

ex voto origins, was – far from being simply filed and ignored – carefully repaired at some point in its century-plus life before entering the archive. Yet the number of plainly inaccurate statements appears very low indeed: the only one that this reviewer found unequivocally bothersome was the apparent assertion that the *Jinglü yixiang* (p. 115, n. 7) is a translated text. It is in fact a very useful early encyclopaedia of quotations from a wide range of Buddhist scriptures, some of which have disappeared or been altered since its compilation. One might perhaps also have appreciated the information that the *Erjiao lun* (p. 94), while not available in English, has a well-annotated French translation by Catherine Despeux included in her *Bouddhisme et lettrés dans la Chine médiévale* (Louvain: Peeters, 2002), 145–227. Both these examples, however, concern no more than other texts touched upon in passing.

Yet the most intriguing feature of this work is the way in which it sometimes involves other manuscripts of equal complexity that in effect demand similar treatment before the information they yield can be usefully adduced as evidence in reconstructing the world of IOL Tib J 754. I have in mind the fascinating S. 529, rather briefly described on pp. 57–8, which I have not seen in its original form, but only as printed – albeit by the best of editors – in a recent selection of transcribed Stein documents published in China. One aspect of its contents I have commented on in a recent tentative publication *From Religious Ideology to Political Expediency in Early Printing: An Aspect of Buddhist-Daoist Rivalry* (London: Minnow Press, 2012), pp. 82–3. But it would also seem a primary document for the study of travel and pilgrimage in the tenth century, since the author (or one of the authors) describes *inter alia* a bootless trip to Canton to try to get to India, which may suggest that – like the object under study in this monograph – S. 529 is also a relic of a later attempt in the author's life to reach this goal by land. Such a loose end is more than welcome: good scholarship is surely not the cut-and-dried product we are supposed to be serving up for assessment, but rather ideally provokes as many questions as it answers. Excellent scholarship, for that matter, also demonstrates how to go about solving further problems through close attention to detail. In these two respects the work under review succeeds triumphantly. One looks forward to more of the same, whether from the authors concerned, or from others inspired to emulate their work.

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LO JUNG-PANG (ed. BRUCE A. ELLEMAN):

China as a Sea Power, 1127–1368. A Preliminary Survey of the Maritime Expansion and Naval Exploits of the Chinese People during the Southern Song and Yuan Periods.

xxx, 378 pp. Singapore: NUS Press, 2012; Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012. ISBN 978 9971 69 505 7 (NUS Pr.); ISBN 978 988 8139 80 4 (HK Univ. Pr.).

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Historians interested in China's maritime past are familiar with Lo Jung-pang's articles on the naval activities of the Song to Ming periods. These studies were published in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. It was also during this period that Lo supplied

Joseph Needham with fresh ideas and manuscripts on China's maritime history. The essence of Lo's findings went into the relevant sections of Needham's famous *Science and Civilisation* series. There can be no doubt that, without Lo's steady support, these chapters might have been written differently. Evidently, Lo had also completed a major manuscript on the Song and Yuan periods, which was never printed separately, as a major monograph. Fortunately this work and other documents left by Lo have survived and Bruce A. Elleman edited the monograph in the form of the present book.

China as a Sea Power (dated 1957) contains a brief foreword by Elleman, with some biographical details on Lo Jung-pang, a preface by Lo himself, and a long introduction by Geoff Wade, known for his many studies on the relations between Ming China and South-East Asia. Interestingly, both Elleman and Wade tried to link Lo's discussion of the past to our own times. During different periods in history, China was the world's leading sea power; the question is, will Beijing acquire a similar position in the decades to come. At present the discussion of *haiquan* (sea power) and *haiyang wenhua* (maritime culture) is a hot topic in the PRC, but while local historians emphasize the peaceful nature of China's ambitions, Elleman and Wade look at such claims from a distance. This is in line with some of Lo Jung-pang's earlier arguments: by citing from a large stock of Chinese primary sources he suggests that, in terms of both military and commercial potential, medieval and early modern China was a heavyweight at the maritime frontier and did not always act peacefully. Innumerable naval battles were fought in Eastern waters, which underlines the fact that China was not just a land power, but also very active on rivers and seas – far more so than we sometimes believe. Whether one should apply the patterns of the past to the twenty-first century, however, is a matter of taste, viewpoint and political rhetoric – in China, the Anglophone world and elsewhere.

