

## REVIEWS

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### THE ANCIENT WORLD

SUZANNE HERBORDT:

*Die Prinzen- und Beamtensiegel der hethitischen Großreichszeit auf Tonbullen aus dem Nişantepe-Archiv in Hattusa. Mit Kommentaren zu den Siegelinschriften und Hieroglyphen von J. David Hawkins.*

(Boğazköy-Hattuša: Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen, 19.)

xv, 441 pp., 60 pl., 1 plan. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2005. €92.50.

Nişantepe, a rocky hilltop in the Upper City of the Hittite capital Hattusa, is situated on the opposite side of Büyükkale, the main royal citadel. A monumental viaduct gave easy access from the fortified citadel to the area around Nişantepe, which is characterized by an assemblage of official buildings with both administrative and religious functions. On a steep slope to the west of Nişantepe, the remains of a heavily burned building were found, and though most of the building's substance had been carried off by erosion, the excavators were able to reconstruct the basic structure of the 'Westbau' as a large two-storey house on the slope, 50 metres long and 25 metres wide. In three basement rooms and on the slope downhill from the building more than 3,400 sealed clay bullae and 29 cuneiform clay tablets inscribed with royal land grants were recovered in the years 1990 and 1991. The find constitutes the largest assembly of sealed bullae ever excavated in Anatolia and adds significantly to our knowledge of Hittite glyptic art.

The present volume provides a full edition of the bullae bearing seal impressions of princes and officials, while the edition of the royal sealings is reserved for a future volume by the same authors in collaboration with H. Otten and D. Bawanypeck (the royal land grants have been published in handcopy in *KBo* 42, a full edition of the texts by C. Rüster, E. Neu (†) and G. Wilhelm is in an advanced stage of preparation). At the heart of the book is a comprehensive catalogue of the seal impressions, whose 787 entries give detailed information on each seal: the name and title of the owner according to the seal's hieroglyphic legend, the full reading of the hieroglyphic legend, measurements, commentaries on the seal type as apparent from the form of the impression(s), a discussion of the seal's iconography and overall composition, a detailed list of the individual attestations as well as further commentary. The catalogue is supplemented by various concordances and a full documentation of the evidence in photographs and line drawings (plates 1–60).

The catalogue is preceded by a study on Hittite seals and sealing practices that takes the Nişantepe find as its starting point, but compares the evidence from Hattusa with that from other Hittite sites (Kuşaklı, Tarsus, Korucutepe, Kaman Kalehöyük) and often addresses more general problems taking into account not only the archaeological data, but also the information on seal practice that can be gleaned from the Hittite cuneiform texts. As Herbordt convincingly argues, the sealed clay bullae of the Nişantepe archive were originally attached to important legal documents by means of strings; some of the bullae were also used to seal leather pouches used to store groups of such

documents. The fact that so few actual legal documents were found in the 'Westbau' (the 29 royal land grants mentioned above) suggests that all the documents to which the bullae originally belonged were inscribed on wax-covered wooden writing boards that did not survive the blaze. Within this context, the author draws attention to the general scarcity of private legal documents among the Hittite written evidence, a phenomenon that could be explained by the fact that Hittite private documents were usually written on writing boards rather than on clay tablets. Whether writing boards were exclusively inscribed in Hieroglyphic Luwian or in both hieroglyphs and cuneiform, is still uncertain. But Herbordt draws attention to the fact that a certain type of stylus found in Hattusa can only be used for writing the hieroglyphic script, probably in wax; she also points out that the scribes writing on writing boards bear a special title in the cuneiform texts, a differentiation not to be found in the hieroglyphic script. The royal and non-royal names on the seals found in the 'Westbau' show clearly that the documents stored in this palatial archive concerned only the elite of the Hittite society, mostly members of the extended royal family, among them also Hittite vassal kings. Chronologically, the archive covers a period of about 250 years stretching from the mid-fifteenth century BC to the late Empire period. This would imply a relocation of major parts of the archive during the thirteenth century if the proposed late date of the building itself was to be confirmed by future studies. A close analysis of the findspots of the bullae shows that the Hittite administrators sorted the documents of the archive chronologically. Since the archive itself was located on one of the upper floors, which collapsed when the building burned down, all other information on shelving and storage is lost. The large building certainly did not house just the archive though it is difficult to guess how the other parts of the building were used for lack of evidence. Herbordt tentatively suggests that the 'Westbau' was a palatial administrative centre, maybe a treasury, or 'seal-house' in the Hittite terminology.

The majority of the seals used by the Hittite princes and officials are stamp seals, which are typical for Anatolian sealing practice from early on. A surprisingly high percentage of the impressions, however, demonstrates the widespread use of a special type of signet ring with a long, oval sealing strip. This type of signet ring originates in Syria and should probably be interpreted as a conflation between the traditional Anatolian signet ring with its small, separately worked, round seal and the cylinder seal typical in Mesopotamia. Only very few impressions of cylinder seals could be identified on the Nişantepe bullae. Among them, however, is a royal seal of Tuthaliya IV; the fact that his contemporary Tukulti-Ninurta I was the first Assyrian king to use a signet ring is taken as evidence for mutual cultural influences between Hittite Anatolia and Assyria. Among the seals attested in Nişantepe itself there is only one clear example of a seal imported from Assyria. Otherwise the iconography of the seals is homogeneous and shows only very few foreign influences from Hittite-ruled Syria.

The decipherment of the Hieroglyphic Luwian seal inscriptions was undertaken by J. D. Hawkins. His contribution is partly integrated into the catalogue of the seals where the full text of each seal legend is given. A separate chapter offers comments on the names and titles found in the seal legends (pp. 248–313 in English). The wealth of new insights resulting from work on the seal legends is illustrated by the addition of no fewer than eighteen excursuses discussing more general problems of reading and interpretation for which the seals provide important new evidence (pp. 289 ff.). Also authored by Hawkins is a commentary on the sign list at the very end of the book (pp. 426–36), which summarizes the new information on the hieroglyphic

syllabary and logograms gleaned from the seals. In doing so, it provides a valuable index to the extensive discussion of the readings in the preceding chapters.

To conclude, this is an exemplary edition of one of the most important recent discoveries in Hittite Anatolia. We look forward eagerly to the publication of the royal seals of the Nişantepe archive by the same authors.

DANIEL SCHWEMER

FRANCESCA ROCHBERG:

*The Heavenly Writing: Divination, Horoscopy and Astronomy in Mesopotamian Culture.*

xxi, 331 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. £45.

The book under review can be warmly praised as both necessary and successful. Its central aim is 'to locate and define interconnections among the various and diverse parts of the Mesopotamian scribal traditions of celestial science' (p. xiii). So broad a topic necessarily leads the author on a varied and eventful intellectual journey, culminating in the demonstration that all branches of Mesopotamian celestial scholarship were profoundly interrelated, and that, contrary to certain modern assumptions, no cleavage existed in ancient thought and practice between 'rational, mathematical' and 'irrational, omen-based' methods and pursuits. Indeed, they were applied and pursued in complementary fashion.

The framework within which the topic is explored is impressively broad. As well as mastering the relevant Assyriological literature and possessing technical astronomical expertise, the author is deeply read in the writings of historians and philosophers of science. She is thus almost uniquely able to deliver a string of lusciously informative and thought-provoking chapters on: the historiography of Mesopotamian science (ch. 1); the connections between celestial divination and other types of Mesopotamian divination (ch. 2); the emergence of Babylonian horoscopes in the fifth century BCE (ch. 3); horoscopes' connections with various types of astronomical literature (ch. 4); the cultural background to the emergence of horoscopes (ch. 5); the practitioners of Mesopotamian celestial scholarship (ch. 6); and the applicability of the word 'science' to Mesopotamian celestial scholarship (ch. 7). There are also an introduction and epilogue.

Thus, while it contains much original and important discussion of specifically celestial matters, parts of the book usefully double as introductions to various important aspects of Mesopotamian scholarship and intellectual culture (notably chapters 2 and 7). Even the specifically celestial discussions often possess wider interest, since the emergence of the horoscopes which are the principal focus of the book, intertwines with developments in social and religious history (e.g. pp. 118, 207 and 235).

Naturally, there are points on which one might disagree, but criticisms are mostly quibbles. The author argues that 'when a celestial omen specialist interpreted the meaning of a phenomenon by reference to the omen compendium, the authority of the interpretation was grounded in the text, not on a claim to divine inspiration. This corresponds well to the apparent distinction between divination and prophecy found elsewhere in Mesopotamian culture' (p. 217). As discussed elsewhere (pp. 166, 181 and 215) and even recognized

further down the same page, however, *Enūma Anu Enlil* and other omen collections were sometimes thought to have sprung 'from the mouth of (the god) Ea', and to possess divine authority. Accordingly, the issue of divine inspiration does not perhaps divide divination and prophecy as starkly as suggested.

On pp. 170–81 the author discusses the interesting question of whether celestial omen protases (e.g. 'if the moon rides a chariot') are to be understood literally or metaphorically, and argues for a metaphorical reading. Here it might have been desirable to incorporate an element of diachronic differentiation. A source which might usefully have been cited is a scholarly letter to a Neo-Assyrian king written in the late seventh century BCE. The author of the letter explains (possibly quoting an older commentary) that the omen protasis 'If the moon's right horn at its appearance pierces (*terât*) the sky' means 'It slips into (*iḥallup*) the sky and cannot be seen' (H. Hunger, *Astrological Reports to Assyrian Kings* (Helsinki, 1992), number 57). Thus the author of the letter (or the previous commentator he was citing) believed that the practical import of the protasis, namely that the right horn is invisible, was not self-evident. This strongly suggests, supporting Rochberg, that he interpreted the phrase figuratively. However, a seventh-century letter tells us nothing about how the phrase was understood at the time of the omen's composition, probably over a millennium earlier. Similarly, the argument that a particular phrase must have constituted a metaphor in the Seleucid period (pp. 172–3) does not exclude a literal interpretation of the same phrase in earlier periods. Deciding whether a phrase is literal or metaphorical is often difficult even outside omen contexts (see examples with discussion in Wilcke, 'A riding tooth: metaphor, metonym and synecdoche, quick and frozen in everyday language', in Mindlin, Geller and Wansbrough (eds.), *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East* (London, 1987), esp. pp. 86 and 90), and further research on the question is perhaps necessary.

Given the book's breadth of interest and its immersion in the philosophy of science, it is slightly surprising to find no reference to David Brown's argument, in *Mesopotamian Planetary Astronomy–Astrology* (Leiden, 2000), that the discovery that astronomical prediction was possible represents a paradigm shift in the full Kühnian sense.

The discussion of the origin of omens and the empirical character of omen protases (pp. 247–55) might usefully have referred to Brown, pp. 126–9, and incorporated Ann K. Guinan, 'A severed head laughed: stories of divinatory interpretation', in Ciruolo and Seidel (eds.), *Magic and Divination in the Ancient World* (Groningen, 2002), 7–40.

Such details aside, the author deserves gratitude for this useful and important book. She lists a number of hair-raising misapprehensions of ancient Mesopotamian celestial scholarship by modern historians of science, which derive from consulting badly outdated literature (p. 174 n. 28). The publication of this splendid volume should ensure that such misapprehensions are stilled for many years to come.

MARTIN WORTHINGTON

VIVIAN NUTTON:

*Ancient Medicine.*

(Series of Antiquity.) xiv, 496 pp. London and New York: Routledge, 2004. £19.99.

The purpose of the present review is to assess whether a new book on Greek and Roman medicine, written by an acknowledged authority on the subject,

may contain information relevant to contemporary medicine in Babylonia. From the fifth century BC Greek and, later, Roman medicine followed its own course of development, introducing new ideas about diet and regime, a theory of humours, bloodletting, and many other innovations which distinguish Graeco-Roman medicine from that of its neighbours in Babylonia (and Persia). Nevertheless, there remained much in common between all systems of ancient medicine in the region. It is also likely that Babylonian medicine, with its very conservative approach to healing, serves as a good model for reconstructing Greek medicine before Hippocrates.

Nutton has important things to say regarding the concept of 'disease' in the ancient Graeco-Roman world, beginning with the Aristotelian idea that 'disease implies motion whereas health is a state of rest' (p. 28). He goes on to say that most ancient doctors (again in Classical sources) thought of disease as a pathological process occurring over time. Nutton further argues that Hippocratic doctors were able to distinguish diseases from symptoms or syndromes associated with an individual's own pathology, 'indicators of deeper changes in the patient's constitution' (ibid.). How do these ideas compare with those of contemporary diagnosticians in Babylon? If Nutton is correct, Greek and Roman doctors had a somewhat better grasp of nosology than did their neighbours, despite the fact that Greek and Babylonian doctors depended on the same processes of observation and detection of disease. No one had any instruments or sophisticated tests but relied solely on careful observation of the external anatomy.

Babylonian physicians either never developed a theory or taxonomy of disease or never transmitted it to us in any writings so far attested. Babylonian nosology cannot easily distinguish between its own terms for a disease or syndrome (such as fever) from a symptom (heat), or 'itching' from 'scabies' (*ekketum*), or terms for 'stroke', 'seizure' and 'epilepsy'. Occasionally we are told that a disease will persist, but there is no general statement acknowledging disease as a process over time, rather than as a single event which just happens at a certain point. What we do find in Babylonian medicine is frequent use of an iterative verbal form describing the patient's condition (such as pain or discomfort) continuing over time, perhaps indicating a chronic illness. It is likely, nevertheless, that both Greek and Babylonian doctors made similar observations about the course of disease, based upon repeatedly observing symptoms over time. The great difference is that Greeks developed general hypotheses about the cause and course of diseases which were handed down as learned treatises. In Babylonia, no theory of disease was ever recorded in cuneiform sources because of a general lack of any explanatory medical literature. We simply have lists of symptoms with some additional remarks and recipes, but no theoretical discussions of medicine.

One of Nutton's important observations concerns the knowledge of internal human anatomy within Greek science (pp. 119 f.), pointing out that Aristotle's own impressive studies of anatomy were based upon dissections of animals rather than humans, and that human dissection is only known to have been carried out by Herophilus and Erasistratus in third-century BC Alexandria (pp. 131 f.). Nutton comments that a widespread taboo among Greeks prevented human dissection, but the one exception to this rule occurred in Alexandria, probably influenced by Egyptian mummification (p. 129), and for a short period Greek scientists may have relaxed the taboo in order to study Egyptian corpses. Although likely to be correct, Nutton's observation that a Greek taboo against dissection was briefly relaxed under the influence of Egyptian funerary practices is based on assumptions (360 n. 15); if Greek

taboos against violating the human body are known, the reader would like to have had chapter and verse. The situation in Babylonia is remarkably similar, where a similar taboo against desecrating human corpses was probably observed, but never actually stipulated or spelled out in the medical literature. A rather strange story in the Babylonian Talmud refers to Palestinian students of Rabbi Ishmael (early second century CE) dissecting the body of a prostitute, but this account is hardly reliable (Babylonian Talmud Bechorot 45a). The result is that Hippocratic knowledge of internal human anatomy was not very far advanced over that of the Babylonians, who had little precise knowledge of the physiology and functions of human organs. A good case in point is the brain, for which there is no specific word in Akkadian. According to Plato, the brain is formed from the marrow, the 'most important of all tissues' (p. 116), which accords well with the Akkadian term *muhhu*, cognate to the Hebrew word for 'marrow' and 'brain', although the Akkadian word *muhhu* usually means the 'upper part, top' of something. In fact, no function was assigned to the brain in Babylonian medicine, and even the 'heart' specifically as an organ is hardly attested within medical contexts.

Certain aspects of Graeco-Roman medicine described by Nutton could be categorized as a 'wish list', i.e. descriptions of ancient medicine which we think we ought to find in Babylonian medicine but have not yet done so. Nutton, for instance, cites an oration by Isocrates in the fourth century BC describing the angry mood of a tubercular patient covered in pus in his sick room, driving away all of his relations, with only a single slave to care for him (p. 9). Such intimate details of a patient's condition cannot be found within the Babylonian Diagnostic Handbook, which also describes the symptoms of a patient suffering from a chest complaint, perhaps even tuberculosis, but concentrating on the nature of the symptoms rather than on the condition of an individual patient. On the other hand, there is a common genre of Hippocratic and Babylonian medicine which has yet to be fully studied, namely the similar structure and form of certain Hippocratic treatises dealing with prognosis and acute diseases which resemble the casuistic structure of Akkadian prognostic texts ('if a man suffers from ... he will live/die'). The point is that both the Greek and Akkadian texts concentrate on describing symptoms drawn from a number of patients collectively, organized into a head-to-foot list or description to assist the physician in making a prognosis. These particular texts describe diseases, not patients.

An Assyriologist working on Babylonian medicine is equally jealous of the data from the Graeco-Roman world on how physicians were paid and how they functioned in public and private practice (see pp. 87, 152 f.), since one lacks this kind of information from Babylonia. All we know for certain is that one type of Babylonian therapist, the *ashipu*-exorcist, was a priest who was supported by his share of temple income as well as gifts from patients. His colleague the *asû*, 'physician' or better 'apothecary', probably relied upon a private trade in his wares (potions, bandages, clysters, etc.) in the open market.

On the other hand, Assyriology is abundantly endowed with 'epistolary medicine' from both second and first millennium sources consisting of letters from court physicians and exorcists, discussing treatments for patients in the royal palace, including the king and prince (see S. Parpola, *Letters of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*, Helsinki, 1993); such intimate exchanges of information about patients have no counterpart within Greek or Latin documents. What we do have from the Hellenistic world are reports about the *archiatros* or personal physician of the ruler (p. 152), which somewhat complements the Babylonian data.

Certain other factors were no doubt similar between the two worlds. The private doctor in Greece, who had to compete against other kinds of practitioners to earn his living, relied upon accurate prognosis as a way of establishing his reputation among his clients (pp. 88 ff.). The Babylonian counterpart may have faced similar pressures, and he is likewise advised in the Diagnostic Handbook not to treat hopeless cases, probably to avoid damaging his reputation. We also have a 'Diviner's Manual' in Akkadian, counselling the omen priest how to explain things to his clients if his predictions have not materialized (see A. L. Oppenheim, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 33 (1974), 197–220). Still, we have no way of knowing how Babylonian physicians were paid, and whether any such system of public medicine—doctor's services paid for by the village—existed in the Near East, as was the case in Greece (p. 155). The best assumption is that the *asû* was paid directly by his clients for his services.

Although there are many other points of comparison between Greek and Babylonian medicine, it will suffice for now to discuss the question of how remedies and drugs were found and tested for effectiveness within both Greek and Babylonian treatments. Without expecting too much in the way of experimentation, one wonders how ancient herbalists and physicians knew what to describe. Babylonian scribes occasionally referred to recipes as '*latku*', tested, but without specifying what this means, and the process may be questionable in scientific terms. One letter from the Assyrian royal court, for instance, explains that a certain drug be tried out on slaves first before being given to the crown prince for his ailment (see Parpola, *Letters*, No. 191). We may hear about a drug or treatment when successful, but we are unlikely to have any reports of failure from ancient evidence. Fortunately Nutton (pp. 148 f.) offers some clues as to how the process of selection may have worked by turning to the records of the Empiricists and Methodists, rather than to Hippocratic theory: the Empiricists were extremely good at keeping records, including case histories of individual patients as well as on the effectiveness of drugs, and Nutton claims that Empiricists did employ a 'trial and error' approach to drug therapy based on similar cases. If one keeps good records and knows that a drug was effective in one case, the same drug might also be effective in a similar case. The important difference between Hippocratic and Empiricists is that the latter did not indulge in theory trying to determine the cause of a disease, but concentrated instead on effective treatment. It may be reasonable to posit that the Empiricists' use of record-keeping and trial-and-error approach to drug treatment may have had much in common with Babylonian medicine; the matter certainly deserves further investigation.

