

shown that local and short-distance commercial exchanges had far greater economic significance than long-distance Silk Road trade. To be sure, the Silk Road commerce consisted principally of luxury items—objects of low volume but of great value while local trade often comprised necessities. Yet the Silk Road trade was vital in facilitating intercultural relations and exchanges. Buddhism and Islam reached China via the Silk Road, and Chinese textiles were transmitted, via these same routes, and would dramatically influence Persian illustrated manuscripts. Music and military tactics and weaponry would all be affected by the exchanges the Silk Road prompted. It is no accident that only one of the twelve composite biographies Dr Whitfield wrote is that of a merchant. The other stories, which include tales about a nun, a writer, an artist, and a pilgrim, reveal the Silk Road's cultural dimension.

A perhaps pedestrian note about the Silk Road that emerges from Dr Whitfield's book is its contribution to global history. Arabs, Chinese, Armenians, Koreans, Jews, Persians, Khazars, Turks, Indians, Rus, Japanese, and Southeast Asians make an appearance, and the cast of characters could readily be expanded. Dr Whitfield unobtrusively weaves all of them in her various narratives, adding considerably to an understanding of intercultural relations. She can thus draw on numerous traditions, which permit her to incorporate many legends and systems of belief.

Whitfield's writing style is lively and engrossing, but specialists on the Silk Road have legitimately questioned some parts of her narrative. She generally bases her characters and their activities on careful reading of primary and secondary sources, but she also speculates concerning their feelings or reactions to events involving them. She may not be able to substantiate those parts of her narrative, but she has been able to provide the reader with a valuable vision of the Silk Road. <mr63@columbia.edu>.

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CHINA AND BEYOND IN THE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD: CULTURAL CROSSINGS AND THE INTER-REGIONAL CONNECTIONS. Edited by DOROTHY C. WONG and GUSTAV HELDT. pp. 441, New Delhi and New York, Manohar Publishers and Cambria Press, 2014.

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Anyone who has worked on a conference volume knows the challenges: making sure the text and notes have transformed to a publishable level, editing for repetition, and interweaving in accordance with the major theme or themes. Editors Dorothy Wong and Gustav Heldt have challenged themselves with an additional hurdle: this is yet another book on Eurasian or trans-Asian interchange. Every criterion of a successful conference volume, and in addition a book with new information on a heavily researched subject, is met in this book, and more are accomplished. *China and Beyond in the Mediaeval Period* is an excellent set of twenty-one papers that offers twenty-one fresh ideas; many of them are important, stand-alone papers. Each deserves attention. The number is such that I comment on them as succinctly as possible.

Wong lets the reader know in her introduction what the book seeks to accomplish. Recognising the existence of cultural spheres that cross linguistic, political, and religious boundaries, and that China was the centre of Buddhism in the Tang dynasty, the essays explore transmission, transgression, hybridisation, dialectic encounters, synthesis, and transformation of peoples, goods and cultures in conditions of trade, war, diplomacy, and evangelicalism that produce evidence of exchange. The

evidence comes from routes of transmission, refereed to in the book as boundaries, topics specifically related to the Silk Roads, texts, and art and iconography.

Three essays follow Lewis Lancaster's introduction to "boundaries" or "networks" that cautions readers about the potential crisis in the digital age of the humanities. Tansen Sen investigates the role of India in Buddhist maritime crossings with a new look at Southeast Asia, the role of metal, and the region known as Nanyue (that includes today's Guangzhou) in the Han dynasty. He argues for a greater focus on Sri Lanka than is usually recognised, concluding that one must differentiate between the forms of Buddhism transmitted along the Silk Road of the Sea and for the importance of Southeast Asia in this transmission. Dorothy Wong's study is seminal. Through careful reading of biographies of the Chinese Buddhist monk Jianzhen, Wong presents aspects of the priest made famous through his failed attempts to reach Japan from China, ultimately leading to a successful journey and construction of the monastery Tōshōdaiji in Nara. She focuses on material culture associated with the monk as a means of assessing the texts. Constructing the biography through places and works of art, Wong draws material from every part of Asia to conclude a shared role of *kentoshi* (official envoys from the Japanese court) and religious emissaries in the transmission of art, doctrine, and ideas. The last essay in this section is Wendy Adamek's study of the interweaving of multiple aspects of time: Buddhism's deities of the past, present and future; pilgrims of various times; and the doctrine of the sixth and seventh centuries of Buddhism in China when the caves on which she focuses, at Baoshan, were carved. She weaves further by bringing in the nearby contemporary cave site Dazhusheng, the termination of the Buddhist law, or *mofa*, and three sutras that address the concept of time. Her conclusion, quoting the monk Daoxuan (596–667), is that the purpose of both cave sites is a recognition of both *mofa* and the timelessness of the Buddha in the face of death; or, a monument like Baoshan was created to recognise destruction, abandonment, and nonexistence.

