

Book Reviews

Integrating China into the Global Economy. By NICHOLAS LARDY.
[Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 2002. x + 244
pp. Hard cover \$48.95, ISBN 0-8157-5136-2; paperback \$19.95,
ISBN 0-8157-51235-4.]

This book assesses the extent of China's increasing integration into the global economy during the reform era and explores the likely global impact of China's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO). The five chapters of the book cover China's pre-WTO trade reforms; the terms of China's final WTO accession package; and the implications of China's WTO membership for foreign companies, world trade, the international trading system, and US-China relations. It presents sober and reasoned analyses of these issues and represents a solid attempt to take stock of China's economic progress to date and its prospects over the coming decade.

Witnessing the mounting publications on this subject, one may wonder what perspectives or insights from this book are still worth repeating and remembering. Within this short review, I would like to highlight the following three.

First, Lardy contends that, contrary to popular wisdom in the media and research literature, China's economy had become far more open than Japan's and it was ready to join the WTO. Before WTO entry China had already achieved the lowest tariff protection of any developing country and had also shrunk non-tariff barriers impressively. Most price distortions were eliminated in the decade before WTO entry and much of the necessary industrial and agricultural restructuring was already underway before accession. Other substantial progress included expansion of trade rights, adoption of current account convertibility, vast expansion of the legal scope for foreign investment, legalized development of the private sector, and establishment of basic social security systems in urban areas. If this assessment is correct, why did it take 15 years for China to get into the WTO? Lardy argues that the long waiting "reflects as much the rising bar imposed by members of the Working Party ... as China's slowness to embrace the principles of the multilateral trading system" (p. 9). This leads to the second insightful message.

Under pressure from the US and the EU, China committed itself to rules that violate the non-discrimination principle, the soul of a liberal trading order. These rules include the transitional product-specific safeguard, the special textile safeguard, and the treatment of China as a non-market economy for 15 years after WTO entry. These rules clash with normal WTO practice, being inconsistent with the WTO's prohibition against voluntary restraint agreements and stimulating potential protectionism for developed countries to shut out China's exports. More important, an aggressive utilization of these so-called "WTO-plus" provisions would substantially undermine China's further reform attempts and

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cripple China's ability to sustain its WTO implementation efforts. For example, under the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, China becomes ineligible for favourable treatment of subsidies associated with privatization. China would not be allowed to treat debt-for-equity swaps, a promising means for privatization, as "non-actionable" subsidies. Newly privatized enterprises therefore face the possibility of countervailing duties. An insistence on this or other similar issues would undermine the privatization process in China and collide with Western intentions to promote private property rights and a liberal market order. While politicians and bureaucrats may typically focus on the direct, first order impact of these agreements in their negotiations, it is the duty of scholars to detect and reveal their far-reaching consequences, as Lardy does in this book.

Thirdly, Lardy dismisses the notion that China is solely to blame for the large and increasing US trade deficit with the country. He argues that the US is running a global trade deficit that is a consequence of the low US saving rate relative to domestic investment. To fill the gap, the US must rely on foreign countries to run trade surpluses and extend credit. "Selective trade liberalization abroad only affects the country-by-country distribution of the US global trade deficit, not its overall size" (p. 158). To reduce its global deficit, the US would either have to increase its saving rate or reduce its domestic investment. This is a powerful point worth highlighting and repeating whenever deficit hawks seek to single China out as a threat to the US national security. Lardy warns, "U.S. policies that have given rise to the perception in China that the United States seeks to delay or even block China's emergence as a major economic power must be abandoned" (p. 167). Furthermore, "the United States should be extraordinarily judicious in exploiting the three highly protectionist measures that U.S. negotiators insisted China agree to as a condition for WTO membership" (p. 168).

All in all, the thesis of the book is well established, carefully examined, and meticulously documented. The book can serve as a very valuable reference to scholars, business professionals, policy makers, as well as more general readers who are concerned about the dynamics of the international trading system and the growing importance of China in the world economy.

LAIXIANG SUN

Selling China: Foreign Direct Investment During the Reform Era. By YASHENG HUANG. [New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 383 pp. £40.00. ISBN: 0-521-81428-6.]

Internationalizing China: Domestic Interests and Global Linkages. By DAVID ZWEIG. [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002. 291 pp. \$54.00. ISBN 0-8014-8755-2.]

In 2001 China attracted more foreign direct investment than any other

nation in the world, including the United States. China's love affair with foreign capital and foreign investors' ardour for China is increasingly a subject of academic inquiry. What are the causes of this mutual attraction? And perhaps more important, what are its effects on China's internal political and economic development? Two recent books by political scientists are focused on answering the former question and, by way of conclusion, speculating on the latter. In their attempts they have contributed to a new and fascinating debate on how globalization (increased contact and interdependence between states, organizations, and individuals) is changing China.

Despite their similar focus, these books are complementary rather than overlapping. They employ different theoretical approaches and modes of empirical evidence. Huang's book is situated in the general business literature on foreign direct investment with scant emphasis on political science while Zweig forges an eclectic argument that draws from political economy, China studies, and sociology. Zweig employs various methods of data collection and empirical evidence, relying both on extensive interviews and statistical data. Huang relies mainly on statistical data culled from various sources and a small number of interviews with firm managers and officials. Both books are data rich and are argued persuasively. While Zweig's research is more finely-grained and attentive to regional differences in opening up, Huang uses some key case studies to make his general points more specific.

In *Selling China*, Huang argues that China's ability to attract foreign direct investment is a sign of weakness rather than strength. Large inflows of foreign direct investment are in part the result of two institutional characteristics of China's political economy. First, there is a "political pecking order of firms" that grants SOEs greater access to credit and political favouritism. This pecking order descends downward from SOEs to collectives to domestic private enterprises (although Huang notes that leadership attitudes toward private enterprise began to change at the end of the 1990s). Domestic demand for FDI is generated because FDI functions as a substitute for credit for many firms at the lower levels of this order and also as a method of SOE rescue through "JV acquisition" at the higher levels. Huang's main point here is that there is systematic discrimination against private Chinese firms, which prevents them from gaining access to credit, limits their legal protection, and also prevents them from acquiring many SOEs. The second institutional distortion is domestic economic fragmentation, which limits the expansive abilities of Chinese firms across different regions due to local protectionism. Foreign firms are less inhibited by this economic fragmentation (indeed Zweig and others argue that they take advantage of it) and can more easily extend their reach across China's national economy. Huang here surprisingly does little to engage with the literature on Chinese-style federalism, which tends to portray China's economic decentralization as an unmitigated good for China's reform prospects.

Huang concludes that the reasons for China's institutional weaknesses are inherently political. The general literature on FDI, which tends to

focus on market failures, overlooks political explanations for large inflows of FDI into developing countries. Huang's political explanation is that the Chinese state continues to maintain an ideological adherence to socialism in at least one respect, state ownership of large enterprises. Protection of SOEs, rather than a deliberate attempt to favour foreign firms, has been the driving motivation and large inflows of FDI are an unintended consequence of SOE policy.

Zweig's account of China's increasing internationalization is more far-reaching, examining not only the politics of trade and foreign direct investment but also policies of overseas education and foreign aid. His account of the local politics of opening up in rural Jiangsu is one the best attempts in recent years to link leadership policy decisions with movement on the ground by local elites, TVE managers, and overseas Chinese investors. It is an explanation with strong microfoundations but Zweig also argues strongly for the importance of key central leaders, especially Zhao Ziyang. Zweig's main argument for all three policy realms (economy, education, and foreign aid) is that opening up was a dynamic process of deregulation and liberalization led by external forces and changes in relative prices, but sustained by the ability of local elites, bureaucrats, and others to benefit from China's gradual and segmented opening up. Zweig shows, as Joel Hellman did for post-communist states, how partial reform can yield unequal benefits to those who have administrative and regulatory power. However, like Dali Yang in *Beyond Beijing* (Routledge 1997), Zweig also places great emphasis on the ability of Chinese reforms to be pushed further through their competitive effects between regions and sectors and in the end to weaken the control of those in power. Zweig is careful, however, to note that China does not seem to be moving toward a free-market economy of deregulation and the rule of law, but rather has built a market economy on the shaky foundations of corruption, weak regulation, and unclear property rights. In this conclusion Zweig and Huang are in agreement, as Huang notes repeatedly that China's liberalization entailed administrative decentralization but not true privatization at least until the late 1990s. Thus despite the emphases in both books on a successful aspect of China's economic reform, internationalization and greater openness, both authors point to fundamental weaknesses in China's political economy.

Huang's conclusion that the CCP regime remains committed to socialism is left largely unexplored despite evidence in the late 1990s that privatization and the private sector were gaining ground. I remain unconvinced that the policy shifts around the SOE problem have anything to do with ideology, especially of the socialist variant. Huang's evidence is thin on this point in particular and despite its importance to the overall argument it is not analysed at length. Rather than explaining the protection of the SOE sector as some kind of ideological remnant of socialism, an alternative explanation is that SOE ownership has been retained because it is one important means by which the CCP maintains its monopoly on political power. With the improvement in the treatment of private entrepreneurs, however, do we see an important shift in CCP

strategy and a more concerted effort to make the economic transition from state ownership more complete? Huang spends most of the book proving that domestic demand for FDI is a sign of institutional distortions in the Chinese economy but spends little time on analysis of the political foundations of these institutions.

Zweig gives ample space to the political foundations of “segmented deregulation” and is able to show how China’s global linkages expanded over time as increasing numbers of social actors were able to benefit from openness. Zweig’s use of rational choice theory to explain the large movement of mostly unorganized collectivities is appropriate. At times, however, the emphasis on interests seems overdrawn, for example when he notes that Chinese regulatory policies in the 1970s prevented Chinese academics from knowing their interests (p. 262). A more careful parsing of the difference between knowledge of one’s own interests and the ability to articulate and then to act upon those interests is warranted.

Both of these books will add to the debate on the nature of China’s political economy amid globalization. They offer persuasive arguments for why globalization was demanded from within, but both end with cautionary notes on the future of China’s opening up.

MARY GALLAGHER

Chinese Entrepreneurship and Asian Business Networks. Edited by THOMAS MENKHOFF and SOLVAY GERKE. [London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002. xv + 335 pp. £65.00. ISBN 0-7007-1653-X.]

Chinese Entrepreneurship and Asian Business Networks contributes to a growing and contested field of scholarship. The introduction presents the volume as a corrective to what it regards as misconceived, popular perceptions of Chinese entrepreneurs and business networks in Asia, and expends much energy criticizing prominent examples of these misconstrued ideas. The major claim is that the culturalist perceptions of bamboo networks and business tribes (pp. 4–7) are not sustained by “sober empirical facts” (p. 8). The aims are to “counteract” the myths about Chinese entrepreneurs with the use of “data” revealing the “actual patterns,” and to present “alternative” interpretations of concepts such as “guanxi” that are “essentialised” in “mainstream literature on Chinese business” (p. 8). To judge by the introduction and the last chapter (both written by the editors), the volume’s agenda is dominated more by the will to engage in a polemic than by the urge to get on with the job of exploring how Chinese businesses in Asia function.