The later Methodists, on the other hand, found the inductive logic and painstaking record-keeping of the Empiricists equally impractical, although they too rejected the notion of researching the cause of disease as an effective route to treatment (pp. 191 f.). Methodists were more interested in a quick fix which could offer the patient immediate relief, without extensive theorizing about the disease or time-consuming searches through archives for an appropriate treatment. The Methodist approach saw disease as either chronic or acute, and diseases were divided according to notions of 'stricture' or 'looseness'. The latter terminology is of interest since similar terms are used to describe disease in Babylonia, where *hiniqtu*, literally 'strangulation', is a common description of a diseased part of the anatomy in Babylonia (such as *hiniqtu* of the kidneys). 'Looseness' also occurs in Babylonian medicine in the sense that limbs tend to be described as flaccid, literally 'poured out'. This does not mean that there is anything in common between Methodists and their

Babylonian predecessors, since such a connection is extremely unlikely, but rather that such terminology in Babylonian medicine may have represented an approach to healing with some sort of theoretical basis which was never explained, and this only becomes clear to us when we see it reflected later on within Graeco-Roman medicine, but this time accompanied by explanatory data.

Finally, Nutton makes the astute observation that Greek medicine would have remained 'interesting, if somewhat tangential', like Egyptian and Babylonian medicine, if it had not been translated into Latin and become assimilated through Latin into medieval science in Europe (p. 157). This may also explain why Babylonian science never quite 'made' it, having never been translated into Latin, despite the fact that cuneiform script remained legible much later than used to be thought possible.

M. J. GELLER

AARON D. RUBIN:

*Studies in Semitic Grammaticalization.*

(Harvard Semitic Studies, 57.) xvii, 177 pp.

Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2005. \$32.95.

Despite its unappetizing name, 'grammaticalization' is an important subject, which concerns the processes (semantic, morphological and syntactic) by which grammatical markers emerge from lexical elements, and the pathways that existing grammatical elements take towards more abstract grammatical functions. In one sense, there is little new about it: the term 'grammaticalization' was coined by A. Meillet nearly a century ago, and many of the fundamental insights go even further back, to Wilhelm von Humboldt. None the less, the last two decades have seen renewed and intense interest in the topic among linguists, and this has led to significant advances in our understanding of the processes involved. Extensive data have been amassed from hundreds of languages, which have revealed a great deal of regularity among the apparent chaos of syntactic changes. A picture of overwhelming unidirectionality has emerged, where language after language goes down similar paths of change, from concrete lexical elements to abstract grammatical markers, and often from the same lexical sources to the same grammatical elements.

It is obvious why such insights are important for reconstruction, whether in Semitic or in any other language family. Just as phonological reconstruction requires an awareness of what sound changes are likely (e.g.  $p > f$  is very likely,  $f > p$  exceedingly unlikely), so does the unidirectionality of many 'grammaticalization' changes provide a framework for reconstructing morphology and syntax. For instance, given two cognate verbal forms, one reflexive, and the other passive, we would reconstruct the reflexive as the original function, since changes from reflexive to passive are much more common than vice versa.

The volume under review draws on ancient and modern Semitic languages to examine many changes that fall under the umbrella of grammaticalization. It is thus a welcome contribution which will be useful to both Semitists and linguists. The discussion starts (ch. 3) with a wide overview of Semitic grammatical markers and their lexical (or less grammatical) origins. The survey includes, amongst others, indefinite articles (which develop mostly from the word 'one'), reflexive pronouns (from nouns such as 'soul', 'head', 'bone'),



gender markers (in Ethiopic, from the nouns 'son' and 'woman'), future tense markers (from verbs such as 'go' or 'want'), copulae (from pronouns and presentative particles), prepositions (from nouns for body parts); relative particles (from demonstratives and locatives), genitive markers (from nouns such as 'property' or 'thing'), and possessive constructions (from locative, dative and comitative constructions).

The author lays no claims to exhaustiveness, but the range of examples is impressive. Yet one still wonders why some prototypical examples of grammaticalization are absent, such as the emergence of quotative markers (e.g. Hebrew *lē'mōr* or Akkadian *umma*). Other areas receive a treatment that is too sketchy to be informative. For instance, a short section on the origin of the derived stems does not take account of any of the important contributions of the last decade, not even D. Testen's groundbreaking article on the N-stem in ZA 88.

The general survey is followed by three detailed case studies: definite articles, direct object markers and present tense markers. Chapter 4 deals with definite articles in the West Semitic languages. After a description of the forms found in the different dialects, and a detailed critical review of previous theories as to their etymology, the author opts for *\*han* (cognate of the Akkadian *\*hanni-* series) as the origin of the Canaanite, Aramaic, and Old South Arabian definite articles, but for a different origin for the Arabic article, cognate with the Akkadian *\*'ulli-* series.

Chapter 5 examines direct object markers. After a methodical survey of the forms of such *notae accusativi* in Canaanite and in the different periods and dialects of Aramaic (*yāt* and *l-*), it assesses the (many) proposed theories about the etymology of Canaanite *ʔet* and Aramaic *yāt*. Given the scant nature of the evidence, the etymology understandably remains elusive. Since internal evidence fails, the author recognizes that parallels from other languages could provide much needed clues. Indeed, the origin of *ʔetyāt* could have been an opportunity to capitalize on insights from grammaticalization studies, and prove the worth of a broad typological approach to thorny philological questions. The examination of a large number of cross-linguistic parallels could have helped to determine which of the suggested etymologies for *ʔetyāt* is more likely. However, this opportunity is not taken up, as the brief survey of parallels is limited to Spanish, Romanian, and Hindi, all of which acquired their direct object markers from a dative adposition. But probably the most informative parallel for this dative > accusative path is missing, namely Persian, which is perhaps the only example where the development can be traced historically all the way from a full noun (*rādiy* 'on account of' in Old Persian) to a direct object marker (*-o* in modern Persian). Moreover, datives are not the only possible origin of *notae accusativi*. In many languages, these markers develop from verbs (e.g. in Chinese from 'take'), and since some of the etymologies that have been suggested for *ʔetyāt* also posit a verb as origin, it might have been helpful to assess their plausibility against attested developments in other languages.

Chapter 6 discusses the development of present-tense markers in Aramaic and Arabic. The standard theory about Aramaic *qā* (*kV* in Neo-Aramaic), which suggests that its origin is the verb 'stand', is convincingly defended and substantiated, also with parallels from non-Semitic languages. The chapter further discusses present tense markers which originated from other verbs, such as 'sit' (*√qʿd*) in Baghdadi Arabic, and 'be' (*√kwn*) in Moroccan Arabic.

The main strength of this monograph is in the collection and thorough assessment of a wide range of developments from a wide range of Semitic

languages. And as such, both linguists and Semitists will profit from it. We can hope that it will inspire others to strengthen the analysis from the linguistic perspective, by submitting proposed etymological theories to the test of cross-linguistic plausibility.

GUY DEUTSCHER

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THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

MICHAEL BONNER, MINE ENER and AMY SINGER (eds):

*Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts.*

vii, 345 pp. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003.

\$71.50.

It seems counterintuitive that poverty might not necessarily be the object of charity. Yet this is one of the main messages of the sixteen contributions to this volume that derive from a conference held at the University of Michigan in 2000. Poverty and wealth being relative conditions, this becomes a matter of defining the difference between entitlement and need, between the deserving and undeserving poor, between voluntary and involuntary poverty, and between philanthropy and charity. There is actually much more about charity than about poverty in this volume.

The contributions are grouped into five sections, the first being about entitlement and obligation, how need is determined. Here Michael Bonner argues that pre-Islamic Arabian competitive hospitality contributed to early Muslim practices and that in the early Muslim view the rich 'returned' *zakat* to the poor. Ingrid Mattson discusses how the Muslim jurists defined need based on a person's status in *zakat* and maintenance laws. Mark Cohen uses Geniza documents to show how the Jews of Fatimid Egypt preferred to give charity to their own relatives and to the poor they knew before giving to strangers or to foreigners. The discussion by Adam Sabra of price-fixing in Mamluk Egypt in order to protect the poor during food shortages caused by famine or hoarding would have profited by comparing what Michael the Syrian says about food hoarding during famines.

The second section deals with how charity was institutionalized through Islamic religious endowments (*awqāf*). Hospitals, schools, soup kitchens, etc., supported by *awqāf*, were part of the institutionalization of Muslim urban life in general from about the tenth century CE onwards. There are two contributions about hospitals in this section, one by Yasser Tabbaa, looking at the functional aspects of their architecture, and one by Miri Shefer on hospitals in the Ottoman Empire. Tabbaa argues that Muslims tended to establish hospitals in competition with Christian charity in regions such as Syria, Palestine, the Jazira, Anatolia and Egypt, where there were substantial Christian communities with churches and monasteries where medical care was also available. There were no Muslim hospitals in India and few in North Africa because there were no large Christian populations there. That may not have been the reason. There were at least two Muslim hospitals (*maristāns*) in Naṣrid Granada where there was no local Christian population and only transient Genoese merchants. In the last contribution in this section Miriam Hoexter shows that the destitute were only one of several groups in Ottoman Algiers to receive charity.

Section 3 is on the role of the state in charity, but the contribution by Eyal Ginio on eighteenth-century Salonika is the only one in this volume that really deals with poverty. It was the pious poor who benefited from endowments; others adopted various strategies for survival, and women and children in domestic service were particularly vulnerable. The boundary between charity and exploitation was thin. Mine Ener and Nadir Özbek bring the state, or at least the ruler, back in by discussing the public orchestration of charity by the Egyptian Khedive and by the Ottoman Sultan in the late nineteenth century.

In section 4, on changing worlds, Juan Cole outlines al-Tahtāwī's explanations for poverty and the responsibility of the government in helping the poor. Beth Baron uses the example of Labiba Ahmad's social activism as a vehicle to discuss the commitment of the Egyptian elite to better the poor, while Kathryn Libal points out the diversion of alms of donors from giving to individuals to giving to organizations in the context of child welfare in early republican Turkey.

In the fifth section, on welfare as politics, Timur Kuran reviews the contemporary debate over *zakāt* as a way of relieving poverty and notes that voluntary *zakāt* tends to go to the most visible poor rather than to the neediest. Amy Singer discusses the legacy of Ottoman *awqāf* in modern Turkey. There is a useful conclusion by Natalie Davis that points out the element of self-interest involved in charity motivated by a desire for legitimacy, closeness to God, or to purify one's wealth.

It is clear that this volume is about poverty and charity in the Islamic Middle East. It starts with the rise of Islam, with a nod to pre-Islamic Arabia, and the focus is almost entirely on Muslims, with a nod to Egyptian Jews. In this respect the title is misleading. Were there no beggars in antiquity? Except for a reference by Cohen to Peter Brown's *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* the possible sources for charitable practices in Late Antiquity are totally ignored. Surely, John the Almoner would have been relevant to this project. By the same token, except for Tabaa's reference to Christian medical care, Middle Eastern Christian charitable attitudes and practices subsequent to the rise of Islam are conspicuous by their absence.

In addition, some of the contributors to this volume have resorted to the theory of Marcel Mauss that gift exchange is comparable to the exchange of commodities to understand some forms of charity. In a Middle Eastern context the Iranian background of gift exchange might have been equally useful.

Nevertheless this is an ambitious and pioneering treatment of this subject that deserves to serve as a starting point. The volume is well edited, there is an index, but no general bibliography.

MICHAEL MORONY

KUDSI ERGUNER:

*Journeys of a Sufi Musician*. (Translated from the French by Annette Courtenay Mayers.)

142 pp., Compact Disc. London: Saqi, 2005. £14.99.

Evaluating autobiographies in academia is not unlike reviewing the type of concert-stage performances of Sufi ritual that are central to this book: there is difficulty in establishing the criteria for assessment. In this book, as in Sufi concerts, there are varying degrees of scholarly and entertainment value in addition to embedded religious messages. Originally published in French as

*La fontaine de la séparation*, Turkish Sufi musician Kudsi Erguner's short and readable book provides an insider's account of twentieth-century Mevlevi Turkish Sufism as it confronted the competing agendas of Turkish secularist politics—which prohibited its performance—and an emergent Euro-American world music audience enthralled by the spiritual power of Sufi music. This informative account is bookended by a charming and evocative description of childhood in 1950s Turkey in the early chapters and a plea for a 'return' to Sufi values in the final ones. Two appendixes, 'The *Ney* in the Mevlevi tradition' and 'The ceremony of the Whirling Dervishes', add an academic touch to the autobiography, while the accompanying CD, 'Music from the *Tekke* of Istanbul, from the Archives of Kudsi Erguner' completes this eclectic and captivating chronicle of the movements, relationships, thoughts, and performances of a twentieth-century Sufi musician.

Born to the sound of the chanted *zikr* in 1952, Kudsi Erguner spent his childhood accompanying his father and grandfather to Mevlevi Sufi ceremonies in Istanbul, where he learned to play the *ney*, a reed flute understood to be the symbol of life in Mevlevi Sufism. His evocative descriptions of these gatherings are set against the backdrop of vigilant watchfulness for the police, who were always a potential threat to practitioners of then-outlawed Sufism. Erguner, who now resides in Paris, has released over a dozen recordings of his playing, which include collaborations with world music personalities such as Peter Gabriel, Jean-Michael Jarre and Peter Brook. Throughout his account, there is a tension between nostalgia for an 'authentic' Sufism that he remembers from childhood, and the opportunities (and challenges) of the world music market that he encountered as an adult. Erguner addresses the issue directly in one of the book's most substantial chapters, 'Classical music from Turkey and the Western audience'. Here we get from Erguner a sense of the difficulties and contradictions that come with performing Sufi music on the European stage. He and other musicians were very conscious of these contradictions as they felt their performances becoming more and more ambiguous, neither fully a concert performance nor a religious ceremony. He presents opinions from within the Mevlevi community, ranging from hostility towards secular stage performances to enthusiasm for staging visually spectacular performances on Western stages. For Erguner, the revitalization of tradition is only possible through combining the main features of each: musical technique and precision (the former) and the right feeling (the latter), as the Turkish *samā'* (spiritual concert) is at the same time artistic and spiritual.

Erguner's journeys also crossed with those of Europeans seeking spiritual enlightenment. The success of the Whirling Dervishes' first European tour (sponsored by UNESCO) and subsequent performances in Europe and the United States led to the development of Turkish 'eso-tourism'. Erguner also recalls encounters with numerous mystic groups abroad, including Turkish Sufis who migrated to London, the International Sufi Movement in New York, the followers of 'Sufi Sam' (who led a hippie commune in San Francisco), and the followers of G. I. Gurdjieff. Much early support of these tours was provided by London- and Paris-based supporters of Gurdjieff, known by his followers for making Islamic mysticism accessible to westerners and for advocating the spiritual power of rhythmic dance. In fact, this relationship remains strong today: the book's translator is a member of the London Gurdjieff Society.

In a refreshing move, he turns the spotlight back onto academics by discussing his encounters with musicologists and Orientalists. He cites the tendency of the former to be unhappy with his popularization of the genre, and

of the latter to spend too much time searching for hidden symbolic meanings of the dance rather than acknowledging its main function, namely, as a form of worship performed in order to induce a state of ecstasy. It should be noted that Erguner considers himself an 'applied musicologist', as he has researched, then reinterpreted and performed, largely unknown parts of repertoires in the realms of Ottoman women's music, liturgical songs of Istanbul (Armenian, Greek, Jewish, and Muslim), and Greek *rebetiko*. Although these projects are not described in any detail here, they do represent his take on the Sufi ethos of cultural inclusiveness, which brings me to the one main criticism I have of the book: it tends to present Sufism as a unified, single entity with the Mevlevi tradition as emblematic. Readers should be reminded that Mevlevi Sufism is but one Sufi tradition among many, and not all Sufi traditions perform a whirling dance, accord prominence to the *ney*, or look to Rumi as their spiritual ancestor.

Finally, the accompanying compact disc alone is worth the price of the book. *Music from the Tekke of Istanbul: From the Archives of Kudsi Erguner* features seventeen performances of Mevlevi music from 1952 to 1980 (although several have no date given). The recording demonstrates the diversity of musical textures and forms employed in Mevlevi ritual, including the *taksim* (solo improvisation), *ilahi* (praise song), *ghazal* (love song), and *peshrev* (instrumental prelude). Only one track features Erguner's playing; the remainder pay homage to the largely unrecorded masters of Mevlevi music, including his father and grandfather.

Despite several distracting proofing errors (e.g. extra or missing spaces between words and punctuation), this is an insightful and engaging book that would be especially suitable for undergraduate students in ethnomusicology and Middle East or Islamic studies.

RICHARD JANKOWSKY

BERNARD O'KANE (ed.):

*The Iconography of Islamic Art: Studies in Honour of Robert Hillenbrand.*

xv, 336 pp. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005. £95.

An abiding and elusive problem in the study of Islamic art is the search for meaning in its myriad forms and manifestations. Robert Hillenbrand, for many years professor of Islamic art history at the University of Edinburgh, has proved more daring than many other scholars in seeking to unearth the levels of significance to be found in Islamic architecture and artefacts. Thus, a *Festschrift* in his honour that focuses on iconography could not be more fitting. The eighteen papers in this volume span the period from the advent of Islam to the twentieth century and the lands from Sicily to India. Perhaps because of this variety the editor, Bernard O'Kane, chose to organize the papers alphabetically by author's name instead of grouping them dynastically, regionally or by medium. Perhaps only reviewers read books such as this straight through, and thus miss the cohesiveness of thematic grouping. For most readers the book offers an excellent range of subjects from which to pick and choose.

The approaches to the study of Islamic iconography include broad investigations of various motifs or forms and tightly focused studies of specific monuments or objects. In general, the most successful papers are those by

authors who have worked extensively on a particular period or medium and who can tie their findings to historical events or situations. An example of this methodology is Sheila Blair's paper on 'A Mongol envoy' in which she analyses the details of an Ilkhanid tinted drawing of a 'Princely procession' in order to explain its historical context. In the process she provides evidence of how forms lose their 'iconographic charge' over time and become vulnerable to artistic misunderstanding. Rachel Ward has probably spent as much time thinking about medieval Arab metalwork as Sheila Blair has about Ilkhanid art and it shows in her paper on the Christian iconography of two Ayyūbid metal objects. Again the reuse of motifs figures in Ward's investigation, but she explains why and how a modified version of Christian iconography found its way onto these objects made for royal Muslim patrons. Her account of the specific meaning of the Freer basin is convincing and very well argued.