The five chapters in part three deal with interchange and boundaries on the Silk Roads. Albert Dien's essay on the Sogdians, a subject he and others have addressed in recent decades, recognises the tendency to overgeneralise about this group based on limited information from burial practices, coins, and images on sarcophaguses and funerary couches, and to focus on the question of sinicisation. Using inscriptions on the sarcophagus of Master Shi (Wirkak) and epitaphs of the Kang and An families, Dien argues that ethnicity was a much more complex issue with regard to the Sogdians than has been recognised, and that inscriptions indicate that degrees of ethnicity changed between the fourth and seventh centuries. Keith Knapp's is another stand-alone, seminal essay. He investigates filial cannibalism, interweaving the sacrifice and eating of bodies and body parts in Buddhist *jātakas* and Confucian filial piety tales. He argues that Buddhist self-sacrifice in the *jātakas* was perceived as superior to the Confucian value of filial sacrifice in the earlier Tang period, but by the ninth and tenth centuries the bodhisattva Sujāti had been transformed into a filial daughter-in-law who sacrifices her flesh. Yuanlin Zhang's essay identifies sources of images of the sun and moon deities at Dunhuang in Chinese and non-Chinese religion and their imagery. Focusing on deities in horse-drawn chariots, deities borne on lotus blossoms, and deities in orbs, she attempts to classify the material according to the Aegean and West Asia, Buddhism, and China, paying particular attention to Zoroastrian sources and imagery brought to China from Sogdiana. Eric Ramirez-Weaver's article, by contrast, shows that boundaries are hard to define and often crossed. Focusing on a Buddhist statue in the State History Museum in Stockholm, he examines the implications of facts: it was made in the Swat Valley and found on an island in central Sweden. Ramirez-Weaver uses its route to prove that sometimes transport can extend the impact of a Silk Road image, by virtue of its existence and separate from its Buddhist meaning, beyond the Silk Road. The last essay in this section, by Kam-Wing Fung, focuses on the astrolabe, the astronomical and time-keeping device used by the ancient Greeks and Romans that was used in the Islamic world by the ninth century CE and was in China in the Tang dynasty. Texts that explained its use were transmitted across Eurasia. The astrolabe would be one of seven devices brought

to China by Muslim astronomers in the thirteenth century for use at the observatories in the capital Dadu (Beijing) and in Dengfeng at the foot of the sacred central peak. It is a fitting last essay that emphasizes that objects, technologies, explanatory texts, and the fundamentals of interpretation of the stars and setting the calendar extended the expanse of the Silk Roads in time and space.

The six essays in part three of the book on literature, are superior. The first four deal with women's issues. Anne B. Kinney focuses on *heqin*, peace through kinship relations, the official Han practice whereby Chinese princesses were sent as tribute to become brides of Xiongnu lords. Kinney shows this sentence to live among the "barbarians" as a potential opportunity that empowered women to be agents of the Han dynasty. Suzanne Cahill's essay deals with women's issues with a double twist. Focusing on dress by the *hu* ("barbarians" or foreigners), she examines women who wear the clothing of *hu*. Quoting from the *Tang Legal Code* and the two Tang Standard Histories (*Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu*), she presents the double conflict of women dressing like men and women dressing as the *hu*. She concludes that Chinese xenophobia meant that the male elite considered *hu* dress more egregious than cross-dressing by women. Using a wide variety of texts and recognising that Confucianism does not afford an opportunity for a female ruler, Norman Rothschild shows that Empress Wu Zetian associated herself with the mother of Laozi, even as she used the genderless aspect of Buddhism to legitimate her position as emperor/empress. Joan Piggott's essay deals with Japan, and women's speech is one subject. She uses Wa-Kan, Japanese-Chinese dialectic, to propose three stages in the reception and adoptions of Chinese vocabulary and specific aspects of culture. They are the adoption of the Chinese concept of the cosmic ruler, the transport of Buddhist and technical texts to Japan in 753, and the concept of female sovereignty, here with Confucianism incorporated into the Buddhist concept in contrast to the Chinese situation under Empress Wu. Piggott in fact finds royal virtue, the mandate of Heaven, and patrilineal succession to be part of the Nara-period dialectic. She further demonstrates that the influence of Empress Wu continued at the Nara court after her influence had waned in China, for Emperor Shōmu had a powerful wife and was succeeded by his daughter.

