Islam in Russia* fails. Even so, the latter is so full of fascinating details that one is almost persuaded to overlook its glaring shortcomings.

H. T. NORRIS

DONALD RAYFIELD: *The literature of Georgia: a history* (2nd revised edition). 320 pp. Richmond: Curzon Press, 2000. £40.

This is a second edition of the title published in 1994 by the Clarendon Press, which, we are told in an additional preface, sold out in 1998. The revisions to the original are minimal, consisting of corrections of slips noted by various commentators, improved typefaces for Georgian and other non-roman fonts, a revised

bibliography, some redivision of paragraphs, and slight alterations/additions to the text (see the middle of p.97, end of p.215, comments on Ameirdzhibi's and O. Ch'iladze's 1995 publications on pp.285–6, and the last three and a bit paragraphs on the very final comment page, p.289). There is, thus, no reason to change the opinion I expressed of the work in its original guise: 'The present volume will long serve both interested amateurs and professional scholars of Georgian (that such a dual audience is envisaged is clear in the reference to both writers and their works by use of English and Georgian forms), furnishing them with both hours of pleasurable reading and many thought-provoking insights from a committed and entertaining specialist who is never frightened to say what he really thinks. I am happy wholeheartedly to recommend it' (*BSOAS* 59/3, 1996). Curzon are to be congratulated for ensuring that this important reference source is not confined to the second-hand market.

The minor nature of the changes alluded to above means that the authors whose omission I noted in 1996 (*viz.* Revaz Dzhaparidze, Levan Sanik'idze, and, most surprisingly, Ch'ola Lomtadidze) remain excluded. Also still failing to make an appearance is any reference to the monumental *kartuli lit' erat' uris ist' oria* (History of Georgian literature) in a projected six volumes, five of which certainly came out between 1960 and 1982.

Two further recommendations were unheeded. Readers will still find the assertion: 'Closer collation with the Greek introduced subordinate and participial constructions so alien to the Georgian language...' (p.25). Whilst it has long been recognized that the many participial constructions in the Old Georgian Bible suggest calquing of the Greek original, the same cannot be said of subordinate-clause constructions. One of the features which sets the South Caucasian family, to which Georgian belongs, apart from the North Caucasian families (?family) is the wide use of fully-fledged subordinate clauses. I do not understand how this phenomenon can be attributable to the influence of literary (specifically biblical) Greek.

Greek μάρτυρος (p.294) is still defined as meaning both 'witness' and 'martyr'. Here is what Liddell and Scott have to say about this rarity: 'Old Ep[ic] form for μάρτυρ [martyr], μάρτυς [witness], ... Il[liad] 2.302, etc.; and in Delph[ic] Inserr., C.I. 1699, 1702–7—the sing[ular] only in Od[yssey] 16.423 ...—Zenodot[us] rejected this form' (Revised 8th edition, p.922).

Not all the typographical slips from the first edition have been tidied up. On p.29 the Greek for 'voices' needs a smooth breathing, whilst that for 'sides' should lose its non-Greek short vowel diacritic. On p.187, l. 14 write 'share' (for 'shares'); at p.193, l. 6 up insert 'it' before 'into'; on p.201, l. 12 lose the final 's' on 'besides'; on p.244 at l. 11 write 'eyes' (for 'yes'); on p.274, l. 11 up add 'to' before 'arouse'; on p.282, l. 19 up the book-title is a question.

Some new errors have crept in. At the bottom of p.23 the strange Armenian original that was translated as 'to Hebron'

(viz. Հոր հարոյ) is replaced by *Եկան Գեւեմի երկիրը* 'went to the land of Gësem'. Firstly, the final Armenian character in the third word should be erased (to give *երկիրը*). The question then arises as to what form of Armenian this might be. The quotation, from Genesis 46:28, corresponds exactly to the 1896 edition of the Modern Eastern Armenian Bible (Ararat dialect)—in a 1955 British reprint of the Vienna Bible we have: *Գեւեմի երկիրը եկան*. Surely it would have been more appropriate to quote from Old Armenian, and in that case the citation would read: *Եկն լերկիրն Գեւեմ*.

At the top of p. 24 the Greek phrase has lost its preposition (viz. 'επι), whilst the sigma on the genitive case of the definite article has been shifted from the correct end-sigma letter-shape 'ς' to the non-word-final form 'σ'.

The Abashidze who heads the region of Ach'ara as mentioned on p. 289 has the first name Aslan (not Levan); the English index (p. 311) should be emended accordingly, whilst this individual lacks an entry in the Georgian index (p. 317).

Whereas the poet T'ariel Ch'ant'uria's willingness to engage in the distasteful nationalist polemics into which all too many members of the so-called intelligentsia became so enthusiastically embroiled from the late 1980s is noted on p. 277, Rayfield misses an opportunity to discuss a further aspect of Murman Lebanidze's 'patriotism' and 'humanity' (p. 276). I refer to a poem in the organ of the Writers' Union, 'Literary Georgia', of May 1999, which possibly appeared too late for inclusion in this revision. It queried the right of Georgian's unwritten sister-language, Mingrelian, to exist (at least in literary guise) alongside Georgian. So objectionable was this sentiment deemed in certain quarters (and quite properly too) that Lebanidze's books were publicly burned in the Mingrelian capital, Zugdidi.

The author sums up his understandably still prevalent pessimism thus: 'Corrupt government, a ruined economy, and an intelligentsia depleted by emigration still augur poorly for a revival of Georgian literature'.

GEORGE HEWITT

MYKHAILO HRUSHEVSKY: *History of Ukraine-Rus'. Volume 7. The Cossack age to 1625*. Translated by Bohdan Struminski. Edited by Serhii Plokhly, Consulting Editor, and Frank E. Sysyn, Editor-in-Chief, with the assistance of Uliana M. Pasiczynk. Ivi, 548 pp., 2 maps. Edmonton and Toronto: Candian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1999. \$119.95.

First published in 1909, the volume under review is the seventh of ten comprising the History of Ukraine-Rus' and was largely written during the turbulent pre-Revolutionary years by the historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky, one of the leading intellectual figures of the

Ukrainian national movement and first president of Ukraine. Hrushevsky's uncompleted History was an unashamed and conscious statement of the history of a Ukraine independent of Russian claims to its past. It has been of huge influence ever since; the volumes dealing with the Cossacks (vii and subsequent) are the standard work in the field and the starting point for present-day research.

Why consider a work on the Ukrainian Cossacks in *BSOAS*? The answer is simple: the Ottoman steppe frontier to the north of the Black Sea has been neglected by historians to the extent that it rates barely a mention in most modern texts on Ottoman history. Yet it was the Cossack inhabitants of this region who from the sixteenth century disrupted the Ottoman *mare nostrum* which had been created by Sultan Mehmed II, and forced the Ottoman government both to react to their sudden and damaging raids on the Black Sea shores and to formulate a policy to deal with this rude ending to a century of calm.

The present volume takes the story of the Ukrainian Cossacks up to 1625, a date with greater resonance for their relations with Poland-Lithuania than with the Ottomans, for it marks their suppression following the battle of Kurukove. In that year, however, the Cossacks sailed to Trabzon on the north-east Anatolian coast and wrought great destruction on the city and its environs. Hrushevsky's more overt passages on the Cossack role in forging the Ukrainian nation may be of limited concern to the Ottomanist or other non-specialist readers. However, his exhaustive account of their origins and relations with the states of the region—Muscovy, Tatar Crimea, Poland-Lithuania, Moldavia and, of course, the Ottomans—furnish an unrivalled source-based narrative of a 'forgotten frontier'.

When the story of the Cossacks begins, in the mid-fifteenth century, they were a barely identifiable group—'free, fearsome and warlike'—living in the south-eastern steppelands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which stretched from the Baltic almost to the Black Sea. These lands were constantly raided by the Crimean Tatars, primarily for slaves for the Ottoman slave market; the Tatars had, since 1475, been Ottoman vassals. The Cossacks retaliated and gradually acquired a persona coherent and independent enough to irritate the Ottomans and cause Poland-Lithuania to disavow them. Ottoman control of the steppes was achieved through the agency of the Crimean Tatars; direct control of the northern Black Sea littoral consisted in a handful of distantly-spaced, vulnerable forts. By the mid-sixteenth century the outlines of future 'great power' conflict were discernible, as the Ottomans and Poland-Lithuania alternately incited, restrained, and were impotent to restrain, their respective clients—Tatars and Cossacks—from attacking one another's territories.

The efforts of the Cossack leader Dmytro Vyshnevetsky in the late 1550s to forge a defensive front of Poland-Lithuania and Muscovy against the Ottomans and Tatars ended with his execution in Istanbul. In 1568 the Cossacks were for the first time addressed directly by their master, the Lithuanian grand

duke; in the 1570s some few hundred were formed into a royal regiment in an effort better to control them. Government reforms aimed at using the Cossacks to police the borders involved the granting to them of rights and immunities which they would henceforth guard jealously. The reforms were ineffective in restraining the Cossacks from the 'harmful and wilful acts' which provoked Ottoman wrath and which were carried out in defiance of their Polish-Lithuanian overlords.

In keeping with his purpose of writing the national history of Ukraine and the Cossacks' key role therein, Hrushevsky emphasizes the internal organization of 'Cossackdom' and the place of the Cossacks in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as it became in 1569. What is of more immediate interest to the Ottomanist, however, are the detailed contemporary accounts describing the Cossack way of life and military practice which Hrushevsky quotes at length. Ottoman chroniclers, too, dwell on the latter in particular, displaying fascination with their maritime skills and the advantages which their guerilla naval technique brought them in contest with the more conventional Ottoman seaborne forces. The Ukrainian Cossacks appeared on the northern coast of Anatolia for the first time in 1614 with an attack on the fortress of Sinop. Previously their raids had extended only as far south as the Bulgarian coast of the Black Sea. In 1624 a Cossack fleet famously raided the Bosphorus shore as far south as Istinye, some few miles from Istanbul *intra muros*. The Ottomans strengthened their Bosphorus defences and retaliated with expeditions across the Black Sea, which took a heavy toll of their resources.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth needed the Cossacks as the Ottomans needed the Tatars. Their crowning achievement in the period until 1625 was the Khotyn war of 1621, so momentous for Ottoman domestic politics, in which the Cossacks fielded an army as numerous as that of Poland. That their crucial role in the conflict was widely acknowledged by the Polish authorities did not ease their mutual relationship; by 1625 the Cossack bargaining position was, temporarily, as weak as it had ever been. Volume VIII of Hrushevsky's *History*, to be published in 2001, takes the story of the Ukrainian Cossacks up to the Khmelnytsky rebellion of 1648, a key date in their struggle to be independent of the great powers of the region, by which time the power constellation in the region was greatly altered.

The realization of this handsome volume is a major achievement. The scholarly apparatus accompanying Hrushevsky's text is exemplary and highly informative; the references are updated to provide the researcher with a state-of-the-art bibliography; the translation reads as though it had originally been written in English. This version of the history of the Ukrainian Cossacks as told from the perspective of the Slavic sources provides an authoritative and accessible backdrop to their own research for scholars of other states whose history is intertwined with that of the Cossacks—and for Ottomanists in particular. It will be of enormous value in providing a narrative framework for the many who are unfamiliar with Slavic languages. Ottomanists

will no longer have any excuse to plead ignorance of the complex history of the northern frontier.

CAROLINE FINKEL

NICOLAS VATIN: *Sultan Djem: un prince ottoman dans l'Europe du XV siècle d'après deux sources contemporaines: Vaki'at Sultan Cem, Oeuvres de Guillaume Caoursin* (Conseil Suprême d'Atatürk pour Culture, Langue et Histoires. Publications de la Société Turque d'Histoire, Série XVIII—No. 14). Ankara: Imprimerie de la Société Turque d'Histoire, 1997.

In this book Nicolas Vatin publishes two contemporary texts on Cem, the Turkish chronicler *Vaki'at-i Sultan Cem*, in facsimile, transcription and translation, and a translation of the memoirs of Guillaume Caoursin, vice-chancellor of the Hospitallers. The *Vaki'at*, critically edited here for the first time, is of considerable importance, being both a first-hand account of Cem written by one of his companions in exile, and an account of a journey in France and Italy made by an Ottoman at the end of the fifteenth century.

