

heaven'. If one is consistent in this reading throughout the text, however, the coherence of the *Min zhi fumu* is, quite obviously, rapidly lost.

In this respect, Richter espouses the view that pre-Qin manuscripts ought to be considered as different from Qin and Han period materials, which share a relatively homogeneous set of meanings: the former draw on meanings that are to be conceived as adaptable to specific situations, or, in other words, as being 'indexed'. He calls the manuscripts from which meaningful coherence and consistency is absent the 'passive text'; the amalgam of text parts which, on the basis of context-specific rules, is used for practical purposes as teachings or predictions, is designated by him the 'active text'. These aspects, we are told, are the central characteristics of the pre-Qin manuscripts, for texts like the *Ziyi* chapter of the *Liji* and later ones are to be considered as 'composed' in that their elements form a coherent whole.

I largely agree with most of the elements of the methodology that is proposed in *The Embodied Text*. Giving preference to the meaning that can be deduced solely from the text itself, and trying to interpret the contents from inside the text, is the very fundament of the study of the history of ideas. At the same time, relying excessively on this method for texts on which outside information is scarce or non-existent, I believe, may lead into the trap of arbitrary interpretation. Richter is aware of this pitfall, and strongly warns against over-interpretation.

*Min zhi Fumu* is a short chapter composed of a mere fourteen bamboo strips, and passages that pose problems of translation are relatively rare. Perhaps the author's methodology is especially apt for this kind of material. Yet would it be equally successful for excavated manuscripts which contain many passages that are difficult to be understood at a basic level, i.e. in a tension between direct versus interpretative transcription, I wonder?

I am furthermore not very keen on adopting the aforementioned methodology (especially when contentious passages in *Min zhi fumu* produce difficulties for interpretation) if it means losing even trifling hints of coherence in terms of persuasive power.

On the other hand, I expect the author to publish further research results, so issues that are not quite solved in *The Embodied Text* will be hopefully addressed at a later time. On a last point, I would like to add that I was surprised to find *The Embodied Text* presents such thorough analysis: as an example of this even the strongly criticized research study of *Min zhi fumu* by Nishiyama Hisashi 西山尚志 (only published as part of the proceedings of a small conference) was thoughtfully included. Even until very recently, it was not uncommon to see the research findings of established Japanese scholars go completely unnoticed in Western scholarship. *The Embodied Text* is a notable exception to that tendency. In any case, one is to welcome the fact that this monograph is the work of a Western scholar, and that Western studies of Chinese manuscripts live up to a new and higher standard.

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*Law, Disorder and the Colonial State: Corruption in Burma c. 1900.* By Jonathan Saha.

Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 166. ISBN 10: 0230358276; ISBN 13: 978-0230358270.

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Jonathan Saha's *Law, Disorder and the Colonial State*, part of Palgrave Macmillan's Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies series, is an important contribution to our understanding of the making

and the working of the colonial state in a changing colonial society. Saha, Lecturer in Modern History at the University of Bristol, draws our attention to the period around the turn of the twentieth century, when Burma was being transformed on a grand scale. These changes were driven by mass population movements that sought economic opportunity from the growing rice trade, improvements in the speed of transportation, and the swelling size of the colonial bureaucracy that created a hazy ground which permitted various kinds of misconduct and malpractice to take place.

Saha's focus is on the modality of the disorderly colonial state. Resonating with other works dealing with state, law, and crime, Saha views disorder in colonial Burma, the notoriously lawless corner of the Raj as "... not the result of a *lack* of legal state power. Instead, it might be said that the disorder in the delta had a symbiotic relationship with legal state power" (p. 2). This "symbiotic relationship" is what Saha investigates by examining 240 extant files that detail "cases of subordinate-level misconducts" investigated in Burma's Irrawaddy Division in the years between 1896 and 1909 (p. 4). What is refreshing about Saha's work is that his focus is not on specific events of anti-colonial violence and disorder, which provide obvious and easier showcases for demonstrating the coercive nature of the colonial state, but is instead on the everyday misconduct that took place in colonial Burmese society. By carefully reading a number of colonial legal cases of the misconduct committed by subordinates such as clerical staff, myo-oks (township officers), and European subordinate officers, Saha is successful in scooping up the ambivalence of the treatment of everyday crime that percolated quietly in the colony.

