the glossary. I also noticed some repetitions in the text: as an example, we are told almost the same thing about the advantages of public lotteries on page 204 and page 214. Small errors, surprising when we consider Ho's obvious familiarity with the field, are scattered through the book. For example, the first bridge over the Pearl River was completed in 1933, not 1929 (p. 181), and the resort of Lizhiwan is located in the western suburbs of Canton (not the eastern, as mentioned p. 209). Also, the warlord-type regime of Chen Jitang ended in July 1936 (not 1935, see p. 287).

In some instances (especially when dealing with politically-related issues), *Understanding Canton* perhaps could be criticized for remaining too superficial. But that would be quite unfair: it is necessary to keep in mind that Ho is the first person to study questions like gambling or prostitution in Canton in truly scholarly terms, and so consequently lacks previous academic work to base his study upon.

The most serious problem, in my opinion, is actually a loophole: Ho pays no attention to the spatial dimension of the social phenomena under his focus. It is both surprising and rather telling not to find even a single map in the book (which has nevertheless many good illustrations). This lack, he explained rather uncomfortably in the introduction, was due to lack of space. The absence of maps is not the only problem though. Prostitution, opium and gambling are described without an analysis of the location of brothels, opium dens and gambling houses throughout the city (even if some sketchy data are given especially in the case of gambling houses). Since he pays a great deal of attention to the perception of these phenomena, he should have, at least, pointed out the fact that the suburb of Henan (Honam) located on the southern side of the Pearl river had a very specific significance for Cantonese inhabitants of the 1920–1930s, being commonly labelled as the place *par excellence* for gambling and opium.

Nevertheless, the above criticism must be considered no more than minor quibbles for, as a whole, *Understanding Canton* is a pioneering work which makes a great contribution to our understanding of Cantonese society during the Republican period. It will clearly be the basis of any further serious research dealing with Republican Cantonese social history.

Peking Opera and Politics in Taiwan.
By Nancy Guy. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005. Pp.ix-230. ISBN: 0-252-02973-9.

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doi:10.1017/S1479591407000629

The first book-length study in English of the history of Peking Opera in Taiwan is basically a coroner's report – a detailed, step-by-step description of the slow strangulation of a once-popular art form. Guy is primarily concerned with the relationship between art and the state, and the lasting effects of Cold War politics on the aesthetics and lives of individual artists. She carefully outlines a number of factors leading to Peking Opera's stagnation and loss of audience in Taiwan, but the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) is clearly Guy's number one suspect.

The first recorded Peking Opera performance in Taiwan was only a few years before the island came under Japanese rule. During the colonial period (1895–1945), the genre grew in popularity. According to Guy, there were a number of factors responsible for this: economic growth and the building of theaters and railways. But primarily, Guy argues that Peking Opera owed its popularity to the very fact of colonialism. The genre offered a link to China and Chinese identity in opposition to Japan. Thus, even when the Japanese banned all Chinese performance genres after 1937, people kept performing Peking Opera secretly.

At the end of the war, Taiwan came under KMT rule. Within a decade, privately sponsored Peking Opera had virtually disappeared. Again, Guy sees economic and technological factors contributing, but the primary reason for the decline is politics. The KMT's denigration of local languages and traditions, as well as the outright political suppression of Taiwanese dissent in the 2-2-8 Incident of 1947 and the subsequent White Terror period, alienated the majority of the population. Peking Opera's status as a symbol of Chinese identity was reinforced by the KMT, but that identity became unappealing when promoted by a repressive state.

Peking Opera had been promoted as embodying a Chinese "national essence" since the 1920s (Guy traces this history in detail), and the KMT labeled Peking Opera *guo ju*, or "national drama," thus reducing the status of all other (especially local) genres. From 1949 to 1995, Peking Opera in Taiwan was sponsored by the state, and was used by the KMT as an ideological medium. For most of this period, the only professional Peking Opera troupes and training institutions in Taiwan were organized and funded by the Ministry of Defense (and partially by the Ministry of Education after 1968). The content of opera performances was strictly censored (although of course some performers found ways around this), and channeled towards optimistic plots that raised morale for the anti-Communist project.

The core of the book examines the nature of state sponsorship and regulation of Peking Opera in detail. Guy finds four primary uses to which the KMT put the art: (1) "competition with the Communists for official recognition from the international community," (2) "re-sinicizing the local Taiwanese population after fifty years of Japanese colonial occupation," (3) "the perpetuation of the exiled Mainlander population's identification with mainland China," and (4) "the promotion of traditional Confucian ethical values and social hierarchies." (p. 43)

With the rise of the Taiwanese Consciousness movement from the 1980s, and the increasing political power of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, Peking Opera's status as the "national drama" came under attack. The state gradually withdrew its support, and began to promote the performance and teaching of a wider variety of opera genres, particularly the homegrown *ge zai xi*.