Vatin begins the book with a lengthy introduction to Cem's life, favouring the argument that Cem's mother was of Serb origin, and giving a chronological list of events from May 1481 to the handing over of Cem's body in May 1499, and its subsequent burial at Bursa. He gives a detailed investigation of the number of companions with Cem, and suggests that Cem left Rhodes with an entourage of fifty people, that he arrived at Rome with around twenty and that he died at Naples with around fifteen. Vatin also tries to identify these companions, giving a list of names mentioned in the various sources, and gives a chronology of Cem's stay in France. While there has been much argument over the cause of Cem's death, Vatin concludes that it was in all probability natural.

Vatin considers Cem's place in contemporary politics. While Cem's aim, the throne, was straightforward, Vatin questions whether in fact he had the means to attain it. In contrast to Bayezid, the head of a well-constituted party, backed up militarily and with religious support, Cem, his father's favourite according to tradition, which Vatin argues to be accurate, was backed by an incoherent coalition of heterogeneous factions with contradictory or opposing interests. Rather than being in command, Cem seems to have been an instrument for different parties.

He was also an ideal instrument for the disunited and squabbling European states which, in the face of growing Ottoman power, were dangerously incapable of defending themselves effectively, as well as for the Mamluk ruler Kaytbay. Possession of Cem brought both political and financial rewards. Politically, possession of the sultan's brother potentially

curtailed hostile Ottoman activity, at least as far as Rhodes, Rome and Venice were concerned. While Venice may have sought to appear neutral, anxious as always to protect her commercial interests, this neutrality was merely apparent, Cem in Christian hands suiting her interests just as much as it did those of the other Christian powers. Possession of Cem was thus, Vatin argues, a key element in the politics of the period.

Financially, too, Cem was a money-spinner, his brother ready to pay a considerable price to ensure that Cem remained out of circulation. The Hospitallers did particularly well out of this arrangement. The financial aspect also reflects a reality of the period, and indeed of the earlier age; that of making money rather than war. While an enterprise such as a crusade 'pouvant séduire des princes puissants comme Charles VIII on Mathias Corvin, le Santi-Siège, Venise ou l'ordre de Saint-Jean préféraient, surtout si ils y trouvaient un avantage financier (mais là n'était peut-être pas nécessairement le point principal), une politique de dissuasion leur assurant la paix' (p. 47).

Vatin poses the interesting question of what were the cultural effects of Cem's fifteen-year sojourn in Europe. From an Ottoman perspective, these seem to have been negligible, there being no trace of any *alla franga* fashion among the Ottomans at the beginning of the sixteenth century. While the Cem affair had political implications it apparently had no cultural consequences. The Europeans, on the other hand, seem to have been more curious about the personality of Cem, but he was not a figure of great strangeness to those at the Papal court, where he was treated by the notables as one of them. Although he was Muslim and Turkish, neither of these attributes were new to Europe and his arrival did not, thus, constitute 'un choc culturel' (p. 7). The importance of the Cem affair must, Vatin points out, be understood not in terms of a confrontation between two civilizations, but as a political problem, which was, in fact, how it was viewed by contemporaries.

In political terms the Cem affair was merely another illustration of the dynastic problems which had beset the Ottomans for a considerable time, but with a significant difference. By crossing to Rhodes and to the Hospitallers, Cem turned the succession crisis from an internal Ottoman problem into an international affair. For the European states, increasingly vulnerable to the growing power of the Ottomans who, in 1480, had taken Otranto and begun the siege of Rhodes, Cem was a most welcome tool to be used against Bayezid II, and helpful in ensuring some Ottoman moderation. The Cem affair thrust the Ottomans into greater diplomatic activity with the courts of Europe, even if unwillingly, and into the role of active player in the system of European states, where the Ottomans came to be seen as a factor of equilibrium.

Vatin discusses the *Vaki'at-i Sultan*, about whose author nothing is known. Vatin agrees with Mehmed 'Arif, the first editor of the *Vaki'at*, that he was with Cem in Europe, although he does not accept 'Arif's identification of him with Cem's *defterdar* Haydar Beg (p. 86). He was apparently not with Cem

between September 1483 and July 1487. The author was not so much interested in Cem, about whom he gives little information, as in his travels. Vatin underlines the exactitude of the author and the richness of the information he gives.

Vatin also discusses the work of Caoursin, which favoured the Hospitallers and the main themes of which were the opportunity the Cem affair offered to Christian Europe, and the protection possession of Cem gave the Christians from Turkish attack. As a historical source, Vatin points out that while Caoursin was in possession of much first-hand information on certain events, he was less reliable over others, such as the civil war after the death of Mehmed II.

Comparing the two works as histories, Vatin concludes that while Caoursin was more rhetorical and less concrete, the author of the *Vaki'at* followed a chronology and was very factual, making up for what he lost in anecdotal interest by his precision.

The book has many illustrations, two maps, an appendix of European names given as they appear in Ottoman, and in Turkish transcription, a bibliography and a summary of the book in Turkish. This is a scholarly work and one which will be of great importance for any research in the period.

KATE FLEET

CAROLINE HUMPHREY and DAVID SNEATH: *The end of nomadism? Society, state and the environment in Inner Asia*. ix, 354 pp. Durham, NC: Duke University Press; Cambridge: White Horse Press, 1999.

Sedentary societies traditionally regarded nomads as primitive, barbarous peoples. Today, aid and development programmes, whether funded by national or international agencies, tend to show the same bias, albeit couching such views in decorously 'objective' language. Caroline Humphrey and David Sneath take a very different view. In this lucid, cogently argued study, they present a persuasive defence of mobile pastoralism (a term they prefer to 'nomadism', which, they contend, has been so misused and distorted as to be of little use as an analytical category). Their aim is to show that far from being outmoded, this form of pastoralism is still feasible; moreover, that it is capable not only of co-existing with, but also complementing, other, very different, social and economic regimes. Indeed, they suggest, it is virtually the only sustainable way of productively exploiting the immense, boundless steppes of central Eurasia.

The work comprises eight chapters, thematically organized; each chapter is further divided into five or more sub-sections. The first of these introduces the central topic of the chapter and provides historical or disciplinary background. The following sub-sections expand and develop the discussion from different angles. This plan



enables the authors to bring cohesion and clarity to a subject that is highly complex. One of the most satisfying aspects of this study is its rounded approach: the perspectives of anthropologist and economist are seamlessly interwoven. Thorough first-hand knowledge of the region permits generalizations to be made where appropriate, but local particularities are given due recognition. Thus, descriptions of 'common themes' are counterpointed by accounts of 'divergent paths'. The inclusion of personal case histories and interviews with local inhabitants helps to root this study in time and place. The text is amplified by maps, tables and photographs. There is, too, a substantial and wide-ranging bibliography, listing mainly English-language words, but also some sources in other languages.

The geographic focus of the work is Mongolia (formerly known as 'Outer Mongolia' later the 'Mongolian People's Republic'), adjacent territories of the Russian Federation (Buryatia, Chita Oblast and Tuva) and China (Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang). This region includes different cultural zones: the Mongolian and the Turkic, the Buddhist and the Islamic. The first chapter explores the historical legacy that gave rise to this diversity; it also looks at indigenous institutions in the pre-modern period, and social organization, as expressed in kinship and 'clan' networks. The enduring significance of kinship networks, and the way in which they evolved to act as support systems under very different regimes in the twentieth century, is revisited in a later chapter. The changing economic, physical and social context of pastoralism in the twentieth century is examined in several chapters. There is a detailed comparison of rural institutions, state and non-state, in the pastoral regions of Mongolia, China and the Russian Federation since the collapse of socialism. These institutions are of crucial importance, since they constitute the link between the herders and the natural environment. The impact of different government policies in the areas under review is discussed, and conclusions are drawn regarding future prospects for herd sizes, mobility and pasture quality.

In the final chapter the attitudes of urban intellectuals are considered. Pastoralism is now widely regarded as part of the traditional national culture and has therefore gained a respectability that, in the not too distant past, was conspicuously absent. Nomadism has also found favour with contemporary political movements that seek to promote greater environmental awareness and more responsible use of natural resources. However, the views and aims of these new activists may not always coincide with the needs and desires of the pastoralists themselves (for example, with regard to hunting). Thus, while pastoralism, as a way of life, now finds greater acceptability, it is also becoming the subject of new disputes.

Any work by Humphrey and Sneath, leading figures in Mongolian studies, is likely to be of interest. This latest book is particularly valuable since it is one of those rare works that will be of use to policy makers, to professionals in the field, and also to academics in a number of different areas, including pastoralism,

comparative development studies and post-socialist transitions.

SHIRIN AKINER

STEPHEN KOTKIN and BRUCE A. ELLEMAN (ed.): *Mongolia in the twentieth century: landlocked cosmopolitan*. xx, 313 pp. Armonk, NY and London: M. E. Sharpe, 1999. \$75, £28.95.

A decade into Mongolia's period of 'trial democracy' interest in that country's history, its past, present and possible future development has, whatever views international politicians may hold, not lost its fascination for the academic community. This volume is the result of such academic interest, the fruits of a learned conference held in 1995 at Princeton University, with a few additional papers specially commissioned after the conference.

One disadvantage of publishing papers read at learned conferences is—from personal experience as contributor as well as conference organizer—that contributors and editors can vary in their zeal to meet deadlines; what appears new and exciting when presented at a conference may thus be seriously dated by the time of publication several years later.

The volume is divided into five formal parts. There is a twenty-five page introduction by Associate Professor Kotkin of Princeton University—an expert on Soviet history—entitled 'In search of the Mongols and Mongolia: a multinational odyssey', the subtitle a direct reference to the *Landlocked cosmopolitan* subtitle of the whole volume, a term coined by Assistant Professor Tom Ginsburg, a former jurisprudence specialist at Berkeley, now at the University of Illinois. There follow sections on 'Sino-Russian competition over Outer Mongolia', 'International diplomacy concerning Outer Mongolia', 'Mongolia today' and 'Epilogue', which *in toto* represent the contributions of thirteen distinguished academics or diplomats. Three wide areas of interest are covered by the volume; these are anthropological/sociological, economic and historical/political.

The anthropological/sociological papers encompass such widely divergent subjects as the Buriat alphabet of Dorzhiev, demography and culture change among the Mongols in present-day China, decollectivization of pastoralism in Mongolia, and nationalism and élites. These cover a very wide range of anthropological, sociological and political considerations—possibly justifying the alteration of the volume's title to *Mongols in the Twentieth Century?*

Mongolia's chequered economic record is in some measure an underlying factor in many of the learned papers, most directly addressed in the three outlined here. Associate Professor Mei-hua Lan from Taiwan covers the period of the 'new administration' of the Qing Dynasty and the early twentieth-century agricultural and industrial reforms introduced initially in Inner Mongolia and then later in Outer Mongolia; Dr E. Endicott offers a succinct

account of the 1910 Trade Expedition by Russian merchants—sponsored by some seventy-three Russian firms—to Outer Mongolia, presenting an intriguing comparison with Mongolian-Russian trade of today. Ts. Batbatbayar, Director General, Department of Policy Planning and Co-ordination of the Mongolian Ministry of External Relations and an expert on Mongolian-Japanese relations, gives some insight into the current economic situation in Mongolia which, with the sudden withdrawal of the massive annual Soviet economic subsidy formerly enjoyed by Communist Mongolia, now depends to a very great extent on grants and credits from a wide range of international donors, of which Japan is an important member and, indeed, a major catalyst in the international sponsorship of Mongolia. The paymasters may be new but the serious current economic situation in Mongolia does not appear to me to differ greatly from that during my period there some twenty years ago. Indeed, it would probably still be recognizable to the late nineteenth-century Scottish missionary, James Gilmour, who commented: ‘What astonishes me is that the Mongol can get so much into debt ... And yet his debt does not distress him. He is most distressed because people will not lend him more money!’ *Plus ça change!*

The historical/political themes are well covered, forming at least an undercurrent to almost all the essays. The main theme is, undoubtedly, the relationship between what I have described as ‘The Yak, the Bear and the Dragon: Uneasy Bedfellows’, with the emphasis on what several of the contributors regard as the perfidious duplicity of the Soviet government over eight decades—with one essay dedicated to the Soviet suppression of the Mongolian attempts in 1962 to celebrate the eight-hundredth anniversary of Chinggis Khan! There is also the essay by Batbayar covering Mongolian-Japanese relations over the last half-century. No doubt Batbayar’s official position—and Mongolia’s dependence on Japanese largesse—constrains him to be economical with the facts; although his detailed account of the steps leading up to the establishment of

