

Book Reviews

The Atlas of Population, Environment and Sustainable Development of China. Edited by LIU YUE. [New York and Beijing: Science Press, 2000. 251 pp. \$300.00 for English edition; \$250.00 for Chinese edition. New York ISBN 1-800132-60-5; Beijing ISBN 7-30-008256-4.]

This atlas is the result of a joint effort involving the State Environmental Protection Agency, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Geography of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the China Population and Environment Society, and the National Environmental Monitoring Center of China. The volume contains 184 maps covering nine major subject areas related to the three main topics in the title. In terms of map type, 115 maps consist of a series of bar graphs showing the quantitative levels of a variable for the years that data are available for each province. Of these some 70 maps have the bar graphs superimposed on quantitative areal (choropleth) maps. These combination maps are especially worthwhile, since they permit readers to clearly see the relationships between variables. Fifty-one maps are either qualitative or quantitative areal maps. Eighteen maps use dots as symbols. Except for the historical maps of population distribution, the data are from censuses and surveys taken between 1990 and 1995. There is no discussion regarding the accuracy or reliability of the data. Taiwan, and the Hong Kong and Macau Special Administrative Zones are reportedly left out due to the lack of data, although the scale of the maps, 1:12 million and 1:24 million, would also preclude using data for the two SAZs. The non-inclusion disclaimer is breached in 12 maps for Taiwan, where apparently data for physical, as opposed to environmental, social or demographic variables, were somehow available. The city of Chongqing, which was only designated a municipality in 1996, is included in the maps of Sichuan Province.

At the beginning of the atlas there are introductory statements in the form of a general foreword, a preface, and editorial notes. In addition, each set of subject area maps is followed by a commentary. For the most part these commentaries are descriptive, not analytical or explanatory. Apart from highlighting obvious locations of extreme values for each variable under discussion, the comments uncritically describe government policies designed to improve the demographic, economic, environmental, or social issue at stake. The only exception to this is found following the last set of maps dealing with regional sustainable development. Here the persistence of regional differences in development is attributed to the impact of topography, the historical pattern of government decisions and policy implementation, and social and cultural variations related to differences between ethnic groups. In general, more commentary would have been useful, especially for those maps that contrast with conventional wisdom.

The impetus for the atlas is traced back to China's Agenda 21, which was undertaken following the 1987 Rio de Janeiro UNCED conference. The atlas aims to document China's progress towards meeting the goal of

sustainable development with nature conservation, population control, and proper use of energy resources, as enunciated by President Jiang Zemin, whose calligraphy adorns the title page. Unfortunately nowhere in the editorial notes are Jiang's statements ever related to more general theories of sustainable development, economic development, or population. As a result, the selection of specific variables, and their order within the atlas, sometimes appears to be idiosyncratic.

The maps as a whole clearly show the extent of regional, and especially rural–urban, disparities, with the coastal areas favoured. In general then, the atlas does fulfil two editorial goals of systematically describing the issues of population, sustainable development, and environmental protection, and showing the interrelationships between these variables. It is less clear if the goals of establishing an indicator system for variables or visualizing the current and future status of China's environment have been met.

The editors of the atlas are to be congratulated for producing an attractive and useful work. The volume conveniently assembles maps from disparate atlases and maps sheets published during the 1990s. Despite the numerous logistical and technical problems associated with the compilation and production of such an atlas, the work is virtually error free: there are really only three spelling errors. Unfortunately the first one is found in the title of the very first map. Here the plate showing elevation is titled elevator. Finding such an obvious mistake so early in the atlas unfortunately lowered expectations for the accuracy of the rest of the maps.

ROGER MARK SELYA

Environmental Regulation in China: Institutions, Enforcement, and Compliance. By XIAOYING MA and LEONARD ORTOLANO. [Lanham, MD and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000. xviii + 209 pp. Hard cover ISBN 0-8476-9398-8; paperback ISBN 0-8476-9399-6.]

This book is a product of the outstanding programme on Chinese environmental protection established by Professor Ortolano in Stanford's civil and environmental engineering department. The authors analyse the causes of often severe shortcomings with respect to pollution control, despite the regime's fairly well-elaborated set of laws, regulations and administrative agencies. Although readers must comprehend basic water pollution control concepts and terminology, this study of policy implementation is neither an engineering text nor overly technical. It strongly merits the attention of students of public policy in general, as well as fields more closely related to the subject matter.

Ma and Ortolano draw their data from fieldwork conducted in the early 1990s in six municipalities with significant industrial development, which they supplement with discussions of subsequent developments in environmental policy. They focus on the implementation of three interrelated

water pollution control programmes (national wastewater discharge standards, wastewater discharge permits and pollution discharge fees). Discharge or effluent standards set industry and sometimes technology-based limits on wastewater discharges into receiving water bodies or sewerage systems. Discharge permits establish a registration and reporting system for polluters which set discharge limits and other permit conditions. Discharge fees imposed on polluters create disincentives to pollute and raise revenue.

These three programmes are not the only ones applied to pollution control in China nor are they unique to China, having counterparts in the United States and other OECD countries. By focusing on these programmes in certain municipalities, however, the authors are able to analyse the styles and effectiveness of environmental policy enforcement in China in considerable depth and sensitivity. A chapter comparing China and the United States and a research design and methodology appendix add further context.

The three programmes are analysed in terms of four institutional elements: (i) organizations (including government, non-government and the media); (ii) formal rules embodied in laws and regulations; (iii) informal rules of behaviour (including deference to hierarchy, *guanxi*, conflict avoidance, and vagueness vs. precision); and (iv) means of enforcement.

The authors show that environmental officials, often operating with lower status than other government departments and even the enterprises they are to regulate, tend to adopt a pragmatic, non-confrontational approach to enforcement. They favour means of enforcement with lower compliance costs, the implementation of discharge fees because they retain a portion of such revenues for their administrative use, and enforce regulations more vigorously against more profitable and politically less well-connected enterprises, i.e. township and village enterprises rather than state-owned enterprises. The authors also show that certain means of enforcement, namely pollution discharge permits, have suffered from design flaws and undue latitude for negotiation on discharge limits.

The book would have been strengthened had the authors presented their findings more clearly in terms of causal hypotheses. For example, fieldwork was limited to state-owned enterprises and township and village enterprises. If such enterprises were analysed in terms of their underlying economic and technological capacity and their political relationships, the authors could have hypothesized that foreign-invested and publicly listed enterprises would be subject to even more stringent regulation. Similarly, although the authors correctly note that economic and political reforms have impaired pollution control by weakening administrative capacity and disrupting planned economy controls over economic activity, they do not address the extent to which economic development has increased demand for environmental quality or the increase in state funding for environmental projects.

The authors make the book substantially more useful by including updates on administrative and policy developments since their fieldwork was conducted. Some items, such as the environmental approval precon-

dition to borrower eligibility for commercial loans, and the availability of policy loans for infrastructural projects, are neglected. On the whole, however, the book is a worthy addition to the literature on public policy and environmental protection and is suitable for classroom use as a supplementary text book.

LESTER ROSS

Inequality, Mobility and Urbanisation: China and India Compared.

Edited by AMITABH KUNDU. [New Delhi: Indian Council of Social Science Research and Manak Publications, 2000. 376 pp. R600, \$30.00. ISBN 81-7827-000-5.]

This book consists of an edited collection of papers on China and India from a two-day seminar in Beijing in 1997. The context of increased globalization and the incorporation of the two largest nations in the world into this process is leading to an escalation in internal regional inequalities. Whether this leads to increased internal migration and increasing urbanization, and the attendant problems of housing, employment, social welfare, and so on, is the subject of this set of papers. The collection consists of 11 papers on China, seven on India and an introductory overview paper by the editor, Amitabh Kundu.

The Chinese papers clearly show that economic reform and open door policies have resulted in rapid economic growth, especially in the 1990s. This growth has been concentrated in the coastal areas and around the large cities in the eastern and central regions. The employment opportunities in these areas far outweigh the available labour force and the incomes of these more developed areas are much higher than in the less developed areas. The outcome has been a massive increase in internal migration, especially from west to east, that incorporates permanent and temporary migrants. Temporary migrants, or the "floating" population, make up 100 million in spite of the household registration system (*hukou*) which in theory ties people to their place of registration.

The Chinese papers cover various aspects but especially focus on the floating population, urban employment patterns, urban employment patterns and environmental and other outcomes resulting from rapid industrialization and urbanization. The papers rely on a variety of sources and provide an overview of both the general picture and case study areas. The problems of poverty, poor housing, poor urban designs, congestion and pollution are widespread. Inevitably the debate about whether the *hukou* system should be abolished surfaces and the authors call for more government attention to address many of the issues. The material is generally very good though it ignores the place of women migrants and the particular problems facing migrant children. The growth of civil society in China's cities, as a means of addressing the problems of migrants, receives very little attention but this may be due to the fact that this is a very recent trend.

The Indian papers, on the other hand, reach the conclusion that while rural–urban mobility was high in the 1970s it slowed down in the 1980s and 1990s, despite economic liberalization and apparently increasing globalization. The slowing down is partly attributed to the allegedly better provision of services in the very poor states. This slower rate of urbanization is seen to be a problem by Kundu and Gupta and they discuss the need to forestall the decline. The alternative is seen as promoting more balanced regional development.

The contention that rural–urban migration has declined is not well substantiated. Most authors rely on census data but the definitions of rural and urban in the census are problematic. Urban is defined differently to China and only takes into account the male segment of the workforce. Bhagat at the 2001 International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) conference in Brazil stated that the apparently lower rate of urbanization in India was partly due to problems of definition. The reliance on census data for most papers is problematic given these data difficulties.

Development has been very uneven in India, but whether urban–rural differentials are of the same order of magnitude to China is open to debate. It is not clear from the papers but I would posit that there is a much higher level of urban poverty in India, than in China, and that differentials are less extreme. India does not have China's booming Special Economic Zones, rate of Foreign Direct Investment or Joint Ventures. Many of the cities of India are magnets for people who cannot make a living in rural areas but their quality of life in the city is extremely low. Many live on the streets and are not able to find employment. Children do not attend school and extreme poverty is obvious. This is not the case in China where the rate of homelessness is much lower, parents often set up schools for migrant children and various forms of social welfare or family support exist.

Students of internal migration, demographers and development studies researchers will find these papers of interest. In my view, an independent overview of the two situations would have been valuable to contrast how the two largest countries are coping with urbanization that is occurring on a scale which is far larger than anything that we have seen before. China's economic success means that opportunities are greater in the cities while India's lack of global economic integration (except for the IT sector) means that cities have much less to offer.

ROBYN RAE IREDALE

The Performance of India's Export Zones: A Comparison with the Chinese Approach. By ASHOK KUNDRA. [New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000. 276 pp. £29.99. ISBN 0-7619-9453-X.]

Indians are finding themselves admiring, a bit belatedly and many of them reluctantly, China's success story of Reform. Minister after minis-

ter, journalist after journalist comes back from China awed by the frenzied pace of development there: "Look at their highways. Look at their supermarkets." If the closing months of the year 2000 in India will be remembered for the widespread resentment against the "flooding of the Indian market with the Chinese consumer goods", it is not going to be missed that this year brought perhaps the first official admission in India of the need to learn from China when India's commerce minister, mesmerised by his visit to the neighbouring country, announced the setting up of two China-type export processing zones.

What is so special about China's Special Economic Zones (SEZs)? Why did India's Export Processing Zones (EPZs) not perform that well? These are broadly the questions that the book in hand seems to be addressing. The answers lie, to varying degrees, in China and India's respective policies on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the role of expatriates, levels of infrastructure, political will, and decentralisation of economic decision-making. The author suggests that India should be setting up large-sized zones with a broader scope of activities, on the Chinese pattern, at suitable locations with requisite infrastructure and operational freedom. At present there are too few of such zones and of too small a size, he says. The author knows that the smallest of such zones in India, the one in Mumbai, has been doing the best (so much so that it contributes 50–55 per cent of the total exports of EPZs), and the largest in China, Hainan, is the poorest. But this he finds ironic.

The book is stronger when documenting the experience of India, whose EPZs have neither been remarkably successful nor documented and analysed adequately. The Chinese experience sets the framework. To the extent that it simply accepts the standard explanation of the Chinese experience and points out that the Indian zones lack this, its contribution to our understanding of the *Chinese* experience is restricted.