Fortunately, most of the contributions are much stronger than the introduction and the last chapter. Tong Chee Kong and Yong Pit Kee in their study of the Lee Rubber Group provide an exemplary, incisive and sensitive model for how to deal with the complex ideas about Chinese

business (pp. 217–18), regarding culture as an important object of enquiry alongside economic factors. Terence Gomez, in his political-economy analysis of Chinese businesses in Malaysia, acknowledges difference in business style and the ways in which the Chinese have been able to use ethnic resources. Jakob Lindahl and Lotte Thomsen's analysis of the ethnic Chinese businesses in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, shows how both the political economy setting and cultural perceptions give shape to the business frameworks. Thomas Heberer's conceptualizes private entrepreneurship in China and Vietnam within the dynamics of the transitional economies. Constance Lever-Tracy, David Ip, and Noel Tracy in a well-documented tour de force through the Chinese community of Brisbane understand the "ethnic" characteristics in their dynamic interaction with the economic and social environment. Yao Souchou's examination of *guanxi* provides a fresh, empirical insight into how economic decision-making, business interaction and social conventions are interwoven.

These and other contributions demonstrate how "ethnic Chinese" ways of doing business and managing enterprises merit empirical examination and critical debate. They understand Chinese management style, business interaction, and co-ethnic networks not as simplistic shorthand concepts nor as independent variables explaining growth or success, but as social resources evolving within complex economic and social environments.

Several of the contributions will be on next year's reading lists for my Chinese society and overseas Chinese classes.

The volume deserves better editing and copy-editing. A couple of contributions are hard to read, due to, in one case, extreme vagueness of style, and, in another, excessively long and convoluted sentences that are almost incomprehensible. The many mistakes in *pinyin* are annoying (Gaike Kaifeng for *gaige kaifang*; Qiyijia for *qiyejia*; mianxi for *mianzi*; xing yong for *xinyong*; gang qing for *ganqing* – just to highlight some).

Although the volume is not the last word on Chinese businesses in China and South East Asia, it illuminates them with good empirical studies.

FLEMMING CHRISTIANSEN

The Chinese Coal Industry: An Economic History. By ELSPETH THOMSON.
[London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. xx + 412 pp. £75.00. ISBN 0-7007-1727-7.]

The performance of the Chinese coal industry in the 20th century is undeniably important given the pivotal role played by coal as a source of energy for Chinese industry and consumers alike until very recently. Was the coal industry a binding constraint on Chinese economic growth across the 1949 divide? And if so, can we identify some form of managerial failure as its root cause?

The answer offered by Tim Wright, in his well-known *Coal Mining in China's Economy and Society 1895–1937* (1984), is that the coal shortages did not constrain pre-war economic growth. On the contrary: it was the slow growth of the Chinese economy in aggregate that limited the expansion of the coal industry. The main obstacle to the expansion of coal production was thus to be found on the demand side, and not in entrepreneurial failure or some other supply-side cause. Accepting this (rather Keynesian) conclusion, the question naturally arises as to whether the coal industry fared any better under Mao, and after. In particular, this framework of analysis invites us to consider whether the Maoist regime (and its successors) lifted the demand-side constraint, only to substitute a supply-side constraint in the form of state ownership and management.

Rather surprisingly, few scholars have attempted to address these key questions for the post-1949 epoch. We are therefore greatly indebted to Elspeth Thomson for her willingness to bridge this chasm in our knowledge. For material, Thomson relies upon a mixture of interviews with 25 officials in 1987 (and a further three in 1998), as well as a wide range of official statistics and Chinese-language sources. A brief chapter is admittedly devoted to the industry pre-1949 but, as Thomson readily admits, this is little more than a summary of the work of Wright, and of Ikonnikov's *The Coal Industry of China* (1977). This, then, is pre-eminently a book on the post-1949 coal industry and that is exactly what was needed. But the book's chief attraction is its wealth of information on a vast range of consumption and production issues; the study has been a long time in the making but the detail repays the wait. Thomson has also done an excellent job of placing the Chinese industry in its wider international context; comparisons with the coal industries of Britain, the USSR and the US abound, and these add much to the book's quality. She carefully avoids all-China generalization; there is much detailed provincial material here and that makes eminent sense given that the Chinese coal industry is anchored in Shanxi and Inner Mongolia. All in all, then, there is thus much food for thought in this volume. Dreary accounts of the impact of foreign trade and foreign direct investment abound in the literature; industry studies are all too rare. All credit, then, to Thomson for her willingness to grasp this particular industrial nettle and for producing such a richly-informed study.

Nevertheless, this book represents a missed opportunity in two important respects. First, instead of spanning the entire 1949–2000 period, she opts to focus on the post-1976 coal industry. Her treatment of the Maoist era is thus very concise; 25 pages take us from 1949 through to the mid-1970s. The remainder of the book (260 pages plus notes) focuses on the state of the industry at the end of the Maoist era, and its evolution and performance in the decades after Mao's death. I do not quibble with this temporal focus in one sense; an author cannot do everything. But it is a little misleading to call the book an economic history of the Chinese coal industry when its time frame is much narrower.

The second missed opportunity is that the book does not contain much by way of analysis, and still less by way of criticism of official precon-

ceptions. There is little real discussion of the extensive literature on the performance of state-owned industry in general in China, and how that literature is supported (or contradicted) by the experience of coal. And Thomson does not engage with economic theory at all; anyone expecting cliometrics will be grievously disappointed here. Thomson is obviously massively well-informed about the coal industry, but there is very little *systematic* discussion of key issues such as the apparent fall in coal production after 1996. This surely deserves more than a couple of pages given the on-going debate on the trajectory of Chinese GDP over the last five years. Moreover, Thomson is far too willing to trust the statements made to her by Chinese officials and scholars as to the dismal state of the coal industry in the late 1970s. Now, to be sure, coal production may have been inefficient at the time of Mao's death; but more than a quarter of a century on, we need more than just a narrative in which Maoist winter gives way to Dengist spring. In particular, we need some proper attempt at measuring 'efficiency,' both productive and allocative, and some attempt to compare the industry's efficiency with that of other Chinese state-owned industries. Did the industry really do so badly given the geological and state-imposed price constraints it faced?

It also needs to be said that, even if one accepts the validity of Thomson's decision to provide us with little more than 'thick description,' hers is a remarkably inaccessible book. The index is monumentally unhelpful, mainly because of inadequate subdivision; under Shanxi, for example, there is simply a list of 130 page numbers. Furthermore, the book could have done with a much firmer editorial hand. It is littered with statements that have no place in an academic monograph, for example, "The Japanese occupied Manchuria in 1931 and set up a puppet state called Manchoukuo. The second Sino-Japanese War began in 1937" (p. 10). Well yes, but do we really need to be told that? And there are some bizarre 'Notes' at the beginning of the book on the limitations of Chinese statistics which stretch to no more than a page; if this is worth doing, why not produce a proper appendix? All in all, one wonders what sort of readership Thomson had in mind. I rather fear it will not be as wide as a subject of this significance deserves. For whilst this book may be a veritable treasure trove of information, it is a very hard read.

CHRIS BRAMALL

Dangerous Minds: Political Psychiatry in China Today and its Origins in the Mao Era. By HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH and GENEVA INITIATIVE ON PSYCHIATRY. [New York: Human Rights Watch, 2002. 298 pp. ISBN 1-56432-278-5.]

This report on the political misuse of psychiatry in China today and in the past, based primarily on the indefatigable research of Robin Munro,

combines human rights concerns with the insights of forensic psychiatry. Munro has adopted the research methodology of Soviet psychiatrist Semyon Gluzman, who proposed three approaches to the study of political psychiatry in any one country: personal examination of victims; the systematic study of the different schools of psychiatric theory; and the examination of a range of psychiatric publications. Although only the third method is available to researchers of the situation in China – a fact that reveals China's lack of transparency in this area – Munro has made good use of it. The result is a searching examination that throws light on the complex interrelationship between political dissent and mental illness in China and on the tendency of its officials, and even its forensic psychiatrists, to conflate or confuse the two. A comparative global context to the study is provided in several sections: a review by psychiatrist Robert Van Doren of the Soviet experience in political psychiatry; a discussion of international standards in ethical psychiatry; a guide to political psychosis; and a historical overview of law and psychiatry in China before and after 1949. Fourteen major documents are included in the appendices, of which the most interesting and disturbing are debates between Chinese psychiatrists during the Cultural Revolution, and a survey of the current situation in China's mental hospitals, or *ankang*.

Munro shows how the practice of using forensic psychiatry to detain political dissidents evolved in post-1949 China. It was used more heavily in periods of political pressure, such as the Cultural Revolution, the 1979 Democracy Wall Movement, the 1989 Democracy Movement, and from mid-1999, the persecution of the *falun gong*. Munro has brought to our attention China's lack of transparency on this issue, in line with its attitude to more recent matters of global health, such as SARS. Finally, his revelations provoked the World Psychiatric Association to vote in August 2002 to send a delegation to China to investigate charges of psychiatric abuse of dissidents. Although China agreed in principle to co-operate and provided some written response to inquiries about the fate of *falun gong* followers, such responses have now ceased.

Munro's main contribution has been to acquaint readers in the West, who may wonder about the connection between the exercise of freedom of speech and mental illness, with the surreal world of China, where the clear boundaries between the two have been obscured. It is frightening to experience even vicariously the effects of an authoritarian, heavily politicized system where, at least until very recently, conformity with every twist and turn of the political line has been the measure of "normalcy." Non-conformity, by definition, becomes abnormal behaviour. Abnormal behaviour, in turn, is often one of the consequences of the social exclusion and political pressures visited on China's citizens by recurrent political campaigns, producing psychological distress and even mental illness among elements of the population. Because the source of the pressure has been political, the illness has also often been manifested in a political form. On the other hand, where authorities have charged a person with "counter-revolutionary crime," they have sometimes deliber-

ately ignored symptoms of genuine mental illness in case the perpetrator is trying to fake illness to escape a prison sentence. Hence the interest of Chinese authorities and professionals in something that would not unduly concern their Western counterparts: the identification of the distinctive features separating expressions of political or social dissent from manifestations of mental illness.