Abbas Daneshvari's paper on Samanid pottery decorated with a figure holding a cup and branch flanked by a bird and fish benefits from his deep knowledge of Persian poetry and his consistent approach to its use in explaining the symbolism of Islamic Iranian art. Interestingly, the topic of solar imagery also arises in Barbara Brend's paper on the importance of pose in portraits of the Timūrid Sulṭān Ḥusayn Bayqara, whom she proposes is equated with the sun both pictorially and in inscriptions. Beyond this, Brend bucks the tide in attributing the famous double-page frontispiece of the *Bustān* of Sa'di in Cairo to Mirak instead of Bihzad. Her identification of a cushion-shaped green object in a painting of the coronation of Sulṭān Ḥusayn Bayqara (fig. 5.4) as a block of inscribed jade may well be correct and could explain the function of an inscribed jade brick in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Even if one does not agree with all of Brend's suggestions, her paper is a thought-provoking examination of late Timūrid painting.

Anna Contadini, in her paper on the swan-phoenix in medieval Arab bestiaries, demonstrates how the traits of real and mythical beasts were combined in one bird. Additionally, she suggests which literary sources form the historical palimpsest of the swan-phoenix and how the artists who illustrated the Ibn Bakhtishu bestiaries adapted their visual vocabulary to the depiction of this imaginary bird. Another paper on bird imagery, Sylvia Auld's study of birds and blessings, takes a modern kohl pot from Jerusalem as a point of departure for a discursive examination of bird symbolism in Islamic art. The discussion reveals how ideas with a very deep history in Islamic art have remained embedded even in a humble object of recent manufacture.

Jonathan Bloom links the geometric designs in the floor of the Capella Palatina in Palermo with the inlaid decoration of the minbar of the twelfth-century Kutubiyya Mosque in Marrakesh. Since the minbar was made in Cordoba, Bloom proposes Almoravid Spain as the source of the designs in Palermo rather than a now-lost Byzantine prototype or the presence of Fatimid craftsmen in Sicily. The force of his argument is somewhat diminished by the suggestion at the end of the paper that Abū 'Abdallah Muḥammad al-Idrīsī, a native of Ceuta, whom Roger II commissioned to produce a world map and related commentary, might have played a part in the transmission of artistic ideas from Spain and Morocco to Sicily. It is an interesting idea but comes too late and without enough supporting evidence to strengthen Bloom's argument.

Marianne Barrucand's contribution concentrates on the reuse of capitals in medieval Egyptian architecture. She shows that early Islamic and Fatimid builders preferred Corinthian capitals and then made new capitals in closely related styles until muqarnas capitals replaced them in the Mamluk period.

More interestingly, Barrucand discusses the hierarchy of capital styles in use in Fatimid monuments. Similarly, Barbara Finster discusses the use of Late Antique forms at the Umayyad palatial city of 'Anjar in Lebanon. In her tightly argued paper Finster shows the ways in which the vine and pomegranate motifs were chosen to reflect the princely power of the patron al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik. She also touches on the function and importance of the tree of life motif in Islamic architecture, a theme that chimes nicely with Bernard O'Kane's paper on 'The arboreal aesthetic: landscape, painting and architecture from Mongol Iran to Mamluk Egypt'. O'Kane investigates the layers of meaning ascribed to trees in the history of Iranian and Egyptian art and history. While some of his conclusions concerning the impact of Chinese art through the filter of the Ilkhanids are strongly supported by the visual evidence, his choice of literary sources for a broader interpretation of the significance of trees in Mongol and Mamluk art is extremely stimulating. As O'Kane notes, the iconography of trees is a vast subject of which he has helped to expand our knowledge significantly.

Avinoam Shalom's paper on the medieval treasury of the Ka'ba in Mecca provides useful information about the change in the use of the Ka'ba from a treasury in which precious objects were stored or hidden to one in which they were exhibited. Oleg Grabar draws attention to references in the *Kitāb al-bukhālā'* of al-Jāhīz to textiles, ceramics, furniture and a few glass, wood and metal items of the eighth and ninth centuries. His paper is more an exhortation to Islamic art-historians to use early Islamic texts comparatively to learn more about the objects and their uses of this period. Unfortunately, he does not include illustrations of actual articles to validate his approach although certainly study of texts and study of objects should go hand in hand.

One of the longest papers, written by Barry Flood, concerns the Persian influence on Sultanate architecture. Here again the fallout from the Mongol invasions of Central Asia and Iran resulted in the displacement of craftsmen, some of whom filtered into India in the thirteenth century. Focusing on the Mosque of Badā'ūn in Uttar Pradesh, Flood provides an overview of late Ghurid and early Tughluq architecture in India and proposes that Persian ideas penetrated Tughluq architecture in a two-step process through the filter of the Ghurids. In several of the papers the Islamic art in question is contrasted with that of earlier non-Islamic cultures. Marcus Milwright deals with patterns in marble used for cladding walls in buildings, comparing the reaction of Muslim viewers with those of Byzantine writers and showing how the Muslims found a different set of meanings in the marble that were appropriate to their religious beliefs. Géza Fehérvári treats the incense burners with square bodies and domed tops as an outgrowth of Buddhist art in Khurasan, claiming that Buddhist stupa architecture inspired the shape. Some of his arguments are rather one-sided and do not take into account the influence of Zoroastrian fire-temples on the shape of medieval incense burners.

The remaining papers deal with manuscript illustration. Raya Shani's examination of one painting in the *Tarjuma-yi ta'rikh-i Ṭabarī* of Bal'amī in the Freer Gallery of Art is so complicated and full of lengthy references that it is at times difficult to follow. Moreover, her suggestion that the artist would have intended different interpretations of the painting seems anachronistic; although she has proposed several interpretations, it does not mean that was the intention of the artist. She does, however, make a convincing case for the Shia significance of the illustration. Similarly, Ulrike al-Khamis argues that a Safavid battle scene, thought to have been removed from the 1539–43 *Khamsa* of Nizāmī, commissioned by the Safavid Shah Ṭahmāsp, is a metaphor for the

triumph of Shiism over Sunnism. Oddly, the author has not referred to any of the rather extensive bibliography on the subject of Safavid art that has appeared since 2000. For example, Jon Thompson's 'A note on the *tāj*' in *Hunt for Paradise: Court Arts of Safavid Iran, 1501–1576* (Milan, 2003) or Barbara Brend's discussion of the same subject in 'Jamāl va Jalāl: a link between two epochs' in *Safavid Art & Architecture*, ed. Sheila R. Canby (London, 2001) might have led al-Khamis to a more accurate interpretation of who wore the *tāj* and why, particularly in a battle scene. More generally, the scholarship on the period of Shah Tahmāsp in the past decade has become more homogeneous; the paintings of the period, even when analysed by S. C. Welch and M. B. Dickson, have not been considered only on the basis of style but as expressions of the court and age in which they were made. Al-Khamis is not the first writer to suggest a broader context for Safavid court painting.

The final paper to be considered here, B. W. Robinson's chapter on the vicissitudes of Rustam, may be one of the last publications of this giant of the history of Persian painting. Despite Robinson's advanced age the paper demonstrates the surefootedness, simplicity, and clarity that has characterized his enormous output over more than fifty years. Overall, this *Festschrift* contains much useful information and some stimulating new research. It is marred a bit too often by negligent proofreading and might have benefited from being organized thematically, but these are minor criticisms.

SHEILA CANBY

GEORGE HEWITT:

*Georgian: A Learner's Grammar*. (Second edition.)

xiv, 482 pp. London: Routledge, 2005. £35.

Nine years ago, George Hewitt's first edition of a learner's grammar of Georgian instantly established itself as not only the best, but the only usable grammar of the language for anyone attempting to learn it. (The nearest rivals are, first, the bibliographical rarity, Tschenkéli's *Einführung* of the 1970s, which for all its pedagogical soundness taught a language as it had been spoken at the end of the nineteenth century, and with an equally outdated methodology and, secondly, a slim, badly printed and almost unobtainable volume, published in Tbilisi in 1998 by Leila Geguchadze, which is better suited to the student of descriptive linguistics than to a serious but unaided learner.) This second edition of Hewitt's grammar has a myriad of subtle changes, most of them not immediately noticeable. The original home-made (by this reviewer) Georgian font has been replaced by a more professional and thoroughly readable version, and the whole book has been reset in smaller type so that the same number of pages give about 15 per cent more information. As a pedagogical exercise, the work has been very much improved. The author does not repress his creative flair in the satirical yet informative, and sometimes soap-opera nature of the dialogues which exemplify the grammar. Some inflammatory passages (from a Georgian point of view) have been removed, a wise move considering the furore that erupted after the first edition appeared, when Tbilisi's public prosecutor was prevented from starting a criminal libel case only when it was clear that funds for extraditing the grammarian would not be forthcoming.

It would be hard to improve the clarity and comprehensiveness of the grammatical explanations, particularly of the complexities of voice, version



and governance in Georgian verbs, and there is little change from the first edition. The only criticism one can make is that Hewitt is a Platonic, rather than Aristotelian, linguist, in that he defends certain features, such as the -n- morpheme inserted between stem and ending of the perfect tense of single-argument transitive verbs, even though this morpheme has not been pronounced in living memory and was removed from the norms of the written language in the 1970s. Modern colloquial Georgian makes a mess of what was once a symmetrical system, but linguists have to adapt to it.

Georgian slang is now so innovative and short-lived that, understandably, this grammar is careful. Nevertheless, as with the first edition, there is enough live material to make Georgians exclaim in public 'We don't speak like that' and admit in private that they do. To sum up, nobody beats Hewitt for clarity, near-infallibility and comprehensiveness, dealing with one of the world's most intractable languages, and this volume is worth every penny of its steep price.

DONALD RAYFIELD

JOHN RENARD:

*Historical Dictionary of Sufism.*

xliii, 351 pp. (Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements Series.) Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005. \$70.

John Renard has spent a large part of his career compiling anthologies which serve the needs of students. His latest work of this kind is the *Historical Dictionary of Sufism*, the latest volume of the series of historical dictionaries with religious and philosophical themes published by Scarecrow Press. (This series already published in 2001 a historical dictionary of Islam, by another experienced compiler of data, Ludwig W. Adamec.)

This volume consists of five sections, the largest of which is the dictionary itself. It is preceded by a chronology of Sufism, starting in 525 before the birth of Prophet Muḥammad, and ending at 2003, the year of the death of Renard's late mentor, Annemarie Schimmel (Hegira dates are provided throughout). As these dates indicate, the chronology covers much more than the history of Sufism. This also applies throughout the chronology with many entries reminding the reader about historical developments outside of not only Sufism but also the Islamic tradition as a whole.

If someone were to seek simply the date of someone's death then they would most probably search on the internet. What this chronology can offer is the contextualization of specific individuals and events, by embedding them among a selection of the most important developments in Sufism. Selectivity is therefore of key importance, and no doubt many would debate some of Renard's selections. For instance, although Schimmel and a few other German Orientalists are mentioned, there is no mention of Fritz Meier, (nor Louis Massignon, Henry Corbin, Reynold Nicholson, and Arthur Arberry). There are also a few oversights, such as the omission of Hallaj, even though a companion of his is mentioned with the same date of death. Likewise Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh is not included in the chronology, even though later members of his Nurbakhshiyā are.

Like the chronology, the dictionary itself admirably covers an extensive geographical area. Here, however, the reader finds names (of Sufis, institutions and places), and themes specifically relevant to Sufism, with biographies/

introductions and explanations. Renard's method is to include the original term (usually in Arabic) and its translation separately, with the former including a cross-reference to the latter, where one finds the definition and explanation. Such explanations are rarely longer than 300 words, and are on average about half that length. The attention devoted to individuals and places relative to each other will always be a matter for debate. Such problems could have been addressed by including a short bibliography with each entry, but the preferred method for this series is to include only a separate general bibliography for the volume as a whole. And thus, the volume ends with an extensive and up-to-date bibliography, which includes a large selection of both primary and secondary sources. It might seem strange at first for an extensive glossary to have been provided for this dictionary, but the function of this glossary is specifically to provide short definitions of Sufi technical terms. (The same terms are often treated more extensively in the dictionary section itself.) There is also a series of black-and-white illustrations, while the introduction includes a couple of very basic maps. Renard has made his *Historical Dictionary of Sufism* much more than an ordinary work of this genre, in that it can serve as an 'all-in-one' reference tool for students. Since electronic reference tools are posing a serious challenge to reference books of all kinds, the price of this volume will probably count against it for budget-conscious readers. If a paperback version were to be issued, I am sure that many students would choose this book as their desk reference in preference to the internet.

JAWID MOJADDEDI

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SOUTH ASIA

CARL W. ERNST:

*Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center.*

(Second edition with a new preface.) xxxvi, 381 pp. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004. £24.99, Rs 1040.

Having received less attention than it deserves since its original publication by the State University of New York Press in 1992, it is to be hoped that this new edition of Carl W. Ernst's history of the Sufis of Khuldabad in the Deccan will reach a wider audience of scholars interested not only in Sufism but also in the history of medieval India and its place in the history of Islam more generally. In constructing a micro-history of the Sufi circle of Burhān al-dīn Gharīb (d. 738/1337) and the connections of its writings and activities with the wider social, political and intellectual formations of the Delhi Sultanate and its successors in the Deccan, *Eternal Garden* presents a highly sophisticated reinterpretation of the standard source materials on the Delhi Sultanate, along with analyses of a wide range of previously unknown sources. In so doing, it addresses many of the major problems in Indo-Muslim history and provides a series of challenging new interpretations. For if 'the main object of this book is to present a method for reading Sufi texts historiographically', this hermeneutic task in turn 'necessitates a rethinking of the basic categories' of medieval Indo-Islamic studies (p. xxviii).

The main body of the text begins with a wide-ranging 'historiographical orientation' (Part I) towards Islam in India. Beginning with a survey of the

‘tradition’ of Sufism, chapter 1 re-examines earlier scholarly approaches towards Sufism, while emphasizing the importance for the Sufis of religious scholarship, ‘which then takes on a distinctively mystical quality from the constant interpretation of traditional subjects in terms of the internal experiences of the soul’ (p. 7). It is this centrality of writing—and the historiographical ramifications of the interplay of genre and context around it—that forms the foundation on which Ernst’s method of close reading is constructed. However, it is the second chapter, on ‘Historiographies of Islam in India’, that is likely to interest a wide audience among students as well as specialists by surveying a whole range of primary and secondary writings on Islam in India in order ‘to establish as far as possible the historiographical positions of each source, the main interpretive stances that governed the narrations of history’ (p. 18). In the following chapter, Ernst turns towards an examination of the role of court historians and other purveyors of ‘source materials’ in the articulation of an ideology of kingship for the Turkish rulers of India. Medieval propaganda based on pious rhetoric of the dissemination of Islam (in the writings of Ziyā’ al-dīn Baranī in particular) would later form an easy trap for the positivist readings of colonial and nationalist historians. Ernst therefore proposes a basic methodological requirement of correctly classifying different literary accounts in order to recognize rather than suppress the historiographical challenge that the multiple perspectives offered by different kinds of texts present. Having asserted the methodological importance of recognizing genre, *Eternal Garden* then turns towards the Sufis of medieval India through a comprehensive examination of the early examples of the Indo-Persian genre of the *malfūzāt* (‘recorded conversation’). As in his reading of the court chronicles, here again Ernst attempts to bring out the ‘internal critical categories’ of the writings in question, before turning towards a shorter appraisal of the internal categories that also need to be navigated in the study of Sufi biographical writings.

It is in Part II that Ernst turns towards the Sufis of Khuldabad. With regard to the establishment of the Sufi presence in the Deccan, he argues again for a reconsideration of earlier approaches, paying particular attention to the theory of the ‘Warrior Sufi’ developed in Richard Eaton’s *Sufis of Bijapur* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). Readers are warned of the dangers of suppressing the ideological agendas of contradictory narratives in an attempt to excavate the ‘facts’. Rather than providing evidence for the Deccan as a geo-cultural shatter zone, for Ernst the ‘legend’ of the Warrior Sufi articulated in certain hagiographical traditions may alternatively be attributed to a combination of folk tradition and the later royal sponsorship of saintly cults. Here as elsewhere in his study, Ernst is keen to challenge colonial stereotypes of a monolithic and ‘militant’ Islam so as to uncover ‘the complex interaction of lives, symbols, and societies in medieval India’ (p. 105). At the same time, he is careful to position the Sufis in the political context of the expansion of Turkish rule into the Deccan after the 1290s by drawing out the shifting positions of Sufis—and their literary productions—with regard to the imperial centre of political life. The book then reaches its closest point of focus in a detailed examination of the manuscript tradition of the circle of Burhān al-dīn Gharīb, using the texts to highlight wider debates about the transmission of religious authority, codes of discipleship and the permissibility of music. A further chapter reassesses the long-standing shibboleth of Sufi ‘missionary’ activity through a detailed examination of the attitudes displayed by the Khuldabad texts towards their Indian environment and its non-Muslim inhabitants.

Part III continues unravelling the interwoven yarns of royal and saintly narratives by examining the connections of the Deccan’s different ruling

powers to the Khuldabad shrines, in which a whole series of rulers—including Awrangzeb and the first Nizam of Hyderabad—were later buried. A final chapter explores the creation of a local sacred geography in which the colourful local legends recorded by later hagiographers played an important role. Three appendixes present an extensive bibliographical ‘Sufi bookshelf’ of writings known to medieval Indian Sufis; a translated Sufi memorandum on Khuldabad’s royal connections; and a set of annotated summaries of the contents of fifteen *farmāns* granting revenue to the Khuldabad shrines.

Although many of *Eternal Garden*’s insights into medieval Indian history felt more original on its initial publication, its methodological diligence and magisterial range will grant it the enduring role of a foundational text for the study of Islam in India and the history of medieval India more generally. As one of the most significant studies to have been written in the past two decades on not only medieval Indian history but also on the ideological and religious formations of medieval Islam more generally, *Eternal Garden* deserves to be read by all those interested in these fields.

NILE GREEN

ELI FRANCO:

*The Spitzer Manuscript. The Oldest Philosophical Manuscript in Sanskrit.*

(Philosophisch-historische Klasse Denkschriften, 323.) 2 vols, xii, 510 pp. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004. €139.

The publication of a new edition is always an important event in the field of Buddhist studies and this one is particularly noteworthy: first, it gives access to the oldest philosophical manuscript in Sanskrit; second, the work is unique since no Tibetan or Chinese translation is known to exist; finally, the editorial work is in many respects of very high quality.

The Spitzer manuscript derives its name from its owner and the first person to have worked on it between 1927 and 1928, Moritz Spitzer. It consists of about one thousand fragments (amounting to approximately 420 folios) of palm leaves that were discovered by the third Prussian expedition to Turfan (Central Asia) in 1906. It is believed to date to the third century CE and is a non-canonical Abhidharma treatise, probably a compilation that belonged to the Sarvāstivāda school. Written in Classical Sanskrit, though featuring many deviations, it contains a philosophical debate between a Buddhist proponent and his opponent which is typical of the philosophical texts from that period.