Using current academic standards to discuss a work written in 1957 requires a diplomatic approach. Modern Sinologists have moved way beyond the findings of Lo Jung-pang, yet one cannot but admire the synthetic nature of his survey, drafted at a time when few scholars understood the mechanics of China's past. Lo, one may say, was able to present a detailed picture from a bird's-eye view, mainly by linking macro-factors such as administrative, economic, demographic, cultural and other key constituents to the gradual emergence of various maritime elements, including naval warfare. It is regrettable indeed that no institution – on account of rivalries (?) – pushed the publication of these rich findings, which Lo had so brilliantly assembled to design a complex panorama.

But this may not be all. My impression after reading Lo Jung-pang's book is that he occasionally made use of certain sources in rather "impressionistic" ways. Although he offers statistical data and qualitative evidence in support of his excellent arguments, one rarely encounters discussions on the authenticity of the relevant materials, their editorial history, and the political implications associated with many texts. It seems that one of Lo's passions was simply to portray China as a major maritime player. Perhaps this passion had something to do with his biography and his visions of the future? Today, historians dealing with traditional Chinese shipbuilding, for instance, would be more careful with the interpretation of traditional data, the best example being the endless debate about the size of China's ocean-going vessels.

Another observation relates to the military side. As pointed out in the book, most naval clashes occurred on China's rivers and in coastal waters. It is also true that in Song and Yuan days huge fleets crossed the East and South China Seas to carry troops to Japan, Annam, Java and other locations – which is all admirably described

by Lo – but battles on the high seas remained rare events. China had various firearms, even simple flame throwers, but the extent to which such weapons, including primitive artillery, were used on the oceans is unclear. The traces left by Song and Yuan sailors and migrants in different parts of South-East Asia and elsewhere are mostly the result of commerce.

Taiwan's past does not occupy a central place in Lo's book. In recent years, Fujianese and other historians have provided evidence that this island was in close touch with the Song and Yuan. However, readers themselves should find responses to such delicate questions. Another issue concerns the editing of the book. One ought to congratulate Elleman for his courage and enthusiasm, but unfortunately there are several incorrect transcriptions of Chinese words and the citation of some sources could be improved. My final observation is this: Lo's book should have come out a long time ago. It certainly is more profound in nature than the early account by Din Da-san, José and Francisco F. Olesa Muñido et al., *El poder naval chino desde sus orígenes hasta la caída de la dinastía Ming* (Barcelona, 1965), and it compares well with Jacques Dars' *La marine chinoise du Xe siècle au XVe siècle* (Paris, 1992).

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YAN XUETONG (阎学通):

Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power.

(The Princeton China Series.) ix, 312 pp. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. (Translated by Edmund Ryden.) \$32.50. ISBN 978 0 691 14826 7.

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A note on the translation (p. ix), says that Yan Xuetong, professor for international relations at Tsinghua University, is “obviously” not arguing for the re-establishment of a monarchical system led by one sage who would save the world with his moral goodness. This excuses translating wǎng by “humane authority”, rather than “King” or “Sage king”. We may be relieved that a “Chinese” theory of international relations, such as this book has been written to provide, will not amount to a re-establishment of monarchy, but given the fundamental role of monarchy, and of the qualities of the monarch in early Chinese political thought, one may well ask how such political thought can serve us today.

The work has three parts, preceded by an introduction by Daniel A. Bell, the volume's editor, and editor of the series which it inaugurated, The Princeton China Series. Yan presents his view of ancient Chinese thought and modern Chinese power in the first part, “Comments” are given by three younger scholars: Yang Qianru, Xu Jin and Wang Rihua, and finally Yan responds to his commentators. Three appendixes complete the volume: the first by Xun Jin offers a potted history of the period for the uninitiated, the second is a conversation between Yan and Lu Xin about himself as a “realist scholar”, and finally Yan gives an account of “why there is no Chinese School of international relations theory”.

Historical accuracy is one point that Yang Qianru picks up on in her comments; Yan reads the Western Zhōu texts to produce a theory, not to be accurate. This is a tension in the three main chapters where the author first discusses “Pre-Qin political philosophy”, “Xunzi's interstate philosophy” and finally, written with Huang Yuxing, “Hegemony in *Stratagems*”, that is, the *Stratagems* in the Warring States (Zhànguó cè). This last