Policies are important, but the author seems to be overstating their importance. Much of the coastal success in China came by *exceeding* policy, and not a few people in India believe that India's software industry succeeded simply because there was no policy on it. Once the conjectural factors that combined to make China's special economic zones so attractive to overseas investors are grasped – like the need in Hong Kong to shift the manufacturing base as land and labour costs had been rising there; the family ties that expatriates had in the mainland that helped reinforce business networks; and local autonomy given to provinces like Guangdong – the scope for drawing lessons becomes limited. The lesson, if any, from the Chinese experience is not as much setting up China-type zones as in being innovative and pragmatic.

The author is right in pointing out that China's is a much more export-oriented economy than India's. And the export processing and export-oriented units (EOUs) in India rely more on domestic investors. The contribution of the expatriate Indians is nothing compared to the investment of overseas Chinese in the special economic zones. The author argues that it is because the Chinese and Indian expatriates differ in their orientation, size and professional background. That unlike China,

India does not have an expatriate concentration near the coastal areas. As there are no Taiwans or Hong Kongs off Indian shores, India relies on a more diversified base of foreign investors. And that the main strength of the Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) is in professions, unlike Chinese expatriates who are shrewd businessmen.

But are the Export Processing Zones not becoming obsolete in increasingly liberalised and WTO-dominated regimes? The classical EPZ, a creation of inward-looking regimes, was, after all, supposed to wither away. China is trying, while celebrating the 20th anniversary of the SEZ “experiment”, to reinvent/restructure them, find a new role for them, and to at least enable them to continue as functional zones with their present advantages. It knows it is going to be difficult to sustain the preferential policies for these zones as the foreign investment regime itself undergoes major changes after its entry into the WTO. If the author finds, as he does, that policy changes in India after liberalization in 1991 made a positive impact on the performance of EPZs/EOUs, howsoever little, it hardly settles the question of the future of EPZs under reforms. In China, as the author himself points out, with the gradual development of the domestic market economy and extension of preferential policies to other areas, some of the inherent advantages of these zones are likely to be eroded. With the introduction of a single national corporate tax rate, for example, the concessional tax rate of 15 per cent for foreign investors may ultimately disappear. Quite rightly, zones will then be differentiated only by the quality of infrastructure and bureaucracies, their investment costs and other logistical attractions. The author’s view that EPZs have a limited life-cycle with different stages and that Indian EPZs are perhaps still stuck at the first phase of their life-cycle is not very convincing. Can one today speak of giving policy suggestions on setting up new EPZs, or talk of the future of existing EPZs without at least mentioning WTO? The author does not appear to have used the term WTO once in the book.

ARVINDER SINGH

Civilizing Chengdu: Chinese Urban Reform, 1895–1937. By KRISTIN STAPLETON. [Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center; distributed by Harvard University Press, 2000. xii + 341 pp. £26.50. ISBN 0-674-00246-6.]

In *Civilizing Chengdu*, Kristin Stapleton presents an excellent analysis of a series of urban reforms that took place between 1895 and 1937 in Sichuan’s provincial capital of Chengdu. The book focuses on two waves of reform initiatives – the New Policies of the 1900s in the late Qing dynasty and the city administration movement of the early Republic period. Through these reforms, Stapleton argues, Chengdu was transformed from a backward seat of imperial government, lacking in urban management, into a modern city with new institutions and facilities,

including public parks and telephones, and a well-developed transportation system.

According to Stapleton, the declining Qing government initiated the first urban reform drive in 1901 after the Boxer Uprising, and its principal architect was Zhou Shanpei. Zhou, an astute local official and an admirer of the Tokyo model, laboured to “civilize” Chengdu by establishing a modern police force, reforming the welfare system, and introducing a clean and orderly urban community into the city, making it one of the most progressive provincial capitals in the late Qing. Zhou’s pioneering work in city administration, Stapleton contends, laid the foundation for future reforms.

The political fragmentation in the early Republic gave rise in Chengdu to myriad factions – secret societies, foreign missionaries, and groups of prominent scholars – all wielding their influence to stabilize the city in the absence of an effective government.

Chengdu’s second but short-lived urban reform, the author informs us, was brought on by Warlord Yang Sen in 1924, after his military seizure of the city. Like Zhou Shanpei before him, Yang underscored the importance of city administration, but he put greater effort into improving transport systems, including road-widening projects, and advancing literacy. Unlike Zhou, however, Yang was an authoritarian militarist who promoted reforms primarily to fashion his own image as a capable, modern administrator. His autocratic style soon alienated the conservative elite and undermined his support. Yang’s Chengdu experiment ended abruptly when he was defeated militarily by his rivals in 1925. Despite subsequent warfare and disorder, Stapleton maintains, Zhou Shanpei’s notion of a civil urban administration continued to inspire future city leaders.

In this splendid book, clearly grounded in extensive archival and library research, the author effectively sums up recent findings on Chinese urban history while providing a great deal of new information. In addition, Stapleton uncovers old photographs and explains city maps with telling effect. She not only vividly chronicles the transformation of Chengdu as a city but also introduces the larger issues of urbanization and city politics in modern China. Her account, however, is largely limited to an understanding of urban history through the efforts of reformers and militarists to reshape the urban landscape by introducing a new concept of city administration. Readers may wish for more discussion of cultural changes brought about by the new urban programs. For instance, Stapleton’s treatment of Sichuan opera reform (especially the *Yuelai* Theatre) – a key project of Zhou Shanpei – is inadequate. True, during the first wave of reforms, Chengdu’s economy was less affected than the scope of its city administration, as Stapleton argues, but perhaps a deeper investigation of the reformers’ economic and industrial undertakings (for example, the silk products promoted by Zhou) might have been fruitful. Moreover, although Stapleton does examine Zhou’s welfare assistance to beggars and Yang’s literacy crusade, her discussion of the overall impact of these two waves of “top-down” reforms on ordinary citizens remains

sketchy. These limitations notwithstanding, *Civilizing Chengdu* is a fine addition to the growing literature on Chinese urban history (recent works by Michael Tsin on Canton and Yinong Xu on Suzhou come to mind) and will be of great interest to students of modern China.

CHANG-TAI HUNG

Women Migrant Workers in China's Economic Reform. By FENG XU.
[Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000. 234 pp. £45.00. ISBN 0-333-91819-3.]

This volume is based on fieldwork conducted by Feng Xu in Sicheng, located in the area south of the Chang (Yangtze) River known as Jiangnan, during the 1990s. Feng Xu sets out to explore the relationship of gender, materialism and identity with economic reform and migration. Sicheng was chosen as a site of interest because of the dynamism of its silk industry, despite the fact that the area has not been granted SEZ status. Two silk factories and their practices are compared: one an SOE, the other an example of a TVE.

The theoretical underpinnings of the book are laid out in the introduction where the author asserts the spatial and temporal heterogeneity of class and gender in China to be the manifestations of structure and agency. This is backed by a Foucauldian definition of power in relational terms. The author also uses Gramsci to deconstruct the nature of political organisation. The result of the author's "canteen" approach to theoretical interpretations of the actions she is investigating can sometimes be misleading, even confusing, although she chooses to cite areas of agreement or rapprochement rather than debate. Further theorisation takes place in the first two chapters, which explore economic reform and class. Chapter two contains a very prescient debate on the way in which the state applies nationalism to its goal of economic reform and the consequent impact at the level of the individual, although this is not illustrated with reference to real-life narratives.

Feng Xu discusses women's lives in the context of the larger economic and social reform processes in China, the impacts of which support the author's thesis of social heterogeneity in the population. The re-establishment of biologically determined gender identities is flagged, but frustratingly never fully explored. The most cogent analysis of gender occurs in Chapter 5. This concentrates on the way in which forms of discipline and power found within the work place, supported by the demand for spiritual and material civilisation by the state, results in different patterns of control within both work and rest spaces. Female migrants, ironically, describe their lives as relatively unrestricted, despite the curfews, guards and factory-sponsored social events, as they are no longer under the immediate control of their family. The wider implications of female migration and factory employment are only mentioned with reference to the work of other authors (Wolf, Salaff, etc.). It is

disappointing that these are not addressed here, especially since the relationships between daughters, factory work, sons and education have been so vividly expressed elsewhere and have produced a vital debate on the nature of gender and opportunities in the context of factory work. The Chinese experience would have made a useful contribution. Feng Xu makes an important point in her identification of state discourse in what at first sight is presented as individuality in the speech of women, and she proffers an innovative re-assessment of the interpretation of work and submissiveness on the part of the employees. But, at times she is guilty of investigating the lives and roles of women in terms of men and their activities

As it stands this book is a welcome and interesting addition to the growing literature on migration, economic reform and the nature of Chinese society, as well as women's experiences in development in the wider Asian context. However, it does disappoint in that the intriguing microcosm of reform promised on the cover of the book does not wholly materialise. Despite the author's commitment to individuality and heterogeneity the migrants' voices are subsumed within the wider discussions. For example, origin, consistently identified as important in determining status, is only really addressed in terms of the Subei/Jiangnan divide. The result of this practice is to muffle the voices of individuals and their experiences within the transitional, dynamic state.

CAROLINE HOY

Chinese Sociologies: An Anthropological Account of the Role of Alienation in Social Reproduction. By P. STEVEN SANGREN. [London and New Brunswick, NJ: The Athlone Press, London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology No.72, 2000. xiii + 328 pp. ISBN 0-485-19672-7.]

This is a work of theory and of analysis. Obviously the two go together. But the importance of Sangren's analyses of Chinese society and culture is not simply for the information and explanations they provide. They are just as importantly a demonstration of the validity of a theoretical framework that Sangren has been expanding over the years since he wrote *History and Magical Power in a Chinese Community* (1987), which is a landmark in the study of Chinese religion. Bringing published articles and revisions of unpublished lectures and conference papers together in this book does two things. It links his close analyses of Chinese institutions with more extended theoretical disputations and explications. The close analyses include two chapters on the politics of Mazu pilgrimages in Taiwan and two on the Chinese family system with its rituals and myths that bring to light the dynamics of mother-son and father-son relations and desires. They are balanced by four theoretical

chapters that expound the framework used in the close analyses, and dispute with other theories of culture and practice and other treatments of the same Chinese institutions.

The framework is refreshingly explanatory, not shirking the will to truth based on what he calls a realist epistemology, nor succumbing to the jibes of post-modernists. On the basis of thorough reading and appreciation of their critical thrust, postmodernist writings are themselves the target of well-justified accusations that they replace the search for intelligibility and coherence by more arbitrary and equally grand but untheorised wills to truth. Worse, their self-aggrandising political gestures appear to be liberating but fail to grapple with facts of inequality and exploitation. Sangren has, in short, been expanding a Marxist theoretical framework that insists on the productivity of human beings and their collectivities – we make our gods and our societies. We make the very systems by which we are exploited and oppressed, including the tensions between different and opposed interests.

Alienation is imagining and representing the product as the producer and the producer as the product – for example the apotheosising of culture as a structure that produces its cultural subjects as if they do not as cultural subjects also produce their cultural context. But Sangren prefers “alienation” to “representation” because he wants the objectification of social relations to be seen as a production of social relations, not narrowing it down to a system of meanings. An analysis of how this works is potentially emancipatory. But Sangren is not positing liberation into a society of clear-sighted anthropologists, of social actors without mystification or alienation. That would be impossible, because to act we inevitably imagine the social context, which is the result of the actions coming out of our desires and interests but includes their unintended and aggregate consequences. Our images of encompassing reality are necessarily less than knowledge of how the system works, since they are imagined representations of it, and they are more than knowledge, since they are our cultural subjectivity and they impel us to action. Cultural subjectivity is indispensable, making the world a meaningful thing, a cosmology. So does knowledge make things intelligible. But the knowledge provided by this framework of theory is knowledge of the social system in which meanings themselves are produced.