The first volume consists mainly of ‘raw material’ related to the manuscript. It opens with a preface (pp. vii–xii) where Franco describes the modern history of the manuscript, as well as giving a detailed account of the life and work of Moritz Spitzer. Next, Franco gives an introduction where he relates the events surrounding the discovery of the manuscript in Turfan (p. 1). He then summarizes previous research on the text by Spitzer, Lüders, Watanabe, Miyasaka, and Schlingloff (p. 3). Next, he gives information about the content and structure of the fragments using a list of key-subjects (p. 10). The manuscript deals with well-known Buddhist topics such as the characteristics of the material elements, the omniscience of the Buddha, the existence of past and future objects, the purity of consciousness (*citta*), etc. But the text also

addresses non-Buddhist issues, since it refers to the books of the *Mahābhārata*, the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the sixty-four arts and sciences, etc. Franco's introduction examines next the palaeographical features of the manuscript which position it in the late Kuṣāṇa period (p. 27). On philosophical grounds, the author goes so far as to locate it in the second half of the third century. In his view, although discovered in Turfan, the manuscript could well have been an import from Greater Gandhara, possibly Bamiyan. Finally, Franco concludes the introduction with remarks about the language and style of the author and the scribe (p. 33). The main part of the volume (pp. 51–313) is dedicated to the reproduction of the fragments and their transliteration. One cannot help but admire the exceptional quality of the facsimiles and notice the challenge posed by the originally poor condition of the folios. Unlike most manuscript editions, this one includes the transliteration immediately below each facsimile, which renders access and comparison straightforward. The first volume concludes with a set of four appendixes listing other related fragments: 1) fragments no longer available but reproduced in Spitzer's papers (p. 314); 2) fragments from the Berezovsky collection (Oriental Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg) (p. 331); 3) fragments written by different hands (p. 337); 4) previously published hand-copies (p. 352). Unfortunately, none of these four categories of fragments are included in the analysis.

The second volume (pp. 353–510) contains a good selection of 'tools' that facilitate the study of the manuscript. First, it gives a concordance between the numbers of the glass frames in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin and Schlingloff's personal referencing system (p. 353). This is followed by a table of *akṣaras* (p. 371) and a word index which also includes cross-references between original and 'correct' spelling (p. 381). So far, so good. Unfortunately, the publication suffers from a number of not insignificant shortcomings. First, it is regrettable that Franco was not in a position to proofread his index with the attention it deserved. Then, the most interesting part of this publication consists of the partial reconstruction of the Spitzer manuscript, spanning from folio 369 to its probable end on folio 414 (p. 435); a large proportion of this has already been published elsewhere. Franco's investigation centres around seven issues: 1) whether the four noble truths are to be understood gradually or at once in a single cognitive act; 2) the nature of consciousness; 3) whether the Buddha is part of the *saṅgha*; 4) the distinction between cognitions and their objects; 5) *cittaviprayukta jñāna*; 6) the *karman* theory of the Kāśyapīya; and 7) dialectics, rules of debate, the meaning of *pramāṇa*, and other related issues. Unfortunately, it constitutes the only attempt to translate/explain the content of the treatise. In other words, Franco's analysis is based on less than one-tenth of the text. The second volume ends with an index (p. 506) that contains the fragments derived from the reconstruction and a bibliography (p. 507). The entire publication is composed in a very personal style, replete with references to the author's personal struggle in putting together the edition and its analysis. On occasion a little more distance to the task at hand would have been preferable in view of its scholarly nature.

Although the work on the fragments is considerable and contains many hallmarks of excellent scholarly endeavour, a great deal remains to be done. One cannot help but turn the last page with a sense of disappointment because the treatment of the manuscript is so incomplete, especially in the index and the reconstructions. Apparently, the author ran out of time and was not able to complete the reconstruction since he experienced financial difficulties. Moreover, a number of 'lost' fragments, now kept in Japan, were not available to Franco and await separate publication. Although scholars have already

waited many years for the edition of the Spitzer manuscript, it would have been preferable had the publication been postponed for a little longer in order to obtain the resources to finish the job properly, especially in view of the rather high cover price.

ALEXANDRA LEDUC-PAGEL

LUDWIG ALSDORF (ed. Annegret Bollée):

*Vom Ganges zum Himalaya: Indologische Lehr- und Wanderjahre 1930–32.*

311 pp. Bamberg: Annegret Bollée, Don-Bosco-Str. 2, D-96047 Bamberg, 2005 (privately published).

On the occasion of his 100th birthday the family of Ludwig Alsdorf (1904–1978) decided to edit and publish privately extracts of his report on his ‘great India journey’ in 1930–32. On 30 August 1930, the young Dr Alsdorf travelled by ship from Antwerp to Calcutta to take up a one and a half year position as lector in German and French at the University of Allahabad with the intention of using his spare time to photograph Apabhramśa manuscripts for his Habilitation at the Friedrich Wilhelm Universität in Berlin under Heinrich Lüders, to improve his Sanskrit, and to visit for the first time the historical sites described in Jain and Buddhist literatures. Although the text frequently addresses his ‘Indological’ and ‘non-Indological’ readers, Alsdorf himself had no intention subsequently of publishing this report. Thankfully, his family took this to mean ‘in its present form’, and his daughter Annegret took over the task of editing and publishing the work. Only few corrections and the updating of certain linguistic conventions were required to produce a very readable and informative text, supplemented with a political map of India in 1930, a foreword, an epilogue, a glossary, a list of selected proper names and a short bibliography. The full version of the text is almost twice as long as the book and contains many interesting details for historians of Indology, such as the visits to Taxila, Orissa and Amraoti which are also well worthy of publication. This information can be acquired in the form of a CD-ROM from the editor, who decided, in an inevitably arbitrary fashion, to leave out many sections which may be less appealing for the general reader. Unfortunately, the ‘omission of very few words and passages, which would not be *politically correct* from today’s perspective’ (preface) also applies to the full version. However, the original typescript will soon be available in the Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Abteilung Handschriften und seltene Drucke, of the University of Göttingen. The general reader would have benefited from more information on the context of Alsdorf’s journey in the preface, although details of his life and work can be readily gathered from the volume *Ludwig Alsdorf and Indian Studies* edited by Klaus Bruhn, Magdalene Duckwitz and Albrecht Wezler (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1990), which is not listed in the bibliography, and the epilogue only indicates the ways in which the text was used by the author for the purposes of teaching and writing. Because it was written with a specific audience in mind, Alsdorf’s report is not a diary in the strict sense of the term. With few exceptions, it provides no clear insights into his research interests and studies in India nor does it contain reflections of a more private nature. Yet, it compares well with the best of contemporary travel writing cited in the text (Karl Baedeker, Else Lüders, Katherine Mayo, John Murray), which it seeks to supplement. Moreover, it is

one of the few surviving documents to portray the extensive, though unsung, 'field experiences' of so-called 'armchair Orientalists' during the heyday of European Indology, in this case especially the encounter with the Jains. Historians would have liked to read more about these momentous meetings, rather than the lengthy description of the journey through Kashmir, the Himalayas, and the Hindu Kush in April 1931, to which one-third of the published report is devoted. The book conveys the great enthusiasm and the wide range of interests of the young Alsdorf, who describes almost everything Indian as *fabelhaft* (fabulous) and emphasizes his preference for the 'far more interesting' recitations of *paṇḍits* over academic papers (his studies of prosody are only hinted at in the text). Interesting episodes include the report on the Oriental Congress at Patna on 17–20 December 1930, and the description of the first encounter with Jains and Tapā Gaccha Mūrtipūjaka Jain monks under Muni Vidyāvijaya at the *Virtattva Prakāśak Maṇḍal* in Shivpuri in February 1931. The visit to Shivpuri, which was pre-arranged by the expatriate Dr Charlotte Krause, is characterized as a 'key journey'. Alsdorf later comments: 'I have rarely moved to such an extent exclusively amongst good and sympathetic people and count the days in Shivpuri to the most beautiful in India. ... I have again and again generally made the experience that to the likes of us the Jainas are after all indeed closer than the Hindus' (p. 163; see the CD-ROM for the fuller version). In contrast to Hindu temples, which were off-limits for foreigners, the Jains offered Alsdorf open access to their shrines. After making contact with Miss Krause and the supportive Tapā Gaccha mendicants, Alsdorf was able to use their Jain networks for many of his journeys. But only a few further encounters with Jain and Buddhist (in Ceylon) monks are recorded; for instance the fruitful meeting with Muni Caturvijaya in Patan, 'the stronghold of the Jainas', where he found useful sources for his Apabhraṃśa studies (p. 398). Alsdorf interacted with Jain *munis* and Hindu *paṇḍits* first in spoken Sanskrit or through translators, and later in Hindustani. His travel report has not lost any of its freshness and could have been written yesterday. The likely readers of this well produced book, historians and Indologists, are indebted to the untiring efforts of Annegret Bollée (née Alsdorf) and Willem B. Bollée for making the literary legacy of Ludwig Alsdorf available in print and electronically. The publication of the long-awaited English translations of his important works *Beiträge zur Geschichte von Vegetarismus und Rinderverehrung in Indien* (1962) and *Les études Jaina: État présent et tâches futures* (1965) have recently appeared under the title *The Present State of Jaina Studies, and Future Tasks* (Mumbai: Hindi Granth Karyalaya, 2006).

PETER FLÜGEL

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE and ARVIND-PAL SINGH MANDAIR  
(ed. and trans.):

*Teachings of the Sikh Gurus: Selections from the Sikh Scriptures.*  
1, 164 pp. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. £16.99.

The Sikh scriptures start with a digit and a syllable, 'ik oankar', frequently translated as 'There is one God'. Christopher Shackle and Arvind-pal Singh Mandair's translations of selected passages of the Adi Granth begin, strikingly: 'One, Manifest as Word'. This is a foretaste of the way in which, from their firm basis of linguistic and philosophical scholarship, the authors challenge earlier renderings and illuminate familiar words. From the outset the

tone is set for a collection of transpositions of devotional poetry, crystallized in contemporary idiom, from thoroughgoing engagement with sacred text. The reader is privileged to be sharing the fruits of a dialogue between scholars who come to the task from 'the not always wholly convergent perspectives' (p. xli) of different generations, as 'insider' and 'outsider' to the Sikh community and from complementary disciplinary backgrounds.

One quarter of the book consists of 'Introduction', an introduction that will command the attention of a wide spectrum of readers. The fifty pages offer a masterly contextualization of the sacred text and a refreshing distillation of its content. The introduction guides the non-specialist into comprehension of the linguistic complexity of the text, its literary structures and the relatedness of its poetic form and its musical expression. The ensuing discussion of the Gurus' teaching is a demandingly worthwhile read. The teaching is summarized in terms of, on the one hand, ego/individuation and, on the other, the character of the '*gurmukh*' (the Guru-centred person) who is aligned with the Guru/Word through the practice of *nam simaran* 'the constant holding in remembrance of the Name, which goes beyond ritualistic repetition to become a spontaneous form of loving meditation in which the ego is disappropriated' (p. xxxiii).

In their overview of earlier commentaries and translations, in line with other scholars with the perspective of a critical historian, the authors highlight the role of the Sikh Sabha reformist movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Where they go further is in arguing that, in reclaiming Sikhism from its interpretation by Ernest Trumpp, as being of a piece with Vedantic monism and Hindu pantheism, the Singh Sabha intellectuals nevertheless failed the Gurus' vision of oneness inasmuch as they too adopted the (Christian theological) language of a dichotomy between 'God' and the rest. This analysis must be taken seriously by those—Sikh and non-Sikh—who understand and present 'Sikhism' in an uncritical English idiom.

The authors go on to outline their innovative structural rationale of alternating 'single major compositions by the Gurus' with selections of shorter compositions articulating the themes of 'impermanence: the gift and curse of time', 'mind, self, ego', 'ethical being: action and grace', 'Guru as word: the location of authority' and 'communicating ecstasy: knowledge and non-knowledge'. Here the selection of themes echoing the priorities of the Gurus, rather than (as has been known to happen in religious studies on occasion) some supposedly faith-neutral set of categories, is a valuable corrective to perspectives more influenced by European/Christian frameworks.

Now that the *Adi Granth* in English is instantly accessible from the internet, it is the authors' insightful discussion of the text's form and content, at least as much as their actual translation, which contributes to informed understanding by both students and devotees.

While the *Adi Granth* is now more accessible than ever before, translations of the *Dasam Granth*, the compilation traditionally attributed to Guru Gobind Singh, are considerably fewer and less accessible. So the inclusion of 'Shabad Hazare' (verses that challenge Hindu religious convention) and 'Zafarnama' (Guru Gobind Singh's poetic letter to the emperor Awrangzeb) is particularly to be welcomed.

The authors are to be congratulated on the literary quality of their transpositions, conveying via metre and line-length something of the diversity of registers and verse-forms in the original, without at any point allowing literary conceits to obscure meaning. They have relegated explanation to the book's introduction, to the introduction to each section and to the endnotes and



glossary of names, and stuck to their resolve to echo the compression of the original. Among the most successful in terms of their pith and punch are:

Now priests are vegetarian,  
They can't stand meat, but feed on men. (p. 85)

and

Read on, read on, fill carts and caravans,  
Read on, read on, fill boats and pits,  
Read on for all your months and years,  
Read on for all your life and breaths.  
Nanak, only one thing counts, the rest is rot. (p. 129)

Delight in words connects Gurus and translators. The unusual spelling of 'gian' (wisdom) in Guru Arjan's acrostic becomes the more esoteric 'gnosis' in the English (p. 134). Explanation in the introductions to the respective sections that (for example) Guru Gobind Singh composed his *Shabad Hazare* in Braj Bhasha and his *Zafarnama* in Persian, and in the style of an epic by the poet Firdausi, enable the reader who is unversed in these languages to appreciate something of the linguistic range of the Gurus' writings.

My hope is that *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus* awakens in many readers a more questioning approach to sacred text (and literature more generally) in translation, as well as provoking some reconsideration of what the Gurus actually taught.

ELEANOR NESBITT

SUSAN S. WADLEY:

*Essays in North Indian Folk Traditions.*

xiii, 256 pp. New Delhi: Chronicle Books, 2005. £26.95.

In recent decades the study of folk/popular religions in South Asia has grown stronger and new publications on the subject appear with increasing frequency. Not only is new material being added to a large and diverse corpus of scholarly books but earlier works from the late nineteenth century onwards are being republished in enlarged, revised editions.

Such is the case for Wadley's *Essays in North Indian Folk Traditions*. The book covers more than thirty years (1967–2002) of fieldwork in the village of Karimpur (a fictitious name), Manipuri District, Uttar Pradesh. Based on the author's field research, the book also relies on previous ethnographies by William and Charlotte Wiser, who volunteered for social work in India in the 1920s and sojourned in Karimpur from 1925 to 1930. The author acknowledges the importance of the Wisers' material, but the papers collected here also pose new questions on the study of popular religions and give great emphasis to methodological issues.

The first paper in the book, 'The spirit "rides" or the spirit "comes": possession in a North Indian village' (pp. 1–21), was originally published in 1976 but it is still a valuable source for those interested in the study of possession phenomena in South Asia. Wadley's descriptions and analyses are remarkable: she carefully describes examples of possessions, and also contrasts previous theories and suggests a reading more adherent to the practitioners' point of view (see the critique of Dumont and Pocock, pp. 2–3, but Eliade's theory also

comes to mind). This paper is in my opinion also a sort of summary of the book. The author's main concern is to discuss and individuate patterns of possession among religious specialists and non-specialists, but from the outset it is possible to evince the struggle to discuss the features of popular Hinduism in Northern India. But if we are discussing the lore of a certain people we need to know their identity. If we are talking about Karimpur villagers, some data on the local population would have been useful. I evince from the book and from the Wisers' early work in Karimpur (see the online presentation at <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/southasiacenter/karimpur/>) that the local social substratum is typical of a North Indian village. There are representatives of high castes, i.e. Brahmins (though they are limited in number) and large groups of intermediate and menial castes (potters, ironsmiths, scavengers, tanners, etc.). It is not clear whether Muslims are resident, but mention is made of Zahir Pir, a typical example of a saint originating from Hindu-Muslim syncretism (p. 11). There is no mention of a tribal presence in Karimpur or its immediate surroundings. Numerical data on gender are also absent. So long as the main economy of the village is grounded in agriculture, I suspect, in this case, we can define the religion of the people of Karimpur as a syncretic system of beliefs based on mainstream Sanskrit/Hindu dharma mixed with regional variants determined by the presence of other religious groups, the economy, gender relations and the role of women, and relics of ancestral cults.

One of the key strengths of Wadley's work is the use of an internal point of view. Reading her book, I can feel the competence of the academic as well as hearing the voices of the people of Karimpur. Excerpts from interviews and translations of oral narratives enrich the book, and the scholar's analysis never disguises the voices of oracles, healers, storytellers or villagers. All of Wadley's arguments respect this line of investigation: possession, oral narratives, the *vrata* ('vow') tradition, the songs of the twelve months (*baramasas*), the relationship between the agricultural cycle and religion, the relationship between oral and written tradition, the ritual and social relevance of music and songs and, finally, the importance of local epics.

The subject of Epic is discussed in detail in chapters 5–9. This reviewer would have liked a greater emphasis on the creative power of the epic, especially in a popular context. Wadley summarizes the key concepts of epics in six points: 1) performance; 2) context; 3) discourse; 4) narrative; 5) story; and 6) structure (pp. 188–9). Epic representations, according to my own fieldwork in Bengali villages, are performed for specific reasons. Cosmogonies, battles, marriages, etc. have a contextual meaning which is invariably related to the necessities of the village. What Wadley does not say is that epics cannot be represented outside of selected scheduled occasions. This is because the myth represented on stage has an intrinsic power which allows specific events to happen. Many of my informants in West Bengal refused to tell me mythical accounts contained in local epics (especially cosmogonies) because reciting those stories makes them happen, quite literally. And as long as the village depends on the agricultural cycle, representing (or telling) an epic at the wrong time can cause a seasonal shift, which is likely to destroy village resources.

However, Wadley succeeds in individuating major issues in the dramatic representation of local epics and their relation with the written Sanskrit tradition. The textuality–orality discourse is clearly outlined and exemplified through unedited translations. I found the analysis of the songs in the context of dramatic representations as well as of occasional performances (singing songs, stories, etc.) extremely valuable. Wadley is indeed right when she says that 'anthropology and folkloristic approaches to the realm of ethnomusicology overwhelmingly look only at the words, at the text of their songs.

In doing so, they ignore the air—the manner in which those words are articulated’ (p. 126). The same approach is maintained in ch. 7, ‘Choosing a path: performing strategies in a north Indian epic’ (pp. 142–74). Here Wadley adopts a transcript method which allows the reader to grasp musical accompaniment, accents in the tune, pauses and remarks from the audience.

In conclusion, I consider this book a very useful framework for the study of popular religions. In a world where the internet and digital resources are increasingly used in teaching, I appreciate the author’s efforts to make her book a support for extra-textual material: the online Wiser archive which, it is hoped, will soon be available at the Smithsonian Institution, and a video/DVD on the author’s ethnographies in Karimpur (p. xi).