The Chinese state has come to different conclusions about this question in different political periods. The Cultural Revolution was clearly the high point of the view that mental illness was a sign of ideological defect. But even as late as 1994, leading Chinese clinical psychiatrists defined some of its critical manifestations as the preparedness of dissidents to take the risk of openly signing their names on a manifesto, thereby endangering their lives in a way no “sane” dissident would ever contemplate, or of taking “any opportunity to peddle his views, without regard to time, place or audience” (p. 94). Although differing according to political context, what unites these views is the power of an ideology to define medical problems such as mental illness in its own political terms, that is, as a defect of ideology. Given this common Chinese view, what is astounding in this report is to read the calm opinion of a brave psychiatrist, Yang Desen, writing at the height of the Cultural Revolution, that mental illness was not a function of ideological deficiency, but of “the presence of disease in the brain” (p. 209). The audacity of that simple pronouncement is stunning. In that context, Professor Yang himself would have been defined as “mad,” and indeed he suffered for his views at the time.

Likewise today, we marvel at the audacity of Chinese dissidents. Their continued heroic preparedness to publicize their views irrespective of the risks, and, in defiance of majority opinion, to sign their names and express their opinions openly, any time, any place, has led not only the authorities in China, but also those of us outside, to marvel at the naivety, foolishness and sheer courage of their fight. At such times, have we not also occasionally privately queried their sanity? We owe Robin Munro a debt of gratitude for leading us in this excellent book to question not only the cruel political abuses of psychiatry in China, but also our own loss of political ideals and failure of imagination.

ANN KENT

Social Connections in China: Institutions, Culture, and the Changing Nature of Guanxi. Edited by THOMAS GOLD, DOUG GUTHRIE, and DAVID WANK. [New York: Cambridge University Press. 2002. 276 pp. £16.95. ISBN 0521-53031-8.]

This collection about *guanxi* in China is timely. It is timely because, as studies of social networks have reached maturity, it is important to reconsider the relevance of *guanxi* to social organization and change in

China, especially since China has experienced such radical social and economic transformations in the last three decades. It is timely also because there is now increasing discussion about the possibilities of understanding non-Western societies with non-Western analytical categories, and about the strategies of resolving the tension between the particular and the universal. So *guanxi*, as the Chinese expression of the universal practice of building interpersonal relationships, may serve as a good example of understanding a social feature in specific cultural-institutional contexts and at a more universal level. The authors of this book have dealt with these issues in three broad ways.

The first is to see if the instrumental and emotional dimensions of *guanxi* offer a more satisfying analysis than one based on extreme rationalism. The authors who took on this issue made useful distinctions between the perception, practice, and real effects of *guanxi*. For these authors, *guanxi* is a good way to understand the ambivalence of, and shifts between, the rational and the emotional in social relations, and between behaviour and discourse in social analysis. It remains a great challenge, however, to use the concept of *guanxi* as an analytical category to resolve the tension between the deep ambivalence of human relations and the methodological clarity demanded by many social scientists.

Secondly, the collection takes on the complaint of many economic sociologists that the social is often treated as secondary and supplementary to the economic. The authors debate whether *guanxi*, which is often seen as filling “institutional holes” created by China’s incomplete and partial reforms, has its own independent logic. Some propose that personal *guanxi*, as based on interpersonal trust, is substituting for the formal and institutional trust that has yet to be established in China since the rise of markets. *Guanxi*, they argue, will decline as Chinese society becomes more capitalistic and legalized. Others in this collection argue that *guanxi* has not only survived but has evolved into new forms to cope with the new institutional and cultural environment in post-Mao China. To them, *guanxi* has its own, somewhat independent logic.

Finally, the authors have deepened *guanxi* studies by adding more precision to the concept of *guanxi*. They have, for example, tried to show how structural power positions affect an individual’s perception and practice of *guanxi*; how *guanxi* networks operate in relationships between the state and private sectors; and to establish a new typology of *guanxi* networks with distinctions such as rural versus urban, younger versus older generations, trading versus job-hunting, and individualistic versus collective behaviour.

The typology of *guanxi* within China is an important first step towards putting *guanxi* in a broader comparative perspective. *Guanxi*, after all, is the Chinese expression of a rather universal social feature. Elena Ledeneva’s (1998) study of Russia’s “economy of favours,” or “*blat*” in Russian, for example, has looked at the formation and transformation of Russia’s interpersonal network in its recent histories. This volume, about a society that is also going through post-socialist transformation, may clarify how culture, institutions, and history determine the way interper-

sonal networks evolve, and how certain forms of *guanxi* may decline or grow in the face of institutionalization of markets.

The authors clearly have a big agenda: nothing less than to synthesize and reconfigure *guanxi* studies, and to make *guanxi* into a concept with wide-ranging applicability. To do that is risky, of course, especially in one volume of collected essays. But the editors have successfully orchestrated a coherent set of debates among the contributors. And those debates will, I think, have an important impact on future studies of *guanxi*.

YOU-TIEN HSING

Shanghai in Transition: Changing Perspectives and Social Contours of a Chinese Metropolis. By JOS GAMBLE. [London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. xxvi + 250 pp. £60.00; \$90.00. ISBN 0-7007-1571-1.]

Jos Gamble sets himself a seemingly impossible task: to “take the city of Shanghai as a whole” as his “fieldwork site,” so that he can produce an “ethnography of a city,” as opposed to an “ethnography in a city.” To apply to any large urban centre interpretive strategies associated with studies of small-scale communities is a tall order. To apply them to Shanghai seems hubristic, given its sheer size and the dramatic changes it underwent between 1992 and 2000, the period during which Gamble made field work stays totalling over 20 months. The most striking thing about this book, then, is simply how quickly the author manages to convince the reader (this reader, anyway) that his project is not foolhardy. The “Introduction” did not dispel my doubts. I was pleased to see from its opening pages that Gamble had made a more serious effort than some of those writing about the city’s recent past have done to read widely in and make use of the now vast scholarly literature on old Shanghai. But I came away from the “Structure of the book” section that concludes the “Introduction” convinced that I would end up feeling that his reach had exceeded his grasp. Midway through the next chapter, though, I got an inkling – that soon grew to a conviction – that I had in my hands the best English language work to date on Shanghai in the post-1978 era of reform.

It is usually hard to pinpoint the moment that a work grabs you, but here I can even give specific page numbers: 17–18. Near the bottom of the former page, Gamble warns that, while he will highlight general patterns in “local residents’ discourses on contemporary Shanghai,” we should keep in mind that Shanghainese takes on the city vary enormously. He then notes, via a set of bullet point comments, some “divergent views” of the 1990s:

- ‘*Kaifang* was like a tidal wave. Its impact was far greater than the leaders ever expected.’

- ‘In recent years many things have changed in a way one could not have believed possible.’
- ‘Talk in the foreign press about China’s turn for the better is nonsense. China’s economic prosperity is fake. Foreigners see only the tall buildings, numerous restaurants, and good clothing in Shanghai but the social and economic system has not changed.’
- ‘The Communist Party hangs the sheep’s meat of socialism but sells the dog meat of dictatorship. There has been no change at all. It is just like a conjuring trick.’

Having made several visits to Shanghai in the 1990s, after spending time as a student there in the 1980s (as Gamble did), these passages struck a chord. I have often found it difficult recently to distinguish between fundamental changes and developments that just give the illusion of transformation, and I have often heard different local residents describe the same phenomenon as either a shift or a sham. What really caught me about this part of Gamble’s book, however, was the sentence that follows the last bullet point quote: “To muddy waters further, I should add that these are the comments of a single person.” There is a tendency in the literature on contemporary Shanghai to assume that privatization has produced two groups, winners and losers: the former revel in recent developments while the latter bemoan them. What Gamble captures well is how ambivalent many individuals are about where their city has been and might be heading.

The continually disorienting effects of the city’s shifting social, cultural and economic – though not yet political – landscape is one important recurring theme in *Shanghai in Transition* that is handled well. Another is the slippery and ambiguous nature of key terms and categories (including “Shanghairen,” literally “Shanghai person”). Other strengths of the book include insightful treatments of the impact of growing consumerism (pp. 139–165) and of the “depoliticization of everyday life” and the “emergence of a rhetoric of individualism” (p. 197).

This said, it is by no means a book without flaws. In terms of style – and this is a very subjective thing – I found myself tiring of the degree to which the book was organized around particular metaphors, such as *kaifang*’s representation by local in hydraulic terms as a cleansing or dangerous flood. Gamble also makes some small mistakes (e.g. *Shanghai: City for Sale* is misidentified on page 5 as a “novel” – it is a popular history). In addition, there are some strange lacunae. For example, I would have expected a mention of the 1986 student protests in the admittedly very short section (pp. 9–10) on Shanghai developments between 1976 and 1990. And I would have expected to find references to more of the recent Chinese language publications on urban identities and regional stereotypes, as well as to Li Cheng’s excellent review essay (*China Journal*, July 1996) on the theme.

Still, given the ambitious agenda of this slim volume – which should be placed on the must-read lists of Shanghai specialists, social scientists interested in comparative urbanization, and scholars concerned with the social dimensions of China’s reform era – these are minor complaints.

Shanghai in Transition remains a very impressive first book, with much to offer in terms of both data and insight.

JEFFREY N. WASSERSTROM

Der Aufstieg Ostasiens in der Weltpolitik 1840–2000 (The Rise of East Asia in World Politics, 1840–2000). By GOTTFRIED-KARL KINDERMANN. [Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2001. €44.99. 727 pp. ISBN 3-421-05174-7.]

This monumental work is in many ways the essence of Professor Kindermann's 50 years' research on East Asia, theoretically based on the Munich school of neo-realism (of which he is the pre-eminent representative) and inspired by his many personal encounters with those Asian leaders who shaped the region's rise in world politics. It also introduces interesting research by other German scholars, which is often excluded from the English-language literature that dominates the Asian studies field. The focus of the analysis is on the foreign policy of the states in the West Pacific region (including Myanmar and Indochina), their interactions and their place in world politics. It is impossible to summarize the 34 chapters within this review. The books offer a superb chronological and contextual overview of a crucial period in East Asia that is highly readable and illustrated with relevant photos. The most space is devoted to China, documenting its rise from imperial victim to major economic power. The coverage of China's interaction with foreign powers and the domestic background is very detailed, especially concerning the Kuomintang before and after 1949, and the Taiwan issue. The account of the era after the Pacific War focuses mostly on the People's Republic of China. Several pages are devoted to the Quemoy crisis of 1954–55, which revealed the complexities of the US–PRC–Taiwan triangle. Kindermann demonstrates how this crisis was the first application of Washington's "calculated ambiguity" towards the PRC concerning Taiwan. A whole chapter is devoted to the second Taiwan crisis of 1958 and its aftermath in 1962. Kindermann's interviews in Taiwan show how the US actively prevented Chiang Kai-shek's plan of occupying two mainland Chinese cities to start the "liberation" of the PRC. There are four chapters on how the Communist Party established and maintained its rule over China, but the majority deal with China's foreign interactions. On Tibet, Kindermann argues that the 17-item agreement of 1951 between Tibetan leaders and the Communist government may have served as a tolerable solution to the Tibet issue and thus have prevented a lot of hardship for the Tibetan people, even though the Tibetan representatives had been coerced into signing it.

