

independent of the spoken form, its treatment is quite thorough. The character table not only includes the usual *pinyin* and English meanings, but also the stroke orders, radicals, components (for compound characters), graphic indications of the structure, numbers of strokes and indications whether a character can stand alone as an independent word in modern standard Chinese. It is very informative indeed, to learners first and foremost, but teachers will also find this very helpful.

The first three chapters of *Fundamental Written Chinese* are devoted to introducing the Chinese writing system: “Demystifying Chinese writing”, “The design and construction of Chinese characters” and “How to use reference books” (e.g. how to use a Chinese dictionary). They offer basic knowledge which, as it is further developed and illustrated in each chapter, can be used by both learners and teachers and would certainly help the learning and teaching of characters. Most similar textbooks contain far less information, leaving it to individual teachers to supply.

Learning characters is one thing, learning to read quite another. There are many ways to ease this daunting task for learners. The authors of *Fundamental Written Chinese* have chosen a very different approach from other textbooks: use *pinyin*, i.e. the phonetic symbols, in a running passage for characters (which the authors introduce later). This results in a rather unnatural rendering of a text. For example, 我 *yǒu* 中文书。 “I have Chinese book(s)”. This no doubt makes reading easier for most beginners by limiting their exposure to characters in a “controlled” way, but I would very much prefer to see the Chinese character where it should be and the *pinyin* on top of it. Some textbooks adopt the latter approach and learners seem to find it quite easy to “jump” the unknown character. Some will remember the character after reading the *pinyin*/character “compound” several times. What puzzles me even further is the characters the authors chooses to introduce later. In the example I cited above, *yǒu* (to have) first appears in Lesson 4 (the first where character texts are introduced), but the character 有 (to have) does not appear until Lesson 8. By then, the *pinyin* version *yǒu* has appeared nearly thirty times in texts and exercises. What pedagogic benefit is there to delaying the appearance of such a frequently used character, which is also easier to write than many other characters introduced before it? Luckily, the *pinyin* substitution for characters, as expected, gradually decreases as the lessons develop.

Generally speaking, learners of Chinese would find *Fundamental Spoken Chinese* and *Fundamental Written Chinese* easy to use, as would their teachers.

Lianyi Song

CHARLES STEPHENSON:

*Germany's Asia-Pacific Empire: Colonialism and Naval Policy
1885–1914.*

xiv, 292 pp. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2009. £60. ISBN 978 1 84383 518 9.

doi:10.1017/S0041977X10000303

The title of the work under review, *Germany's Asia-Pacific Empire*, may lead the unsuspecting reader to assume that this is a history of Germany's colonial possessions in East Asia and the Pacific islands. As a military historian, the author's primary concern is, however, naval policy in the context of intense competition and shifting alliances among the international powers. He does not overlook Kaiser

Wilhelm II's bombastic interventions, inflammatory utterances – including the infamous references to the “yellow peril” – that contributed to the unravelling by the late 1890s of Bismarck's carefully balanced system of international alliances. In this connection, the German acquisition of colonial territories in China and the Pacific forms the backdrop to the wider discussion of naval strategies and their complications during the two decades or so leading up to the outbreak of the First World War.

In his discussion of issues more directly related to the Asia-Pacific region, Stephenson devotes considerable space to military campaigns and naval issues. One early chapter deals with the acquisition of Kiautschou (the German spelling of the Jiaozhou leased territory, not to be confused with the nearby Chinese administrative town of Jiaozhou) and the construction of naval facilities at the emerging German city of Tsingtau (now Qingdao). Two further chapters are devoted to the Japanese naval and military operations against the German leased territory following the outbreak of war in 1914. The author weaves certain well-known episodes and incidents into his account, such as Günther Plüschow's aerial engagements over Kiautschou, the fate of the *Scharnhorst* and the exploits of the commerce raiders *Emden* and *Seeadler*. Nor does he fail to mention the small British contingent with the Japanese forces at the time of the fall of Qingdao.

In the final chapter Stephenson considers certain developments in the aftermath of the First World War, such as the demise of some empires (Spain, Germany, Austria-Hungary) and the emergence of new Great Powers (Japan and the United States). At the same time, other empires (France and the United Kingdom, including its Dominions) benefited from the absorption of former German colonial possessions. Although Germany's colonial presence in her African colonies had been rather harsh, the author recognizes the “unjust retrospective judgement” of this colonial guilt because “all the colonial powers had, at some point, been guilty of excesses” (p. 184). Indeed, one may ask why Belgium, with her deplorable record in the Congo, should have been awarded the German colonies of Ruanda-Urundi.