Mongolian-Japanese diplomatic relations is welcome, I doubt whether his rather bland account of the decade following ‘normalization’ in 1972 accords with, for example, the recollections of H.E. Mr Mitsutaka Akiho who was not only closely involved in the pre-1972 negotiations but was also Japanese Ambassador to Mongolia at the turn of the decade in question when, perhaps because of Soviet pressures, Mongolian-Japanese relations were clearly less than cordial. These fourteen essays may have answered the question ‘Whence Mongolia?’, but do they offer us any answer to the more important question: ‘Whither Mongolia?’ Reading a crystal ball is always, as I am certain Guudain Tumurchuluun, a senior researcher of the Mongolian Ministry of External Affairs, would agree, is far from an exact science. His Prologue offers us a fairly clear—if Mongolian—analysis of the current relationship between the Yak, Bear and Dragon and of the Yak’s travels into the wider world—but any possible projection of this upbeat analysis into the new millennium is clouded by recent changes within Mongolia. After a decade of ‘democratization’, recent national elections in the Republic of Mongolia have highlighted the disarray within the uneasy front formed in 1990 by the various ‘democratic parties’. The Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party (MPRP) has again taken power nationally, with 72 of the 76 seats in the Great Hural; this victory by the MPRP was confirmed more recently in the local elections when the democratic parties were again routed. I would personally be surprised if the new MPRP government proved to be a direct ideological descendant of the communist MPRP which terrorized the Mongolian People’s Republic for so many decades; but there have, in the few months since the recent national elections, been warning signs, reported in the Mongolian press, of a worrying tendency towards greater centralization and authoritarianism in Mongolian government statements and actions. One must hope that the MPRP has genuinely learned from the history of the last decade and that the delicate flower of Mongolian democracy is permitted to remain alive.

THOMAS NIVISON HAINING

## EAST ASIA

NICOLAS STANDAERT (ed.): *Handbook of Christianity in China, volume one: 635–1800*. (Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section Four: China, Volume 15/1.) xxvii, 964 pp. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001. \$201.

It is only with mixed feelings that students of Chinese Buddhism will be able to salute the appearance of this magnificent new guide to the state of research in a far more marginal field of research in the history of Chinese religion, albeit one of immense interest from the point of view of East-West relations. For had Erik Zürcher, doyen of European researchers in Chinese Buddhism, been able to find

younger scholars to whom to pass on his expertise, it is doubtful that he would have turned his considerable energies to the direction of research into the spread of Christianity into China, a topic far removed from his own doctoral studies, albeit complementary to his initial achievements in the investigation of the ‘Buddhist Conquest’.

His own contribution aside, the influence of his teaching is easy to see, for though the compilation of this handbook was based at the Catholic University of Leuven, both the editor and the editor’s main assistant, Ad Dudink, were originally part of Zürcher’s team at Leiden. Curiously, however, the labour involved in compilation is not indicated by signed articles, but by a list at the back of the book (pp. 907–9) and a second, more detailed,

table of contents with contributors' names attached (pp. 910–20); the subsequent indexes of persons, of Chinese and Manchu books, of subjects, and of authors (modern) are more readily appreciable as aids to the convenient consultation of the wealth of information included here.

This work is naturally divided into three chronological sections: the Nestorian Christianity of the Tang: the mixed Catholic, Nestorian, and indeed Armenian and other forms of Christianity of the Mongol period; and the much longer section on the reintroduction of Catholic Christianity from the late Ming onwards to 1800 that takes up almost nine-tenths of the book. Within each division a number of topics are covered by survey articles equipped with selective bibliographies, and in the latter part the topics are expanded to cover all manner of tempting themes for research, besides the basic coverage of the source materials available and existing information on missionaries and converts. We find therefore not only expected entries on Figurism and the Rites controversy, but also essays on such other areas of cultural contacts as 'Clocks', or 'Botany'.

Of course it is always possible to complain about gaps in coverage of such a vast panorama of mutual influence. There is apparently no reference, for example, to Joseph Needham's coverage of such matters as the Jesuits and chemistry in his *Science and civilisation in China* Volume v.3 (Cambridge: CUP, 1976), 221–36, or (where one might expect it under the handbook heading of 'Medicine') the Jesuits and calisthenics, as in Volume v.5 (Cambridge: CUP, 1983), 170–9. Even in the more narrowly conceived first section, on the Tang, the contributor might have mentioned David Wilmshurst, 'The "Syrian Brilliant Teaching"', *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 30 (1990), 44–74, a substantial, though not definitive, discussion of the terminology used to refer to Nestorianism in Chinese. And much later, in the discussion of Ricci's *De Amicitia* on pp. 604–5, the addition of a reference to Joseph P. McDermott, 'Friendship and its friends in the Late Ming', in *Family process and political process in modern Chinese history* (Taipei: Institute of Modern Chinese History, 1993), pp. 67–96, might have been appreciated too.

But for the most part a first reading suggests that if one withholds criticism of the scope of the work as inevitably subjective, the majority of the errors that leap to the eye are of the typographical variety. A preliminary list is therefore given here in the hope that many of them are trivial enough to be corrected in future printings, so as to make a useful work of reference yet more reliable. The list is somewhat longer than one would wish, given that it could presumably be extended through more protracted acquaintance with this volume. The publishers and editors of the 'Handbook of Oriental Studies' series are to be congratulated on their productivity and high intellectual standards, which go from strength to strength. Were I not convinced of the excellent scholarship of the editor of the second part of this survey, due to be published shortly, I would term the efforts of Standaert and his team a

virtually impossible act to follow. It might be wise, however, if these volumes, aimed though they may be at resolute seekers after truth, were first scrutinized more thoroughly by scholars equally dedicated to the pursuit of error.

P.7: The romanization and characters for the work by Saeki cited in n.15 do not match. P.38: For 'Wanatabe', read 'Watanabe'. P.47, n.18: Presumably the 'Kappler (1985)' cited in this note and below, but not in the relevant bibliography, is C. and R. Kappler, trans., *Guillaume de Rubrouck, envoyé de saint Louis*. Paris, 1985. The translation by Peter Jackson and David Morgan listed in this same note is published by the Hakluyt Society, not 'Hakluyt', and surely should have been listed in the final bibliography in preference to the outdated work of Rockhill which it was designed to replace. P.72, n.109: For 'Aldershot', read 'Aldershot'. P.74: The assertion that William of Rubruck met a Tibetan lama is based in my opinion on a false inference; I hope to publish my reasons in due course. P.375: The essays listed by Riffin and Sorokin appeared in a volume co-edited by Ming Wilson, not 'W. Ming'. P.443 (and cf. index, p.957): For 'Kowabara', read 'Kuwabara'; this entry also lacks all appropriate macrons on the Japanese. P.527: The *Pixie ji* of Ouyi Zhixu was printed in the Jiaxing edition of the Buddhist Canon. I have commented on the significance of this in *Asian Affairs* 26/1 (1995), 20–31. P.881, n.6: For 'Yoke-Ho Peng', read 'Ho Peng Yoke'.

T. H. BARRETT

COLIN MACKERRAS (ed.): *Sinophiles and sinophobes: Western views of China*. xxvi, 268 pp. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press (China), 2000. £12.99 (paper).

As the introduction to this anthology makes clear, this is not intended as a scholarly treatment of Western views of China, despite the well-informed introductions to the seventy-eight selections. Nor does it attempt to deal with fictional or retrospective images of China, doubtless because other volumes on these topics are listed by the same press in its 'Literary Anthologies of Asia' series. The emphasis, then, is very much on 'Chinawatching', the task of trying to make sense of the immediacy of China which stretches all the way back to Marco Polo, but which has assumed increased importance in more recent years as Westerners have come to realize that China can no longer be ignored as either a sleeping or even an isolationist giant.

As an anthologist of such material, Colin Mackerras is better qualified than most, not only on account of the stream of publications which he has produced over the past thirty-five years, including many valuable reference works, but also because one of these, *The Cambridge handbook of contemporary China* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), demonstrates through its two hundred or so reviews of a

mere section of this literature quite how widely read he is on his chosen subject. It is always possible to quibble with an anthologist's choice, and the generalization (p. xvii) that with a few exceptions, all writers on China before the twentieth century were men, though true enough, clashes somewhat with the selection in Jonathan Spence's more literary selection in *The Chan's Great Continent* (London: Penguin, 1998), which includes several missionary and other wives not excerpted here. Even so, the careful account given of the 'pendulum' of shifts in attitude towards China between generally positive and generally negative almost to the end of the twentieth century constitutes a useful body of documentation of lasting value.

What remains to be discovered, however, even for the twentieth century, is not just the reporting of China, but the reading that was done concerning it. How much in this anthology ever had any impact on its readership? Sometimes, as in the case of the *Cultural atlas of China* by Caroline Blunden and Mark Elvin (Oxford: Andromeda, 1983) we are told on p. 190 that it became a popular 'coffee table' item—even then a term implying glancing rather than reading—but information of this type is not consistently provided. This is not a criticism, for in all probability—and as far as I have been able to discover in preliminary research of my own—the types of material that sold best on China, at least in the middle of the twentieth century, were not those which attempted any instant analysis, since seriously trying to understand China has been very much a minority preoccupation. Rather, once beyond the most popular stereotypes, such as that of the villainous Fu Manchu, and travel or missionary accounts against which China is a mere backdrop for Western achievement, the more thoughtful reader was at best mildly intrigued by what it might be like to be Chinese. Such a market was more likely to be satisfied by a Pearl Buck novel, by the essays of Lin Yutang, or more lately by Jung Chang and those trying to emulate her success, than by any professional commentary on China's current state and future prospects.

But, to repeat, such observations are no more than a digression with no bearing whatsoever on the volume under review. Colin Mackerras has done a thoroughly professional job on the materials falling within the scope of his own interests, and the resulting anthology will certainly be highly appreciated by the better-informed readership on China that is at last emerging in the twenty-first century.

T. H. BARRETT

SACHIKO MURATA: *Chinese gleams of Sufi light: Wang Tai-yü's Great learning of the pure and real and Liu Chih's Displaying the concealment of the real realm*. xiv, 264 pp. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.

The study of Islam in China is a field whose recent growth (e.g. through the writings of such

scholars as Donald Leslie or Dru Gladney) may be seen to be very much in keeping with general trends in academic fashion. The widespread contemporary concerns with hybridity, with the voicing of silent minorities and with the rewriting of classical traditions, might all be cited as examples of these.

There are equally, however, formidable intrinsic difficulties of understanding to be faced by prospective workers in this field. The range of linguistic competence required is itself a daunting enough preliminary, but it is further overshadowed by the even more necessary ability to operate across the culturally very diverse frames of references represented by the civilizations of Islam and of China. Exceptional in her ability to meet these demanding requirements, Sachiko Murata demonstrated her willingness to question conventional Islamicist mind-sets through the suggestive use of an East Asianist model in her yin-yang approach to gender relationships in Islamic thought in the arrestingly titled *The Tao of Islam* (1992).

Her exciting and scholarly new book moves on to deal directly with historical Chinese understandings of Islam, as exemplified in the Chinese treatises produced by the two outstanding Muslim scholars Wang Tai-yü (d. 1657–8) and Liu Chih (b. c. 1670). Murata's introduction and her first chapter on Chinese-language Islam set out the exceptional constraints and exceptional freedoms involved in writing on Islamic topics in Chinese, a language whose structure and script inhibited the usual massive adoption of Arabic terminology and copious citation of Arabic authorities and whose cultural orientation necessitated a whole set of rather fundamental category shifts.

Described in Islamic terms as falling within the category of the mystical theology of theoretical Sufism, the project of these Chinese 'ulama is shown to be defined by their overriding desire to demonstrate that while the teachings of Islam, termed 'the pure and the real' (*ch'ing-chen*), are fully compatible with Neo-Confucianism, they also represent an essential supplement thereto in providing a fully worked out theory of creation and eschatology. The Riccian parallel which will suggest itself to many readers is treated with appropriate caution, given the significant differences of intent between conversion and accommodation.