FABRIZIO M. FERRARI

SUSHIL MITTAL and GENE THURSBY (eds):

*Religions of South Asia: An Introduction.*

xv, 308 pp. London and New York: Routledge, 2006. £65.

*Religions of South Asia* is a textbook aimed at undergraduates. It opens with an introduction to the cultural, historical and geographical notion of South Asia (pp. 1–12) and is then divided in two sections: Part 1 ‘What India has given to the world’, and Part 2 ‘What India has received from the world’. The first part includes papers on Hindu Dharma (J. Grimes, S. Mittal and G. Thursby, pp. 15–86), Jain Dharma (Anne Vallely, pp. 87–102), Buddha Dharma (Tessa Bartholomeusz, pp. 103–10) and Sikh Dharam (Pashaura Singh, pp. 131–48). Part 2 deals with the Indian Zoroastrian tradition (T. M. Luhrmann, pp. 151–68), Indian Judaic tradition (Shalva Weil, pp. 169–84), Indian Christian Tradition (M. Thomas Thangaraj, pp. 185–200), Indian Muslim Tradition (Peter Gottschalk, pp. 201–46) and Indian Bahā’ī tradition (William Garlington, pp. 247–60). The book ends with a paper by Carol Olson (‘Contested categories and issues in interpretation’, pp. 263–86) on the problematic of addressing religion and applying categories in the study of religion.

When teaching undergraduate courses on the South Asian religions it is crucial to define ‘South Asia’. Mittal and Thursby give an exhaustive overview of the geographical, historical and cultural meanings of ‘South Asia’ (pp. 3–5), a region which embraces at least seven sovereign countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives)—if we consider cultural and social issues we should add Afghanistan, Myanmar and Tibet to this list. So, if this socio-political identification of South Asia is accepted, why did the editors and authors adopt such an Indo-centric approach to the study of South Asian religions? If Hindu Dharma, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism are indeed Indian religions, why does Part 2 refer only to India? Some traditions are almost exclusively Indian (e.g. Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Bahā’ī). However, very little is said about Hinduism, Islam and Christianity outside of India. Islam is so rooted in Pakistan and Bangladesh that it is now possible to talk of a Pakistani and a Bengali Islam. Muslim communities are also present in Nepal, Tibet and Myanmar and show interesting forms of syncretism. Christianity too has developed its own regional features in many South Asian countries. Hinduism lives in symbiosis with Buddhism in Sri Lanka while Pakistani and Bangladeshi Hindus are established minorities at the centre of social, cultural and geo-political debates.

The book will be an extremely useful tool for students interested in the study of religions in South Asia. All relevant questions are clearly explained

and a thorough bibliography gives the reader the chance to explore further. There are none the less some important omissions.

Like many books of its kind this one deals almost exclusively with textual traditions and focuses on 'institutional' forms of worship. Syncretism and localism are scarcely mentioned: religions such as Hinduism and Islam (as the most practised in South Asia) cannot be explained solely in terms of moving from Sanskrit and Arabic scriptures. South Asia consists of villages where not only are most people unfamiliar with the languages of their own textual tradition (Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Pali, Avestic, Hebrew, etc.) but they are also ignorant of many of the concepts delivered by them. I do not object to explaining the pillars of a religion, but syncretism is a reality in South Asia and would have merited its own chapter. Examples are numerous and can be found in all religious traditions: Muslims who worship Hindu and Buddhist deities, Hindus who worship Sufi saints, Sikhs celebrating Hindu gods and goddesses and attending Muslim festivities, Jains who bring their offerings on occasion of Hindu *pujas*, Christians who indulge in ascetic practices, Buddhists who join Hindu and Christian ceremonies, etc.

A greater emphasis might have been placed on the role of women and religion in South Asia, a subject of much scholarly attention since the late 1960s, yet still the approach tends to be andro-centric. It can be argued that South Asian traditions have, in most cases, been established by men (and in some instances by men only, e.g. priestly elites or men forming the highest social classes). Women, however, have an extremely important position, especially in villages. Maidens, housewives, celibates or nuns have different taboos and rites of passage, but most of all they have their own patterns of worship, usually grounded in being (potential) mothers.

The third and most serious omission for this reviewer is the total absence of a discussion of tribal religions. This is perhaps not surprising: tribal religions are regularly omitted when talking about South Asian religions and it is rare to find university departments specializing in South Asian religions and cultures which include the study of the tribes of South Asia in their programmes. Although many tribesmen and women embraced Christianity or adopted Hindu rituals (some Mizoram and Manipur tribes adopted Judaism, see p. 179), there is a huge body of belief transmitted orally from generation to generation since time immemorial. It is not relevant to discuss here if *adivasis* ('original inhabitants') or 'scheduled tribes' are antecedent, coeval or posterior to the earliest South Asian tradition, i.e. Vedic culture, but tribal people are an established presence. They speak languages belonging to the Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Indo-Iranian and Tibeto-Burman families. They have their own art, myths and rituals. They can be divided in agricultural, hunting, fishing, pastoral and gathering tribes and can be further distinguished into nomadic, semi-nomadic and settling groups. South Asian tribes are mostly patriarchal, but matriarchal tribes exist too. Finally, tribal people differ from other South Asians because they worship spirits rather than gods or goddesses, and their religious specialists are shamans, oracles and healers (be they male or female), rather than priests. The tribal tradition of South Asia is extremely diverse and presents a religious substratum worthy of separate inquiry. Further, as long as tribal people are struggling for their human rights in many South Asian countries, denying their contribution to the religious and cultural history of South Asia is a major omission.

Notwithstanding the above lacunae this is an extremely valuable textbook for students. None the less I cannot help thinking that the study of religions should be more grounded on the people and their beliefs, and I found it rather

worrying that the tribes of South Asia, their culture and religions were given so little attention.

FABRIZIO M. FERRARI

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CENTRAL AND INNER ASIA

JAN-OLOF SVANTESSON, ANNA TSENDINA, ANASTASIA KARLSSON  
and VIVAN FRANZÉN:

*The Phonology of Mongolian.*

(The Phonology of the World's Languages.) xix, 314 pp. Oxford:  
Oxford University Press 2005. £65.

This work, which is based both on original research and on sources not easily accessible to Western readers, covers many aspects of Mongolian phonology, including both the classical language and dialects of the modern language. The first seven chapters, about half the book, give a detailed phonological analysis of the language based on instrumental phonetic data collected by the authors from speakers of Standard Mongolian, known as the Halh (Khalkha) dialect and spoken in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of the Republic of Mongolia. Acoustic data on vowels and consonants are given in chapters 1 and 2 respectively, followed by a phonemic analysis of the segmental inventory in chapter 3. The authors' analysis differs in many ways from that of previous Western writers, for example Ramstedt, *Das Schriftmongolische und die Urgamundart phonetisch verglichen* (Helsinki, 1902), Poppe, *Mongolian Language Handbook* (Washington, 1970) and Street, *Khalkha Structure* (Bloomington, 1963), but has more in common with Russian, Chinese and Japanese authors, especially with Saito, *The Consonant System of Modern Khalkha Mongolian* (Tokyo, 1986). Vowels contrast for a pharyngeal feature (similar to retracted tongue root) rather than the more traditional front-back analysis, and stops contrast for voiceless aspirated and plain, rather than the more traditional voiceless and voiced analysis. All consonants, apart from affricates and fricative, have palatalized counterparts. Mongolian orthography is discussed in chapter 4, with particular reference to the proposed phonemic system.

Vowel harmony is the most important phonological process described in chapter 5. This is analysed in terms of monovalent privative features, similar to those used in particle phonology as in Schane, *The Fundamentals of Particle Phonology* (Cambridge, 1984) and dependency phonology as in J. Anderson and C. Ewen, *The Principles of Dependency Phonology* (Cambridge, 1987). The pharyngeal feature spreads autosegmentally from the first vowel of a word, affecting both consonants and vowels within the domain. A CV skeletal tier is assumed, as in Clements and Keyser, *CV Phonology: A Generative Theory of the Syllable* (Cambridge, 1983).

Chapter 6 deals with the formation of surface syllable structure (C)V(V)(C)(C)(C). Vowels contrast for length only in initial syllables, although short vowels do not occur word-finally in monosyllabic words. The maximum number of three word-final consonants is found only in morphologically complex words, otherwise two consonants may occur, depending on their relative decreasing sonority. Epenthetic vowels in monomorphemic words, and schwa-zero alternation in morphologically complex words, are discussed in detail.

Prosody is the topic of chapter 7. Tone is analysed within an autosegmental framework, marking both focus and sentence boundaries. A comprehensive

analysis of tonal phenomena in Mongolian by one of the authors is forthcoming. The authors discuss problems in analysing Mongolian stress, listing six differing opinions currently available in the literature and concluding that word stress is not a relevant concept in Mongolian phonology.

The remaining chapters are devoted to Old Mongolian and development of the modern Mongolic languages. A reconstruction of the Old Mongolian sound system in chapter 8 is based on texts written in the four different scripts, namely Uighur, Chinese, Arabic and 'Phags-pa, used for writing Mongolian in the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. The authors doubt that primary long vowels existed in proto-Mongolian due to scant evidence and non-uniformity of development in the modern languages. Palatal (front-back) vowel harmony is assumed, as by other writers, although evidence from the sources is incomplete. Examples of Old Mongolian vocabulary, together with the sources from which the words are reconstructed, completes the chapter.

The modern Mongolic languages are listed and described in chapter 9. Samples of comparative vocabulary are given, many from Chinese published sources. Their development from Old Mongolian and various changes that have taken place in the modern languages are discussed in chapter 10, including vowel splits and mergers, harmony shifts and consonantal changes, and deletion of non-initial short vowels affecting word and syllable structure.

Appendixes and bibliographical references provide a wide-ranging list of works in many languages for those wishing to read further. As the first comprehensive description of the phonology and phonetics of Standard Mongolian, as well as being the first account in any language of the historical phonology of the entire Mongolian group of languages, this book is a very useful reference work.

ANN DENWOOD

LILLA RUSSELL-SMITH:

*Uyghur Patronage in Dunhuang: Regional Art Centres on the Northern Silk Road in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries.*

(Inner Asian Library Series, 14.) xxv, 274 pp., 20 figures, 64 plates. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005. \$199.

In 1995 Lilla Russell-Smith realized that a sketch from Dunhuang of two seated women identified as 'divinités sogdiennes' were in fact wearing the headdresses of high-ranking Uyghur women. She thus recognized something that had heretofore gone undetected. Paintings from Dunhuang reveal not only Chinese and Tibetan influences, but also Uyghur ones. This book encapsulates her extensive research on this revelation and makes the case that Dunhuang art in the tenth century was influenced by Uyghur artistic styles on account of Uyghur patronage, especially that of Uyghur women who had married into the elite families of Dunhuang.

At the outset the author makes it clear that this is not an easy point to prove. Indeed, her narrative is peppered with hesitancy: 'maybe', 'probably', 'very likely', and 'it should be'. Moreover, in her introduction Russell-Smith makes it clear that there is no defined Uyghur 'aesthetic', much less a 'national style'. Rather there are stylistic elements or tendencies in material (colour, gilding), iconography (clothing, carpets, nimbi, scroll design), and style (brushwork, facial types, hair, depictions of architecture and trees) that can be traced back to earlier Uyghur Manichaean and Buddhist art. In particular, the

author works with seventeen Dunhuang paintings that scholars have often placed within the dubious category of 'Central Asiatic'. She rightfully responds to this trope by arguing that these facets must be explained and not simply dismissed under ill-conceived categories, even though 'the exact nature of the merging of these influences is different almost painting by painting' (p. 14). She therefore engages in a comprehensive and meticulous analysis of these pieces in order to defend her thesis of extensive Uyghur patronage and artistic influence in tenth-century Dunhuang.

She begins by providing a valuable history of the Uyghurs. And most relevant to the issue at hand is the development of the three separate, and often antagonistic, Uyghur realms during the period under discussion: the western Xizhou of Turfan, the central Shazhou Uyghurs of Dunhuang, and the Ganzhou Uyghurs of the Hexi corridor. Moreover, central to the author's argument is that the Xizhou and Ganzhou Uyghurs remained powerful and independent during the pivotal tenth century. Thus not only did they maintain their Uyghur culture, but the rulers of these realms were also able to marry their daughters into the ruling Cao family of Dunhuang, which is a point central to Russell-Smith's argument. It was these women who, through their patronage, brought Uyghur aesthetics into the Dunhuang orbit.

Russell-Smith therefore challenges Fraser's recent argument that Cao family rule and its artwork reflect anti-foreign and pro-Chinese sensibilities. Indeed, as seen in Dunhuang murals these Uyghur women were not required to 'become Chinese', rather, they continued wearing their distinctive garb. The Guiyijun dynasty was thus by necessity one of multiethnic and multicultural mixing. And it was this reality that opened up the door for Uyghur artistic influences in Dunhuang during the tenth century.

Yet as Russell-Smith makes clear, this was not a one-way street. In chapter 2 she investigates an example of reverse transmission: from Dunhuang to Turfan. In particular, she uses Fraser's scholarship on the use of sketches and the possibility of the Dunhuang art guilds moving along the Silk Road to argue that a mural of the Vimalakirti Sutra at Murtuq can be traced back to originals at Dunhuang. In chapter 3 Russell-Smith surveys Dunhuang banner paintings and reveals an array of Uyghur Manichaean and Buddhist influences. In particular she engages in the detailed study of several famous Dunhuang paintings in order to tease out their Uyghur sources. Her arguments are well captured in her summary of the painting *Virupaksa, Guardian of the West*. The 'key features' of this painting, 'as listed in table 4, include: the use of colour, the facial type, the clothing and hairstyle, and the brushwork. This painting's close resemblance to Bezeklik examples makes Uyghur patronage likely' (p. 171).

Likely? This is not a ringing endorsement. Yet it is the tone found throughout the book. Indeed, in chapter 4, where the main argument of patronage by Uyghur women and its affect on Dunhuang art is laid out, Russell-Smith conveys the same uncertainty. The whole chapter is again an exhaustive analysis of a corpus of paintings that the author believes reveal Uyghur influences. Yet right at the outset she confesses, 'these form a distinct group of paintings that were most probably commissioned by Uyghur donors' (p. 180). Most probably? The recognition of such a possibility is at once refreshing in an academic work, in that it readily recognizes the enormous difficulties in working with the complex, fragmentary, and largely undated material from the Silk Road; yet at the same time, it also reveals the issue that kept gnawing at me as I read this work. Am I convinced of the central argument? Do not get me wrong. I think the hypothesis is fascinating, important, probably groundbreaking, and I would like to support it; however, I am not so sure whether I am fully swayed by the argument.

This is not to say Russell-Smith does not marshal a tantalizing array of art historical evidence, but one can wonder whether it has been shoehorned in to fit the thesis. Indeed, one can really wonder how much power these Uygur brides actually wielded in the tenth century. But another, more pressing, issue is the reality of the well-organized, strict and hierarchical Dunhuang Art Academy. Russell-Smith concedes there were no Uygur workshops in Dunhuang until the eleventh century; one may thus wonder how any of these transmissions took place?

At the same time, however, something clearly did take place during this pivotal period in Dunhuang art. Thus in the end this is still a very important work. By revealing the important role the Uygurs had in the formation of Dunhuang culture it is a powerful intervention in the study of the Silk Road. Yet, as with so much of the current historiography that finds multicultural harmony in the past, while it clearly tries to work us out of the nationalist, ethnic, and religious mayhem we have dug ourselves into, it also raises the issue of how accurate a representation of the past it truly is.

JOHAN ELVERSKOG

L. J. NEWBY:

*The Empire and the Khanate: A Political History of Qing Relations with Khoqand, c. 1760–1860.*

(Brill's Inner Asian Library.) xxv, 297 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2005. €69.

Once neglected as a backwater by the China field and ignored by Central Asianists more focused on former Tsarist and Soviet empires, the Xinjiang region has enjoyed a resurgence of interest in the post-Soviet period. Though such current issues as economics, oil and separatism have something to do with this, there are sound historical reasons for China scholars and indeed all students of empire to pay more attention to the region. As Newby's book makes clear, the course of Qing dynasty foreign relations along its westernmost border in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reflected tectonic shifts in Chinese domestic politics, foreign policy, and imperial worldview.

*The Empire and the Khanate* is the first detailed study (save Pan Zhiping's work in Chinese) of the relations between the Qing and the Khoqand khanate and the related invasions and uprisings in the westernmost corner of Xinjiang. Newby's monograph is based on a thorough reading of Qing archival and published sources complemented by documents in Chaghatai and Persian and contemporary travel accounts and studies in Russian and English. It both surpasses previous accounts of Qing–Khoqandi relations in its detail, and challenges some of the assumptions and conclusions of these works. Most importantly, Newby treats events in Xinjiang in the context of politics in Beijing (and, to a lesser extent, Khoqand); this broader framing makes clear the political and policy connections between events in Xinjiang and those along China's southern coast, connections that Joseph Fletcher suggested, but never really explicated. As a result, readers gain a better understanding of why events transpired as they did not only in Xinjiang, but in the Opium War as well. Indeed, we can now clearly see how the interaction of institutional decline, fiscal constraints, imperial overreach and ethnic insecurity on the part of the Manchu regime explains the descent from the confident expansionism of the early Qianlong era to the diffidence and deadlock of Daoguang and later reigns.



Newby begins her narrative with the Qing conquest of Altishahr and Jungharia, pointing out just how far west Qing forces advanced in their pursuit of Junghar and khoja fugitives: Qing detachments tramped over the Pamirs, camped outside Tashkent, and paid calls on Talas, Andijan, Marghilan and Khoqand. The 'submissions' offered to the Qing by squabbling Central Asian cities and tribes were at this point no mere lip service. The joint Manchu–Mongol armies of the Qing were an awesome peacemaker in Central Asia, if only temporarily.

From these mighty beginnings, however, Qing prestige and power in the region entered a long decline, a process Newby carefully charts, focusing on the interrelated factors of the khojas, Khoqand and corruption. The khoja clan had ruled southern Xinjiang before the Qing, and Jahangir and other scions of this family led revanchist incursions back into the Kashgar area on several occasions from the 1820s to the 1850s. The khojas variously sought support from, were restrained by, or were used as figureheads by the khanate of Khoqand, which sought to enhance its power in Central Asia, monopolize trade with and tax revenue on trade from China, and, if possible, establish a beachhead in south-west Xinjiang. Diplomatic relations between Khoqand and Qing were always complicated by the khojas, whose extradition Qing repeatedly demanded and which Khoqand successfully refused. The great crisis in Qing–Khoqand relations, the Qing embargo on Khoqand trade from 1828–32, arose over this issue. It was more or less resolved between 1832 and 1835 by the conclusion of an agreement permitting tax-free Khoqandi trade and allowing the Khoqandi merchants (and other foreign merchants as well) to administer themselves on Xinjiang soil. Joseph Fletcher famously called this agreement China's first 'unequal treaty', but Newby points out that it is best understood as a policy shift from one traditional Chinese strategy for dealing with foreigners to another, based on a careful cost-benefit analysis. Likewise, she argues, the Treaty of Nanking that concluded the Opium War a few years later was not really inspired by the agreement with Khoqand; rather it is best understood as drawing elements from the same playbook. Newby challenges the still-prevalent Fairbankian conception of a static 'tribute system' by arguing that the foreign policy repertoire drawn upon by the Qing, including even 'tribute missions', was not especially 'Confucian', nor was it inflexible or obsolete—for it continued to furnish the structure of relations with Khoqand through the 1860s. The problems faced by the Qing in its relations with Khoqand derived, rather, from fiscal constraints (that ruled out military response to Khoqandi provocation) and domestic politics (sabre-rattling by Han literati which precluded the rational reassessment of the Qing position in southern Xinjiang which some experienced Manchu and Mongol officials advocated).