The author also devotes space to revolutionary China's relations with Sukarno's Indonesia, post-colonial Africa and Albania, which are situated

within the ideological power struggle with Moscow. The account of Nixon's visit to China in February 1972 unfortunately does not go beyond the Kissinger memoirs and the official documents, leaving out the transcript of the Nixon–Kissinger discussions with the Chinese government that were made public in 1999. However, the author provides an interesting personal piece of research when he quotes Japan's Foreign Minister Aichi Kiichi telling him, just before leaving for the decisive meeting of the UN General Assembly in autumn 1971, that he would again support Washington's request for Taiwan's UN seat, but that he had the feeling of a gap between the official US China policy and Kissinger's real intentions. Aichi's understanding was soon to be proven correct, leading to the famous 'Nixon shock' crisis in Japan. At the end of the book Kindermann describes Sino-American relations as the most important but at the same time the most problematic relationship in East Asia. He sees an American endeavour for partnership with China, but notes that the Chinese side does not feel accepted as an equal and considers US policy towards Taiwan as depriving China from regaining its territorial integrity. The author considers it a fateful question for the whole region whether Beijing and Taipei can find a *modus vivendi*, either with or without Washington's aid, and wonders to what extent the latter's policy of "constructive engagement" is conducive to a peaceful outcome. Kindermann cannot answer this question, but readers of his well-written account will have the necessary historical background to follow the denouement of this and other open questions of East Asia's rise in world politics.

REINHARD DRIFTE

Contemporary China: The Dynamics of Change at the Start of the New Millennium. Edited by P.W. PRESTON and JÜRGEN HAACKE. [London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002. ix + 360 pp. £60.00. ISBN 0-7007-1637-8.]

This volume originated in a collection of workshop papers given at the University of Birmingham in June 2000. The problems with such collections are well known: the papers can quickly become out of date; their quality can be variable; or the collection can lack over-arching intellectual purpose. With this volume the first two problems are negligible: the papers are still largely relevant and of sufficient quality to demand our attention. The third problem is, however, evident: the volume has 14 main chapters divided into three sections covering economic, social and political, and foreign policy change in China, yet the relationship between some of the chapters within sections, or indeed between sections, is not established. This is not too apparent in the six chapters on economic change, which work well together, but much more so in the section on social and political change where chapters on welfare reform, the internet,

Taiwan, neo-authoritarianism, and the Asian financial crisis sit alongside each other. The section on foreign policy is largely detached at the back of the volume with no apparent relationship to the preceding chapters.

We can have some sympathy for the editors and their aspiration to present “a comprehensive book on the scope and dynamics of change affecting China” (p. ix): the facets of rapid change in China are so many and their interaction so complex that building a model of China’s transformation is particularly challenging. Yet this is precisely what social science must attempt not least by rigorous use of theory, and it is a major weakness of the book that it is largely an exercise in micro-level empiricism with few appeals to theory building. This is not true of all contributions: Zhao Chenggen’s chapter on the limits of rational authoritarianism in dealing with the problems arising from economic liberalization is acerbic and convincing. Guan Xinping ties China’s struggle to create a modern welfare system to the pressures of neo-liberal globalization. But with regard to the volume as a whole the editors seem uncertain where to locate China’s changes in social science terms: industrialization, modernization theory, Asian developmentalism, transition studies? They call for a dialogue of theoretical approaches (p. 9) but this feels as much like uncertainty as eclecticism.

The book starts strongly with informative chapters on reform of monetary, foreign exchange and trade policy by David Dickinson, Zhang Zhichao and Tong Jiadong, though the last of these does suffer from the publication delay since it deals only with the period before WTO accession. The weakest chapter of the book is Preston and Aifen Xing’s discussion of SOE reform, which is entirely dependent on secondary sources, with more than half all citations coming from just two texts. Quite what ‘value added’ is provided by this exercise is hard to say. The section on economic change does close well, however, with Hsiao-hung Nancy Chen’s detailed and thorough overview of regional development strategy.

As well as the papers by Zhao and Guan, the section on social and political change has interesting contributions by Gudrun Wacker on the development of Internet use in China and Christopher Hughes on the relationship between political change on Taiwan and cross-strait relations. The section concludes with Ngai-Ling Sum’s analysis of the comparative impact of the 1997 financial crisis on China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. She argues that this has accelerated a trend towards a new mode of accumulation – characterized as siliconization – which will intensify both collaborative and competitive interactions across Greater China.

The section on external relations provides chapters on bilateral relations with the US and ASEAN (both by Jürgen Haacke), the European Union (Paul Lim), and Japan (Caroline Rose). These are all effective though the latter deserves especial mention for its concise and illuminating discussion of the often opaque Sino-Japanese relationship.

These are in the main, therefore, strong analytical expositions of some components of change in China, and can be recommended to undergraduate and graduate students as such. It can be argued that many areas are

neglected – almost any dimension of political sociology, for example: class, gender, or ethnicity – yet since no volume can be truly comprehensive, the principal drawback is the methodology. To place these empirical studies within a strong framework of theory would allow us to compare China's modernization with that of other Asian or non-Asian countries, and perhaps even reach some conclusions about where China is heading. In the absence of such theory, the book largely documents change rather than explains it.

DAVID KERR

Popular China: Unofficial Culture in a Globalizing Society. Edited by PERRY LINK, RICHARD P. MADSEN and PAUL G. PICKOWICZ. [Lanham, NY: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002. 316 pp. Hardcover \$75.00, ISBN 0-7425-1078-6; paperback \$21.95, ISBN 0-7425-1079-4.]

The dozen chapters in this book, based on papers for a 1999 conference, comprise an interdisciplinary glimpse into the increasingly diverse and contradictory world of Chinese popular culture. A theme of *Popular China* is representation: most of the chapters examine the way in which group and individual identity is represented (in newspapers, magazines, popular sayings, and advertisements, and in the stories people tell about their lives). Many of the authors draw on surveys and interviews – of young basketball fans, rural women, home owners in Shanghai, migrant workers, and entrepreneurs – allowing the people of China to speak for themselves. The book contains nothing that is revelatory (especially for anyone who visits China regularly and reads Chinese), but it provides a detailed, informed look at each of several phenomena often noted only in passing.

The first chapter deals with basketball, which is not a frivolous topic. Andrew Morris shows that while young Chinese may idolize Michael Jordan, buy Nike shoes, and dream of playing in the NBA, they are not passive consumers of global capitalist culture; they are conscious agents who transform international basketball culture to meet local needs. Morris's essay, which seems prescient in the wake of the advent of Yao Ming in 2002–03, brings to the fore what the editors identify as the new central tension of Chinese popular culture in the mid to late 1990s. Tension between state and society, the focus of a previous collection by the same editors, *Unofficial China: Popular Culture and Thought in the People's Republic* (Westview Press, 1989), still exists, but “the new central tension is between different aspects of globalization” (p. 3). The argument is that the most significant agents of change in China are global communication and the global economy. Much of the book sticks to the China-United States axis of globalization. This limited view of the way globalization works is something of which the reader should be aware but is not a flaw: there is no point in criticizing this sort of a book for what is not in it. It

is also true that a different set of essays might identify a different central tension in Chinese cultural life.

The other chapters cover: conceptions of what constitutes “corruption” (Richard Levy); violence against women in rural Hebei and Jiangsu (Paul Pickowicz and Liping Wang); the political content and social use of *shunkouliu* or “slippery jingles” (Perry Link and Kate Zhou); the meanings of tabloid newspapers (Yuezhi Zhao) and glossy lifestyle magazines (Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen); migrant workers (Anita Chan); urban labour markets (Amy Hanser); professional beggars (Leila Fernández-Stembridge and Richard Madsen); the intersection of home ownership and gender politics (Deborah S. Davis); gay and lesbian relationships (Robert Geyer); and the floating population (*liudong renkou*) in Beijing (Li Zhang).

Anita Chan’s “The culture of survival: lives of migrant workers through the prism of private letters” is not only informative; it is moving. Chan reveals the motivations and aspirations of people who moved from the Guangdong countryside to work in city factories. Her source is a bundle of letters written by relatives, friends, and neighbors to some of the 133 young women killed or injured in a 1993 fire at a toy factory in Shenzhen (the letters were retrieved after the fire). Chan tabulates the number of mentions in the letters of each of 43 issues (e.g. wages), and from this data she is able to draw conclusions about the pattern of migrant workers’ lives. But Chan always allows the correspondents to retain their individuality. The woman who writes to a friend that a received photograph has made her both happy and lonely is, on a significant level, simply herself and not an example of any sociological trend. Most of the chapter authors strike a similar balance between specific example and general conclusion, which is as it should be in a book about “actual, desiring, struggling people trying to make sense of who they are and how they should act” (p. 1).

Unintentionally, *Popular China* highlights the shortcomings of Western reporting about China and the accomplishments of Chinese journalists. In the English-language media – in the United States at least – journalists file the same stories about China over and over again. These stories (about censorship, oppression of dissent in Beijing and Tibet, the killing and abandonment of female infants, worker unrest, and national politics) are hugely important but do not provide a full understanding of contemporary China. Chinese journalists, on the other hand, have over the last 15 to 20 years dealt at length with the subject matter of at least half of the chapters in *Popular China*. For example, in the late 1980s maverick reportage author Jia Lusheng wrote about violence against women in rural China, the politics of slang, and the traditional roots of the modern organization of professional beggars. The irony is that the free Western press has, in some ways, been outdone by the less free Chinese press.

For ten years, I have assigned chapters from *Unofficial China* as reading for students too much in the thrall of received, fixed ideas about what Chinese culture supposedly is or who “the Chinese” supposedly are.

I expect to make similar use of *Popular China*. It is creative, valuable scholarship that debunks stereotype and opens the way for further inquiry, which is precisely what we have come to expect from the editors.

THOMAS MORAN

Chinas Unlimited: Making the Imaginaries of China and Chineseness. By GREGORY B. LEE. [London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. xi + 121 pp. £65.00. ISBN 0-7007-1492-8.]

Gregory Lee's latest book addresses representations of Chineseness in the 19th and 20th centuries, in the United Kingdom as well as in China and Hong Kong. Each of its four chapters singles out texts – from “high” literature, government documents, news and entertainment media – to point out the dangers of generalizing about culture, language or race. Lee observes that while the “scientific racism” of earlier days has been discredited, racist stereotypes of Chineseness abound to this day.

Chapter one begins with an explanation of the author's interest in Chinese and his career to date. This would have combined well with chapter four, subtitled “A short (hi)story of a Liverpool hybridity,” which contains scattered musings on the Liverpool Chinatown Lee knew as a child, where a lifelong fascination was sparked by a notebook left by his Chinese grandfather. Critical distance is by no means a “shibboleth” (p. 82), but Lee's lengthy justification of the autobiographical parts of his book is unnecessary. Still, the expression of his personal feeling, on the first day of each academic year, of “disappoint[ing] the eager European students as they see a white man walk into the room” (p. 83) is questionable. For all its autobiographical hues, as part of the scholarly treatise that his book aims to be, this entails the danger of unwarranted generalization.

