

those years, including descriptions of violence and persecution which Clark's book largely avoids. For example, Zheng describes the labelling of the prominent artist Pan Tianshou (then president of the academy in Hangzhou) as a "Guomintang cultural spy" at the hands of Jiang Qing and Yao Wenyuan and his subsequent lonely death in a Hangzhou hospital in 1971 after five years of continuous persecution and torture. That these terrible tragedies are brought out in King's volume is of enormous importance given the on-going suppression of documentation on the Cultural Revolution in the past 30 years.

Whilst Clark's impressively researched book makes a very important contribution to knowledge on visual culture and the operation of culture in this radically politicized period of China's recent history, King's volume is bolder on the human cost of the time within cultural life. This subject will probably take decades to emerge in full, with thousands of accounts still unspoken and a complete lack of political responsibility or accountability by those (still living) who effectively carried out torture and murder on a scale yet to be revealed. Although this deeply problematic period is a long way from any kind of meaningful exposure, efforts have been made continuously to draw out information in and outside of China. Highly critical works produced in recent years act as extraordinarily courageous (and often lonely) efforts to unearth detailed personal accounts, such as the filmmaker Hu Jie's documentary *Though I am Gone* (2005), which documents the first female teacher to be murdered in an elite school in Beijing by her own students, told through the words of her 85-year-old widower. In the current climate the reality of the Cultural Revolution is still effectively taboo. These two volumes are important additions to the history and cultural significance of the period and hopefully will tempt students and scholars to take up the challenge of carrying out further much-needed research in the field.

The recent treatment of human rights campaigners, lawyers, writers and artists in China is a sobering reminder of some of the tactics used to maintain the party line in the face of opposition used before, during and after the Cultural Revolution right up to the present. Rather than relegating the Cultural Revolution as an irrelevant aberration in the modern era, it is vital to understand the significance of the period as an on-going problematic of Chinese politics and society up to today. In the words of Julia Andrews from King's volume, "it is on the human wreckage left by the Cultural Revolution that China is building its twenty-first century" (p. 29). These two important volumes pave the way for further research and probing into the Cultural Revolution, often dismissed as "the ten dark years of chaos," that has profoundly affected China up to the present day.

KATIE HILL

Mapping Modernity in Shanghai: Space, Gender and Visual Culture in the Sojourners' City, 1853–98

SAMUEL Y. LIANG

London and New York: Routledge, 2010

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"Another word for 'modern,' or 'new' in early twentieth century China was 'Shanghai,'" wrote David Strand ("New Chinese cities," in Esherick (ed.), *Remaking the Chinese City*, 2001, p. 213). Shanghai and Chinese modernity were inextricably linked, but what did this mean in practice and what was Shanghai

modernity? In *Mapping Modernity in Shanghai* Samuel Y. Liang argues that modernity arrived in Shanghai in the second half of the 19th century. This modernity, he argues, was primarily experienced as a reconfiguration of the urban spaces of everyday life, as opposed to the “imagined space of Chinese nationhood” (p. 1). These urban spaces were home to shifting social and gender relationships. Liang argues that scholars such as Leo Lee (*Shanghai Modern*, 1999) have overstated the importance of Western influence in shaping Shanghai modernity. He also rejects Hanchao Lu’s characterization of *lilong* life in Republican Shanghai as representing Chinese “tradition” (*Beyond the Neon Lights*, 1999). The *lilong* dwellers had long left the rural hinterland behind and the “tradition” that they represented was actually a new form of urban modernity. Liang is arguing for a more fluid conception of modernity, and for a modernity that arrived in Shanghai before the great cultural movements of the Republican Era which have long been the focus of scholarly attention.

Liang uses space as a vehicle for understanding modernity; he sets his arguments in contrast to other recent influential works (including Mittler, *A Newspaper for China?*, 2004, and Des Forges, *Mediasphere Shanghai*, 2007) which for him embody a historicism that focuses too much on human activity within Hegelian narratives of progress and change. In contrast to positivist Western historical narratives with their focus on man overcoming nature, Liang posits a redemption of Chinese “traditionalism” as a means of understanding the historical process. This involves an emphasis on the teachings of the ancients, on the arts of pleasure and entertainment, and folk beliefs. He argues that traditional Chinese views of historical progress centred on cyclical themes and recycling. Using this understanding of historical progress nature is not overcome, but rather industrial culture comes to be portrayed as “new nature” (pp. 2–5, 73). Liang’s intention is not to exclude Western influences at the expense of a Sino-centric narrative, but rather to explore the history of Shanghai with a focus on its everyday space, visual and material cultures. His sources, chiefly travel notes, guidebooks, journalism and lithographed drawings, are represented as “fragments” charting the city’s spatial dimensions rather than attempting to form a temporal narrative.