Its aim is to show how alienation can work as an expropriation of the creativity and the values of the subordinate. Sangren’s extended example of this is the production of children and social relations by women, alienated in their prayers and gratitude to gods for successful reproduction of a family. The one process produces many alienations. One of them is attribution to gods of the agency of the women themselves. Another is transferral of a cult created and sustained largely by women and of domestically produced offerings and donations to control of male-dominated temple committees. A third is the female strategy of emotional attachment of sons to their mothers, as a way of enhancing their autonomy but at the same time reproducing patriline and patriarchy in which the male head has authority and assumes responsibility for the

greater social whole, including the family system itself. Similarly, the heterodoxies and autonomies of local cults are nevertheless acknowledgements of a central political system through their addressing a transcendent representation of power that is merely ambivalent, not a challenge to the state and its officials. Sangren admits that tensions and ambivalences are the sources of resistance that may bring about endogenous change. But his main point is that usually they do not. Knowledge of alienation does not, in the social anthropologist's hands at least, recommend consequential political organisation and action to reduce inequality and exploitation.

This Marxism uses an extended notion of production and value, stressing the appropriation of surplus that must occur in every social formation, from immediate producers to the encompassing means of reproducing the social aggregate. Nevertheless Sangren has not shown how he can extend it to include the relations of economic production, nor has he shown the capacity of his framework to analyse long-duration historic transformations. What he calls a totality is confined to the social relations of producing meaning and identity, collective and personal. But that is already a lot. It is capable, as he amply demonstrates, of including great complexity into an analytic coherence.

STEPHAN FEUCHTWANG

Le jeu dans la Chine contemporaine: mah-jong, jeu de go et autres loisirs. By ELIZABETH PAPINEAU. [Paris and Montreal: L'Harmattan, *Recherches Asiatiques*, 2000. 298 pp. FF150.00. ISBN 2-7384-910-X.]

Away from the euro-centred image of the gambling Chinese that many Westerners kept throughout the ages, it is once again possible to demonstrate, by means of this book, that the game has a fundamental importance for the national affirmation of the Chinese as through it they picture the most characteristic values of their own way to view the world and their peers.

Elizabeth Papineau aims at giving us a logical view of this phenomenon through the centuries, studying in detail the evolution of leisure arrangements in the 20th century.

As it is a piece primarily meant to be a doctoral thesis in anthropology, only later restructured into a book, aiming not only at experts in social and socio-political anthropology, but also at the public at large, the author starts by presenting a theoretical framework. She refers to the ideas of some classical anthropologists representing the best known historical schools, ending up by picking Ruth Benedict's polemic dual classification (1934), founded on Nietzsche (1887) and applying it to the games of *wei qi* and *majiang*.

Next, there is an interesting semantic analysis of terms that mean "game," "ludic" and "recreation" for the Chinese. This is, however,

limited to the city of Beijing, based solely upon the official language. Therefore all regional terminology was left aside, namely from Southern China.

Chapter two is the highlight of the author's work, analysing the demonstrations of hedonism that took place in Chinese culture in the 1980s and 1990s, following upon the social change after Mao Zedong's death in 1976, and the Third Plenary of the 11th Central Committee in 1978, a crucial political turning point. This in sharp contrast to the preceding period starting in 1949 when the Communist Party took over and all ludic activities were subordinated to the dominant political thought.

In the early 20th century, the foreign presence resulting from the openings to trade imposed by the Nanking (1842) and Tianjian (1858) Treaties, brought several innovations such as horseracing, casinos and diverse gambling houses. These operated side by side with *mah-jong* (*majiang*) clubs and the increasingly popular lotteries that spread all over the country. The pleasure of games for the Chinese did not certainly derive from imported games, but these swiftly led to debauchery, becoming a "symbol of capitalist decadence" in the eyes of the Communist government.

Thus, all games practised by workers were soon organized by the State, with a view to popular education, with sports ranking first as a means of communist education aiming at promoting courage and collectivism. From 1968 to 1971, the State Sports Commission was dismantled by Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, and during the collective psychosis brought about by the Cultural Revolution, both card decks and chess boards were burnt by Red Guards. Only *Xiangqi* (war chess) was left. After Mao Zedong's death in 1976 and the disbandment of the Gang of Four, Deng Xiaoping promoted the progressive freeing of the people from the State's control of the organization of everyday activities. And with this change of the former collective life into a private one, along with other old values, many old games reappeared (among which traditional *wei qi* and *majiang*), allowing the re-definition of their cultural identity stripped by Maoism.

The author ends her work with the study of the two games that she regards as paradigms (one a "reflexive" game, the other a game of "excitement" induced by the pleasure of profit).

The interesting presentation of this book allows not only for pleasant reading but, above all, reflection on the social and political role of games in any society. China with all the social changes it has experienced over time is a fertile field supplying social anthropologists and even politicians with important data, true indicators of the public reaction to political action.

The sources, many of them primary, chosen by the author add to the value of this work and it contains much data obtained through participant observation.

Tibetan Border Worlds: A Geohistorical Analysis of Trade and Traders.

By WIM VAN SPENGEN. [London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 2000. ix + 307 pp. £45.00, \$76.50. ISBN 0-7103-0592-3.]

In this study, social geographer Wim van Spengen sets out to offer a geohistorical explanation for the relative success of the Nyishangba community of Manang district in Nepal as international long-distance traders. The general argument and approach is informed by the structuralist geohistory of the *Annales* school, but the author draws on the notion of *genre de vie* as developed by early twentieth century French geographers Vidal de la Blanche and Sorre to give greater attention to culture than Braudel did in his seminal work on the Mediterranean.

After a summary overview of the geopolitical history of Tibet proper, the first part of the book presents a structuralist discussion of the regionality of what may be called “ethnographic” Tibet, emphasizing the region’s relative cultural–historical homogeneity, its spatial interconnection through networks of monasteries, towns and routes, and its broader regional setting in relation to adjacent *économies-mondes* with their own specific geohistorical structures, such as those of China and India. Despite a considerable level of cultural homogeneity, it is argued that Tibet remained fragmented due to the unevenness of its internal economic relations and the scattered nature of its demographic distribution, while the major regional clusters were oriented towards the *économies-mondes* on whose frontiers they were located. Against this background attention then turns to the geohistory of Tibetan trade, focusing on the changes in the “traditional” local and regional barter complex and the growing importance of long-distance trade in luxury goods. Here the (temporary) rise to prominence of Bhotia communities of the Himalayan borderlands in the trade between Tibet and India is explained through their particular geohistorical setting and the dynamics of the respective *économies-mondes*.

In the second part of the book, one such case is then analysed in detail. While the experience of the Nyishangba exemplifies structural geohistorical features laid out in the first half of the book, the specificities of the case show how a range of contingent factors contributed to the success of this community. In part, their rise was based on the opening up of culturally specific markets for musk and herbs, for example because of the settlement of large numbers of Nepali workers in Assam and beyond. However, gradually, Nyishangba traders diversified in response to changing geopolitical and economic opportunities and constraints, becoming involved in Burma in the trade in gems, as well as arms and possibly drugs. With the emergence of Singapore and after the second world war Hong Kong as sources of mass produced cloth and other cheap manufactured goods, Nyishangba traders extended their trade operations all across Southeast Asia. More recently, some have become involved in the booming tourist sector in Nepal. In his conclusion, van Spengen reiterates that neither culture, nor locational opportunity or state support alone can explain the relative success of the Nyishangba. Rather, such instances

must be understood in the context of long-term dynamics of particular *économies-mondes* in interaction with medium-term processes of state formation.

Van Spengen draws on an impressive range of literatures from different disciplines for his argument, and the case study of the Nyishangba incorporates material collected by the author during fieldwork in Nepal in 1981. Although some readers may be disappointed by the relative paucity of original ethnographic material, and historians by the lack of primary sources in general – issues taken up directly by the author in the appendices – the strength of the study is that it is quite unique in the breadth of its scope and its synthetic objective. In addition to its demonstration of the usefulness of a broadly Braudelian approach, the study provides a useful review of the literature on trade, economy, history, and anthropology of the Tibetan world. Disciplinary specialists may take issue with some arguably dated concepts in some of the discussions, but the author offers fresh perspectives, challenging propositions, and especially in the case study interesting and original material. For these reasons, this is a welcome contribution to the literature on the (geo-) history of Tibet and culturally Tibetan populations, transnational communities, and trade.

MARTIJN VAN BEEK

Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861–1928. By EDWARD J. M. RHOADS. [Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2000. x + 394 pp. ISBN 0-295-97938-0.]

This engaging and well-documented study makes significant contributions to our understanding both of late 19th and early 20th century Chinese history, and of China's continuing struggle with ethnic heterogeneity. The fact that the book is readable, well-written and at times even suspenseful, enhances its usefulness and appeal.

Manchus and Han weaves together three themes into a comprehensive argument. First, it describes the evolution of the Manchus from a military alliance into a hereditary economic caste, and then into a distinct ethnic group (although the account of the transformation of the Hanjun and Mongol bannermen into Manchus is somewhat hazy.) Secondly, Rhoads convincingly refutes the conventional view that differences between Manchus and Han were minimal (or even non-existent) by the mid-19th century. Thirdly, he provides a detailed examination of late-Qing politics, focusing on the efforts of Cixi and Zaifeng to balance two contradictory goals. These leaders sought to reduce the appeal of anti-Manchu rhetoric by diminishing visible differences between Manchus and Han, while at the same time maintaining the power of the Qing court and refusing to surrender the Manchus' privileges.

The first two themes address the misperception that few meaningful distinctions between Manchus and Han persisted beyond 1865. Rhoads

quotes Mary Wright's famous assertion that "a 'Sino-Manchu amalgam'" existed in the 19th century, such that "the ethnic issue was irrelevant" (p. 10). In fact, Wright's view is less influential today than Rhoads suggests: the works of Pamela Crossley, Robert Lee, Evelyn Rawski and others already have altered the conventional wisdom on this point. Still, Rhoads makes an important contribution by providing new evidence and arguments for the contemporary view.

The book's comprehensive portrait of the late-Qing era Manchus – encompassing the court, the Manchus garrisoned in China's cities and the Manchus in the Northeast – draws on a huge number of primary and secondary sources to prove that the Manchus were never assimilated into the Han population. In a chapter entitled "Separate and Unequal," Rhoads enumerates a long list of policies aimed at segregating Manchu from Han – and providing privileges to the Manchu people. The evidence Rhoads provides should dispel any lingering confusion as to why anti-Manchu agitation was popular among Han revolutionaries.

In his discussion of the Qing's policies under Cixi and Zaifeng, Rhoads demonstrates that the Qing court failed to act on Han demands for equal treatment, right up until the end of the dynasty. The implicit argument here is that the Qing's downfall was inevitable, given Han reformers' refusal to accept a constitutional monarchy that preserved Manchu privilege, either at court or in the larger society. Rhoads' extended discussion of the much-hated "imperial kinsmen's cabinet," in which Zaifeng actually *increased* the Qing court's political dominance in 1911, reveals a Manchu elite that set itself (and the Manchu people as a whole) on a collision course with China's Han majority.

This book will be of value to historians of the late Qing era, as well as to those who are interested in the development of ethnic politics in China. It could serve as a supplementary text in graduate-level courses on late-Qing and early Republican history. The chapter on Manchu segregation and privilege would be of interest to undergraduates studying the Qing period, as would the chapter on the 1911 revolution, which provides an excellent corrective to the abstract (and rather bloodless) accounts of that period that abound in the literature. In it, Rhoads recounts the Manchus forces' courageous – if ineffectual – efforts to defend the dynasty, and the bloody retribution exacted against Manchu civilians in many cities.

SHELLEY RIGGER

Swallows and Settlers: The Great Migration from North China to Manchuria. By THOMAS R. GOTTSCHANG and DIANA LARY. [Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2000. xvii + 231 pp. \$45.00, £28.00. ISBN 0-89264-134-7.]

This monograph combines aggregate economic and demographic data (developed primarily by Gottschang) with individual family histories (gathered by Lary) to create an integrated and nuanced discussion of the

massive migration of mostly young, mostly male workers from North China to Manchuria that occurred during the latter part of the 19th and first part of the 20th centuries. Many of these migrants moved back and forth annually, though others stayed in Manchuria more permanently. Hence the terms “swallows” and “settlers” in the title.

Gottschang and Lary describe both the “pushes” (overpopulation, natural calamities, and warlord depredations in North China) and the “pulls” (empty land and pro-colonization policies in the Northeast) that created the pressure to migrate, and they also discuss the improvements in transportation (steamships and railways) that facilitated the migrants’ mobility. While recognising the importance of these factors, however, the authors argue (persuasively) that the “driving force behind the migration to Manchuria was neither the poverty of North China, nor the growth of the Manchurian economy, but rather the deep and unquestioned commitment of millions of North Chinese workers to aid their families by any possible means” (p. 9).