The fifth and sixth essays in section three also deal with Japan. H. Mack Horton examines a banquet for envoys from the Silla kingdom at the home of Prince Nagaya of the Nara period based on poems written in Chinese by the Japanese who attended. He articulates not only the pre-Tang Chinese literary context of the poems, and of poetic composition in Japan more generally at the time, but he also shows the Japanese attitude toward those who crossed the sea to Nara from Silla. Further, Horton provides background to the internal politics of Nara during this period. Gustav Heldt examines poetry of diplomacy by Abe no Nakamaro in the eighth century when he sought to return to Japan from China, and poetry two centuries later when Nakamaro's experiences are interpreted in the later context, to convincingly argue that Japan's self image was still determined in relation to continental Asia, but China was not necessarily the centre of Japan's focus.

The final section of *China and Beyond* deals with Buddhist art and iconography. The first three of these essays focus on Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion. Turning to the fifth-seventh centuries, Denise P. Leidy interweaves representations of the deity from South and Southeast Asia and China, while at the same time turning to some of the most important examples of Avalokiteśvara from Gandhara, Ajanta, Kizil, Dunhuang, in the Metropolitan Museum, and the Musée Guimet. Takeshi Kozuka, by contrast, focuses on Candi Borobudur in Java, demonstrating that while the Mahayanist text that is the basis for the Borobudur reliefs is confirmed, the deities on the monument are clear evidence of Esotericism. Further, although images of Sudhana's pilgrimage are incorporated into the imagery at Borobudur, East Asian examples were not their sources. The subtleties and complexities of Avalokiteśvara iconography are further explored in Sherry Fowler's study of the Six Kannon (Avalokiteśvara) cult in Japan. She shows that the six manifestations can transform into thirty-three and that the ringing of a temple bell can cause the bodhisattva to replicate itself and can link the bodhisattva to others from different places. Liying Kuo's remarkable study of 280 *dhāraṇī* pillars follows.

Using texts and inscriptions, Kuo plots the locations of *dhāraṇī* pillars in fourteen Chinese provinces. Dividing them by purpose and function, as well as reading their inscriptions, Kuo is able to date or redate relief sculpture and Mogao cave murals according to the representations of the pillars in them. This is yet another stand-alone, major contribution to Buddhist art with a border crossings theme.

John Rosenfield's essay is on the type of reliquary pagoda known as *Ratnakāranda*. Noting that the rituals associated with these "jewel casket" stupas originated in India, Rosenfield traces the devotional practice and structures and images of the sutra type through China and across Japan. The study is typical of the trans-Asian topics for which Rosenfield is known, and is, therefore, a fitting final essay, published a year after his death. The last essay similarly traces iconography across Asia. Henrik Sørensen studies Sudrṣṭi, a relatively minor astral deity in India who rises in importance as the Daoist deity of the North Star of the Big Dipper in China to become the Esoteric god Myōken in Japan. Sørensen concludes by showing that in the Heian period a cult of Sudrṣṭi, an aspect of a cult of Avalokiteśvara, conflated with a cult of the Hindu deity Lakṣmī. The merging of the gods of South Asia, China, and Japan, and of Buddhism, Daoism, and Hinduism, provides a strong conclusion to this impressive set of essays. The book ends with reflections by David Summers on the Silk Road.

Cultural crossings, thus, are through religion, time, and across vast distances, indeed beyond China, the medieval period, and along the extent of the Silk Roads in this book. Only rarely can or do twenty-one scholars write such high-level essays on such an expansive subject in such a coherent manner. *China and Beyond in the Mediaeval Period: Cultural Crossings and the Inter-Regional Connections* confirms not only that such a polished conference volume is possible, but that the final word on cultural crossings and the Silk Roads has not been written. Editors, authors, and others involved in this book are to be commended. Nancy Steinhardt <nssteinh@sas.upenn.edu>

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THE ART OF MEDICINE IN EARLY CHINA. THE ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL ORIGINS OF A MODERN ARCHIVE.
By MIRANDA BROWN. pp. xv, 237. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2015.
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If you are looking for an explanation of early Chinese medical skills and a historical account of medical writings, as the title and subtitle separately promise, you are in for a surprise. The aim of Miranda Brown's book is more fundamental: to show that what we think we know about the history of early medicine is largely erroneous—a figment of the assumptions of philologists and editors at many points over the past two thousand years. Her success makes it an indispensable study.

Brown combines striking intellectual dynamism with a broad command of her field. Her interpretations are reliably original. She tends to open up new topics by finding weaknesses in the conventional wisdom and reconstructing what was actually the case. Scholars of Han China tend to be preoccupied by institutional patterns, often ideal ones, but she has the learning and acuity to confront ideology with the actual conduct and thought patterns of individuals. Here she shows that the current historiography of both European and Chinese medicine has led consistently to the wrong questions with respect to China. The productive questions have to be uncovered by open-minded critical reading of Chinese sources with close attention to context.

Her scholarly revisions are a guide to how the research should be done. She begins by examining accounts of court physicians in two early historical compilations. The physician He (Yi He 醫和,