The third factor leading to trouble in Xinjiang was corruption and misrule, especially by local bek officials. Newby contends that abuses by Xinjiang authorities contributed to escalating poverty and disaffection among the local Muslim population and led to its willingness to rebel in concert with khoja and Khoqandi invasions. This is a reasonable enough proposition, but available evidence on this point remains mixed. While Newby cites Lin Zexu's account of severe poverty in rural southern Xinjiang, *c.* 1840, and suggests that these conditions were a cause of unrest, there are other accounts and indeed economic evidence that cities at least were benefiting from the steady flow of trade. In fact, as Newby's account makes clear, although the first khoja invasion, by Jahangir, garnered considerable local support, locals in Yarkand and Khotan opposed the next attack (Yusuf's invasion) and indigenous support

declined further with each subsequent invasion, until the later khojas (in the 1840s and 1850s) were perceived as little more than bandits and met staunch local resistance.

Was the violence in south-west Xinjiang in the early–mid nineteenth century the result of local unrest? Or of invasions by external elements (khojas and Khoqand)? It was certainly some combination of both, but the degree of local interest in overthrowing Qing rule at this point, and on what that interest was based (Islam? Uyghur proto-nationalism? complaints about misrule?) remain central questions. It is thus necessary to be cautious about terminology. Newby occasionally generalizes from events in Kashgar to southern Xinjiang as a whole, as when she discusses support for Jahangir among ‘Muslims of Altishahr’ (p. 90); real support for Jahangir was restricted to four cities in the south-west that he managed to capture, and even there, only to adherents of the Afaqi branch of the Naqshbandi sufi order, while their Ishaqi rivals supported the Qing. Likewise, Newby uses such terms as ‘rebels’, ‘insurgents’, ‘rising’ and ‘revolt’, to depict forces and attacks led by and largely composed of khojas coming from Khoqand, Khoqandis, and Pamir Qirghiz tribes (pp. 114, 154, 158, 233). At one point she refers to a force attacking Yengi Hisar as ‘rebels’ and ‘insurgents’ in one paragraph, and as ‘Khoqandi troops’ in the other. She is perhaps here unconsciously following Qing terminology which refers universally to ‘muslims’ and ‘rebels’ rather than invaders but, as the United States is learning to its shame in Iraq, it matters whether the enemy are foreigners or locals—even when it’s hard to tell them apart.

Likewise unconvincing is Newby’s assertion that the Qing actually *created* an Islamic resistance to its rule in the region by (1) making Jahangir into a Muslim martyr and regional hero (119–20); (2) failing to implement policies to exploit the schism between Afaqis and Ishaqis (121); and (3) failing to inject an Islamic component into its culturally pluralist imperial ideology (252). For one thing, it is hard to see how Qing non-patronage of Islam amounted to ‘inadvertently nurturing the faith for some 60 years, providing the context in which it rooted itself ever deeper into the Tarim Basin, while also extending its reach ... to much of Jungharia’. (The Tarim had been fully Islamicized for at least a century-and-a-half before the Qing conquest; more Uyghurs had moved north by the late Qing, to be sure, taking their religion with them.) For another thing, there is little evidence that the Islamic faith among Xinjiang residents was a motivating force (as opposed to a handy vessel or rallying cry) behind resistance to the Qing. If that was the case, why was there so little unrest among Muslims in Xinjiang between 1760 and 1864? Where was the jihad? With a couple of small exceptions, there were no uprisings in Xinjiang except those associated with invasions by khojas or Khoqandis during this century. It is Newby’s other argument that makes the most sense: worsening mal-administration, corruption and exploitation by officials primarily underlay the discontent, as it underlay rebellion in China proper. Moreover, due to fiscal constraints and court inattention, a severe power vacuum developed in Xinjiang by the 1850s, by which point the impoverished, starved and opium-besotted Qing forces could no longer defend against anything. Then, all it took was a spark from the east and the shell of Qing administration crumbled and blew away.

My debate over these points of interpretation should not detract from Newby’s excellent book, which is certainly the standard and best work on the subject.

JAMES A. MILLWARD

## EAST ASIA

VICTORIA TIN-BOR HUI:

*War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe.*

xiv, 294 pp. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. \$24.95.

The similarities between the multi-state systems of China during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods and Europe during the latter half of the second millennium have long attracted the attention of historians and political scientists. Both systems were marked by the intense diplomatic and military competition of sovereign, territorial states giving rise to profound changes not only in the ways in which armies were raised and war was waged, but also in the structure and function of the state itself. Yet the outcome in each case was different. Whereas China was united under the rule of Qin Shihuangdi in 221 BC, Europe remained a congeries of independent states despite the efforts of Charles V and Napoleon. Why did the power-balancing mechanisms so evident in Europe fail to operate in the Chinese case? Why was Ancient China's multi-state system unable to sustain itself?

Political scientist Victoria Tin-Bor Hui argues that such questions are both wrong-headed and Eurocentric. With their emphasis on the balance of power, international relations theorists in particular have taken the European historical experience to be a universal norm and dismissed others as deviant cases. One might just as well ask, Why did Europe fail to achieve unification under the rule of a single empire? Hui is equally critical of sinologists' assumption that China's unification under a coercive empire was somehow inevitable. What is needed, she argues, is a theoretical framework capable of explaining developments in both Europe and China. She proposes a 'dynamic theory of world politics' based on the competition between a 'logic of domination' followed by expansionist powers and a 'logic of balancing' followed by their targets, leaving room for contingency and human agency and allowing for more than one possible outcome. The task then becomes to explain why domination triumphed in one case and balancing in the other.

Hui's analysis covers ancient China from 656 BC (the creation of a northern coalition against Chu that she believes inaugurated the interactive multi-state system) to unification in 221 BC, and early modern Europe from the French invasion of Italy in 1494 to the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 (after which British hegemony fundamentally altered the European system). She observes that balancing worked fairly well during the first three centuries of China's multi-state system, but began to break down after the pressures of international competition drove the Warring States to undertake 'self-strengthening reforms' which included the creation of bureaucratic governments run by meritocratic elites, the introduction of military conscription, the elimination of 'intermediate resource-holders', and the direct extraction of resources from the farming population. The 'logic of domination' included not only self-strengthening reforms but also divide-and-conquer strategies, cunning stratagems (bribery, assassination), and brutal tactics (such as the massacre of defeated armies). Pursued most consistently and effectively by the state of Qin, such policies produced a unified empire by 221 BC. In early modern Europe, by contrast, the logic of domination was relatively weak. Instead of implementing self-strengthening reforms, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century rulers adopted 'self-weakening expedients' such as borrowing the funds to finance their wars and relying on military contractors and expensive mercenaries to fight them. All of

this seriously impeded the drive towards domination and rendered European states incapable of subjugating even relatively weak neighbours. When some powers, most notably Revolutionary France, finally turned to self-strengthening reforms, the legacy of earlier debts and bankruptcies continued to impede their performance. Hui explains the different choices made by Chinese and European rulers as largely a function of differing initial conditions. A relatively monetized and commercialized economy (reinforced by bullion from the New World) encouraged European monarchs to rely on loans and mercenaries as the path of least resistance, whereas rulers in the less commercialized environment of early Warring States China were driven to maximize their capacity for direct extraction from the agrarian economy.

This rich and complex book does not stop at the system level, however; it also devotes a chapter to the state level. Hui argues that the expedients pursued by European rulers required them to share power with 'intermediate resource holders', a development that—especially in Britain—led eventually to the emergence of liberal democracy. In China, too, the pressures of interstate competition caused rulers to bribe their subjects with the offer of 'citizenship rights' (such as access to impartial justice and economic welfare measures), concessions that were promptly repealed after the Qin unification. Hui makes no secret of her wish to 'restore China's hidden liberal legacy' (p. 176), and some readers may wonder whether this has not led her to place undue emphasis on 'citizenship' that stopped well short of actual participation in government.

The discussion of self-strengthening reforms versus self-weakening expedients, and the reasons China chose one and Europe the other, is the most plausible and persuasive part of Hui's argument. The other elements of her 'logic of domination' are more problematic. She assigns great weight to cunning stratagems (which are interchangeably labelled as 'Sunzian', 'Machiavellian', and 'ruthless') and brutal tactics in explaining the rise of Qin, but given the extreme paucity of sources for this period of Chinese history and the strong fictional element in works such as the *Shiji* and *Zhanguo* there is a real risk of mistaking literary trope for historical fact. With regard to early modern Europe she notes that stratagems were rarely used and the wholesale massacre of surrendered foes was almost unheard of, but offers little in the way of explanation except to say that the overseas colonial arena made European interstate competition less zero-sum and provided an outlet for violent passions. Hui shows little interest in considering the influence of norms, values, and even religious beliefs on human behaviour, and this is perhaps the greatest weakness of her book.

Although not without shortcomings, this book is by far the most thoughtful, comprehensive and systematic comparison of these two multi-state systems that has yet appeared. It deserves the serious attention of scholars of ancient China and early modern Europe, historians and political scientists alike.

DAVID A. GRAFF

KEITH NATHANIEL KNAPP:

*Selfless Offspring: Filial Children and Social Order in Medieval China.*

x, 300 pp. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005. \$52.

Keith Knapp's new book, *Selfless Offspring: Filial Children and Social Order in Medieval China*, makes an important contribution not only to our

understanding of narratives that celebrate Confucian paragons of filial piety but also to our comprehension of the early medieval period and the increasing social and political significance of Confucianism in a period generally characterized as a time when this philosophical school was in deep decline. Although filial piety (*xiao*) is often cited as an important, and from some perspectives, a defining feature of Chinese civilization, relatively little has been written about it in English-language sources. Knapp's book 'unpacks' the cultural significance of filial piety by looking at how generations of Chinese intellectuals promoted this virtue in didactic texts, biographies, and art work. He also examines what motivated people from all sectors of society to pattern their lives on famous exemplars of this virtue. By comparing filial exemplars with Christian saints, Knapp also provides a means by which we can understand the religious qualities of Confucianism and some of the contradictions inherent in a system of thought that tried to realize both sacred and secular goals.

Chapter 1, 'Extended families and the triumph of Confucianism', explores the pressures brought to bear on elites who increasingly favoured large extended families as a means to shore up local status and power. Under these conditions, family patriarchs increasingly employed Confucian ideology, filial piety in particular, as a useful tool for maintaining fragile domestic harmony in a world where large families became the springboard to social prestige and political privilege. In this chapter Knapp also provides a fascinating assessment of how family size and structure evolved from Han to medieval times and taking into account data drawn from archaeological, agricultural and legal sources. Readers will be especially grateful for his survey of recent Japanese-language scholarship on this topic.

In chapter 2, 'The narratives: origins and uses', Knapp focuses on filial piety narratives themselves, which may have begun as family oral history but which later became incorporated in written works, such as family histories, credentials collected by the government for candidates being considered for official positions called 'behavioural dossiers' (*xingzhuang*), epitaph literature, and accounts drawn from a variety of sources and compiled by relatives or admirers called 'separate biographies' (*biezhuan*), as well as geographical works lauding regional worthies that circulated among members of a much larger community.

Chapter 3, 'Accounts of filial offspring: models for emulation', takes into consideration collections of filial piety narratives. Knapp argues that what is generally considered to be the earliest collection of these tales, *Tableaus of Filial Offspring* (*Liu Xiang Xiaozhi tu*), was not written by Liu Xiang or even produced in the Han Dynasty. He demonstrates that compilations of these tales did not become popular until the Southern Dynasties (317–589). Knapp speculates that officials from prominent families compiled accounts of filial offspring to provide positive role models for men and youths of similar backgrounds, but perhaps also as a means to bolster their own reputations as filial sons.

In chapter 4, 'Filial miracles and the survival of correlative Confucianism', Knapp shows how vestiges of Han Confucian ideology, which promoted the notion that human beings form a triad with heaven and earth, more specifically, that the human realm is informed with the divine, that family hierarchy conforms to heavenly and natural patterns, and that Heaven and the spirits reward the virtuous, became articles of faith for the intellectual elite.

In chapters 5, 'Reverent caring' and 6, 'Exceeding the rites: mourning and burial techniques', Knapp discusses two of the most important motifs in filial piety narratives. He argues that the first theme—nurturing one's parents—became important in medieval times because of the crucial nature of family

unity in a time of political upheaval. In ch. 6, he explores how exceeding traditional mourning rites in medieval times may well reveal the general indifference to mourning rituals that had by medieval times become commonplace.

The final chapter, 'Filial daughters or surrogate sons?' enquires into gender differences between male and female filial exemplars. Knapp reveals that women are most often portrayed as filial exemplars when they have no brothers to fulfil filial duties generally shouldered by male offspring. More importantly, collections of filial exemplars tend to portray daughters as engaging in much more extreme and often violent acts in order to demonstrate their sincerity.

Knapp's book is highly readable and accessible enough to assign to undergraduates, but at the same time, provides rich insights into medieval China that will not disappoint a specialist readership.

ANNE BEHNKE KINNEY

PETER LORGE:

*War, Politics and Society in Early Modern China, 900–1795.*  
vii, 188 pp. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. £60.

Peter Lorge has written a history of China in terms of imperial military successes and failures from roughly the fall of the Tang to the end of the Qianlong reign. As he rightly points out, many people have been misled by the Confucian idealization of virtuous rulership and proclaimed preference for persuasion over coercion into thinking of traditional China as somehow aloof from military affairs. Yet every dynasty came to power as the consequence of conquest, then ruled by a combination of actual and threatened military power, and usually came to grief at least in part as a consequence of military weakness. Thus not only is the division of Chinese history according to dynastic timelines unhelpful and often teleological—though sometimes hard to escape—but the attempt to draw a distinction between 'native' and 'conquest' dynasties is deceptive. Scholarly rehabilitation of Chinese military history—a small but significant historiographical turn in which Lorge has played his part—parallels recent efforts to complicate our understanding of 'sinicization', or the absorption of outsiders through the charisma of Chinese culture, in that both seek to overturn conventional but inaccurate narratives. It builds on A. I. Johnston's characterization of Chinese strategic culture as never flinching from the application of military force in the pursuit of political goals (Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

Lorge divides his eight chapters according to important milestones of military history—to which the politics and especially society of the title ultimately seem distinctly subordinate. A succinct introduction sets out the book's key insight, namely that the durability of the imperial system depended on maintaining a taut balance between local and imperial elites, including emperors themselves. A politically fragmented society nominally held together as an empire suited a strong emperor because it was unable to pose a substantive threat, while a weak centre suited local elites because it could not challenge their bases of power. Local power was not only more easily attainable but it was more attractive than regional or national power because it was, simply, less fraught with risk.

The first, and stronger, half of the book addresses the centuries from the post-Tang chaos through the Song and Yuan dynasties, giving extensive coverage to Chinese rulers' main regional rivals, the Tangut Xixia to the north-west, the Jurchen Jin in the north, the Khitan Liao to the north-east, and later the Mongols under Chinggis. Chapter 1, 'Unity through war, 900–1005', shows that, later historiography notwithstanding, for most of the tenth century reunification was never regarded as inevitable. The chapter closes with the Chanyuan Covenant of 1005 between the Song and Liao, which marked the end of Song imperial expansion and the beginning of the rise to political pre-eminence of civilian officials. Chapter 2, 'Empires at peace, empires at war, 1005–1142' takes the story to the death of Yue Fei, one of China's greatest military-patriotic heroes, in the context of passionate disagreements about whether to attempt to retake the north or to accept the impracticability of such a goal. It includes discussion of the several wars of the eleventh century, key battles, policy debates and military modernization. Chapter 3, 'Three empires and a century of war, 1142–1272' lucidly explicates the interplay of civil and military and local and national interests within the Song, on the one hand and, on the other, the complex interactions between the Song and its various imperial competitors. Chapter 4, 'A Chinese empire? (1272–1355)' is perhaps the strongest in the book. Lorge analyses the differing attitudes of civilian and military officials to dynastic loyalty, and describes the notorious siege of Xiangyang, offering the gruesome detail that the Mongols murdered the entire population of perhaps ten thousand and left their bodies to rot in an enormous pile outside the city wall.

Chapter 5, 'The Chinese Conquest Dynasty, 1355–1435', presents the early Ming as dominated by military concerns. Such was not the case for most of the remainder of the Ming, covered in chapter 6, 'The politics of imperial collapse, 1435–1610'. Lorge draws on the work of Kenneth Swope to rehabilitate the Wanli emperor's reputation for indolence and political disengagement. In the years around 1600, directed by Wanli, the Ming successfully fought three widely separated campaigns, in the north-west against the Mongols, in Korea against the Japanese, and in the south-west against indigenous rebels. It was only later that Ming factionalism overwhelmed its will to maintain military strength so that within half a century the Ming fell to the Manchus. Lorge reminds us that the Ming always adopted the best technology obtainable, including European firearms. Later Ming cannons and gunfounders captured by the Manchus would help tip the balance in the wars of dynastic transition.

The remaining two substantive chapters ('A people created for war, 1610–1683' and 'The Old Man of Ten Complete Victories') discuss the Manchu Qing empire. The wars and martial focus of the Qing have formed a central theme of much of the new Qing history (see Waley-Cohen, 'The new Qing history', *Radical History Review* 88, 193–206), which Lorge largely follows. He ends his account with the death of the Qianlong emperor, which marked the beginning of at least an interruption for Chinese global stature. The source of that shift, of course, was economic as well as military, not least because of British trade, but that story reaches beyond the scope of the present book.

This book, part of a series on 'Warfare and History', will primarily be of interest to military historians, and to all those who quite reasonably have always wondered about the real role of military power in Chinese imperial history.

JOANNA WALEY-COHEN

ON-CHO NG and Q. EDWARD WANG:

*Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China.*

xxiv, 306 pp. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005.

This is a book that has been very sorely needed, in that almost seven decades have passed since the only other attempt at a connected survey of Chinese historical writing, despite the dominant position of history as queen of sciences within Chinese civilization. The quantity of more recent scholarship drawn together in this relatively slim volume is phenomenal, encompassing as it does work in English, Chinese and Japanese. One scarcely feels that the omission of a certain amount of relevant work in French, German or Italian can be made the grounds of any major complaint, though of course it is to be regretted, especially when not all the relevant work by Achim Mittag, who does take the trouble to publish in English on occasion, has been consulted. This short-coming is in any case offset by the willingness of the authors to bring to our attention historians such as Qiu Jun (compendiously treated on pp. 205–06) virtually unknown to the English reader in the past, even if the vast breadth of their canvas means that a fairly narrow range of self-evidently historical writing tends to be selected at the expense of—to take the example of this particular figure—Qiu's more encyclopedic work on institutions, on which an unpublished dissertation already exists.