In making their case, the authors draw upon a very rich body of source material: the extensive contemporaneous accounts and field studies that were produced by Chinese, Japanese, and Western researchers, the local gazeteers of the migrants’ home counties, and a remarkable series of personal interviews conducted by Lary in Shandong in 1984. (The special contributions of Franklin Ho and Owen Lattimore to the early scholarship in this field are recognised in the book’s dedication.)

For teaching purposes, this book will be particularly useful for students of modern Chinese economic history, but it could also be valuable for more generic courses in sociology or demography. The production quality of the book is excellent, with only a handful of editorial errors.

Despite my overall enthusiasm for this monograph, I must register one deep concern. It seems to me that, by revealing the personal details of *named* individuals, the authors have violated the canons of ethical research. This occurs at several places, but particularly egregious is the case of Liu Huanwu, who is accused of selfish, unfilial behaviour on little more than the interviewers’ surmise. Because Liu was already an elderly man at the time of the interview in 1984, and is therefore probably no longer living, one can perhaps make the legalistic argument that the dead cannot be libelled, but at a deeper level I am quite uncomfortable with such an obvious violation of an interviewee’s rights in the name of social science research.

RALPH W. HUENEMANN

New Fourth Army: Communist Resistance along the Yangtze and the Huai, 1938–1941. By GREGOR BENTON. [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. xxiv + 949 pp. \$80.00. ISBN 0-520-21992-9.]

In his previous book, *Mountain Fires: The Red Army’s Three-Year War in South China, 1934–1938* (University of California Press, 1992),

Gregor Benton told the story of the struggle for survival by remnant Communist forces left behind in south and central China after the majority of the Red Army departed on the Long March. This book takes up where the previous work left off in 1938 when, with the establishment of the Second United Front between the Communist and Nationalist parties, these guerrilla fighters were called down from their mountain bases to organize the New Fourth Army. The guerrillas faced drastically different conditions from their previous situation. Old enemies were now supposed allies against a new adversary, the invading army of Japan. After several years of desperate isolation, they regained contact with the Party centre and were forced to readjust themselves to the Party's broader strategic aims. Leaving their familiar mountain redoubts behind, they were asked to initiate a new guerrilla struggle on a terrain that was, up to this point, considered unsuitable for such activity – the heavily populated, well-watered, and economically advanced plains of eastern China. The hardened rural veterans were also challenged to absorb and train a flood of inexperienced intellectual and working class recruits from Shanghai and other urban centres.

The main story of this book is how the New Fourth Army successfully adapted to these challenges, relying significantly on the lessons of expediency that had insured their survival in the previous three years. Chen Yi is clearly the hero of Benton's account. With his urbane manners and careful manipulation of United Front principles, Chen won over to the Communist cause many of the local elites who dominated lower Chang (Yangtze) River society. Benton sees this as an important key to the New Fourth Army's success. The result, however, was the development of a Communist tradition quite different from the experience of the Yanan-based Eighth Route Army. Thus, Benton shows that Communist success did not simply represent the triumph of a single unified revolutionary strategy but the ability of different Communist leaders and forces in different places to adapt expediently to a variety of social, political, ecological, and military contexts.

While rejecting a purely Mao or Yanan-centred explanation of the Communist revolution, Benton is not arguing that the New Fourth Army or other Communist forces be viewed as representing isolated trajectories. Rather, Benton also sees central Party political and military structures as among the "contexts" to which the New Fourth Army had to respond. Benton suggests that final Communist victory still depended on the integration of flexible local adaptations into broader national designs determined at the Party centre. Thus, the New Fourth Army's successful expansion into a new base area north of the Chang River fit into the Party's broader strategic aims to reestablish a direct link between the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies.

The book ends with the Wannan or New Fourth Army Incident of January 1941 when Nationalist forces attacked and crushed the Army's main forces south of the Chang River. Although this incident marked the effective end of the Second United Front, Benton clearly believes this disaster did not in fact undo the New Fourth Army's contribution in

laying a foundation for ultimate Communist victory in the lower Chang River region.

The book is the result of extensive research that draws heavily on memoirs and official documents, but is also fully cognizant of the secondary literature. The book does have flaws. A stronger editorial hand might have eliminated the numerous redundant references to, and summaries of, points made elsewhere in the text. The book also devotes nearly 200 pages of text and notes, and a 90 page appendix, to the Wannan Incident, in an attempt, it seems, to provide a comprehensive evaluation of all the political charges and historical debates that have swirled around this affair since its occurrence. In the end, Benton largely absolves the New Fourth Army leader, Xiang Ying, of responsibility for this disaster, laying considerable blame instead on Maoist strategic choices and vacillating instructions from the Party centre. This is an important contribution to the historiography of this incident, which might have deserved its own treatment in a separate work. But the amount of detail on this subject distracts from the book's other more important themes and, in combination with the book's overall length, may discourage the non-expert reader.

Benton's two books are well complemented by Yungfa Chen's *Making Revolution* (1986), which examines Communist mass mobilization in the same area and period (a topic largely ignored by Benton), and Lanxin Xiang's *Mao's Generals* (1998), which focuses more strongly on the military strategies of New Fourth Army commanders. Taken together, these works greatly expand our understanding of the Communist revolution beyond the Mao-centred "Yanan way."

EDWARD A. MCCORD

A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China.

By BENJAMIN A. ELMAN [Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2000. xiii + 847 pp. ISBN 0-520-21509-5.]

Probably no single institution, not even the monarchy, has done more to shape China over the last seven centuries – through various foreign and native dynasties and even into the 20th century – than the examination system. Indeed, like the Chinese bureaucracy more generally, its effects on world historical trends are incalculable. Built to man the emperor's bureaucracy, the exams shaped local and national society, reflected literati orthodoxy, fostered dynastic ideology, became a focus of great governmental attention and expense, and produced a hyper-literate elite. Benjamin Elman's exhaustive, well-written, and beautifully published study traces the history of the civil exams (not including the less important military exams) since the 14th century. It is must-reading for all students of China; one hopes it will also be read outside the precincts of Sinology.

Elman shows that the exam system was subject to constant change and reform. His study takes not an overarching revisionist view of the exams

but carefully charts a course through the issues that have attracted historical attention, and more as well. Elman essentially traces the origins of the “modern” exam system not to the Song or the Yuan dynasties but to the early Ming (to the 1420s, to be precise), which sorted through the available precedents and decided on the basic elements that set the pattern through the Qing. As is well known, the exams emphasized memorization and orthodox Zhu Xi commentaries on the Four Books and Five Classics, established educational standards, ratified the status of local elites, became by far the most important means of imperial bureaucratic recruitment, and reflected and reproduced dominant moral–cultural attitudes; furthermore, they constantly reaffirmed the “partnership” between gentry–merchant elites and the imperial court. The achievement of this book is to show exactly how the exams did all this through the modifications of the centuries. Elman emphasizes the success of the exams, at least judged in terms of their ability to promote and maintain “a carefully balanced and constantly contested piece of educational and social engineering” (p. 293).

Key to Elman’s conception of the exams themselves is a possibly controversial view of late imperial society which emphasizes the dual dominance of literati and the court (as opposed to the thesis of imperial autocracy). Elman clearly shows that literati standards by and large tended to dominate the content of the exams while of course legitimating imperial power. Imperial attempts to change the exams that lacked widespread literati support generally failed to take. Exam candidates were thought to “speak in the place of the sages” while emperors claimed to inherit the political mantle of the sage-kings (p. 396). The exams were not above politics, but lay at the heart of power – and finance as well, providing for literally millions of candidates to take exams which required tens of thousands of copyists, proofreaders, and examiners up to the emperor himself.

Not every reader will want to read every word of this mountain of a book. Some may wish to skim sections with dozens of sentences like “... after 1450 typically 3,000 to 4,000 *juren* competed triennially in the metropolitan examinations for 250 to 350 places, which meant that only 7.5% to 10% received *jinshi* degrees” (p. 158, romanization modified). And those who are interested in such statistics may wish to skim the sections that rehearse the philosophical background to changing exam questions. This book, then, will function partially as a reference work (cf. 91 pages of tables), as well as a monograph in its own right. Even advanced undergraduates may find it difficult, but graduate students will find it necessary and rewarding. The work represents prodigious scholarship, being based on extant exams, exam reports, and memorials in libraries around the world, as well as Ming and Qing writings on exam issues.

Historians interested in the old question of the relationship between the exams and social mobility may be disappointed in Elman’s treatment. Essentially, Elman argues that the high degree of classical literacy required by the exams limited them to a wealthy elite, and that elite in turn was largely able to reproduce itself through the exams. This is particularly

evident given his emphasis on the importance of those who passed the highest, *jinsi* level of the exams. However, it still levels open the question of how what we might call lesser elites or more local elites used the lower levels of the exams and how many families that managed to rise economically, perhaps over several generations, finally achieved exam success. In any case, Elman shows that the “impartiality” of the exams, if not their fairness in modern terms, was an important piece of their self-legitimation.

Impartiality, however, did not mean that the examiners always knew what they were doing. Indeed, one of the most fascinating motifs of this book is how people reacted to the arbitrariness of the results. This reviewer was not convinced that the strains of exam-taking and failure were as psychologically severe as Elman suggests. Former and future candidates got on with their lives and careers. But, as Elman emphasizes, most men, even the most successful, were literally failures most of the time (very, very few passed every exam the first time, and strict quotas assured that very few succeeded at all). Many turned to religion, fortune-telling, eremitism, literature, and very occasionally rebellion. Indeed, the exams were never without their critics. As the system collapsed at the beginning of the 20th century, it was supposed to be replaced by schools – scarcely a new idea – but without the ability to fund or even properly organize them, schools were no substitute for the old exam system. Indeed, one of the most significant of Elman’s achievement is his tracing of the link between “decanonization” (the collapse of orthodox thought as ratified in the exams) and delegitimation (not only for the Qing court but for the entire sociopolitical system).

Any book of this scale will raise disagreements on specific issues. This reviewer found the term “cultural prisons” for the exam compounds to be misleading for a voluntary and still elitist process that might better be likened to painful initiation ceremonies. Nor does “Dao Learning” seem any more precise or historical a term than the more familiar Neo-Confucianism. It might have been useful to have one complete examination translated, though Elman’s extensive discussions of several particular questions are very enlightening. Some details are not explained: if one of the “six agonies” of taking the exams was sitting near the latrines, what were the other five? But as this example indicates, the book is full of wonderful details. More importantly, it not only illuminates the role of the exam system in late imperial Chinese culture, society, and politics, but it is also highly suggestive on topics ranging from philosophical currents and the publishing industry to class structure and demographic change.

PETER ZARROW

The Rhetoric and Reality of Mass Education in Mao’s China. By VILMA SEEBERG. [Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000. 562 pp. ISBN 0-7734-7638-5.]

This is one of the most thorough, detailed and substantive studies to be published on Chinese education in the key period from 1949 to 1979 for

over a decade. By reference to quantitative empirical data, meticulously collected, sifted and evaluated over a period of twenty years, as well as wide-ranging interview data over the whole period, it presents a devastating critique of Maoist educational policies, and a sad commentary on the failure of China's socialist education system at the basic level. As the title suggests, the author begins by addressing the rhetoric of mass education, and analysing the differential degree of support from the Confucian education tradition for the moderate and radical versions of it. This approach shapes the periodization used throughout the book, with the moderate version dominating the period from 1949 to 1957, a struggle between radical and moderate versions shaping developments between 1957 and 1976, and the moderate version regaining dominance in the third period from 1976 to 1979.

In the major section of the book, chapters four to seven, the author uses sophisticated concepts and tools of analysis from international development literature to unfold a critical evaluation of the implementation of both radical and moderate versions of mass education. This multi-faceted evaluation – drawing on empirical data relating to enrolment rates, the financing of education, links between education and work, quality issues and the qualifications of teachers, and educational achievement – demonstrates convincingly that the moderate version of mass education did far more to open up educational opportunity to the rural masses than the radical version, whose rhetoric is proven empty. The author makes full, critical use of official data sets available nationally and locally in China, information provided to agencies such as the World Bank and UNESCO, as well as insights gained through interviews. Her superb grasp of statistical methods and indicators for key concepts such as literacy in the international literature, enables her to provide alternative interpretations of important data sets, and in some cases proxy indicators for crucial aspects of educational development which are not easily subject to empirical evaluation. Not only is the argument convincing, it is also phrased in ways that link China's educational development experience with that of other developing and developed societies in Asia, as well as other parts of the world. The enormous size and scope of the work probably made it impossible to carry forward some of the fascinating comparisons with other Asian countries that are briefly sketched out. One can see that the book could be particularly valuable for courses in comparative, international and development education, where it could stimulate the exploration of such comparisons in much greater detail.