When travel across the Taiwan Strait was legalized in the 1990s, visiting mainland troupes took Taiwan by storm, and local troupes were unable to compete. Perhaps the most tragic consequence of the KMT's regulation of Peking Opera has been the sense of inferiority experienced by Taiwanese performers, both before and after contact with troupes from the PRC. Guy argues that while Peking Opera on the mainland underwent a number of transformations, both those enforced by the Chinese Communist Party and innovations by artists in the post-Mao era, Peking Opera on Taiwan was preserved, or trapped, in its pre-war forms. In Chapter 6, the only chapter of the book which analyzes the actual musical features of the opera, Guy notes that one of the main reasons for Taiwanese artists' inability to "catch up" was that on the mainland, opera musicians switched from a primarily personal and oral mode of teaching to a reliance on written scores.

Most of the arguments made in the book have been made by Taiwanese artists and scholars themselves, but Guy translates and organizes the secondary material in an exceptionally clear fashion, and makes her own arguments against some popular theories which fail to recognize the complexities of Taiwanese history. The scope of the study is limited, however. Guy states in the introduction that she wants to examine not only the way that the changing political, economic, and social environment of Taiwan has affected Peking Opera, but how Peking Opera has influenced its environment. Unfortunately, such influences can only be caught in glimpses, largely due to the narrow focus on government agency, and on artists who remained within the tradition – and perhaps because Guy's informants are, understandably, more aware of how direct state intervention has influenced their lives than they are of how their work has influenced genres (such as *ge zai xi*, conceptual theater and modern dance) they may rarely see.

Peking Opera and Politics in Taiwan provides a wealth of information, gathered from a wide variety of sources, including government documents, performance programs, and interviews with singers, musicians, and bureaucrats. It includes a concise introduction to Peking Opera in an appendix, making it accessible to undergraduates and scholars outside of China studies and ethnomusicology. It is somewhat unfortunate that the book is being marketed only in those fields, as it would be valuable for arts administrators and for artists interested in preserving and reviving endangered traditional arts. Guy's writing is lucid and the argument quite clear. The book provides an excellent case study for comparison with other cases of state intervention in the arts, and there is some explicit comparison with the PRC case, but more general theorizing is left to the reader.

Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Genealogy, Politics, and Legacy.
By Gi-Wook Shin. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006. Pp. 328, 20 tables, 3 figures. ISBN 080454071 cloth; 080475408X paper.

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doi:10.1017/S1479591407000630

One can hardly find any other concept that has stimulated the imagination of scholars in the field of modern (including contemporary) Korean history as much as "nationhood" and "nationalism." Unlike other concepts such as the individual, freedom, equality, and human rights adopted from the West as translated words along with Korea's modernization from the nineteenth century, nationhood and nationalism were dominant in terms of their influence, and became objects of continued debate in both the everyday sphere and in scholarship. It is in this context that Gi-Wook Shin's *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea* comes to the fore.[5] He attempts to explain the entirety of modern Korean history, spanning the broad period of over one hundred years from the late nineteenth century to recent globalization, in terms of the concept of nationalism. From this perspective, this book can be said to provide a new interpretation of, and a new approach toward, Korea's modern history based on the notion of nationalism.

While the author denies the essentialist approach which considers the nation to be eternal and natural, he advocates that "nation" should be understood as the result of contested powers both within and without, in historically embedded and structurally contingent contexts (p. 8). In other words, "nation" should be considered "not as a fixed entity or settled accomplishment, but rather as a field of politics and even a project" (p. 223). From the perspective of "nation" as a social and historical construction, he seeks to explain the historical process of Korea's nationalism becoming ethnic through dual processes of contention. Thus, he claims that Korea's ethnic nationalism is the product both of contention between national and transnational forces, and contention over the very notion of nation. In this respect, the author questions why ethnic nationalism has become salient as collective identity, sacrificing many competing sources in modern Korean history. Analysis of transnational forces as alternatives to such nationalism comprises Part I of this book. The four major competitors of nationalism are: Pan-Asianism (Chapter 1); Japan's imperialism and colonial ethnicity/racism (Chapter 2); international socialism and North Korea's socialism based on *juche* ("self-reliance") ideology (Chapters 3 and 4); and capitalism and the modernization of South Korea (Chapter 5).

5 For a more detailed discussion of this book in Korean, see my review article in *Yeoksabipyeong* [Critical Review of History] 76 (Autumn 2006), pp. 500–17.