In the opening chapter, Lee's reminiscences lead to a rather forced transition to Duoduo's *Going Home* (1992). Duoduo's short story has intercultural ignorance, misunderstanding and racism among its themes, but Lee's discussion is marred by repetitiveness and lack of direction. When the narrator says that he never dreams in England, Lee writes (p. 14): “But to produce no dreams is to produce no poetry and this narrative seems like a web of poetically dreamed moments. Perhaps then these are dreams dreamt in China, now mapped onto an experience called England, or Iremond, the experience of not-China, of the long-imagined not-China.” The argument is shaky, and becomes shakier as Lee wonders if Iremond “lends itself to a multiple reading both as England and China. [. . .] forty years of life all lived in China. Or in England. London as Beijing, Iremond as place of exile, as England, but also as China” (p. 17).

Passages like this offer not critical ambivalence but confusion, and are miniature illustrations of the book's overall lack of cohesion. Imprecision of argument is aggravated by infelicitous wording and jargon, and by sloppy editing. “While concurring with the opinion that there exists a

desperate need to encourage the de-alienation of (post)modernity and to combat the almost viral nature of ideological legacy of colonialism, I also want to emphasize the importance of recognizing historical realities that have produced ‘non-authentic’, hybrid lived realities” (p. ix–x). What is an undergraduate student to make of this, not to mention less specialized readers? This is all the more regrettable in view of the book’s important social concerns.

The middle chapters are the strongest. Through case studies of Feng Xiaogang’s soap opera *A Beijinger in New York* (1993) and Gao Feng’s song *Great China* (1996), chapter three considers “televisual socialization of the contemporary Chinese consumer,” highlighting issues of cultural imperialism in the former, and of ethnicity and nationalism in the latter. Lee is understandably pessimistic about Chinese television’s potential for ideological resistance. A comparative exercise would have been of interest: is that different for, say, the UK?

In chapter two, “Addicted, demented, and taken to the cleaners: the white invention and representation of the ‘Chinaman,’” Lee recalls British manipulation of the opium trade. He notes contradictions between British propaganda at home and in the colonies, and between ideological and economic (dis)interest in the Chinese, and outlines British racist reception of Chinese immigrants. Lee draws attention to popular racist tropes for the Chinese Other, such as flood, tide, contagion and contamination. Writing about the 1997 Asian financial crisis, he says: “When capitalism in Asia succeeds (despite the mythic character faults of the Chinese, and the Oriental in general) the experts describe it as a ‘miracle’, and when economies fail [...] they talk in terms of fearsome, irresistible, pandemic disease [...]” (p. 54).

Such imagery is not the exclusive curse of the Chinese. Here, *miracle* points to speed of development not incomprehensibility, just like in the *Wirtschaftswunder* of 1950s Germany. And if the declining Ottoman empire was the first “sick man of Europe,” Germany, too, has recently been called just that – as was the UK in the 1970s. In 1980s China, Western influences were dubbed spiritual *pollution*. Racism and its favourite, dehumanizing tropes are of many, if not all, times and places. Yet, the Chinese have suffered a great deal of it, and Lee’s book is a timely warning in the days of SARS and the danger, again, of stigmatization of a country and its people.

MAGHIEL VAN CREVEL

Searching for Life’s Meaning: Changes and Tensions in the Worldviews of Chinese in the 1980s. By LUO XU. [Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002. xi + 359 pp. ISBN 0-472-11239-2.]

In analysing the youthful cohort that launched the Tiananmen protest movement, Luo Xu draws our attention to the problematic connection

between young people's quest to define individual identity and the decision to commit themselves to political and social action. How, he asks, could a "self-centered 'me generation' ... engage in such an enormous collective action that demanded great devotion to a common idealistic cause?" (p. ix)

Part one, "The journey" treats intellectual formulations from Bei Dao's poem *I Don't Believe* (1976) to Cui Jian's song *I Have Nothing* (1986), and summarizes public discourses by and about youth from the Democracy Wall (1978–79) to the lesser known "Pan Xiao discussion" (1980) and "Shekou Storm" (1988). Xu's narrative implies that the tidal changes of the 13 years from the death of Mao to the Tiananmen uprising created two mini-generations. The first (late 1970s and early 1980s) was preoccupied with unresolved issues of the Cultural Revolution. The second (late 1980s) sought to redefine the relationship between the individual and the public realm.

In part two, "The issues," Xu explores broader themes that run through youth culture for the decade as a whole. One chapter examines "conflicts between idealism and pragmatism, collectivism and individualism, moral absolutism and relativism and the long-dominant moral sense of righteousness (*yi*) and the alternative principle of utilitarianism (*li*)" (p. 158) as well as between words and deeds. Another deftly delineates four generations in post-1949 China and situates the youth of the 1980s (the fourth) in relationship to their parents (the second) and their immediate predecessors, the Red Guard-*zhiqing* generation (the third). In "Rural youth in social metamorphosis" the author compensates for the urban focus of his study, thus avoiding the anti-peasant bias common to many Chinese intellectuals, officials, and other city dwellers. "The influence of Western cultures" treats a vast array of ideas and values from discos to Sartre, from individualism and hedonism to democracy and human rights.

In a final chapter, modestly entitled "Epilogue" rather than "Conclusion," Professor Xu seeks to explain the inner logic through which a generation focused upon the individual and preoccupied with the discovery of self ultimately threw itself into a collective movement for the public good. There was, he argues, no contradiction since those who took to the streets in 1989 viewed fundamental political change as essential for the realization of individual potential. Those of us who lived through America's youthful revolution of the 1960s might make a further point. Recalling that young men and women played dual and sometimes overlapping roles as altruistic activists and hedonistic hippies, we might observe in Tiananmen Square a similarly multidimensional display of a variegated youth culture. Seen from this perspective, it was not necessary for China's 1980s youth to reconcile preoccupation with the individual with a sense of collective responsibility. Tiananmen allowed ample room for both.

Xu's exposition, which ends before the dramatic events of the spring of 1989, would be valuable even if these events had never occurred. In any case, given the complex and often contradictory forces that left their mark upon China's youth in the 1980s, future scholars who seek to

understand the Tiananmen uprising must come to grips with the decade-long process of generational transformation depicted in Luo Xu's masterful treatment.

JOHN ISRAEL

The Tiger and the Pangolin: Nature, Culture and Conservation in China.
By CHRIS COGGINS. [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003. xi + 339 pp. \$55.00. ISBN 0-8248-2506-3.]

Much of this book is based on extensive fieldwork in the Meihuashan Nature Reserve (and nearby protected areas) of western Fujian as well as substantial examination of relevant historical records. Its basic purpose is to explore the interaction between people (in this case Hakka) and their surrounding ecological environments as influenced by their culture. The study is set within a long-term historical context stretching in the case of the tiger over approximately 2000 years. The chronicling of the status of the tiger illustrates how culture and ecological conditions are intertwined. While the tiger is a focal point in this book, it is not the only ecological case analysed in considering how and why ecological conditions have altered in this part of China as a result of variations in local cultural, social and economic conditions.

The basic thesis of this book is that culture dominates man-induced ecological change. Hence, little or no progress can be made in understanding ecological change without a thorough study of the way cultural factors influence attitudes to nature. It is especially important to do this at the local level, particularly in China.

There are two reasons why this is a desirable approach. First, in-depth local studies can enhance understanding of the national situation. Local or regional studies can be very valuable even when their results cannot be completely transferred to other parts of the country. Secondly, Coggins argues that local people are often the final arbiters of ecological change and that nature conservation can make little progress without local support and knowledge (for example, p. 283).

To illustrate this, he shows how western Fujian resisted Mao Zedong's centralist efforts to wipe out 'feudal superstition.' However, following China's economic reforms and local road construction in the Meihuashan area, this region has become increasingly linked with the wider market economy. This process of market extension may more effectively bring about local cultural change and associated alterations of the local environment than past centralist governments were able to achieve. Already local land use is undergoing significant change – some farmed areas are being abandoned (for example, rice terraces in hilly areas) whereas in many valleys the area of bamboo groves is expanding (described by Coggins as bamboo desertification) – driven by 'invisible' market forces. The local cultural landscape is undergoing a new wave of transformation with

important implications for the future of the tiger, other wild animals and nature generally. It is the most recent of several earlier waves of landscape alteration identified in this book.

Coggins points out that Westerners are often appalled by the treatment of wild animals by Chinese, the parts they utilize of such animals for culinary and medicinal purposes and the range of wild animals consumed. This view was reinforced in 2003 with the outbreak of SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome), which was attributed to the eating of civet cats. Pictures shown on Western television of crowded cages in the Guangzhou wild animal market further added to unease.

In Coggins' view, increasing incomes in China are fuelling demand for wildlife products, both domestic and foreign, and wild game is in the vogue among the urban business elite, commanding up to ten times the price of the same farmed species. He states that "Trade in illegal wildlife and medicinal parts appears to be on the increase and in many provinces captive-bred animals receive no legal protection at all, despite recent legislative efforts by the central government" (p. 6). China's economic growth encourages the illegal hunting of protected species, including the tiger.

There are also many interesting sub-themes in this book. These include the process of the settlement of western Fujian by the Hakka and the influences of the She, their predecessors, on the adaptation of the Hakka to the local environment; and the past process of burning the mountains to encourage the growth of ferns, the roots of which were ground for flour. The implications of this burning for wildlife populations, and the consequences of government policies to stop such burning are explored.

This is a truly interdisciplinary and unique book that should interest both specialists and generalists. It is geographical in its approach and contains themes of interest to historians, sociologists, ecologists and economists. Its main focus is on cultural ecology and nature conservation in the historical context of China's civilization. It is both a useful and fascinating contribution to Chinese studies.

CLEM TISDELL

Women, Sport and Society in China: Holding up More than Half the Sky.

By DONG JINXIA. [London and Oregon: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003.

357 pp. Hard cover £42.50, ISBN 0-7146-5235-0; paperback £17.50, ISBN 0-7146-8214-4.]

With Beijing set to host the 2008 Olympic Games, interest in Chinese sports has increased. Due to the greater successes of Chinese sportswomen in the international arena compared to Chinese sportsmen, interest in women's sports has been particularly keen. There are only a few books in English on Chinese sports, and this is the first book focusing

on women's sports, and so it will be useful to journalists and instructors in sport studies seeking basic background information. The author performs the valuable service of pulling together nearly 300 Chinese articles and chapters. She reviews all of the available relevant official statistics, but – as is often true of such statistics – it is not always clear what they mean. For example, there is the tantalizing fact that Sichuan's sports system seems to have more gender parity than Guangdong's and Beijing's. This might provide good insight into the differential effects of the inland and coastal economies on women's social status, but this analysis is never fully carried out. The problem of interpreting the statistics is partly corrected by the 48 semi-structured interviews with sportswomen of varied backgrounds, but the content of the interviews is slightly disappointing, as many of the quoted responses seem to repeat the official picture without offering much in the way of deeper insights.