The book also makes a highly valuable contribution to Chinese studies, and could be a key text for courses on modern China, since it explores in depth the relationship of educational policy and practice with the labour system, with key economic development issues, and with the political system. It makes judicious use of excellent historical studies of the Nationalist period, particularly with reference to economic development, and shows both persisting patterns and divergences from the trajectory of development up to 1949. The outline of the Confucian tradition is sound, and forms a key part of the argument, yet it might have been more

nanced if the author had delved more deeply into some of the classical works on education in the Sinological literature. Errors such as the association of the term for traditional private schools, *sishu*, with the Four Books (also romanized as *sishu*), on p. 61, also might have been avoided. However, this is a minor quibble, given the enormous scope of the study. There is some justification also for the decision to omit reference to other important educational traditions in China, such as those of Buddhism and Daoism (p. 55), given the overall focus of the argument. However, it would have been interesting to explore whether or how persisting values from these traditions may have affected both policy and implementation.

This is a work that will stand as a key source of information and understanding for a long time to come. The author notes how the comparison between radical and moderate policy and their impact on the rural/urban gap could be instructive for designing contemporary policy (p. 464), since this gap remains a key concern at the present time. The formulation of solid and convincing policy advice for the future development of basic education in China, drawing on this analysis, would be an extremely valuable next step.

RUTH HAYHOE

Taiwan's Informal Diplomacy and Propaganda. By GARY D. RAWNSLEY.
[London: Macmillan and New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
xiii + 182 pp. £42.50. ISBN 0-333-75119-1.]

Never before in human history has a country been as constrained in the international arena as the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC or Taiwan). This thin volume offers a unique opportunity to uncover some of the mysteries of this unprecedented episode. The author employs a combination of structuralist and culturalist views to expose some of the chronic problems of ROC propaganda. These problems include a world view moulded by the lengthy reign of the Kuomintang (Nationalist) regime, the fragmentation of responsibilities within the government (and the resulting divided messages intended for their targets), a failure to distinguish between allies and non-allies, and the preponderant factor of the PRC. The book also succeeds in avoiding a US-centric approach – the perspective is broadened to include some European as well as African viewpoints.

The theme of the book, as the author suggests, is to explore “how governments which are obliged to enter into informal diplomatic relations with other governments are required to engage in propaganda” (p. 135). Consequently, most readers would inevitably look for answers to a variety of questions. How does an informal diplomacy work? Who are the targeted audiences for the information to be disseminated? Is the message propagated by these governments the same across the geographical and ideological divides? What are the goals? What are the channels? Are they effective? Unfortunately, the author fails to answer these questions. The

method employed – namely interviewing a small number of officials – is much too unsophisticated to provide the answers.

An example is provided by the case of the overseas Chinese communities. The institutional approach enables the writer to delve into the work of Taipei's Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission. It also helps him to successfully unveil the inter-agency squabbling over jurisdiction. But the author fails to identify the various strategies that the government adopted largely for domestic political purposes, a practice that is quite different from the stated policy of uniting overseas Chinese communities for the purpose of promoting the reunification of China. He also fails to differentiate between the old *huaqiao* (overseas Chinese) and the new émigrés *taiqiao* (overseas Taiwanese). Anyone even remotely familiar with this situation knows that these groups differ significantly. And since he fails to distinguish between these factions, the author is unable to discern the bitter partisan infighting within the overseas Chinese communities – battles over national and ethnic identity that often are more fiercely fought than those in Taiwan proper – and the likely impact on Taiwan's propaganda policy. In a similar vein, the author exposes himself to potential criticism when he identifies the U.S. as the most important target of the ROC's propaganda, but fails to examine whether certain sectors of the American populace have been prioritized and/or targeted. The reader is left wondering whether Taiwan conducts studies to locate the more amiable audiences in the USA. Also left unanswered are questions about the corresponding measures Taiwan adopts to reap desired results.

A part of this book's troubles may be traced to the nefarious relationship between the two themes under investigation: informal diplomacy and propaganda. While the author identifies some of the objectives of ROC's diplomacy (p. 36), he has nevertheless failed to pinpoint the objectives of propaganda. Unlike other LDCs whose propaganda very much serves as catharsis to whitewash domestic irregularities, the main goals of the ROC propaganda have been to compete against a Goliath, the PRC, for support within the global community. This lofty task has been complicated by the need to project its image as a sovereign entity against overwhelming odds. ROC propagandists are more than beauty parlor specialists whose obligation is simply to make their clients appear attractive. As the intimidatory menace from Beijing has never relented, Taipei's propaganda is best viewed as part of a grand strategy for national survival and preservation. Being disparaged as a troublemaker in the trilateral Washington–Beijing–Taipei relations could mean the difference between continuing international support and isolation and defeat. The author's failure to discuss these points is ill-conceived and incomprehensible.

This leads one to questions about the effectiveness of the propaganda employed by Taiwan. The author is certainly correct when he suggests that there is no way to quantify the precise impact of Taipei's propaganda campaign. But it is not impossible to glean some general conclusions. One of the biggest drawbacks of this book is a lack of corresponding investigation at the other end of the author's interviews. That is, the

author's arguments could have been substantiated if he made contact with the audience that received the disseminated message. For instance, what is the component breakdown of the 35,000 subscribers of the two official publications of the GIO – the Taipei Journal and the Taipei Review? What is their circulation beyond the overseas Chinese community? Are they providing information vital to the making of relevant policies inside the Washington beltway? How frequently are they being cited by China hands and journalists? How much money does the ROC government spend on advertisement in major international newspapers? Are there favoured media agents overseas? Answers to such questions might readily have surfaced if the author had only pursued them. Furthermore, the author correctly states that economic diplomacy is inextricably linked with Taiwan's propaganda. But one is left wondering how this differs from the economic instruments applied by countries that conduct so-called "normal" diplomacy. And how effective is economic aid in helping the ROC's diplomatic cause? Or how is economic aid perceived by a recipient country when rumours of Taiwanese bribery or malfeasance surface? Again, more unanswered questions.

The author has undertaken a noble cause in tackling an unprecedented saga in human history. How Taipei fares in its propaganda battle with Beijing could very well become a legacy worthy of future study. As pioneering an effort as it is, however, the book could have been more diversified both in terms of the sources referred and methods applied. Unfortunately, this book raises many more questions than it answers.

CHIEN-MIN CHAO

China and Southeast Asia's Ethnic Chinese: State and Diaspora in Contemporary Asia. By PAUL BOLT. [Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000. 184 pp. £47.95. ISBN 0-275-96647-X.]

This book is concerned with the triangular relationship among China, the states of South-East Asia, and South-East Asia's ethnic Chinese, focusing on the latter's role in "contributing to China's economic development since 1978 and the political ramifications of this role for both China and the region [of South-East Asia]" (p. 4). Drawing theoretical insights from the discussions on the nation-state, international politics, and diaspora networks, Bolt demonstrates his keen awareness of the paradoxical nature of the questions under examination and his competence in analysing these complexities in a jargon-free and well-structured manner.

The first leg of the diaspora relationship connects China with Asia's ethnic Chinese. Historically, they were an important external source in fuelling China's modernization. Their significance has increased dramatically with China's open door policy and its improved relationship with Southeast Asia. It is estimated that ethnic Chinese capital originating from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South-East Asia accounts for 70–80 per cent of foreign direct investment in China. "The ethnic Chinese," Bolt

contends, “have played an important role as catalysts for China’s economic growth” (p. 155). Arguing that “profit is central” in ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs’ ventures, he also points out that ethnic bonds, *guanxi*, dialect, emotional and hometown connections all play a part in the investment decisions and that these ethnic elements do not necessarily conflict with the profit motive (pp. 70–73). While the Chinese state benefits enormously from this investment, its central authority over the southern provinces (where ethnic Chinese investment is concentrated) has been somewhat undermined. Bolt considers this “dangerous decentralization in Chinese politics and regional economic inequality” as “a pre-existing weakness in the Chinese state,” which has been exacerbated by the economic activities of the Chinese diaspora.

The second leg of the diaspora triangle is the relationship between ethnic Chinese in South-East Asia and the nation-states of the region. While most South-East Asian governments want to benefit from the huge economic opportunities resulting from China’s open-door policy, they are deeply concerned about the political ramifications of ethnic Chinese investment in their ancestral homeland (which is sometimes depicted as “capital flight”). This problem has been intensified by their competition with China to attract foreign investment. The ambivalent attitudes of the South-East Asian governments highlight “the difficulties inherent in a world of state sovereignty and transnational business and cultural interactions” (p. 157).

With respect to the third leg of the triangle relationship that links China with South-East Asia, Bolt demonstrates that there exist both convergences and divergences in the state interests of both sides. In their competition for investments of ethnic Chinese, the market force and non-market claims all play a part in deciding the final outcomes. (For instance, China’s claims for ethnic Chinese investment stem from cultural ties and hometown connections, while South-East Asian claims are based upon the fact that the region is the physical and political homeland of ethnic Chinese.) On the other hand, the economic and political benefits of engaging with China, partly through the bridging role of ethnic Chinese, is among the central considerations of South-East Asian governments’ acceptance and/or encouragement of ethnic Chinese investment in China. Within such a complex and changing environment, Bolt believes, ethnic Chinese in South-East Asia “will continue to play a major role in China’s economy well into the future, a role that will transform China, Asia, and the world economy” (p. 160).

Two important issues should have been addressed more closely. The first is concerned with the heterogeneous nature of ethnic Chinese in Asia. Although Bolt points out correctly that it is simplistic to lump “all ethnic Chinese living outside mainland China into the category of ‘overseas Chinese’ ” (p. 3), he seems to underestimate their diversity. In contrast to his conviction that there exist only slight differences between Chinese in Hong Kong and Taiwan and those in South-East Asia (e.g. pp. 96–97), there are notable divergences in terms of political orientations, cultural attitudes, and social structure, which have some significant

ramifications for their activities in China and responses to state policies. A related issue concerns Taiwan's role in the diaspora triangle. Bolt discusses Taiwan in the framework of its investment in mainland China. However, since the late 1980s there has been a rapid increase of Taiwanese direct investment in South-East Asia, encouraged by the Taiwanese government's "Southward Policy". In view of the complex cross-Straits relationship and the uncertainties in the politico-economic evolution of South-East Asia, the impact of this Taiwan factor on the diaspora triangle ought to be discussed.

These reservations notwithstanding, *China and Southeast Asia's Ethnic Chinese* is a succinct and well-documented account on an important subject. Unlike most Western scholars working on similar subjects who tend to use Chinese materials as their raw data, Bolt makes conscious efforts to relate those studies by and debates among PRC scholars and policy makers to his own analytical framework, which helps make this book informative, convincing, and sensible. It can be beneficially adapted for upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses dealing with the changing political economy of the Asia Pacific. The publisher should consider issuing a paperback version to make this book more accessible to interested readers.

HONG LIU

Japan and China: Rivalry or Cooperation in East Asia? Edited by PETER DRYSDALE and DONG DONG ZHANG. [Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, 2000. xi + 182 pp. A\$25.00. ISBN 0-7315-3620.]

During the Clinton Administration, the U.S. and China formed a strategic partnership by mutual visits and summit talks in 1997 and 1998 that overlapped with psychological damage due to the sluggish economy in Japan, while so-called "Japan Passing" – a parody of "Japan Bashing" – was rampant. This reflected a sign of frustration that Japan might be losing its footing in the interstice between these two great nations, the U.S. and China. The birth of the Bush administration, however, shed a new and distinct light on Japan's footing in the relationship between the U.S. and China. The Bush administration clearly indicated that it would upgrade the importance of the U.S.–Japan alliance, while changing its stance toward China from that of a strategic partner to that of a strategic competitor. Regarding the Taiwan issue, the new U.S. administration began changing its "blurred strategy" to one in which it defined its active commitment. As a result, Japan's strategic presence has been enhanced accordingly. Under these circumstances, it seems that Asia's international relations are getting back to their previous positioning, i.e. the U.S.–Japan alliance versus China. In any case, the shift in U.S. domestic and foreign policies continues to greatly influence Japan–China relations.