The rest of the book focuses more closely on writings by Wang Tai-yü and Liu Chih, with full translations of one text by each. Brief excerpts from Wang Tai-Yü's *The true answers of the very real (Hsi-chen cheng-ta)*, a *mal'fūzāt*-like posthumous collection of short dialogues, are followed by a summary of his major work, *The real commentary of the true teaching (Cheng-chiao chen-ch'üan)*, accompanied by longer extracts which serve to show just how diverse in its expression this core text of Chinese Islam is from Perso-Arabic norms. This sophistication of cultural transfer is equally characteristic of the shorter text chosen for full translation, *The great learning of the pure and real (Ch'ing-chen ta-hsüeh)*, whose treatment of *tawhīd* clothes Ibn al-'Arabī in the garments of Neo-Confucian metaphysics.

Murata's account of Liu Chih explains the important place in Chinese Islamic literature occupied by his original writings like *The*

*philosophy of Arabia (T'ien-fang hsing-li)*, an influential work whose subsequent history includes the fascinating twist of a translation into Arabic called *Latā'if* by Ma Lian-yūan aka Muḥammad Nūr al-Ḥaqq ibn al-Sayyid Luqmān (d. 1903), whose commentary *Sharh-i latā'if* was first printed in Kanpur and later reprinted in Shanghai.

But the Liu Chih text selected for translation in the final part of the book is his Chinese version of a classic Persian Sufi text, the *Lawā'ih* by Jāmī, for which English-speaking readers have too long had to rely on the often misleading Whinfield-Kazvīnī version of 1906. A productive husband and wife partnership here yields the greatly added value of a new translation of Jāmī's original by William Chittick which is printed facing Murata's translation of Liu Chih's *Displaying the concealment of the real realm (Chen-ching chao-wei)*, so that the two may be readily compared. An introductory chapter draws attention to the many significant alterations involved in Liu Chih's version, not least through his omission of Jāmī's verses which so attractively lighten the abstractions of the original, and informative endnotes here, as throughout the book, add much on many points of detail.

The bibliographies and the various indexes which deal separately with Chinese and with Persian and Arabic names and terms are further testimony to the impressive breadth of scholarship which informs this truly mind-extending study of a uniquely interesting instance of intercultural religious translations.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE

HU YING: *Tales of translation: composing the new woman in China 1889–1918*. ix, 265 pp. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

This book is about modernity and gender in late Qing and early Republican Chinese writings. It is concerned mainly with how Western-derived images of women contributed towards the making of the modern Chinese woman and explores how a number of Western female icons were circulated and transformed in fiction and other kinds of writing such as biography. The author attempts to depart both from an impact-response model of historical change, and from what she calls 'feminist orientalism'. Thus, she views the adoption of Western icons as creative appropriation, rather than slavish imitation, of Western culture, and she avoids interpreting the making of New Woman in terms of liberation from oppression.

Zeng Pu's novel *Niehai hua* ('Flower in a sea of retribution') serves as the starting point for the investigation. Hu Ying reads the novel as a story about the crossing of geographical, linguistic and gender boundaries. Most of this 'crossing' is performed by the female protagonist Fu Caiyun, a Chinese ambassador's concubine who travels to Europe. The transgressive and autonomous Fu Caiyun is, Hu argues, a precursor of the New Woman. In chapters ii and iii the discussion turns to two Western female icons to which the novel *Niehai hua*

makes reference: the fictional Lady of the Camellias and the historical Sophia Perovskaia. Hu analyses how Lin Shu's translation of *La dame aux camélias* into *Chahua nü* sinicized Dumas's Parisian courtesan by infusing her with Confucian ethics, while at the same time retaining enough of her foreignness to make her exotic. It was this mix of old and new, familiar and exotic, which made for the success of the Lady of the Camellias as a cultural icon, argues Hu. Lin Shu's story *Liu Tingting*, Xu Zhenya's novel *Yuli hun* ('Jade pear spirit') and Su Manshu's novella *Suizan ji* ('The broken hairpin') are interpreted as reworkings of *Chahua nü*. Much like the Lady of the Camellias, the Russian anarchist Sophia Perovskaia was presented in Chinese writings as both foreign and familiar, in this case as an exoticized version of the domestic *nüxia* or female knight-errand. In Chinese biographies of Sophia and in the late Qing novel *Dong'ou nühaojie* ('Female heroes of Eastern Europe') she is described as a morally pure, self-sacrificing young maiden, but also as a rebel with a flair for dramatic self-invention. The image of Sophia, Hu demonstrates, is also bound up with images of Chinese professional women, as *Dong'ou nühaojie* was published under a pen-name borrowed from a Cantonese woman doctor, and the life-story of the novel's Chinese protagonist parallels that of the woman doctor Kang Aide. The fourth and final chapter treats a third foreign icon; Madame Roland of the French revolution. Hu reads Yi Suo's feminist novel *Huang Xiuqiu* and other Chinese writings about Madame Roland as texts about tensions between Chinese nationalism and international feminism.

In spite of its title, Hu Ying's book is not a translation study. With the exception of the analysis of Lin Shu's translation of *La dame aux camélias*, the focus is not on the transfer of female images from the West to China, but on the transformations these images underwent when already in China. In other words, it is less about the relationship between source and target languages than about intertextual links within the target language itself. Rather than taking translation as her subject of inquiry, Hu Ying uses 'translation' as a metaphor for the creation of self by looking at the 'Other'.

The book provides many perceptive analyses of intertextual links between different kinds of writing, and many interesting observations concerning individual texts. It suffers, however, from a certain vagueness. Conclusions are imprecise and theoretical positions not made clear. It would have been helpful to the reader had Hu Ying explained the theoretical underpinnings of her view of the relationship between literary discourse and historical change. Hu describes literature as being extremely powerful, something which shapes history and creates 'identities' and 'spaces'. We are told, for instance, that it was the literary metaphor of 'the birth of the nation' which led late Qing reformers to believe that motherhood was important to China's modernization. Fictional characters are even portrayed as agents in historical events. Thus, Fu Caiyun is merged with her historical model Sai Jinhua and becomes a participant in the political intrigues surrounding the Boxer Rebellion, a

period which the novel *Niehai hua* does not cover. Yet Hu does not indicate how she has arrived at this far from common-sense view of literary language. Nor does she explain the causal link between the images of women she explores and the emergence of New Woman. It is also unfortunate that the book focuses on a May Fourth rather than a late Qing or early Republican concept: the term 'New Woman', Hu Ying concedes, had not yet achieved currency in the period concerned, and it denoted an ideal not yet 'fully articulated'. The choice of New Woman as the focal point of the analysis therefore makes Hu Ying's account of gender in the late Qing and early Republican periods unnecessarily teleological.

In conclusion, this book is more relevant to the study of late Qing and early Republican fiction than it is to women's studies or even translation studies.

MARIA AF SANDEBERG

HAROLD M. TANNER: *Strike hard! Anti-crime campaigns and Chinese criminal justice, 1979–1985*. (Cornell East Asia Series, 104.) x, 253 pp. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999. \$17 (paper).

With the economic reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, the PRC also started to reform the criminal justice system. Harold Tanner uses a variety of sources, including internal documents and reports of criminal cases, to analyse the first six years of legal reform, marked by a series of prominent anti-crime campaigns which have hitherto not received due attention. In the first part of the book Tanner describes in detail the reconstruction of the criminal justice system from 1979 to 1982, drawing on historical antecedents since 1950 as well as the Soviet Union, although the Republican period from which the CCP emerged is entirely ignored: most of the book operates in a historical vacuum. The following chapters offer the meat of the book, namely an analysis of the first 'Strike hard' campaign in 1983–85. In an attempt to 'overcome chaos with severe punishment', in Deng Xiaoping's words, a record number of people were arrested and punished during the first six months of a vehement campaign in which judicial authorities were given quotas to be filled. In some cases, previous offenders already tried were reconsidered and given a revised sentence, while 'crime' and 'criminal intention' were defined in the broadest possible way under new procedures of rapid adjudication. Over two million people were prosecuted from 1983 to 1987, as even brushing against a woman in public could be construed as attempted rape. A hard campaign hardened crime: new problems of serious theft, violent crime and narcotic offences appeared in the wake of the campaign, although this aspect is not always followed up by the author. Specifically targeting unruly youths, for instance, the campaign only succeeded in producing a fall in the average age of juvenile offenders. A more sustained cultural analysis of the meanings of 'danger', 'crime',

'punishment', 'youth' or 'deterrence' would have been helpful, as it could explain why a very low crime rate prompted such brutal and ultimately ineffectual methods of control: crime and punishment are social constructs and cultural spectacles which say more about political culture than about crime prevention. Moral panics about crime rates historically appear in periods of political instability in which a government seeks increased powers of intervention, an aspect which warrants more attention from political scientists working on crime in contemporary China.

A separate chapter looks closely at the two dominant forms of punishment, namely execution and labour reform, both of which expanded considerably as a result of the anti-crime campaigns. The author shows that the liberal use of capital punishment failed to prevent a rise in crime rates. The efficacy of labour camps, on the other hand, is more ambiguous, although social prejudice and economic difficulties facing prisoners returning to society in certain cases led to increased recidivism. An ambitious final chapter looks at the historical relationship of 'modernization' to changes in the rate and structure of crime and the development of the criminal justice system, although the lack of reliable statistics, the short time span under consideration as well as the sheer diversity of theories in this field prevent the author from drawing any conclusive observations.

Tanner has made good use of a variety of sources to present a coherent and informative analysis of the criminal justice system in post-Mao China. Although the book relies heavily on government documents to present a systemic description of criminal justice rather than a detailed analysis of its workings in concrete cases, it provides a timely and solid analysis of the 'strike hard' phenomenon which has been eclipsed by more prominent political campaigns.

FRANK DIKÖTTER

SHERMAN COCHRAN (ed.): *Inventing Nanjing Road: commercial culture in Shanghai, 1900–1945*. (Cornell East Asia Series, 103.) 252 pp. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 1999. \$28, \$17 (paper).

*Inventing Nanjing Road: commercial culture in Shanghai, 1900–1945* provides a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of how commercial culture was constructed in Shanghai in the first decades of the twentieth century. Most importantly, it also offers indispensable threads to unravel the complex tapestry of Shanghai's emerging consumerism at the beginning of the new millennium. The contributors to this timely volume explore similar issues at various levels and from different angles thus providing an enriching, multi-dimensional interpretation of hitherto neglected aspects of pre-1949 Shanghai. As for the narrative of the book, it is bound together by Nanjing Road, Shanghai's main commercial thoroughfare, which is seen as the epitome of the city's commercial attitudes and practices.

The introduction, by the editor Sherman Cochran, offers a unifying interpretation of the main themes developed in the volume. One of the central questions raised is whether foreign influence played a pivotal role in the establishment of commercial culture in Shanghai. In other words, as aptly summed up by Cochran, was the city's commercial culture 'imported' or 'invented'?

In the first part of the volume Cochran and Wellington K. K. Chan discuss at length the origins of Shanghai's commercial culture. Chan's essay looks at how modern department stores, founded by Cantonese entrepreneurs, introduced a revolutionary way of shopping which was alien to traditional Chinese retailing practices. It convincingly demonstrates that these enterprises, which were inspired by Western models, accelerated the rise of Nanjing Road as the centre of Shanghai's distinctive commercial culture around 1920.

The second contribution by Sherman Cochran discusses whether commercial culture in Shanghai was a foreign import by dissecting the advertising techniques used by the British-American Tobacco Company (BAT) in China. The essay suggests that BAT's early advertising campaigns failed to spread the message across the country as a result of the company's usage of Western advertisements. Only when BAT started to adapt its advertisements to Chinese tastes, did it manage to send persuasive messages to potential Chinese customers. As a whole, BAT's advertising in China was not a mere foreign import but a more complex amalgam of Western marketing techniques and technology combined with the skilful use of Chinese cultural symbols. The challenging conclusion is that advertising in China was born in Shanghai's Nanjing Road rather than in New York's Times Square.

In the second part of the volume Carrie Waara, Carlton Benson and Hanchao Lu examine various facets of 'Shanghai style' (*Haipai*), and discuss the role played by the inventiveness and resourcefulness of Shanghainese in the rise of commercial culture in Shanghai. Carrie Waara's perceptive essay demonstrates that, by drawing inspiration from foreign models, art magazines between 1911 and 1937 attempted to forge a distinctive Shanghai style in applied arts as well as in other fields. These magazines also represented the Shanghai woman as an icon of modernity, fashion and sophistication thus contributing to create a 'highly gendered consumer culture' which was especially visible in the shops along Nanjing Road.