The discussion of the doping problem is original, and should help correct the widespread stereotype of a centrally-administered doping system. Instead, the author convincingly describes how the *decentralization* of state-planned sports under the reforms actually contributed to doping abuses, since the centre (the National Sports Commission in Beijing) lost some control over the provincial teams. The rivalry was exacerbated by the administrative structure and budget allocation methods, which pitted provincial teams against the national team with the result that the provincial teams were likely to support doping and to hide it from the centre. Also, the much-vaunted "obedience" of female athletes made them vulnerable to coaches who gave them performance-enhancing drugs, or even deceived them into using them.

Another original contribution is to point out that the foundations for the seemingly sudden emergence of Chinese sportswomen in the 1980s had been laid in the 1950s; and that in some ways the Cultural Revolution benefited sports, because once the sports teams were restored in 1970 they became a haven for young people attempting to avoid being sent down the countryside. The numbers of athletes in sports schools tripled between 1972 and 1976; further, many were from intellectual families, who in the 1980s began directing their children away from sports and into other career paths.

The overall analysis of the relationship between gender and sports, however, is not carried as far as one might hope. The tone of the narrative echoes the official Party teleology, in which women achieved progressive liberation through sports. The author does address the question of why success on the sportsfield is not accompanied by parity in high-level coaching and administrative positions. However, she stops short of asking the hard feminist question: Do the achievements of sportswomen — however well they may reflect on the ambition and determination of individual Chinese women — serve to reinforce the patriarchy that they are supposedly challenging? In this, the author could have benefited from being more in touch with recent theoretical developments in Chinese gender studies, which have revealed that what was presented as women's

liberation has often served more to reinforce masculine positions than to liberate women.

SUSAN BROWNELL

Taiwan: A Political History. By DENNY ROY. [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003. xiii + 255 pp. Hard cover £31.50, ISBN: 0-8014-4070-X; paperback £11.95, ISBN 0-8014-8805-2.]

Anyone wishing to read a compelling and thorough history of Taiwan will do no better than turn in the first instance to Denny Roy's new volume. Its aspiration is simple: to trace the political development of Taiwan from Chinese outpost and contested European colony to 21st-century democracy. Applying a broad-brush approach, *Taiwan* is a careful synthesis of the published research with few surprises for the specialist, but the book will appeal most to the non-specialist and the student market.

In the opening pages, the author sells short his contribution. This book, he promises, "examines selected events from the last several centuries ...," but "more recent periods are studied in greater depth" (p. 2). In fact, the first 54 pages that analyse the history of Taiwan prior to the more familiar story of the island's return to rule by mainlanders are the most fascinating. In saying this, I do not intend to demean the remaining 200 pages – far from it, for Roy's account of the rise and fall of the Kuomintang is among the finest available. However, authors rarely allow their readers to appreciate the full impact of pre-1945 colonial (European, Chinese or Japanese) administration on Taiwan, though for Roy this is an essential part of the story. Without this historical context, it is impossible to understand fully the foundations of Taiwan's recent regime change.

So is the book beyond criticism? For the most part, the answer is yes. However, there is one significant flaw that both indicates the market for whom Roy is writing, but also undermines the audience's ability to apply the book to their own understanding of Taiwan's political development. The footnotes are few and far between, an irritating defect in an otherwise excellent book because the motivations and accuracy of some of the earlier sources he consults are questionable. George H. Kerr, for example, provided useful snapshots of early 20th-century Taiwan, but his open political views (found in *Formosa Betrayed* (Boston, 1966) and *Formosa: Licensed Revolution and the Home Rule Movement* (Honolulu, 1974)) render his account particularly subjective and therefore problematic. The more discerning reader – and we all wish our students to be as discerning as possible – will interrogate the material, critically analyse both the information and the sources, and demand evidence for the author's more sensational claims. For example, the Japanese administration may have "used narcotics as a means of unconventional warfare" to pacify Taiwan's young middle-class Hakka (p. 6), but where is the evidence to support this allegation? The addition of more references would therefore

be welcome, as would a bibliography. After all, as Shelley Rigger demonstrates in a recent article (*Issues & Studies* Vol. 38, No. 4), the study of Taiwan is expanding at an extraordinary rate. Such an important introduction to the subject as Denny Roy's should acknowledge this welcome development by including a bibliography at least.

There are no superior introductions to Taiwan's extraordinary political development, and this is a useful teaching text. However, we should be cautious by drawing students' attention to the absence of evidence and references. I hope that a second edition will cater more to the needs of the academic market.

GARY D. RAWNSLEY

Industrialization and the State: The Changing Role of the Taiwan Government in the Economy, 1945–1998. Edited by LI-MIN HSUEH, CHEN-KUO HSU, and DWIGHT H. PERKINS. [Cambridge, MA: Harvard Institute for International Development, 2001. v + 350 pp. Hard cover £21.50, ISBN 0-674-00252-0; paperback £11.50, ISBN 0-674-00253-9.]

This is the first volume to introduce Taiwan's industrial growth both in the early years and in the recent period. The existing English and Chinese literature on post-war Taiwan economic history does not go beyond the mid-1980s. Despite studies of individual sectors and cases, a more general introduction about the economic adjustments since the late 1980s from a historical perspective has remained absent. Therefore, this volume to some extent can fill this gap in the literature. The book also uses some new materials about the policy process and the factors that influenced government industrial policy.

However, there are a number of weaknesses in the book. The theme of the volume – the role of government in economic growth – is not new. Readers may be disappointed to find that the book does not provide any new accounts of this issue. The major argument made by the authors is that the industrial success in Taiwan can be attributed to the state's capability to continually adopt new development strategies in response to changing circumstances. Thus, this is another volume on the statist paradigm that holds that a capable state is responsible for industrial success. The account provided by the developmental state thesis, a dominant approach in the statist paradigm, is an institutional approach – that the right institutional arrangements enable the state to formulate and implement its industrial policy to govern the market (see, Robert Wade, *Governing the Market* (Princeton, 1990)). What is the book's explanation for the government being able to adopt the right development models in response to changing environments? Do the authors agree with the developmental state thesis's argument of a strong state with autonomy and capability, or do they develop a new account? Surprisingly, no

answers are provided. But without such an explanation, the argument is based on a shaky foundation.

It is well known that Taiwan's government has shifted economic emphasis several times since the late 1950s, namely from import substitution to exports, to heavy and chemical industries, and to technology-based industries. This is the case in South Korea as well. In other words, it is a well-known fact that the state adopted different strategies to respond to the changing environment. The analytic argument should explain how this occurred and how it worked in practice. But the book fails to do this. Thus, although the editors intend to explain the role of the state in Taiwan's industrial growth, their efforts are undermined by the absence of a coherent and powerful argument.

The major weakness of this book is its lack of a conceptual and theoretical framework. Although the first three chapters, which represent the major part of the book, attempt to argue that the government's economic policies were shaped by internal and external political and economic factors, the authors do not attempt to analyse these factors. The narrative in these chapters is descriptive rather than explanatory. It is surprising that the discussion rests on a very narrow reading of literature. There is a rich literature, in both English and Chinese, on each of the issues discussed in the book – from the role of the government in economic development to general political and social changes, the industrial organization of firms, *guanxi qiye*, small and medium-sized firms, and individual sectors. But little of this literature appears either in the discussion or in the bibliography.

The bibliography itself is rather inconsistent. A small number of Chinese sources are in Wade-Giles romanisation, while most other citations consist merely of English translations of the title. Careful editing could have avoided this inconsistency.

Despite its lack of scholarly originality, this book may be useful in classes on postwar Taiwan economic history. Some important autobiographies and memoirs, such as *Wang Zhaoming huiyilu (The Memoirs of Wang Zhaoming)* (Taipei, 1995), are excluded from the discussion, but the book does introduce some new sources from newspapers, interviews, government documents, and memoirs, such as *K.T. Li's Oral History*.

YONGPING WU

The Origins of the Boxer War: A Multinational Study. By LANXIN XIANG. [London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. xvii + 382 pp. \$80.00. ISBN 0-7007-1563-0.]

This old-fashioned political and diplomatic history of the conflict between the Qing court and foreign powers in 1900 makes a significant, if not always convincing, contribution to our understanding of the Boxer troubles. Arguing that previous studies have been flawed by an excessive

focus on “the so-called ‘Boxer Rebellion’ ” (p. vii), this book focuses on how the Qing court came to declare war on the foreign powers in June of 1900. Its close analysis of court politics and actions of the foreign diplomatic corps in Beijing makes excellent use of archival records from Belgium, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States plus published documents from Russia and Japan – an impressive research accomplishment that adds an important new dimension to our understanding this critical moment in modern Chinese history.

In four chapters tracing the background to the Boxer incident, Xiang argues that the death of Prince Gong in 1898 deprived the Qing court of a critical balancing figure. When southern reformers overplayed their hand in the 1898 reforms, the Empress Dowager responded in a coup that brought an incompetent group of ultra-conservative Manchu princelings to power. At the same time, a new kind of imperialism representing an “unholy alliance” of nationalist elites, commercial interests and Christian missionaries threatened China with the scramble for concessions. Xiang is particularly effective in describing the catch-up imperialism of Germany, spurred by the erratic Catholic bishop Anzer, and the “theatrical performance” of the Italians, whose rebuff by the Qing court emboldened the conservative princes.

The author’s treatment of the rise of the Boxers is less satisfying to this reviewer, especially his undocumented claim that the Boxers of Shandong were “from the beginning more anti-Qing than anti-foreign” (p. 115). When he turns to the situation in Beijing, however, Xiang is on much surer ground. He stresses the underlying factors that exacerbated the conflict between the Qing court and the powers. A relatively new diplomatic corps in Beijing, in which several of the key players were fresh from service in their countries’ imperialist ventures in Africa, was unusually aggressive and insensitive to China’s plight. The Empress Dowager, for her part, felt threatened by the powers’ objection to the naming (in January 1900) of the anti-foreign Prince Duan’s son as heir apparent. Xiang overstates his case in calling this “a stubborn non-recognition position toward the Empress Dowager’s new government” (p. 139), but he is correct in pointing out that, in light of the perceived foreign interference in the imperial succession, the ministers’ complaints against the Qing failure to suppress the Boxers and the eventual summoning of reinforcements to protect the legations were understood by conservatives in Beijing as overt threats to their rule.