The authors are of course aware of the possibility of discussing historiography more broadly, and do occasionally mention alternatives to the mainstream of historical writing narrowly conceived, for example Buddhist works and Buddhist views of history. Straying too far in this direction, however, would clearly have resulted in a much larger book of less immediate benefit to students. Perhaps some other pairing of authors, or more probably a team, will now take on the varieties of history that were produced in a society where self-definition was more often than not achieved by means of some form of historical writing, broadly conceived—in religious writings of every hue, for example, constructed traditions decked out with specific historical references (not all of them false) accost one at every turn, even where one does not find such narratives elevated formally to the status of history. Including any reflections on such a situation here, however, would no doubt have resulted in confusion.

Equally, the authors have wisely foregone the temptation to consider in any detail the very different historiographies of distinct periods produced by shifts in a succession of intellectual climates that may be found even in perfectly conventional historical writing. Within the limits of this volume it is impossible to discover, for example, what the Qing thought of the Yuan, or the Song of the Tang, though these specific reassessments within the general writing of history provide the superbly continuous Chinese tradition of historical writing with a particularly distinctive flavour. Such an approach would have made for a very different and much larger book, though again it would undoubtedly be a very rewarding volume to produce. In China the tradition allowed for some intriguing reassessments of the heritage of the past, and though these are often more conspicuous in literature or religious writing, historians too were well able to rethink the materials they had received in the light of new modes of understanding. Of course a figure like Li Zhi (1527–1602) for whom revisionism was such a large-scale exercise that it transcended the examination of any specific period in history, constituting much more his natural *modus operandi*, is given some prominence here (pp. 219–22),



but flagrant iconoclasm was not the only mode of reassessment possible. Even so, one must concede that the authors have probably done the right thing to concentrate on major figures like Li so as not to dissipate their efforts into a meaningless catalogue of lesser names.

Where these intrinsically sensible policies may have had slightly misleading results, however, is in cases where past scholars have had an influence only on later historians rather than on the mainstream historiography of their own epochs. Such cases may be rather rare, but even so one regrets it if such figures do not get their due. I am thinking here of the case of Cui Shu (1740–1816), who wrote outside the conventional historiographic modes that dominate in this survey and was virtually unknown for about a century after his death, yet his impact on researchers of the Republican period is quite undeniable. But this specific case can by no means be elevated into a general criticism of this book. We have long needed a comprehensive survey of Chinese historiography and now, thanks to the hard work of these two scholars, here it is. Given the diligence and good sense on display here, one imagines that their efforts will be rewarded by several decades of sales, at the very least, before any future historian attempts to emulate their achievement.

T. H. BARRETT

KEELUNG HONG and STEPHEN O. MURRAY:

*Looking through Taiwan: American Anthropologists' Collusion with Ethnic Domination.*

161 pp. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.

This is a self-consciously angry book. More a collection of essays than the sustained unfolding of an argument, it is anger that provides the threads of continuity across the various chapters. No doubt some critics will point to Hong and Murray's frequent appeals to polemic and hyperbole. Those critics would do well to acquaint themselves with Nietzsche's observation that dispassionate or objective modes of writing are special instances of polemic that consciously seek to mask their own partisan nature. As 'an interpretive review of the representation of Taiwanese realities in American social science literature ... during the era of KMT authoritarianism' (p. 6) this book should become compulsory reading for students and scholars interested in Taiwan, regardless of their disciplinary specialism or background.

In the 'Introduction' to this volume penned by the series editors Stephen O. Murray and Regna Darnell, it is claimed that 'anthropologists were complicit with the domination of the Taiwanese majority by a refugee Chinese minority and de facto colluded in occlusions of ethnic domination' (p. vii). Evidence for this 'complicity' is deduced from the fact that American anthropologists working on Taiwan from the mid-1950s minimized the influence of Japan and earlier European colonizers on the island and similarly ignored Taiwan's non-Han populations. They also chose not to write about the so-called White Terror and martial law periods. Instead, they directed their attention to the study of family and kinship structures and religious beliefs and practices in search of 'traditional Chinese culture' (ibid.). Yet, and as Hong and Murray acknowledge, the approach taken by American anthropologists working on Taiwan—particularly the tendency to 'treat communities as isolates' without attention to their articulation with 'larger (state and economic) systems'

(p. 17)—was a defining feature of British and American functionalist theorizing. Indeed, anthropology as a discipline during the 1950s and 1960s was pathologically incapable of interrogating the linkages between locale, state (colonial or otherwise) and global markets, and of recognizing anthropology's own embeddedness within and indebtedness to colonialism, or of questioning its own Orientalist and Orientalizing assumptions.

The problematic that lies at the heart of the volume can be summarized in the following manner: anthropologists depended for the funding of their research and for their access to research sites and co-researchers on Kuomintang (KMT) institutions and agencies. Their representation of Taiwan as a sign or simulacrum of an imagined China suited the political interests of KMT, which likewise sought to present itself to the world as the only legitimate representative of China and Chinese culture. According to Hong and Murray, then, anthropologists 'cooperated with official ethnocide and linguicide' (p. 6). Unwitting collusion—even intentional co-operation—with agencies of the KMT for research purposes is, however, not necessarily the same thing as co-operation with 'ethnocide and linguicide', and this perhaps highlights the central weakness of this book: Hong and Murray ably demonstrate the necessity for a critical re-reading and re-evaluation of the canonical ethnographies composed by American anthropologists working on Taiwan. However, at different moments in the text the remit of the volume shifts: in the 'Introduction' it is on the 'complicity' and 'collusion' of anthropologists with 'ethnic domination'; then the stakes are raised to include co-operation with 'ethnocide' and 'linguicide', while further on it is claimed that 'the focus of the book ... is on the complicity with an ethnic minority oligarchy's imposition of its official language' (p. 23). Shortly after that it is stated that the volume 'details some specific instances' (p. 27) of complicity, by anthropologists and others, with 'colonial domination' in Taiwan. However, a little later Hong and Murray distinguish between 'research on kinship and religion' which 'especially evidences participation of American anthropologists in the imposition of traditional China on Taiwan', and 'research on ethnomedicine and ... working women' characterized by 'closer attention to Taiwanese distinctiveness' (p. 67). Yet even the claim that ethnographies on religion(s) in Taiwan tended towards the assumption that religion in Taiwan was in fact an expression or sign of traditional Chinese culture is later qualified by the observation that 'cults of deities possessing *dang-gis* were seen by many Western anthropologists ... as expressions of Taiwanese identity in specific opposition to Chinese domination' (p. 92). These differing statements on the volume's focus, the various caveats that have been added and the slippages they entail suggest greater care and attention should have been paid to the structure and coherence of the text as a whole.

Nevertheless, many of Hong and Murray's observations are acute. For example, in their re-reading of Lai et al.'s *A Tragic Beginning* (1991), they point out the authors' problematic usage of 'tragedy' (p. 28) and 'sincerity' (p. 34) as neutral, scientific-analytical categories in their analysis of the early years of KMT rule in Taiwan, the 2:28 incident and the White Terror. They also point out how Arthur Wolf's focus—in his analyses of kinship and family structures—on uxorial residence and the division of family assets during the father's lifetime, sits uncomfortably alongside his insistence on Taiwan as an instance of a 'single Chinese essence' (p. 49). Moreover, they point out the historicity of the claim made by American anthropologists that Taiwan represents traditional Chinese culture by noting that 'before the Chinese government transferred its claim of sovereignty over Taiwan to Japan, the dangerous frontier outpost was certainly *not* considered typically Chinese' (p. 60).

In this volume of essays, Hong and Murray engage in a biting and pertinent review of American ethnographies written about Taiwan, and provide an important critique of those texts and their silences about KMT rule and the political structures which, on the one hand, facilitated research but which on the other were structures of terror and political intimidation of the subjects of that research. It is to be hoped that contemporary anthropological scholarship on Taiwan (and elsewhere) takes on board this critique and that anthropologists think twice before becoming partners with states for which the prosecution of violence and terror against their own populations is routine.

PAUL-FRANÇOIS TREMLETT

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## SOUTH-EAST ASIA

ABDULLAH SAEED (ed.):

*Approaches to the Qur'an in Contemporary Indonesia.*

(Institute of Ismaili Studies, Qur'anic Studies Series No. 2.) xx, 252 pp. London: Oxford University Press in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2005. £45.

This is the second volume in a new series on quranic studies released by the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, which in recent years has built a reputation for supporting innovative and progressive contributions to the study of Islam. The context for this collection of essays is provided by a preface written by Anthony Johns, a leading pioneer of research into quranic exegesis in the Malay-Indonesian world, and an introductory essay from the hand of the volume's editor, Abdullah Saeed, a Maldivian Islamicist working at the University of Melbourne. Earlier, this duo also collaborated on an article for the first volume in this series, in which they discussed the writings of Nurcholish Madjid, himself a contributor to the current volume.

Johns draws attention to the prevailing tendencies of relegating Muslim South-East Asia to a peripheral position within the Muslim world and the lack of awareness of the 'pulsating networks of 'Ulema', pilgrims, marabouts and merchants' (p. xv) which carried Islamic learning to the shores of the Indonesian archipelago. By the fifteenth century the region had developed a rich Muslim Malay literary tradition, with more concrete textual evidence becoming available from the late sixteenth century onward. He explores this further in a second contribution to this volume, in the form of a historical survey of the exegetical literature written in Malay.

In his introduction, editor Saeed gives an outline of the modern trends in the interpretation of the Quran, tracing them back to figures from the Subcontinent, such as Shah Walī Allāh (1703–62) and Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–98) and, of course, key reformists from the Middle East. Here, the writings of Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849–1905) on quranic exegesis were eventually published by his student Rashīd Rida (1865–1935) under the title *Tafsīr al-Manār*. Their new ways of studying the Quran; giving more room to *ijtihād* (individual reasoning) than *taqlīd* (blind replication of earlier interpretations) was continued by later scholars like Amin al-Khuli of Egypt (1895–1966) and the Pakistani Fazlur Rahman (1919–88), who advocated contextual and thematic approaches to the interpretation of the Quran text. In the next section, Saeed also pays attention to the traditionalist and modernist trends which in early

twentieth-century Indonesia started to be represented by mass organizations such as the Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Ulama (NU) respectively. Although initially diametrically opposed, in post-independence Indonesia they developed a more unified position, and from this emerged in the 1960s and 1970s a new trend, usually referred to as 'neo-modernism'.

According to Saeed, 'neo-modernists are more concerned with the "essence" rather than the "form" of Islamic teachings' (p. 9). With regard to quranic interpretation, this is expressed by three ideas: the significance of the historical context in which the Quran was revealed; an emphasis on the ethical-moral dimension rather than the legislative aspects; and the legitimacy for present-day intellectuals to let their own circumstances prevail in assessing the Quran's relevance for Muslims today. Finally, Saeed sketches the importance of Indonesia's system of Islamic higher education in consolidating neo-modernism. In fact, most authors of the essays in this collection are themselves products of this system of State Institutes of Islamic Studies (known under its Indonesian abbreviation 'IAIN'). The intention of letting these individual voices be heard is to underscore the diversity within a certain living Islamic tradition. The authors discuss a range of issues pertaining to the study of the Quran and its role in contemporary Muslim society, choosing a variety of points of departure.

The three essays following Johns's historical excursus focus on personalities. Milham Yusuf shows how Hamka (1908–81), the acronym of Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah and a towering figure among Indonesia's twentieth-century Muslim intelligentsia, has treated the way the Quran deals with law-giving; specifically with respect to polygamy, inter-religious marriage, and the payment of interest. The next two chapters deal with two intellectuals from the island of Sulawesi: Muhammad Quraysh Shihab and H. B. Jassin. Shihab is presented as a leading advocate of the thematic interpretation of the Quran who was responsible for introducing it into the curriculum of the IAIN in Jakarta (leading to 74 dissertations using that method, half of which were by students from Shihab's home region of Makassar). Yusuf Rahman, who serves on the faculty of the same university and who has written about the hermeneutics of figures like Henry Corbin and the controversial Egyptian scholar Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, discusses the poetic Quran translations of H.B. Jassin (1917–2000). This prominent man of letters was—somewhat ironically in this context—nicknamed 'the Pope of Indonesian literature'. Rahman explains how his projects were greeted with both praise and condemnation, leading to government endorsement for one version of his translations and a more circumspect treatment of the other.

The remaining six essays are more topical: a chapter on a further exploration of the contextual approach to the Quran and another on legislative issues are followed by two contributions dealing with more contentious subjects pertaining to gender relations. Lies Marcoes-Natsir writes about a possible new take on abortion, while Ro'fah Mudzakir returns to the issue of polygamy and the 'Aisyiyah women's movement's interpretation of some relevant quranic verses. The final two contributions are from the hands of Azyumardi Azra and Nurcholish Madjid (1939–2005). The latter, one of the country's most influential public intellectuals since his days as a student-leader in the late 1960s, deals with one of the overriding themes of his writings: the quranic underpinnings of religious tolerance and pluralism. Azra, currently the rector of the Islamic University in Jakarta and a respected historian of Islam, has offered a brief but engaged piece on the ways a sacred scripture can become caught up in politics.

Together the selections made for these eleven chapters show that, although their country is located on the geographical periphery, the ‘*Umma* below the winds’ is very much part of a wider contemporary Muslim discourse.

CAROL KERSTEN

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AFRICA

JAN VANSINA:

*Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyiginya Kingdom.*  
xvii, 354 pp. Oxford: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain  
Publishers, 2005. £15.95.

Rwanda’s pre-colonial history is the subject of heated debate and controversy. One common stumbling block is that Anglophone analysts rarely read French, a few exceptions granted. The present book, a ‘nearly identical’ translation of the author’s *Le Rwanda ancien: le royaume nyiginya*, does much to redress the balance. Offering a critical overview of Rwanda’s pre-colonial past as found in the oral traditions, Vansina covers not only the history of the Nyiginya kingdom, but also challenges official interpretations handed down by the kingdom’s court since the beginning of the twentieth century. Official sources transmitted and controlled by the court, by court historians like Alexis Kagame, are here examined against a body of popular sources, and texts retrieved from writings by Pagès and Schumacher, who researched the traditions before Kagame did. Leaving no source ‘beyond suspicion’, Vansina uses his vast experience as a historian of Rwanda and the region to decide which information appears most credible. Rebelling against received wisdom, he emphasizes ‘that the Nyiginya kingdom is not equivalent to Rwanda as a whole; that a history of the Kings is not a complete History ...; that the kingdom has not existed since hoary antiquity but is a relatively recent creation; that its kings were neither autocratic nor omnipotent; that its politics were not planned; that its centralization was peculiar and not founded on a homogenous territorial administration; that its military was not always victorious; and that its upper class was not always more intelligent or better able to command than any other classes were’ (p. 5). Each theme is treated with a keen eye for detail, context, and plausibility; and has the reader fully engrossed.

After tracing the origins of the Nyiginya kingdom to the legendary figure of Ndori—the holdall name of a single managing authority—Vansina maps out the steps Ndori undertook to turn his assets (formidable army, cattle) into the foundation for the administrative structure of his realm. Of Hima origin, Ndori found local allies to whom he loaned cattle in a form that later evolved into the *ubuhake* contract. Ndori’s successors and their elites set up an ambulant court from which they created a centralized kingdom by seizing ever-increasing amounts of cattle and land. It became a system of government unique to the Great Lakes region; a system rife with rivalries and political intrigue. In scrutinizing the traditions, Vansina challenges the view that the kings of the eighteenth century would have been autocratic rulers, showing instead that the actions of every king who reigned during that era (Gisanura, Mazimpaka, Rwaka, Rujugira, Ndabarasa) appear to have originated in the partly contradictory goals pursued by a variety of actors at the court. In sifting through a wealth of information, Vansina corrects the perception endorsed by court historiography, which glorified the king at the expense of paying attention to the actions of individuals, families and elites.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Nyiginya kingdom, now unified and centralized, saw royal army commanders acquire control of territorial domains. Each conquest brought more land, more cattle and more power to the main lineages at court. But although militarization was ruthless and extensive, the campaigns were best understood as spontaneous and irregular, rather than the product of grand strategic planning, as court historiography claimed. Thoughts of provocation and conspiracy, here exposed as being mostly justifications after the act, have also biased the work of certain post-colonial Hutu historians. In their case too, Vansina argues convincingly that the emphasis on the planned nature of social and political campaigns is thoroughly exaggerated.

The task of correcting the imbalances caused by court tradition and interests includes scrutinizing portrayals of Rwabugiri as a visionary in full control of his political agenda. Vansina's reconstruction shows instead that the king's centralization efforts amounted first and foremost to an increase in the power of the court as a whole and in the export of its bloody rivalries across the country. Rwabugiri's politics of centralization, it is clearly documented, were indeed marked by terror, social disaster, and the persecution of old aristocratic families, but his grip on events was 'more limited and passive than has been believed' (p. 195).

Under Rwabugiri, bitter internal rivalries not only fuelled territorial expansion, but also resulted in 'a process of social transformation that affected all the inhabitants of the kingdom and gave birth to the stratified social categories, known today by the labels "Hutu" and "Tutsi"' (p. 126); a fatal division that came to dominate Rwandan society and history. Vansina traces the historical trajectory of these labels in a consistently clear manner, spelling out what currency they had in Rwandan society prior to the arrival of the first Europeans. When Europeans appeared on the scene, however, the labels were no longer relative categories denoting class, dependency or occupation. Rwabugiri's administration, through the institutions and taxation system it set up, had transformed the labels into hierarchically opposed social categories. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the awareness of the division between Tutsi herders and Hutu farmers spread all over Rwanda, and broke into the open by the time of the 1897 insurrection. European visitors, such as the German Captain Bethe, routinely misread the signals and wrongly attributed the Tutsi/Hutu opposition to feelings of racial hatred. Understanding the labels 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' has been challenging ever since.

The translation of Vansina's book into English means that every analyst of Rwanda's pre-colonial past can now come to terms with its complexities, and, above all, with their relevance for Rwanda in the post-genocide era. The book is an inspired, balanced and invaluable contribution to the search for a history that all Rwandans can share.

JOHAN POTTIER

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## GENERAL

ROBERT IRWIN:

*For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and their Enemies.*

410 pp. London: Allen Lane, 2006. £25.

Nearly thirty years on, some might question whether we really need another rebuttal of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Robert Irwin's erudite and

readable book is a history of European (and some Arab and American) scholarship relating to Islam and the countries of the Near and Middle East. The main discussion of Said's polemic is contained within a single chapter, enabling the book to be read with pleasure even by those who are bored with the debate (for they can easily skip it). But it is clear both from this chapter and from the Introduction (pp. 1–8) that Said's book provides Irwin's chief target and motivation. Much as some who share Irwin's dislike of it might prefer the whole matter to disappear, the baleful influence of *Orientalism* is still very much with us, indeed is seemingly now a permanent feature of Oriental studies; and this continuing legacy (rather than the many and manifest flaws of Said's book) makes a riposte such as Irwin's both necessary and timely.