Japan and China's strained relationship is in its worst state since the diplomatic normalization with China in 1972. At present, there is no

major dispute that may decisively aggravate the situation in Japan or China; however, animosity is mutual and is accelerating. Speaking of Japan, due partially to its economic stagnation, domestic discontent seems to have found its outlet directed toward the presence of China, opaque but steadily gaining its strength. Japan's awareness and political power to stave off such anti-China sentiment is not sufficient. Moreover, the new Bush Administration has put China in a difficult position. This may be the reason why China's attitude toward Japan tends to be relatively low-key. And, of course, recent conservative direct investments from Japan and the persisting argument to reduce ODA (Official Development Assistance) to China among Japanese are contributing factors.

This book is an edited version of papers presented at a conference held immediately after the formation of strategic partnership between the U.S. and China. Although the book points out several underlying problems between Japan and China, including the 1998 visit of Jiang Zemin to Japan – when he repeatedly argued the subject of Japan's wartime aggression – that caused anti-China sentiment among Japanese, the overall view remains relatively optimistic. Naturally, depending on subject matters, there may be distinct differences as to nuances. Such distinctions are most significant on two major issues, one dealing with the modern history of Japan and China, politics and national security, and the other dealing with economic affairs. When discussing modern history – especially the issue of Japan's perception of the war and the future of the Taiwan issue – the trend is to be apprehensive, but when it comes to economic issues, relatively optimistic arguments are presented. The book tends to state rather optimistic views of Japan–China relations because of a tacit consensus, i.e. despite problems related to different historical perceptions and Taiwanese issues, Japan and China would not and cannot afford to confront each other from the viewpoint of economic rationality.

In the first chapter, Dong Dong Zhang and Peter Drysdale summarize the basic issues concerning Japan–China relations, followed by the second chapter in which Allen Whiting discusses the background of China's perception and policies toward Japan based on the context of domestic politics. Whiting pointed out the magnitude of the mental stumbling block underlying Japan–China relations in his *China Eyes Japan*, having analysed China's perception of Japan, especially concerning historical issues. But in this chapter, he concludes that China's economic needs call for co-operation with Japan and that this is inevitable. In chapter three, Tomoyuki Kojima writes that the Japan–China joint declaration issued at the time of Jiang Zemin's visit to Japan uses the expression “partnership” rather than “neighboring friendship”, which was used previously, and that this is a turning point in Japan–China relations. He assesses that the perception changed from that of a mere relationship between two countries to that of an expanded viewpoint of their position in Asia and the world. In chapter four, Dong Dong Zhang points out that China's shift to a market economy enhanced the mutual dependency between Japan and China and in chapter five, Robert Taylor asserts that

Japanese–Chinese economic relations are changing from the vertical relationship of the past to a horizontal one.

In chapter six, Liu Jiangyong, maintaining China’s official viewpoints, asserts that the “New Guidelines for U.S.–Japan Defense Cooperation” of 1997 aim to restrain China, bearing in mind the Taiwan issue. His views are the most pessimistic in this book. In chapter seven, Christopher B. Johnstone writes that Japan’s engagement policy with China is bound to put China in a tight spot. And in chapter eight, Stuart Harris and Greg Austin make assessments that, within the scope of Asian-Pacific regionalism, both Japan and China chose to maintain the status quo in spite of conflicts of interests, as the matter is “geopolitics” and not an emotional issue.

Japan–China relations will continue to be a major factor in the international affairs of the Asian-Pacific region. Multilateral economic interdependence will make headway in the Asian-Pacific region with Japan–China at the helm. This will serve as the basis for co-operative relations, but at a same time, increased and multi-faceted friction is inevitable. In fact, Japan has recently imposed safeguard curbs on certain Chinese agricultural products and China, in retaliation, has considered taking certain actions. As the book indicates, enhancement of economic relations is the foundation for Japan–China relations, but at the same time, there may be potential new political problems stemming from it. In any rate, Japan–China relations weigh heavily in the international relations of Asian-Pacific region. The publication of this book is very timely in this regard and it is very useful in understanding the basic issues underlying Japan–China relations. “Rivalry or cooperation in East Asia?” is the sub-title of this book and as each paper in the book unanimously points out, rivalry and co-operation co-exist in Japan–China relations as a matter of fact. And the situation will remain as it is for quite some time.

RYOSEI KOKUBUN

State Capacity in East Asia: Japan, Taiwan, China, and Vietnam. Edited by KJELD ERIK BRØDSGAARD and SUSAN YOUNG. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. £45.00. ix + 310 pp. ISBN 0-19-829763-7.]

This book looks beyond the popular notion of the strong developmental East Asian state and examines how state capacities adapted in the rapidly changing states of Taiwan, China, Japan, and Vietnam. Many chapter authors are informed by Joel Migdal’s “state-in-society” perspective, which not only contends that states are embedded in societies and interact with them in a process of mutual transformation, but also insists that state structures themselves are social organizations that need to be disaggregated and analysed at different levels, policy areas, and sectors.

Drawing upon the above theoretical tradition, Thomas Gold’s chapter points out that there has been a waning of the Kuomintang (KMT) state on Taiwan since the 1990s, as shown by its marked diminution in

autonomy and capacity. The KMT has evolved from a hegemonic centralized Leninist party into an increasingly democratized electorally oriented party, and the state itself is increasingly an arena of contestation by forces from the extensively mobilized society. Following a similar line of argument, Jurgen Domes' chapter shows that the Taiwanese state underwent dramatic change in the context of transition from an authoritarian dictatorship to a representative system. State capacity has assumed the features of a mixed limited manipulation by the KMT leadership and participation by increasingly powerful groups (like big business organizations) within the society.

Although both the states of mainland China and Taiwan are working toward economic liberalization and internationalization, An-Chia Wu's chapter contends that such a similar trend can have widely different impacts because of the differences in their states' capacity to develop new institutions to manage change. Whereas the Taiwanese state has introduced democracy to mediate conflicting interests, in China localization and regional polarization is a threat to state capacity. This chapter suggests that the mainland state, like the Taiwanese state, needs to develop an apparatus of government with formalized structures and institutions for the mediation of disparate interests.

Turning to the study of the state in mainland China, Andrew Walder's chapter raises the ultimate question about state capacity – whether the state can continue to govern and under what conditions does a state collapse? When the Chinese state “unraveled” in the Cultural Revolution, it was not the Red Guards who tore down China's state structure, but the aggregate effect of the survival strategies of hundreds of thousands of officials. With no alternative power structures or channels of political expression, the state itself became the arena for political struggles and was transformed from within.

Focusing on policing and social control, Børge Bakken's chapter points out that tightening of control by the Chinese state does not necessarily reflect strength. It is rather the attempt of a weakened state to cope with the new types of problems that have followed in the wake of reforms. Traditional methods of control, including the household registration system and mutual community surveillance, have been undermined as market reforms have demanded a more mobile population. This has made it necessary for the state to retreat from the goal of extensive social penetration to implement more “hard” policing aimed at targeted groups like the “floating population”.

Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard and Kamal Sheel's chapter uses the concept of the “informal economy” to examine the connectedness of state and society in China. It argues that more of the Chinese economy is “informal” than the obviously illicit business dealings. The local state is embedded in various informal economic arrangements and institutional norms such as the operation of *guanxi* or personal relationships. The informal economy is not defined by its opposition to the state, but rather operates as an integral expression of the state and depends on the tacit support of the state.

Finally, David Apter's chapter discusses the developmental problems facing the states in socialist China and Vietnam. It formulates a concept of "managerial socialism" in which much of the economic initiative is shared with the private sector, but the leadership seeks to retain political control through management of a neo-corporatist state structure. This chapter evaluates the viability of managerial socialism and concludes that it is inherently unstable, having no lasting way of balancing the contradictory demand of information and coercion.

The book also includes three chapters on the states in Japan and Vietnam. As a whole, this book has made a significant contribution to our understanding of state capacity and the states in East Asia. By examining the interaction between state and society, it goes beyond the narrow focus on industrial policy and economic performance in the developmental state literature. And by examining the local states and their embeddedness in social network and community, it opens up new research frontiers on the study of local state officials, local interest groups, social control, informal economy, grassroots democracy, etc. As such, this book should be of interests to researchers who are interested in studying the transformation of the states in Taiwan, mainland China, and other East Asian territories.

ALVIN Y. SO

Sinica Lusitana 1. Chinese Sources in Portuguese Libraries and Archives (1668–1871). Edited by RODERICH PTAK, ZHANG WEIMIN and ANTÓNIO GRAÇA DE ABREU. [Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 2000. 168 pp. ISBN 972-785-013-0.]

This book is the first step of a solid project scientifically co-ordinated by Roderich Ptak (University of Munich) and published by the Orient Foundation, a Portuguese private institution that has been giving considerable support to research on Asian issues for more than a decade.

The main goal of *Sinica Lusitana* is to publish selected Chinese documents available in Portuguese archives and libraries. Sixteen pieces are gathered in this first volume; they range from the late 17th to the late 19th centuries and are kept in the following institutions: Library of the Ajuda Palace, Library of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon, Overseas Historical Archive, and Library of the Ducal Palace of Vila Viçosa.

A considerable number of these texts provide the historian with an interesting picture of the economic structure of Macau in the 18th and 19th centuries. Other documents provide detailed aspects of daily life in Macau and the relations between Macau's Chinese and Portuguese residents. This includes the exercise of justice and some of the problems stemming from the coexistence of Portuguese and Chinese law under the Qing.

Scholars interested in the reactions of Qing China to Western religion and thought will profit from the letters of two Chinese Catholic literati (Qiu Sheng and Jiang Weipiao, c. 1668), both discussing the issue of

rites. Special attention should also be given to a letter written in 1781 by the parents of a certain Wu Yaxing, a young Chinese man living in Portugal. It is a touching piece on filial duty, which allows insights into the mental dimensions of Chinese family during the 18th century. One passage may be quoted here: “After you have read these lines, my son, come back home immediately to save your mother’s life and to see your father one more time. ...Who would have thought that you would not take care of your parents after your departure and not show your gratitude for the kindness you received from them? ...Seeing the letter you sent from Portugal – it is unbearable, indeed. It will be best for you to return home and make your living here” (pp. 159, 161).

Relations between Lisbon and Beijing are well illustrated in two documents. The letter that Prince Regent D. João (later King D. João VI, 1816–1826) wrote to the Jiaqing emperor in 1813 will arouse particular curiosity, since the Portuguese version is slightly different from the Chinese one. As the editors of this volume have noted, “in the Portuguese original D. João puts himself in a position equal to that of the Jiaqing emperor ... ; in the Chinese version he appears in an inferior position, almost as subordinate of the Qing emperor” (p. 115). In 1753, following the embassy of Francisco de Assis Pacheco de Sampaio to Beijing, the Qianlong emperor sent a letter to D. José I (1750–1777) together with a fine selection of gifts. This document, kept in the Ajuda Library, is the “jewel” within the *Sinica Lusitana 1* collection: it is a magnificent trilingual letter in Manchu, Chinese, and Portuguese written on yellow paper (3.85cm x 86cm) and already displayed in several international exhibitions.

Like Qianlong’s letter, *Sinica Lusitana* is also trilingual (Portuguese–English–Chinese) which reflects the purpose of both editors and publisher to reach a wider audience, i.e. the international circle of sinological and historical studies. In this sense, however, the editors might have added more footnotes or, alternatively, provided the reader with more details in the introduction to each document.

Sinica Lusitana is a beautifully printed volume with coloured illustrations. It constitutes a central piece of a deep, ongoing, process of renovation of the history of Sino–Portuguese relations in which a considerable number of Portuguese and Chinese historians and institutions are taking active part. The publication of coherent collections of documents with English translations is surely a suitable path to follow.

JORGE MANUEL FLORES

East Asia at the Center: Four Thousand Years of Engagement with the World. By WARREN I. COHEN. [New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. 516 pp. \$35.00, £22.50. ISBN 0-231-10108-2.]