Most of the book provides a detailed account of the rising conflict in the first six months of 1900. The complex and poorly documented debates between pro- and anti-Boxer factions at court in May and June are examined with great care. Xiang provides far more detail than previous accounts to support the argument that the foreign ministers’ calling of the legation guards, Seymour’s ill-fated expedition to reach Beijing, and the naval commanders’ unprovoked attack on the Dagu forts all served to drive the court toward war. He concludes with a fascinating chapter seeking to unravel the mystery of who killed the German minister Ketteler just prior to the Qing declaration of war.

Despite its impressive research and revealing narrative, the book is flawed by occasional excesses of rhetoric: the foreigners' "primitive killer instinct" (p. 270) and "deep hatred of the Chinese race" (p. 284), the Manchu court's fear that any loss of territory would mean "the Chinese Empire would soon be turned into dust and rubble" (p. 108). Xiang's commitment to "the irrelevance of the Boxers" (p. 129) leads him to describe their beliefs rather imprecisely as both "Taoist" (pp. 105–6) and "fatalistic voodooism" (p. 173). Finally, the somewhat spotty footnoting (and the annoying practice of citing Chinese sources by translated titles) makes it difficult to trace his sources. When a few were checked, small but troubling errors were found. In an argument that relies heavily on chronology, he misdates the first deaths of foreign missionaries in the summer of 1900 by three crucial days (p. 236). Wishing to show that before the calling of the legation guards, the court was trying hard to suppress the Boxers, he claims a decree ordered them "exterminated," though the cited document only calls for prosecuting those engaged in criminal acts and "dispersing" the rest (p. 215). Such small errors lead one to conclude that for all the contribution this study makes, it should not necessarily be regarded as the final word.

JOSEPH W. ESHERICK

Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period: Political and Cultural Change in Late Qing China. Edited by REBECCA E. KARL and PETER ZARROW. [Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center, distributed by Harvard University Press, 2002. x + 273 pp. £29.95; \$45.00. ISBN 0-674-00854-5.]

In their introduction to this excellent collection of nine essays, most of which were presented at the 1998 Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, historians Rebecca Karl and Peter Zarrow write convincingly that the "1898 period" in particular and the late Qing in general mark the moment when "Chinese experiences of modernity" (p. 10) began. Recognizing that many of the elements we associate with the May Fourth paradigm first appeared in the under-studied late-Qing period, the editors decry how the late Qing "continues to be treated in an isolated fashion and is seldom drawn into the main currents of 'Chinese modernity,' which are seen as more properly placed in the later May Fourth period" (p. 7). The reason to study 1898 now is that we can see and compare China's confrontations with two global capitalisms (late 19th and late 20th centuries). We don't need a "functionalist exhumation of 1898;" we need an approach that helps us understand the "local effects of globalizing trajectories" (p. 7). In sum: "[We need to] rethink 1898 not as an event *per se* but, more important, as a vital conjunctural historical moment, as an extended moment during and through which Chinese intellectuals and society *consciously* confronted and began to reformulate the Chinese historical problematic" (p. 7).

The still-influential version of the “Hundred Days of Reform” of 1898 first propagated by two of its most famous protagonists, Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, immediately after the Empress Dowager Cixi’s coup d’état of September is challenged in *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period*. Seungjoo Yoon demonstrates how Zhang Zhidong, a patron of the reforms both provincially (Hunan) and nationally (Beijing), ensured that the reform journal *Chinese Progress (Shiwu bao)* (1896–98) remained under his editorial guidance in spite of a spirited attempt by Liang Qichao to seize control for the Cantonese faction led by Kang Youwei. Zhang’s attempt to mediate between reformers and conservatives with his widely-circulated essay *Quanxue pian* (An exhortation to learning) is the subject of Tze-ki Hon’s chapter. This is a Zhang’s revisionist reading of Zhang’s document, often seen as a tired repetition of the *ti–yong* dichotomy that self-strengtheners had used to persuade fellow officials that China could adopt Western technologies and methods (*yong*) without compromising its core values (*ti*). (A similar re-reading of the *ti–yong* dichotomy can be found in Timothy Weston’s discussion of the development in 1898–1904 of the Imperial University). Hon persuasively argues that Zhang was desperately trying to keep a conversation going between two factions who were equally traumatized by the aggressive Western attacks on Chinese territory and sovereignty in the period 1894–98. That this was a strident debate taking place at the centre of imperial power is made compellingly concrete in Richard Belsky’s fascinating exploration of how reform-minded officials and scholars met to discuss their reform agenda in the area around Liulichang and how they endeavoured to gain the attention of the court. This analysis of how extensive patronage networks situated in a specific urban space informed decision-making in Beijing helps us understand the degree to which the events of 1898 were as much about power as they were about ideas. Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, and their allies were thwarted or defeated in Hunan in 1898, in Beijing in the same year, and in Hubei in 1900. Thenceforth they waged their battles rhetorically, and with varied success, from outside China. Never again did they hold or have access to power at the local, provincial, or national level. These richly-empirical essays, taken together, demonstrate how important it is to leave behind conventional historiography, with its Kang Youwei-inspired dichotomies of Cixi versus the Guangxu emperor, reaction versus reform, and Manchu versus Han, in any attempt to rethink the 1898 reform period.

The intellectual and social contexts of these events and their legacies is explored in other essays in this volume. Peter Zarrow looks at ideas about monarchy and legitimacy based on the pre-1898 writings of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao. The notion of a self-legitimizing “popular power” (*minquan*) in the context of a redefined monarchy with limited powers, while promising, was extremely difficult to put into practice in late-Qing China. Joan Judge surveys essays on female literacy written by men in 1896–99 and samples some of the writings by Chinese women studying in Japan in the post-1900 era. Not only did these women write for the main overseas student journals, they founded and published ten

journals in Tokyo between 1903 and 1911. Hu Ying discusses three representations of the Jiangxi native Kang Aide (Ida Kahn; 1873–1930); one by Liang Qichao, one that is formed from materials in missionary archives and publications, and one based on Kang’s own writings. Receiving a medical degree from the University of Michigan in 1896, Kang returned to China as a missionary doctor and remained devoted to her adoptive mother, the Methodist missionary Gertrude Howe (1847–1928). Rebecca Karl explores the uses of words and phrases like slave (*nu*), lost country (*wangguo*), and people (*min*) in writings by Chen Duxiu and Liang Qichao along with women whose works were published in journals such as *Beijing Women’s News* (*Beijing nübao*) and *Women’s World* (*Nüzi shijie*) in the post-1900 period. Finally, Xiaobing Tang looks at Liang Qichao’s first writings as a refugee after the collapse of the Hundred Days Reform. Liang, moving his attention from political to cultural reform, argued for a new poetry informed by both traditional forms and a new sensitivity to and appreciation of the West. Tang writes that for Liang a “‘poetic revolution’ made poetry writing a serious social and intellectual commitment, and the role of poets was to usher in a new age and new imagination” (p. 255).

This rich collection includes a variety of perspectives, some of which implicitly challenge those of the editors. It is refreshing to see serious attention given to the late Qing as an intellectual, social, and political moment of enormous consequence for modern Chinese history. Joining the recent revisionist critique that has called into question the explanatory power of the May Fourth paradigm, these essays force us to re-evaluate a period that needs much more study; Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao may still dominate the historical vista, but there is much more to be glimpsed. When the relatively familiar terrain of intellectual history becomes more closely connected to the political, social, and institutional transformation of the time, our understanding of this period will finally become free of the blinders placed by the historiographies of political and intellectual revolution associated with luminaries like Kang, Liang, and Sun Yat-sen.

ROGER R. THOMPSON

Defining Modernity: Guomindang Rhetorics of a New China. Edited by TERRY BODENHORN. [Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 2003. 288 pp. £35.50; \$50.00. ISBN 0-89264-161-4.]

The eight essays in this volume represent the research of a new generation of scholars examining historical change in 20th-century modern China, namely Kuomintang party-state development between 1925 and 1970. According to Ernest P. Young in the introduction, these essays describe the “cultural, ideational, and symbolic dimensions” of change in

the KMT party-state activities and the response by elites and ordinary people.

If we define, as does Nobel prize-winner Douglass C. North, “institutional change” as the beliefs, ideas, rules, laws, norms, and so on that influence the motivation, choices, and actions of individuals and organizations (private and public) in society, we then say the book under review is about institutional reform and its protagonists and opponents.

Creating a new society requires at least some degree of institutional change. Those holding power resist change, clinging to old institutions. The ensuing struggle can be ferocious, with many possible outcomes. When the KMT began promoting institutional reform in 1925, it encountered great resistance, and after 1934 the resistance had not only stalled reforms, it had stirred up great social disharmony.

Sympathetic as the authors are to KMT reforms, their essays demonstrate how and why they failed. First, the KMT party-state tried to win foreign support, elicit Chinese endorsement, and modify citizen values and behaviour to create the new, good and moral Chinese society. Michael G. Murdock describes one of the few KMT successes – limiting attacks on foreign Christian communities and services and assuring these outsiders there was room for them in Chinese society. But most KMT party-state activities produced public criticism and a gradual withdrawal of support for the new regime’s reforms.

Robert Culp writes about the party-state textbooks and their efforts to educate young people to undertake “Confucian duties of altruism, mutual aid, and civic consciousness in order to maintain social order and contribute to social progress.” But these dictums did not mesh with the authority necessary to produce the organic, harmonious, and hierarchical society demanded by the KMT for citizens.

Terry Bodenhorn, in an elegant interpretation of the KMT leader Chen Lifu’s attempt to blend concepts in Chinese classical writings with Henri Bergson’s philosophy of “vitalism,” explains why it met with little enthusiasm from the Chinese elite. Beth E. Notar discusses how the currency printed with portraits of famous KMT or Communist leaders, proved immensely popular as long as the government provided solid services. Once such services failed, however, support for the leaders (and the currency) dwindled.

In her essay “Civilizing the masses,” Sara L. Friedman writes that in 1939 the KMT party-state machinery at the local level initiated reforms in Fujian province to end foot binding, liberate women from servile relationships, improve public health standards, and promote citizenship. Central government and provincial officials, however, fearful that the effects of these reforms might threaten their official status and interests, refused the requests, arguing that laws already existed to promote such reforms. The ensuing demoralization reduced popular support for the KMT party-state.

One strategy adopted by the KMT was for ministries, the military and the party to select high-quality individuals for special training courses (*xunlian*) in which to upgrade skills and build loyalty and discipline

between the individual and his or her organization. Julia C. Strauss describes the Ministry of Finance's *xunlian* during the Sino-Japanese war, illuminating their shortcomings and the unintended consequences that caused demoralization and withdrawal of support for the KMT. J. Megan Greene outlines the long way in which the KMT tried to promote science and technology, but failed to do so because of an inability to separate institutions supportive of Chinese culture from those facilitating the development of science and technology. Not until the KMT withdrew to Taiwan did officials such as K. T. Li focus on designing the institutions exclusively for the support of science and technology.