Irwin professes himself unable to account for the attention that Said has received (p. 309); but he has amply demonstrated the two most important reasons. One is the serviceability of a confusion at the heart of Said's argument, arising from his vague adherence to Foucault's discourse theory. To Said—as to so many who have adopted his concerns and arguments and made them their own—there is an ambiguity as to whether we are to posit the existence of a real, objective Orient that lies somewhere beyond the constructed Orient of European imaginings. Sometimes the answer must be yes (at least implicitly) because there must be something solid against which to measure the West's gross falsifications and misrepresentations. As Irwin puts it, 'If indeed the Orient did not exist, it should not be possible to misrepresent it' (p. 291). The theory tacitly assumes the Orient to be sufficiently material to be not only misrepresented but indeed violated, thus provoking our outrage.

On the other hand, sometimes it is necessary to don the mantle of a hardcore philosophical sceptic and to deny the existence of objective reality, of anything but a series of competing discursive strategies. Why should anyone outside of France do such a thing? Well, because opponents of the argument about the supposed collusion of scholarship and colonialism have a frustrating habit of advancing factual information in support of their arguments. The denial of objective reality carries the advantage of ruling out 'facts' as a reachable commodity, and any argument based on them can be characterized as reactionary and philosophically naïve. It is a philosophical cloak of invisibility, impervious to the facile barbs of empiricism.

Irwin tells us (p. 163) that Edward William Lane thought that parts of the Napoleonic *Description de l'Égypte* (1809–28) were 'based on too much philosophy and not enough observation'. The phrase is telling. Philosophy—especially bad philosophy—is a great deal easier to do than the tedious and time-consuming gathering of empirical data undertaken by so many nineteenth-century Orientalists. To some who are embarking on a career in Oriental studies the proven success of adopting half-digested Foucauldian rhetoric offers a tempting short cut. Cynical? Certainly: on their part.

The second reason for Said's durability is political. As Irwin points out (p. 309), the argument appeals to some who are anti-Zionist or anti-American. More importantly, its challenge to colonialism appeals to many who would define their political stance in less oppositional terms, who regard themselves simply as liberal or left-leaning. What could be more consensual than condemning past colonial aggression? The problem is that the consensus becomes coercive. Those who wish to engage with the argument on particularities (what this or that Orientalist actually said and thought) are stigmatized as advocates for people who have been lawfully condemned, and are suspected of defending even colonialism itself. Those who are insufficiently indignant towards their nineteenth-century source material are accused of sharing its prejudices. Faced

with such polarization many genuine liberals prefer to keep their heads down and wait for the storm to pass. It hasn't yet. Here lies the flaw in the proposition often advanced in support of Said that at least he has stimulated debate. Debate of what quality, one may ask, if the hectoring rhetoric keeps many silent?

In a section entitled 'Does the subaltern have permission to speak?' (pp. 292–3) and throughout his final chapter (pp. 310–30), Irwin explores how Said drew on some earlier Arab writers without acknowledgement and traduced or entirely overlooked many others, and concludes that 'Said did not want the Arabs to represent themselves'. There is another aspect to this which again raises questions about the value of the wider debate Said stimulated. The study of Western Orientalist scholarship—now an academic industry—has had the extraordinary effect in some quarters of occluding Asian voices: sometimes those of the present but more often those of the past. The point that nineteenth-century Orientalists often relied heavily on local informants is inconvenient for the theory, suggesting as it does that Western 'constructions' of Asian societies often depended on (or at least engaged with) the ways in which Asians have described themselves. Asian 'constructions' are rarely examined as alternatives, and are frequently silenced or submerged in the torrential tide of 'Oriental studies' diverted away from its primary subject-matter towards the examination of the Western mind.

At one point Irwin allows that 'certain Orientalists did go too far' in discussing such entities as 'the Islamic city' (p. 294). But essentialisms of this sort are not always the handiwork of Orientalists. As often they are advanced by Muslim scholars seeking to establish the distinctiveness or contemporary relevance of an ostensibly Islamic model or type. A useful intervention would be to break down the distinction between 'Western constructions' and their Asian counterparts and components—in other words, to abandon the polarity on which the whole argument was built in the first place. To do that requires regional knowledge of exactly the kind in which Irwin excels.

GILES TILLOTSON

ROBERT E. HERZSTEIN:

*Henry R. Luce, Time, and the American Crusade in Asia.*

xviii, 346 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. £25.

The present volume is a study of Henry Robinson Luce (1898–1967) and his media empire, mainly during the Second World War and the early Cold War period. The author, Robert E. Herzstein, Professor of History at the University of South Carolina, has examined Luce's life generally in a previous monograph (*Henry R. Luce: A Political Portrait of the Man Who Created the American Century*). In the present volume, Herzstein focuses on the ways in which Luce, through his publications such as *Time* and *Life* magazines (he also founded *Fortune* and *Sports Illustrated*), attempted to shape American foreign policy and shift its attention from Europe to (for Luce) the more important struggle being waged in Asia against the Communists.

In Herzstein's study, Luce, the son of protestant missionaries based in China, had a vision of an 'American century', never doubting that America would emerge as a guiding force for the post-war world. Through tense interaction with the co-operative and unco-operative among his journalists abroad and editors at home and by revising field stories as they came in, Luce



attempted to seduce the American reading public into accepting this vision. More importantly, Luce sought to influence American politicians so that they too would share his fears that his better world was threatened by communist expansion in the latter part of the war and after. Understandably, given Luce's close personal relationship with Chiang Kai-shek, the promotion of Chiang Kai-shek and his regime in China as democratic forces was a critical part of this effort.

There is much useful information for researchers on Asia during the Cold War and time expended in consuming this fascinating story will be amply rewarded. The book's focus on Luce, of course, means that personal information is included to colour the account and help the reader understand Luce more comprehensively than would be the case from an examination solely of his professional activities. Such details relate, for example, to Luce's sexual life and some of the more private arrangements in his relationship with his second wife, Clare Booth (Luce). Aside from such (perhaps unnecessary) forays into Luce's bedroom, the account of Luce's rise from Yale student to media giant within the space of two decades, despite the Great Depression, is fascinating, as are his frequent failures in influencing the course of American domestic politics. The most interesting (and useful) material in the book, however, are the constant interplays between Luce and his journalists and editors, as well as the politicians he sought to influence. Herzstein brings these interactions to life with effectively deployed fragments of conversations, diary notes, and biographical details. Herzstein's writing style makes readers feel as if they are there with Luce and his various antagonists (in seemingly endless supply), almost as if one could step back and look around the room while different conversations or episodes are taking place (for example, Luce's awkwardness at sharing an elevator ride with a subordinate staff member). As a result, Herzstein accurately depicts the complexity of Luce's position. On the one hand, Luce had an agenda and a media empire with which to promote it. On the other, to run this media empire, he had to employ, and depend upon, men (such as Theodore H. White) with whom he had serious disagreements in perspective on communist and nationalist rivalries in China. At the same time, such men also had their own professional reasons to work for Luce. In other words, relationships between Luce and his subordinates appear almost as a metaphor for the ambiguous relationship between America and its wartime communist allies.

It is difficult to find major faults with Herzstein's present contribution. Overall, the book makes for informative and yet relaxing reading, and is thus suitable for a general readership. A Cold War researcher, however, could raise questions about the Western focus of Herzstein's study. He has relied on Western archival materials and thus his story is focused squarely on Western men and women, at home and in the workplace in America or on tour in Asia. It would be interesting to know, however, if *Time* and *Life* magazines influenced Chinese media during the period of coverage. It is true that some interviews with Chinese participants in the Cold War are available in Western archives (for example, Columbia University's Chinese Oral History Project) and Herzstein has used a few of these for the present study. Nevertheless, episodes such as that relating to Dr Wu Kuo-chen (pp. 178–9) stand out mainly because they are so infrequent and because what they have to say is almost drowned out by what Westerners said about them. The reader thus wonders if Herzstein's portrayal of Luce and his attempts to shape history in Asia might be altered if he had paid more attention to what the Chinese were doing to influence Luce and his journalists. In other words, how would more

attention to Asian agency complicate Herzstein's understanding of Luce and his agenda?

These comments, however, do not detract from the value of the book as it now stands. This book is a special bonus for those who research the Cold War in Asia, which is so often neglected in favour of the standoff in Europe. The same readers, regardless of any eschewing of anti-communist propaganda of the Cold War period, will find Luce a kind of hero as well, for here was a man who clearly loved Asia (at least China) and always kept it at the centre of his thinking. The present volume is also highly recommended reading for those who want an inside look at one 'theatre' (the journalistic front) of the early Cold War.

MICHAEL W. CHARNEY

GEOFFREY PARKER (ed.):

*The Cambridge History of Warfare.*

viii, 515 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. £13.99.

The present volume is divided into nineteen chapters with an introduction and epilogue, covering developments in warfare from Ancient Greece to the Gulf Wars. Geoffrey Parker, the editor, contributed the introduction and conclusion, as well as three chapters (6, 7, and 9) and a chapter (17) co-written by Parker and Williamson A. Murray. Other contributors include Victor Davis Hanson (chapters 1–3), Bernard S. Bachrach (4), Christopher Allmand (5), Patricia Seed (8), John A. Lynn (10 and 11), and Williamson A. Murray (12–16). The volume is rounded off with useful supplementary material including a lengthy chronology and a glossary.

The *Cambridge History of Warfare* amounts to a more than satisfactory survey of the origins and development of Western warfare. There is a healthy balance between specific details (provided with substantial economy) and general trends, and the reader is not dragged through meticulous descriptions of weaponry or repetitious biographical sketches of great conquerors (although with occasional emphasis on a few key actors such as Bismarck and Sheridan). Space does not allow a regurgitation of the myriad topics examined in the volume. Nevertheless, one topic that is particularly well handled across many of the chapters is the long, twisting evolution of fortifications which, after minimal change for a thousand years from the late Roman period, underwent substantial change in response to the impact of firearms. Interestingly, fortifications built by Europeans abroad were first arranged to defend against sea attacks by other Europeans, rather than hostile advances by indigenous forces from the hinterland. Attention to new Italian fortress designs after the introduction of firearms and later by French engineers is presented in the context of necessary manpower. As fortifications became better and more easily defended, it increased exponentially the number of troops required to bring a siege to fruition, leading to innovations in siege technology and tactics to reduce the commitment of troops and expense associated with such a campaign.

Nevertheless, the volume's coverage is limited mainly to the West. Developments outside of Europe and North America are limited mainly to those cases where and when Europeans brought their ships and guns to carve out

colonies. The native North Americans, the Aztecs, and Incas do appear in Seeds' chapter, 'The Conquest of the Americas', as well as Sudanese, the Zulus and the Vietnamese, among others (the Japanese expansion of World War II is provided, but their military was built on the Western model), in later chapters, but only as representatives of new challenges to European invaders and technology. The editor acknowledges this problem in the preface, but offers three reasons for the European focus: (1) a single volume on military history could not possibly cover the entire world satisfactorily; (2) a brief notice of non-Western developments in the context of an overwhelming focus on the West would present a great distortion; and (3) regardless of competing traditions, Western warfare did win the globe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Hence, the 'rise and development of this dominant tradition, together with the secret of its success' deserves 'examination and analysis' (p. vii). One would expect that if this is the case the volume should have been entitled *The Cambridge History of European Warfare* or at least retained the earlier subtitle of *The Triumph of the West* for, in its present form, the title is very misleading.

No-one disagrees that Western warfare is worthy of examination, but one wonders if this story needs to be told yet again (European military success is, after all, a far from neglected theme in the literature and the coverage here, especially in the second half of the volume is very familiar ground indeed) at the expense of the rest of the world. The space devoted to the emergence of Western warfare in the present volume could have been substantially reduced to provide room for non-Western developments. Perhaps, a good beginning could have been made with at least one chapter on non-Western warfare, contrary to Parker's initial suggestion, to allow the non-Western world some space in their own history. Regarding Parker's third justification, the present reviewer has reservations as to whether the success of the West can really be understood without a more thorough investigation of how indigenous warfare emerged and why, in numerous encounters, Western warfare failed. The ability of the Burmese to delay the British advance in the First Anglo-Burmese War, the length of time it took to conclude the Java War, the much longer Aceh war, and a significant Dutch defeat in Bali in the mid-nineteenth century, all stress the need to understand the inadequacy of European armies in dealing with indigenous armies at the time and how Europeans were forced to develop new tactics and strategies, sometimes drawing upon indigenous technologies and tactics to do so. Further, as indigenous armies adapted themselves to Western warfare, many 'Westernized' indigenous armies fell very quickly and easily to European forces in the late nineteenth century. Afterwards, however, their rural (and hill) compatriots were able to hold off the Europeans for many years by falling back on indigenous tactics and technology.

Within the limited, Western, scope of the volume, the treatment of developments in warfare is scholarly and makes for a very rewarding read. Its arrangement and fine balance between details and narrative flow make it especially suitable for classroom instruction at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Indeed, the present reviewer expects to include this as supplementary reading in his own warfare course to cover warfare beyond the confines of Asia. The volume is thus recommended for researchers and students of warfare with the caveat that some supplementary reading on non-Western warfare should be undertaken if one desires a full and balanced understanding of the history of warfare on a global scale.

MICHAEL W. CHARNEY

## SHORT NOTICES

MARVINE HOWE:

*Morocco: The Islamist Awakening and Other Challenges.*

xi, 428 pp. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. \$29.95/£18.50.

This book is written by a journalist with extensive personal experience of Morocco and its elite from the 1950s onwards. The title, presumably chosen for the impact of the word 'Islamist' in contemporary times, is slightly misleading. Although the rise of Islamist sentiment is certainly present and used as a framework, the book is actually a record of Howe's interactions with numerous members of the royal family, the political elite, and the commercial sector, and a meticulously researched synopsis of Morocco's development since independence. The book starts on a historical note but then moves to a more encyclopedic coverage of aspects of the contemporary Moroccan situation such as Islamism, women's rights, Arab and Berber identity, economic development, culture and the western Sahara. It culminates with an account of the Casablanca bombings and their impact.

While not strictly speaking academic, Howe's narrative provides considerable insight into the country's achievements but also the ways in which the hopes of many for political and economic improvement have been thwarted, encouraging the rise of an oppositional Islamist discourse. Howe is clearly sympathetic to the monarchy and the secular political complex but does not shy away from criticism. For instance, she acknowledges the human rights abuses perpetrated by Hassan II and his autocratic style, despite her warm memories of her own meetings with him when he was crown prince. Conversely, she presents the Islamists' position in a fair way, despite her obvious dislike of 'religious' politics. The use of the rise of Islamism as a frame has its flaws, but does bring to the fore the existence of a religious trend, long assumed to be insignificant in Morocco by both Moroccans and foreigners alike.

Although, *Morocco: The Islamist Awakening* does not present new material, it is an engaging and comprehensive assessment of Morocco's path over the last half century, written from a perspective which, while that of an outsider, also resonates with the insights and reflections of the many Moroccans Marvine Howe has known as friends, colleagues and informants.

AMIRA K. BENNISON

DAWUD GHOLAMASAD:

*Selbstbild und Weltsicht islamistischer Selbstmord-Attentäter:**Tödliche Implikationen eines theozentrischen Menschenbildes unter selbstwertbedrohenden Bedingungen.*

(Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 270.) 88 pp. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2006. €26.50.

In this short publication Dawud Gholamasad intends to offer a new perspective on the motivations of Islamist suicide assassins. Most studies on this phenomenon either regard them as terrorist security threats and seek to find

mechanisms to prevent such missions, or present suicide assassins as pathological or brainwashed individuals who, under the influence of fanatical preachers, are willing to commit suicide. For Gholamasad, such explanation patterns are not necessarily wrong but they fall short in investigating the religious formation of suicide assassins and the ideals which impel them to undertake such missions. Gholamasad discusses the *Weltanschauung* of suicide assassins as an important explanation model. *Weltanschauung* is understood both as the self-perception ('Selbstbild') the individual holds as part of his or her socialization in an Islamic society and the perception of the world ('Weltsicht') that is also the consequence of the individual's religio-cultural formation in an Islamic social context. According to Gholamasad, theocentric beliefs, which revolve around the notion to please God with one's actions, as well as the valorization of martyrdom within the Islamic tradition as a virtuous act, are central to the suicide assassin's *Weltanschauung*. For the suicide assassin, martyrdom is seen as a necessary defensive act against either specific external aggressors who have invaded a Muslim country or the forces of globalization in general, which threaten the existing social order. Gholamasad undertakes a study of the notion of martyrdom within the Islamic tradition with particular reference to the significance which the events at Karbala in 680 hold for Shiis, when Husayn, grandson of the Prophet and third Shii Imam, was killed. Gholamasad shows quite convincingly how the Karbala motif re-emerges, for example, in testimonies of Iranian soldiers who were sent on suicide missions in order to clear minefields during the Iran–Iraq War in the 1980s (pp. 65–71).

Gholamasad's study contains some caveats. There is the tendency to make generalized assumptions about Islamic doctrines and practices. While it is true that discourses on martyrdom around the events of Karbala play an important role in Shii identity, Gholamasad does not explain the emergence of suicide assassins with a Sunni background, simplistically assuming that the notion of martyrdom is identical within Shii and Sunni Islam. The other, more problematic, assumption of this essay lies in the connection between a theocentric anthropology and the valorization of martyrdom in the Islamic tradition, on the one hand, and Islamist suicide missions on the other. Gholamasad follows notions of psychological determinism when he argues that, because of the Islamic emphasis on pleasing God and the exalted status of a martyr in the Islamic tradition, Islamists or 'Islamically influenced people (Islamisch geprägte Menschen)' (p. 50) (Gholamasad does not always distinguish clearly between them) are almost compelled to revert to suicide missions in order to defend their community. Gholamasad does not consider other examples of suicidal attacks or assassinations. Japanese Kamikaze pilots in the Second World War or suicide assassins of the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka follow very similar patterns, although they do not share the theocentric beliefs and the high esteem of martyrdom with their Islamist counterparts.

OLIVER SCHARBRODT

JOHN KING FAIRBANK and MERLE GOLDMAN:

*China: A New History*. (Second enlarged edition.)

xx, 560 pp. Cambridge Massachusetts and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.

For this latest version of this familiar work, Merle Goldman has gone over her account of the post-Mao reform era, expanding the annotation and suggested

readings somewhat, and rewritten the Epilogue to describe China in the new millennium, resulting in a volume more than a dozen pages longer than its immediate predecessor of 1998. Of the commendations formerly on the cover, one from the *Boston Globe* has now been removed and some remarks from the *Times Literary Supplement* added instead. Perhaps this portends the rise of a new British market for this not quite so new product. For Fairbank's contribution over the first four-hundred pages or so, up to his original remarks on reform and his own very personal epilogue, both deleted already in 1998, remains just as it did in the first edition of 1992 under his sole authorship, despite the rise, for example, of important new interpretations of the Manchu Empire. If this work is to have the impact in this country that it has done across the Atlantic, then time is running out. As matters stand, however, unless the history departments of Britain start changing rather fast, we will probably still have to look westward for any replacement volume treating the whole of Chinese history in English. Wherever it comes from, Fairbank and Goldman will be a hard act to follow.

T. H. BARRETT