The application of double standards is, of course, by no means rare in international affairs. With regard to the Asia-Pacific region, the author observes, for example, that indigenous voices were absent from the deliberations of the Great Powers after the war. He agrees, furthermore, that Japan had been “making hay” not only in the Pacific but also in China. Yet certain aspects of the opportunistic intentions of other nations following the post-war settlements are not mentioned. Britain, for example, was instrumental in the attempt to eliminate all German economic and cultural influences from China. In addition to German commercial competitors, many Catholic and Protestant missionaries were also rounded up and repatriated in 1919.

Although the author has consulted some primary sources, Stephenson's careful reconstruction of events draws heavily on secondary accounts. He has not made use of, for example, the relevant files in the archives of the Reichsmarineamt, the Reichskolonialamt, the German Foreign Office or other major German archives. While writers obviously cannot verify every fact by consulting archival records and have to rely on the expertise as well as the good intentions of other scholars, one cannot always be sure that the authors of such secondary accounts do not have hidden agendas. Certain writers may adopt an opportunistic rather than a common sense approach for ideological or nationalistic reasons in their reconstruction of the past.

Whatever their reasons, some authors have produced an inaccurate image of the German Catholic missionary presence in the Chinese province of Shandong. For one

thing, the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) mission was active only in the southern part of the province. Its vicar apostolic, Bishop Johann Baptist Anzer, was, therefore, not in charge of the entire province. The claim that up to 1897 Anzer's policy was designed to engineer German military intervention through provoking an incident with the indigenous population (p. 19) is somewhat exaggerated. As far as the SVD mission in southern Shandong is concerned, a careful examination of the available records reveals that before 1900 there was no sustained explicit "political collaboration" between the Catholic priests and the German government. The SVD priests were not as such concerned with the furtherance of the narrow political and economic aims of the fatherland in China. Theirs was essentially a supra-national enterprise, and their primary loyalties lay with the Vatican, rather than with Berlin. It would be more accurate to say that, after Germany had wrested from France the religious protectorate over the German Catholic mission in Shandong in 1890, Anzer opportunely exploited the existing intense Franco-German rivalries to further his own ambitions as well as the work of the Church and the SVD mission. While it is an undeniable fact that the bishop had demanded more energetic action in connection with the acquisition of mission premises, no documentary evidence has come to light which would suggest that he was consulted by the German authorities with respect to the occupation of Kiautschou. The place was, after all, located outside the SVD mission at that time. Anzer, along with many Catholic and Protestant missionaries in China, was, however, enthusiastically in favour of occupation once it had taken place.

These issues are, however, of little consequence to Stephenson's competent and fair discussion of Great Power rivalries and naval developments. The presentation of material from an impressive collection of secondary and some primary sources, with particular reference to the brief German colonial presence in the Asia-Pacific region, will certainly be of considerable interest to general readers.

R. G. Tiedemann

DANIELLE OUYOUNG PYUN and IN-SEOK KIM:

Colloquial Korean: The Complete Course for Beginners – New Edition. xi, 308 pp., 2 CDs. New York and London: Routledge, 2010. £29.40. ISBN 978 0 415 77446 8 (pack). doi:10.1017/S0041977X10000315

Colloquial Korean: The Complete Course for Beginners (New Edition) is the updated Korean volume from this popular series of language books designed for private study. This new version includes some important revisions from the first edition (In-Seok Kim, 1996). However, the book still contains notable weaknesses as an introductory Korean text.

Two important revisions from the first edition have improved the accessibility and relevance of *Colloquial Korean*. Firstly, while retaining the Korean Hangul script, the text now contains Romanization of all dialogues. This represents a break from traditional practices in Korean language pedagogy, where Romanization is often seen as superfluous. The reason for this is the assumed simplicity of Hangul, which is viewed with pride in the South Korean national consciousness as being the most scientific and easiest to learn script and also one of the nation's finest inventions (King, *Language and National Identity in Asia*, Oxford: OUP, 2007). This traditional position, however, ignores the fact that *ab*