In summarizing these essays, John Fitzgerald points out that as the KMT party-state tried to expand its influence in Chinese society, it pressed for standards of modernity that its critics used to highlight the regime's failure to adhere to its own standards, especially in conducting reforms. Thus, the KMT party-state set in motion a process whereby the people increasingly withdrew their support or went over to the KMT's feared rival, the Communist party.

The KMT's weak institutions also set in motion struggles that restricted the regime's ability to improve social justice and create a modern economy. Those who did not receive the full fruits of the regime's promises felt more than ever that they had been cheated.

The contributions of these open-minded, highly trained and talented scholars, who in this volume examine in depth the inter-regnum period of Republican China, deserve careful study and reflection by anyone interested in the history of modern China.

RAMON H. MYERS

Angelwings: Contemporary Queer Fiction from Taiwan. Edited and translated by FRAN MARTIN. [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003. 248 pp. \$18.95. ISBN 0-8248-2661-2.]

This collection of ten short stories from the 1990s, translated and annotated by Fran Martin, highlights the importance of the topic "queer" in a non-Western context. Not only is the excellent quality of the translation worthy of mention; the familiarity of the author with queer theory, Taiwanese social history and Chinese literature in general is also outstanding.

In her detailed introduction, Fran Martin illustrates vividly the relevance of *tongzhi*-literature (*tongzhi wenxue* is the expression currently used to describe the same-sex discourse in the Taiwanese world) within the broader transformation of Taiwanese society in general and "in the public discourse on sexualities" in particular (p. 2). She attributes the development of *tongzhi*-literature and the more recent sub-genre of *ku'er*-literature (*ku'er wenxue* or "queer literature") to the rise of post-modernism (*houxiandai zhuyi*) in post martial-law Taiwan (p. 4-5).

The selection of short stories demonstrates convincingly the “glocalization” which has taken place within Taiwanese society. Referring to Chi Tawei, she states that “*ku’er* itself – and [...] *tongzhi* – is best viewed as a kind of cultural hybrid” (p. 17). Fran Martin is, therefore, able to demonstrate the fluidity between *tongzhi*-discourse, with its roots in a social movement, and *ku’er*-discourse with its poststructuralist and deconstructivist connotations. She shows that Western queer-theory, Chinese and/or Taiwanese traditions and the existing hetero-normativity in society have influenced to differing degrees the writings of the contemporary literary scene in Taiwan but stresses that the “question of relationships with blood-family” (p. 19), in particular, marks a crucial difference between Taiwanese and Western queer-literature.

Even a cursory glance at the short stories themselves is enough to show that the topics of *tongzhi* and *ku’er*, feminist and women’s literature, gay literature, Taiwanese and mainland Chinese literature have been dealt with by a broad spectrum of the literary scene. The older generation has generally been more concerned with the confusion and perplexity wrought by unknown desires that did not fit comfortably within traditional family structures and a heterosexualized society (see: “The boy in the pink orchid” by Lin Yuyi (pp. 127–153) or “Who is singing” by Lin Chun Ying (pp. 155–175). Chu T’ien-wen (“Bodhisattva incarnate,” pp. 29–49), although unable to transcend her own heterosexual feelings, seems eager to describe male homosexuality, which might lead us to speculate on whether her writing was not overly dependent on fashionable trends. That a conservative mainland Chinese writer has chosen to write on the topic of love between men, however, illustrates the changes that have taken place within Taiwan as a *huaren* society that leads one to consider the possible implications for such a society when same-sex love becomes a fashionable topic.

By way of contrast, the younger generation, such as Chi Tawei (“A Stranger’s ID,” pp. 213–220) is not afraid to challenge heterosexist society. These authors (Chen Xue, Hong Ling, Chi Tawei) have grown up in a more internationalist and globalized environment and questions associated with older identities, such as mainlander vs. Taiwanese, have become less important. A particular case, here, is Qiu Miaojin’s “Platonic hair,” which provides a very personal description of life and love between women and also openly attacks the heterosexist society. Unlike many other young authors, Qiu Miaojin (who committed suicide in 2001) was not involved in the politicized *tongzhi*-movement but she has, nevertheless, already come to be regarded as a heroine by the Taiwanese *tongzhi*-community. The story “Poem from the glass womb” by Hong Ling (pp. 189–212) shows most clearly that queer literature in Taiwan may employ confrontational techniques and themes to shock and awe the reader, in contrast to the *tongzhi* literature of the older generation which presented a wide variety of arguments in connection with homosexuality, some drawn from an enlightened discourse, others from a homophobic discourse which was perceived as having its roots in tradition. It is also

important to mention Hsu Yoshen's "Stones on the shore," in which he deals not only with "rice and potato queens," that is, the relationship between Western and Asian global gay communities characterized by postcolonial subordinations, but also with questions related to the clash taking place in the diaspora between Taiwanese and mainland Chinese.

Another topic mentioned in some of the stories is that of HIV and AIDS. Chi Tawei deals with this from a psychological vantage point, drawing attention to the prevailing prejudices in Taiwanese society towards homosexuality, transgendered people and AIDS. Hsu Yoshen, in his story, however, describes the sympathy and consideration found within the queer Chinese community, while emphasizing that rejection comes from the "white" man, who is only interested in sexual relations without any deeper commitment.

To summarize, this collection offers a great deal of scope for inclusion in any courses dealing with modern Taiwanese literature and issues relating to sexual identities in general. The work is much more than just a collection; it is a thoughtfully edited compilation that offers new insights into the varied complexity of more than a decade of social transformation within Taiwanese society.

JENS DAMM

Mon Van Genechten (1903–1974), Flemish Missionary and Chinese Painter: Inculturation of Christian Art in China. By LORRY SWERTS and KOEN DE RIDDER. [Leuven: Leuven University Press and the Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, 2002. 188 pp. €16.15. ISBN 90-5867-222-0.]

This book offers an appreciation of the life and work of Father Mon Van Genechten, a Belgian artist-priest who was a missionary in China from 1930 to 1946. It presents Father Van Genechten as an open-hearted and creative man of faith, and also makes the rather dramatic claim that Van Genechten, whose art combined Chinese styles with Christian iconography, should be seen as a Chinese artist.

The book contains two essays: one by De Ridder, on the art-historical context of Van Genechten's work; and the other by Swerts, giving fuller biographical detail. It also includes a brief memoir of Van Genechten by a former student; reproductions of his paintings, woodcuts and photographs; a list of his exhibitions; and a catalog of his known works. This catalogue is, unfortunately, less useful than it might be as it gives neither the current location of a work nor where it is reproduced.

Van Genechten is no neglected genius, but he is potentially interesting to students of Christian missionary work in China, of the modern development of Christian art, and also to students of modern Chinese art. His career – which encompassed decorating churches in Inner Mongolia, teaching at the Catholic University of Peking, and being prisoner of war

in Shandong – offers a fresh perspective on East–West artistic interchange. But while the book introduces a worthwhile subject, it falls short in analysis and historical contextualization.

The problem is not that De Ridder and Swerts fail to convince the reader that Van Genechten was a Chinese painter, but that they fail to convincingly address the question of why this imputed identity matters, and to whom. One gathers that the Chineseness of the Christian artist is to serve as proof of the universal nature of Christianity, but this idea is not rigorously examined. According to the authors, Van Genechten was a Chinese artist because he “mastered” the Chinese “classical tradition.” However, their discussion of this tradition is shallow and orientaling, and their study would be richer if it situated Van Genechten more securely within contemporary artistic practice in China. While Van Genechten was in China, Chinese brush and ink painting continued to live and evolve. Chinese artists were studying Western art (often in the West) and devising their own blends of Western and Chinese styles. Questions of cultural identity and of the proper use of various strands of tradition were hotly debated. These trends, and how they might colour one’s view of Van Genechten’s work, are not discussed here. Nor is the relationship between Van Genechten and other Christian artists active in China at the same time, such as Luke Chen.

However, while the book has limitations, De Ridder and Swerts do widen our view of the give and take between Chinese and Western art by making Van Genechten’s career more widely known and accessible. The images, information and references assembled here should be the basis for further studies of this intriguing chapter of cultural interchange, and inspire more complex considerations of the questions it raises.

FELICITY LUFKIN

China to Chinatown: Chinese Food in the West. By J.A.G. ROBERTS
[London: Reaktion Books, 2002. 256 pp. £19.95. ISBN 1-86189-133-4.]

Following his earlier publication of three volumes of *China through Western Eyes* (1991–96), Roberts now concentrates on the Western perception of Chinese food and eating behaviour. In the first half of the present book, Roberts quotes travellers’ tales from Marco Polo and other adventurers, personal journals of European missionaries in the 16th and 17th centuries, reports of English envoys such as Lord Macartney, merchants of the 19th century, and journalists’ accounts from the Second World War to the Cultural Revolution. Part one, “West to East” starts with a succinctly written introduction and a chapter that draws from anthropological works on Chinese diet, food beliefs, and table manners. Roberts then discusses Western perceptions (more often imaginations) of Chinese food, which transformed from curiosity to aversion, rejection, and eventual popular acceptance.

A second project constitutes part two, "East to West," which could be read independently: a history of Chinese migration to North America and England. Roberts draws upon many studies on the emergence of Chinatowns in North America, recounting how the Chinese endured discrimination and how their restaurants took a foothold in many cities in the United States and Great Britain. The style of Chinese restaurant food in foreign lands changed rapidly, adapting to the local environment and subject to innovations such as the invention of chop suey. A concluding chapter engages in important theoretical arguments of globalization, summarizing up-to-date literature in social sciences to explain the spread of Chinese food around the world. The "Selected further reading" at the end of the book renders this volume a potential text for college courses.

All together, this well-written and informative book is a welcome volume of world history, telling the story of how one major Asian culture made a global impact. On the basis of library research, Roberts has done a superb job in compiling, abstracting, and quoting relevant materials published in Western languages. His approach is historical and chronological in presentation. He also describes the prejudicial and ethnocentric views of Westerners, some of which still exist. An important message that comes out of Roberts' analysis is that eating is a political act: you are what you would not eat. It thus reveals the connectedness of food to changing international politics between China and the West.

One may not agree with the arbitrary selection of data that creates a temporal imbalance: whereas materials used to depict perceptions of Westerners during the early centuries are rich and entertaining, data for modern China appears to be surprisingly scant. This could be because Chinese food, diet, and feasting seldom warrant attention in the Western media accounts on which the author relies quite heavily.

This book takes the reader on a Chinese gastronomic ride across three continents and over a time span of some eight centuries. It is a pleasant read for both scholars and general readers who wish to understand the globalization of Chinese cuisine, and the development Western perceptions of China, Chinese people, and Chinese food.

DAVID Y.H. WU