Most of us who study China, I suspect, worry at times about what the true context for such study should be. Obviously China’s history is long, and

impressively documented; at the same time China has always been part of a wider world, and China's own self-definitions of its role in that wider world do not have to be taken at face value. Many scholars now feel that the idea of China's dominant cultural role, expressed through the mystique of "sinicization," does not withstand sustained scrutiny; similarly, the idea of a central Chinese "heartland" of some enduring kind grows more elusive the more we pursue it. When did such a heartland appear? At whose cost was it established? In what sense was it permanent? What were the roles of language, custom, rulership, family, agriculture or the military in its formation?

In "East Asia at the Center" Warren I. Cohen, well-known for his work on United States–Chinese relations, takes a bold stab at the problem by presenting a four-thousand year chronological and regional overview of the interstate system in East Asia, from the earliest analysable days of Chinese state-building in the early Shang dynasty down to the realities of power in East and South-East Asia at the close of the 20th century. This approach enables Cohen to place China within the ebb and flow of power, wealth and prestige across the vast region, and to see China as merely one part of a grander story, even though events in China are often setting the mood for the story as a whole.

This is extremely ambitious, and also extraordinarily difficult, but Warren Cohen plunges right in with enviable bravado and scope. He finds room in his narrative not only for rich detail on China but also for Tibet and inner Asia, for Korea and Japan, for Sumatra, Java and the Philippines, for Thailand, Burma, and Vietnam, for Taiwan and Hong Kong. At the same time, he knows that the phrase "engagement with the world" can involve forced contact as much as voluntary contact, and thus he has to deal to some extent with the Mongol conquests, the Europeans in their centuries of aggressive expansion, the Soviet Union, the post-Meiji Japanese aggressions, and the roles of American finance and culture in the nuclear and cold war age. Telling such a complex story demands a kind of tight-rope act, and one can only watch with bated breath as Cohen edges carefully across the perilous spaces he must traverse. But by dint of carefully marshalled secondary sources, a rigorous policy of keeping names and terms to a minimum, and the inclusion of numerous global and regional time-lines, Cohen keeps his multilayered story on track.

Despite the length of this book, Cohen does not attempt to present any single over-arching interpretative framework. If East Asia is clearly "at the center" in the book's title, it is never exactly clear of what else it is at the centre. The world? Yes, in a way, but only as one of a number of competing claimants for such attention. When the essential storyline edges out of East Asia, Cohen expands his definition accordingly, as with the case of South-East Asia throughout the narrative, with foreign imperialisms in various guises, and with India, Africa or the Middle East when necessary. We are never brought to feel that there is any central or co-ordinating value system that holds this vast region together; there are, of course, different presences, Confucian, Legalist, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian and so on, but their diffusion or comparative weights are not

really at issue here. The “Little Dragons” of South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong are nicely discussed in the concluding chapters, but the possibly overlapping themes that bind them together or give them that name are not explored. Throughout the narrative, events occur and countries enter or leave the scene, empires rise and fall, in time to the beat of Cohen’s conductor’s baton rather than to some deeper themes or rhythms that might integrate the score as a whole.

The treatment of China proceeds along somewhat similar lines. Cohen presents an enormous amount of interesting information, culled from a wide range of materials, but there are no tightly drawn analytical links that tie China into the region that surrounds it, and of which it forms such a colossal part. We are not sure, historically, who it is that should be called “Chinese” and on what basis, nor which of China’s borders are historically valid or permanently binding. And though the tributary structure is given full coverage, we are not sure what the binding force of the system was, or why for instance it could suddenly re-emerge in such force and scope in the late 14th century after being in abeyance for so long.

Cohen’s clearest presentation of a real conclusion remains one with which he opened the book: that his tale suggests a “persistent record of Chinese imperialism, of Chinese efforts to expand and to dominate their neighbors whenever they had sufficient power – and sometimes when they didn’t” (p. xiii). This theme is restated with vigour in the discussion of the Ming emperor Yongle (p. 165), and it forms a central part of Cohen’s concluding reflections. The “most obvious continuity over these several millennia,” Cohen writes, “has been the importance of China.” (p. 477). But in the context of a book as ambitious as this, one still wants to ask the leading question, “important to whom?” Has China really been so central to the region as a whole? Or has there not been a deeper regional identity and coherence of which China has been consistently, but also merely, a part? It is that bigger question that this ample book does not really seek to answer.

JONATHAN D. SPENCE

China and Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future. Edited by
STEPHEN UHALLEY and XIAOXIN WU. [Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe,
2000. xiii + 499 pp. \$79.95. ISBN 0-7656-0661-5.]

This volume is a collection of conference papers, divided into three major sections: a general overview, past achievements, and future prospects of China missionary work. It is a successful attempt to bring experts from around the globe to focus on a topic that historically had distinguished the role of the Society of Jesus in China. The conference was held in late 1999 at the University of San Francisco. Of the 21 papers included in the volume, three chapters serve as macro-overviews of past burdens of China mission work (Uhalley), a brief sketch of the history of missionary

achievements (Witek), and a bibliographic introduction of Chinese source material (Zhang). The attempt to achieve a balance of Western and Chinese views provides an appropriate framework for other papers to follow.

There are eight papers to provide narratives of the burdened past, in varying degrees of detail, on selected early mission-related issues in China. The focus of these papers as a group was largely on Catholic missions, with emphasis on the Jesuits in China (Erik Zürcher, Paul A. Rule, Robert Entenmann, Nicolas Standaert, and Li Tiangang). The remaining three papers described how China missions had created Western interest in Sinology in France (Qi), Germany (Von Collani) and Russia (Dobrovolskaia). These three papers highlighted the fact that European missionaries had been the driving force to establish Sinology in Europe. One is impressed by the fact that it was Christian churches, rather than mercantile trade that had greater *cultural* impact on contacts between Confucian China and the West.

The remainder of the book consists of ten papers that represent a good mix of history, of the Protestant mission (Dunch); the belief structure of Chinese Catholicism (Madsen); the Catholic educational mission (Wiese); Hungarian missionaries in China (Vamos); missionary work among China's ethnic minorities (Covell); analysis of "cultural Christians" (Zhuo); the Catholic church in post-1997 Hong Kong (Leung); Christianity in Taiwan (Wang), and a concluding remark by Paul Wickeri with suggestions for issues that merit further discussion.

Several points need to be made about these conference papers. First, not surprisingly, the major focus is on Catholic missions, with only a few papers on Protestant churches in China. The reason for giving the Catholic church focused attention appears to be that earlier missionary work began with Catholic religious orders, principally the Society of Jesus in the 16th century and Father Ricci in particular. This set the stage for later missionary work in Ming and Qing China, including that of the Protestant churches. The "rites controversy" that involved the Jesuits became a pivotal point that led to the discussion of contextualization or indigenization of Christianity as a possible solution. The seeming under-representation of papers on Protestant missions in China could give the erroneous impression that Protestantism had had no or at best little impact in China. Related to this under-representation is the equally insufficient attention paid to mid-19th and early 20th century Christianity in China. This includes the period of British rule in Hong Kong, and the role of American's Protestant missionaries in building educational and medical institutions, facilitating the modernization of an ancient civilization. Given the title of the book, the imbalance is regrettable. Third, even on the issue of Catholic missionaries, little is said about Catholic religious orders other than the Society of Jesus. In view of the fact that the rites controversy had become the key religious as well as political issue that separated the Jesuits from the Dominicans and Franciscans, was there not a need to give the rites issue much fuller explications by including the positions of those other religious orders?

Furthermore, the conference excluded an important chapter of China missions, namely the role of Religious Sisters. The conference also could have benefited by having detailed comparative analysis of regional differences in missionary work, and between China's urban and rural sectors. More provincial or regional comparisons along the lines of Entenmann's paper on Sichuan would be most welcome since different religious orders had converts in different provinces. A comparison of achievements and problems by provinces or regions would be most useful to uncover new vistas for research that could benefit both Sinologists interested in regional and community development in China, and missionary orders considering alternative methodology for teaching Christian doctrines.

An important paper written by Beatrice Leung supplies refreshing views on Christian churches as a result of Hong Kong's return to China. Given the past policy of the British colonial government, can Christian churches continue to perform their various roles in the future, or will they gradually redefine their roles in a much narrower and restricted sense in line with religious policy on the mainland? Leung's paper highlights the questions of political context, as did Peter Wang's paper on Taiwan. Cultural and political contextualization of Christian churches can suggest a *burdened*, rather than a *hopeful*, future.

Significantly, Madsen's argument that Chinese Catholicism is a folk religion is intriguing. If he is correct, then it follows that Catholicism is already firmly grounded in rural regions of China. Father Standaert, in his thoughtful and well-documented paper on Christianity in late-Ming and early-Qing periods seemed to have argued just the opposite (pp. 86–93 *et passim*) by comparing the success of Buddhism mixed with folk beliefs, and the failure of having Christian beliefs integrated into the indigenous belief system. The apparent disagreement between Madsen and Standaert aside, there are more significant questions about the future that deserve attention. For example, if there is an indigenization of Christianity, would that alter Sino-Vatican relations towards the positive or negative end of the continuum? What is more, will there be new rush of publications on "new and improved" Neo-Confucianism that is partly shaped by, and synthesized with, the localized Christianity in China? On the other hand, would and could localization and indigenization create a schism for the Catholic Church, and a new sect movement for the Protestant persuasion, or would localization of Christianity become the critical force to reinvigorate Christianity in China?

Finally, much has been said in these papers about the "burdened past". Little, however, was said about the "hopeful future". Wickeri put it appropriately when he said in the final chapter, "it appears from the papers collected here that the future of the encounter between Christianity and China will carry its own *burdens*" (italics added).

All in all these papers have contributed to the understanding that attempts to establish the *universality* of teachings of Christ somehow seemed to be only *foreign* to the Chinese. In order for Christianity to take roots in China, the roots must be adaptable to the cultural environment of

the society. Wicker's final chapter gives the entire volume a needed closure, making it possible to thread through these papers with a single powerful message. These collected papers are excellent collateral readings for students in China studies, cultural anthropology, foreign missions, and sociology of religion.

WILLIAM T. LIU

Sinophiles and Sinophobes: Western Views of China. Edited by COLIN MACKERRAS. [Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2000. 268 pp. £12.99. ISBN 0-19-591892-4.]

This interesting anthology selected and edited by Colin Mackerras contains 78 short extracts on writings about China, ranging from Marco Polo and the Southern Song dynasty in the 12th century to the end of the 20th century. Each extract occupies roughly two pages – though a few are slightly longer. The extracts have been selected from the writings of well-known scholars, missionaries, sociologists, historians, economists, diplomats, travellers and novelists. Although the latter include more recently Somerset Maugham and Pearl Buck, fictional writings as such have been avoided. The vast majority of contributors to the anthology are European and American, the compiler himself working at Griffith University in Brisbane and contributing a brief but very useful introduction with an excellent summary of the contents and a note on the interpretation of the terms “west” and “western”. Only one or two of the contributors are ethnic Chinese but these have been born outside China. There are no contributions, of course, from Chinese authors born or resident in China itself.

The anthology largely avoids discussions on China's foreign policy and also on the arts and sciences in China. Key historical events are mentioned but rarely given priority as the emphasis throughout the book is placed on ordinary lives and lifestyles. Social and political systems, cultural values, education, health, religion, and attitudes are all covered, together with assessments of China's past, present and future position in the world. Considerably over half of the book is devoted to the 20th century from the fall of the Qing dynasty onwards, covering (according to the compiler's analysis of his subject) the fifth to the eighth ages of Western views of China.

The subjects of the extracts (rice missionaries, foot binding, opium smoking, medicine and health, the population problem, corruption, the position of women in China, education, crime, economy, etc.) make interesting reading as do the attitudes of various authors (Mendoza, A.H. Smith, Sarah Pike Conger, Simon Leys, Edgar Snow, Lee Feigon, etc.). The popular fame or distinction of certain authors (e.g. Voltaire, Adam Smith, Somerset Maugham, Toynbee, Pearl Buck, Sir Percy Craddock) also adds to the anthology's inherent interest. It would be misleading to cite particular authors for detailed individual mention, however, since the

most useful and enlightening extracts will depend primarily on the reader's own interests.