Carlton Benson's essay artfully demonstrates how the *kaipian*, a traditional song usually rendered at the beginning of a storytelling performance (*tanci*), was deftly adapted by the Shanghainese to suit their commercial inclinations. In fact, in the early 1930s silk merchants employed *kaipian* songs, either in radio promotions or in commercial magazines, to advertise their products and, indirectly, to promote the new fashion-conscious Shanghainese woman. The essay also stresses that Shanghai's commercial culture was deeply entrenched by the mid-1930s when the contents of *kaipian* were skilfully manipulated to defy the austerity preached by the New Life Movement.

Hanchao Lu's illuminating essay highlights how the Shanghainese successfully

appropriated Western architectural styles and then reinvented them to suit their own needs. On a general level, Lu's essay stresses that the emergence of a modern real estate market in Shanghai in around 1860 created fresh commercial opportunities for the Shanghainese and, at the same time, introduced new housing concepts among the local population. The essay centres around *shikumen*, alleyway dwellings which epitomized the hybridity of Shanghai's architecture. It demonstrates with great detail and insight that in overcrowded Shanghai, especially in the late 1930s and the 1940s, the renting of rooms of various sizes and purposes in *shikumen* houses fuelled a highly lucrative and complex rental market.

In the third and last part of the volume Poshek Fu and Susan Glosser ask whether Shanghai's commercial culture was able to survive the Sino-Japanese War (1937–45). Fu analyses the issue by looking at film production in *gudao* (solitary island) Shanghai, the area under foreign administration which escaped Japanese occupation between 1937 and 1941. Contrary to mainstream interpretation, he argues that in *gudao* Shanghai the film industry flourished, though very briefly, between 1938 and 1940. In this respect, Fu's essay cites the melodramatic movie *Hua Mulan joins the army* which, through a careful mixture of patriotic motifs and commercial concerns, became a major success in 1939. Yet, by 1940 under increasingly difficult economic and political conditions, film production in Shanghai had exhausted the creative vein, which could not be revived once the whole city came under Japanese control in December 1941.

As for Susan Glosser's essay on the milk industry, it demonstrates that this specialized commercial activity was able to survive, and to a certain extent even to prosper during the war years. In fact, Chinese milk producers such as T. M. Yu found a *modus vivendi* with the Japanese occupiers, which permitted them to pursue their own commercial concerns. Glosser's provoking conclusions offer intriguing insights about business practices in occupied Shanghai and raise questions for further studies on this subject.

Finally, William R. Taylor, the editor of *Inventing Times Square* (1991) after which the title of this volume is modelled, reflects on the similarities and differences between Shanghai and New York's commercial cultures in the first decades of the twentieth century. Most significantly, he points out that New York's consumer culture was the result of local developments whereas the emergence of Shanghai's modern consumerism was strongly linked to the import to the city of foreign commercial practices.

CHIARA BETTA

ELIZABETH J. PERRY and MARK SELDEN (ed.): *Chinese society: change, conflict and resistance*. (Routledge Studies in Asia's Transformations.) xi, 241 pp. London and New York: Routledge, 2000. £16.99 (paper).

This informative volume focuses on the diverse sources and facets of inequality, social tension

and popular resistance or protest in contemporary Chinese society. It takes as axiomatic that rapid economic growth and income gains resulting from China's reform programme have many benefits and, instead, looks at a different legacy of reform or individual and collective expressions of social, economic or political anxiety, discontent and unrest. These range from everyday acts of passive and private resistance to public street demonstrations. Thus there are in-depth and insightful analyses of the different forms of labour dispute arising from lay-offs, reduction of welfare benefits and non-payment of wages, including daily workplace resistance, petitions, work stoppages, strikes and public protest. Other papers examine overt and open resistance to taxation, birth control policies and migration policies; anti-corruption, nationality and gender protests; intellectual and religious dissidence; democratic demonstrations; and suicides.

There are several recurrent themes which link the papers, each of which is written by an experienced scholar from a variety of disciplines including history, anthropology, sociology, political science, economics and psychiatry. Alike they trace the origins of the different expressions of dissent and defiance to Imperial, Republican and Maoist traditions and practices and to new media and other opportunities for acquiring comparative knowledge that derives from both domestic and foreign sources. Many of the papers also highlight the role that popular kinship, village and religious ideologies play in structuring patterns of resistance and conclude that popular religions and folk ideologies, revitalized in new socio-political contexts and in support of new goals, play a pivotal role in the process of passive and active resistance. A second theme which emerges from many of the papers is the fragmentation and segmentation of China's heterogeneous post-reform society, which means that resistance movements are for the most part local, isolated and disparate in their demands and expressions, be they framed in terms of class, gender, nationality or educational level. A third theme, and one that is familiar to China scholars, is the pivotal and often contradictory role played by local officials in relation to popular resistance. Simultaneously they may articulate, collude with and defend the interests of villagers, workers or others and suppress their causes at upper administrative levels, especially where they run the risk of losing government support. In turn, the government itself is fearful of losing the loyalty of local officials and encourages them to channel and control any discontent.

This volume is not just about the nature and level of discontent in China's contemporary

society but also about the strength, resources and flexibility of the state in channelling, controlling and accommodating discontent and protest be it silent or overt. A second set of themes in the volume centres on the way in which the state has accommodated demands and criticism, prescribed legal and regular channels for complaints and reshaped or altered the pace of reform by expanding the market and the private sector, enlarging the scope of the legal system and sponsoring elections for local government. Several of the papers offer new insights into the ways that legal reforms now offer opportunities to press claims against officials and create a legitimate arena for complaint. In sum, the government has both directed or diverted and regularized or even routinized channels for criticism and conflict, and what is apparent is that it is economic protests which tend to be regularized and routinized. Thus economic criticism and urban protest against officials and managers or demonstrations against loss of wages and investments are less apt to be repressed, but equally it is clear that the state will not tolerate any challenges to its own basis of authority, power and legitimacy.

This timely volume does not avoid addressing difficult or controversial questions. What will interest readers is another phase in the continuing analysis of state-society relations; this time after twenty years of reform. How far have the plethora of strikes and protests, and everyday resistance challenged Party rule, and do they have the potential to do so? In examining such questions the editors conclude that what is striking so far is that, despite diverse and plentiful expressions of dissatisfaction and protest, no significant organizational focus either enshrined in political party or social movement has emerged at the national, regional or even local level to challenge Communist Party leadership. The editors also conclude that it is unlikely that levels of dissatisfaction in contemporary China traceable directly and indirectly to the effects of reform policies will challenge state power and radically change state-society relations unless there is an overriding issue which provides connective threads. However, the detailed and nuanced papers do reveal that there is a new sense of entitlement reflecting a rising consciousness of rights. By turning a wide-ranging analytical eye to the disadvantaged and disappointed, the dissatisfied and marginalized or excluded, this very interesting volume facilitates a balanced picture of the reform process, its achievements, its difficulties and its consequences for China now and as it snakes it way into the twenty-first century.

ELISABETH CROLL

## AFRICA

RIJK VAN DIJK, RIA REIS and MARJA SPIERENBURG (ed.): *The quest for fruition through ngoma: the political aspects of healing*. 172 pp. Oxford: James Currey; Athens, OH: Ohio

University Press, 2000. £12.95 paper; £40.00 cloth.

In search of comparative frameworks, the anthropology of spirit-oriented rituals has generated a number of (pseudo)analytical terms



such as 'trance', 'possession', 'healing' and 'masks' and has also developed functionalist, psychological and semantic approaches ('theories'), all of which have had the effect of disintegrating and reducing the phenomena under study and reifying the resulting fragments. For adopting a less ethnocentric approach, the contributors to this collection praise John M. Janzen's *Ngoma: discourses of healing in Central and Southern Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992) with faint damns, some louder than others. They like the fact that Janzen employed an indigenous term, *ngoma* (drum), to analyse a specific regional complex of 'healing practices, discursive forms, music, rhythm and rhyme which form an integrated whole'. The drum, 'with its infinite range of associations deriving from its shape, material and sound is the encompassing metaphor of this complex whole' (p. 98). The contributors complain that Janzen treats *ngoma* complexes too narrowly as 'cults of affliction' concerned with 'therapy', and relegates other functions to the margin of metaphorical extension. They intend to bring politics back in and investigate the relationship between healing power and political power.

An anthropologist is entitled to emphasize whatever most interests him, in the particular circumstances of his field work, and as Jacques Barzun recently asked, 'What is the point of saying about innovators that they should have done what later comers were able to do after the ground had been cleared for them?' To be sure, it is always proper to add descriptions and commentaries to our current understanding of social phenomena, but the issue is much more than a matter of arithmetic. The real problem is that of translation. Africans consult experts to help them deal with diseases; the words they use to describe the process are often appropriately translated by 'healing'. The same 'healers', however, may be asked to deal with experiences that we, speakers of European languages, would not call 'disease': a man's savings are destroyed when his mattress catches fire, a prostitute has not been able to attract enough clients, an entire people feel themselves oppressed by a dictator. 'Affliction' was meant by its inventor, Victor Turner, to be a sufficiently abstract term to cover such problems.

The authors believe that 'therapy' is too medical a term for the interpretation and handling of adversity, and want to say 'bringing to fruition' instead; but would widespread adoption of the term 'fructification' really illuminate for us the elusive many-sidedness of *ngoma*? It is our illusion that politics is wholly different from healing, because we segregate these activities in our life (parliament, hospital) and allot them to different scholarly domains. For us, but not for Bantu-speaking Africa, it is metaphorical to speak of 'healing' political problems. We have little choice, however, but to continue using our usual language and the conceptual categories that go with it, while adding warnings that terms like 'therapy' and 'fertility' are necessary though (in)convenient compromises. After all, the editors have found it necessary to sub-title the book, *The political aspects of healing*, an expression which brings us back to the original problem of fragmentation.

'All *ngoma*, such as healing, initiation rituals and kingship rites, share a common concern with the person in transition and the society in transition' (p. 6). Within the same society, as Henny Blokland shows for Nyamwezi, *ngoma* can be social, secular and competitive; or they can be religious, serving to unite the collectivity with its ancestors. In a part of Zambia discussed by Annette Drews, *ngoma* in the form of *chimwali* (*chisungu*) helps to redefine gender identities among Christians. Varieties of *ngoma* mediate social changes in Swaziland (Ria Reis). In Zimbabwe, the cult of the spirits of royal ancestors, Mhondoro, as an *ngoma*, provides a forum for political negotiation (Marja Speierenburg). Matthew Schoffeleers, taking '*ngoma*' to include earth cults favouring the reproduction of society as a whole, offers typically thoughtful suggestions on the relations among kingship, divinity and historical change, drawing on the work of Victor Turner, Frazer, René Girard and Igor Kopytoff. Cor Jonker analyses the internal dynamics of healing in Mdzimu Zionist churches in Zambia, to which he thinks the term *ngoma* applies, although the Bible has replaced the drum; 'healing' here is at least partly a matter of inducing women to adopt a more passive role in urban situations than they were accustomed to in rural life. An important point in this and other essays is that participants in ritual may have contrasting motives and expectations. Rijk van Dijk employs the theme of transformation in *ngoma* to show that an important difference between the *ngoma* model and the Born-Again movement in South Africa lies in different constructions of the past and the future in relation to the present.

The book as a whole shows anthropology in transition, struggling with its own past and its future, as the authors discover new aspects to 'healing' and reach for parallels elsewhere. In a concluding review, Janzen comments on the rich and varied ethnography these essays offer, traces his own scholarly quest from his studies of healing in Lower Congo to *Ngoma*, and notes that *ngoma* is becoming a worldwide phenomenon.

WYATT MACGAFFEY

BRUNO NOVELLI: *Karimojong traditional religion: a contribution*. lxxxvii, 396 pp. Verona: Comboni Missionaries Kampala, 1999. No price.

The author has been a missionary among the Karimojong of northern Uganda for extended periods since 1972. This work is a very full and useful compilation of data that goes beyond his own material to include extracts from the published and unpublished writings of others. These range from the notes of earlier missionaries to the anthropological work of Neville Dyson-Hudson. No attempt is made to reassess these writings, but the book aims rather to bring them together and provide a definitive and authoritative source on this subject. The volume complements the author's earlier publications on these people, notably on their

language, and he takes care to draw out the linguistic nuances of vernacular terms. The sub-headings follow a clear and logical sequence; although there is no index, which would be an essential research aid for anyone who wishes to consult this work selectively, or to attempt an alternative collation of the data.