One of the most interesting points that Saha makes is the shift in the nature of misconduct from the pre-modern to the colonial periods in the country. Misconduct of a similar nature did occur in the pre-colonial period as Victor Lieberman, Michael Adas, and Thant Myint U have explained. The motivation of misconduct such as bribery and embezzlement in the pre-modern period was for the culprit to "develop their own reputation, build their local followings, and eventually mount a challenge to the authority of the ruling power" (p. 129). However, Saha points out that subordinate officers' misconduct in the colonial state, which enabled them to establish their personal authority, on the contrary, "did not threaten the centralized authority ..." (p. 129). Instead, Saha convincingly argues "subordinate officials necessarily invoked the colonial state in order to commit their acts of misconduct and establish their personal authority. Through their acts, the state was not weakened, but enacted as a powerful and intrusive entity" (p. 129).

Saha raises an intriguing question in his conclusion. How can the nature of and the symbiotic relationship among misconduct, law, and the state during the colonial period, as discussed in this book, shed new light on the misconduct and criminality of the post-war period in Burma? This is an important question given the fact that the military junta, before more positive change in the last few years, had often made an argument that shifted blame for their own problems and misconduct onto the colonial past. Saha suggests that what corruption is, what it meant and how it was used as an issue politically changed over time. But Saha stresses that the colonial period he examines up to the present is a unique phase, peculiar to the emergence of the modern state. As he explains, it is a "period in which corruption has been intrinsic to how the modern state has been seen and performed in its various colonial and post-colonial forms" (p. 131).

Saha skilfully utilizes very rich and colourful archival sources he found in the Burmese National Archives in Yangon and the India Office Records at the British Library as well as contemporary journals and newspapers, such as the *Times of Burma*. Burmese sources might tell a different story and may reflect more raw Burmese feelings and their own understanding of each incident, and this reviewer would have liked to have seen more details about the sources themselves. For example, was the language of the testimony in Burmese with translation or in English originally? Nevertheless, the sheer volume of archival material Saha has dealt with and brought to our attention is impressive and holds the reader's interest through to the end of the book.

This reviewer highly recommends this important study for both academic researchers and as a text for undergraduate and graduate courses in colonialism and Southeast Asian history. The volume would also be valuable reading for research methods courses that include approaches to archival materials.

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*Edwardian London through Japanese Eyes: The Art and Writings of Yoshio Markino, 1897–1915.* By William S. Rodner. Japanese Visual Culture 4.

Leiden: Brill, 2012. Pp. 240. ISBN 10: 9004220399; ISBN 13: 978-9004220393.

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This is the first book-length scholarly study of the career of Yoshio Markino (1869–1956), a Japanese artist and publicist who lived in London from 1897 to 1942, and established himself as a painter and illustrator of urban life in the London art scene in the period leading up to the First World War. In his paintings and drawings he blended stylistic elements drawn from Japanese pictorial traditions (he had had some formal training in literati painting) with Western painting styles, notably those he found in the works of J. M. W. Turner and James A. McNeil Whistler. Rodner's focus on the Edwardian era may seem a little odd, but is justified, partly because it coincided with the most creative period in the career of Markino, and partly because this was a time when Britain was most receptive to the kind of art he produced. He makes a great effort to put Markino in the wider context of the Anglo-Japanese relationship.

Marion Harry Spielmann, editor of *The Magazine of Art*, and above all Douglas Sladen, the first editor of *Who's Who*, were the first who brought his work to the attention of the British public. Having mastered the so-called "silk veil" technique, he found delight in painting urban scenes that were shrouded in mist or fog. His watercolors romanticized a phenomenon that was essentially a bad case of pollution. His visual enchantment was apparently reinforced by the smell of burning coal, which evoked memories of his time at an American mission-school in Japan. The missionaries used to burn coal in their homes, and as a result the smoke of coal became synonymous with modern civilization. Another favorite topic was the silhouette of elegant women. Atmospheric effect became his stock in trade, and was widely recognized by the British critics and public as typically Japanese. His illustrations for *The Colour of London* (1907) consecrated his renown as an artist. In the following years he produced illustrations for books of a similar format on Paris and Rome, while at the same time contributing both articles and illustrated work to various prestigious British magazines. His autobiographical work *A Japanese Artist in London*, published in 1910, marked the high point in his London career. In it Markino offered what was supposed to be a distinctively Japanese perspective on metropolitan life, which won him recognition among the British public.

The outbreak of World War I put an abrupt end to the pleasant life he had been enjoying in London up to then and greatly affected the sale of his books and pictures, which was not to recover after the end of the war. Anglo-Japanese relations equally markedly cooled, as in British eyes Japan gradually changed from an ally into an imperial rival. After the war he increasingly devoted time to lecturing, writing and staging exhibitions.

Rodner draws on a wide range of primary sources, both unpublished manuscripts and Edwardian commentaries, as well as on studies dealing with the wider context to draw a comprehensive portrait of the artist and the London art scene during the period under study. With abundant quotations from