By far the most important features of the book are the anthologist's notes and comments – those contained in the general introduction to the book and especially those forming the introduction to each extract. Though quite brief, these notes constitute a fundamental feature of the anthology.

This excellent book is distinguished from the usual anthology of writings about China in that its primary purpose is to present Western views of Chinese life rather than simply features of China and Chinese life throughout the period the extracts cover. Unfortunately, I feel a slight unease that general readers might occasionally experience difficulty in evaluating the Western views contained because of insufficient familiarity with China and its social history. Hence, the introductory notes to each extract become absolutely crucial. Indeed, an argument may be made for more detailed and comprehensive notes, especially for references to other Western views concerning a particular issue being treated or even for additional comments on a related issue. Readers should constantly remind themselves that this book is not an anthology of Chinese life over the past 700 years so much as an anthology of Western views of Chinese life over this period.

J. BRIAN HEATON

Open Doors: Wilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China. By CHRISTOPHER BO BRAMSEN. [Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000. xvi + 320 pp. £45.00. ISBN 0-7007-1404-9.]

In the beginning of the 20th century the Danish community in China comprised around 800 people. Four hundred of these lived in Shanghai, which was a buzzing city full of commercial and intellectual activity. This book is about two of these Danes, namely Wilhelm Meyer, the founder and president of Andersen, Meyer & Co., and his wife Kirsten Meyer. One of their four daughters, Marie-Louise Bramsen, is the mother of the author, who served as Danish Ambassador to China 1995–2001.

The book describes the lives of Wilhelm and Kirsten Meyer against the backdrop of economic and political developments taking place in Shanghai during the first decades of the 20th century. The book also describes the development of the company Andersen, Meyer & Co., which started out as a Danish company but changed to an American based company in 1915. The company became quite successful with a capital equal to 20 million Danish kroner and a staff of more than 1,200. The success of the company was very much related to co-operation with the American company General Electric which was developing a strong interest in the Chinese market.

The comparatively large number of Danes in Shanghai at the time was

primarily related to the presence of two large Danish companies: the Great Northern Telegraph Company and the East Asiatic Company. The Great Northern Telegraph Company, founded in 1869, was heavily involved in building up a telegraphic network in China and the Far East and was the largest Danish firm in China by the turn of the 20th century. The East Asiatic Company (EAC), established in 1897, developed into one of the major Western trading houses in China during the Republican period and in particular after 1949.

Wilhelm Meyer started to work for the EAC in Shanghai in 1902, but soon left the company due to a fall-out with Frederik Kinch, the EAC head of the Shanghai office. He then worked in the Russo-Chinese Bank for a few years, before establishing his own firm Andersen, Meyer & Co. together with two other Danes. After three years Meyer became the sole owner, but the original name was kept. Although the company in 1915 turned into an American-owned company, Meyer continued to be the Managing General Director.

Despite his status as Managing General Director and President of an American company, Meyer continued to play an important role in the Danish community in Shanghai. Thus he served as Chairman of the Danish Charity Society from 1925 to his death in 1935 and was deputy chairman of the Danish Society in Shanghai from 1929.

Through the lives of its main characters the book gives a good introduction to the Danish community in Shanghai and the concerns and preoccupation of Danish entrepreneurs in China. In this sense it provides an important contribution to the study of the history of Danish Chinese commercial relations. Undoubtedly many other studies could be written on other Western industrialists and entrepreneurs in China during the early stages of the country's industrialization process. Christopher Bo Bramsen has set an example for others to follow.

The source material includes early diaries by Kirsten Bramsen and other family members. In addition there are the letters of Gerda Nielsen, who was employed by the Meyer family in Shanghai from 1920 to 1923. Bramsen has also examined documents in the Danish Record Office and has found information on Andersen, Meyer and Co. in company registers in the U.S. Of particular interest is the author's meticulous attempts to trace the Meyer family houses and the company buildings of Andersen, Meyer and Co. in Shanghai and Beijing. The book also contains interesting information on old houses in Shanghai, such as the stretch of old European houses along the famous Bund.

The book's utility for teaching and research is limited by the complete absence of footnotes in the text and an incomplete list of references of other works written on Danish-Chinese diplomatic and commercial relations. However, as an appetizer for anyone further anyone interested in the topic of Danes working and living in China and the wider issue of foreign participation in China's early industrialization process I can highly recommend this well-written and richly illustrated book.

Fu Ssu-nien. A Life in Chinese History and Politics. By WANG FAN-SEN.
[Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. xiv + 261 pp. ISBN
0-521-48051-5.]

This book is the first comprehensive biography in a Western language of Fu Sinian (1896–1950), a leading intellectual of the May Fourth movement and an influential historian of the Republican period. In six chapters Wang Fan-sen narrates Fu's complicated intellectual and political life. He describes Fu Sinian's early life, his education, and his role within the May Fourth movement (chapter one). He deals with his historical methodology and his pivotal role in the establishment of the first modern Chinese historical research institution, the Institute for History and Philology (IHP) of the Academia Sinica (chapter two), analyses in great detail Fu's historical research (chapters three and four), before trying to interpret his contradictory attitudes as caught in between the poles of history and politics on the one hand, and nationalism and iconoclasm on the other hand (chapters five and six).

Wang analyses Fu's view of science and traces his epistemology back to 19th century Western positivism as exemplified in Ernst Mach's writings, as well as to early Qing evidential scholarship (*kaozheng*). Accordingly Fu's concept of historiography is identified as being situated between Ranke on the one hand, and Qing "old text" historical scholarship as embodied in Zhang Taiyan, one of Fu's early teachers, on the other hand. Fu opposes theory and interpretation in historical research and aims at positivistic research restricting himself to investigating data "in order for the facts to become naturally revealed" (p. 78).

Limited and outdated in terms of the methodology applied as this might look, Fu's major contribution is that he goes beyond the scepticism of the "doubters of antiquity" (*yigupai*) and starts to reconstruct Chinese ancient history with the help of Western scientific methods. During the 1930s the IHP conducted several archaeological excavations that led to a major breakthrough in the understanding of ancient Chinese history, showing that there had been no single source of Chinese civilization. On the basis of these excavations and traditional textual material Fu claimed in 1935 that during high antiquity there had been two independent ethnic and geographic centres in constant exchange and battle.

In the field of intellectual history, Fu put forward in 1937 his thesis of the rationalistic and anti-metaphysical character of early Confucianism. Arguing against the traditional emphasis on Mengzi, Fu stressed that it is Xunzi who represented best the original intentions of Confucius. He therefore should be understood as the Chinese precursor to a scientific, rational mindset – an approach Fu himself represented.

However, in spite of his demand – typical for the May Fourth generation – not to become involved in politics, and to conduct disinterested, objective historical research, Fu increasingly engaged in politics during the ever-aggravating national crisis of the 1930s. As a consequence he was torn between history and politics, a conflict that compromised his historical research and eventually led to the end of Fu's career

as an active historian. Another equally important aspect of his contradictory mindset was the tension between iconoclasm and nationalism, common to the May Fourth generation. Parallel to his intensifying engagement in politics, Fu started to shift towards a nationalism that relied more and more on tradition for support and became increasingly critical of youthful, radical iconoclasm. Wang Fan-sen thus concludes his monograph with his thesis of “the defeat of a May Fourth youth”, a defeat that can be understood as being representative of the approach for which Fu stood.

Wang presents a comprehensive biography that is based on a plethora of unpublished archive materials from the IHP, adding considerably to our knowledge of that period. However, as with all biographical studies, the drawback of this approach is the lack of a coherent topical focus. It would have been very helpful if Wang would have provided much more context in his chapters dealing with Fu’s research. Given his other research publications, Wang Fan-sen definitely would have been able to do so. Due to the limited space that by definition is given for contextualization within a biographical study, important contemporaries such as Liang Qichao, Zhang Taiyan, Hu Shi, and their approaches are insufficiently mentioned. A detailed analysis and comparison of their historiography and political activities would have added considerably to the interpretative strength of the book and probably would have kept Wang Fan-sen from sometimes applying oversimplified categorizations such as “conservative” vs. “moderate” vs. “radical.”

In spite of these drawbacks Wang Fan-sen’s book on Fu Ssu-nien is an important contribution to the study of the intellectual history of Republican China, a field where much still remains to be researched and re-evaluated.

AXEL SCHNEIDER

A Lifetime in Academia: An Autobiography by Rayson Huang. By RAYSON HUANG. [Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2000. 168 pp. ISBN 962-209-518-6.]

In his autobiography, vice-chancellor Rayson Huang recounts a life full of study, research, teaching, administration and travel. His life in higher education moves from Hong Kong to China, to the United Kingdom, to Chicago, to Singapore and Malaysia, and back to Hong Kong.

After briefly recounting the “fortunate” accident when his grandfather severely cut and infected his foot while working in the fields near Shantou, Rayson Huang writes briefly about his early life attending his father’s bilingual secondary school in Hong Kong. In 1938 he was admitted to the University of Hong Kong – an institution which was to form such an important part of his life not only as a student but as vice-chancellor later in his career. The account of the fall of Hong Kong in late 1942 and the author’s escape to Free China several months later

make exciting reading – perhaps not least because the events and incidents seem to be understated rather than dramatised or exaggerated. His journey to Samkong and account of life there in 1942 were fascinating. The fact that there was a Hong Kong Government Relief Office at Kukong, albeit on a boat, was a great surprise and even seemed to add a certain authenticity.

The normality of life at the university in Kweilin and the opportunity (and funding) for research may come as a surprise to certain readers. The author's research project on the cracking of tung oil to produce chemicals with some of the attributes of petrol was so interesting that I wanted to read far more about it. His later account of being driven down to Chungking from the mountains and his subsequent descriptions of Chungking were useful in providing a much-needed setting to the events in this part of his life. The account of a busy Chiang Kai-shek, together with the amusing story of him unwittingly sentencing to death a loyal young man who had simply applied for leave to marry, was one of several contributing human interest – and a touch of wry humour.

Perhaps one of the most interesting chapters was "To England via India", containing several anecdotes – amusing but full of insight. A little more serious was the author's attitude to Chicago, where he met and married Grace, only to encounter racism later when trying to rent an apartment.

The chapter on Malaya probably holds more interest for the general reader than that on Singapore, although a fairly comprehensive picture of education was given and important issues raised in the latter chapter. The difficulties and problems experienced in the setting up of Nanyang University were related with forthrightness and honesty, no attempt being made to cover up the in-fighting and disagreements between the founder and multi-millionaire businessman Tan Lark-sye and the writer and philosopher Lin Yutang, who had been appointed Vice-Chancellor.

The conferment of honorary degrees formed a most interesting part of "A New University in a New Country". In some ways, it was reassuring to see that the problems and considerations relating to the choice of honorary graduands at the University of Malaya are much the same throughout the world.

In the last chapter, readers may find it interesting to read about the more recent developments in Hong Kong, the author's view of LegCo, and his visit to Deng Xiaoping in Beijing in 1982, when he first learned of the "one country, two systems" concept, two years before the joint declaration was announced.

Dr Rayson Huang's activities after his retirement included violin making and music education, continued work for the Croucher Foundation, vice-chairmanship of the council for a new university in Shantou, advisor on the establishment of a new university for overseas Chinese in Thailand, and eventually convenor of a specialist Basic Law committee concerned with relations between Beijing and the special administrative region.

The only problem which causes me a little disquiet relates to the target

readership of the book. Basically, there is a conflict between the general reader and the specialist reader – on the one hand, the reader who is interested generally in the life of a highly successful academic working at an interesting time in interesting places and, on the other hand, the reader who has actual experience of life and education in the specific places mentioned and is acquainted with the individuals mentioned. Consequently, the frequent references to the names of people might well lack interest or significance for the general reader. Furthermore, it would seem a pity to ignore a potentially wider readership and deny many the experience and enjoyment that can be gained from reading the autobiography. The incidents and events narrated in this particular autobiography are such as to be of interest and importance in their own right for many readers largely unfamiliar with Hong Kong, Singapore or Malaysia.

I enjoyed reading this fascinating account of Dr Rayson Huang's experiences and achievements. Overall, I gained the impression of an outstanding academic, a sensible and perceptive administrator, and a talented man endowed with a sense of humour, a certain generosity of spirit and sensitivity to the needs of others. His autobiography should be of considerable interest to anyone interested in contemporary higher education in China, Singapore and Malaysia.

J. BRIAN HEATON