Clearly, there is a wealth of material here, and the strength of this work is that the detailed ethnography stands on its own merits. However, the author's approach to explanation raises problems. He does not shy away from questioning conventional theories, for instance on sacrifice. (And incidentally, while dismissing the notion of 'sacrifice' in a Karimojong context, he also produces some truly astonishing evidence (and a photograph) of 'human sacrifice'.) He points out that the Karimojong do not suggest that a ritual slaughter is intended as a gift to God or the spirits, but rather it is a gift of meat for the senior elders to eat; and hence, he argues, this is not 'sacrifice'. Perhaps it is not sacrifice in the Hebraic/Christian tradition; but there is a sense in which the whole occasion is 'made sacred'. The participants are smeared with the chyme of the animal and so is the tree below in which they sit in prayer to God, who comes down from the sky to the highest branches. Even if the ritual killing is not an offering of life to God, it does appear to have a very close association with the process of bringing God and God's protection closer to the supplicants. God provides rain, and hence grass and cattle and livelihood, as a gift; and the chyme is (linguistically) grass—God's gift to Karimojong. An alternative theory of sacrifice, in other words, is that this *is* a gift after all among the Karimojong, but *from* rather than *to* God, and passed on through the senior elders to other participants. The benevolence of these elders in their mediating role as they eat the meat is their experience of the benign power of God as the ultimate giver.

Generally, the author's attempt to reduce metaphysical explanation to rational argument, rather as E. B. Tylor might have done, does less than justice to his material. He sees Karimojong livelihood as hard and uncertain, but essentially simple and pragmatic; and hence all aspects of their system have the 'characteristic simplicity of a pragmatic people', and their religion has a very direct explanation. However, this approach to explaining Karimojong religion as an elaboration of pragmatic experience is a circular argument. Because they are pragmatic, he argues, the Karimojong perceive their world in material terms which feed back to their experience in concepts that they understand, giving psychological satisfaction. The emphasis on correct performance is self-fulfilling. The problem, however, is that this approach could apply to any society (as indeed he suggests at certain points) and fails to illuminate the uniqueness of Karimojong religion and the sheer drama and intensity of ritual assemblies. If one turns from Tylor to W. Robertson Smith for some explanation, then the emphasis on correct performance takes on another dimension. Robertson Smith suggested that the powers and dangers associated with ritual correctness and sharing in a sacrificial assembly emanate

from the complex of relations between humans in a situation of anxiety and change; in other words, between the meat-eating elders of the senior generation and those who supplicate them. The concept of deity, and the spirit world which descends from the sky and the treetops, has meaning in the performance and the wider social context, incorporating the ambiguities, emotions and dynamics of social relations that are unique to Karimojong.

Far from being simple, the complexity of this religion is self-evident in this work. To this, one may add the bewildering complexity of Karimojong social organization. Each territorial section of Karimojong society has its own ceremonial ground where ancestors are buried, and it is hedged with rigorous taboos and ceremonial procedures. When they congregate at one of these at a tribal level, each section retains its territorial position and order of seniority. *All* the elders of a *single* senior generation, extending over some 25,000 square kilometres of Karimoja, are the powerful mediators with God, and hold the entire society in a ritual strait-jacket for fifty years or more, before mounting chaos forces the few survivors of this generation to retire to oblivion in order to bring 'boys'—some of them middle-aged rebels—into the system (cf. p. 211). At this point in the cycle, various territorial sections are poised to break away from the Karimojong federation; but they become reincorporated as the strait-jacket snaps in the process of reconstituting a new strait-jacket that will constrain younger men for the next fifty years or so. Few experience this catastrophic event more than once in their adulthood, and yet it appears to have recurred with remarkable consistency. To describe this process as simple and account for it in similar terms fails to address the host of questions that it raises (P. Spencer, *The pastoral continuum*, Oxford, 1998, 32–3, 99–119). There is enough evidence in this work to support the claim of other authors that this complexity is no mere fiction. But the work also draws attention to the key role of sacrifice in bringing a sense of awe, recreating a divine order out of a sense of tumbling disorder with each passing generation. One is left with a deep impression that goes well beyond the pragmatic experience of survival for individual families to the power and complexity of human relations on a massive semi-surrealist scale. It is the seed-bed for an impressive and awe-inspiring religion.

PAUL SPENCER

JAMES FERGUSON: *Expectations of modernity: myths and meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. (Perspectives on Southern Africa 57.) xvii, 326 pp. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1999. \$45, \$17.95 (paper).

Urban forms and dynamics in sub-Saharan Africa are immensely variable, reflecting different roots in pre-colonial or colonial imperatives, different locations and functions, different

planning philosophies and policies and a host of other variations. In terms of their internal economic dynamics, particularly reflected in the nature of internal labour markets, it is hard to think of any today where a significant majority of the workforce is involved in formal, waged jobs. Yet this is what is needed if 'modernity' is to characterize the city and its citizens—or at least that is what much writing on African urbanization has suggested, with its frequent singling out of Zambia, and the Copperbelt in particular, as a place where processes of urbanization in social, economic and demographic terms were most highly developed; where 'real' urbanism was occurring. As Ferguson notes in the book under review, the Copperbelt was envisaged as the 'vanguard of the "African Industrial Revolution"' (p. 174).

This conceptualization of the Copperbelt was, by the mid to late 1970s, quite erroneous. The slowing, halting or even reversing of urbanization in demographic terms in Copperbelt towns was evident from the national censuses in the 1980s and 1990s, although the evidence of the data was ignored by many urban practitioners for years. The cities' growth slowed because the underlying economic functions of those cities, the copper mines, faltered and failed. Throughout the world, mining-based towns have a nasty habit of experiencing booms and slumps: most 'ghost' towns were once thriving towns and in some ways the fate of the Copperbelt might have come as no surprise, although the fate of the Copperbelt is part of a much wider process of economic decline evident throughout urban Africa, and cannot be explained in terms of the unpredictability of metal prices alone. Yet, because perhaps of its special place in the literature (from the perspective of many disciplines) on African urbanization, the old conceptualization of the Copperbelt has taken decades to lay to rest. *Expectations of modernity* should dispense with it once and for all.

Ferguson dispels any notion that 'modern', permanent, 'committed' urban residents with 'modern' urban attitudes are particularly likely to be found in Copperbelt towns because of their specific economic history. He comprehensively dismantles the idea that any unilineal trend towards more permanent (and more proletarian) urbanization of its residents, in accordance with modernization theory as it pertains to African urbanization, has occurred. This part of his book had already been rehearsed in the *Journal of Southern African Studies*, in the pages of which there was an exchange between him and the historian Hugh Macmillan; much of the theorizing therein lies in the field of political economy. In this book Ferguson also provides a fascinating and compelling critique of anthropological theories and approaches towards the African urban 'modernity' issue, from Gluckmann to Mitchell. Apart from the methodological difficulties, which Ferguson highlights, of 'measuring' whether individual urban dwellers' values and beliefs are, in some essential sense, 'urban' or 'rural', he proposes that these were the wrong questions. Instead, he argues, people adapt their views and behaviour according to their perceptions of what is likely to be best for

them and these are practised as 'cultural styles'. This is not the same as adopting, perhaps superficially, a set of values which serve for specific occasions or purposes, which can be 'shrugged off' when not wanted and other, perhaps more deeply held (often supposedly rural), values adopted. Ferguson's theory is that cultural styles have to be practised and while it is possible to practise more than one, it is hard to be convincing or good at both of them. All this is tied to the theme of Copperbelt people's links with rural areas in Zambia for, as the book shows, today most ex-miners are convinced, however reluctantly, that they will eventually have to leave the Copperbelt and go to rural areas. Ferguson argues that this is the main reason why many Copperbelt miners tend to practise what he calls a 'localist' cultural style which is likely to appeal to their rural kin, rather than the 'cosmopolitan style' practised by a range of residents, including many from the salaried middle-classes, youths, the lumpenproletariat and some miners.

Ferguson's exposition of the fate of many ex-miners who were part of his research survey takes up a major part of the book and it is a most eloquent and sensitive exposition. He maintained contact via letters with several of the men who formed part of an initial survey in 1986 of soon-to-be ex-miners on the Copperbelt and visited seventeen of them in their, by then rural, homes in 1989. Their struggles with pension schemes (and schemers), their tragic disappointments when investments fail, their struggles with the usual rural problems of lack of water, unreliable rainfall, insufficient agricultural labour power and so on are depicted with great sympathy and clarity, and tellingly illustrated with excerpts from their letters. The cases highlight the potentially disastrous fate of those who had not maintained sufficiently well their 'rural alliances' by regular visits and remittances and generally keeping up a 'localist style' while on the Copperbelt. In modern developmentalist parlance the problems they faced stem from their subsequent lack of 'social capital' in their new home areas. This is not only reflected prosaically in difficulties in raising labour to help in the fields but also in the undermining of the miners' rural enterprises and, quite often, themselves and their wives. As Ferguson elaborates at some length, such negative influences are often cited by the miners as 'witchcraft'.

Ferguson makes the case for the rationality of urban-rural labour mobility and for 'localist style' extremely convincingly. So convincing is it, however, that his chapter on cosmopolitan style which, like the rest of the book, is a pleasure to read, theoretically sophisticated and full of insight (and self-deprecating humour), still left me wondering why anyone but the wealthy middle classes should practise it. Was it for many a triumph of hope over experience and for others, who had perhaps read the signs wrong (or failed to take note of them), a mistake? Could the youths he describes in the bars later become experts in 'localist style' as their probable future loomed nearer? None of these questions is answered in this book although my inkling is that, at least for the average rebellious youth (which presumably the Copperbelt produces just like anywhere

else) it is much more fun to be cosmopolitan rather than localist, and for some urban women rural alliances are just not worth cultivating.

In the final chapter of the book, entitled 'Global disconnect', Ferguson traces the process by which Zambia, and the Copperbelt (along with sub-Saharan Africa in general) have gradually been disconnected from the 'bandwagon of global growth' (p. 245) as neo-liberal economic values came to rule the global economic agenda. As he notes, with evident dismay and telling sarcasm, it is the de-industrialization of Africa that neo-liberalism dictates which lies at the heart of many of the cultural practices and urban processes he analyses with such vigour and rigour on the Copperbelt. Ferguson is a telling critic of neo-liberalism and structural adjustment, and once used a haunting quotation (p. 22 of this book) from one of his survey's ex-miners in a publication on 'IMF-ruled Africa': 'children are dying like nobody's business'. (J. Ferguson, 'From African socialism to scientific capitalism: reflections on the legitimization crisis in MF-ruled Africa', in D. B. Moore and G. J. Schmitz (ed.), *Debating development discourse: institutional and popular perspectives* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995). It is a phrase that has stayed in my memory.

There is much else in *Expectations of modernity* which will stay in my memory. It is a landmark in the anthropological literature on African urbanization and provides new theoretical perspectives for several other disciplinary approaches to the study of processes of urbanization, for example geography, history and political economy. It is also a pleasure to read with its compelling case studies and fluent, clear theoretical explanations which are accessible even to a non-anthropologist.

DEBORAH POTTS

RICHARD FARDON and GRAHAM FURNISS (ed.): *African broadcast cultures: radio in transition*. xvi, 239 pp. Oxford, Harare, Cape Town, and Westport, Connecticut: James Currey, Baobab, David Philip, and Praeger, 2000. £14.95.

The academic study of radio in Africa is indeed, as the editors of this excellent collection write in their introduction, 'seriously under-researched' (p. 19). This is a considerable gap in the literature of social science, for radio in Africa is far more than just another imported consumer item which has acquired a certain market share. It has become the pre-eminent modern communication medium, particularly since the introduction of transistor radios beginning in the 1950s, and is far more important than newspapers, television, email or internet in transmitting ideas in Africa. It is ideally suited to Africa's particular tradition of oral culture. Although there do exist some studies of radio in Africa, many of them are written by radio professionals for their own purposes, such as training, and some emanate from non-governmental organizations or others

concerned with freedom of expression or with development, again as noted by the editors (pp. 8–9). There are few studies rooted in the disciplines most prominent in academic African studies, such as politics and anthropology. In short, Fardon and Furniss and their various collaborators have provided us with a most useful collection, and one which in some ways continues the editors' earlier work on language policy. It would be a fine thing if other researchers were to pick up some of the suggestions or loose ends in this volume and produce further studies in the same vein.

