

figure much at all. In sum, the book's reach extends into many areas and touches upon a wide range of connected subjects, for which some readers may be left wishing that the author had achieved greater integration.

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*Explorers and Scientists in China's Borderlands, 1880–1950*

Edited by DENISE M. GLOVER, STEVEN HARRELL, CHARLES F. MCKHANN and MARGARET BYRNE SWAIN

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This useful collection of essays, predominantly on the southwest of China during the years in which it entered the realm of international scientific and ethnographic knowledge, has certainly absorbed a great deal of academic labour. The eight contributions have required not simply four editors but 15 authors in all, including five devoted to the redoubtable Joseph Rock (1884–1962) alone, in part because his many interests and travels extended well beyond the area of the book's main focus. Also slightly outside the main focus are the duo of J. G. Andersson and Ding Wenjiang, whose experience was more in the northwest than the south of China: if the intention was to cover the whole spread of "China inland science" as it were, then why not add in a chapter on Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, rather than allow him to appear in a couple of footnotes? The reason is, no doubt, that this book pools the collective knowledge of a collection of scholars who "happened to be working on" half a dozen or so figures whose lives could be profitably brought together and discussed in conjunction. Obvious gaps are therefore not difficult to spot, with no mention at all, for example, of Sir Alexander Hosie (1853–1925), whose activities during his time as consul in Chengdu did much to extend knowledge of western China in the English-speaking world.

Indeed, were one Scottish and paranoid one might begin to wonder about this omission, especially in light of the contents of some of the other chapters. There are, after all, studies of the Englishman Ernest Henry Wilson, the Swiss-German couple Fritz and Hedwig Weiss and the French missionary Paul Vial, besides those already mentioned. On the American David Crockett Graham there are two chapters, and both draw attention to his detailed refutation of the hypothesis of the Scottish missionary Thomas T. Torrance (1883–1959) to the effect that the Qiang were the lost tribes of Israel. No one would seek to defend such ideas today, but it is only fair to point out, as Tudor Parfitt does in his monograph on this topic, *The Lost Tribes of Israel: The History of a Myth*, that they were taken seriously by many people until quite recently, and that in 1937 Torrance's book was well reviewed in Britain and even described as "the greatest missionary book of the century" (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2004, 102–107). Torrance was a much more interesting figure than his brief appearances here suggest, and though in retrospect his most unusual distinction was perhaps that he was both the father and the grandfather of Moderators of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, some of his other writings on China, such as his essay on the Chinese cat, have stood the test of time much better than his musings on the Qiang.

Given the method of compilation of this book, however, such outcomes of its slightly random coverage are inevitable. But this is not a collection of biographies, as the Introduction by Stevan Harrell and the initial chapter by Erik Mueggler make abundantly clear; rather, it is the entire imperial process of exploration and science that is under examination. Mueggler in fact devotes the majority of his pages to a Scot, George Forrest, but places him helpfully within the context of others from the British Empire whose eyes were lifted up to the hills of the Chinese borders. There is therefore much here that would appear to complement Fa-ti Fan's work on British naturalists in Qing China. Yet there is also arguably something else. At first sight those whose stories are told here are thoroughly modern men and women, with their cameras and classifying, so that despite his name David Crockett Graham, for example, seems at first glance to have set behind him an earlier American era of rough frontiersmen in animal headgear. For some at least, however, this modernity appears to have co-existed with a righteous dislike of the cities of the plain, and a consequent willingness to find in the highlanders of this supposedly untouched world of the southwest – well, if not God's chosen people, then at least communities leading simpler yet more noble lives than their neighbours. One is reminded of the research of Lionel Caplan into British attitudes to the Gurkhas. Maybe when the initial historical exploration represented by the research collected in this book pushes further into this fascinating area it will be possible to see that as these men and women brought science to the mountains, so the mountains stirred in them atavistic memories of earlier times in their own histories – and maybe in the history of Scotland in particular. Only more volumes of this type will let us decide.

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*China's Last Imperial Frontier: Late Qing Expansion in Sichuan's Tibetan Borderlands*

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The wars launched in Kham (the eastern part of the Tibetan world) in 1905 by Qing officials determined to replace local Khampa leadership with Chinese bureaucracy are of great importance in Chinese and Tibetan history. They fundamentally altered relations between China and Tibet, and Samuel Adshead mused that without the ruinously expensive wars in Kham, Sichuan might have avoided its 1911 crisis and the “empire might have escaped revolution” (*Province and Politics in Late Imperial China*, Curzon, 1984). Xiuyu Wang's book on the origins of the campaigns, their prosecution by Zhao Erfeng, and the subsequent attempts to reshape Kham's government, economy and culture joins a relatively significant body of work on the subject (for example, the books by Louis Sigel and Adshead; and articles by Elliot Sperling and Dahpon David Ho). But there are enough reinterpretations and new details in Wang's book to make it interesting to scholars who work on Sino-Tibetan relations, and significant for those who study Qing and Chinese rule over other non-Han territory more generally.

A minor problem that one feels bound to mention before moving onto the more important things: the map on p. 2 is too small, and many of its labels illegible.