In chapter one the author develops his key theme; that “modernity is embodied in the spatio-temporal strategy of capitalist development, which is marked by fragmentation and contingency rather than (the positivist notions of) totality and progress.” An “artificial order of modern industrial culture” was imposed on traditional order embodied in different urban and rural, private and public, and sacred and secular spaces which were disrupted as a result. Many “traditional” elements, such as the bohemian literati, itinerant merchants and courtesans played just as important a role in forming “hybrid modernity” as did Western influences (p. 8).

It is the literati that form the focus of chapter two. In their new urban literature, which was transformed by Western-style publishing, these writers and journalists presented a city of new phenomena and change, in contrast to traditional portrayals of the world as being timeless. Chapter three examines courtesan houses as places where modernity was shaped and contested as gender dynamics played out in an environment increasingly influenced by material culture. Chapters four (on evolving urban architecture), five (a wonderfully illustrated exploration of public culture) and six (on commercial spaces) explore how the changing fabric of the city impacted on its residents and how the activities of the sojourners impacted on the city’s developing spatial order. Liang focuses in particular on leisure, entertainment and spectacle. Shanghai’s transformation, he concludes, was “generated from within the community of Chinese sojourners, who actively appropriated or domesticated new technology and products rather than passively reacting to Western influences” (p. 181).

The great strength of this book is its focus on the special rather than the temporal; Shanghai's urban spaces are brought vividly to life. The book contributes greatly to our understanding of what modernity really meant to the Chinese residents of Shanghai. Yet the book's self-conscious focus on fragmentary sources will perhaps also be considered its greatest weakness by those who like their histories purposeful, event-driven and firmly temporal. Similarly, those who struggle to be engaged by historical accounts so clearly informed by the language and theorizing of the field of cultural studies may find the book hard going at times. The contributions Liang makes to on-going debates on issues from the development of modernity to the effect of foreigners on Shanghai's publishing world and on concubinage are extremely valuable, but a more direct style of prose might have brought these contributions to the fore a little more obviously.

JONATHAN HOWLETT

Building Globalization: Transnational Architecture Production in Urban China

XUEFEI REN

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Xuefei Ren, currently an assistant professor of sociology and global urban studies at Michigan State University, has spent a good part of the last decade steeped in the world of urban redevelopment in China, both as an observer and as a participant. She has been a regular commentator in *SOHO xiaobao*, a cultural and architectural magazine which started life as a sales brochure of SOHO China, a major real-estate developer that is also examined in this volume. Right from the outset, it is this intimate knowledge of the world of urban construction, consumption and commentary, which sets Ren's work apart.

At first glance, the work could belong firmly to the field of study of world/global cities in the tradition of Friedmann or Sassen (Ren's more quantitative second chapter undoubtedly does), but it is also distinctly multidisciplinary, with a thorough ethnography of key actors and a score of focused, in-depth case studies, exploring the question of globalization in China from a perspective of networks and actors, as well as the symbolic capital invested and accrued from the process of building the city in China.

Initially, Ren constructs an architectural taxonomy of world cities, dividing them into places of production and places of consumption. She uses a relational analysis to map out the position of Chinese cities in this world network in a novel way, focusing on architectural firms rather than financial services and their related business activities. Examining transnational architecture as the main criterion, Ren makes a salient comment on its importance in different parts of the world: while architecture is not a central feature of life in the developed world, Ren argues that it is in China, due to a comprehensive involvement of the state, business and professional elites in a national project of rebuilding. Modern architecture is a currency in this national project, the scope of which cannot be matched in the developed world's saturated real estate markets.

Ren furthermore leaves us with no doubt that first-tier cities in China have moved on from a formula of "glass + steel = modernity," and that place-making with the