The fifteen chapters which follow the editors' introduction are divided into three sections. Part 1 is written by professional radio broadcasters and managers and concerns such matters as the number of radios in Africa, the evolution of radio engineering, policies on staff training and programme management. For those who crave facts and figures, the chapter by the BBC's Graham Mytton will be the most satisfying in the book since it has plenty of statistics on who broadcasts and who has radios, and discusses the relative merits of short-wave, satellite and digital broadcasting.

Part 2, on the culture of radio was, for this reviewer, the most interesting part of the book. In the course of reading these chapters it becomes clearer just how deeply the freedom of the airwaves instituted in Africa in the 1990s has penetrated societies. With the decline of the old one-party states there has been a proliferation of private, local and community radio stations, some of them broadcasting in minority African languages and experimenting with various forms of audience participation. Mary Myers, Christine Nimaga Ceesay, Tilo Grätz and Mansur Abdulkadir all write engagingly on the interaction between radio broadcasters (or 'microcasters' in the case of small-scale community radio) and their listeners. Another author in this section, Debra Spitulnik, adds a carefully-observed account of how people in Zambia actually use radios, lending them out to family and friends, conserving valuable batteries, and so on. This is surely how globalization should be treated in anthropology, rather than in the form of the punditry which fills so many volumes on the subject.

Part 3 concerns radio, conflict and political transition. This section includes an interesting and characteristically well-written piece by Richard Carver on Rwanda's Radio mille collines, the notorious hate-radio which incited its listeners to genocide during the terrible events during and after April 1994. Carver brings some useful nuances into this story, such as pointing out that Radio mille collines only turned really nasty after the fateful day of President Habyarimana's assassination. He goes on to point out the crucial role played by lingering single-party control of national broadcasting stations in sabotaging so many of the attempted democratic transitions of the 1990s and makes a plea for the virtues of independent, public-interest national broadcasting (a notion supported by Jeanette Minnie). This section also includes the weakest piece in the whole volume, by Wendy James, which consists of an analysis of a sequence of events in Sudan as reported on radio stations monitored by the BBC's Summary of World Broadcasts. Her

essay would have benefited from further work before publication.

Altogether, then, this volume is a successful example of a genre somewhat devalued by the possibilities offered by desk-top publishing and the demands of research assessments: the multi-author collection. It has been carefully edited to reflect the papers presented at a conference, held at the School of Oriental and African Studies in June 1997, which had itself been well prepared. It opens up an important subject. We must hope that future researchers pick up the threads of the arguments presented here.

STEPHEN ELLIS

JEFFREY HERBST. *States and power in Africa: comparative lessons in authority and control*. (Princeton Studies in International History and Politics.) x, 280 pp. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000. £35, £11.50 (paper).

This is a big picture account of contemporary African statehood by a well-established name in the field, proposing a bold synthesis and a (as the author thinks) novel argument. In many ways it leans on currently fashionable orthodoxies: there is a withering dismissal of previous (modernization and dependency) theories as 'analytic disasters' (p. 6); an irritated contempt for anything that smacks of 'exoticism' (p. 31 and p. 256); a concern to play down the significance of European historical experience and an emphasis on long historical continuities (p. 4). So much so that one might note in passing that, as these themes are all strongly associated with the foremost French scholar of African politics, Jean-François Bayart, it seems a little churlish that Bayart's work is systematically ignored. Herbst links these current fashions, however, to a materialist social science that sees political and institutional developments 'as the result of human agency interacting with powerful geographic and historical forces' (p. 31).

What is the substantive argument? The author contends that the problem facing state-builders in Africa (throughout history it would seem) is how to project authority over difficult terrain with low population densities, a set of challenges supposedly in sharp contrast to European experience. State consolidation can be understood in terms of the assessment of the costs of expansion by individual leaders; the nature of buffer mechanisms established by the state; the nature of the regional state system; and finally there are trade-offs between these three dimensions. Concretely this leads him to look closely at various ways in which leaders have tried to consolidate states not just by means of boundaries but also through the establishment of national currencies, citizenship laws and the rules governing land tenure. There is no doubt that this approach enables Herbst to pull together in a useful way a mass of information concerning these matters, but his more ambitious project is vitiated by three confusions. The first is a deep ambiguity about

the state. This stems from the concern to avoid (as he sees it) Eurocentrism so that 'state' becomes something like 'form of rule' and it can then be argued that Europe 'does not provide a template' (p. 22). But of course Europe does provide a template for the modern state and when he is not worrying about Eurocentrism Herbst is well aware of this (e.g. p. 100). The effect, however, is that it is never made clear whether there is one type of modern state and various routes to it (hardly anyone disagrees with this) or different types of modern state. Thus Herbst claims to show that 'the desired characteristics of a state in Africa are different from those traditionally valued in Europe' (p. 24). Chapter v (to which we are referred) in fact shows nothing of the kind but rather documents the difficulties that African states have had in projecting power. The fact that African élites have done rather badly at building modern states does not begin to demonstrate that they were trying to construct some other kind of state.

This difficulty is compounded by the author's meta-theoretical commitments, that is to say his analysis constantly appeals to ecological and geographical factors, referring to them as 'givens', and systematically plays down the cultural and discursive elements in social and political life. So 'agency' is understood entirely in a template sense to mean something like the calculation of 'sensible cost-benefit equations' (p. 39). Needless to say such an approach is almost guaranteed to produce historical continuities, indeed history in any useful sense disappears. What this systematically occludes is that the other side of the coin, of states' lack of capacity to enforce their will, is a capacity of at least some communities to resist that will, or at the least indicates that they still possess alternative ways of doing things. This is the real difference with Europe and the West generally, where the construction of the modern state has been as much about the destruction of communities and cultures within state boundaries as it has been about the maintenance of the boundaries themselves. It is that which has proved so difficult to replicate in Africa. To be fair Herbst appears to allude to this in suggesting that in contemporary Africa 'profound social forces with deep historical roots come into increasing tension with these new state structures' (p. 257) but this rather obscure remark is made in passing and its implications are nowhere explored.

Finally Herbst attempts to derive some quasi-normative implications from his analysis—essentially that the imposition of boundaries does not fit the realities of African life and is not likely to produce viable states. This being so it is legitimate for the rest of the world at least to consider the possibilities of ignoring currently constituted states. Such possibilities include using aid to promote regions rather than states; decertification (e.g. of states involved in the narcotics trade); recognizing new nation-states; and most radically, considering alternatives to the nation-state. In one sense of course this sensitivity to political realities and variations can be quite admirable. But Herbst is writing from a perspective in which a group of nation-states, indeed one in

particular, dominates the rest. Leaving aside the ludicrous double standards (Herbst seems unaware that sections of his own state have been involved in narcotics from time to time) the fact is that in a world of nation-states such proposals will be pushed on the weak by the

strong and will be seen by virtually all political forces in weak countries as forms of balkanization.

TOM YOUNG

## GENERAL

LEIF MANGER (ed.): *Muslim diversity: local Islam in global contexts*. [vi], 260 pp. (NIAS Studies in Asian Topics, no. 26.) Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999. £40.00.

DAVID WESTERLUND and INGVAR SVANBERG (ed.): *Islam outside the Arab world*. xii, 476 pp. Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999.

Perhaps fatally wounded by Said's critique, the older orientalist tradition which used to dominate Islamic studies has in recent decades been largely replaced by new emphases. These changes have been due partly to the general academic shift in Asian and African studies towards the social sciences, in part to the shifting relationships in human society itself, most notably including besides the general effects of globalization the settled establishment of significant diaspora communities of Muslims in the West.

Much attention has consequently come to be given, at least at an academic level, to chipping away at the still prevalent simplicities of a monolithic model of Islam by emphasizing its internal diversity and affirming the validity of its varied local manifestations. Although each is conceived with a rather different audience in mind, these two edited volumes from Scandinavia are both self-identified products of this new approach to Islamic studies, not least in their emphasis on descriptions of Muslim societies outside the Arab heartlands of the Middle East.

Originating in a workshop held in Norway in 1992, *Muslim diversity* is a collection of academic papers of which the majority are contributed by social anthropologists. In his editorial introduction, Manger presents a clear account of the all too familiar theoretical difficulties which arise from the need to do proper justice both to local realities and to the normative traditions which form so important a reference point in Muslim self-definition. He provides a balanced assessment of the various attempts which have been made to address these, in which he highlights the utility of the fluid model suggested by Talal Asad, and a particularly useful bibliography is provided. An afterword by William Roff describes the important role in the development of the new Islamic sociology which was played by the American Joint Committee on the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies.

Based in most cases upon their authors' fieldwork, the papers included in the volume relate to a wide variety of Asian and African local settings, from Bangladesh (Gardner) to

West Africa (Vikør) and the Sudan (Harir, Manger). Particularly interesting issues are raised in several papers, including Tor Aase's exploration of the multiple explanations which may be advanced for the recent emergence of acute Sunni-Shia conflict in Gilgit in northern Pakistan; Eldar Bråten's demonstration from the evidence of fieldwork in Java of the dubious nature of the contrasting social categories so memorably delineated in Geertz's classic study; and Annika Rabo's account of the internal diversity of Islamic identity and allegiance within the Middle East itself as revealed by her fieldwork in a town in north-west Syria. In much the longest paper of the book, Dru Gladney provides a detailed account of the Salafiyya movement among the Hui Muslims of north-west China, which should be of wide interest, particularly in its careful description of the relationship of the Salafiyya to other varieties of Islam amongst the Hui and its illuminating discussion of the effects of shifting Chinese government policy, in its turn determined by perceived foreign affairs priorities.

For the larger volume on *Islam outside the Arab world*, its Swedish editors have assembled an international list of contributors with the aim of providing a comprehensive geographical coverage. While the editorial introduction is modestly pitched at a readership not expected to have much prior knowledge of Islam, this handsomely produced volume should prove to be a most useful work of reference not only to the general reader and undergraduate student but also to policy makers and to academics.

Few even of the latter will command a grasp of the Islamic world at the level presented in the book's twenty chapters, arranged under three headings dealing respectively with Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Europe and the Americas. Those interested in comparison will be grateful for the evidently firm editorial guidelines which ensure that each chapter is clearly arranged as a summary historical survey of the particular region, followed by a description of the contemporary scene, including both internal variety and where appropriate relationships of Muslim communities to the wider local society. All Islamicists will find much to learn about parts of the Islamic world with which they are not directly familiar. As an instance, one may cite the excellent chapter on China which has been contributed by Justin Ben-Adam, an Uighur specialist whose account usefully complements the Gladney paper in the Manger volume. And as the cover photograph of the Uppsala mosque in the snow promises, there is a particularly extensive coverage of all the main communities recently established in the diaspora, including even Australia and New

Zealand (where Muslims constitute 0.83 and 0.37 per cent of the respective total populations).

The interest of the book is further enhanced by the inclusion of numerous black and white illustrations, and its usefulness as a work of reference by the provision of much recent statistical information, of good bibliographies after each chapter, and of a well designed index.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE

DAVID CRYSTAL: *Language death*. x, 198 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. £12.95 (\$19.95).

The title speaks for itself. One (modest) estimate for the maximum number of languages that might have existed in the course of human history is 12,000, whereas 6,000 is a widely accepted figure for those spoken today. Of these, however, up to half are considered to be threatened with extinction. And Crystal concludes with the stark observation: 'If the estimates I reviewed in chapter 1 are right, another six or so have gone since I started to write this book...'. What is surprising at a time when we are bombarded with so much information about the loss of animal- and plant-species in the context of concerns over the general degradation of the environment is the level of ignorance within both the relevant communities and the world at large about the diminution of variety in the uniquely human achievement which is language. And even when individuals or communities are aware of what is happening, often this is deemed no cause for alarm. It is to counter such ignorance and/or complacency that this welcome and readable volume has been written by a linguist of proven ability to appeal to wide audiences. All royalties will be paid to the Foundation for Endangered Languages, the Appendix giving contact details for this and similar organizations.

The nature and scale of the phenomenon are discussed. Explanation is then offered for why the issue occasions concern: apart from sorrow over the abstract concept of yet another manifestation of ecological impoverishment, possible clues as to the universal defining characteristics of language might be missed if some little studied or unknown tongue dies out—the canonical illustration is the Khoisan family in southern Africa, for, had this passed into oblivion unrecorded, linguists would have no hint that human speech could make such central use of the click-sounds that are exclusive to this group. The reasons for the disappearance of speech-varieties are set out in chapter iii; they range from cataclysmic natural disasters, through attrition from quite understandable processes of cultural assimilation, to the results of war or ethno-linguistic persecution. As for possible first steps towards protection/preservation, nothing can be achieved unless members of the speech-community themselves appreciate the need to keep their language alive as the pre-eminent badge of their cultural identity. Here, though, care is needed to avoid charges of interference or cultural superiority; foreign players can exert a positive influence by raising awareness among native speakers

and/or instructing the latter in the latest techniques for teaching and managing their minority language in the no doubt bi- or multilingual environment in which it exists. One regrettable attitude that has to be combated is the frequently encountered apathy or even lack of pride amongst perhaps the last generation of competent native speakers, which might lead them not to bother passing on their linguistic knowledge in the belief that it is better for their (grand)children to concentrate on gaining mastery in the major local or international language(s). The persuasive counter-argument is that it is precisely amongst such generations deprived of their linguistic inheritance that one is likely to (and indeed regularly does) find strong sentiments of remorse at the loss that has been imposed upon them, for they, undoubtedly thanks to better education, may well come to realize the value of the language to their cultural heritage when it is sadly too late to ensure its survival. Thus, based on this study, Crystal's six recommendations for areas where efforts for amelioration should be concentrated are set out in the following formulae: an endangered language will progress if its speakers: 1. increase their prestige within the dominant community; 2. increase their wealth relative to the dominant community; 3. increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community; 4. have a strong presence in the educational system; 5. can write their language down; 6. can make use of electronic technology.

Plainly, it is not just minorities who may require educating firstly in the advantages of safeguarding their linguistic skills and then in the practicalities of how to realize any desire for preservation—local dominant groups, which are in many cases hostile to minorities living amongst them, might have to be coaxed to evince greater sensitivity and tolerance; after all, whilst the granting/strengthening of cultural (including linguistic) autonomy *might* lead to a demand for greater political freedom, there is no logical reason why it necessarily should, a point that could have been emphasized in the text.

This book so succinctly fulfils the goals which the author set himself that it deserves dissemination not only amongst a general readership simply to raise awareness of the problem but also amongst communities faced with the short- or medium-term loss of a native tongue as well as amongst dominant populations within which there are linguistically threatened minorities, in the hope that problematic mind-sets might be altered. In many instances such communities will not themselves be literate but, if the work were translated into such languages as, for example, Spanish, Russian, Turkish, Mandarin, Swahili, and (dare I add it?) Georgian, it might contribute to saving some of the moribund languages spoken where these forms of speech predominate. Is there a role here for UNESCO funding, perhaps? The original version will serve across the English speaking world, where deaths continue to occur.

The work virtually begins with an account of a Western visitor arriving in Turkey one October day in 1992 to interview Tevfik Eşenç, the last speaker of the North West Caucasian

language, Ubykh, only to find that he had passed away earlier that morning. Speaking as, I believe, the only Englishman to have met and worked with Tevfik, I should like to endorse the ample testimony presented in these pages as to the effect experiencing such contact has on concerned observers. Ubykh's two remaining sister-languages, Abkhaz(-Abaza) and Circassian, especially in its western dialectical forms, are precariously placed—it would be wonderful to think that this book's appearance might contribute to putting them on a more secure footing.

GEORGE HEWITT

DAVID PATTERSON: *The Hebrew novel in Czarist Russia: a portrait of Jewish life in the nineteenth century*. xiv, 321 pp. Lanham, Bolder et al.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999.

David Patterson's *The Hebrew novel in Czarist Russia* was first published in 1964. It has been reissued, with a brief new introduction, an expanded and updated bibliography, and a new sub-title, *A portrait of Jewish life in the nineteenth-century*.

Patterson chronicles the rise of modern Hebrew literature in Eastern Europe, a phenomenon intimately tied up with the educational mission of the *Haskalah*, the Jewish variant of the European-wide Enlightenment movement. While the pioneering Hebrew novelists were obliged to entertain in order to attract an audience, they also infused a didactic message of moral self-improvement, occupational diversification, and engagement with the modern, non-Jewish world into their works. The first authors faced a daunting task. Although Hebrew was in wide use as a sacred language for liturgy and study, it was not a vernacular language equipped to convey modern concepts. Nor did the religiously Orthodox wish it to become one, especially in the service of the *Haskalah* agenda. Ultimately, modern Hebrew literature could become viable only if it combined entertainment with regard for the general concerns of the Jewish public, presented in a form which was easily comprehensible. Since not all novels could be set in ancient Palestine—which solved some of the problems of vocabulary—a modernized Hebrew had to be fashioned for the task.

For example, the moment a character in a modern Hebrew novel lit a cigarette with a match as he sat down to a game of cards with a group of brokers, a new Hebrew vocabulary was required, since the biblical and medieval language provided none of these terms. Nor would the language be strengthened if the author relied on foreign loan words and transliterations. Likewise, Hebrew authors had to acquire and devise colloquialisms that would serve for the kitchen as well as the prayer-house. Patterson deftly describes how his authors overcame these problems, albeit through a long and tortuous process, to

fashion a 'new' Hebrew which remained completely grounded in the 'old' sacred language.

Plotting posed another problem, especially since the early models for Hebrew authors were the exuberant and convoluted French novels of writers such as Eugene Sue. At least authors wrote about what they knew, and the setting for most early Hebrew novels was Eastern Europe. Despite their copious flaws—in their fantastic plots coincidence was raised to an art form, fortunes were made and lost in the space of a page, and romances displayed all the permutations of a modern soap-opera—the novels have often been considered a valuable insight into the life of Eastern European Jewry, as Patterson's new sub-title emphasizes. This assumption was summed up at the start of the century by the literary critic David Frishman, who claimed that from the work of S. I. Abramovich 'the future scholar would be able to reconstruct the entire map of Jewish shtetl life in Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century in such a manner that not even one iota would be left out'.

A half-century of revisionist history by scholars such as Hans Rogger, Michael Stanislawski, Michael Aronson and Stephen Zipperstein, as well as the opening of post-Soviet archives, must cause us to qualify such claims. In particular we must reassess Abramowitz, who should be viewed as a social critic with a penchant for the grotesque rather than as a purveyor of realistic documentation. Patterson's work is particularly valuable because it elucidates works which, rather than providing an account of photographic accuracy, reveal the preoccupations of the *Haskalah* writer in Hebrew: the problem of Jewish poverty, the 'chained wife' or *agunah*, and the position of women in general, and the tyranny of the Jewish communal leadership. Often these serve as background elements which need to be teased out of the text and explicated. Thus, the cavalier treatment of many wives by their husbands created a situation where they were unable to marry, raising questions which are not necessarily integral to the main narrative, but of which the contemporary reading public would have been aware. In short, these works are indeed valuable for an understanding of the East European Jewish world, but in the realm of mentalities, rather than absolute *vérité*.

It is not the task of Patterson's work to discuss the phenomenon of creativity in two different languages, a talent displayed by a number of his authors, especially Sh. J. Abramowitz. Patterson notes in passing that Abramowitz wrote in Yiddish, even as he accords him, in his guise of 'Mendele Mokher Sefarim' (Mendel the bookseller) the paean of 'Grandfather of Hebrew literature'. Yet this hardly informs the casual reader that Abramowitz, as 'Mendele Moykher-Sforim' won equal acclaim as the *zeyde* (grandfather) of modern Yiddish literature. Patterson sins less than most in this regard—there are studies of Abramowitz which hardly mention that he wrote in Yiddish. Nonetheless, this work would be made more valuable still if it addressed the phenomenon of bi-lingual creativity, especially because many of the problems Patterson's Hebrew-language authors faced in framing a modern form of an ancient language had



numerous analogies to the problems faced by the Yiddish-language writer, who was often the self-same individual!

Minor cavils aside, it is a pleasure to welcome the reissue of this book, especially in paperback, which makes it a valuable resource

for university classes dealing specifically with the history of modern Hebrew literature or more generally with the history and culture of East European Jewry itself.

JOHN D. KLIER

## SHORT NOTICES

CARMEN BLACKER: *The Catalpa Bow: a study of shamanistic practices in Japan*. 384 pp. (Third edition.) Richmond: Curzon, 1999. £16.99.

Though one cannot but give an unreserved welcome to the reappearance of this superb study, its publication as a 'Classic Paperback' in Curzon's 'Japan Library' does seem to target its appeal towards an unduly narrow readership. After all, the accounts of firewalking and of climbing a ladder of swordblades which mark but two of the more dramatic episodes in its still frequently electrifying narrative are already referred to in Tang China, and the former practice in the East Asian world was first described by Walter Medhurst in his early nineteenth-century observations of the overseas Chinese. The whole topic of shamanism, too, has (as the preface to the second edition already rightly observed) assumed a wider interest than was the case when the work first appeared in 1975. So though it may still be marketed as a purely Japanological classic, one suspects that the time may be not far off when it will come to be recognized as the best book on East Asian religion as a whole to emerge from Britain in the twentieth century.

And although, too, this third edition may in its preface lament its author's somewhat diminished ability these days (p. 6) to 'climb the steeper slopes of the holy mountains of Japan', one notes even so that she has been far from idle: pp. 366 and 367 append additional bibliographies of important recent works in European languages and Japanese respectively. Amongst the former one might particularly note P. F. Kornicki and I. J. McMullen (ed.): *Religion in Japan: arrows to heaven and earth* (Cambridge, 1996) not simply for the excellent essays which justify its place in this bibliography, but also for the biographical sketch and bibliography of Carmen Blacker's principal publications on its pp. xvii–xxii, for those outside Japanese studies who want to know more about her work. May the republication of her best-known study win for her more readers than ever, whatever their own fields of interest.

T. H. BARRETT

JACKIE ASSAYAG (ed.): *The resources of history: tradition, narration and nation in South Asia*. (Études thématiques 8.) xvii, 374 pp. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, Institut français de Pondichéry, 1999.

This rather bulky volume originated as a set of

papers delivered to an international seminar held in Pondicherry in January 1997 on 'The resources of history. Traditions: transmission or invention?'. As both that title and the smoother version preferred for the published proceedings may indicate, the contents are wide-ranging in their totality and often individually suggestive.

Taking L. P. Hartley as inspiration for her editorial introduction's title 'The past is not (always) a foreign country', Assayag makes a brave attempt to draw out common themes, but the twenty-two papers are too diverse in scope to make this a very easy task. As is often the case with collections of this kind, most readers will prefer to look through the table of contents for contributions close to their own areas of interest, and the following selective comments are offered in that spirit.

Each helpfully provided with English and French abstracts, the papers are arranged under three categories. The first embraces the broad topic of 'Sacred texts and regionalism or nationalism'. It includes a stimulating short paper by Chris Fuller on the attitudes of the contemporary priesthood in Tamil Nadu to the scholarly project of editing the Agamas being pursued by the French Institute in Pondicherry; some thought-provoking reflections by Peter van der Veer on the significance of editions of the epics for the definition of the modern Hindu nation; and an interesting demonstration by Christophe Jaffrelot of the typological difference between the sectarian assimilation implied in the *suddhi* of the Arya Samāj and the more radical semitic-style conversion of contemporary *dharm parivartan*.

The rather heterogeneous section on 'Construction of regional identities' includes a paper by Sylvia Vatuk on the lives of his female forebears compiled by a South Indian Muslim, an interesting contribution by Assayag herself on the bridging of the communal divide in the Kannada hagiography of a Muslim saint from north Karnataka, and a visually striking essay by Pierre Pichard on how the modern architecture of Thimphu is shaped by official insistence on the inclusion of traditional Bhutanese features.

Grouped as 'Imagined narratives of regionalism and nationalism' the final set of papers includes a short interpretation by Marc Gaborieau of Sayyid Ahmad Bareilvi as millenarian charismatic rather than prototypical freedom fighter, an often alarming picture of the popular ideology of the Shiv Sena by Gérard Heuzé, and a wonderful ending with Karen Leonard's sympathetic portrait of the distanced images of South Asia which form part of the painfully reconstructed American identity of the early Panjabi emigrants to California and their Panjabi-Mexican descendants.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE